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This book is a study of the Russian revolution from a spiritual point of view – the point of view of Orthodox Christianity and therefore of the majority of the population of the Russian empire. While not ignoring the political, economic and social dimensions of the struggle it seeks to place these within the context of this fourth, religious dimension. In this way it seeks to plug a major gap in the literature on the revolution, which almost always either bypasses Orthodox Christianity completely, or makes only passing allusions to it as to a secondary, minor factor.

With this aim in mind, the rule of Tsar Nicholas is re-assessed in a much more positive light than is commonly found in western interpretations. And the views of conservative writers of the pre-revolutionary period such as Dostoyevsky, Pobedonostsev, Soloviev, Tikhomirov, Frank and Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), together with the works of important recent writers such as Archpriest Lev Lebedev (Velikorossia, St. Petersburg, 1997) and Alexander Solzhenitsyn (Dvesti Let Vmeste, Moscow, 2001), are quoted and discussed at length.

This book covers the period from the end of the Crimean War in 1856 to the triumph of the Red Army over the Whites and the last open manifestation of Tsarist, Orthodox Russia on Russian soil at the Zemsky Sobor in Vladivostok in 1922. It is divided into four parts. The first, “Reform”, covers the period of the great reforms undertaken by Tsar Alexander II and ending in his death in 1881. The second, “Reaction”, covers the period of the conservative reaction under Tsar Alexander III and the peaceful half of the reign of Tsar Nicholas II. The third, “War”, covers the period of the Russo-Japanese War, the abortive revolution of 1905, the Balkan Wars and the First World War until the eve of the revolution. The fourth, “Revolution”, covers the February and October revolutions and the Civil War. Of course, the roots of the revolution go much further back than 1856, and it continued to develop and afflict the world long after 1922. However, all the essential traits of the revolution were revealed in all their massively satanic significance in this period.

Works that study the revolution in this very broad spiritual dimension while not ignoring the political, economic and social data analyzed in more conventional studies are few and far between. The best I have found is Archpriest Lev Lebedev’s Velikorossia (Great Russia), published in St. Petersburg in 1999. One of the purposes of my book is to bring Fr. Lev’s great work to the attention of English-speaking readers, and to this end I have quoted large sections of his work, especially his superlative account of the events of February and March, 1917. And if I have ventured to disagree with some of his emphases – for example, on the extent to which the social elites, as opposed to the broad masses of the Russian population, were responsible for
the revolution – this in no way diminishes my admiration for, and indebtedness to, his work as a whole. I will be happy if my own work is considered to follow in his tradition of historiography.

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

November 30 / December 13, 2010.
Holy Apostle Andrew.
INTRODUCTION

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

“Terrible and mysterious,” wrote Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky), second leader of the Russian Church Abroad, “is the dark visage of the revolution. Viewed from the vantage point of its inner essence, it is not contained within the framework of history and cannot be studied on the same level as other historical facts. In its deepest roots it transcends the boundaries of space and time, as was determined by Gustave le Bon, who considered it an irrational phenomenon in which certain mystical, supernatural powers were at work. But what before may have been considered dubious became completely obvious after the Russian Revolution. In it everyone sensed, as one contemporary writer expressed himself, the critical incarnation of absolute evil in the temper of man; in other words, the participation of the devil – that father of lies and ancient enemy of God, who tries to make man his obedient weapon against God – was clearly revealed.”

“The critical incarnation of absolute evil in the temper of man”, “not contained within the framework of history”: such a description indicates that in order to understand the revolution we need to look beyond conventional political, social and economic categories. We need to put it into the wider and deeper context of Divine Providence, and the struggle between God and Satan for the souls of men. The left-wing historian E.H. Carr once wrote that history could either be “a study of human achievement” or “relapse into theology – that is to say, a study... of the divine purpose”. This book does not aim to “relapse” into theology; and, like all histories, it is a study of human achievement and failure. But it proceeds from a profound conviction that merely explicating the motivations and deeds of men without placing them in the wider and deeper context of Divine Providence will only result, in the words of Macbeth, in “a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing”. The Marxist understanding of history as a process fully and exclusively determined by impersonal material and economic forces has been sufficiently discredited – although the excessive attention devoted to economics in many histories of the revolution appears to indicate that its influence is with us still. It is time now to go a step further and recognize that in all human history, and especially in such gigantic cataclysms as the Russian revolution, it is not only the impersonal forces of nature and the personal wills of men that matter, but also the all-good Will of God and the all-evil will of the devil.

Such a complex and profound event as the revolution needs a multi-dimensional approach. The approach favoured by western historians – that is, the study of the political, economic and social antecedents of the catastrophe – certainly has its place and has produced much valuable work; and I shall be citing liberally from the works of western historians such as Richard Pipes, Oliver Figes and Dominic Lieven. But even western writers have begun to sense the inadequacy of their approach when applied to the revolution.

Faced with the now indisputable fact of “the most colossal case of political carnage in history”, as Martin Malia puts it, western historians have been strangely coy in delivering moral verdicts. Nor is this because they never deliver damning verdicts: when it comes to the Nazi Holocaust – which, however terrible it was, destroyed far fewer lives, directly and indirectly, than Communism - such verdicts are frequent, almost obligatory. But when it comes to Soviet Communism, the tendency has been to refrain from “judgementalism”. This was especially true when the Soviet Union was still in existence, and a very large proportion of western intellectuals were ideologically sympathetic to it. But even since the fall of Soviet Communism in 1989-91, when the opening of the Soviet archives left even the most faithful leftists in no doubt about the enormity of its crimes and the falseness of its ideology, the level of the condemnation of Communism has never reached the level of the condemnation of Nazism.

It is important to understand the reasons for this. One reason undoubtedly lies in a besetting weakness of almost all men: even when we have seen through the falseness of our former beliefs, we nevertheless seek excuses for ourselves, excuses that make our errors “understandable” and perhaps not really that bad after all. And yet former Nazis or Nazi sympathizers are never given this grace: their views remain inexcusable and unforgiveable, and the hounding of Nazis, even minor ones, continues without mercy and without end. On the other hand, no Communist has ever been put on trial or punished for his views in the post-Cold War period in Russia, and the Soviet Communist Party itself was “acquitted” in a trial in 1992. And so Vladimir Putin, for example, can even boast of his membership of the KGB, saying that “once a chekist, always a chekist” – and still get to have tea with the Queen of England, whose relative, Tsar Nicholas II, was murdered by the Cheka...

A deeper reason lies in the fact that the ideologies of Communism, on the one hand, and Liberalism, on the other, are in fact closely related, being both derived, in their modern forms, from the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. They both offer a utopian vision for mankind based on rationalism, science and education, in which religious belief has no place. Liberalism is relatively

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4 See Vladimir Bukovsky, *Moskovskij Protess* (Moscow Trial), Moscow, 1996.
more individualistic than Communism, gives more place to individual initiative in economic and social life, and is more tolerant of individual differences and idiosyncrasies, such as religion. But the similarities between them are more striking than their differences. And from the point of view of traditional Christianity, the main difference is that while the one destroys faith slowly, the other does it relatively quickly. Thus Stuart Reed writes: “In the Cold War, an unworkable revolutionary creed, communism, yielded to a workable revolutionary creed, liberal capitalism. Now liberal capitalism has replaced communism as the chief threat to the customs, traditions and decencies of Christendom…”

In view of the inner spiritual kinship between Liberalism and Communism, western intellectuals who adhere to Liberalism feel compelled to be not too hard on the sister ideology - “no enemies to the left,” as they used to say in the Russian Duma. It is a different matter with anti-Enlightenment political ideologies such as Nazism or Orthodox Christian Autocracy, in spite of the fact that, as Jonathan Glover writes, “opponents of the Enlightenment can seem to grasp truths which elude its followers, and repudiation of the Enlightenment is now fashionable among philosophers”. And so Soviet Communism, whatever its horrors, is felt to be “justified” at any rate to this extent: that the “evil” autocracy of “Bloody” Nicholas had to be replaced - after all, as Lenin said, you can’t make an omelette without breaking eggs. Of course, it was regrettable that the revolution could not have stopped during its liberal phase, between February and October, 1917. But the intention was good: it was only the execution that was poor...

Daniel Pipes confirms this analysis: “The Soviet Union appeared less bad than the Third Reich. The Nazis rose and fell in spectacular fashion; the communist trajectory was a more gentle one. The Third Reich lasted only twelve years and ended a blaze of gun smoke and fire; the Soviet Union endured for three-quarters of a century and expired with a whimper. These differences have important consequences. While the results of Nazi conspiracism are the subjects of innumerable studies and artistic works, the comparable Soviet actions remain relatively obscure. Auschwitz, Birkenau, and the other death camps are known by name, but who knows their Soviet equivalents? German archives were captured in a fell swoop. Soviet ones are slowly unveiled.


“Vladimir Bukovsky retorted that he had seen the broken eggs, but no one he knew had ever tasted the omelet!” (Stephane Courtois, in The Black Book of Communism, op. cit., p. 19).
“The same distinction applies to the two dictators. Hitler left behind a far more terrible reputation than Stalin. One ranted; the other calculated. Hitler made no discernible attempt to disguise his wickedness. In contrast, Stalin hid evil with such diligence and success that his crimes became known only three years after his death and were then widely received with shock. Because the facts about Stalin came out in so disjointed a way, his crimes to this day lack the notoriety of Hitler’s murderousness. Hitler so discredited himself that to find any virtues in him implies a kind of insanity. Not so Stalin. If Hitler’s apologists are beyond the pale, Stalin’s remain within it…

“Analysts sympathize more with the Left. The liberal orientation of most scholars and journalists means that they treat comparable phenomenon in different ways. They do not hide the Left’s turpitude, but they present it less harshly, in isolation, and usually as the idiosyncracies of an individual rather than faults intrinsic to the system. Leninism would have been more humane if only Stalin had not highjacked the revolution…”

One of the purposes of this book is to show that the exact opposite of this was true: Leninism was already the height of inhumanity well before Stalin came to power. Its intention was evil from the beginning, and the execution of this intention was, tragically, all too effective. To that end I have started the book over sixty years before 1917, showing the development of the revolutionary movement from the beginning of the reign of Tsar Alexander II. This will show that if some of the followers of the revolution naively thought that they were advancing the cause of human happiness, and so were acting out of a kind of misguided compassion, this could in no way be said of the leaders, such as Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin. Thus during the famine of 1891, when the leaders of liberal society, headed by the Tsarevich Nicholas, were rushing to help the starving, the young Vladimir Ulyanov, though living right in the middle of the famine-struck region, ostentatiously declared himself against helping the poor in any way because it would distract from the main aim: the destruction of the hated tsarist regime. Therefore we must conclude concerning the revolution, contrary to the liberals, that “a good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits shall ye know them…” (Matthew 7.20).

The corollary of this is that the tsarist regime was nothing like as bad as it has been painted in Soviet and western histories. “True,” as Bishop Dionysius (Alferov) of Novgorod writes, “now they no longer repeat the Soviet clichés about an ‘extremely backward country’ and ‘the prison of the peoples’.

“They speak more about social injustice, which, supposedly, was liquidated by the revolution.

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“Social injustice is inevitable in any state. It existed also in Tsarist Russia, but in the last reign of Emperor Nicholas II it was less than in the whole history of the country: no more than 5-7% of the population lived below the poverty line. The greatest social injustice was established precisely by the communist regime, which liquidated the people in whole classes, estates and social groups.”

Of course, mistakes were made; and of course, the regime could not have fallen if it and the country as a whole were not infected by disease from within. But that disease was precisely western liberalism and its more radical socialist “sister”. As for Tsar Nicholas himself, even now western historians – with some honourable exceptions, such as Dominic Lieven - trot out the old clichés about his supposed weakness of will, obstinacy, etc. So another purpose of this book is to show that the tsar actually defended Christian civilization against the ultimate barbarism with great skill and courage, and was overwhelmed at the last only because all the leaders in the army and society, as well as his western allies, were against him. Of course, he, too, made mistakes – the Far Eastern policy, Rasputin, perhaps his abdication (although this is debatable, as we shall see, and was in any case forced); but these pale into insignificance beside his positive achievements, which were crowned, in the end, with the crown of martyrdom and the recognition of his sanctity even by some of the leaders of today’s neo-Soviet Russia.

This brings me to the question of my Russian sources and my attitude to the approach favoured by many contemporary Russian historians - that is, the understanding of the Russian revolution as the product of a Judaeo-Masonic conspiracy. Now this approach is largely shunned by western historians for reasons of political correctness. But the fact is that conspiracies do exist, and in 1917 there certainly was a conspiracy to overthrow the Tsar that was initiated and successfully executed mainly by Jews and Freemasons from both Russia and abroad. However, while accepting the basic thesis of nationalist Russian historians that there was a Judaeo-Masonic conspiracy to overthrow the tsar, I have not given it the centrality and almost exclusive importance that these historians attribute to it. For neither political and economic factors, as western and westernizing historians assert, nor the presence of conspirators within and without the body politic, as Russian nationalist historians emphasize, are sufficient to explain how such a mighty organism as the Russian Empire not only fell, but fell so resoundingly, with such bitter and long-term consequences both for Russia and the whole world. In order to understand this fall we also need a fourth dimension, the spiritual or religious dimension of explanation: only in that way can we understand the revolution in its full breadth and depth.

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9 Alferov, “O Nashem Preemstve s Istoricheskoj Rossii” (On Our Succession from Historical Russia), Nasha Strana (Our Country), Buenos Aires, no. 2886, February 23, 2010, p. 2.
Now the central object that we discern when using the spiritual or religious dimension is the Orthodox Church – an institution that western historians have tended to ignore, or pass over very superficially, and which Russian historians have tended to distort through the prism of Soviet and neo-Soviet reality: the Orthodox Church. Few historians of the Middle East today would claim that it is possible to acquire a deep understanding of their subject without acquiring a more than superficial understanding of Islam. And yet it remains the case that most historians of Russia have a minimal understanding of that faith and Church which inspired the great majority of the inhabitants of Russia both before and for a long time after the revolution.

A new approach is needed, one that makes the struggle between the Church and the State – and that between Orthodoxy and the renovationist elements within the Church - the central aspect of the revolution. My aim in this book, therefore, has been to provide a spiritual-ecclesiastical history of the Russian revolution, somewhat on the model of the Venerable Bede’s Ecclesiastical History of the English People. I describe the main political events, but from the point of view, primarily, of the Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Christians, who, after all, constituted the majority of the population for most of the period under review. My thesis is that the Orthodox Church was not only the heart and soul of pre-revolutionary Russia, but also the last pre-revolutionary institution to fall to the Bolsheviks – and remnants of it, both in Russia and abroad, have not fallen yet.

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10 One of the exceptions to this rule is Richard Pipes, who writes: “In histories of the Russian Revolution, religion receives little if any attention. W.H. Chamberlin devotes to this subject fewer than five pages in a book of nearly one thousand. Other scholars (for instance, Sheila Fitzpatrick and Leonard Schapiro) ignore it altogether. Such lack of interest can only be explained by the secularism of modern historians. And yet, even if historians are secular, the people with whom they deal were in the overwhelming majority religious: in this respect, the inhabitants of what became the Soviet Union – Christians, Jews, and Muslims alike – may be said to have lived in the Middle Ages. For then, culture meant religion - religious belief, but especially religious rituals and festivals: baptism, circumcision, confirmation, confession, burial, Christmas and Easter, Passover and Yom Kippur, Ramadan. Their lives revolved around the ceremonies of the religious calendar, because these not only glorified their hard and humdrum existences but gave even the humblest of them a sense of dignity in the eyes of God, for whom all human beings are equal. The Communists attacked religious beliefs and practices with a vehemence not seen since the days of the Roman Empire. Their aggressive atheism affected the mass of citizens far more painfully than the suppression of political dissent or the imposition of censorship. Next to the economic hardships, no action of Lenin’s government brought greater suffering to the population at large, the so-called ‘masses’, than the profanation of its religious beliefs, the closing of the houses of worship, and the mistreatment of the clergy…” (Russia under the Bolshevik Regime, 1919-1924, London: Fontana, 1995, pp. 337-338)

Although Pipes’ point is well taken, his own treatment of religion is one of the weaker aspects of his work, containing some startling mistakes. For example, he writes that Lenin “postponed an all-out assault on religion until 1922, when he was in unchallenged control of the country” (p. 339). On the contrary, the twin peaks of persecution were the Civil War period (1918-21) and the 1930s.
This point of view presupposes a very wide eschatological framework whose basic theses can be summarized as follows:

God wishes that all men should come to a knowledge of the truth and be saved. His instrument in bringing men to this knowledge and this salvation is the One, Holy, Orthodox-Catholic and Apostolic Church. Now the Church can exist and even flourish without any political support, as was clearly demonstrated during the first three centuries of the Church’s existence under the pagan Roman emperors. However, the conversion of the Roman Empire itself during the reign of St. Constantine the Great gave the Church a wonderful opportunity to extend her influence throughout the oikoumene and even into the most recalcitrant sphere of human life – politics - by entering into a “symphonic” relation with the Christian emperor whereby the emperor was in charge of political matters while the Church was in charge of spiritual matters. Of course, together with this opportunity came temptation: the temptation of subduing the Kingdom of God, which is not of this world, to the categories of the kingdom of this world, which lies in evil. But temptation exists in order to be overcome: there is no inevitability in succumbing to it. And so while Western Europe succumbed to the temptation of secular power and secular political philosophy, making the Church first into a form of absolutist monarchy under the Pope and then a kind of confederation of independent democracies under the Protestant Reformers, in the East the “symphonic” ideal of Christian Rome remained: that is, the idea that the State can serve the Church, not by engulfing her or being engulfed by her, and still less by separating itself completely from her sanctifying influence in a rigid separation of powers, but by protecting her against her external enemies as “the guardian of the ark”, by helping to enforce her decrees in public life through godly legislation, and by providing, in the person of the Christian Emperor, a focus of unity for Christendom as a whole.

The Christian Roman Empire, with its capital in the “New Rome” of Constantinople, carried out this task for over a thousand years before it fell to the Muslims in 1453. The Empire failed because, while emperor and patriarch remained in harmony to the end, this harmony was not true "symphony", but an agreement to put the interests of the nation-state above those of the Ecumenical Church. As an 8th or 9th Greek prophecy recently found in St. Sabbas' monastery near Jerusalem says: “The sceptre of the Orthodox kingdom will fall from the weakening hands of the Byzantine emperors, since they will not have proved able to achieve the symphony of Church and State. Therefore the Lord in His Providence will send a third God-chosen people to take the place of the chosen, but spiritually decrepit people of the Greeks.”

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That third God-chosen people was the Russians, and in time Russia became “the Third Rome”, the main protector of Orthodoxy throughout the world. At the beginning of the period studied in this book Russia had grown to become the largest and most diverse land empire in world history. It protected not only the 100 million Orthodox Christians within the empire: it also worked actively on behalf of the millions more Orthodox Christians in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, and in its missions in Persia, China, Japan and North America. Moreover, Russia, as Marx and Engels recognized, was the main fortress against the revolution that threatened every government, and every Christian community, throughout the world.

The tragedy of the Russian revolution is the tragedy of how the main earthly protector of Christianity and legitimate government was destroyed and transformed into its greatest persecutor because of the sins of its people – and in particular the sin of not valuing their Russian Homeland as “the threshold of the Heavenly Fatherland”, in St. John of Kronstadt’s words...

“And so,” as Archbishop Averky of Syracuse and Jordanville wrote, “there appeared the third, most important stage in the ‘apostasy’ which is now developing so quickly in front of our eyes – the bloody catastrophe which came upon our unfortunate homeland of Russia in 1917. Carried out in accordance with the example of ‘the Great French Revolution’ of 1789, our Russian revolution can, with all justice, be looked upon as the greatest achievement of the servants of the coming Antichrist. In the person of Orthodox Russia, the chief obstacle on the path of the victoriously progressing, God-permitted ‘apostasy’ was destroyed: there remained no strong fortress of the true Orthodox Faith and Church in the world, and the Antichrist, in the person of his servants, began, according to the expression of our native interpreter of the apostolic epistles, the holy hierarch Theophan the recluse of Vishna, ‘to expand his operations’.

“Since then, as we see now, the apostasy has gone forward by gigantic strides, without meeting any serious impediments.”

Indeed, as recently as May, 2008 Maoist revolutionaries overthrew the King of Nepal. This shows how far we are still from “the end of history”, as liberal commentators understand it – that is, the end of totalitarian tyranny and its replacement by liberal capitalism. Communism still lives, and it lives largely because the lessons of the Russian revolution have still not been learned. For how can we go forward to a better future if we have not learned the lessons of the past? Hence the vital importance of a thorough and deep study of the event that gave totalitarian evil its decisive breakthrough – the Russian revolution.

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I. REFORM (1856-1881)

*I will dash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the Lord.*


The ending of the Crimean War and the accession to the throne of Tsar Alexander II heralded major changes in both the internal and external policies of Russia. These changes, while aiming to restore Russia’s position vis-à-vis the West and her own westernising intelligentsia, in fact revealed the increased influence of the West in the government’s own thinking. They would therefore lay the foundations for the reaction against Western influence that we see in the reigns of Alexander III and Nicholas II...

*The Peace of Paris*

In purely military terms, the Crimean War was not such a disaster for Russia as is often made out: if the Russians had lost Sebastopol in the Crimea they had gained Kars in Turkey, and the enemy had not put a foot in Russia proper. The situation had been more perilous for the Russians in 1812, and yet they had gone on to enter Paris in triumph. As Tsar Alexander II wrote to the Russian commander Gorchakov after the fall of Sebastopol: “Sebastopol is not Moscow, the Crimea is not Russia. Two years after the burning of Moscow, our victorious troops were in Paris. We are still the same Russians and God is with us.” And within a generation, Russian armies were at the gates of Constantinople...

However, the fact remained that while the war of 1812-14 had ended in the rout of Russia’s enemies, this had not happened in 1854-56. Russia had “not yet been beaten half enough”, in Palmerston’s words; but her losses had been far greater than those of the Allies, and the war had revealed that Russia was well behind the Allies in transport and weaponry, especially rifles. (The gap in both spheres was still critical in 1914). Moreover, Russia’s primary war-aim had not been achieved: while the status quo in the church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem was restored, Russia could no longer claim to be the exclusive guardian of the rights of Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire, but shared this right with four other great powers.¹⁴

Another important long-term consequence was the destruction of the Triple Alliance of Christian monarchist powers established by Tsar Alexander I in 1815. The revolution, whose most recent explosion in 1848 had been defeated largely through the intervention of Tsar Nicholas I in Hungary, was on the march again, and both Christianity and Monarchism were now on the

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retreat. The very fact that the peace was signed in Paris showed how the balance of power had shifted: Tsar Nicholas I had not recognized the legitimacy of the French government, considering it inherently revolutionary, but Tsar Alexander II was both forced to recognize it and make concessions to it...

But perhaps the most profound consequence was a lowering of the morale of the Orthodox nation. The simple people, following the Tsar and the Church, had been enthusiastic for the war, considering it to be holy\textsuperscript{15}; the soldiers in the Crimea had shown feats of heroism; and the intercession of the Mother of God had clearly been seen in the deliverance of Odessa through her “Kasperovskaya” icon.\textsuperscript{16} However, examples of unbelief had been seen among the commanding officers at Sebastopol; some of the intelligentsy, such as B.N. Chicherin, openly scoffed at the idea of a holy war; and the nation as a whole could not be said to have been as united behind their Tsar as in 1812. The reputation of Tsar Nicholas I suffered, and criticisms of almost every aspect of the tsarist system became louder. The leading Slavophiles of the pre-war period, such as Khomiakov and Kireyevsky, died soon after the war, and with their deaths the ideological struggle shifted in favour of the westerners.

One scoffer was a young officer who was soon to make a worldwide reputation in another field – Count Leo Tolstoy. In his \textit{Sebastopol Sketches} he made unflattering comparisons between the western and the Russian armies. His comments on the defenders of Sebastopol were especially unjust: “We have no army, we have a horde of slaves cowed by discipline, ordered about by thieves and slave traders. This horde is not an army because it possesses neither any real loyalty to faith, tsar and fatherland – words that have been so much misused! – nor valour, nor military dignity. All it possesses are, on the one hand, passive patience and repressed discontent, and on the other, cruelty, servitude and corruption.”\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{15} Archbishop Innocent of Kherson and Odessa, within whose jurisdiction the Crimea fell, had had sermons “widely circulated to the Russian troops in the form of pamphlets and illustrated prints (\lubki). Innocent portrayed the conflict as a ‘holy war’ for the Crimea, the centre of the nation’s Orthodox identity, where Christianity had arrived in Russia. Highlighting the ancient heritage of the Greek Church in the peninsula, he depicted the Crimea as a ‘Russian Athos’, a sacred place in the ‘Holy Russian Empire’ connected by religion to the monastic centre of Orthodoxy on the peninsula of Mount Athos in north-eastern Greece. With [Governor] Stroganov’s support, Innocent oversaw the creation of a separate bishopric for the Crimea as well as the establishment of several new monasteries in the peninsula after the Crimean War” (Figes, op. cit., p. 423). However, in the end it was on the other side of the Black Sea, in Abkhazia, that the great monastery of New Athos was constructed shortly before the First World War.


\textsuperscript{17} Tolstoy, \textit{Sebastopol Sketches}; quoted in Figes, op. cit., p. 445.
Tolstoy was to cast his ferociously cynical eye over much more than the army in the course of his long life as a novelist and publicist. Idolized by the public, he would subject almost every aspect of Russian life and faith to his withering scorn. For, as the poet Athanasius Fet noted, he was distinguished by an “automatic opposition to all generally accepted opinions”; and in this way was in a real sense “the mirror of the Russian revolution”.

The conclusion drawn by the Slavophile Constantine Aksakov (who, in spite of his anti-statism, ardently supported the war) was that the country was in danger, not so much from an external as from an internal foe, from “the spirit of little faith, the spirit of doubt in the help of God, a non-Russian, western spirit, a foreign, heterodox spirit, which weakens our strength and love for our brothers, which cunningly counsels us to make concessions, to humiliate ourselves, to avoid quarrels with Germany, to wage a defensive war, and not to go on the offensive, and not go straight for the liberation of our brothers... It is necessary that we should go forward for the Faith and our brothers. But we, having excited the hopes of our brothers, have allowed the cross to be desecrated, and abandoned our brothers to torments... The struggle, the real struggle between East and West, Russia and Europe, is in ourselves and not at our borders.”

“The New Man”

Even before the Peace of Paris was signed in March, 1856 Tsar Alexander had lifted some of the restrictions placed by his father, such as the ban on travel abroad and the limitations on the numbers of university students. Censorship on the press was also eased. The generation that came of age after the Crimean War was characterised by a sharp and categorical rejection of the values of their fathers, who, whether they were Slavophiles or Westerners, were generally believers in God and lovers of their country. But the sons were almost invariably Westerners – and of the most extreme kind: not believers but positivists and atheists, not liberals but revolutionary socialists.

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18 Fet, in Figes, op. cit., p. 446.
19 C. Aksakov, in E.N. Annenkov, “‘Slaviano-Khristianskie’ idealy na fone zapadnoj tsivilizatsii, russkie spory 1840-1850-kh gg.” (“‘Slavic-Christian’ ideas against the background of western civilization, Russia quarrels in the 1840s and 50s”), in V.A. Kotel’nikov (ed.), Khristianstvo i Russkaja Literatura (Christianity and Russian Literature), St. Petersburg: “Nauka”, 1996, pp. 143-144. Cf. Yury Samarin: “We were defeated not by the external forces of the Western alliance, but by our own internal weakness... Stagnation of thought, depression of productive forces, the rift between government and people, disunity between social classes and the enslavement of one of them to another... prevent the government from deploying all the means available to it and, in emergency, from being able to count on mobilising the strength of the nation” ("O krestnom sostojanii i o perekhode iz nego k grazhdanskoj svobode" (“On serfdom and the transition from it to civil liberty”), Sochinenia (Works), vol. 2, Moscow, 1878, pp. 17-20; quoted in Sir Geoffrey Hosking, Russia: People & Empire, London: HarperCollins, 1997, p. 317).
Perhaps the most typical representative of this new generation was Dmitri Pisarev. “Allow us, youths,” he wrote in May, 1861, “to speak, write and publish, allow us to shake off through our natural scepticism those things which have become stale, that clapped-out junk, which you call general authorities.’ ‘Here is the concluding word of our youth camp: what can be broken should be broken; that which withstands a blow can stay, but that which will fly off into fragments is rubbish; in any case beat to the right and to the left, no harm will come of it nor can come of it…’ ‘Literature in all its varieties must strike at one point; it must with all its powers emancipate the human person from those various restrictions which make him ashamed of his own thought, caste prejudices, the authority of tradition, the striving for a common ideal and all that outdated rubbish which hinders the living man from breathing and developing freely.”

In 1862 there appeared two novels that portrayed the “new man”: Chernyshevsky’s *What is to be Done?* and Turgenev’s *Fathers and Sons*. Chernyshevsky gave a positive portrayal of the new man in the figure of Rakhtmetev. “This monolithic titan,” writes Orlando Figes, “who was to serve as a model for a whole generation of revolutionaries (including Lenin), renounces all the pleasures of life in order to harden his superhuman will and make himself insensible to the human suffering which the coming revolution is bound to create. He is a puritan and an ascetic: on one occasion he even sleeps on a bed of nails in order to stifle his sexual urges. He trains his body by gymnastics and lifting weights. He eats nothing but raw steak. He trains his mind in a similar way, reading ‘only the essential’ (politics and science) for days and nights on end until he has absorbed the wisdom of humankind. Only then does the revolutionary hero set out on his mission to ‘work for the benefit of the people’. Nothing diverts him from the cause, not even the amorous attentions of a young and beautiful widow, whom he rejects. The life he leads is rigorous and disciplined: it proceeds like clockwork, with so much time for reading every day, so much time for exercise and so on. Yet (and here is the message of the story) it is only through such selfless dedication that the New Man is able to transcend the alienated existence of the old ‘superfluous man’. He finds salvation through politics.

“Allowing the publication of Chernyshevsky’s novel was one of the biggest mistakes the tsarist censor ever made: for it converted more people to the cause of the revolution that all the works of Marx and Engels put together (Marx himself learned Russian in order to read it). Plekhanov, the ‘founder of Russian Marxism’, said that from that novel ‘we have all drawn moral strength and faith in a better future’. The revolutionary theorist Tkachev called it the ‘gospel’ of the movement; Kropotkin the ‘banner of Russian youth’. One young revolutionary of the 1860s claimed that there only three

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great men in history: Jesus Christ, St. Paul and Chernyshevsky. Lenin, whose
own ascetic lifestyle bore a disturbing resemblance to Rakhmetev’s, read the
novel five times in one summer. He later acknowledged that it had been
crucial in converting him to the revolutionary movement. ‘It completely
reshaped me,’ he told Valentinov in 1904. ‘This is a book which changes one
for a whole lifetime.’ Chernyshevsky’s importance, in Lenin’s view, was that
he had ‘not only showed that every right-thinking and really honest man
must be a revolutionary, but also – and this is his greatest merit – what a
revolutionary must be like’. Rakhmetev, with his superhuman will and selfless
dedication to the cause, was the perfect model of the Bolshevik.

“Chernyshevsky’s hero was also an inspiration to the nihilistic students of
the 1860s. His asceticism, his belief in science, and his rejection of the old
moral order appealed to them. Their ‘nihilism’ entailed a youthful rebellion
against the artistic dabbling of their father’s generation (the ‘men of the
forties’); a militant utilitarianism, materialism and belief in progress through
the application of scientific methods to society; and a general questioning of
all authority, moral and religious, which was manifested in a revolutionary
passion to destroy… As Bakunin put it, since the old Russia was rotten to the
core, it was ‘a creative urge’ to destroy it. These were the angry young men of
their day. Many of them came from relatively humble backgrounds – the sons
of priests, such as Chernyshevsky, for example, or of mixed social origins
(raznochintsy) – so their sense of Russia’s worthlessness was reinforced by
their own feelings of underprivilege. Chernyshevsky, for example, often
expressed a deep hatred and feeling of shame for the backwardness of
Saratov province where he had grown up. ‘It would be better’, he once wrote,
‘not to be born at all than to be born a Russian.’ There was a long tradition of
national self-hatred among the Russian intelligentsia, stemming from the fact
that they were so cut off from the ordinary people and had always modelled
themselves on the West.”

In Fathers and Sons Turgenev portrayed the new man in the figure of
Bazarov, calling him a “nihilist”, that is, “a person who does not take any
principle for granted, however much that principle may be revered”. 22 Being
a “man of the forties” himself, Turgenev had intended him as a monstrous
caricature of the nihilists, materialist, morally slippery and artistically
philistine (although later he would pretend otherwise). Yet such was the gulf

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22 The term “nihilism” was first introduced, according to B.P. Kosmin (Russkaia Filosofia: Maliy
Entsiklopedicheskii Slovar’ (Russian Philosophy: Small Encyclopaedic Dictionary), Moscow: Nauka,
1995, p. 253, by Michael Katkov, editor of the conservative Russkij Vestnik (Russian Herald),
who diagnosed Bazarov’s spiritual illness as proceeding from his lack of rootedness in the
national soil: “Man taken separately does not exist. He is everywhere part of some living
connection, or some social organization… Man extracted from the environment is a fiction or
an abstraction. His moral and intellectual organization, or, more broadly, his ideas are only
then operative in him when he has discovered them first as the organizational forces of the
environment in which he happens to live and think.”
of misunderstanding between the real-life fathers and sons that the young radicals took his faults as virtues and acclaimed Bazarov as their ideal man.

“The figure of Bazarov in that novel,” writes Fr. Seraphim Rose, “is the type of the ‘new men’ of the ‘sixties’ in Russia, simple-minded materialists and determinists, who seriously thought (like D. Pisarev) to find the salvation of mankind in the dissection of the frog, or thought they had proved the non-existence of the human soul by failing to find it in the course of an autopsy. (One is reminded of the Soviet Nihilists, the ‘new men’ of our own ‘sixties’, who fail to find God in outer space.) This ‘Nihilist’ is the man who respects nothing, bows before no authority, accepts (so he thinks) nothing on faith, judges all in the light of a science taken as absolute and exclusive truth, rejects all idealism and abstraction in favor of the concrete and factual. He is the believer, in a word, in the ‘nothing-but’, in the rejection of everything men have considered ‘higher’, the things of the mind and spirit, to the lower or ‘basic’: matter, sensation, the physical…”

The Emancipation of the Serfs

The rise of nihilism in Russia coincided with a series of liberal reforms unparalleled in any country on earth, and undertaken by the tsar himself. These were elicited by the various inadequacies in Russian life exposed by the Crimean War. The first, according to both Slavophiles and Westerners, was serfdom. The second, according to Westerners alone, was the autocracy...

Serfdom came into being in the sixteenth century as a result of military needs. “Before then,” writes Max Hayward, peasants “had been free to leave their masters every year, by tradition, on St. George’s day in November. The introduction of serfdom meant that the peasants were bound to the land in the same way and for the same reasons as their masters were bound to the czar’s service. During the eighteenth century, however, just as the privileges of the landowners were made absolute, so were the rights of their serfs whittled away until they became virtually slaves who could – and, notoriously, often were – bought and sold, even if meant separating them from their families. Perhaps the worst aspect of a serf’s life was that – from the time of Peter the Great – he could be sent into the army for twenty-five years…”

23 Rose, Nihilism, Forestville, Ca.: Fr. Seraphim Rose Foundation, 1994, p. 34.
24 “The unsuccessful conclusion of the Crimean war was connected by the Westerners with God’s punishment striking Russia for all her vices and absurdities, by which they understood the existence in the country of serfdom and the despotic character of the State administration. Despotism and serfdom, as the Westerners noted, hindered the normal development of the country, preserving its economic, political and military backwardness.” (A.I. Sheparneva, “Krymskaia vojna v osveschenii zapadnikov” (The Crimean war as interpreted by the Westerners), Voprosy Istorii (Questions of History), 2005 (9), p. 37).
“With the military character of the state,” wrote Bishop Ignatius Brianchaninov, “it was impossible for the military class not to occupy the first place in the state. In particular in ancient and middle-period Russia the military element absorbed and overshadowed all other elements…

“The necessity of muzzling the self-will of the simple people and the impossibility of having a police force in an unorganised state forced Tsar Boris Godunov to tie the peasants to the lands. Then all the Russian peasants were turned into unfree peasants [by Catherine II]…

“From the time of Alexander I views on the subject changed: the state finally became organized, a police force consisting of officials was established everywhere, the people began to emerge from their condition of childhood, received new ideas, felt new needs. The nobility began to chafe at being guardians of the peasants, the peasants began to chafe at the restrictions on their liberty, at their patriarchal way of life. All this began to appear and express itself strongly in the second half of the reign of Emperor Nicholas I.26

“Now the prosperously reigning Emperor Alexander II has found the matter already prepared and has found it necessary to change the form of administration of landowners’ peasants. What is the essential significance of the improvement in the peasants’ way of life? It is the change in the form of their administration. They are being given freedom, but not self-will. They are coming out from under the jurisdiction of the landowners as if from under the supervisions of educators and guardians, into a relationship of personal service to the state…”27

The Tsar declared: “It is better to abolish serfdom from above than wait for it to abolish itself from below.” For the serfs were becoming violent...28 This

26 Nicholas I had long planned to emancipate the serfs, and was able to improve the lot of the State serfs considerably. Thus L.A. Tikhomirov wrote: “Under Emperor Nicholas I the government undertook a restructuring of the State peasants. The Emperor made a very good choice for the executor of his thought in Count Kiselev, one of the greatest statesmen that Russia has ever given birth to. Thus one of the most remarkable social organizations in our history was created. Lands the size of the whole of Europe were united in the hands of the State, the peasants were abundantly endowed [with them], and the system of repatriations gave an exit to new generations of the farming class. A remarkable system of national provision for the struggle against poor harvests was created. The improvement of the farming culture of 20 million peasants became the object of obligatory and conscious work on the part of the ministry. Moreover, the peasants were personally free, and their communities were ruled by men chosen by themselves. After two decades of effort this extensive organisation was finally put on its feet.” (“Pochemu ia perestal byt’ revoliutsionerom” (Why I ceased to be a revolutionary), Kritika Demokratii (A Critique of Democracy), Moscow, 1997, p. 26) (V.M.)


28 Eric Hobsbawm writes: “There were 148 outbreaks of peasant unrest in 1826-34, 216 in 1835-44, 348 in 1844-54, culminating in the 474 outbreaks of the last years preceding the emancipation of 1861.” (The Age of Revolution, 1789-1848, London: Abacus, 1962, p. 362)
was not caused by poverty alone – as English observers noted, the Russian peasants were on the whole richer than their British counterparts. The peasants, wrote the senator, Ya. A. Soloviev, “either were disturbed in whole regions by false rumours about freedom, or were running away from cruel landlords, or resisted the decrees of unjust landowners. The landlords feared both the government and the peasants. In a word, serfdom was beginning to shake and with each day became more and more unsuitable: both for the peasants, and for the landlords, and for the government.”

The peasants understood their relationship with their noble masters to be: “we are yours, but the land is ours”, or even: “we are yours, and you are ours”. While this was unacceptable to the Tsar, he did accept that “emancipation was, in [Prince Sergius] Volkonsky’s words, a ‘question of justice… a moral and a Christian obligation, for every citizen that loves his Fatherland.’ As the Decembrist explained in a letter to Pushkin, the abolition of serfdom was ‘the least the state could do to recognize the sacrifice the peasantry has made in the last two wars: it is time to recognize that the Russian peasant is a citizen as well’.

In any case, there were major benefits to be gained from emancipation from a purely material point of view. Emancipation would pave the way for more efficient agriculture and the provision of labour for the industrialization of Russia, so sorely needed in view of the relative failure of the Crimean War, by freeing the peasants from the commune as soon as they had paid their redemption payments. These would then be free to seek work in the towns and factories. Again, as Sir Geoffrey Hosking writes, “the existence of

Ronald Seth writes: “A Russian historian, Vasily Semevsky, who died in 1916, using official records as a basis, claimed that there were 550 peasant uprisings in the sixty years of the nineteenth century prior to liberation; while a later Soviet historian, Inna Ignatovich, insists, upon equally valid records, that there were in fact 1,467 such rebellions in this period. And in addition to these uprisings serfs deserted their masters in hundreds and thousands, sometimes in great mass movement, when rumours circulated that freedom could be found ‘somewhere in the Caucasus’.” (The Russian Terrorists, London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1966, pp. 20-21) (V.M.)

33 This applied also to the production of armaments. The Crimean war had revealed Russian rifles to be very inefficient. Therefore priority had to be given to new armaments technologies and factories. But that required a free labour force instead of the system of forced labour of serfs that was then in operation… For “in the words of a report on the Tula Armory in 1861: ‘It would seem to be generally indisputable that only free men are capable of honest work. He who from childhood has been forced to work is incapable of assuming responsibility as long as his social condition remains unchanged.’” (David Landes, The Wealth and Poverty of Nations, London: Abacus, 1999, p. 241). (V.M.)
serfdom obstructed modernization of the army and thereby burdened the treasury with huge and unproductive military expenditure. As the military reformer R.A. Fadeyev pointed out, ‘Under serfdom, anyone becoming a soldier is freed; hence one cannot, without shaking the whole social order, admit many people to military service. Therefore we have to maintain on the army establishment in peacetime all the soldiers we need in war.’” 34

Moreover, emancipation of the serfs would save the poorer nobles from bankruptcy. For “by 1859, one-third of the estates and two-thirds of the serfs owned by the landed nobles had been mortgaged to the state and noble banks. Many of the smaller landowners could barely afford to feed their serfs. The economic argument for emancipation was becoming irrefutable, and many landowners were shifting willy-nilly to the free labour system by contracting other people’s serfs. Since the peasantry’s redemption payments would cancel out the gentry’s debts, the economic rationale was becoming equally irresistible.” 35 Nor would they have to wait for the peasants to pay them: the government would immediately pay them 80% of the value of the land by wiping out their debts, while the peasants, having been given their freedom gratis, would be given a 49-year period within which to pay for the land at a cheap rate of interest. The remaining 20% would be paid by the peasants directly to the landowners in cash payments or labour. Moreover, they would be helped by generous loans from the government.

The question of the emancipation of the serfs tended to cut across these ideological discussions. Supporters of emancipation could be found in all camps; but among the more Slavophile and Orthodox thinkers could also be found anxieties about its possible effects on the ethnic and religious cohesion of the country. In order to understand these concerns, we need to look at the origins of the institution of the peasant commune.

“The commune,” writes Professor Richard Pipes, “was an association of peasants holding communal land allotments. This land, divided into strips, it periodically redistributed among members. Redistribution (peredely), which took place at regular intervals – ten, twelve, fifteen years or so, according to local custom – were carried out to allow for changes in the size of household brought about by deaths, births, and departures. They were a main function of the commune and its distinguishing characteristic. The commune divided its land into strips in order to assure each member of allotments of equal quality and distance from the village. By 1900, approximately one-third of communes, mostly in the western and southern borderlands, had ceased the practice of repartitioning even though formally they were still treated as

35 Figes, Natasha’s Dream, p. 144. “More than 80% of the small and middle nobility were in debt to the state on the security of their own estates, and this debt would have been unrepayable if it had not been for the reform. The value of the payments for the land cleared many debts.” (Krivosheev and Krivosheev, op. cit. p. 20).
‘repartitional communes’. In the Great Russian provinces, the practice of repartition was virtually universal.

“Through the village assembly, the commune resolved issues of concern to its members, including the calendar of field work, the distribution of taxes and other fiscal obligations (for which its members were held collectively responsible), and disputes among households. It could expel troublesome members and have them exiled to Siberia; it had the power to authorize passports, without which peasants could not leave the village, and even to compel an entire community to change its religious allegiance from the official church to one of the sects. The assembly reached its decisions by acclamation: it did not tolerate dissent from the will of the majority, viewing it as antisocial behaviour.”

Now, as we have seen, for both Slavophiles and Westerners the institution of the commune was the essence of Russianness. For Slavophiles, it was a patriarchal institution of pre-Petrine Russia, while for the Westerners it was “Russian socialism”. However, Fr. Lev Lebedev points out that the commune was by no means as anciently Russian as was then thought: “In ancient Rus’ (Russia) the peasants possessed or used plots of land completely independently, according to the right of personal inheritance or acquisition, and the commune (mir) had no influence on this possession. A certain communal order obtained only in relation to the matter of taxes and obligations… To this ancient ‘commune’ there corresponds to a certain degree only the rule of ‘collective responsibility’ envisaged by the Statute of 1861 in relation to taxes and obligations. But in Rus’ there was never any ‘commune’ as an organization of communal land-use with the right of the mir to distribute and redistribute plots among members of the ‘commune’…”

Again, according to Pipes, “the origins of the Russian commune are obscure and a subject of controversy. Some see in it the spontaneous expression of an alleged Russian sense of social justice, while others view it as the product of state pressures to ensure collective responsibility for the fulfilment of obligations to the Crown and landlord. Recent studies indicate that the repartitional commune first appeared toward the end of the fifteenth century, became common in the sixteenth, and prevalent in the seventeenth. It served a variety of functions, as useful to officials and landlords as to peasants. The former it guaranteed, through the institution of collective responsibility, the payment of taxes and delivery of recruits; the latter it enabled to present a united front in dealings with external authority. The principle of periodic redistribution of land ensured (at any rate, in theory) that every peasant had enough to provide for his family and, at the same time, to meet his obligations to the landlord and state.”

38 Pipes, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
Supporters and Critics of Emancipation

The reform, which was announced in a manifesto written by Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow on February 19, 1861, was welcomed by many, including highly conservative churchmen such as Bishop Ignatius Brianchaninov, who saw it as “a most happy initiative, a majestic order amazing Europe”.

He argued: “1. That both the Word of God and the Church – both the Universal Church and the Russian Church – in the persons of the Holy Fathers, has never said anything at all about the abolition of civil slavery, that there is nothing in common between spiritual and civil freedom, that both slaves and masters were constantly taught by the Church the most exact and conscientious fulfilment of their obligations, that the violators of Christ’s commandment on love were subject to rebukes and exhortations.

2. That the emancipation of slaves has always been recognized by the Church as a good deed, a deed of mercy, a deed of brotherly Christian love.

“… The most pious Russian Autocrat has indicated to the class of the nobility the accomplishing of a great Christian work, a work of love. The Church invokes the blessing of God upon the great work of the fatherland with her warmest prayers. Her pastors invite the nobility to noble self-renunciation, to sacrifice, to the immediate sacrifice of material goods for the sake of moral goods, while they instruct the peasants to accept this gift of the Tsar with due veneration and humility – the true indications that the gift will be used wisely and usefully.

“But one must not think that civil liberty morally exalts only the peasants: the class of the nobility must unfailingly enter onto a higher level of moral achievement in renouncing the ownership of slaves. That is the characteristic of self-sacrifice and the offering of material goods as a sacrifice for spiritual goods: it exalts, changes and perfects man.”

According to Dostoyevsky, far from undermining the traditional bonds of society, emancipation in fact strengthened the bond between the Tsar and the people, the union in faith and love which was at the very heart of Holy Russia. For the peasants had always looked to the Tsar as their father and protector against the greed of the landowners and officials. They had been expecting the Tsar to liberate them, and their expectations had been fulfilled. For Dostoyevsky, as Igor Volgin writes, “the reform of 1861 created a historical precedent of exceptional importance. It presented an example of voluntary renunciation of an age-old historical injustice, a peaceful resolution of a social conflict that threatened to have terrible consequences. In this sense the emancipation of the peasants was as it were the first step to ‘the Russian

resolution of the question’: the action taken from above hinted at the possibility of the creation of a world-order that would be founded on justice – and only on justice.”

“Is the saying that ‘the Tsar is their father’ a mere phrase, an empty sound in Russia? He who so believes understands nothing about Russia! Nay, this is a profound and most original idea, - a live and mighty organism of the people merging with the Tsar. This idea is a force which has been moulding itself in the course of centuries, especially the last two centuries, which were so dreadful to the people, but which we so ardently eulogize for European enlightenment, forgetting the fact that this enlightenment was bought two centuries ago at the expense of serfdom and a Calvary of the Russian people serving us. The people waited for their liberator, and he came. Why, then, shouldn’t they be his own, true children? The Tsar to the people is not an extrinsic force such as that of some conqueror (as were, for instance, the dynasties of the former Kings of France), but a national, all-unifying force, which the people themselves desired, which they nurtured in their hearts, which they came to love, for which they suffered because from it alone they hoped for their exodus from Egypt. To the people, the Tsar is the incarnation of themselves, their whole ideology, their hopes and beliefs.

“So recently these hopes have been completely realized. Would the people renounce their further hopes? Wouldn’t the latter, on the contrary, be strengthened and reinforced, since after the peasants’ reform the Tsar became the people’s father not merely in hope but in reality. This attitude of the people toward the Tsar is the genuine, adamant foundation of every reform in Russia. If you wish, there is in Russia no creative, protective and leading force other than this live organic bond of the people with their Tsar, from which everything is derived. For instance, who would have ventured to dream about the peasants’ reform without knowing and believing in advance that the Tsar was a father to the people, and that precisely this faith of the people in the Tsar as their father would save and protect everything and stave off the calamity?…”

Inevitably, however, many were disappointed. Many of the peasants had not expected to pay for the land, and found the payments greater than the rents they had been paying earlier. Moreover, once liberated they lost access to timber and firewood in landowners’ forests.

Again, “the Law allowed landowners considerable leeway in choosing the bits of land for transfer to the peasantry – and in setting the price for them. Overall, perhaps half the farming land in European Russia was transferred from the gentry’s ownership to the communal tenure of the peasantry, although the precise proportion depended largely on the landowner’s will.

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40 Volgin, Poslednij God Dostoevskogo (Dostoevsky’s Last Year), Moscow, 1986, pp. 32-33.
Owing to the growth of the population it was still far from enough to liberate the peasantry from poverty.”

Again, for those peasants who did not take advantage of their freedom to leave the land, and until they had paid their redemption payments, the authority of the commune over them would actually increase now that the authority of the landlord was removed. If one member of the commune could not contribute payments or labour, he fell into debt, as it were, to the commune.

Moreover, “during the conservative reign of Alexander III legislation was passed which made it virtually impossible for peasants to withdraw. This policy was inspired by the belief that the commune was a stabilizing force which strengthened the authority of the bol’shak [head of the individual peasant household], curbed peasant anarchism, and inhibited the formation of a volatile landless proletariat.” So while the government genuinely wanted to free the peasant, both as a good deed in itself, and in order to exploit his economic potential, its desire to strengthen the bonds of the commune tended to work in the opposite direction...

The radicals said that the reform provided “inadequate freedom”. However, the real problem was not so much “inadequate freedom” as the fact that emancipation introduced “the wrong kind of freedom”.

True freedom, according to Metropolitan Philaret, “is Christian freedom – internal, not external freedom, - moral and spiritual, not carnal, - always doing good and never rebellious, which can live in a hut just as comfortably as in an aristocrat’s or tsar’s house, - which a subject can enjoy as much as the master without ceasing to be a subject, - which is unshakeable in bonds and prison, as we can see in the Christian martyrs’.” This freedom was not lost under serfdom. Rather, it was emancipation that threatened this true Christian freedom by introducing the demand for another, non-Christian kind.

In fact, as we have seen, the old order, though harsh, was never really one of traditional slavery. It had been dictated by the military situation of the time, in which Russia had vast extended borders with no natural defences. A quasi-monastic way of life was developed in which everyone from the Tsar to the humblest peasant had his “obedience”. The Tsar had to obey his calling; the nobles had to obey the Tsar (by providing military service or service in the bureaucracy); and the peasants had to obey the landowners. It was a common effort for a common cause – the preservation of Orthodox Russia. Nobody literally “owned” anybody else. But there were relations of obedience enforced by law that were carried out, for the most part, in the Spirit of

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42 Figes, Natasha’s Dream, op. cit, p. 145.
43 Pipes, op. cit, pp. 98-99.
Orthodoxy. For, as St. John of Kronstadt said, “the varied forms of service... to the tsar and the fatherland are an image of the main service to our heavenly King, which must continue forever. Him first of all we are obliged to serve, as fervent slaves of His by creation, redemption and providence... Earthly service is a test, a preparatory service for service in the heavens”.45

Emancipation changed the relationship both between the state and the landowners, and between the landowners and the peasants. As the nobles began to lose their feeling of duty and obedience to the state, the peasants, correspondingly, began to see their obedience to the nobles as a burden that was not justified, as in the past, by the defence of the land. As such, the formal structure probably had to change in view of the change in its spiritual content. But the change in formal structure from patriarchal to civil meant that the sanctifying bonds of obedience broke down still faster than they would have done otherwise. To that extent, the reform, though rational from a politico-economic point of view, was harmful.

As Schema-Monk Boris of Optina said: “The old order was better, even though I would really catch it from the nobleman... Now it’s gotten bad, because there’s no authority; anyone can live however he wants.”46

Fr. Lev Lebedev writes: “Later critics of the reform also justly point out that it suffered from an excessive ‘slant’ in one direction, being inspired most of all by the idea of the immediate emancipation of the serfs from the landowners, but without paying due attention to the question how and with what to substitute the guiding, restraining and, finally, educating function of ‘the lords’ (the landowners) for the peasants. Indeed, delivered as it were in one moment to themselves, to their own self-administration (after 100 years of the habit of being guided by the lord), could the Russian peasants immediately undertake their self-administration wisely and truly, to their own good and that of the Fatherland? That is the question nobody wanted to think about at the beginning, being sometimes ruled by the illusion of the ‘innateness’ of the people’s wisdom!... They began to think about this, as often happens with us, ‘in hindsight’, after they had encountered disturbances and ferment among the peasantry. All the indicated mistakes in the reform of 1861 led to the peasantry as a whole being dissatisfied in various respects. Rumours spread among them that ‘the lords’ had again deceived them, that the Tsar had given them not that kind of freedom, that the real ‘will of the Tsar’ had been hidden from them, while a false one had been imposed upon them. This was immediately used by the ‘enlighteners’ and revolutionaries of all kinds. The peasants gradually began to listen not to the state official and the former lord, but to the student, who promised ‘real’ freedom and abundant land, attracting

45 St. John of Kronstadt, Moia Zhizn’ o Khriste (My Life in Christ), Moscow, 1894.
46 Victor Afanasyev, Elder Barsanuphius of Optina, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 2000, pp. 216, 217. The old family retainer in Chekhov’s The Cherry Orchard also believed that the rot set in with “Freedom” (Hayward, in Obolensky, op. cit., p. 13).
the peasant with the idea of ‘the axe’, by which they themselves would win all this from the deceiver-lords... In such a situation only the Church remained in her capacity of educator and instructor of the people, which task she immediately began to fulfil, although it was very difficult because of the restricted and poor condition of the Church herself. Therefore there soon arose the question of the broadening and strengthening of the rights and opportunities of the Russian Church. The most powerful and influential person who completely understood this was Pobedonostsev, who did a great deal in this respect, thereby eliciting the hatred of all ‘democrats’.

“But in spite of inadequacies and major mistakes, the reform of 1861, of course, exploded and transfigured the life of Great Russia. A huge mass of the population (about 22 million people) found themselves a free and self-governing estate (class), juridically equal to the other estates. This immediately elicited the need to build its life and activity on new foundations...”

This judgement was echoed by J.M. Roberts: “In retrospect [the emancipation of the serfs] seems a massive achievement. A few years later the United States would emancipate its Negro slaves. There were far fewer of them than there were Russian peasants and they lived in a country of much greater economic opportunity, yet the effect of throwing them on the labour market, exposed to the pure theory of lissez-faire economic liberalism, was to exacerbate a problem with whose ultimate consequences the United State is still grappling. In Russia the largest measure of social engineering in recorded history down to this time was carried out without comparable dislocation and it opened the way to modernization for what was potentially one of the strongest powers on earth...”

The Jews under Alexander II

The first of Alexander’s great reforms, but the one having perhaps the most profound long-term consequences for the empire as a whole and for the tsar in particular, related to the Jews. In 1856, in the coronation manifesto, the Jews were placed on the same basis as the rest of the population in relation to military service. In the same manifesto, all their (very large) debts incurred in non-payment of taxes over the previous years were forgiven.

“More expansively than this,” writes Alexander Solzhenitsyn, “Alexander II expressed his intention to resolve the Jewish question – and in the most general sense favourably [for the Jews]. For the whole way in which the question was posed was radically changed. If under Nicholas I the government had set itself the task, first, of reforming the inner way of life of the Jews, gradually clearing it up through productive labour and education, in this way leading to the removal of administrative restrictions; then under

Alexander II, by contrast, the government began by removing external restrictions and impediments, without searching deeply into possible inner causes of Jewish isolation and sickliness, and hoping that then all remaining problems would be solved of themselves; it began ‘with the intention of merging this people with the native inhabitants of the country’, as the sovereign command of 1856 put it.\textsuperscript{49}

During the rest of the reign almost all the restrictions on the Jews were dismantled. Jews were now to be found in all parts of the empire, and the share of trade and industry owned by them rapidly increased – as did their overall numbers, to almost 4 million by 1880. The Jews also benefited from other reforms, such as the abolition of the poll-tax on urban dwellers in 1863.

However, the emancipation of the serfs hit the Jews hard in three ways. First, the social gap between the free Jews and peasant serfs was abolished – the peasants were now as free as the Jews. Secondly, the liberated peasants were now freed from the strict prohibition of buying and selling goods through an appointed middle-man – who in the western provinces was almost always a Jew. Thirdly, the government’s establishment of agricultural credit at very reasonable rates, together with the development of consumer and credit associations, squeezed out the Jew’s role as provider of credit (at extortionate rates).\textsuperscript{50}

Alexander I’s plan to draw the Jews into agriculture was abandoned by Alexander II. In 1866 he rescinded the special decrees on transforming the Jews into farmers in the South-Western region of “New Russia”. Since they had proved incapable of working the land independently, the Jews were given the opportunity to become craftsmen and merchants. They were allowed to buy out the land plots they had been given, and then to resell them at great profit.

However, this measure created some further problems. For the Russian peasants who were neighbours of the Jewish colonists were angry that, while they did not have enough land, the Jews had been given more than enough – and were then able to lease the land out to the Russians at a high price. It was this fact that led in part to the sacking of several Jewish settlements during the disturbances of 1881-1882.\textsuperscript{51}

Alexander’s reforms with regard to Jewish military recruitment also did not reap the results hoped for. The Jews very often did not respond to the call-up. Thus in the period 1876-1883 31.6% of Jews called up did not respond – the figure throughout the Empire was 0.19%.

\textsuperscript{49} Solzhenitsyn, \textit{Dvesti Let Vmeste (Two Hundred Years Together)}, Moscow, 2001, volume 1, p. 136.
\textsuperscript{50} Solzhenitsyn, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 146-148.
\textsuperscript{51} Solzhenitsyn, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 154, 155.
When the government offered privileges in military service to those with education, the Jews suddenly converted to the idea of accepting Russian education. By 1887 13.5% of all university students in the country were Jews, and the figures were much higher in cities such as Kharkov and Odessa. According to the theory, this should have been a good thing – it was the government’s aim to assimilate the Jews into Russian culture through education. However, Russian education in this period was rapidly becoming radicalised. And so the institutions that, as it was hoped, would make the Jews into model Russian citizens and patriots in fact turned them into revolutionaries… Thus Solzhenitsyn writes: “It is precisely under Alexander II, when the restrictions on Jewish life in Russia were so weakened, that Jewish names begin to be encountered amidst the revolutionaries… In the student disturbances of 1861 we encounter Mikhoels, Utin and Gen.”

Again, David Vital writes: “A breakdown based on official records of the calling, social status, and origin of 1,054 revolutionaries arrested, tried, condemned, and sent into punitive exile or placed under police surveillance in the course of the round-up of dissidents in 1873-7 showed that 68 – 6.5 per cent – were Jews. Of 79 condemned to exile 12 were Jews: 15.2 per cent. These were not immensely large figures, but they do illustrate the fact that the Jewish contingent was already strikingly in excess of the Jewish proportion of the total population of the empire.”

In fact, the exposure of the younger generation of Jews to goy literature was the cause of a profound change within Jewry itself. Many young fanatics who had immersed themselves in the study of the Talmud now abandoned Talmudism, and even the external appearance of Talmudic Jewry, and immersed themselves instead in Turgenev, Belinsky, Dobroliubov, Chernyshevsky, Pisarev and Nekrasov. They became socialists and joined the populist movement [narodnichestvo], distancing themselves more and more from their own people.

Meanwhile, most Jews remained fenced off by Talmudic edicts from Russian culture and even the Russian language. “The eminent Jewish-Russian lawyer, Genrikh Sliozberg,” write Kyril Fitzlyon and Tatiana Browning, “never forgot the ‘real grief’ of his family and relations when they discovered that his father had sent him to a Russian grammar school. His school uniform they found particularly irritating, sinful even. It was, they thought, ‘an apostate’s garb’, and his mother and grandmother cried bitterly every time they saw him in it.’ Again, ‘the Russian-Jewish revolutionary, Lev Deutsch, writing in 1923, clearly remembered the time when the Jews ‘considered it

52 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 165-166.
53 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 213.
55 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 218, 219, 220.
sinful to learn Russian, and its use was allowed only if absolutely essential and, of course, only for speaking to Christians (the goyim).”

Even among the russified Jewish intelligentsia voices were heard warning against complete assimilation. Thus in 1868 Perets Smolenskin warned that, in adapting to the general culture, the Jews should preserve their national spiritual character. And the Petersburg newspapers Rassvet [Dawn] and Russkij Evrej [Russian Jew] “strengthened the attraction of Jewish youth towards the study of the Jewish past and present life. At the end of the 70s and beginning of the 80s there arose a watershed between the cosmopolitan and nationalist tendencies in Russian Jewry. ‘In essence the leaders of Rassvet no longer believed in the truth of assimilation… Rassvet, without realising it, went along the path of … the excitation of national self-consciousness… it had a vividly expressed national bias… the illusions of russification… were dispelled…”

Also concerned to conserve the identity of Talmudic Judaism was a foreign organization, the Alliance Israélite Universelle (in Hebrew: Khabur Menitsi Indrumim, “Brotherhood Arousing the Sleepy”), which was founded in 1860 in Paris with a Central Committee led by the Minister of Justice, Adolphe Crémieux. It was the first of a series of national Jewish organisations, such as the Anglo-Jewish Association in Great Britain, the Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden in Germany and the Israelitische Allianz zu Wien in Austria, which began to campaign for Jewish rights in this period. Although the Alliance considered itself to be motivated by universalist sentiments, it did not disguise the fact that its aim was the defence of the Jewish faith: “Universal union is among our aspirations without any doubt, and we consider all men our brothers, but just as the family comes before strangers in the order of affection, so religion inspires and memory of common oppression fortifies a family sentiment that in the ordinary course of life surpasses others… Finally, there is the decisive consideration for not going beyond the religious confraternity: all other important faiths are represented in the world by nations – embodied, that is to say, in governments that have a special interest and an official duty to represent and speak for them. Ours alone is without this important advantage; it corresponds neither to a state nor to a society nor again to a specific territory: it is no more than a rallying-cry for scattered individuals – the very people whom it is therefore essential to bring together.”

The Alliance was soon interceding for Russian Jews. Thus In 1866 Crémieux traveled to St. Petersburg to successfully defend Jews of Saratov, who had been accused in a case of “blood libel”.

Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 177-178.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adolphe_Cr%C3%A9mieux.
Meanwhile, writes Solzhenitsyn, “the newly-created Alliance (whose emblem was the Mosaic tablets of the law over the earthly globe), according to the report of the Russian ambassador from Paris, already enjoyed “exceptional influence on Jewish society in all States”. All this put not only the Russian government, but also Russian society on their guard. [The baptised Jew] Jacob Braffmann also agitated intensively against the Alliance Israélite Universelle. He affirmed that the Alliance, ‘like all Jewish societies, has a two-faced character (its official documents tell the government one thing, but its secret documents another’), that the Alliance’s task was ‘to guard Judaism from the assimilation with Christian civilization that was harmful to it’…

“The pre-revolutionary Jewish Encyclopaedia writes that in the 70s in the Russian press ‘voices in defence of the Jews began to be heard less frequently… In Russian society the thought began to be entrenched that the Jews of all countries were united by a powerful political organisation, the central administration of which was concentrated in the Alliance Israélite Universelle’. So its creation produced in Russia, and perhaps not only in Russia, a reaction that was the reverse of that aimed at by the Alliance.”

The leader of this trend in Russian thought was Aksakov, who wrote: “The Jews in the Pale of Settlement constitute a ‘state within a state’, with its own administrative and judicial organs, and with a national government - a state whose centre lies outside Russia, abroad, whose highest authority is the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Paris.”

In 1869 the baptised Jew Jacob Braffmann published Kniga Kagala (The Book of the Kahal), in which, on the basis of a detailed translation of the acts of the Minsk kahal at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries, he exposed and interpreted the kahal system, demonstrating the complete rightlessness of the majority of the members of the Jewish community. In 1976 the New Jewish Encyclopaedia confirmed that the material used by Braffmann “is genuine and the translation of it quite accurate”. And in 1994 the Russian Jewish Encyclopaedia declared that “the documents published by Braffmann are a valuable source for the study of the history of the Jews in Russia at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century”.

“Braffmann asserted that ‘State laws cannot annihilate that harmful power hidden in Jewish self-government… According to his words, this organization is not limited to local kahals… but encompasses, he says, the Jewish people throughout the world… and in consequence of this the Christian peoples cannot be delivered from Jewish exploitation until everything that aids the

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60 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 178-180.
isolation of the Jews is destroyed’. Brafmann supported ‘the view of the Talmud as not so much a codex of a religio-national character, but rather “a civil-political codex”, which went “against the flow of the political and moral development of Christian countries”’, creating ‘a Talmudic republic’. He insisted that ‘the Jews constitute a State within the State’, that the Jews ‘consider themselves not bound by State laws’, the Jewish community has ‘as one of its basic aims “the darkening of the mind of Christians” to turn them only into fictional owners of the property that belongs to them’. More broadly, he ‘accused the Society for the Spreading of Enlightenment among the Jews and the Universal Jewish Union (the Alliance Israélite) of being a part of “a world-wide Jewish conspiracy”’...

“The State Council, ‘softening the decisive phraseology of the Book of the Kahal’, declared that the external distinguishing of the Jews from the rest of the population could be achieved by administrative measures, this ‘will in no way guarantee the annihilation of the self-enclosed and almost anti-Christian feelings of the Jewish communities’, but ‘the isolation of the Jews which is so harmful for the State’ can be ‘annihilated, on the one hand, by a weakening, as far as possible, of the social links of the Jews among themselves and of the Jewish elders’ abuse of their power, and on the other hand, which is still more important, by the spread of enlightenment among the Jews’.”

“I.S. Aksakov, a constant opponent of complete emancipation for the Jews, already at the end of the 50s had tried to restrain the government ‘from too bold steps’ along this path. When a law was passed giving state service to Jews with degrees, he objected (1862), saying that the Jews were ‘a handful of people who completely reject the Christian teaching, the Christian ideal and moral code (and consequently all the bases of the social existence of the country), and confess a teaching that is contrary and hostile to it’. He was not in favour of equality for the Jews in political rights, although he was completely in favour of their having equality in purely civil rights, so that the Jewish people ‘should be provided with complete freedom of existence, self-government, development, education and trade… even… that they should be allowed to live throughout Russia’. In 1867 he wrote that economically ‘one should not talk about the emancipation of the Jews, but about the emancipation of the Russians from the Jews’. He noted the deaf indifference of the liberal press to the peasants’ condition and needs. And now Aksakov explained the way of pogroms in 1881 as the display of popular anger against ‘the oppression of the Russian local population by Jewry’, which is why during the pogroms there was ‘no burglary’, only the destruction of property and ‘some kind of simple-minded conviction of the rightness of their actions’; and he repeated that the question should be put ‘not about the equality in rights of the Jews with the Christians, but about the equality of the Christians with the Jews, and about the removal of the rightlessness of the Russian population before the Jews’...

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“The writer D. Mordovtsev, who was sympathetic to the Jews, in his ‘Letter of a Christian on the Jewish question’, which was published in the Jewish newspaper Rassvet [Dawn], pessimistically called on the Jews ‘to emigrate to Palestine and America, seeing this as the only solution of the Jewish question in Russia.’

Again, in 1879 Constantine Pobedonostev wrote to Dostoyevsky: “They are at the root of the revolutionary socialist movement and of regicide, they own the periodical press, they have in their hands the financial markets; the people as a whole fall into financial slavery to them; they even control the principles of contemporary science and strive to place it outside of Christianity.”

And Dostoyevsky himself wrote: “Jewry is thriving precisely there where the people are still ignorant, or not free, or economically backward. It is there that Jewry has a champ libre! And instead of raising, by its influence, the level of education, instead of increasing knowledge, generating economic fitness in the native population, - instead of this, the Jew, wherever he has settled, has still more humiliated and debauched the people; there humaneness was still more debased and the educational level fell still lower; there inescapable, inhuman misery, and with it despair, spread still more disgustingly. Ask the native populations in our border regions: What is propelling the Jew – has been propelling him for centuries? You will receive a unanimous answer: mercilessness. ‘He has been prompted so many centuries only by pitilessness for us, only the thirst for our sweat and blood.’

“And, in truth, the whole activity of the Jews in these border regions of ours consisted of rendering the native population as much as possible inescapably dependent on them, taking advantage of the local laws. They always managed to be on friendly terms with those upon whom the people were dependent, and, certainly, it is not for them to complain, at least in this respect, about their restricted rights compared with the native population. They have received from us enough of these rights over the native population. What, in the course of decades and centuries, has become of the Russian people where the Jews settled is attested by the history of our border regions. What, then? – Point to any other tribe from among Russian aliens which could rival the Jew by his dreadful influence in this connection! You will find no such tribe. In this respect the Jew preserves all his originality as compared with other Russian aliens, and, of course, the reason therefore is that status in statu of his, the spirit of which specifically breathes with pitilessness for everything that is not Jew, with disrespect for any people and tribe, for every human creature that is not a Jew. And what kind of justification is it that in Western Europe the nations did not permit themselves to be overwhelmed, and that thus the Russian people themselves are at fault? Because the Russian

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63 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 197, 198.
64 Pobedonostev, in Cohen and Major, op. cit., p. 627.
people in the border regions of Russia proved weaker than the European nations (and exclusively as a result of their cruel political circumstances), for this sole reason should they be completely crushed by exploitation, instead of being helped?

“And if reference is made to Europe, to France, for example, - there too, hardly has their status in statu been harmless. Of course, there, Christianity and its idea have been lowered and are sinking not because of the Jew’s fault, but through their own fault; nevertheless, it is impossible not to note also in Europe the great triumph of Jewry which has replaced many former ideas with its own.

“Oh, it goes without saying that man always, at all times, has been worshipping materialism and has been inclined to perceive and understand liberty only in the sense of making his life secure through money hoarded by the exertion of every effort and accumulated by all possible means. However, at no time in the past have these tendencies been raised so cynically and so obviously to the level of a sublime principle as in our Nineteenth Century. ‘Everybody for himself and only for himself, and every intercourse with man solely for one's self’ – such is the ethical tenet of the majority of present-day people, even not bad people, but, on the contrary, laboring people who neither murder nor steal. And mercilessness for the lower classes, the decline of brotherhood, exploitation of the poor by the rich, - oh, of course, all this existed also before and always; however, it had not been raised to the level of supreme truth and of science – it had been condemned by Christianity, whereas at present, on the contrary, it is being regarded as virtue.

“Thus, it is not for nothing that over there the Jews are reigning everywhere over stock-exchanges; it is not for nothing that they control capital, that they are the masters of credit, and it is not for nothing – I repeat – that they are also the masters of international politics, and what is going to happen in the future is known to the Jews themselves: their reign, their complete reign, is approaching! We are approaching the complete triumph of ideas before which sentiments of humanity, thirst for truth, Christian and national feelings, and even those of national dignity, must bow. On the contrary, we are approaching materialism, a blind, carnivorous craving for personal material welfare, a craving for personal accumulation of money by any means – that is all that has been proclaimed as the supreme aim, as the reasonable thing, as liberty, in lieu of the Christian idea of salvation only through the closest moral and brotherly fellowship of men.

“People will laugh and say that this is not all brought about by the Jews. Of course, not only by them, but if the Jews have completely triumphed and thriven in Europe precisely at the time when these new principles have triumphed there to the point of having been raised to the level of a moral principle, it is impossible not to infer that the Jews, too, have contributed their
influence to this condition... The summit of the Jews is assuming stronger and firmer power over mankind seeking to convey to it its image and substance. Jews keep vociferating that among them, too, there are good people. Oh, God! Is this the point? – Besides, we are speaking not about good or bad people. And aren’t there good people among those? Wasn’t the late James Rothschild of Paris a good man? – We are speaking about the whole and its idea; we are speaking about Judaism and the Jewish idea which is clasping the whole world instead of Christianity which ‘did not succeed’...

Of course, the views of Dostoyevsky, Aksakov and other Russian “antisemites” are profoundly unfashionable today. Most critiques of Russian anti-Semitism simply ignore the facts about the Jews in Russia cited above. However, a more intelligent and interesting critique has been presented by Sir Geoffrey Hosking, who takes up the hint given here by Dostoyevsky that the Jewish idea took the place of Christianity, “which ‘did not succeed’”.

According to Hosking, “Anti-Semitism was a kind of frustrated Slavophilism, conceived in awareness of the ways in which Russians had failed to fulfil their potential nationhood. In the interests of great-power status, the Russians had spurned their myth of the chosen people and the empire of truth and justice. The Jews, by contrast, continued to believe that they were a chosen people and to hold to their messianic prophecies. Where Slavophiles dreamed of a peasant commune based on Orthodox principles, the Jews seemed still to have successful communities ruled over by their religious leaders. They had succeeded where the Russians had failed: in making a messianic religion the essence of their national identity.”

We may concede a degree of psychological truth in this analysis: the Russians were failing “to fulfil their potential nationhood”, if that nationhood was perceived as being the mission of the Third Rome, that is, of being the bearer of “light from the East”, the universal truth of Orthodox Christianity, to the benighted nations of Europe and Asia. Far from converting the Europeans to Orthodoxy, the Russians were being converted in large numbers to various westernizing ideologies. Nor, in spite of flourishing missions in Alaska and (a little later) Japan, were they much more successful in Asia, where the very earthly motivations of great-power politics, little different from those of their great rivals, the British, prevailed.

Now a sense of failure can be treated in two ways: in the Orthodox way, by repentance and the confession of sin, and in the fallen way, by exaggerated self-assertion and the blaming of others. Slavophilism at its best, as we find it in Khomiakov and Kireyevsky, or, somewhat later, in Dostoyevsky and Tiutchev, implicitly contained a message of repentance: that Russia was...
falling away from her vocation as God’s people, and she should return to the traditions of the pre-Petrine, Muscovite period, when she had been more faithful to her heavenly calling. But in some of its later varieties, as we shall see in more detail later, Slavophilism degenerated into mere nationalist self-assertion. Russia, it was maintained, was great not only, or even primarily, because she was the bearer of the one truth to all nations (messianism), but also in a purely secular, material sense, or as embodying the last and greatest in the historical series of world civilizations (Danilevsky)...

The Jews were unique among Russia’s national rivals in being no threat to her (yet) in purely political terms, but a direct threat in terms of messianic mission. For the Jews, like the Russians, claimed to be the nation that knows the truth, the bearer of God’s saving message to the world. But the Jewish God was definitely not the Russians’ God – not Jesus Christ. And Judaism was aimed at protecting the Jews against the influence of this Russian God, Who happened to be a Jew by race, but Whom the Jews had crucified and continued to anathematize. So in religious terms – and Russia’s national “myth”, to use Hosking’s word, was nothing if not religious – there could be no compromise, no living together in amity between these two most religious of peoples. It was a matter of kto kogo?, to use Lenin’s phrase: who would rule whom? – and the constant strife between Jews and Russians in the Western Borderlands was therefore both wholly predictable and essentially unavoidable. Moreover, as Hosking rightly points out, the relative success of the Jews in maintaining their religious identity was an implicit rebuke to the Russians, who were losing theirs. In fact, it was hardly a coincidence that the appearance of the Jews in large numbers in the Russian lands towards the end of the eighteenth century had coincided almost exactly with the nadir of Russian religious consciousness in the reign of Catherine II. It was as if God had introduced the Jews into Russia to remind the Russians: “Just as the Jews fell away from Me when they chose national self-assertion instead of Me, so you can fall away if you pursue great-power wealth and status at the expense of faithfulness to My commandments. And just as they fell from being My People to being My fiercest enemies, so it can happen to you…”

Marx and Bakunin

In spite of Alexander II’s reforms Russia remained (with Romania) one of only two countries in Europe that refused to give full rights to the Jews – for reasons, as we have seen, that were fully comprehensible. If poor peasants were to be protected from merciless exploitation by the Jews, - indeed, if the poorer Jews themselves were to be protected from the dictatorial control of the kahal, - then some restrictions had to be placed on the latter. The basis for these restrictions in Russia was not racial, but religious: only Talmudic Jews, those who accepted the blood-curdling hatred of the Talmud, suffered restrictions. Other categories of Jews – for example, the Karaites, who rejected the Talmud – were free of all restrictions. Even for the Talmudists, the
restrictions were very loosely applied, and did not prevent many Jews from getting a good education in Russian universities and enriching themselves.

However, the simple fact that the Russian State did not submit completely to the contemporary fashion for giving the Jews everything they asked for meant that it was enemy number one for the Jewish leadership.

Moreover, as Mikhail Nazarov writes, there were other powerful reasons for the Jews to hate Russia: “Already Suworov’s campaign in Europe against the armies of revolutionary France in 1799 (‘God save the kings!’ said Paul I to the commander as he left), the victory of Russia over the ‘usurper’ Napoleon and the creation of the monarchist Sacred Union in 1815, the crushing of the bourgeois-democratic rebellion in Poland in 1831, the interference into the European bourgeois revolution of 1848-1849, when the Russian army gave help to the Austrian monarchy in Hungary – had demonstrated before the eyes of the powers behind the scenes that Russia was the withholding power of the old Christian world-order in Europe (in the sense of the Apostle Paul’s words, cf. II Thessalonians 2.7)…”67

Only the power and independence of the Russian State meant that the methods of gradual infiltration and control of the financial levers of power that had proved so successful in Western Europe would be insufficient to overthrow Russia - there were no Rothschilds, and certainly no Disraelis in Russia! Revolution from above was impossible; so it had to be revolution from below. But this revolution did not have to be carried out by Jews or with the aim of establishing a Jewish kingdom. It could be carried out by Gentiles for intrinsically Gentile ideals, such as “Freedom, Equality and Fraternity”. The important thing was that it should succeed in destroying the Russian State. It would then be up to the secret Jewish leaders living abroad to turn the destruction to their advantage, to the building of a Jewish kingdom...

This strategy of revolution from below was offered in two forms: the anarchist revolution favoured by the Russian nobleman Michael Bakunin, and the socialist revolution favoured by Marx and Engels.

Marxism’s main aims, as declared in The Communist Manifesto of 1848, were the destruction of private property, the destruction of the family and the destruction of religion as a prelude to the triumph of the proletariat and the coming of communism. However, the revolution of 1848 had been a failure from the socialist point of view. And after that failure a mild conservative reaction set in throughout Europe as some of the wealth generated by a period of rapid growth in the world economy trickled down to the workers

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and dulled their zeal for revolution. But as their numbers increased in direct proportion to the increase in factory production, so did their power. And it only took another downturn in the economy to bring them out on the streets.

In 1864 Marx founded the International Working Men’s Association in London. In his Inaugural Address he showed how the industrial revolution had impoverished the English working class, and declared: “In all countries of Europe it has now become a truth demonstrable to every unprejudiced mind, and only denied by those whose interest is to hedge other people in a fool’s paradise, that no improvement of machinery, no appliance of science to production, no contrivances of communication, no new colonies, no emigration, no opening of markets, no free trade, nor all these things put together, will do away with the miseries of the industrious masses.”

Marx continued to control this, the First Internationale, until its Congress in Basle in 1869, when the delegates were captivated by Michael Bakunin.\(^{68}\)

The basic difference between Marx and Bakunin was in their attitude to the State. While Marx called for the overthrow of the old regimes, he was not against the State as such, at any rate before the advent of the communist paradise, and believed that the State could be used to free the workers. And the importance of the State in his thinking, combined with a more “scientific” and collectivist approach, became more pronounced with time. “It meant,” as M.S. Anderson writes, “a fundamental change of emphasis in his thinking. The fulfilment and true freedom of the individual still remained the objective of revolution and the end of the historical process. As far as the making of revolutions was concerned, however, his ‘alienation’ and his revolutionary consciousness, so important in the early works of the 1840s and still important in those of the 1850s, were now threatened with submersion in a vast and impersonal process of social evolution governed by laws analogous to those of the physical world and quite impossible to divert or restrain.”\(^ {69}\)

Bakunin, however, believed that the State was simply another form of oppression and had to be destroyed. “I am not a Communist,” he said, “because Communism, by concentrating all property in the State, necessarily leads to the concentration of all the power of society in the State. I want to abolish the State...”\(^{70}\) Like the French philosopher-anarchist Proudhon, Bakunin believed that all property was theft, and that included State property. Like Proudhon again, he believed that States would be replaced by local workers’ organizations.

Bakunin’s most famous remark was: “The desire to destroy is also a creative desire.” “The whole of Europe,” he said, with St. Petersburg, Paris

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and London, will be transformed into an enormous rubbish-heap.” “The miracles of the revolution,” he said, “will come out of the depths of this fiery ocean. Russia is the aim of the revolution, its greatest forces will be unleashed there, and there it will attain its perfection.” “The constellation of the revolution will rise high and beautiful in Moscow out of the sea of blood and will become the guiding star for the good of the whole of liberated humanity…”

In 1883 Engels criticised Bakunin’s anarchism, writing: “The anarchists have put the thing upside down. They declare that the proletarian revolution must begin by doing away with the political organisation of the state... But to destroy it at such a moment would be to destroy the only organism by means of which the victorious proletariat can assert its newly-conquered power, hold down its capitalist adversaries and carry out that economic revolution of society without which the whole victory must end in a new defeat and in a mass slaughter of the workers similar to those after the Paris Commune.”

True; and yet “Bakuninist” anarchism corresponded more closely to the spirit of the revolution than all the treatises of Marx, whose only purpose was to give a pseudo-scientific justification to an essentially destructive, satanic force. Thus the victory of Bakunin over Marx at the meeting of the First Internationale in Bâle was no accident – the delegates recognised in Bakunin the true incarnation of the spirit of the revolution. As Baron Wrangel said of his speech: “I no longer remember what Bakunin said, and it would in any case scarcely be possible to reproduce it. His speech had neither logical sequence nor richness in ideas, but consisted of thrilling phrases and rousing appeals. It was something elemental and incandescent – a raging storm with lightning flashes and thunderclaps, and a roaring as of lions. The man was a born speaker, made for the revolution. The revolution was his natural being. His speech made a tremendous impression. If he had asked his hearers to cut each other’s throats, they would have cheerfully obeyed him.”

One of those present at Bakunin’s speech was Dostoyevsky. He said that the whole speech had been “without the slightest proof, all this learned by rote twenty years ago and not changed one bit. Fire and sword! And when all has been destroyed, then, in their opinion, there will be peace…” Dostoyevsky had no time for Bakunin’s atheist slogans: “As long as God exists, man is a slave” and: “Man is rational, just, free, therefore there is no God.” Already in Notes from the Underground (1864) Dostoyevsky had demonstrated that man in his fallen state was quite irrational, and would never be happy with rationalist schemes for his happiness. “I would not be at all surprised, for instance, if suddenly and without the slightest possible reason a gentleman of ignoble or rather reactionary and sardonic countenance were to arise amid all that coming reign of universal common sense and,

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71 Engels, in Chomsky, op. cit., pp. 31-32.
72 Wrangel, in Wilson, op. cit., p. 269.
gripping his sides firmly with his hands, were to say to us all. ‘Well, gentlemen, what about giving all this common sense a great kick and letting it shiver in the dust before our feet simply to send all these logarithms to the devil so that we again live according to our silly will?’”

And yet Bakunin’s anarchism was not just thunder and lightning. For him “the withering away of the State” was not, as in Marx and Engels, an essentially utopian idea that ill accorded with the central idea of class struggle: for him, it was the heart of the matter. Being a more consistent libertarian than any of the Marxists, he perceived that even the socialist State would be an instrument of oppression. In fact, he warned that the “red bureaucracy” would be “the vilest and most dangerous lie of the century”. And in 1870 he accurately predicted what actually took place in 1917: “Take the most radical of revolutionaries and place him on the throne of all the Russians or give him dictatorial powers… and before the year is out he will be worse than the Tsar himself…”

Bakunin’s vision of socialism looked more likely than Marx’s to triumph in the years 1869-1871, between the Basle Congress and the Paris Commune. However, Marx defeated Bakunin by claiming that the Paris Commune was the beginning of the new proletarian (as opposed to bourgeois) revolution, which would spread from France to Germany to all Europe. It did spread, but not in the way he predicted: its first success was in peasant Russia, not proletarian Germany – as Bakunin, not Marx, had predicted. For Bakunin was able to foresee, as Sir Isaiah Berlin wrote, “that [revolutions] were liable to develop not in the most industrialised societies, on a rising curve of economic progress, but in countries in which the majority of the population was near subsistence level and had least to lose by an upheaval – primitive peasants in conditions of desperate poverty in backward rural economies where capitalism was weakest, such as Spain and Russia.”

However, Marx and Engels had this in common with Bakunin: they saw clearly that the enemy that had to be destroyed for the revolution to succeed was Russia. As Engels said: “Not one revolution in Europe and in the whole world can attain final victory while the present Russian state exists…”

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73 Dostoyevsky, Notes from the Underground, in The Best Stories of Dostoyevsky, New York, 1955, p. 136. Already in the eighteenth century the Scottish philosopher David Hume had argued that “reason alone can never be a motive to any action of the will,” and reason “can never oppose passion in the direction of the will”. For “tis not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger” (A Treatise of Human Nature, book II, section 3).


75 Berlin, “Nationalism”, in The Proper Study of Mankind, London: Pimlico, 1998, p. 584. In fact, the peasants of Russia were not as poor, comparatively speaking, as is often thought. See the recollections of English travellers in Krivosheev and Krivosheev, op. cit., p. 10.

76 Friedrich Engels, Karl Marx and the Revolutionary Movement in Russia.
Dostoyevsky on Papism and Socialism

The simultaneous defeat in 1870-71 of both the most reactionary and the most revolutionary regimes in Europe (the Papacy and the Paris Commune) raised the question: might there be a connection between these seeming opposites? Following the suggestion of some French socialist thinkers, Dostoyevsky saw a link between the two antichristian systems. “Present-day French Socialism,” he wrote, “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.”

Papism, according to Dostoyevsky, was the beginning of western atheism. As Prince Myshkin says in The Idiot (1868): “Roman Catholicism believes that the Church cannot exist on earth without universal temporal power, and cries: Non possumus! In my opinion, Roman Catholicism isn’t even a religion, but most decidedly a continuation of the Holy Roman Empire, and everything in it is subordinated to that idea, beginning with faith. The Pope seized the earth, an earthly throne and took up the sword; and since then everything has gone on in the same way, except that they’ve added lies, fraud, deceit, fanaticism, superstition wickedness. They have trifled with the most sacred, truthful, innocent, ardent feelings of the people, have bartered it all for money, for base temporal power. And isn’t this the teaching of Antichrist? Isn’t it clear from Roman Catholicism itself! Atheism originated first of all with them: how could they believe in themselves? It gained ground because of abhorrence of them; it is the child of their lies and their spiritual impotence! Atheism! In our country it is only the upper classes who do not believe, as Mr. Radomsky so splendidly put it the other day, for they have lost their roots. But in Europe vast numbers of the common people are beginning to lose their faith – at first from darkness and lies, and now from fanaticism, hatred of the Church and Christianity!”

And since Socialism is “above all an atheistic question, the question of the modern integration of atheism”, Papism is its parent, too: “Socialism, too, is the child of Catholicism and the intrinsic Catholic nature! It, 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! Fraternité ou la mort! Two

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million heads!" So akin is Socialism to Papism that Papism “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.”

Peter Verkhovensky in *The Devils* (1871) even envisages the possibility of the Pope becoming the leader of the Socialists: “Do you know, I was thinking of delivering the world up to the Pope. Let him go barefoot and show himself to the mob, saying, ‘See what they have brought me to!’ and they will all follow him, even the army. The Pope on top, we all round him, and below us – the Shigalev order. All we need is that the Internationale should come to an agreement with the Pope; this will come about. The old boy will agree at once. He can’t do anything else. Mark my words…”

“The Western Church,” wrote Dostoyevsky, “has distorted the image of Christ, having been transformed from a Church into a Roman state and incarnated it again in the form of the papacy. Yes, in the West there is in truth no longer Christianity and the Church, although there are still many Christians – yes, and they will never disappear. Catholicism is truly no longer Christianity, and is passing into idol-worship, while Protestantism with giant steps is passing into atheism and a slippery, shifting, inconstant (and not age-old) teaching on morality. The Empire accepted Christianity, and the Church – the Roman law and state. A small part of the Church departed into the desert and began to continue its former work: Christian communities appeared again, then monasteries.... But then the remaining, huge part of the Church divided, as we know, into two halves. In the western half the state finally overcame the Church completely. The Church was annihilated and was reincarnated finally into a state. There appeared the papacy – a continuation of the ancient Roman Empire in a new incarnation.”

Dostoyevsky saw in Germany’s victory over France at Sedan in 1871 an attempt to crush Socialism, and thereby Papism, and foresaw the time when the madness of Papist individualism would seek to unite itself with the madness of socialist collectivism: “By depriving France of her political existence, Prince Bismarck hopes to deliver a blow at socialism. Socialism, as a heritage of Catholicism, and France are most hateful to a genuine German. It is excusable that Germany’s representatives believe that it is so easy to master socialism by merely destroying Catholicism – as its source and beginning.

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“However, this is what is most probably going to happen should France fall politically [which it did not]: Catholicism will lose its sword, and for the first time will appeal to the people whom it has been despising for so many centuries, ingratiating itself with worldly kings and emperors. Now, however, it will appeal to the people, since there is nowhere else to go; specifically, it will appeal to the leaders of the most worldly and rebellious element of the people — the socialists. Catholicism will tell the people that Christ also preached everything the socialists are preaching to them. Once more it will pervert and sell them Christ as it has Him so many times in the past for earthly possessions, defending the rights of the Inquisition which, in the name of loving Christ, tortured men for freedom of conscience — in the name of Christ to Whom only that disciple was dear who came to Him of his free accord and not the one who had been bought or frightened.

“Catholicism sold Christ when it blessed the Jesuits and sanctioned the righteousness of ‘every means for Christ’s cause’. However, since time immemorial, it has converted Christ’s cause into a mere concern for its earthly possessions and its future political domination over the whole world. When Catholic mankind turned away from the monstrous image in which, at length, Christ had been revealed to them, - after many protests, reformations, etc., at the beginning of this century - endeavours arose to organize life without God, without Christ. Devoid of the instinct of a bee or an ant, unmistakably and with utmost precision constructing their hive and ant-hill, men sought to create something on the order of an unmistakable ant-hill. They rejected the unique formula of mankind’s salvation, derived from God and announced through revelation to man: ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself’, and substituted for it practical inferences, such as ‘Chacun pour soi et Dieu pour tous’ (‘Each one for himself and God for all’), or scientific axioms, such as ‘the struggle for existence’.

“Bereft of the instinct which guides animals and enables them to organize their life faultlessly, men haughtily sought to rely upon science, forgetting that for such a task as the creation of society, science is still, so to speak, in swaddles. Dreams ensued. The future tower of Babylon became the ideal but also the dread of humanity. But after these dreams there soon appeared other simple doctrines, intelligible to everybody, for instance: ‘to rob the rich, to stain the world with blood, after which somehow everything will again be settled of its own accord.’

“Finally, even these teachers were outstripped: there appeared the doctrine of anarchy, after which — if it could be put into effect — there would again ensue a period of cannibalism, and people would be compelled to start all over again as they started some ten thousand years ago. Catholicism fully understands all this, and it will manage to seduce the leaders of the underground war. It will say to them: ‘You have no centre, no order in the conduct of the work; you are a force scattered all over the world, and now,
after the downfall of France [Dostoyevsky is referring to the fall of the Commune in 1871] – also an oppressed force. I shall be your rallying center, and I shall attract to you all those who still believe in me.

“One way or another, the alliance will be formed. Catholicism does not wish to die, whereas social revolution and the new social period in Europe are indubitable: two forces, unquestionably, will have to come to understanding, to unite. It stands to reason that slaughter, blood, plunder, even cannibalism would be advantageous to Catholicism. Precisely then it may hope to catch once more its fish in troubled waters, foreseeing the moment when, finally, mankind, exhausted by chaos and lawlessness, will fall into its arms. Then, once more, it will become in reality the sole and absolute ‘earthly ruler and universal authority’, sharing its power with no one. Thereby it will attain its ultimate goal."

Although not an exact prophecy, this accurately identified the general trend in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. For there has been an increasing tendency for the papacy, if not to identify with the revolution (although its “liberation theologians” did precisely that in Central and South America in the 1980s), at any rate to accept many of their premises and strive to work with them rather than against them. Thus the papacy has fitted easily into the modern liberal-socialist structure of the European Union...

In The Brothers Karamazov (1881), Dostoyevsky underlined the link between Papism and Socialism by making the leading proponent of Socialism a Papist Inquisitor. After his disillusionment with Papism, Western man could not be satisfied with the atomic individualism of the societies that replaced it, but yearned for the brotherhood of all men in obedience to one Father that Papism provided, albeit in a 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 the universal worship they have put each other to the sword…”

The Devils

In about 1870, writes Richard Pipes, “radical youths became increasingly interested in the newly emancipated peasant. The leading theoretical lights of this period, Michael Bakunin and Peter Lavrov, called on young people to abandon universities and go to the village. Bakunin wished them to carry the message of immediate rebellion. He believed that the muzhik [peasant] was a born anarchist, and only a spark was needed to set the countryside on fire. That spark was to be carried by the intelligentsia in the form of revolutionary

83 Dostoyevsky, The Diary of a Writer, November, 1877, pp. 910-912.
‘agitation’. Lavrov adopted a more gradual approach. Before he would turn into a revolutionary, the Russian peasant needed exposure to ‘propaganda’ which would enlighten him about the injustices of the Emancipation Edict, about the causes of his economic predicament, and about the collusion between the propertied classes, the state and the church. Inspired by these ideas, in the spring of 1874 several thousand youths quit school and went ‘to the people’. Here disappointment awaited them. The muzhik, known to them largely from literary descriptions and polemical tracts, would have nothing to do with idealistic students come to save him. Suspecting ulterior motives… he either ignored them or turned them over to the rural constabulary. But even more disappointing than the peasants’ hostility, which could be explained away by his ignorance, were his ethics. Some radical youths scorned property because they came from propertied backgrounds: they associated concern for wealth with their parents, whom they rejected. Hence they idealized the rural commune and the artel. The muzhik, living from hand to mouth, looked at the matter quite differently. He desperately wanted to acquire property… The intellectuals could indulge in talk of selfless brotherhood because, being supported by their families or the government (by means of stipends), they were not required to compete with one another. The muzhik, however, was always competing for scarce resources…

“In response to these disappointments, the radical movement broke up into warring factions. One group, called narodnik from their unbounded faith in the narod or people, decided that it was improper for intellectuals to foist their ideas upon the masses. The toiling man was always right. Intellectuals should settle in the village and learn from the peasant instead of trying to teach him. Another group, convinced that this method would end in renunciation of revolution, began to veer towards terrorism. A third developed an interest in western Social Democracy and, having concluded that no social revolution in Russia was possible until capitalism had done its work, braced themselves for a long and patient wait.”

The “going to the people” movement had petered out by 1875. It was replaced, on the one hand, by Socialist Revolutionary movements such as Land and Liberty and The People’s Will, and on the other by the Marxist Social Democratic movement. Both movements wanted revolution; but since the Marxists, led by George Plekhanov, did not believe that the revolution could come to Russia before it had become an industrial country, and that it was the workers, not the peasants, who would spearhead it, attention focussed on the Socialist Revolutionary terrorists who wanted apocalypse now.

The first “pure” terrorist was Bakunin. But he lived abroad. More typical of the young devils who came to dominate the revolutionary underground inside Russia was Nicholas Ishutin.

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84 Pipes, Russia under the Old Regime, pp. 273-274.
Ronald Seth writes: “He was the son of a merchant and of a mother who came of a noble family. When he was two both his parents died, and he was brought up until he was eleven by relatives of his father. In 1863 he entered Moscow university, where he quickly gathered round him a group of young men upon whom he was soon exerting a quite extraordinary influence.

“Ishutin was not an intellectual, and though his scorn of learning might have been a pose, he had not been long at the university when he decided to give up his studies in order to devote all his time to The Cause. Many of his followers imitated their leader in this.

“The group quickly became strong and active, and determined, as they phrased it, ‘to go to the people’, they sacrificed not only careers but all personal belongings. As a practical step in making contact with the people they set up co-operative and friendly societies for the workmen, artisans and students.”

However, this romantic Populist phase did not last long. For in fact “all Ishutin’s efforts and multifarious schemes were directed to one sole end – the creation of a revolutionary force. To achieve this he tossed all scruples out of the window, and introduced a new approach to the means by which the end might be attained – naked terrorism.

“The group believed that a peasant revolution would take place within five years. Their conception of this revolution differed from any previous conception of popular revolt; it was to be radical and ‘economic’ and nothing must be allowed to prevent its happening.

“The ruthless extremist policy preached by Ishutin did not appeal to all the members of the group, and as a result, between 1865 and 1866, there came into being a smaller group-within-the-group who were prepared to transmute into activity the extreme ideas of their leader. Named by Ishutin The Organization, this smaller group consisted mostly of extremely poor young men, many of whom were the sons of country priests whose modus vivendi differed little from that of the peasants. A few came from peasant families.

“Even this small and select band, however, did not entirely respond to all the aims of its founder. Extremist propaganda and agitation, yes – but not out and out terrorism, and this last was dear to Ishutin’s heart. So within The Organization there also developed another group, a secret cell, even more select, composed of students who lived together ‘in common’. They gave themselves the name Hell…

“The existence of Hell was to be kept secret even from the members of The Organisation…”

85 Seth, op. cit., pp. 28-29.
It was an appropriate name for a truly demonic organization, whose layers within layers recall Weishaupt’s *Illuminati* in the French revolution. However, it was not Ishutin’s *Hell* that was destined to create the spark of revolution. After another member of the organization, Demetrius Karakozov, made a failed attempt to assassinate the Tsar, he and Ishutin were tried and sentenced to death. Karakozov was hanged, but Ishutin’s sentence was commuted to hard labour in Siberia. There he died of tuberculosis, having spent the last eleven years of his life insane…

The next terrorist leader was Sergius Nechayev, a teacher of Holy Scripture who from his student years devoted himself to political activity. (The combination of seminary training and revolutionary activity was not uncommon. Dobroliubov was the son of a priest. Stalin was a seminarian…)

In 1869 Nechayev went abroad with a false passport to Geneva, where he joined Bakunin and Ogarev, a friend of Herzen’s. Like Bakunin, he was an anarchist: “We are destroyers,” he declared, “others will create”.

Together with Bakunin Nechayev wrote *The Revolutionary’s Catechism*, which declared: “1. The revolutionary is a doomed person. He has neither his own interests, nor affairs, nor feelings, nor attractions, nor even name. Everything in him is swallowed up by a single exclusive interest, a single thought, a single passion – the revolution.

“2. In the depth of his essence he has broken – not in words only, but also in fact – every bond linking him with the civil order and with the whole civilized world, with all the laws, decencies, social conditions and morality of this world. He is its pitiless enemy, and if he were to continue to live in it, then it would only be in order to destroy it more reliably.

“3. The revolutionary despises all doctrinaire attitudes and has rejected secular science, presenting everything to future generations. He knows only one science – the science of destruction. For this and only for this has he studied mechanics, physics, chemistry and, perhaps, medicine.

“4. He despises and hates contemporary social morality in all its manifestations. Morality for him is that which aids the triumph of the revolution. Immorality and crime is everything that hinders it…

“7. The nature of the genuine revolutionary excludes all romanticism, all sensitivity, exaltation or amusement. It excludes even personal hatred and revenge. Revolutionary passion, having become in him an everyday, every-minute phenomenon, must be united with cold calculation…

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“25. In coming closer to the people, we must first of all be united those elements of the people’s life which since the time of the foundation of the Muscovite State power have not ceased to protest, not in words, but in deeds, against everything that is directly or indirectly linked with the State: against the nobles, against the officials, against the popes, against the world of Guilds and against the rich peasant, the devourer of the mir. We shall unite with the savage world of the thieves, this true and only revolutionary in Russia…”

In Nechayev’s plan for the revolution, various public figures were to be shot, but Alexander II himself was not to be killed, but would be publicly tortured and execute “before the face of the whole of the liberated plebs, on the ruins of the State”. 87

After the great work of destruction, according to Nechayev, all power would necessarily be concentrated in the hands of a Central Committee. (In this centralism, he differed from the more democratic Bakunin.) Everybody was to undertake physical work. Dissidents were to be executed...

In August, 1869, Nechayev returned to Russia as the self-styled representative of the World Revolutionary Movement at Geneva and organized a ‘Society of National Retribution’ in Moscow. On 21 November he and four members of the Moscow ‘group of five’ murdered the fifth member of the group, a young student of the Moscow Agricultural College called Ivanov, for allegedly refusing to carry out the instructions of the Geneva committee. Ivanov was strangled, then shot, and his body was weighted with stones and thrown into the pond.

“Dostoyevsky’s description of Shatov’s murder [in The Devils] follows closely the description of Ivanov’s murder. After the murder, Nechayev, like Peter Verkhovensky in the novel, escaped first to Petersburg and then abroad. He went back to Geneva, where he rejoined Bakunin and Ogaryov and assisted them in their abortive attempt to revive Herzen’s London journal The Bell. His ruthlessness in carrying out Bakunin’s own principle that the end justifies the means appalled even Bakunin, who soon broke with him. Nechayev then went to London, where he began publishing his terrorist journal Village Commune, which was sharply condemned by Engels…

“He later returned to Switzerland, where he was arrested by the Swiss police on an extradition order as a criminal and not a political offender and handed over to the Russian police. On 8 January 1873 he was tried for murder by the Moscow District Court and sentenced to twenty years’ penal servitude. He was not sent to Siberia, however, but incarcerated in the Peter and Paul fortress in Petersburg, where he died one year and ten months after Dostoyevsky, in November 1882.”88

87 Ivanov, op. cit., pp. 342-343.
Dostoyevsky on the Terrorists

Dostoyevsky never disputed the guilt of the terrorists, nor the right of the Tsar to punish them. But he did not believe that the problem could be solved by executions; this disease could not be cured “by blood and iron”. He thought that the authorities as well as the criminals were guilty – in fact, the whole of educated society was guilty. Thus in his “before-death” notebook he wrote: “Nihilism has appeared among us because we are all nihilists. We have only been frightened by a new form of its manifestation...”89

Dostoyevsky had serious doubts whether the terrorist sons were really more guilty than their liberal fathers. Thus in The Devils, while the son, Peter Verkhovensky, turns out to be the real criminal of the story, his father Stepan also has to do some profound repentance... So when the police chief General Mezentsov was assassinated in 1878, and the liberal press rose up in indignation, Dostoyevsky commented: “All these are articles of liberal fathers in disagreement with the diversions of their nihilist children, who went further than them” – further, that is, on essentially the same path of apostasy from God and Holy Russia. “If you’re going to write about the nihilist Russians, then for God’s sake don’t abuse them more than their fathers. Introduce this thought, for the root of nihilism is not only in the fathers, but it is the fathers who are still more nihilist than their children. Our underground evil-doers at any rate have a certain disgusting ardour, but in the fathers there are the same feelings, but [also] cynicism and indifferentism, which are still worse.”90

So what was the basic disease? According to Dostoyevsky, it was the striving of the creature to attain the status of the Creator, the striving for mangodhood. In Crime and Punishment this striving was apparent in Raskolnikov’s conviction that he had the right to kill. In The Devils this analysis is taken a step further: into Kirillov’s conviction that he had the right to kill himself – and thereby become a god. For “if there is no God, then I am a god... If there is a God, then it is always His will, and I can do nothing against His will. If there isn’t, then it is my will, and I am bound to express my self-will...

“I am still only a god against my own will, and I am unhappy because I am bound to express my self-will. All are unhappy, because all are afraid to express their self-will. The reason why man has hitherto been unhappy and poor is because he was afraid to express the main point of his self-will, but has expressed it only in little things, like a schoolboy. I am terribly unhappy because I’m terribly afraid. Fear is the curse of mankind. But I shall proclaim my self-will. I am bound to believe that I do not believe. I shall begin and end, and open the door. And I shall save. Only this will save mankind and will

90 Dostoyevsky, in Volgin, op. cit., p. 17.
transform it physically in the next generation. For in his present physical condition man cannot – as far as I can see – get along without his former God. For three years I’ve been searching for the attribute of my divinity, and I’ve found it: the attribute of my divinity is – Self-Will! That’s all I can do to prove in the main point my defiance and to show my defiance and my new terrible freedom.”

Kirillov’s suicide is exploited by Peter Verkhovensky in his plan to destroy society and place himself at its head. Thus revolutionary terrorism, while preaching absolute freedom, actually brings forward the reign of universal terror and absolute despotism. As Shigalev says in The Devils: “Starting from unlimited freedom, I arrived at unlimited despotism...” “He proposes as a final solution of the problem to divide humanity into two unequal parts. One-tenth is to be granted absolute freedom and unrestricted powers over the remaining nine-tenths. Those must give up their individuality and be turned into something like a herd, and by their boundless obedience will by a series of regenerations attain a state of primeval innocence, something like the original paradise. They will have to work, however...”

“A modified and noble version of Shigalev’s system,” writes Andrzej Walicki, “is presented in the ‘Legend of the Grand Inquisitor’ in book five of The Brothers Karamazov. This is preceded by the rebellion of Ivan Karamazov – a rebellion against alleged divine or historical justice, a refusal to accept a harmony for which too high a price must be paid. Ivan rejects not God but the world He has created – because it is a world of injustice, because divine Providence does nothing to prevent the suffering of innocent children, and because no future ‘harmony’ can make up for the tears of a tormented child. His revolt suggests that men ought to take their fate into their own hands, reject the revealed truths of the Gospels, and build the Kingdom of God on earth – but without God. This... was Dostoyevsky’s explanation of the origins of revolutionary socialism...”

So what was the cure? Certainly not simple repression. Thus in the case of Vera Zasulich, who made an attempt on the life of the Tsar in 1878, Dostoyevsky wrote that “to punish this young woman would be inappropriate and superfluous”...

Dostoyevsky’s reservations about capital punishment for terrorists proceeded not from liberal considerations, but from his belief that in a Christian country in which the great majority of people were baptised Orthodox Christians the only true criminal tribunal was the tribunal of the criminal’s own conscience, and that the only true punishment was the torments of that conscience. The punishments distributed by the State did

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91 Dostoyevsky, The Devils, pp. 612, 614-615.
92 Dostoyevsky, The Devils, pp. 404, 405.
little, in his opinion, to elicit those inner torments in most people (they had
done so in his personal case, but he was an exception). On the other hand, the
spiritual punishment administered by the Church was another matter: it had
the power to bring the criminal to true repentance, and then absolution and
renewal of life.

This idea, together with the still more idealistic and radical idea that the
Church might one day supplant the State, was developed in most detail by the
Elder Zossima in his last great novel, The Brothers Karamazov…

Portents of the Antichrist

The disease that afflicted both the fathers and the sons could not fail to be
manifested in other forms in other parts of the mystical body of Russia – that
is, the Russian Orthodox Church. Among those who still considered
themselves Orthodox, one of the earliest signs of this spiritual sickness was
indifferentism, what we would now call ecumenism, that is, an increased
tolerance for Christian heresies to the extent of placing them on a par with
Orthodoxy. This danger was especially noted by Bishop Ignatius Brianchaninov (+1867): 
“You say, ‘heretics are Christians just the same.’ Where did you take that from? Perhaps someone or other calling himself a
Christian while knowing nothing of Christ, may in his extreme ignorance
decide to acknowledge himself as the same kind of Christian as heretics, and
fail to distinguish the holy Christian faith from those offspring of the curse,
blasphemous heresies. Quite otherwise, however, do true Christians reason
about this. A whole multitude of saints has received a martyr’s crown, has
preferred the most cruel and prolonged tortures, prison, exile, rather than
agree to take part with heretics in their blasphemous teaching.

“The Ecumenical Church has always recognised heresy as a mortal sin; she
has always recognised that the man infected with the terrible malady of
heresy is spiritually dead, a stranger to grace and salvation, in communion
with the devil and the devil’s damnation. Heresy is a sin of the mind; it is
more a diabolic than a human sin. It is the devil’s offspring, his invention; it is
an impiety that is near idol-worship. Every heresy contains in itself
blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, whether against the dogma or the action of
the Holy Spirit…”

Bishop Ignatius was pessimistic about the future of Russia: “It is evident
that the apostasy from the Orthodox faith is general among the people. One is
an open atheist, another is a deist, another a Protestant, another an
indifferentist, another a schismatic. There is no healing or cure for this
plague.” “What has been foretold in the Scriptures is being fulfilled: a cooling

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94 Brianchaninov, Pis’ma, no. 283; translated as “Concerning the Impossibility of Salvation for
the Heterodox and Heretics”, The Orthodox Word, March-April, 1965, and Orthodox Life,
towards the faith has engulfed both our people and all the countries in which Orthodoxy was maintained up to now." "Religion is falling in the people in general. Nihilism is penetrating into the merchant class, from where it has not far to go to the peasants. In most peasants a decisive indifference to the Church has appeared, and a terrible moral disorder."95

"The people is being corrupted, and the monasteries are also being corrupted," said the same holy bishop to the future Tsar Alexander II in 1866, one year before his own death.96

Visions from above seemed to confirm that apocalyptic times were approaching. Thus in 1871 the Over-Procurator of the Russian Holy Synod, Count Alexander Petrovich Tolstoy, had the following vision: "It was as if I were in my own house standing in the entrance-hall. Beyond was a room in which on the ledge between the windows there was a large icon of the God of Sabaoth that gave out such blinding light that from the other room (the entrance-hall) it was impossible to look at it. Still further in was a room in which there were Protopriest Matthew Alexandrovich Konstantinovsky and the reposed Metropolitan Philaret. And this room was full of books; along the walls from ceiling to floor there were books; on the long tables there were piles of books; and while I certainly had to go into this room, I was held back by fear, and in terror, covering my face with my hand, I passed through the first room and, on entering the next room, I saw Protopriest Matthew Alexandrovich dressed in a simple black cassock; on his head was a skull-cap; in his hands was an unbent book, and he motioned me with his head to find a similar book and open it. At the same time the metropolitan, turning the pages of this book said: 'Rome, Troy, Egypt, Russia, the Bible.' I saw that in my book 'Bible' was written in very heavy lettering. Suddenly there was a noise and I woke up in great fear. I thought a lot about what it could all mean. My dream seemed terrible to me - it would have been better to have seen nothing. Could I not ask those experienced in the spiritual life concerning the meaning of this vision in sleep? But an inner voice explained the dream even to me myself. However, the explanation was so terrible that I did not want to agree with it."

St. Ambrose of Optina gave the following interpretation of this vision: "He who was shown this remarkable vision in sleep, and who then heard the very significant words, very probably received the explanation of what he had seen and heard through his guardian angel, since he himself recognized that an inner voice explained the meaning of the dream to him. However, since we have been asked, we also shall give our opinion...

96 Zhizneopisanie Episkopa Ignatia Brianchaninova, p. 485. Another pessimist was Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, who feared "storm-clouds coming from the West", and advised that rizas should not be made for icons, because "the time is approaching when ill-intentioned people will remove the rizas from the icons." (in Fomin and Fomina, op. cit., 1994, vol. I, p. 349)
...The words 'Rome, Troy, Egypt' may have the following signification. Rome at the time of the Nativity of Christ was the capital of the world, and, from the beginning of the patriarchate, had the primacy of honour; but because of love of power and deviation from the truth she was later rejected and humiliated. Ancient Troy and Egypt were notable for the fact that they were punished for their pride and impiety - the first by destruction, and the second by various punishments and the drowning of Pharaoh with his army in the Red Sea. But in Christian times, in the countries where Troy was located there were founded the Christian patriarchates of Antioch and Constantinople, which flourished for a long time, embellishing the Orthodox Church with their piety and right dogmas; but later, according to the inscrutable destinies of God, they were conquered by barbarians - the Muslims, and up to now have borne this heavy slavery, which restricts the freedom of Christian piety and right belief. And in Egypt, together with the ancient impiety, there was from the first times of Christianity such a flowering of piety that the deserts were populated by tens of thousands of monastics, not to speak of the great numbers of pious laity from whom they came. But then, by reason of moral licentiousness, there followed such an impoverishment of Christian piety in that country that at a certain time in Alexandria the patriarch remained with only one priest.

"... After the three portentous names 'Rome, Troy, Egypt', the name of 'Russia' was also mentioned - Russia, which at the present time is counted as an independent Orthodox state, but where the elements of foreign heterodoxy and impiety have already penetrated and taken root among us and threaten us with the same sufferings as the above-mentioned countries have undergone.

"Then there comes the word 'Bible'. No other state is mentioned. This may signify that if in Russia, too, because of the disdain of God's commandments and the weakening of the canons and decrees of the Orthodox Church and for other reasons, piety is impoverished, then there must immediately follow the final fulfilment of that which is written at the end of the Bible, in the Apocalypse of St. John the Theologian.

"He who saw this vision correctly observed that the explanation given him by an inner voice was terrible. Terrible will be the Second Coming of Christ and terrible the last judgement of the world. But not without terrors will also be the period before that when the Antichrist will reign, as it is said in the Apocalypse: 'And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and death shall flee from them' (9.6). The Antichrist will come during a period of anarchy, as the apostle says: 'until he that restraineth be taken away from the midst' (II Thessalonians 2.7), that is, when the powers that be no longer exist."^97

^97 St. Ambrose of Optina, Pis'ma (Letters), Sergiev Posad, 1908, part 1, pp. 21-22.
St. Ambrose's identification of "him that restraineth" the coming of the Antichrist with the Russian State had long roots in the patristic writings. St. John Chrysostom, Blessed Theophylact and others identified him with the Roman emperor, whose successor, as being the emperor of "the Third Rome", Russia, was the Russian Tsar. Metropolitan Philaret had restated the political teaching of Orthodoxy with exceptional eloquence in the previous reign. And now Bishop Theophan the Recluse wrote: "The Tsar's authority, having in its hands the means of restraining the movements of the people and relying on Christian principles itself, does not allow the people to fall away from them, but will restrain it. And since the main work of the Antichrist will be to turn everyone away from Christ, he will not appear as long as the Tsar is in power. The latter's authority will not let him show himself, but will prevent him from acting in his own spirit. That is what he that restraineth is. When the Tsar's authority falls, and the peoples everywhere acquire self-government (republics, democracies), then the Antichrist will have room to manoeuvre. It will not be difficult for Satan to train voices urging apostasy from Christ, as experience showed in the time of the French revolution. Nobody will give a powerful 'veto' to this. A humble declaration of faith will not be tolerated. And so, when these arrangements have been made everywhere, arrangements which are favourable to the exposure of antichristian aims, then the Antichrist will also appear. Until that time he waits, and is restrained."

Bishop Theophan wrote: “When these principles [Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality] weaken or are changed, the Russian people will cease to be Russian. It will then lose its sacred three-coloured banner.” And again: “Our Russians are beginning to decline from the faith: one part is completely and in all ways falling into unbelief, another is falling into Protestantism, a third is secretly weaving together beliefs in such a way as to bring together spiritism and geological madness with Divine Revelation. Evil is growing: evil faith and lack of faith are raising their head: faith and Orthodoxy are weakening. Will we come to our senses? O Lord! Save and have mercy on Orthodox Russia from Thy righteous and fitting punishment!”

The future New-Martyr Anna Zertsalova wrote: “It was a sad time then in the capital. The holy churches, the unconquerable strongholds of Orthodoxy, stood in it as before, as did the unshakeable walls; the holy icons were adorned with shining covers of precious stones, the God-pleasers rested in the churches in their incorrupt relics. But the people were perishing from their vices and errors. The spirit of little faith and debauchery entered everywhere like the most savage plague into unstable heads. Tolstoy and other false teachers crept into inexperienced young hearts with their destructive propaganda, undermining in them the bases of faith and piety. The Lord was

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forgotten, forgotten were the rules of morality and honour; forgotten were the authorities and order; passions and vices broke out into liberty.”

A fairly typical example of those who succumbed to this pernicious atmosphere, at least for a time, was Sergius Alexandrovich Nilus. “I was born,” he writes, “in 1862 (25 August), in a family which on my mother's side counted in its midst not a few advanced people - advanced in the spirit for which the 60s of what is now already the last century was distinguished. My parents were nobles and landowners - major ones, moreover. It was perhaps because of their links with the land and the peasants that they escaped any extreme manifestation of the enthusiasms of the 70s. However, they could not escape the general, so to speak platonic-revolutionary spirit of the times, so great then was the allure of the ideas of egalitarianism, freedom of thought, freedom of thought, freedom... yes, perhaps freedom of action, too, which overcame everyone. It seems that at that time there was not one home of the nobility in both the capitals where the state structure of the Russian empire was not reshaped in its own model, according to the measure of its understanding and according to the last book it had read, first from Sovremennik (The Contemporary), and then Otechestvennie Zapiski (Notes on the Fatherland) or Vestnik Evropy (Herald of Europe). Of course, the hard food of conversations of a political character did not much help to develop in me religious dreams, as they were then called, and I grew up in complete alienation from the Church, uniting it in my childish imagination only with my old nanny, whom I loved to distraction. Nevertheless, I did not know any prayers and entered a church only by chance; I learned the law of God from teachers who were indifferent, if not outrightly hostile, to the word of God, as an intractable necessity of the school’s programme. That was the degree of my knowledge of God when I, as a youth who was Orthodox in name, went to university, where they already, of course, had no time for such trivialities as Orthodoxy. Left to my devices in the life of faith, I reached such an abominable degree of spiritual desolation as only that person can imagine who has lived in this spiritual stench and who has then, while on the path of his own destruction, been detained by the unseen hand of the benevolent Creator.”

Nilus did not actually become a revolutionary. But many others subjected to the same influences did, such as L.A. Tikhomirov. Few were those, like Nilus and Tikhomirov, who found their way back to the ancestral faith of Orthodoxy. Thus did the woolly liberalism of the fathers corrupt the sons, preparing the way for the revolution...

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99 Svetil’nik Pravoslavia (Candlestick of Orthodoxy), Moscow, 1912, pp. 5-6; in “Zhizneopisanie Protoiereia Valentina Amphiteatrova” (Life of Protopriest Valentine Amphiteatrov), Pravoslav'naia Zhiz' (Orthodox Life), 53, № 11 (658), November, 2004, pp. 9-10.
The Eastern Question

If liberalism, socialism and other false beliefs were sapping the foundations of Holy Russia, a different, albeit related disease was corrupting the rest of the Orthodox oikoumene: nationalism. Like many in the West, the Orthodox nations of the Balkans and the Middle East were thinking of one thing: freedom! The Southern Slavs – the Serbs and the Bulgarians – wanted freedom from the Turks – and looked to the Russians to liberate them. And the Greeks in the Free State of Greece wanted freedom for their fellow countrymen still under the Ottoman yoke in accordance with their “great idea” of the re-establishment of the Byzantine Empire. The only anti-liberal and (relatively) anti-nationalist group in the Orthodox East was its ruling class under the old millet system – the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

There were both good and bad reasons for this. The good reason was that the patriarchate, together with the monks of Mount Athos over whom it had jurisdiction, stood for strict, traditional Orthodoxy. As such, it could not fail to resist the liberal, westernizing trends that were gradually gaining the upper hand in Athens, Belgrade, Sophia and Bucharest. This Orthodox traditionalism made the patriarchate and the Russian government natural allies – although, as we shall see, events were to test that relationship.

A less good reason for the patriarchate’s conservatism was the fact that it and the leading Greek merchant families, the “Phanariots”, led what was in many ways a comfortable and privileged life under the Ottomans. And so they were in no hurry to be “liberated” – whether by their fellow countrymen in Free Greece or by the Russian Tsar. In fact, as Philip Mansel writes, “the bishops, aware of the tsars’ cavalier treatment of the Russian Orthodox Church, feared that ‘protection’ would mean ‘slavery’. They told a Russian diplomat: ‘We are now rich and strong. Nine million souls in the hands of the Patriarch, his synod and seventy bishops. You with the right of protectorate will deprive us of everything.’”

However, after the Crimean War, Russia was no longer protector of the Christians at the Sublime Porte – and the Greeks felt the difference. And not only the Greeks. Thus in 1860 the Orthodox of Damascus were subjected to a massacre which the Russians were not able to prevent or avenge. According to Professor A.P. Lopukhin, “the Christian subjects of the Sultan, whatever oppression and humiliation they were suffering, were now unable to rely on any outside help but were obliged to rely solely on their own resources... During the last years of the reign of Abdul Mecid [1839-61]... the Greeks...

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102 One of the victims of this massacre was Hieromartyr Joseph the Damascene (http://aaron.org/midwest/Articles/St_Joseph_Of_Damascus_A.htm).
not only remained in a dreadful social and economic state, but even lost many of their former rights and privileges.”

The reason for this was a series of liberal reforms that the Western Powers imposed on Turkey at the Treaty of Paris in 1856, and which the Ottomans issued in the form of an Imperial Rescript. These were seen as supplementing and strengthening the policy of reform known as tanzimat which Turkey had begun in 1839. They aimed to improve the lot of the Christians under Ottoman rule - but actually made it worse. Thus both Christians and Muslims were promised equality before the law in place of their separate legal systems - which, however, both groups wanted to retain. Again, the economic reforms, which essentially involved the imposition of liberal free-trade principles on the empire, were harmful to both groups. For neither the Orthodox Christians nor the Muslims could compete with the mass-produced products now pouring in from the West, especially Britain, while Ottoman infant industries were deprived of the protection they needed in order to survive.

As living conditions declined, and the power of the patriarch over his people weakened, national passions exploded. In 1861 rebellions broke out in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Bulgaria, Wallachia and Moldavia. In 1866 it was the turn of the island of Crete, where in an extraordinary outburst of patriotic passion reminiscent of the Russian Old Ritualists Abbot Gabriel of the monastery of Arkadiou blew up himself and nearly a thousand other Greeks rather than surrender to the Turks. Further rebellions broke out in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria in the 1870s, which finally brought the Russians into the region in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878.

These events placed the Russian government in a quandary. Russia had been looking to liberate the Balkans and Constantinople from the Turkish yoke since the seventeenth century. Thus “on April 12th, 1791,” writes Roman Golicz, “a cartoon was published in London entitled ‘An Imperial Stride!’ depicting Catherine the Great... with one foot in Russia and the other in Constantinople. The image recalls the empress’s epic tour to the Crimea in 1787 when she entered Kherson through an arch inscribed ‘The Way to Constantinople’.”

The liberation of Constantinople would continue to be seen as an imperial aim until the very fall of the Russian Empire in 1917. But it was only at two moments, 1829-30 and 1877-78, that the achievement of the aim looked like a distinct possibility, even probability; and the period 1829-1878 can be called the period of “the Eastern Question”. This was the question which power was to rule Constantinople; or, alternatively, the question of the liberation of the

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Orthodox nations subject to the Ottoman empire – was it to be at their own hands, at the hands of the Russians, or through the concerted pressure of the great powers on Turkey?

For most of the nineteenth century Russia had been governed in her foreign policy by two not completely compatible principles or obligations: her obligations as a member of the Triple Alliance of monarchist states (Russia, Austria and Prussia) against the revolution, and her obligations as the Third Rome and the Protector of Orthodox Christians everywhere. As a member of the Triple Alliance Russia could not be seen to support any revolution against a legitimate power. That is why Tsar Alexander I refused to support the Greek Revolution in 1821, for the monarchist powers considered the Ottoman empire to be a legitimate power. On the other hand, as the Third Rome and Protector of all Orthodox Christians, Russia naturally wished to come to the aid of the Orthodox Greeks, Serbs, Bulgars and Romanians under the oppressive Turkish yoke. That is why Tsar Nicholas I did intervene in the Greek revolution in 1829 by invading the Ottoman empire – the decisive event enabling the emergence of the Free State of Greece in 1832.

In spite of Nicholas I’s intervention in Greece in 1829-32, he was in general a legitimist – that is, his priority was the protection of what he considered legitimate regimes (in practice, all the Major Powers including Turkey but excluding France) against revolution rather than Orthodox Christians against Turkey. So it was from a legitimist position that he twice crushed uprisings of the Poles against his own rule, and in 1848 crushed the Hungarian rising against Austro-Hungary. However, the quarrels between the Greek Orthodox and the Roman Catholics over the Holy Sepulchre led him to take a more specifically “Third Rome” stand. This led eventually to the Crimean War against Turkey, Britain and France, which, as Oliver Figes’ authoritative study of the war confirms, was essentially a religious war between Orthodoxy and Islam, with the Western states supporting the Muslims.105

Although the Crimean War constituted a defeat for the “Third Rome” policy, it inflicted even more damage on the legitimist principle; for illegitimate France was now legitimized again (the treaty ending the war was signed in Paris), while the Tsars never again fully trusted the legitimate monarchy of Austro-Hungary, which had not supported Russia in the war. So intervention for the sake of the Orthodox again became popular, especially as a new wave of rebellions against Turkish rule began in the Balkans.

However, the Russian intervention under Alexander II was different from earlier interventions under Nicholas I. Under Nicholas, wrote the Russian diplomat (and future Optina monk) Constantine Leontiev, “there was more talk of the rights of Russian protection, of Russian power.” However, from the 1860s “Russian diplomacy, the Russian press and Russian society began to

speak more and more loudly in favour of the Christians of the East, without relying, as in the 50s, on the right of our power, but much more on the rights of the Sultan’s Christian subjects themselves.” In other words, human rights, rather than Russia’s rights. And so Turkey “was forced to make concessions to us constantly on the path of the liberal reforms that we suggested for the Christians. Because of this Turkey became weaker; the Christians became bolder and bolder, and we in the course of twenty years in all, step by step, destroyed the Turkish empire…”

But the paradoxical fact was that the gradual weakening of the Ottoman empire, and liberation of the Christians from under the Turkish yoke, while to be welcomed in itself, contained great spiritual dangers for the Orthodox commonwealth. For the removal of the yoke gave renewed strength to two diseases that had plagued the Orthodox since even before 1453: an inclination towards western humanist culture; and disunity among themselves on ethnic lines. Moreover, from the time of the French revolution, and especially after the Greek revolution of 1821, the two diseases began to work on each other. Thus western ideas about freedom and the rights of individuals and nations began to interact with frictions among the Christians caused by Greek bishops’ insensitivity to the needs of their Slavic, Romanian and Arabic flocks to produce a potentially revolutionary situation.

The Turkish conquest of the whole of the Balkans suppressed both diseases without completely eliminating either. On the one hand, western influence was seen as harmful by the Turks as it was by the Christians, and the Ottoman authorities acted to cut it off. On the other hand, the millet system recognised only one Orthodox nation under the Ecumenical Patriarch, thereby cutting off the possibility of inter-Orthodox wars.

These two very important benefits of the Turkish yoke outweighed its disadvantages in the form of the restrictions on missionary activity, the forced induction of Bosnian boys into the Janissaries, and intermittent persecutions; just as the advantages of the pagan pax Romana had outweighed its disadvantages. The Christian leaders in both Church and State – specifically,

106 Leontiev, “Pis’ma o vostochnykh delakh – I” (Letters on Eastern Matters – I), in Vostok, Rossia i Slavianstvo (The East, Russia and Slavdom), Moscow, 1996, p. 354. Cf. Mansel, op. cit., p. 248: “Wellington revealed the great truth: ‘The Ottoman Empire stands not for the benefit of the Turks but of Christian Europe.’ Metternich pronounced the preservation of the Ottoman Empire in Europe ‘a political necessity for Austria’.”

107 For example, “when in the eighteenth century the Orthodox in Syria complained to the Porte of Catholic propaganda, the following decree was issued: ‘Some of the devilish French monks, with evil purposes and unjust intentions, are passing through the country and are filling the Greek rayah with their worthless French doctrine; by means of stupid speeches they are deflecting the rayah from its ancient faith and are inculcating the French faith. Such French monks have no right to remain anywhere except in those places where their consuls are located; they should not undertake any journeys or engage in missionary work” (in Fr. Alexander Schmemann, The Historical Road of Eastern Orthodoxy, Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1963, p. 284).
the Tsar of Russia and the Patriarch of Constantinople – understood this. So they did not try to destroy the empire, while trying to mitigate its savagery.

Leontiev also understood this. Thus “it is necessary,” he wrote, “as far as possible, to preserve the Porte; the Porte must be served; it must be defended. And I agree with this point of view of the Phanariots: the pasha is better than the Hellene democratic nomarch (prefect): the pasha is more monarchical, more statist, cleverer, broader.”

Pan-Hellenism versus Pan-Slavism

The idea animating the Greek part of this revolutionary movement was *Pan-Hellenism*, also known as “the great idea” (η μεγάλη ιδέα) – the idea, namely, that all the traditionally Greek lands not yet freed from the Turks - Crete, Epirus, Macedonia, Thrace, even Constantinople and the vast territory of Asia Minor – should be united under Greek suzerainty. This idea dated from well before the Greek revolution of 1821; some say it began immediately after the fall of Constantinople in 1453; but it gathered headway after the foundation of the Free State of Greece, being nourished especially by western-educated liberal thinkers in Athens. It is not to be confused with *Byzantinism*, the faith and culture of Christian Rome...

Unfortunately, Pan-Hellenism tended to enter into conflict with other Orthodox nationalisms, especially those of the Serbs and Bulgars. Thus in Macedonia and Thrace there were now more Slavs than Greeks – and the Slavs were not going to give up their lands to the Greeks without a fight. Moreover, Greek nationalist pressure was exerted not only in lands that had traditionally been inhabited mainly by Greeks, like Macedonia and Thrace, but also in originally Slavic lands.

Thus Fr. Alexander Schemann writes: “The first Greek had been appointed to the patriarchate of Peć in 1737 at the insistence of the Dragoman Alexandros Mavrokordatos on the plea that the Serbs could not be trusted. The Phanariots began a policy which led to the exclusion of any Serbian nationals in the episcopacy.” In September, 1766 the Ecumenical Patriarch Samuel took over the Serbian patriarchate at Peć, and in January, 1767 the Bulgarian Church was absorbed with the forced retirement of Archbishop Arsenius of Ochrid.

“Everywhere former bishops who were native Bulgars and Serbs were deposed and replaced by Greeks. This canonical abuse of power was accompanied by forced ‘Grecizing’, particularly in Bulgaria, where it later served as the basis of the so-called Bulgarian question.

108 Leontiev, “Pis’ma o vostochnykh delakh” (Letters on Eastern Affairs), op. cit, p. 362.
“This same sad picture prevailed in the East as well, in the patriarchates of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria, where Orthodox Arabs became the victims of this forced unification. All these offenses, stored up and concealed – all these unsettled accounts and intrigues – would have their effect when the Turkish hold began to slacken and the hour for the rebirth of the Slavic peoples drew near…”\textsuperscript{110}

The cause of Greek oppression was not simply contempt for Christians of non-Greek race. The Phanariots – that is, the leading Greek laymen, who lived in the Phanar district of Constantinople - had to raise money from all the Christians in order to pay the bribes that the Ottoman authorities required for raising candidates to the patriarchy. As Mark Mazower writes, “the money, often borrowed by candidates for office from wealthy Phanariots, could only be recouped through the Church’s taxation of Christian peasants. Growing centralisation under the Ecumenical Patriarch increased the resources at stake and probably made the problem worse. ‘A saying common among the Greek peasants,’ according to a British traveller, was that ‘the country labours under three curses, the priests, the \textit{cogia bashis} [local Christian notables] and the Turks, always placing the plagues in this order.’ In nineteenth-century Bosnia, ‘the Greek Patriarch takes good care that these eparchies shall be filled by none but Fanariots, and thus it happens that the... Orthodox Christians of Bosnia, who form the majority of the population, are subject to ecclesiastics alien in blood, in language, in sympathies, who oppress them hand in hand with the Turkish officials and set them, often, an even worse example of moral depravity.’ The reason was clear: ‘They have to send enormous bribes yearly to the fountainhead.’ This story of extortion and corruption spelled the end of the old Orthodox ecumenicism, created bitterness between the Church and its flock, and - where the peasants were not Greek speakers – provoked a sense of their exploitation by the ‘Greek’ Church which paved the way for Balkan nationalism.”\textsuperscript{111}

These injustices suffered by the Slavs at the hands of the Greeks elicited the sympathy of notable Russians such as Alexis Khomiakov and Bishop Theophan the Recluse. The latter, as archimandrite, was sent by the Russian government and the Holy Synod to Constantinople to gather information on the Greco-Bulgarian quarrel. On March 9, 1857 he presented his report, in which his sympathies for the Bulgarians were manifest. However, he also called on “magnanimous” Russia to come to the help of the Ecumenical Patriarchate – “we must not abandon our mother in the faith in this helpless situation of hers”. \textsuperscript{112}

\textsuperscript{110} Schmemann, op. cit., p. 280.
\textsuperscript{112} St. Theophan’s \textit{Life}, in Archimandrite Nicon (Ivanov) and Protopriest Nicholas (Likhomakov), \textit{Zhita Russkikh Sviatykh (Lives of the Russian Saints)}, Tutaev, 2000, vol. 2, p. 716.
The Greeks distrusted this movement in Russian society for the liberation of the Southern Slavs. Whereas earlier generations would have welcomed any incursion of Russia into the Balkans, hoping that the Tsar would liberate Constantinople and give it to the Greeks, the modern, more liberal- and nationalist-minded Greeks rejected any such interference. For in Free Greece Russia was no longer seen as the liberator of the Balkans for the sake of the Orthodoxy that the Russian and Balkan peoples shared, but as the potential enslaver of the Balkans for the sake of Russian Pan-Slavism. More specifically, the Greeks suspected that Russia wanted to help Bulgaria take the ancient Greek lands of Thrace and Macedonia in which there was now a large Bulgarian population. Thus Pan-Slavism was seen as the great threat to Pan-Hellenism.

True, many Greeks, especially in the Ottoman Empire and on Mount Athos, cherished more charitable views of Russia, which continued to support the Christians under the Turkish yoke in many ways. But the views of the western-educated liberals in Athens were gaining ground... A sign of the times was the court case that took place on Mount Athos in 1874-1875 between the Russian and Greek monks of the monastery of St. Panteleimon with regard to the rights of the Russian monks to stay there. “The case divided the whole of Athos into two opposing camps: the Greek monks and the Russian monks. Only a few of the Greeks had the courage to support the Russians. Thanks to the energy and insistence with which the Russian monks defended their rights to the monastery, with documents in their hands and with the strong support of the Russian consul at the Porte [Count N.P. Ignatiev], the case ended with victory for the Russians.”

The phenomenon of Pan-Slavism was misunderstood and exaggerated by the Greeks. While there was some talk in Russia – for example, by Michael Katkov at the ethnographic exhibition in Moscow in 1867 of bringing all the Slavs together into a single polity under Russia just as the German lands were being brought together under Prussia, this was never a serious political proposition and never entertained by any of the Tsars. Pan-Slavism existed more in the minds of the Greeks than in reality.

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113 Lopukhin, op. cit., pp. 136-137.
115 The famous Serbian Bishop Nikolai (Velimirovich) was inclined to deny the very existence of Pan-Slavism, saying that it was invented by the Germans: “Who thought up Pan-Slavism and spoke about it to the world? The Pan-Germanists! Yes, it was precisely the Pan-Germanists who thought up Pan-Slavism and sounded out about it to the whole world. Man always judges about others from himself. If Pan-Germanism exists, then why should Pan-Slavism not exist? However, this analogy, however much it may appear to represent the rule, is inaccurate in this case. Pan-Germanism existed and exists, while Pan-Slavism was not and is not now. Everybody knows that there is a Pan-German party in both Germany and Austria. We know that there exists Pan-German journalism, and pan-German clubs, and German literature, and pan-German organizations, and German banks. But in the Slavic world, by contrast, there exists nothing of the kind. As a Slav, I would have known about it, and as a
Even the Pan-Slavism of a man like General Fadeyev can be called this only with major qualifications. Thus consider his *Opinion on the Eastern Question* of 1876: “The liberated East of Europe, if it be liberated at all, will require: a durable bond of union, a common head with a common council, the transaction of international affairs and the military command in the hands of that head, the Tsar of Russia, the natural chief of all the Slavs and Orthodox... Every Russian, as well as every Slav and every Orthodox Christian, should desire to see chiefly the Russian reigning House cover the liberated soil of Eastern Europe with its branches, under the supremacy and lead of the Tsar of Russia, long recognized, in the expectation of the people, as the direct heir of Constantine the Great.” The ideology expressed here is not Pan-Slavism, but that of *Russia the Third Rome*, the idea—which goes a long way back, before the age of nationalism—that Russia, as the successor of Rome and Byzantium, is the natural protector of all Orthodox Christians. Hence the reference to “all the Slavs and Orthodox”, and “every Slav and every Orthodox Christian”, and to Constantine the Great—who, needless to say, was not a Slav.

For what in fact united *all* the Slavs as opposed to the Orthodox Slavic nations? Less than one might expect. Russia herself was far from being a purely Slavic empire; her aristocracy had been accepting Tatar and German nobles into its ranks for centuries. With the next largest Slavic nation, Poland, she was in a state of constant friction, as the Roman Catholic Poles did everything in their power to undermine Orthodox Russian power. With the Catholic and Protestant Slavs of the Austro-Hungarian Empire—Czechs, Slovaks, Croats, Slovenes—they were on more friendly terms. But it was not in her interests to foment revolution on ethnic lines in Austria, and as recently as 1848 Russian armies had acted to bolster Austrian power against the Magyars. With the Serbs and the Bulgars, Russia had both blood and Orthodox Christianity in common. But a political union with these nations—even if they wanted it, which most did not—would have required absorbing non-Orthodox Hungary and non-Slavic Romania as well.

free man I would have spoken about it all openly. However, in the Slavic world there exists something which is somewhat different from the Pan-Slavic spectre—a feeling, only a feeling, which is to be found more often in literature than in politics—Slavophilism. This is the same feeling of blood kinship and sympathy that exists in Italy towards the French, which is far from political Pan-Romanism, or the same feeling of kinship that exists in the United State towards the English and in England towards the Americans, although here also it is far from any kind of fantastic Pan-Anglicanism. It is a sentimental striving for kin, a nostalgia of the blood, a certain organic fear of being separated from one’s own. And if in this Slavophilism the penetrating note of love is just a little more audible than in Romanophilism or Anglophilism (and I think that it is audible), then this is completely natural and comprehensible. People who suffer are closer to each other than people who are lords. We Slavs, first of all as Slavs, and secondly as oppressed slaves, love and strive towards those who suffer from the same injustice, from the same arrogant pride, from the same disdain. Who can understand a slave better than a slave? And who is more likely to help a sufferer than a sufferer?...” (*Dusha Serbii* (The Soul of Serbia), Moscow, 2007, pp. 572-573).

Nor was it in Russia’s interests to support individual Slavic nationalisms. As Tom Gallacher points out, “as a multi-national empire in its own right, Russia was hostile to the pretensions of European small state nationalism.”¹¹⁷ For to support, say, Bulgarian pretensions to an independent Greater Bulgaria – as opposed to simply protecting Bulgarians suffering from Turkish cruelty – would have created conflicts with the Greeks, the Romanians and the Serbs; whereas it was in Russia’s interests to see unity among all the Orthodox nations. Even supposing that Russia in the name of some mythical Pan-Slavist ideal had been willing and able to conquer the whole of the Balkans and take Constantinople, she could not have held on to her gains for long. First, the western powers, including the new rising power of Germany, would have been stirred up to launch another crusade against her. Secondly, to drive the Turks out of Constantinople would not have meant their final defeat, and further operations deep into Asia would have been necessary. But thirdly and most importantly, the union between the Tsar of Russia and the Patriarch of Constantinople, upon which the whole of the Orthodox commonwealth was based, would have been shattered. For what then would the position of the Patriarch within the Russian empire have been? Still the first hierarch of Orthodoxy, or de facto subordinate to the Russian Synod? How would the Greeks (not to mention the Southern Slavs) react to exchanging one form of foreign dominion for another, albeit Orthodox?

A true Pan-Slavist in the political sense was Nicholas Danilevsky, whose Russia and Europe (1869) made use of Slavophile ideas from the 1840s. Danilevsky distinguished ten types of civilization in the past: (1) Egyptian, (2) Chinese, (3) Assyrian-Babylonian-Phoenician or Ancient Semitic, (4) Hindu, (5) Iranian, (6) Hebrew, (7) Ancient Greek, (8) Roman, (9) Neo-Semitic or Arabian, and (10) Romano-Germanic or European. He believed that after Russian had conquered Constantinople and liberated and united the Slavs under her rule, she would create an eleventh type of civilization or cultural type.¹¹⁸

Being a form of nationalist historicism, Danilevsky’s theory identified the latest in history with the best. And so Slavism, being the last in the series of “historico-cultural” types was the best, in his view. “The new Slavic

¹¹⁷ Gallagher, “Folly & Failure in the Balkans”, History Today, September, 1999, p. 48. As Hosking points out, “the official Foreign Office view was that Russia should cooperate with Germany and Austria to reaffirm the legitimist monarchical principle in Eastern Europe, to counteract revolutionary movements there, whether nationalist or not, and to promote a stable balance of power. Panslavism could never be consistently espoused by the Russian government, for it was a policy which would inevitably lead to war against the Ottomans and Habsburgs, if not against the European powers in general. Besides, it was in essence a revolutionary strategy, directed against legitimate sovereign states. For the Russian empire to promote the principle of insurrectionary nationalism was, to say the least, double-edged.” (op. cit., pp. 370-371)

civilization, with its capital at Constantinople, would synthesize the highest achievements of its predecessors in religion (Israel), culture (Greece), political order (Rome) and socio-economic progress (modern Europe), and would supplement them with the Slavic genius for social and economic justice. ‘These four rivers will unite on the wide plains of Slavdom into a mighty sea.’…"\(^{119}\)

Strictly speaking, however, “best” should not be understood here in relation to a universal scale of values, insofar as each “historico-cultural” type was \textit{sui generis} and incommensurable, according to Danilevsky. However, this reduced the significance of Danilevsky’s theory. For if no one civilization, even the Slavic, can be considered better than any other according to a universal scale of values, then there is no reason to consider it to be better in any real, objective sense…\(^{120}\)

In spite of the existence of one or two true Pan-Slavists like Danilevsky, Mark Almond is right in asserting that “Pan-Slavism remained a minority taste in Alexander II’s Russia. Although it attracted interest among journalists and academics as well as curious politicians wondering whether it might serve imperial interests abroad or undermine stability at home, even the Slavic Congress founded in 1858 or the high profile Slavic Congress in Moscow in 1867 attracted little more than interest. Cash to support the idea of

\(^{119}\) Hosking, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 369.

\(^{120}\) As Fr. Georges Florovsky writes, speaking of the later Slavophiles, “Significance is ascribed to this or that cultural achievement or discovery of the Slavic nationality not because we see in it the manifestation of the highest values, values which surpass those that inspired ‘European’ culture, but simply because they are the organic offshoots of the Slavic national genius. And so not because they are \textit{good}, but because they are \textit{ours}…”

“The ideals and concrete tasks for action are inspired not by autonomous seeking and ‘the re-evaluation of all values’, but solely by ‘the milieu’ and ‘circumstances’ of one’s ‘chance’ belonging to the given ‘cultural-historical type’, to the given ‘ethnic group of peoples’. This nationalism should be given the epithet ‘anthropological’, as opposed to the \textit{ethnic} nationalism of the ‘older Slavophiles’, [since] the basis for ‘idiosyncracy’ is sociological or anthropological particularity, not originality of cultural content. There individual variations are allowed on universal and eternal motifs: here they are taken to be various unshakeable and unmixed relative melodies…”

“It was on this plane, “continues Florovsky, “that the annihilating criticism to which Vladimir Soloviev subjected the imitative nationalism of the later Slavophiles lay. His words had the greater weight in that, even though he was not conscious of it, he stood squarely on the ground of the old, classical Slavophile principles. True, his criticism suffered from wordiness and ‘personalities’. Too often a harsh phrase took the place of subtle argumentation. But the basic fault of ‘false’ nationalism was sensed by him and illumined completely correctly. \textit{Only on the soil of universal principles that are absolutely significant to all is genuine culture possible}, and the national task of Slavdom can lie only in actively converting itself to the service of values that will be chosen for their supreme good in the free exercise of thought and faith… But the denial of the ‘universal-historical’ path is a step towards nihilism, to the complete dissolution of values... in the final analysis, the abolition of the category of values altogether…” (“Vechnoe i prekhodiaschee v uchenii russkikh slavianofilov” (The eternal and the passing in the teaching of the Russian Slavophiles), in \textit{Vera i Kul’tura (Faith and Culture)}, St. Petersburg, 2002, pp. 101, 102-103, 104-105).
Pan-Slavism was in short supply. The Slavic Committee made do with 1700 rubles a year even in 1867, at the height of public interest before the war a decade later.”\textsuperscript{121}

**Leontiev on Byzantinism**

An important disciple of Danilevsky was Constantine Leontiev. However, if Leontiev had ever really been an adherent of Danilevsky’s Pan-Slavism, he soon abandoned it under the influence of the holy Optina Elders, especially St. Ambrose, and a closer knowledge of the East. Thus “towards the end of his life, in the early 1890s, he finally lost his faith in Russia’s ability to create a distinctive new cultural type. The future, he prophesied, belonged to socialism; possibly a Russian tsar would stand at the head of the socialist movement and would organize and discipline it just as the Emperor Constantine had ‘organized’ Christianity; or perhaps, he wrote in another apocalyptic prediction, a democratic and secular Russia would become the home of the Antichrist…”\textsuperscript{122}

A more important enduring influence in the work of Leontiev was early Slavophilism.\textsuperscript{123} However, he was more appreciative than any of the Slavophiles of the continuing importance of Greek Orthodoxy. Leontiev believed that if one subtracted Byzantinism from Slavdom, very little distinctively different was left. An ardent Philhellene, he thought that narrowly Serbian and Bulgarian nationalisms were real and powerful forces, very similar in their aims and psychology to Greek nationalism, and, like


\textsuperscript{122} Walicki, *op. cit.*, pp. 304-305.

\textsuperscript{123} Thus “one of the sources of Leontiev’s ideas”, writes S.V. Khatuntsev, “on the inevitability of serious conflicts between a Russia that was renewing and transforming itself and the civilization of the West was undoubtedly the ideas of the Slavophiles. Proceeding from a recognition of the complete opposition of the two worlds – the ‘western’, ‘Romano-Germanic’, ‘Catholic-Protestant’, and the ‘eastern’, ‘Slavic-Orthodox’, the Slavophiles concluded that conflicts and wars between them were inevitable. So for Yu.F. Samarin, ‘the essential, root difference’ between the two worlds was already ‘a condition of struggle’ between them in all spheres, including the political. The political opposition between Western Europe and Slavdom was the initial basis of the views of I.S. Aksakov. Already in 1861 he was speaking about ‘the hatred, often instinctive’ of Europe for the Slavic, Orthodox world, the case of which was ‘the antagonism between the two opposing educational principles and the decrepit world’s envy of the new one, to which the future belongs’. Several years later Aksakov wrote: ‘The whole task of Europe consisted and consists in putting an end to the material and moral strengthening of Russia, so as not to allow the new, Orthodox-Slavic world to arise…’ However, he did not think that the opposition between the West and Russia unfailingly signified enmity or war between them. No less important for the genesis of the ideas of Leontiev that are being reviewed was his conception of the war of 1853-56 and the anti-Russian campaigns in Europe during the Polish rebellion of 1863-1864. Both the Eastern war and the anti-Russian campaigns convinced him that the West was irreconcilably hostile to Russia.” (“Problema ‘Rossia–Zapad’ vo vzgliadakh K.N. Leontieva (60-e gg. XIX veka)” (The Problem of Russia and the West in the views of K.N. Leontiev (in the 60s of the 19th century), *Voprosy Istorii (Questions of History)*, 2006 (3), p. 119).
contemporary Greek nationalism, sadly lacking in that exalted and spiritual form of “universalist nationalism” that he called *Byzantinism*. These petty nationalisms, argued Leontiev, were closely related to liberalism. They were all rooted in the French revolution: just as liberalism insisted on the essential equality of all men and their “human rights”, so these nationalisms insisted on the essential equality of all nations and their “national rights”. But this common striving for “national rights” made the nations very similar in their essential egoism; it erased *individuality* in the name of *individualism*, *hierarchy* in the name of *egalitarianism*.

Leontiev believed, as Walicki writes, that “nations were a creative force only when they represented a specific culture: 'naked' or purely 'tribal' nationalism was a corrosive force destroying both culture and the state, a levelling process that was, in the last resort, cosmopolitan; in fact, nationalism was only a mask for liberal and egalitarian tendencies, a specific metamorphosis of the universal process of disintegration”.

According to Leontiev, the nations’ striving to be independent was based precisely on their desire to be like every other nation: “Having become politically liberated, they are very glad, whether in everyday life or in ideas, to be like everyone else”. Therefore nationalism, freed from the universalist idea of Christianity, leads in the end to a soulless, secular cosmopolitanism. “In the whole of Europe the purely national, that is, *ethnic* principle, once released from its religious fetters, will at its triumph give fruits that are by no means national, but, on the contrary, in the highest degree cosmopolitan, or, more precisely, *revolutionary*.” The nations were like a man who is released from prison during an epidemic. It would be safer for him to remain in prison until the epidemic passes instead of striving for “liberation”. In the same way, “the political nationalism of our time does not give national isolation, because the overwhelming influence of cosmopolitan tastes is too strong…”

Leontiev foresaw that state nationalism could lead to the internationalist *abolition* or *merging* of states. “A grouping of states according to pure nationalities,” wrote Leontiev, “will lead European man very quickly to the dominion of internationalism” — that is, a European Union or even a Global

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124 As Leontiev put it: “The Greeks have ‘the Byzantine empire’, ‘the Great Hellenic Idea’; while the Bulgars have ‘Great Bulgarìa’. Is it not all the same?” (“Pis’ma o vostochnykh delakh – IV” (Letters on Eastern Matters–IV), op. cit., p. 363.
125 “So much for the national development, which makes them all similar to contemporary Europeans, which spreads... petty rationalism, egalitarianism, religious indifference, European bourgeois uniformity in tastes and manners: machines, pantaloons, frock-coats, top hats and demagogy!” (“Plody natsional’nykh dvizhenij” (The Fruits of the National Movements), op. cit., p. 560).
126 Walicki, op. cit., p. 303.
United Nations. "A state grouping according to tribes and nations is... nothing other than the preparation - striking in its force and vividness - for the transition to a cosmopolitan state, first a pan-European one, and then, perhaps, a global one, too! This is terrible! But still more terrible, in my opinion, is the fact that so far in Russia nobody has seen this or wants to understand it..."\(^\text{130}\)

“This striving for unity”, writes Wil van den Bercken, “provoked in Leontiev a fear of cultural impoverishment. He feared that the old capital cities of Europe would be swept off the map because formerly they had been centres of hostility between the European nations, and that the monarchies would disappear in favour of ‘a banal workers’ republic. Leontiev asks himself: ‘What price must be paid for such a fusion? Will not a new pan-European state have to dispense in principle with recognizing all local differences?... In any case France, Germany, Italy, Spain, etc. will cease to exist as states; they will become districts of the new state as former Piedmont, Tuscany, Rome and Naples have become districts for Italy, and as now Hessen, Hanover and Prussia have themselves become districts of pan-Germany; they will become for pan-Europe what Burgundy and Brittany have long become for France!’ According to Leontiev, the cultural complexity of Europe cannot be maintained in a Europe which has been democratically levelled down, but only in the various monarchistic states of Europe...”\(^\text{131}\)

Orthodoxy recognizes no essential difference between Jew and Greek, Scythian and barbarian so long as they are all Orthodox, all members of the Church. The same applies on the collective level, between nations. This is the Orthodox egalitarianism. So it went against the spirit of Orthodoxy for Russia to take the side of one Orthodox nation against another, or of Slavs against non-Slavs. The aim of Russia, as the protectress of Orthodoxy throughout the world, had to be to cool passions, avert conflicts and build bridges among the Orthodox of different races, rejecting both Pan-Hellenism and Pan-Slavism.

Therefore neither Pan-Hellenism nor Pan-Slavism but Byzantinism, was the ideal: the ideal of a commonwealth of all Orthodox nations united by a strict adherence to Holy Orthodoxy in the religious sphere and loyalty to the Orthodox Emperor in the political sphere. This vision has repelled many. Thus it has been argued that “for Leontiev, ‘ascetic and dogmatic Orthodoxy’ was mainly distinguished by its ‘Byzantine pessimism’, its lack of faith in the possibility of harmony and universal brotherhood.”\(^\text{132}\) However, this criticism is unjust: Orthodoxy does not reject the possibility of universal brotherhood, still less the actuality of Orthodox brotherhood. But it is realistic; it knows that


\(^{132}\) Walicki, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 308.
man is fallen, and that neither the idea of human rights nor that of national rights can take the place of true fraternity, or love in Christ, acquired through true faith in Christ and ascetic struggle.

**The Greco-Bulgarian Schism**

In her role as the defender of Ecumenical Orthodoxy, Russia’s natural ally was the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and the more perspicacious Russians always strove to preserve good relations with the patriarchate. In 1872, however, relations with Constantinople were put to a severe test when an ecclesiastical schism took place between the Greeks and the Bulgarians.

Now the Bulgarians were the only Orthodox nation in the Balkans that had not achieved some measure of political independence through revolution. By the same token, however, they were the only nation that had not been divided by revolution. Thus the Greek revolution had divided the Greek nation between the Free State of Greece and the Ottoman Empire, and successive Serbian rebellions had divided the Serbs between the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires, the Free States of Serbia and Montenegro. Romania was a more-or-less independent state, but with many Romanians still outside her borders. Of the Balkan Christian nations in 1871, only the Bulgarians had no

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133 This was a point stressed by Leontiev’s spiritual father, Elder Ambrose of Optina: “In your note about the living union of Russia with Greece, in our opinion you should first of all have pointed out how the Lord in the beginning founded the Ecumenical Orthodox Church, consisting of five Patriarchates, or individual Churches; and, when the Roman Church fell away from the Ecumenical Church, then the Lord as it were filled up this deprivation by founding the Church of Russia in the north, enlightening Russia with Christianity through the Greek Church, as the main representative of the Ecumenical Church. The attentive and discerning among the Orthodox see here two works of the Providence of God. First, the Lord by his later conversion of Russia to Christianity preserved her from the harm of the papists. And secondly, He showed that Russia, having been enlightened with Christianity through the Greek Church, must be in union with this people, as the main representative of the Ecumenical Orthodox Church, and not with others harmed by heresy. That is how our forefathers acted, seeing, perhaps, a pitiful example, beside the Romans, in the Armenian Church, which through its separation from the Ecumenical Church fell into many errors. The Armenians erred for two reasons: first, they accepted slanders against the Ecumenical Church; and secondly, they wanted self-government and instead of this subjected themselves to the subtle influence of the westerners, from which they were protected by their very geographical position. The cunning hellish enemy also wove his nets and is still weaving them over the Russians, only in a somewhat different form. The Armenians were confused first by accepting a slander against the Ecumenical Church, but afterwards by their desire for self-government. But the Russian could be closer to the same actions by accepting slanders against the first-hierarchs of the Ecumenical Church. And thus, through the enemy’s cunning and our blunders, it will turn out that we, wilfully departing from a useful and saving union with the Ecumenical Church, involuntarily and imperceptibly fall under the harmful influence of western opinions, from which Providence Itself has preserved and protected us, as was said earlier… You should have pointed out that absolute obedience is one thing, and relations with the Greek Church another. In the latter case there is nothing obligatory with regard to absolute obedience…” (Letter 226, *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’* (Orthodox Life), 478, November, 1989, pp. 208-209)
independent State or statelet – almost all Bulgarians were all living within the borders of one State – the Ottoman empire.

However, things were stirring in Bulgaria, too. Only the Bulgarians saw
the main obstacle to their national ambitions not in the Ottomans - some were
even happy at the thought of a “Turkish tsar” (after all, the Bulgarians were
partly of Turkic origin) – but in the neighbouring Christian nations. There
was particular tension in the provinces of Thrace and Macedonia, which from
ancient times had been Greek134, but where there were now more Bulgarians
than Greeks. The question was: if Turkish power finally collapsed west of the
Bosphorus, which nation would take control of these provinces – the Greeks
or the Bulgarians?

Parallel to the movement for political independence was a movement for
ecclesiastical independence. “The impetus for the Bulgarian movement for
ecclesiastical independence,” writes Eugene Pavlenko, “was provided by the
issuing in 1856 by the Turkish government of a decree promising liberal
reforms. In 1860 there followed a de facto refusal of the Bulgarians to submit
to the Patriarchate, which did not satisfy their demands for the right to elect
their own bishops in their own dioceses and the granting to them the
possibility of occupying the higher Church posts on an equal basis with the
Greeks. The Patriarchate of Constantinople made various concessions: it
issued Divine service books for the Bulgarian clergy in the Slavonic language,
and appointed archimandrites from the Bulgarians. Later, under the influence
of passions aroused on both sides, the demands of the Bulgarians intensified
and flowed out into the desire to have their own separate exarchate. In 1867
the Constantinopolitan Patriarch Gregory VI proposed a project for the
creation of a separate Bulgarian exarchate, but no meeting of minds was
achieved on this project. It was hindered not only by the impossibility of
precisely delineating dioceses with Greek and Bulgarian populations, but also
by the gradually formed striving of the Bulgarians to create their own
national Church, in which every Bulgarian, wherever he might be – in
Bulgaria or in Asia Minor - would be in subjection only to the Bulgarian
hierarchy. Such a striving was leading to a situation of ecclesiastical dual
powers and to schism, but the Bulgarians were no longer upset by this. They
wanted a schism, they were seeking it. They wanted separation not only from
the Greeks, but also from the whole of Orthodoxy, since such a separation
made them an independent people. ‘Look how willingly religion has been
sacrificed for the same purely tribal principle, for the same national-
cosmopolitan impulses!’ said K.N. Leontiev in this connection.135

134 Moreover, the 28th canon of the Fourth Ecumenical Council specifically mentions Thrace
and Macedonia as coming within the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The Greeks
were to use this canon in defence of their position.
135 Leontiev, “Plody natsional’nykh dvizhenij” (The Fruits of the National Movements), op.
cit., p. 559. (V.M.)
“In 1868 Patriarch Gregory VI of Constantinople attempted to settle the Greco-Bulgarian question by convening an Ecumenical Council, but without success. In these circumstances the Bulgarians decided to act through the sultan and submitted to him a petition concerning the re-establishment of the ecclesiastical independence which had been lost because of the abolition of the Trnovo Patriarchate. ‘Asking the Porte to establish their national independent hierarchy,’ wrote Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, ‘shows that although the Bulgarians have had sufficient time to think over what they are doing, they still have the stubborn desire without having acquired understanding. It is possible to establish a new independent hierarchy only with the blessing of a lawfully existing hierarchy.’ In reply to this request of the Bulgarians the Porte put forward two projects. According to point 3 of both projects, ‘in Constantinople, next to the Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch, a pre-eminent Orthodox Metropolitan of Bulgaria must be introduced..., to whom the supervision of the administration of the Bulgarian churches is to be entrusted and under whom there will be an assembly, that is, a kind of Synod, occupied with church affairs.’ In point 5 of one of these projects the Bulgarian Church is also called ‘a separate body’, while the aforementioned assembly is more than once called a Synod.”

The patriarch objected to this project on sound canonical grounds: it is forbidden by the Holy Canons for two separate hierarchies to exist on the same territory (8th canon of the First Ecumenical Council; 34th and 35th canons of the Holy Apostles). Nevertheless, in 1870 the sultan issued a firman giving permission to the Bulgarians to establish a separate exarchate that was to be administered by the Synod of the Bulgarian bishops under the presidency of the exarch. However, the following concessions were made to the Ecumenical Patriarch: the Bulgarian exarch had to commemorate his name in the liturgy; he had to refer to him in connection with the most important matters of the faith; the election of a new exarch had to be confirmed by the patriarch; and the Bulgarians had to receive chrism from the patriarch. Patriarch Gregory asked the Ottoman authorities for permission to convene an Ecumenical Council to examine this question, but he was refused, and resigned his see.

In April, 1872 a Bulgarian Assembly in Constantinople elected its exarch. However, the new Patriarch of Constantinople, Anthimus IV, refused, as Pavlenko writes, “not only to recognize, but also to receive the exarch, from whom he demanded written repentance for all that had been done. But the semi-independent existence of the exarchate no longer suited the Bulgarians, either. They longed for complete separation from the Greeks, which could only be achieved by means of an ecclesiastical schism. On May 11, 1872, after the Gospel during the Liturgy, which was celebrated in Constantinople by the

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136 Metropolitan Philaret, in Leontiev, “Пис’ма o востоchnyh delakh” (Letters on Eastern Matters), op. cit, p. 360.
exarch together with the other Bulgarian bishops and many clergy, an act signed by the Council of seven Bulgarian bishops was proclaimed, which declared that the Bulgarian Church was independent. On May 15, the Patriarchal Synod declared the Bulgarian exarch deprived of his rank and defrocked; the other Bulgarian bishops, together with all the clergy and laity in communion with them, were subjected to ecclesiastical punishments. A declaration was also made concerning the convening of a Local Council...

“The Local Council of Constantinople opened on August 29, 1872. 32 hierarchs and all the Eastern Patriarchs except Jerusalem took part in it. On September 16, in its third session, the Constantinopolitan Council confirmed the decision according to which all the Bulgarian hierarchs with their clergy and laity were declared schismatics, and the whole of the Bulgarian Church was declared schismatic. In relation to phyletism the Council made the following decision: ‘...We have concluded that when the principle of racial division is juxtaposed with the teaching of the Gospel and the constant practice of the Church, it is not only foreign to it, but also completely opposed, to it.’ ‘We decree the following in the Holy Spirit: 1. We reject and condemn racial division, that is, racial differences, national quarrels and disagreements in the Church of Christ, as being contrary to the teaching of the Gospel and the holy canons of our blessed fathers, on which the holy Church is established and which adorn human society and lead it to Divine piety. 2. In accordance with the holy canons, we proclaim that those who accept such division according to races and who dare to base on it hitherto unheard-of racial assemblies are foreign to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and are real schismatics.’”

The Churches of Russia, Jerusalem, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania remained in communion with both the Greeks and the Bulgars.

Now the synodical condemnation of “phyletism”, or ecclesiastical nationalism, was certainly timely. However, for many the conciliar condemnation of nationalism carried little weight because it came from the patriarchate that they considered the first sinner in this respect. Thus D.A. Khomiakov wrote. “Is not ‘pride in Orthodoxy’ nothing other than the cultural pride of the ancient Greek? And, of course, the true ‘phyletism’, formulated for the struggle against the Bulgarians, is precisely the characteristic of the Greeks themselves to a much greater extent than the

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138 Pavlenko, op. cit. The full report of the special commission can be found in Hildo Boas and Jim Forest, For the Peace from Above: an Orthodox Resource Book, Syndesmos, 1999; in “The Heresy of Racism”, In Communion, Fall, 2000, pp. 16-18.

Bulgarians, Serbs, Syrians and others. With them it is only a protest against the basic phyletism of the Greeks. The contemporary Greek considers himself the exclusive bearer of pure Orthodoxy..."\[^{140}\]

Even the Philhellene Leontiev agreed. Although he supported the Greeks on the purely canonical issue, he thought that both sides were equally responsible for the schism: “Both you [Greeks] and the Bulgarians can equally be accused of phyletism, that is, in introducing ethnic interests into Church questions, and in the use of religion as a political weapon; but the difference lies in the fact that Bulgarian phyletism is defensive, while yours is offensive. Their phyletism seeks only to mark out the boundaries of their tribe; yours seeks to cross the boundaries of Hellenism...”\[^{141}\]

\[^{140}\] Khomiakov, *Pravoslavie, Samoderzhavie, Narodnost’* (Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality), Minsk: Belaruskaya Gramata, 1997, p. 19. Cf. Glubovsky, N.N.: "Greek nationalism historically merged with Orthodoxy and protected it by its own self-preservation, while 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, ending 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 Tubingen theologians of the Constantinopolitan patriarch Jeremiah II (+1595), who spoke in the capacity of a 'successor of Christ' (introduction), the Greek 'holy Church of God is the mother of the Churches, and, by the grace of God, she holds the first place in knowledge. She boasts without reproach in the purity of her apostolic and patristic decrees, and, while being new, is old in Orthodoxy, and is placed at the head', which is why 'every Christian church must celebrate the Liturgy exactly as she [the Greco-Constantinopolitan Church] does (chapter 13). Constantinople always displayed tendencies towards Church absolutism in Orthodoxy and was by no means well-disposed towards the development of autonomous national Churches, having difficulty in recognising them even in their hierarchical equality. Byzantine-Constantinopolitan Hellenism has done nothing to strengthen national Christian distinctiveness in the Eastern patriarchates and has defended its own governmental-hierarchical hegemony by all means, fighting against the national independence of Damascus (Antioch) and Jerusalem. At the end of the 16th century Constantinople by no means fully accepted the independence of the Russian Church and was not completely reconciled to Greek autocephaly (from the middle of the 19th century), while in relation to the Bulgarian Church they extended their nationalist intolerance to the extent of an ecclesiastical schism, declaring her (in 1872) in all her parts to be 'in schism'. It is a matter of great wonder that the champions of extreme nationalism in the ecclesiastical sphere should then (in 1872) have recognized national-ecclesiastical strivings to be impermissible in others and even labelled them 'phyletism', a new-fangled heresy." ("Pravoslavie po ego sushchestvu" (Orthodoxy in its essence), in Tserkov’ i Vremia (The Church and Time), 1991, pp. 5-6).

\[^{141}\] Leontiev, “Panslavism i Greki” (Pan-Slavism and the Greeks), *op cit.,* p. 46.
**At the Gates of Constantinople**

We return now to the “Eastern Question” in the political sense - the competition between the Great Powers, especially Russia and Britain, to control territories of “the sick man of Europe”, Turkey. The British persistently tried to oppose Russia’s expansion towards the Mediterranean in defence of her co-religionists, the Orthodox. “British interests in the Balkans,” writes Roman Golizc, “derived from wider economic interests in India via the Eastern Mediterranean. In 1858 the British Government had taken direct control over Indian affairs. Since 1869 the Suez Canal had provided it with a direct route to India. Britain needed to secure the shipping routes which passed through areas, like Suez, that were nominally Turkish.”

Or rather, that was the theory. In fact, Russia presented no threat to British interests in India, whether in the Eastern Mediterranean or in Central Asia, the other area of Anglo-Russian tensions. Rather, the real cause of British hostility to Russian expansion was simply visceral jealousy - the jealousy of the world’s greatest maritime empire in relation to the world’s greatest land-based empire. And it was expressed in a fierce, “jingoistic” spirit. As Selischev writes: “If Palmerston unleashed the Crimean war, then Disraeli was ready to unleash war with Russia in 1877-78, in order, as he wrote to Queen Victoria, to save the Ottoman state and ‘cleanse Central Asia from the Muscovites and throw them into the Caspian sea.”

Palmerston himself commented once that “these half-civilized governments such as those of China, Portugal, Spanish America require a Dressing every eight or ten years to keep them in order”. “And no one who knew his views on Russia,” writes Dominic Lieven, “could doubt his sense that she too deserved to belong to this category.”

The conflict really began in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where, as Andrew Wheatcroft writes, “a series of disconnected incidents, beginning with strident Muslim resistance to the plan that a new Orthodox cathedral being built in Sarajevo would tower over the sixteenth-century Begova mosque, sparked violence. From 1872 onwards there was resistance to Ottoman tax-gatherers, with peasants arming themselves and taking refuge in nearby Montenegro. The local authorities responded, as they usually did, with a knee-jerk brutality: by 1876 hundreds of villages had been burned and more than 5,000 Bosnian peasants killed. Soon the contagion of rebellion began to seep into the Bulgarian provinces. The threat of a general uprising seemed imminent.

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143 Selischew, “Chto neset Pravoslaviu proekt ‘Velikoj Albanii’?” (What will the project of a ‘Greater Albania’ bring for Orthodoxy), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), No 2 (1787), January 15/28, 2005, p. 10.

“Every piece of revolutionary propaganda and each intelligence report read served to bolster the fear. Was the government in Constantinople to disregard the terrorist threats made by the Bulgarian revolutionaries? The insurgents wrote: ‘Herzegovina is fighting; Montenegro is spreading over the mountains and coming with help; Serbia is ready to put its forces on the move; Greece is about to declare war; Rumania will not remain neutral. Is there any doubt that death is hanging over Turkey?’ In July 1875, at Nevesinje in Herzegovina, the clan chiefs had met and thrown down a challenge to the Turks. One declared: ‘Ever since the damned day of Kosovo [Polje, in 1389] the Turk robs us of our life and liberty. Is it not a shame, a shame before all the world, that we bear the arms of heroes and yet are called Turkish subjects? All Christendom waits for us to rise on behalf of our treasured freedom… Today is our opportunity to rebel and to engage in bloody fight.’ This guerilla war, in Harold Temperley’s view, led directly to the revolt in Bulgaria and all that followed. It was a cruel war on both sides. The first things that the British Consul Holmes [in Sarajevo] saw as he entered Nevesinje were a Turkish boy’s head blackening in the sun, and a bloody froth bubbling from the slit throat of a young Turkish girl…”

The Turks replied in kind. When the Bulgars rebelled in the town of Panagyurishte in Central Bulgaria the Turkish “Bashi Bazouks” unleashed a savage wave of reprisals that left about 12,000 dead. Many of the slain were martyred precisely because they refused to renounce their Orthodox faith for Mohammedanism.

For example, early in May, 1876, the Turks came to the village of Batak, and said to the second priest, Fr. Peter: “We’d like to say a couple of words to you, priest. If you carry them out, priest, we shall not kill you. Will you become a Turk [the word actually means: ‘become a Muslim’], priest?” Fr. Peter boldly replied: “I will give up my head, but I will not give up my faith!” Then the Turks beheaded him.

The other priest of the village, Fr. Nyech, saw all of his seven daughters beheaded. “And each time he was asked: ‘The turban or the axe?’ The Hieromartyr replied with silence. His last child having been put to death, the torturers plucked out the Priest’s beard, pulled out his teeth, gouged out his eyes, cut off his ears, and chopped his body, already lifeless, into pieces…”

And yet Western governments at first dismissed these reports, preferring to believe their ambassadors and consuls rather than The Daily Telegraph.

Disraeli dismissed public concern about the Bulgarian atrocities as “coffee-house babble”. And when a conference was convened in Constantinople by the Great Powers, it failed to put any significant pressure on the Turks.

In July, 1876 Serbia and Montenegro also declared war on the Ottoman Empire. The main cause here was slightly different – the Ottomans’ imposition of a tithe of one-tenth or one-eighth of their crop on the Orthodox peasants of Bosnia and Herzegovina. When the harvest failed in 1874, the Ottomans resorted to force, and by the end of July all the peasants in the region had fled to the mountains in armed rebellion. As Noel Malcolm writes, “the basic cause of popular discontent was agrarian; but this discontent was harnessed in some parts of Bosnia by members of the Orthodox population who had been in contact with Serbia, and who now publicly declared their loyalty to the Serbian state. Volunteers from Serbia, Slavonia, Croatia, Slovenia and even Russia (plus some Italian Garibaldists, and a Dutch adventuress called Johanna Paulus) were flooding into the country, convinced that the great awakening of the South Slavs was at hand. The Bosnian governor assembled an army in Herzegovina, which acted with ineffective brutality during the autumn and harsh winter of 1875-6. The fiercer begs raised their own ‘bashi-bazooks’ (irregular troops) and, fearing a general overthrow in Bosnia, began terrorizing the peasant population. During 1876, hundreds of villages were burnt down and at least 5000 peasants killed; by the end of the year, the number of refugees from Bosnia was probably 100,000 at least, and possibly 250,000.”

Opposition to Disraeli’s policy of inaction was now mounting. In September, 1876 Gladstone, his great rival, published The Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East: “Let the Turks now carry off their abuses in the only possible manner, namely by carrying off themselves. Their Zaptiehs and their Mindirs, their Bimba shis and their Yuzbachis, their Kaimakams and their Pashas, one and all, bag and baggage, shall I hope to clear out from the province they have desolated and profaned.”

Disraeli, on the other hand, ascribed the violence to the activities of the secret societies, which he said were on the side of Serbia. “Serbia declared war on Turkey, that is to say, the secret societies of Europe declared war on Turkey, societies which have regular agents everywhere, which countenance assassination and which, if necessary, could produce massacre.”

Public opinion was also demanding action in Russia. As Hosking writes, “Army officers, society ladies and merchants formed Slavic Benevolent Committees which called meetings, collected money, and began to send volunteers to fight for the Serbian army. Dostoevskii… preached war against the Turks as a means of achieving ‘eternal peace’. The authorities decided they could not condemn these efforts out of hand, and allowed Russian

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officers and men to take leave and volunteer for the Serbian army: among them was Fadeyev’s friend, General Mikhail Cherniaev, who soon became an emblematic hero for the Panslavs."

But Cherniaev’s support was not enough to save the Serbs from defeat by the Turks. The Russians were now faced with a dilemma. Either they committed themselves officially to war with Turkey, or they had to resign themselves to seeing a sharp fall in their influence in the Balkans. In November, 1876 the Tsar spoke of the need to defend the Slavs. And his foreign minister Gorchakov wrote that “national and Christian sentiment in Russia… impose on the Emperor duties which His Majesty cannot disregard”. Ivan Aksakov then took up the Tsar’s words, invoking the doctrine of Moscow the Third Rome: “The historical conscience of all Russia spoke from the lips of the Tsar. On that memorable day, he spoke as the descendant of Ivan III, who received from the Paleologi the Byzantine arms and combined them with the arms of Moscow, as the descendant of Catherine and of Peter… From these words there can be no drawing back… The slumbering east is now awakened, and not only the Slavs of the Balkans but the whole Slavonic world awaits its regeneration.”

On April 24, 1877 Russia declared war on Turkey - “but more”, argues Hosking, “to preserve Russia’s position in the European balance of power than with Panslav aims in mind. At a Slavic Benevolent Society meeting Ivan Aksakov called the Russo-Turkish war a ‘historical necessity’ and added that ‘the people had never viewed any war with such conscious sympathy’. There was indeed considerable support for the war among peasants, who regarded it as a struggle on behalf of suffering Orthodox brethren against the cruel and rapacious infidel. A peasant elder from Smolensk province told many years later how the people of his village had been puzzled as to ‘Why our Father-Tsar lets his people suffer from the infidel Turks?’, and had viewed Russia’s entry into the war with relief and satisfaction.”

Meanwhile, Disraeli and his cabinet, supported by Queen Victoria, decided that if the Russians succeeded in taking Constantinople, this would be a casus belli...

After a victorious campaign across the Balkans, the Russian armies crossed the Danube, conquered Bulgaria and captured Adrianople, only a short march from Constantinople, in January, 1878. Serb and Bulgarian volunteers flocked to the Russian camp. The Russians were now in a similar position to where they had been in 1829. At that time Tsar Nicholas I had held back from conquering Constantinople because he did not have the support of the Concert of Europe. That Concert no longer existed in 1878. However, it was

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150 Hosking, op. cit., p. 371.
151 Figes, op. cit., p. 40.
a similar fear of provoking a war with the Western powers that held the Russians back again now…

The commander-in-chief of the Russian armies and brother of the Tsar, Grand Duke Nikolai, wrote to the Tsar: “We must go to the centre, to Tsarigrad, and there finish the holy cause you have assumed.”

He was not the only one who clamoured for the final, killer blow: “‘Constantinople must be ours,’ wrote Dostoyevsky, who saw its conquest by the Russian armies as nothing less than God’s own resolution of the Eastern Question and as the fulfilment of Russia’s destiny to liberate Orthodox Christianity.

“‘It is not only the magnificent port, not only the access to the seas and oceans, that binds Russia as closely to the resolution… of the this fateful question, nor is it even the unification and regeneration of the Slavs. Our goal is more profound, immeasurably more profound. We, Russia, are truly essential and unavoidable both for the whole of Eastern Christendom and for the whole fate of future Orthodoxy on the earth, for its unity. This is what our people and their rulers have always understood. In short, this terrible Eastern Question is virtually our entire fate for years to come. It contains, as it were, all our goals and, mainly, our only way to move out into the fullness of history.’”\(^\text{152}\)

Immediately, however, the entire British Mediterranean Squadron was sent to the Dardanelles by Disraeli as British public opinion turned “jingoistic”:

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\text{We don’t want to fight, but by jingo if we do,} \\
\text{We’ve got the ships, we’ve got the men, and got the money too;} \\
\text{We’ve fought the bear before, and while we’re Britons true,} \\
\text{The Russians shall not have Constantinople.}
\]

Under the influence of this threat, the Russians agreed not to send troops into Constantinople if no British troops were landed on either side of the Straits. Then, on March 3, at the village of San Stefano, just outside Constantinople, they signed a treaty with the Turks, whereby the latter recognized the full independence of Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, and the autonomy of an enlarged Bulgarian state that was to include Macedonia and part of Thrace. “The Treaty also constituted Bulgaria as a tributary principality of Russia; it required a heavy financial indemnity from Turkey; it gave to Russia the right to select a port on the Black Sea; it opened up the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus at all times to Russian vessels; it obtained full right for all Christians remaining under Turkish rule; and it gave Bessarabia to Russia in exchange for the corner of Bulgaria known as Dobruja.”\(^\text{153}\)

\(^{152}\) Figes, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 462.
\(^{153}\) Golicz, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 44.
In little more than 20 years the Crimean war had been avenged: it was a
great victory for the Orthodox armies... However, the Great Powers were
determined to rob Russia of the fruits of her victory by diplomatic means. As
Disraeli demanded that the Russians surrendered their gains, Bismarck
convened a congress in Berlin in June, 1878. It was agreed that all troops
should be withdrawn from the area of Constantinople, and Greater Bulgaria
was cut down to two smaller, non-contiguous areas, while Britain added
Cyprus to her dominions. Serbia, Montenegro and Romania were recognised
as independent States (on condition that they gave full rights to the Jews), but
Serbia and Montenegro lost the acquisitions they had made in the war.

More importantly, writes Archpriest Lev Lebedev, “Bosnia and
Herzegovina were for some reason handed over to Austria for her ‘temporary’
use in order to establish ‘normal government’. In this way a mine was laid
which, according to the plan of the Masons, was meant to explode later in a
new Balkan war with the aim of ravaging and destroying Russia. At the
congress Bismarck called himself an ‘honest broker’. But that was not how he
was viewed in Russia. Here the disturbance at his behaviour was so great that
Bismarck considered it necessary secretly (in case of war with Russia) to
conclude with Austria, and later with Italy, the famous ‘Triple Union’…”

Disraeli, the Jewish leader of the Western Christian world, had
triumphed... And then the Jews proceeded to punish Russia again. “In 1877-
1878 the House of Rothschild, by agreement with Disraeli, first bought up,
and then threw out onto the market in Berlin a large quantity of Russian
securities, which elicited a sharp fall in their rate.”

Dostoyevsky on Russia

Russia’s failure to conquer Constantinople and unite the Orthodox peoples
under the Tsar was a great blow to the Slavophiles. “At a Slavic Benevolent
Society banquet in June 1878 Ivan Aksakov furiously denounced the Berlin
Congress as ‘an open conspiracy against the Russian people, [conducted] with
the participation of the representatives of Russia herself!’”

Dostoyevsky was also disillusioned. But his disillusionment was not the
product of the failure of his “Pan-Slavist” dreams, as some have made out.
For Dostoyevsky’s dreams were not “Pan-Slavist”, but “Pan-Human”,
genuinely universalist. His dream was the conversion of the whole world to

154 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1997, p. 349. The disturbance was such
that “at a Slavic Benevolent Society banquet in June 1878 Ivan Aksakov furiously denounced
the Berlin Congress as ‘an open conspiracy against the Russian people, [conducted] with
the participation of the representatives of Russia herself!’” (Hosking, op. cit., pp. 372-373)
155 V. Zombardt, in O.A. Platonov, Ternovij Venets Rossii (Russia’s Crown of Thorns), Moscow,
Christ, and thereby to real fraternity – that fraternity which the revolutionaries had promised, but had not delivered, and would never be able to deliver. A major step on the road to this dream was to be the liberation and unification of the Orthodox peoples of the East under the Russian tsar through the planting of the Cross on the dome of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople by the Russian armies. Dostoyevsky found real brotherhood only in the Orthodox Church, and in that Orthodox nation which, he believed, had most thoroughly incarnated the ideals of the Gospel – Russia. “The moral idea is Christ. In the West, Christ has been distorted and diminished. It is the kingdom of the Antichrist. We have Orthodoxy. As a consequence, we are the bearers of a clearer understanding of Christ and a new idea for the resurrection of the world… There the disintegration, atheism, began earlier: with us, later, but it will begin certainly with the entrenchment of atheism… The whole matter lies in the question: can one, being civilized, that is, a European, that is, believe absolutely in the Divinity of the Son of God, Jesus Christ? (for all faith consists in this)… You see: either everything is contained in faith or nothing is: we recognize the importance of the world through Orthodoxy. And the whole question is, can one believe in Orthodoxy? If one can, then everything is saved: if not, then, better to burn… But if Orthodoxy is impossible for the enlightened man, then… all this is hocus-pocus and Russia’s whole strength is provisional… It is possible to believe seriously and in earnest. Here is everything, the burden of life for the Russian people and their entire mission and existence to come…”

It was for the sake of Orthodoxy, the true brotherhood, that the Russian armies had sacrificed, and would continue to sacrifice themselves, for the freedom of the Greek, Slav and Romanian peoples. “I am speaking of the unquenchable, inherent thirst in the Russian people for great, universal, brotherly fellowship in the name of Christ.” Dostoyevsky believed, had only temporarily been checked at the Gates of Constantinople, and would one day conquer it and hand it back to the Greeks, even if took a hundred years and more. Nor was this universalist love confined to Russia’s brothers in the faith: it extended even to her enemies in Western Europe – that “graveyard of holy miracles”. The lost half of Europe, immersed in Catholicism and its child, Protestantism, and its grandchild, atheism, would be converted from Russia: “Light will shine forth from the East!”

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159 V. Weidle writes: “‘Europe is a mother to us, as is Russia, she is our second mother; we have taken much from her and shall do so again, and we do not wish to be ungrateful to her.’ No Westernizer said this; it is beyond Westerners, as it is beyond Slavophiles. Dostoyevsky wrote it at the height of his wisdom, on the threshold of death… His last hope was Messianism, but a Messianism which was essentially European, which developed out of his perception of Russia as a sort of better Europe, which was called upon to save and renew Europe” (*The Task of Russia*, New York, 1956, pp. 47-60; in Schmemann, *op. cit.*, p. 338).
But in the meantime, what sorrows, what torture and bloodshed, lay in store for Europe, and first of all for Russia, whose ruling classes were already Orthodox only in name! It was all the fault of the misguided idealism that sought, on the basis of science and rationalism, to force men to be happy – or rather, to give them happiness of a kind in exchange for their freedom. This rationalist-absolutist principle was common both to the most believing (Catholic) and most unbelieving (Socialist) factions in Western political life, and was typified in the Grand Inquisitor in *The Brothers Karamazov*, who “in his last remaining years… comes to the clear conviction that it is only the advice of the great and terrible spirit that could bring some sort of supportable order into the life of the feeble rebels, ‘the unfinished experimental creatures created as a mockery’. And so, convinced of that, he sees that one has to follow the instructions of the wise spirit, the terrible spirit of death and destruction. He therefore accepts lies and deceptions and leads men consciously to death and destruction. Keeps deceiving them all the way, so that they should not notice where they are being led, for he is anxious that those miserable, blind creatures should at least on the way think themselves happy. And, mind you, the deception is in the name of Him in Whose ideal the old man believed so passionately all his life! Is not that a calamity?...”

Since so many in Russia’s educated classes thought like Ivan Karamazov and the Grand Inquisitor (although much less seriously and systematically, for the most part), it was premature to think of the unification of the Orthodox peoples – still less, of the whole of Europe - under the leadership of Russia. The first need was to unite Russia within herself. And that meant uniting the educated classes with the bulk of the population, the peasant *narod*, whose lack of education and poverty, and attachment to the Orthodox Tsar and Church, repelled the proud, self-appointed guardians of the nation’s conscience. In fact, populism had been an underlying theme of that generation of liberals, most notably in the attempt of the young revolutionary *narodniki* to “go out to the people”. Dostoyevsky took it upon himself to show them a surer, because humbler way of being united with the people...

In his youth Dostoyevsky had been converted from the socialist ideas of his youth to the official slogan of Nicholas I’s Russia, “Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Narodnost”. But he wrote little directly about Orthodoxy or Autocracy, probably because this would immediately have put off his audience, confining himself to such remarks as: "Our constitution is mutual love. Of the Monarch for the people and of the people for the Monarch.”

A generation earlier, Slavophiles such as Khomiakov and Kireyevsky had been able to speak openly in support of the Church and the Tsar. But the years 1860-1880 had entrenched liberalism and positivism firmly in the hearts and minds of the intelligentsia. So Dostoyevsky had to approach the subject more

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indirectly, through the third element of the slogan – Narodnost’, Nationhood. Such an approach had the further advantage that it was the way Dostoyevsky himself had returned to the faith: from the time of his imprisonment in Siberia, his eyes had slowly been opened to the reality of the people, their spiritual beauty and their Orthodox faith.

At the same time, a whole pleiad of artists, the so-called pochvenniki, “lovers of the soil”, were coming to a similar discovery, giving a kind of second wind to Slavophilism. For example, in 1872, during the celebrations of the bicentenary of that most “anti-pochvennik” of tsars, Peter the Great, the young composer Modest Mussorgsky wrote to his closest friend: “The power of the black earth will make itself manifest when you plough to the very bottom. It is possible to plough the black earth with tools wrought of alien materials. And at the end of the 17th century they ploughed Mother Russia with just such tools, so that she did not immediately realize what they were ploughing with, and, like the black earth, she opened up and began to breathe. And she, our beloved, received the various state bureaucrats, who never gave her, the long-suffering one, time to collect herself and to think: ‘Where are you pushing me?’ The ignorant and confused were executed: force!... But the times are out of joint: the state bureaucrats are not letting the black earth breathe.

‘We’ve gone forward!’ – you lie. ‘We haven’t moved!’ Paper, books have gone forward – we haven’t moved. So long as the people cannot verify with their own eyes what is being cooked out of them, as long as they do not themselves will what is or is not to be cooked out of them – till then, we haven’t moved! Public benefactors of every kind will seek to glorify themselves, will buttress their glory with documents, but the people groan, and so as not to groan they drink like the devil, and groan worse than ever: haven’t moved!”

Mussorgsky composed in Boris Godunov and Khovanschina two “popular” dramas which evoked the spirit of Mother Russia and the Orthodox Church as no other work of secular art had done. Dostoyevsky was to do the same in The Brothers Karamazov. He hoped, through the beauty of his art, to open the eyes of his fellow intelligenty to the people’s beauty, helping them thereby to “bow down before the people’s truth” – Orthodoxy. In this way, “beauty” – the beauty of the people’s truth, the Russian God – “will save the world”.

However, Dostoyevsky’s concept of the people is easily misunderstood, and needs careful explication. Some have seen in it extreme chauvinism, others – sentimental cosmopolitanism. The very diversity of these reactions indicates a misunderstanding of Dostoyevsky’s antinomical reasoning.

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Let us consider, first, the following words of Shatov in *The Devils*: “Do you know who are now the only ‘God-bearing’ people on earth, destined to regenerate and save the world in the name of a new god and to whom alone the keys of life and of the new word have been vouchsafed?”¹⁶³ The “people” here is, of course, the Russian people. And the God they bear is Christ, Who is “new” only in the sense that the revelation of the truth of Christ in Orthodoxy is something new for those other nations who were once Christian but who have lost the salt of True Christianity. Not that the Russians are considered *genetically* or *racially* superior to all other nations; for “Russianness” is a spiritual concept closely tied up with confession of the one true faith, which may exclude many people of Russian blood (for example, the unbelieving intelligentsia), but include people of other nations with the same faith. Thus Shatov agrees with Stavrogin that “an atheist can’t be a Russian”, and “an atheist at once ceases to be a Russian”. And again: “A man who does not belong to the Greek Orthodox faith cannot be a Russian.”¹⁶⁴

It follows that “the Russian people” is a concept with a universalist content insofar as her Orthodox faith is universal; it is virtually equivalent to the concept of “the Orthodox Christian people”, in which “there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither barbarian nor Scythian” (Colossians 3.11). For “if,” writes M.V. Zyzykin, “it is possible to call the fact that Christianity has become the content of a certain people’s narodnost’ the national property of that people, then such a property belongs also to the Russian people. But we should rather add the term ‘universal’ here, because the very nationality is expressed in universality, *universality has become the content of the narodnost’.*”¹⁶⁵

Shatov continues: “The purpose of the whole evolution of a nation, in every people and at every period of its existence, is solely the pursuit of God, their God, their very own God, and faith in Him as the only true one... The people is the body of God. Every people is a people only so long as it has its own particular god and excludes all other gods in the world without any attempt at reconciliation; so long as it believes that by its own god it will conquer and banish all the other gods from the world. So all believed from the very beginning of time – all the great nations, at any rate, all who have been in any way marked out, all who have played a leading part in the affairs of mankind. It is impossible to go against the facts. The Jews lived only to await the coming of the true God, and they left the true God to the world. The Greeks deified nature and bequeathed the world their religion – that is, philosophy and art. Rome deified the people in the State and bequeathed the State to the nations. France throughout her long history was merely the embodiment and development of the idea of the Roman god, and if she at last flung her Roman god into the abyss and gave herself up to atheism, which for the time being they call socialism, it is only because atheism is still healthier

¹⁶⁴ Dostoyevsky, *The Devils*, p. 255.
than Roman Catholicism. If a great people does not believe that truth resides
in it alone (in itself alone and in it exclusively), if it does not believe that it
alone is able and has been chosen to raise up and save everybody by its own
truth, it is at once transformed into ethnographical material, and not into a
great people…”

It follows that what we would now call “ecumenism” – the belief that other
nations’ religions are as good as one’s own – is the destruction of the nation.
And indeed, this is what we see today. For the modern nations who recognize
each other’s gods have become mere “ethnographical material”, members of
the United Nations but not nations in the full sense of entities having a
spiritual principle and purpose for their independent existence. According to
the ecumenist logic, any nation that asserts its own truth in the face of other
supposed truths must be “nationalist”, and steps must be taken to reduce or
destroy its power. Universalism is declared to be good and nationalism bad. It
cannot be that a nation’s particular, national faith may have a universalist
content.

And yet this is precisely what Dostoyevsky insisted on for Russia…

*The Pushkin Speech*

“Dostoyevsky,” wrote Florovsky, “was a faithful follower of the classical
Slavophile traditions, and he based his faith in the great destiny marked out
for the God-bearing People, not so much on historical intimations, as on that
Image of God which he saw in the hidden depths of the Russian people’s
soul, and on the capacities of the Russian spirit for ‘pan-humanity’. Being
foreign to a superficial disdain and impure hostility towards the West, whose
great ‘reposed’ he was drawn to venerate with gratitude, he expected future
revelations from his own homeland because only in her did he see that
unfettered range of personal activity that is equally capable both of the abyss
of sanctity and the abyss of sin…, because he considered only the Russian
capable of become ‘pan-human’.”

This, Dostoyevsky’s fundamental insight on Russia was summarized and
most eloquently expressed in his famous *Pushkin Speech*, delivered at the
unveiling of the Pushkin Monument in Moscow on June 8, 1880. In this
speech, writes Walicki, Dostoyevsky presents Pushkin as the supreme
embodiment in art “of the Russian spirit, a ‘prophetic’ apparition who had
shown the Russian nation its mission and its future.

“In the character of Aleko, the hero of the poem *Gypsies*, and in Evgeny
Onegin, Dostoyevsky suggested, Pushkin had been the first to portray ‘the
unhappy wanderer in his native land, the traditional Russian sufferer

167 Florovsky, pp. 105-106.
detached from the people.…” For Dostoyevsky, the term ‘wanderer’ was an apt description of the entire Russian intelligentsia – both the ‘superfluous men’ of the forties and the Populists of the seventies. ‘The homeless vagrants,’ he continued, ‘are wandering still, and it seems that it will be long before they disappear;’ at present they were seeking refuge in socialism, which did not exist in Aleko’s time, and through it hoped to attain universal happiness, for ‘a Russian sufferer to find peace needs universal happiness – exactly this: nothing less will satisfy him – of course, as the proposition is confined to theory.’

“Before the wanderer can find peace, however, he must conquer his own pride and humble himself before ‘the people’s truth’. ‘Humble thyself, proud man, and above all, break thy pride,’ was the ‘Russian solution’ Dostoyevsky claimed to have found in Pushkin’s poetry. Aleko failed to follow this advice and was therefore asked to leave by the gypsies; Onegin despised Tatiana – a modest girl close to the ‘soil’ – and by the time he learned to humble himself it was too late. Throughout Pushkin’s work, Dostoyevsky declared, there were constant confrontations between the ‘Russian wanderers’ and the ‘people’s truth’ represented by ‘positively beautiful’ heroes – men of the soil expressing the spiritual essence of the Russian nation. The purpose of these confrontations was to convince the reader of the need for a ‘return to the soil’ and a fusion with the people.

“Pushkin himself was proof that such a return was possible without a rejection of universal ideals. Dostoyevsky drew attention to the poet’s ‘universal susceptibility’, his talent for identifying himself with a Spaniard (Don Juan), an Arab (‘Imitations of the Koran’), an Englishman (‘A Feast During the Plague’), or an ancient Roman (‘Egyptian Nights’) while still remaining a national poet. This ability Pushkin owed to the ‘universality’ of the Russian spirit: ‘to become a genuine and complete Russian means… to become brother of all men, an all-human man.’

“In his speech Dostoyevsky also spoke about the division into Slavophiles and Westerners, which he regretted as a great, though historically inevitable, misunderstanding. The impulse behind Peter’s reform had been not mere utilitarianism but the desire to extend the frontiers of nationality to include a genuine ‘all-humanity’. Dreams of serving humanity had even been the impulse behind the political policies of the Russian state: ‘For what else has Russia been doing in her policies, during these two centuries, but serving Europe much more than herself? I do not believe that this took place because of the mere want of aptitude on the part of our statesmen.’

“‘Oh the peoples of Europe,’ Dostoyevsky exclaimed in a euphoric vein, ‘have no idea how dear they are to us! And later – in this I believe – we, well, not we but the Russians of the future, to the last man, will comprehend that to become a genuine Russian means to seek finally to reconcile all European
controversies, to show the solution of European anguish in our all-human and all-unifying Russian soil, to embrace in it with brotherly love all our brothers, and finally, perhaps, to utter the ultimate word of great, universal harmony, of the fraternal accord of all nations abiding by the law of Christ’s Gospel!’

“Before delivering his ‘Address’, Dostoyevsky was seriously worried that it might be received coldly by his audience. His fears proved groundless. The speech was an unprecedented success: carried away by enthusiasm, the crowd called out ‘our holy man, our prophet’, and members of the audience pressed around Dostoyevsky to kiss his hands. Even Turgenev, who had been caricatured in The Possessed [The Devils], came up to embrace him. The solemn moment of universal reconciliation between Slavophiles and Westerners, conservatives and revolutionaries, seemed already at hand…”

The Slavophile Ivan Aksakov “ran onto the stage and declared to the public that my speech was not simply a speech but an historical event! The clouds had been covering the horizon, but here was Dostoyevsky’s word, which, like the appearing sun, dispersed all the clouds and lit up everything. From now on there would be brotherhood, and there would be no misunderstandings.”

It was indeed an extraordinary event. And while the enthusiasm was short-lived, the event represented in a real sense an historic turning-point: the point at which the unbelieving intelligentsia had the Gospel preached to them in a language and in a context that they could understand and respond to. For a moment it looked as if the “the Two Russias” created by Peter the Great’s reforms might be united. With the advantage of hindsight one may pour scorn on such an idea.

But, as Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky) writes: “However accustomed people are to crawling in the dust, they will be grateful to every one who tears them away from the world below and bears them up on his powerful wings to the heavens. A man is ready to give up everything for a moment of pure spiritual joy and bless the name of him who is able to strike on the best strings of his heart. It is here that one must locate the secret of the amazing success won by the famous speech of Dostoyevsky at the Pushkin festival in Moscow. The genius writer himself later described the impression produced by him upon his listeners in a letter to his wife: ‘I read,’ he writes, ‘loudly, with fire. Everything that I wrote about Tatiana was received with enthusiasm. But when I gave forth at the end about the universal union of men, the hall was as it were in hysterics. When I had finished, I will not tell you about the roars and sobs of joy: people who did not know each other wept, sobbed, embraced each other and swore to be better, not to hate each

169 Dostoyevsky, in Igor Volgin, Poslednij God Dostoevskago (Dostoyevsky’s Last Year), Moscow, 1986, p. 267.
other from then on, but to love each other. The order of the session was interrupted: grandes dames, students, state secretaries - they all embraced and kissed me.’ How is one to call this mood in the auditorium, which included in itself the best flower of the whole of educated society, if not a condition of spiritual ecstasy, to which, as it seemed, our cold intelligentsia was least of all capable? By what power did the great writer and knower of hearts accomplish this miracle, forcing all his listeners without distinction of age or social position to feel themselves brothers and pour together in one sacred and great upsurge? He attained it, of course, not by the formal beauty of his speech, which Dostoyevsky usually did not achieve, but the greatness of the proclaimed idea of universal brotherhood, instilled by the fire of great inspiration. This truly prophetic word regenerated the hearts of people, forcing them to recognize the true meaning of life; the truth made them if only for one second not only free, but also happy in their freedom.”

Tsar, Church and People

June 8, 1880 was the last date on which the deep divisions in Russian society might have been healed, and the slide to revolution halted. However, the opportunity was lost. Disillusion and criticism set in almost immediately from all sides.

This was less surprising from the liberals, who were looking for another, leftist answer to the question: “What is to be done?” from Dostoyevsky. They forgot that, as Chekhov wrote in 1888, an artist does not attempt to solve concrete social, political or moral problems, but only to place them in their correct context...

Somewhat more surprising was the less than ecstatic reaction of the right-wing litterati. Thus M.N. Katkov was very happy to publish the Speech in his Moskovskie Vedomosti (Moscow Gazette) - but laughed at it in private. Perhaps for him, too, the Speech offered too little in the form of concrete political solutions or advice - an open endorsement of the monarchy, for example.

And yet Katkov was not far from Dostoevsky in his views. “M.N. Katkov wrote that the opposition between Russia and the West consists in the fact that there everything is founded on contractual relations, and in Russia – on faith. If western society is ruled by law, then Russian society is ruled by the idea... There is no question that good principles can be laid at the base of any state, but they are deprived of a firm foundation by the absence of religious feeling and a religious view of the world. Good principles are then held either

170 Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky), Besedy so svoim sobstvennym serdsem (Conversations with my own Heart), Jordanville, 1948, pp. 9-10.
171 The only person who retained his enthusiasm for the Speech for years to come was Ivan Aksakov.
172 Volgin, op. cit, p. 266.
173 Volgin, op. cit, p. 271.
on instinct, which illumines nothing, or on considerations of public utility. But instinct is an unstable thing in a reasoning being, while public utility is a conventional concept about which every person can have his own opinion.”

Like Dostoyevsky, Katkov was striving to build bridges, and especially a bridge between the Tsar and the People (he had been a liberal in his youth). “Russia is powerful,” he wrote, “precisely in the fact that her people do not separate themselves from their Sovereign. Is it not in this alone that the sacred significance that the Russian Tsar has for the Russian people consists?” “Only by a misunderstanding do people think that the monarchy and the autocracy exclude ‘the freedom of the people’. In actual fact it guarantees it more than any banal constitutionalism. Only the autocratic tsar could, without any revolution, by the single word of a manifesto liberate 20 million slaves.” “They say that Russia is deprived of political liberty. They say that although Russian subjects have been given legal civil liberty, they have no political rights. Russian subjects have something more than political rights: they have political obligations. Each Russian subject is obliged to stand watch over the rights of the supreme power and to care for the benefit of the State. It is not so much that each one only has the right to take part in State life and care for its benefits: he is called to this by his duty as a loyal subject. That is our constitution. It is all contained, without paragraphs, in the short formula of our State oath of loyalty…”

This was all true, and Dostoyevsky undoubtedly agreed with it in principle. However, he was doing something different from Katkov, and more difficult: not simply state the truth before an audience that was in no way ready to accept it in this direct, undiluted form, but bring them closer to the truth, and inspire them with the truth. And with this aim he did not call on his audience to unite around the Tsar. In any case, he had certain reservations about the Tsardom that made him in some ways closer to his liberal audience than Katkov. In particular, he did not support the “paralysis” that the Petrine system had imposed on the Church, whereas Katkov’s views were closer to the official, semi-absolutist position.

For example, he wrote: “The whole labour and struggle of Russian History consisted in taking away the power of each over all, in the annihilation of many centres of power. This struggle, which in various forms and under various conditions took place in the history of all the great peoples, was with us difficult, but successful, thanks to the special character of the Orthodox Church, which renounced earthly power and never entered into competition

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174 K.V. Glazkov, “Zashchita ot liberalizma” (“A Defence from Liberalism”), Pravoslavnaià Rus’ (Orthodox Russia), № 15 (1636), August 1/14, 1999, pp. 9, 10, 11.
175 Katkov, Moskovskie Vedomosti (Moscow Gazette), 1867, № 88; in L.A. Tikhomirov, Monarkhiceskaia Gosudarstvennost’, op. cit., p. 312.
176 Katkov, Moskovskie Vedomosti (Moscow Gazette), 1881, № 115; in Tikhomirov, op. cit., p. 314.
177 Katkov, Moskovskie Vedomosti (Moscow Gazette), 1886, № 341; in Tikhomirov, op. cit., p. 314.
with the State. The difficult process was completed, everything was subjected to one supreme principle and there had to be no place left in the Russian people for any power not dependent on the monarch. In his one-man-rule the Russian people sees the testament of the whole of its life, on him they place all their hope.”

And again he wrote: “[The Tsar] is not only the sovereign of his country and the leader of his people: he is the God-appointed supervisor and protector of the Orthodox Church, which does not recognize any earthly deputy of Christ above it and has renounced any non-spiritual action, presenting all its cares about its earthly prosperity and order to the leader of the great Orthodox people that it has sanctified.”

If Katkov would have preferred more on the monarchy in Dostoyevsky’s speech, Constantine Leontiev was scandalised by the lack of mention of the Church. Volgin writes that “at the end of the Pushkin festival Pobedonostev in a restrained way, without going into details, congratulated Dostoyevsky on his success. And then immediately after his congratulations he sent him ‘Warsaw Diary’ with an article by Constantine Leontiev. This article was angry and crushing. C. Leontiev not only annihilated the Speech point by point from the point of view of his ascetic… Christianity, but compared it directly with another public speech that had taken place at almost the same time as the Moscow festivities, in Yaroslav diocese at a graduation ceremony in a school for the daughters of clergymen. ‘In the speech of Mr. Pobedonostev (the speaker was precisely him – I.V.),’ writes Leontiev, ‘Christ is known in no other way that through the Church: “love the Church first of all”. In the speech of Mr. Dostoyevsky Christ… is so accessible to each of us in bypassing the Church, that we consider that we have the right… to ascribe to the Saviour promises that He never uttered concerning “the universal brotherhood of the peoples”, “general peace” and “harmony”…”

We will recall that he wrote much about the invasion of the twin spirits of liberal cosmopolitanism and nationalism into the Orthodox world. So when he writes that Dostoyevsky “extracted out of the spirit of Pushkin’s genius the prophetic thought of the ‘cosmopolitan’ mission of the Slavs”, it is with scarcely concealed irony. This irony becomes crushing when he speaks about waiting for “the fulfilment of the prophecy of Dostoyevsky, ‘until the Slavs teach the whole of humanity this pan-human love’, which neither the Holy Fathers nor the Apostles nor the Divine Redeemer Himself was able to confirm absolutely in the hearts of men”.

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178 Katkov, Moskovskie Vedomosti (Moscow Gazette), № 12, 1884; in Tikhomirov, op. cit., p. 312.
179 Katkov, in Tikhomirov, op. cit., p. 313.
180 Volgin, op. cit., pp. 269-270.
181 Leontiev, “G. Katkov i ego vragi na prazdnike Pushkina” (G. Katkov and his enemies at the Pushkin festivities), in Vostok, Rossia i Slavianstvo (The East, Russia and Slavdom), p. 279.
182 Leontiev, op. cit., p. 282.
But was he being fair? Dostoyevsky was not looking to the fusion of the races into one liberal-ecumenist conglomerate, but to their union in spirit and true brotherhood through the adoption of the Orthodox faith. Nor was he a chauvinist, but simply believed that the Russian people was the bearer of a truly universal content, the Orthodox Christian Gospel, which it would one day preach to all nations; for “this Kingdom of the Gospel shall be preached to all nations, and then shall the end come” (Matthew 24.14). As he wrote in another place: “You see, I’ve seen the Truth. I’ve seen it, and I know that men can be happy and beautiful without losing the ability to live on earth. I cannot – I refuse to believe that wickedness is the normal state of men. And when they laugh at me, it is essentially at that belief of mine.”

Leontiev returned to his criticism of this romantic, cosmopolitan or “chiliast” faith of Dostoyevsky’s, as he considered it, in an article entitled “On Universal Love”, in which he supported the liberal writer A.D. Gradovsky’s claim that Dostoyevsky was ignoring the prophecies of the Antichrist. “The prophecy of the general reconciliation of people in Christ,” he wrote, “is not an Orthodox prophecy, but some kind of general-humanitarian [prophecy]. The Church of this world does not promise this, and ‘he who disobeys the Church, let him be unto thee as a pagan and a publican’.”

Dostoyevsky himself replied to Gradovsky (and therefore also to Leontiev) as follows: “In your triumphant irony concerning the words in my Speech to the effect that we may, perhaps, utter a word of ‘final harmony’ in mankind, you seize on the Apocalypse and venomously cry out:

“‘By a word you will accomplish that which has not been foretold in the Apocalypse! On the contrary, the Apocalypse foretells, not “final agreement”, but final “disagreement” with the coming of the Antichrist. But why should the Antichrist come if we utter a word of “final harmony”.’

“This is terribly witty, only you have cheated here. You probably have not read the Apocalypse to the end, Mr. Gradovsky. There it is precisely said that during the most powerful disagreements, not the Antichrist, but Christ will come and establish His Kingdom on earth (do you hear, on earth) for 1000 years. But it is added at this point: blessed is he who will take part in the first resurrection, that is, in this Kingdom. Well, it is in that time, perhaps, that we shall utter that word of final harmony which I talk about in my Speech.”

Leontiev counters by more or less accusing Dostoyevsky of the heresy of chiliasm: “It is not the complete and universal triumph of love and general righteousness on this earth that is promised to us by Christ and His Apostles;

183 Dostoyevsky, The Dream of a Ridiculous Man.
but, on the contrary, something in the nature of a seeming failure of the evangelical preaching on the earthly globe, for the nearness of the end must coincide with the last attempts to make everyone good Christians... Mr. Dostoyevsky introduces too rose-coloured a tint into Christianity in this speech. It is an innovation in relation to the Church, which expects nothing especially beneficial from humanity in the future..."\(^{186}\)

However, of one thing the author of The Devils, that extraordinary prophecy of the collective Antichrist, cannot be accused: of underestimating the evil in man, and of his capacity for self-destruction. The inventor of Stavrogin and Ivan Karamazov did not look at contemporary Russian society with rose-tinted spectacles. Dostoyevsky’s faith in a final harmony before the Antichrist did not blind him to where the world was going in his time. "Europe is on the eve of a general and dreadful collapse,” he wrote. “The ant-hill which has been long in the process of construction without the Church and Christ (since the Church, having dimmed its ideal, long ago and everywhere reincarnated itself in the state), with a moral principle shaken loose from its foundation, with everything general and absolute lost - this ant-hill, I say, is utterly undermined. The fourth estate is coming, it knocks at the door, and breaks into it, and if it is not opened to it, it will break the door. The fourth estate cares nothing for the former ideals; it rejects every existing law. It will make no compromises, no concessions; buttresses will not save the edifice. Concessions only provoke, but the fourth estate wants everything. There will come to pass something wholly unsuspected. All these parliamentarisms, all civic theories professed at present, all accumulated riches, banks, sciences, Jews - all these will instantly perish without leaving a trace - save the Jews, who even then will find their way out, so that this work will even be to their advantage."\(^{187}\)

However, Leontiev accuses him also, and still more seriously, of distorting the basic message of the Gospel. Dostoyevsky’s “love” or “humaneness” (gumannost’) is closer to the “love” and “humaneness” of Georges Sand than that of Christ. Christian love and humaneness is complex; it calls on people to love, not simply as such, without reference to God, but “in the name of God” and “for the sake of Christ”. Dostoyevsky’s “love”, on the other hand, is “simple and ‘autonomous’; step by step and thought by thought it can lead to that dry and self-assured utilitarianism, to that epidemic madness of our time, which we can call, using psychiatric language, mania democratica progressiva. The whole point is that we claim by ourselves, without the help of God, to be either very good or, which is still more mistaken, useful... “True, in all spiritual compositions there is talk of love for people. But in all such books we also find that the beginning of wisdom (that is, religious wisdom and the everyday wisdom that proceeds from it) is “the fear of God” – a simple, very

\(^{186}\) Leontiev, op. cit., pp. 315, 322.

simple fear both of torments beyond the grave and of other punishments, in the form of earthly tortures, sorrows and woes.”  

However, far from espousing a “dry and self-assured utilitarianism”, Dostoyevsky was one of its most biting critics, satirising the rationalist-humanist-utilitarian world-view under the images of “the crystal palace” and “the ant-hill”. Nor did he in any way share in mania democratica progressiva.

Again, Leontiev rejects Dostoyevsky’s call to the intelligentsia to humble themselves before the people. “I don’t think that the family, public and in general personal in the narrow sense qualities of our simple people would be so worthy of imitation. It is hardly necessary to imitate their dryness in relation to the suffering and the sick, their unmerciful cruelty in anger, their drunkenness, the disposition of so many of them to cunning and even thievery… Humility before the people… is nothing other than humility before that same Church which Mr. Pobedonostsev advises us to love.”

However, “one must know,” wrote Dostoyevsky, “how to segregate the beauty of the Russian peasant from the layers of barbarity that have accumulated over it… Judge the people not by the abominations they so frequently commit, but by those great and sacred things for which, even in their abominations, they constantly yearn. Not all the people are villains; there are true saints, and what saints they are: they are radiant and illuminate the way for all!… Do not judge the People by what they are, but by what they would like to become.”

“I know that our educated men ridicule me: they refuse even to recognize ‘this idea’ in the people, pointing to their sins and abominations (for which these men themselves are responsible, having oppressed the people for two centuries); they also emphasize the people’s prejudices, their alleged indifference to religion, while some of them imagine that the Russian people are simply atheists. Their great error consists of the fact that they refuse to recognize the existence of the Church as an element in the life of the people. I am not speaking about church buildings, or the clergy. I am now referring to our Russian ‘socialism’, the ultimate aim of which is the establishment of an oecumenical Church on earth in so far as the earth is capable of embracing it. I am speaking of the unquenchable, inherent thirst in the Russian people for great, universal, brotherly fellowship in the name of Christ. And even if this fellowship, as yet, does not exist, and if that church has not completely materialized, - not in prayers only but in reality – nevertheless the instinct for it and the unquenchable, oftentimes unconscious thirst for it, indubitably dwells in the hearts of the millions of our people.

188 Leontiev, op. cit., p. 324.  
189 Leontiev, op. cit., pp. 326, 327.  
190 Dostoevsky, The Diary of a Writer; in Figes, op. cit., p. 331.
“Not in communism, not in mechanical forms is the socialism of the Russian people expressed: they believe that they shall be finally saved through the universal communion in the name of Christ. This is our Russian socialism! It is the presence in the Russian people of this sublime unifying ‘church’ idea that you, our European gentlemen, are ridiculing.”  

So Dostoyevsky’s “theology” was by no means as uneclesiastical as Leontiev and Pobedonostsev thought. The idea of universal communion in the name of Christ may be considered utopian by some, but it is not heretical. And even if some of his phrases were not strictly accurate as ecclesiastical theses, it is quite clear that the concepts of “Church” and “people” were much more closely linked in his mind than Leontiev and Pobedonostev gave him credit for. Indeed, according to Vladimir Soloviev, on a journey to Optina in June, 1878, Dostoyevsky discussed with him his plans for his new novel, The Brothers Karamazov, and “the Church as a positive social ideal was to constitute the central idea of the new novel or series of novels”.  

In some ways, in fact, Dostoyevsky was more inoculated against Westernism than Leontiev. Thus Leontiev complained to his friend Vasily Rozanov that Dostoyevsky’s views on Papism were too severe. And he was so fixated on the evils of liberalism and cosmopolitanism that he could be called an ecumenist in relation to medieval and contemporary Papism – an error that Dostoyevsky was not prone to.  

Dostoyevsky started where his audience were – outside the Church, in the morass of westernism, and tried to build on what was still not completely corrupted in that world-view in order to draw his audience closer to Christ. In this way, he imitated St. Paul in Athens, who, seeing an altar with the inscription “TO THE UNKNOWN GOD”, gave the Athenians the benefit of the doubt, as it were, and proceeded to declare: “He Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him I declare unto you” (Acts 17.23).
Constantine Leontiev would perhaps have objected that the Athenians, as pagans, were certainly not worshipping the True God at this altar. And he would have been formally right... And yet St. Paul saw the germ of true worship in this inchoate paganism, and, building upon it, led at any rate a few to the truth. This was also the method of Dostoevsky with his semi-pagan Russian audience. And he, too, made some converts...

Again, if Dostoevsky emphasised certain aspects of the Christian teaching such as compassionate love and humility more than others such as the fear of God, fasting, sacraments, obedience to authorities, this is not because he did not think the latter were important, but because he knew that his audience, being spiritually infants, could not take this “hard” food, but had to begin on the “milk” of those teachings which were not so distasteful to their spoilt palates. And the results proved him right from a pragmatic, missionary point of view. For the unbelieving intelligentsia of several subsequent generations have been stimulated to question their unbelief far more by the writings of Dostoevsky than by those of Leontiev and Pobedonostev, undoubtedly Orthodox though the latter are.

An admirer of Leontiev, V.M. Lourié, has developed Leontiev’s line of criticism. Analysing Dostoevsky’s remarks about “that rapture which most of all binds us to [God]”, Lourié concludes that “‘deification’ is interpreted [by Dostoevsky] as a psychological and even natural condition – a relationship of man to Christ, in Whom he believes as God. From such ‘deification’ there does not and cannot follow the deification of man himself. On the contrary, man remains as he was, ‘on his own’, and with his own psychology... In such an – unOrthodox – soteriological perspective, the patristic ‘God became man, so that man should become God’ is inevitably exchanged for something like ‘God became man, so that man should become a good man’; ascetic sobriety turns out to be simply inadmissible, and it has to be squeezed out by various means of eliciting ‘that rapture’.”

And yet what is more significant: the fact that there is a certain inaccuracy in Dostoevsky’s words from a strictly theological point of view, or the fact that Dostoevsky talks about deification at all as the ultimate end of man? Surely the latter... Even among the Holy Fathers we find inaccuracies, and as Lourié points out in other places, the Palamite ideas of uncreated grace and the deification of man through grace had almost been lost even among the monasteries and academies of nineteenth-century Russia.

This makes Dostoevsky’s achievement in at least placing the germs of such thoughts in the mind of the intelligentsia, all the greater. For in what

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other non-monastic Russian writer of the nineteenth century do we find such a vivid, profound and above all relevant (to the contemporary spiritual state of his listeners) analysis of the absolute difference between becoming “god” through the assertion of self (Kirillov, Ivan Karamazov) and becoming god through self-sacrificial love and humility (Bishop Tikhon, Elder Zosima)?

Leontiev also asserted (followed by Lourié) that Dostoyevsky’s monastic types are not true depictions of monastic holiness. “In his memoirs, Leontiev wrote: ‘The Brothers Karamazov can be considered an Orthodox novel only by those who are little acquainted with true Orthodoxy, with the Christianity of the Holy Fathers and the Elders of Athos and Optina.’ In Leontiev’s view (he himself became an Orthodox monk and lived at Optina for the last six months of his life), the work of Zola (in *La Faute de l’abbé Mouret*) is ‘far closer to the spirit of true personal monkhood than the superficial and sentimental inventions of Dostoyevsky in *The Brothers Karamazov*.’”195

There is some truth in this criticism, and yet it misses more than one important point. The first is that Dostoyevsky was not intending to make a literal representation of anyone, but “an artistic tableau”. And for that reason, as he wrote to Pobedonostsev in August, 1879, he was worried whether he would be understood. The “obligations of artistry… required that I present a modest and majestic figure, whereas life is full of the comic and is majestic only in its inner sense, so that in the biography of my monk I was involuntarily compelled by artistic demands to touch upon even the most vulgar aspects so as not to infringe artistic realism. Then, too, there are several teachings of the monk against which people will simply cry out that they are absurd, for they are all too ecstatic; of course, they are absurd in an everyday sense, but in another, inward sense, I think they are true.”196

Again, as Fr. Georges Florovsky writes: “To the ‘synthetic’ Christianity of Dostoyevsky Leontiev opposed the contemporary monastic way of life or ethos, especially on Athos. And he insisted that in Optina *The Brothers Karamazov* was not recognized as ‘a correct Orthodox composition’, while Elder Zosima did not correspond to the contemporary monastic spirit. In his time Rozanov made a very true comment on this score. ‘If it does not correspond to the type of Russian monasticism of the 18th-19th centuries (the words of Leontiev), then perhaps, and even probably, it corresponded to the type of monasticism of the 4th to 6th centuries’. In any case, Dostoyevsky was truly closer to Chrysostom (and precisely in his social teachings) than Leontiev… Rozanov adds: ‘The whole of Russia read *The Brothers Karamazov*, and believed in the representation of the Elder Zosima. “The Russian Monk” (Dostoyevsky’s term) appeared as a close and fascinating figure in the eyes of the whole of Russia, even her unbelieving parts.’… Now we know that the Elder Zosima was not drawn from nature, and in this case Dostoyevsky did

195 Magarshack, op. cit., p. xviii.
196 Magarshack, op. cit., p. xvi.
not draw on Optina figures. It was an ‘ideal’ or ‘idealised’ portrait, written most of all from Tikhon of Zadonsk, and it was precisely Tikhon’s works that inspired Dostoyevsky, constituting the ‘teachings’ of Zosima... By the power of his artistic clairvoyance Dostoyevsky divined and recognized this seraphic stream in Russian piety, and prophetically continued the dotted line.”\textsuperscript{197}

\textit{The Tsar and the Constitution}

The creation of the zemstva, which had given the nobility a taste of administration, stimulated demands for the introduction of a constitutional monarchy. The initiative came from the Moscow nobility, who in 1865, as Ivanov writes, “agitated for the convening of the people’s representatives, thanking the Tsar for his wise beginnings. The Moscow nobility, who always strove for the good of the State, asked him not to stop on his chosen path and bring to completion the state building begun by him ‘through the convening of a general assembly of elected delegates from the Russian land for the discussion of the needs that are common to the whole state’. Emperor Alexander did not accept this appeal. He underlined that ‘not one assembly can speak in the name of the other classes’ and that the right to care for what is useful and beneficial for the State belonged to him as emperor.

“Alexander thought and wisely foresaw that the granting of a constitution for Russia would be disastrous for the latter.

“In a private conversation with one of the composers of the appeal (Golokhvyostov), Alexander said: ‘What do you want? A constitutional form of administration? I give you my word, at this table, that I would be ready to sign any constitution you like if I were convinced that it was useful for Russia. But I know that if I do this today, tomorrow Russia will disintegrate into pieces.’

“The Tsar’s forebodings had solid foundations.

“On April 4, 1868 Karakozov made an attempt on the life of the Tsar.

“It was necessary to speak, not about a constitution, but about the salvation of the State...”\textsuperscript{198}

As Dominic Lieven writes, Alexander “explained to Otto von Bismarck, who was then Prussian minister in Petersburg, that ‘the idea of taking counsel of subjects other than officials was not in itself objectionable and that great participation by respectable notables in official business could only be advantageous. The difficulty, if not impossibility, of putting this principle into effect lay only in the experience of history that it had never been possible to

\textsuperscript{197} Florovsky, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 301-302.
\textsuperscript{198} S. P. Ivanov, \textit{Russkaia Intelligentsia i Masonstvo ot Petra I do nashikh dnej} (The Russian Intelligentsia and Masonry from Peter I to our days), Harbin, 1934, Moscow, 1997, p. 340.
stop a country’s liberal development at the point beyond which it should not go. This would be particularly difficult in Russia, where the necessary political culture, thoughtfulness and circumspection were only to be found in relatively small circles. Russia must not be judged by Petersburg, of all the empire’s towns the least Russian one... The revolutionary party would not find it easy to corrupt the people’s convictions and make the masses conceive their interests to be divorced from those of the dynasty. The Emperor continued that ‘throughout the interior of the empire the people still see the monarch as the paternal and absolute Lord set by God over the land; this belief, which has almost the force of a religious sentiment, is completely independent of any personal loyalty of which I could be the object. I like to think that it will not be lacking too in the future. To abdicate the absolute power with which my crown is invested would be to undermine the aura of that authority which has dominion over the nation. The deep respect, based on innate sentiment, with which right up to now the Russian people surrounds the throne of its Emperor cannot be parcelled out. I would diminish without any compensation the authority of the government if I wanted to allow representatives of the nobility or the nation to participate in it. Above all, God knows what would become of relations between the peasants and the lords if the authority of the Emperor was not still sufficiently intact to exercise the dominating influence.’...

“... After listening to Alexander’s words Bismarck commented that if the masses lost faith in the crown’s absolute power the rise of a murderous peasant war would become very great. He concluded that ‘His Majesty can still rely on the common man both in the army and among the civilian masses but the “educated classes”, with the exception of the older generation, are stoking the fires of a revolution which, if it comes to power, would immediately turn against themselves.’ Events were to show that this prophecy was as relevant in Nicholas II’s era as it had been during the reign of his grandfather...”

The revolutionaries did not rest. In 1876 in London, the Jewish revolutionaries Liberman, Goldenburg and Zuckerman worked out a plan for the murder of the Tsar. Goldenburg was the first to offer his services as the murderer, but his suggestion was refused, “since they found that he, as a Jew, should not take upon himself this deed, for then it would not have the significance that was fitting for society and, the main thing, the people.” On May 28, 1879 Soloviev was hanged for attempting to kill the Tsar. Three weeks later a secret congress of revolutionaries in Lipetsk took the decision to kill the Tsar. Further attempts were made to kill the Tsar in November, 1879 and 1880.

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199 Lieven, Nicholas II, op. cit., pp. 142, 143.
200 Ivanov, op. cit., p. 345.
201 "The participation of the Masons in this deed," writes Selyaninov, “cannot be doubted. This was discovered when the Russian government turned to the French government with
In February, 1880, on the insistence of the Tsarevich, the future Tsar Alexander III, a “Supreme Investigative Commission” was founded and Count Loris-Melikov was given dictatorial powers.

Loris-Melikov entered into close relations with the zemstva and the liberal press and suggested the project for a State structure that received the name of “the constitution of Loris-Melikov” in society. This constitution suggested greater participation in government by people taken from the zemstva and other elected organs. The former revolutionary Lev Tikhomirov declared that Loris-Melikov was deceiving the Tsar and creating a revolutionary leaven in the country.

The Tsar confirmed Loris-Melikov’s report on February 17, 1881, and on the morning of March 1 he also confirmed the text announcing this measure, allowing it to be debated at the session of the Council of Ministers on March 4.

Russia was on the verge of becoming a constitutional monarchy...

the demand that it hand over Hartman, who was hiding in Paris under the name Meyer. Scarcely had Hartman been arrested at the request of the Russian ambassador when the French radicals raised an unimaginable noise. The Masonic deputy Engelhardt took his defence upon himself, trying to prove that Meyer and Hartman were different people. The Russian ambassador Prince Orlov began to receive threatening letters. Finally, the leftist deputies were preparing to raise a question and bring about the fall of the ministry. The latter took fright, and, without waiting for the documents promised by Orlov that could have established the identity of Hartman-Meyer, hastily agreed with the conclusions of Brother Engelhardt and helped Hartman to flee to England... In London Hartman was triumphantly received into the Masonic lodge ‘The Philadelphia’.” (in Ivanov, op. cit., p. 346).

“In this connection an interesting correspondence took place between two high-ranking Masons, Felix Pia and Giuseppe Garibaldi. Pia wrote: ‘The most recent attempt on the life of the All-Russian despot confirms your legendary phrase: “The Intenationale is the sun of the future!”’, and speaks about the necessity of defending ‘our brave friend Hartman’. In reply, Garibaldi praised Hartman, and declared: ‘Political murder is the secret of the successful realization of the revolution.’ And added: ‘Siberia is not the place for the comrades of Hartman, but for the Christian clergy.’ In 1881 Hartman arrived in America, where he was received with a storm of ovations. At one of the workers’ meetings he declared that he had arrived in the USA (!) with the aim of... helping the Russian people (!) to win freedom.” (in Lebedev, op. cit., p. 356).

202 Ivanov, op. cit., pp. 344-345.
II. REACTION (1881-1904)

The mystery of iniquity is already at work.
II Thessalonians 2.7.

The Murder of Tsar Alexander II

On March 1, 1881, in broad daylight, a bomb was thrown at the Tsar’s carriage. It injured some of the guards but left him unhurt. Disregarding his personal safety, he left his carriage and was attending to the injured when a second bomb was thrown, fatally wounding him. He was rushed to the Winter Palace where he died in the presence of his family. Both his son and heir, the future Tsar Alexander III, and his grandson, the future Tsar Nicholas II, were present. The bomb was thrown on the same day that Alexander II received the report of Count Loris-Melikov. And so, by the Providence of God, Russia was saved from a constitution by the death of the Tsar...

“The murder of Alexander II,” writes G.P. Izmestieva, “was seen by monarchical Russia as the culmination of the liberal ‘inebriation’ of earlier years, as the shame and guilt of all, God’s judgement and a warning.”203 St. Ambrose of Optina wrote: “The Lord allowed Alexander II to die a martyric death, but He is powerful to give help from on high to Alexander III to catch the evildoers, who are infected with the spirit of the Antichrist. Since apostolic times the spirit of the Antichrist has worked through his forerunners, as the apostle writes: ‘The mystery of iniquity is already working, only it is held back now, until it is removed from the midst’ (II Thessalonians 2.7). The apostolic words ‘is held back now’ refer to the powers that be and the ecclesiastical authorities, against which the forerunners of the Antichrist rise up in order to abolish and annihilate them upon the earth. Because the Antichrist, according to the explanation of the interpreters of Holy Scripture, must come during a time of anarchy on earth. But until then he sits in the bottom of hell, and acts through his forerunners. First he acted through various heretics who disturbed the Orthodox Church, and especially through the evil Arians, educated men and courtiers; and then he acted cunningly through the educated Masons; and finally, now, through the educated nihilists, he has begun to act blatantly and crudely, beyond measure. But their illness will turn back upon their heads, as it is written in the Scriptures. Is it not the most extreme madness to work with all one’s might, not sparing one’s own life, in order to be hung on the gallows, and in the future life to fall into the bottom of hell to be tormented forever in Tartarus? But desperate pride pays no attention, but desires in every way to express its irrational boldness. Lord, have mercy on us!”204

Not only the elders saw in Russia the main obstacle to the triumph of evil. “The same withholding role in Russia,” writes Mikhail Nazarov, “was seen by the founders of Marxism: ‘… It is clear to us that the revolution has only one truly terrible enemy – Russia’; the role of Russia is ‘the role predestined from on high of the saviour of order’. In those years Marx wrote in the New Rhine Newspaper (the organ of the ‘League of Communists’): ‘Russia has become a colossus which does not cease to elicit amazement. Russia is the one phenomenon of its kind in history: the terrible power of this huge Empire… on a world scale’. ‘In Russia, in this despotic government, in this barbaric race, there is such energy and activity as one would look for in vain in the monarchies of the older States’. ‘The Slavic barbarians are innate counter-revolutionaries’, ‘particular enemies of democracy’.

“Engels echoed Marx: what was necessary was ‘a pitiless struggle to the death with Slavdom, which has betrayed and has a turncoat attitude towards the revolution… a war of destruction and unrestrained terror’. ‘A general war will pay back the Slavic barbarians with a bloody revenge.’ ‘Yes, the world war that is to come will sweep off the face of the earth not only the reactionary classes and dynasties, but also whole reactionary peoples – and this will be progress!’”

The elders saw signs of the coming Antichrist not only in specific acts of terrorism, such as the murder of the tsar, but also in the general softening of the power of the Orthodox Autocracy. Thus Constantine Leontiev, a disciple of Elder Ambrose of Optina, wrote: “One great spiritual elder said: ‘It is true that morals have become much softer. But on the other hand most people’s self-opinion has grown, and pride has increased. They no longer like to submit to any authorities, whether spiritual or secular: they just don’t want to. The gradual weakening and abolition of the authorities is a sign of the approach of the kingdom of the antichrist and the end of the world. It is impossible to substitute only a softening of morals for Christianity.’”

But, as St. John (Maximovich) of Shanghai and San Francisco wrote: Alexander II’s murder “shook the entire country, and that moral upsurge gave Emperor Alexander III, the Peacemaker, the opportunity to rule Russia with a strong arm…”

205 Nazarov, “Krovavaia mest’ slavianskim varvaram” (Bloody revenge on the Slavic barbarians), address to the international scientific conference, ‘The Jewish-Bolshevik coup of 1917 as the precondition of the red terror and forced starvations’, http://www.livejournal.com/users/rocornews/174447.html
The Jewish Question

Now the murder of the Tsar was carried out by a revolutionary organization called “The People’s Will”, which consisted mainly of Jews. This fact, in the words of Bishop Anthony (Khropovitsky), “clarified for people who were capable of at any rate some thought that these murders and blasphemies were not at all the expression of the people’s will, but on the contrary, a shameful spitting at that will. Moreover, they proceeded not so much from an honourable predilection for false theories as from the hands of the natural enemies of the fatherland – people of another race and nation, who were being rewarded with a corresponding financial payment.”

Paradoxically, however, the Jews who joined the revolutionary movement and killed the Tsar were not religious Jews who believed in the Talmud, but atheists – and their atheism had been learned in Russian schools by Russian teachers who had abandoned their own, Orthodox faith and adopted the faith of the revolutionary thinkers of the West.

But this distinction was lost on the ordinary people, who suffered in their everyday life from (religious) Jews that exploited and deceived them, and believed that the (atheist) Jews who killed the Tsar must be of the same kind. Moreover, the violence of the act profoundly shocked them; for, as Alexander Solzhenitsyn explains, “that the deaths of the heirs or tsars of the previous century – Alexis Petrovich, Ivan Antonovich, Peter III, Paul – were violent remained unknown to the people. The murder of March 1, 1881 shocked the minds of the whole people. For the masses of the simple people, and especially the peasants, it was as if the foundations of their life were being shaken. But again, as the narodovoltsy had calculated, this could not fail to be reflected in some kind of explosion. And it was. But in an unpredictable way: in pogroms against the Jews in New Russia and Ukraine.”

On April 15 the first pogrom broke out in Elizavettgrad. It spread to Kiev and Kishinev and Odessa. The government reacted energetically: in Kiev 1400 people were arrested. However, there were not enough policemen for the scale of the disturbances, and “the government recognised that it had been insufficiently active. An official declaration proclaimed that in the Kiev pogrom ‘measures to rein in the crowd had not been undertaken quickly and energetically enough’. In June, 1881 the director of the department of police, V.K. Plehve, in his report to the sovereign on the situation in Kiev province named ‘as one of the reasons “for the development

209 Solzhenitsyn, Dvesti let vnestce (Two hundred years together), Moscow, 2001, part 1, p. 185.
of the disturbances and their not very speedy suppression” the fact that the military court “was very condescending to the accused, and very superficial in approaching the affair’. Alexander III commented on the report: ‘This is unforgiveable’.\textsuperscript{210}

Many western historians have accused the Tsarist government of complicity in the pogroms. But this is not true.\textsuperscript{211} “The reasons for the pogroms were earnestly investigated and discussed by contemporaries. Already in 1872, after the Odessa pogrom, the governor-general of the South-Western region had warned in a report that such an event could happen again in his region, for ‘here hatred and enmity towards the Jews is rooted in history and only the material dependence of the peasants on them at the present, together with the administration’s measures, holds back an explosion of discontent in the Russian population against the Jewish race’. The governor-general reduced the essence of the matter to economics: ‘I have counted and estimated the commercial-industrial property belonging to the Jews in the South-Western region, and at the same time have pointed to the fact that the Jews, having taken eagerly to the renting of landowners’ lands, have leased them out again to the peasants on very onerous terms’. And this causal nexus ‘was generally recognised in the pogrom years of 1881’.

“In the spring of 1881 Loris-Melikov had also reported to the Sovereign: ‘At the root of the present disturbances lies the profound hatred of the local population for the Jews who have enslaved them. But this has undoubtedly been used by evil-minded people.’\textsuperscript{212}

\textsuperscript{210}Solzhenitsyn, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 189.

\textsuperscript{211}In fact, as David Vital admits, “Alexander did display genuine dismay and dissatisfaction when reports of the weak and ineffective conduct of the security forces were brought to him; and fury when he learned of cases of military officers and men having actually joined the mob. His instructions were to deal firmly with rioters, to see to it that their leaders were severely flogged; and to make clear to the civil and military authorities alike that their business was to restore and maintain order before all else…. All in all then, while much was murky in official Russia at this time, the grounds for positing a momentarily disoriented, intrinsically inefficacious government not so much stimulating as failing to cope with simmering, popular, generalized discontent seem solid enough.” (\textit{A People Apart: The Jews in Europe 1789-1939}, Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 288, 289).

Again, Dominic Lieven writes: “… The pogroms were terrible but they were a long way from the systematic ethnic cleansing, let alone genocide, of whole peoples which were to be the strategies of supposedly more civilized European people towards the Jews. Moreover, all recent research emphasizes that the tsarist central government itself did not organize or instigate pogroms, though local authorities sometimes winked at them and more often were slow to stamp on them. Tsarist ministers did not connive in murder and were in any case deeply uneasy at outbreaks of mass violence and very scared that the ‘dark people’s’ uncontrollable propensity for anarchic settling of scores might easily target the ruling classes themselves. On the other hand, it is the case that knowledge of their superiors’ frequent antipathy to the Jews could encourage junior officials to believe that failure to stop pogroms could go unpunished…” (\textit{Empire}, London: John Murray, 2000, p. 277)

\textsuperscript{212}Solzhenitsyn, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 192.
This was true: the “evil-minded” revolutionaries, both Russian and Jewish, used the hatred to their own end. And yet it is little wonder that conservative opinion, while deploring the pogroms, saw the root cause of the Jews’ problems in the Jews themselves, in their economic exploitation of the peasants. When Loris-Melikov was succeeded in 1881 by Count N.P. Ignatiev, the latter, on the instructions of the emperor, sent him a memorandum on the causes of the pogroms, in which, writes Sir Geoffrey Hosking, he outlined “his fears about domination by ‘alien forces’. In it he linked the whole Westernizing trend with the Jews and the Poles… ‘In Petersburg there exists a powerful Polish-Jewish group in whose hands are directly concentrated, the stock exchange, the advokatura, a good part of the press and other public affairs. In many legal and illegal ways they enjoy immense influence on officialdom and on the course of affairs in general.’ They used this influence to mould public opinion in the interests of their favourite schemes: ‘the broadest possible rights for Poles and Jews, and representative institutions on the western model. Every honest voice from the Russian land is drowned out by Polish-Jewish clamours that one must only listen to the ‘intelligentsia’ and that Russian demands should be rejected as old-fashioned and unenlightened.’”

Among the most important causes of the pogroms, write M. and Yu. Krivoshein, Ignatiev “mentioned the changed economic condition of the peasants after the reform of 1861: having become personally free, but unskilled in financial operations, the peasants gradually fell into dependence on the local Jewish usurers and, in this way, peasant gardens, lands, cattle, etc. began to pass over to the latter. Explosions of popular anger followed.

“In his turn the very prominent banker Baron G.O. Ginzburg interceded before the emperor for the usurers who had been beaten up by the peasants, imploring him not to allow repressions against his co-religionists. The banker’s reply was Count N.P. Ignatiev’s speech in the name of Alexander III before a deputation of Jewish society:

“… ‘Your situation is not comforting, but it depends to a great extent on you to correct it. Living amidst a population that is foreign to you, you have drawn upon yourselves such hatred that for several months I was forced to apply force merely to protect you. Investigations have by no means confirmed your favourite ploy, that they are attacking you as proprietors. Still less can what has happened in the south be ascribed to religious intolerance. The Russian people, like the state, is very tolerant in matters of faith – it takes a lot to draw it out of its tolerance. In the East there live many people of other races amidst the Russian population who are not Christians. However, it is not necessary to employ armies there in order to defend them.”

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“While being profoundly sorrowful over the disorders that have taken place, and doing everything that depends on me to prevent them in the future, I warn you that I will not act in a one-sided manner. On reviewing the causes of the disorders, and having studied their details, it is impossible not to recognize that in many cases they have been elicited by the Jews themselves; lengthy cohabitation with the Jews has rooted the conviction in the local population that there is no law which the Jew would not be able to bypass.

“One can rely on the bayonet, but one cannot sit on it. Remember that you are being protected, but that it is impossible to tolerate a situation in which it is constantly necessary to protect the Jews from the consequences of popular anger. Try to search out for yourselves productive occupations, labouring with your own hands, abandon tavern-keeping and usury... I am willing and ready to assist you in everything that can accelerate your transition to agricultural, craft and factory work, but of course you will find in me a very powerful opponent if you, under the guise of crafts and other productive occupations, develop throughout the provinces of Russia the trades that you usually practise now.

“I will end the way I began: as long as you keep your kahal organization, your cohesion and your striving to take everything into your hands, while violating the laws of the country, you will in no way be able to count on privileges and a broadening of your rights or places of settlement, which will create fresh complications...”

Ignatiev’s reference to the kahal organization was especially emphasized by religious leaders, such as Archbishop Nicanor of Odessa and Kherson. Of course, the kahal, that “state within a state”, was supposed to have been abolished in the reign of Nicholas I. Evidently, as in so many other ways, the Jews had managed to get round that law...

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215 “Religion,” he said, “is the basis of the powerful Jewish spirit. The more or less secret-open religious organisation of the kahal is that mighty, many-cylindered machine which moves the millions of Jews to secretly planned ends. Only a blind man could not see how terrible and threatening is this power! It is striving for nothing less than the enslavement of the world!... In the last century it has had horrific successes by relying on European liberalism, on equality before the law, etc. It is mixing up people of other faiths more and more closely, while it rules its own people like a machine. All the Jews are in essence like one man. We reason in a liberal way whether it is useful or harmful to ban bazaars on feast-days. But the secret Jewish power says to its own people: 'Don't you dare! Honour the Sabbath! Honour the law of your fathers! The law gives life and power to Jewry!' And look: not a single Jew dares to go out on Saturday from Nikolaev to Kherson or Odessa. The railway trains are empty, while the steamer services between these great cities stop completely. It is strange and offensive for the Christian people and such a great Kingdom as ours! But what a foreign power! And how bold and decisive it is. This is a religious power coming from the religious organisation of the kahal.” (in Fomin and Fomina, op. cit., vol. I, p. 351).
In May, 1882 the government issued new “temporary rules” which “forbade Jews to resettle or acquire property in rural areas, even within the Pale, while outside it the police were instructed to enforce restrictions on Jewish residence which had previously been widely flouted. In the following years Jews were barred from entering the advokatura and the military-medical professions, while a numerus clausus was imposed on their admission to secondary and higher education in general. They were also denied the vote in zemstvo and municipal elections. In 1891, at Passover, there was a mass expulsion of illegal resident Jews from Moscow, which deprived the city of two-thirds of its Jewish population.”

The Jewish radicals of the previous reign had seen themselves as joining Russian culture, whose famous writers had been their idols. Unfortunately, however, the pogroms served to radicalize Jewish youth still further and in an opposite direction, so that their radicalism was now nationalist rather than internationalist, and anti-Russian rather than pro-Russian.

And yet there is reason to believe that the great wave of Jewish emigration from Russia to the West in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – about two million Jews emigrated to America alone before 1914 - was not elicited primarily by the pogroms. A more important factor, probably, was the introduction of a state monopoly on the sale of alcohol in 1896. For the introduction of the state monopoly in the region of the Pale deprived about 100,000 Jews of their livelihood.

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217 As Solzhenitsyn writes: “The general turning-point in Jewish consciousness in Russia after 1881-82 could not fail, of course, to be reflected to some extent also in the consciousness of the Jewish revolutionaries in Russia. These youths had first left Jewry, but afterwards many returned, ‘the departure from “Jew street” and return to the people’, ‘our historical destiny is bound up with the Jewish ghetto, and from it comes our national essence’. Until the pogroms of 1881-82 ‘it absolutely never entered the head of any of us revolutionaries to think about the necessity’ of publicly explaining the role of the Jews in the revolutionary movement. But the pogroms elicited ‘amongst… the majority of my compatriots an explosion of discontent’. And so ‘not only the intelligent Jews in general, but also some revolutionary Jews, who previously had felt not the slightest bond with their nationality… suddenly recognised themselves as obliged to devote their strength and abilities to their unjustly persecuted compatriots’. ‘The pogroms brought out previously hidden feelings and made the youth more sensitive to the sufferings of their people, and the people more receptive to revolutionary ideas.’” (op. cit., p. 192)
219 Solzhenitsyn writes: “There is no doubt about it: the introduction of the state wine monopoly turned out to be a very powerful blow at the economy of Russian Jewry. And right up to the World War itself, when it more or less came to an end, the state wine monopoly continued to be a favourite target of public displeasure – although only it introduced strict control over the quality of the spirits sold in the country and their purity. And although the state monopoly also removed the livelihood of Christian publicans, it was nevertheless made out to be primarily an anti-Jewish measure: ‘The introduction of the state sale of wines in the Pale of Settlement at the end of the 90s deprived more than 100,000 Jews of their livelihood’, ‘the authorities counted on pushing the Jews out of their village localities’, and from that time ‘trade in alcohol did not have its former significance for the Jews’.
However, other means of exploiting the Christian peasantry remained. 18% of the Jews before the revolution, about one million people, were occupied in the sale of bread. And sometimes they would hoard the harvest and refuse to sell it so that the prices should fall. “It is not by accident that in the 90s of the nineteenth century agricultural cooperatives (under the leadership of Count Haydn and Bekhteev) arose for the first time in Russia, forestalling Europe, in the southern provinces. [This was envisaged] as a counter-measure to this essentially completely monopolistic hoarding of peasant bread.”

The Jews were also heavily involved in the lumber, sugar, gold, oil and banking industries. And by 1900 they controlled one-third of the trade of Russia. With such a heavy involvement in the country’s economy, it is not surprising to learn that, of those Jews who emigrated between 1899 and 1907, only one per cent were educated.221 The educated had no reason to leave: there were plenty of opportunities for them in Tsarist Russia. We might also have expected that those who remained would be gradually assimilated. But no: the Jews chose emancipation (education), but not assimilation. They fought for equality of rights, but without the loss of their Jewish exclusiveness.222

“From the beginning of the century a ‘Bureau for the Defence’ of the Jews in Russia was organized from prominent lawyers and publicists...

“In these years ‘the Jewish spirit was roused to struggle’, and in many Jews there was ‘a rapid growth in social and national self-consciousness’ - but national self-consciousness no longer in a religious form: with the ‘impoverishment at the local level, the flight of the more prosperous elements... among the youth into the cities... and the tendency to urbanization’, religion was undermined ‘among the broad masses of Jewry’ from the 90s, the authority of the rabbinate fell, and even the yeshbotniks were drawn into secularization. (But in spite of that, in many biographies in the Russian Jewish Encyclopaedia were read about the generation that grew up on the cusp of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: ‘he received a traditional Jewish religious education’.)

“However, as we have seen, Palestinophilia began to develop in an unexpected form and with a strength that was unexpected for many...”223

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“And it is precisely from the end of the 19th century that the emigration of Jews from Russia intensified. Its statistical link with the introduction of the state sale of wines has not been established, but these 100,000 lost livelihoods point to it. In any case, the Jewish emigration (to America) did not increase substantially until 1886-87, jumped for a short time in 1891-92, and its long and massive rise began in 1897...” (op. cit., pp. 293-294)

220 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 299.
221 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 311.
223 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 314.
“Anti-Jewish manifestations - both abroad and in Russia - were being passionately discussed already in 1884 by Vladimir Soloviev, who was disturbed by them: ‘The Jews have always treated us in a Jewish way; but we Christians, by contrast, have not yet learned to treat Judaism in a Christian way’; ‘with regard to Judaism the Christian world in its majority has so far displayed either zeal not according to reason or a decrepit and powerless indifferentism’. No, ‘Christian Europe does not tolerate the Jews – unbelieving Europe does’.

“Russian society felt the growing importance of the Jewish question for Russia as much as half a century after the government. Only after the Crimean war did ‘embryonic Russian public opinion begin to become conscious of the presence of the Jewish problem in Russia’. But several decades would have to pass before the primary importance of this question was recognized. ‘Providence implanted the largest and strongest part of Jewry in our fatherland,’ wrote Vladimir Soloviev in 1891.

“But a year earlier, in 1890, Soloviev, finding incitement and support in a circle of sympathizers, composed the text of a ‘Protest’. [He wrote] that ‘the only reason for the so-called Jewish question’ was ‘forgetfulness of justice and love of man’, ‘a mindless attraction to blind national egoism’. – ‘The incitement of tribal and religious enmity, which is so counter to the spirit of Christianity… radically corrupts society and can lead to moral savagery…’ – ‘It is necessary decisively to condemn the anti-Semitic movement’ – ‘already from the single feeling of national self-preservation’.

“S.M. Dubnov recounts how Soloviev collected more than a hundred signatures, including those of Lev Tolstoy and Korolenko. But the editors of all the newspapers received a warning: don’t publish this protest. Soloviev ‘addressed Alexander III with an ardent letter’. However, he was warned through the police that if he insisted he would be administratively persecuted. And he abandoned the idea.

“As in Europe, the many-faceted growth of Jewish strivings could not fail to elicit in Russian society – alarm in some, sharp opposition in others, but sympathy in yet others...

“And in others – a political calculation. Just as in 1881 the People’s Will revolutionaries had thought of the usefulness of playing on the Jewish question..., so, some time later, the Russian liberal-radical circles, the left wing of society, appropriated for a long time the usefulness of using the Jewish question as a weighty political card in the struggle with the autocracy: they tried in every way to re-iterate the idea that it was impossible to attain equality of rights for the Jews in Russia in any other way than by the complete overthrow of the autocracy. Everyone, from the liberals to the SRs and
Bolsheviks, brought in the Jews again and again – some with sincere sympathy, but all as a useful card in the anti-autocratic front. And this card, without a twinge of conscience, was never let out of the hands of the revolutionaries, but was used right up to 1917…”  

**Vladimir Soloviev**

The philosopher Vladimir Soloviev was, for good and for ill, the most influential thinker in Russia until his death in 1900, and for some time after. In 1874, at the age of 23, he defended his master’s thesis, “The Crisis of Western Philosophy”, at the Moscow Theological Academy. Coming at a time when the influence of western positivism was at its peak, this bold philosophical vindication of the Christian faith drew the attention of many; and his lectures on Godmanhood in St. Petersburg were attended by Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky. Unfortunately, his philosophy of “pan-unity” contained pantheistic elements; there is evidence that his lectures on Godmanhood were plagiarized from the works of Schelling; and his theory of Sophia, the Wisdom of God, was both heretical in itself and gave birth to other heresies.

Turning from his metaphysics to his social and political teaching, we find in Soloviev a mixture of East and West, Slavophilism and Westernism. On the one hand, he believed fervently, with the Slavophiles, in the Divine mission of Russia. But on the other, as we have seen, he was fiercely critical of the nationalism of the later Slavophiles, he admired Peter the Great and did not admire Byzantium, and felt drawn to the universalism of the Roman Catholics, becoming an early “prophet” of Orthodox-Roman Catholic ecumenism. The problem with the Slavic world and Orthodoxy, Soloviev came to believe, was its nationalism. Thus in 1885 he 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…"

Moving still more in a westernizing direction, Soloviev feared that Russia’s political ambitions in the Balkans and the Middle East were crudely imperialist and did not serve her own deepest interests, but rather the petty nationalisms of other nations. Thus in “The Russian Idea” (1888) he wrote: “The true greatness of Russia is a dead letter for our pseudo-patriots, who want to impose on the Russian people a historical mission in their image and

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225 Rklitsky, op. cit., volume 1, pp. 103-104.
226 For Soloviev Sophia was the feminine principle of God, His ‘other’. For some of his heretical followers, such as Protopriest Sergius Bulgakov, it was the Mother of God.
227 Soloviev, V. “Golos Moskvy” (The Voice of Moscow), 14 March, 1885.
in the limits of their own understanding. Our national work, if we are to listen to them, is something that couldn’t be more simple and that depends on one force only – the force of arms. To beat up the expiring Ottoman empire, and then crush the monarchy of the Habsburgs, putting in the place of these states a bunch of small independent national kingdoms that are only waiting for this triumphant hour of their final liberation in order to hurl themselves at each other. Truly, it was worth Russia suffering and struggling for a thousand years, and becoming Christian with St. Vladimir and European with Peter the Great, constantly in the meantime occupying its unique place between East and West, and all this just so as in the final analysis to become the weapon of the ‘great idea’ of the Serbs and the ‘great idea’ of the Bulgarians!

“But that is not the point, they will tell us: the true aim of our national politics is Constantinople. Apparently, they have already ceased to take the Greeks into account – after all, they also have their ‘great idea’ of panhellenism. But the most important thing is to know: with what, and in the name of what can we enter Constantinople? What can we bring there except the pagan idea of the absolute state and the principles of caesaropapism, which were borrowed by us from the Greeks and which have already destroyed Byzantium? In the history of the world there are mysterious events, but there are no senseless ones. No! It is not this Russia which we see now, the Russia which has betrayed its best memories, the lessons of Vladimir and Peter the Great, the Russia which is possessed by blind nationalism and unfettered obscurantism, it is not this Russia that will one day conquer the second Rome and put an end to the fateful eastern question…”

In 1889, in his work *Russia and the Universal Church* Soloviev tried to argue in favour of a union between the Russian empire and the Roman papacy (he himself became a Catholic, but returned to Orthodoxy on his deathbed). The Roman papacy was to be preferred above the Orthodox Church as the partner to the Russian empire because, in Soloviev’s opinion, the Orthodox Church had become a group of national Churches, rather than the Universal Church, and had therefore lost the right to represent Christ.

Dostoyevsky disagreed with his friend on this point, considering the papacy to be, not so much a Church as a State. Nor did he agree with the doctrine of papal infallibility, which Soloviev also supported. As Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) wrote in 1890, in his review of Soloviev’s book: “If a sinful man cannot be accepted as the supreme head of the Universal Church without this bride of Christ being completely dethroned, accepting the compatibility of the infallibility of religious edicts with a life of sin, with a wicked will, would amount to blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of wisdom by admitting His compatibility with a sinful mind. Khomiakov very justly

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229 Published in French as *La Russie et l’Eglise universelle.*
says that besides the holy inspiration of the apostles and prophets, Scripture tells us of only one inspiration - inspiration of the obsessed. But if this sort of inspiration was going on in Rome, the Church would not be the Church of Christ, but the Church of His enemy. And this is exactly how Dostoyevsky defines it in his ‘Grand Inquisitor’ who says to Christ: ‘We are not with Thee, but with him’... Dostoyevsky in his ‘Grand Inquisitor’ characterised the Papacy as a doctrine which is attractive exactly because of its worldly power, but devoid of the spirit of Christian communion with God and of contempt for the evil of the world…”

The Orthodox Church, wrote Soloviev, had a wealth of mystical contemplation, which must be preserved. “In Eastern Christendom for the last thousand years religion has been identified with personal piety, and prayer has been regarded as the one and only religious activity. The Western church, without disparaging individual piety as the true germ of all religion, seeks the development of this germ and its blossoming into a social activity organized for the glory of God and the universal good of mankind. The Eastern prays, the Western prays and labours.”

However, only a supranational spiritual power independent of the State could be a worthy partner of the State, forming the basis of a universal theocracy. For “here below, the Church has not the perfect unity of the heavenly Kingdom, but nevertheless she must have a certain real unity, a bond at once organic and spiritual which constitutes her a concrete institution, a living body and a moral individual. Though she does not include the whole of mankind in an actual material sense, she is nevertheless universal insofar as she cannot be confined exclusively to any one nation or group of nations, but must have an international centre from which to spread throughout the whole universe...

“Were she not one and universal, she could not serve as the foundation of the positive unity of all peoples, which is her chief mission. Were she not infallible, she could not guide mankind in the true way; she would be a blind leader of the blind. Finally were she not independent, she could not fulfil her duty towards society; she would become the instrument of the powers of this world and would completely fail in her mission...

“If the particular spiritual families which between them make up mankind are in reality to form a single Christian family, a single Universal Church, they must be subject to a common fatherhood embracing all Christian nations. To assert that there exist in reality nothing more than national Churches is to assert that the members of a body exist in and for themselves and that the body itself has no reality. On the contrary, Christ did not found any particular Church. He created them all in the real unity of the Universal Church which

He entrusted to Peter as the one supreme representative of the divine Fatherhood towards the whole family of the sons of Man.

“It was by no mere chance that Jesus Christ specially ascribed to the first divine Hypostasis, the heavenly Father, that divine-human act which made Simon Bar-Jona the first social father of the whole human family and the infallible master of the school of mankind.”

For Soloviev, wrote Nicholas Lossky, “the ideal of the Russian people is of [a] religious nature, it finds its expression in the idea of ‘Holy Russia’; the capacity of the Russian people to combine Eastern and Western principles has been historically proved by the success of Peter the Great’s reforms; the capacity of national self-renunciation, necessary for the recognition of the Pope as the Primate of the Universal Church, is inherent in the Russian people, as may be seen, among other things, from the calling in of the Varangians. Soloviev himself gave expression to this characteristic of the Russian people when he said that it was ‘better to give up patriotism than conscience’, and taught that the cultural mission of a great nation is not a privilege: it must not dominate, but serve other peoples and all mankind.

“Soloviev’s Slavophil messianism never degenerated into a narrow nationalism. In the nineties he was looked upon as having joined the camp of the Westerners. In a series of articles he violently denounced the epigons of Slavophilism who had perverted its original conception. In the article ‘Idols and Ideals’, written in 1891, he speaks of ‘the transformation of the lofty and all-embracing Christian ideals into the coarse and limited idols of our modern paganism... National messianism was the main idea of the old Slavophils; this idea, in some form of other, was shared by many peoples; it assumed a pre-eminently religious and mystical character with the Poles (Towianski) and with some French dreamers of the thirties and forties (Michel, Ventra, etc.). What is the relation of such national messianism to the true Christian idea? We will not say that there is a contradiction of principle between them. The true Christian ideal can assume this national messianic form, but it becomes then very easily pervertible (to use an expression of ecclesiastical writers); i.e., it can easily change into the corresponding idol of anti-Christian nationalism, which did happen in fact.’…”

“Soloviev struggled in his works against every distortion of the Christian ideal of general harmony; he also struggled against all the attempts made by man to satisfy his selfishness under the false pretence of serving a noble cause. Such are for instance the aims of chauvinistic nationalism. Many persons believe, Soloviev tells us, that in order to serve the imaginary interests of their people, ‘everything is permitted, the aim justifies the means, black turns white, lies are preferable to truth and violence is glorified and considered as valor... This is first of all an insult to that very nationality which we desire to serve.’ In reality, ‘peoples flourished and were exalted only when they did not serve
their own interests as a goal in itself, but pursued higher, general ideal goods.’

Trusting the highly sensitive conscience of the Russian people, Soloviev wrote in his article, ‘What is Demanded of a Russian Party?’ ‘If instead of doping themselves with Indian opium, our Chinese neighbors suddenly took a liking to the poisonous mushrooms which abound in the Siberian woods, we would be sure to find Russian jingos, who in their ardent interest in Russian trade, would want Russia to induce the Chinese government to permit the free entry of poisonous mushrooms into the Celestial empire... Nevertheless, every plain Russian will say that no matter how vital an interest may be, Russia’s honor is also worth something; and, according to Russian standards, this honor definitely forbids a shady deal to become an issue of national politics.’

“Like Tiutchev, Soloviev dreamed of Russia becoming a Christian world monarchy; yet he wrote in a tone full of anxiety: ‘Russia’s life has not yet determined itself completely, it is still torn by the struggle between the principle of light and that of darkness. Let Russia become a Christian realm, even without Constantinople, a Christian realm in the full sense of the word, that is, one of justice and mercy, and all the rest will be surely added unto this.’”231

As a warning against the dangers of a Russian nationalism lacking the universalist dimension of the early Slavophiles and Dostoevsky, Soloviev’s critique had value. But his attempt to tear Russia away from Constantinople and towards Rome was misguided. And it had an unhealthy influence on other writers, such as D.S. Merezhkovsky. Thus Merezhkovsky, according to Sergius Firsov, “found it completely normal to compare Roman Catholicism headed by the Pope and the Russian kingdom headed by the Autocrat. Calling these theocracies (that is, attempts to realise the City of God in the city of man) false, Merezhkovsky pointed out that they came by different paths to the same result: the western – to turning the Church into a State, and the eastern – to engulfing the Church in the State. ‘Autocracy and Orthodoxy are two halves of one religious whole,’ wrote Merezhkovsky, ‘just as the papacy and Catholicism are. The Tsar is not just the Tsar, the head of the State, but also the head of the Church, the first priest, the anointed of God, that is, in the final, if historically not yet realised, yet mystically necessary extent of his power – ‘the Vicar of Christ’, the same Pope, Caesar and Pope in one.’”232

**Pobedonostsev on Church-State Relations**

Merezhkovsky’s comparison of the Pope and the Tsar, though greatly exaggerated, had a certain basis in fact; in the fact, namely, that the relationship between Church and State in Russia since Peter the Great had not been canonical, but leaned in a caesaropapist direction. The fact was that the

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Tsar had too great a control over the decisions of the Church hierarchy, and the hierarchy had become accustomed to following the lead of the secular power to an alarming degree. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, this question became increasingly topical, with general agreement on the nature of the problem, but much less on its solution.

The debate centred especially on the personality and policies of Constantine Petrovich Pobedonostsev, who from April, 1880 to October, 1905 was over-procurator of the Russian Holy Synod and whose policy of Orthodox conservative nationalism was dominant in Russia until the publication of the October manifesto in 1905. Since Pobednostsev personified this policy of the supremacy of the Orthodox Autocracy perhaps even more than the tsars whom he served, and since his influence extended far beyond his role as over-procurator, he was reviled more than any other figure by the liberal press. He was portrayed as standing for the complete, tyrannical domination by the State of every aspect of Russian life; and among the epithets the press gave him were “prince of darkness, hatred and unbelief”, “state vampire”, “the great inquisitor” and “the greatest deicide in the whole of Russian history”.233

These were vile slanders; for Pobedonostev was a pious man who believed in the Church, and educated the future Tsar Nicholas on the necessity of his being a servant of the Church. And although he never tried to correct the uncanonical state of Church-State relations, and even expressed the view that Peter the Great’s removal of the patriarchate was “completely lawful”, his work as over-procurator was in fact very beneficial. Thus he did a great deal for the development of parish schools, an essential counter-measure to the spread of liberal and atheist education in the secular schools, for the spread of the Word of God in various languages throughout the empire, for the improvement in the lot of the parish priest and for an enormous (fourfold) increase in the number of monks over the previous reign.234

At the same time, his views on Peter the Great’ “completely lawful” removal of the patriarchate cannot be accepted. Nor can it be denied that the power that the tsars wielded over the Church through the over-procurators was anti-canonical. In the 16th and 17th centuries there had been something like real “symphony” between Church and State. However, the eighteenth-century tsars from Peter the Great onwards succeeded, through the lay office of over-procurator, in making the Church dependent on the State to a large degree. This process reached its apogee in Alexander I’s decrees of November 13, 1817 and May 15, 1824, which made the Holy Synod into a department of State.

233 A.I. Peshkov, “‘Kto razoriaet – mal vo Tsarstvii Khristovym’” (He who destroys is least in the Kingdom of Christ), in K.P. Pobedonostev, Sochinenia (Works), St. Petersburg, p. 3.
234 Sergius Firsov, Russkaia Tserkov’ nakanune peremen (konets 1890-kh – 1918 g.) (The Russian Church on the Eve of the Changes (the end of the 1890s to 1918), Moscow, 2002, pp. 42-43.
Pobedonostev’s biographer, A.I. Peshkov provides a certain correction to this point of view: “It is necessary to take into account that even in the Synod he [the over-procurator] did not have that direct administrative power which any minister in Russia’s Tsarist government possessed in the department subject to him, since the Most Holy Synod was a collegial organ, whose decision-making required the unanimity of its members. As Pobedonostev himself emphasised, ‘juridically I have no power to issue orders in the Church and the department. You have to refer to the Synod.’ In particular, when Metropolitan Isidore of St. Petersburg expressed himself against the publication in Russia of the New Testament in the translation of V.A. Zhukovsky, C.P. Pobedonostev had to publish it abroad, in Berlin...”\textsuperscript{235}

Moreover, by the Providence of God the de jure power that the State wielded over the Church did not translate into a de facto tyranny that prevented the Church from carrying out her saving mission. Thus it was fortunately the case that the over-procurators of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century were in general more Orthodox than those of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century. This was undoubtedly a consequence of the fact that the tsars themselves were more genuinely Christian than their nineteenth-century predecessors. Moreover, some of the complaints about the State’s interference in Church affairs were exaggerated - for example, the Petrine decree that priests should report the contents of confession if they were seditious. As Pobedonostsev himself pointed out, this had long been a dead letter.

But this did not change the essentially uncanonical nature of the situation. And there were some consequences of this “Caesaropapism” that threatened to undermine the inner nature of the Church herself – as, for example, the tendency of over-procurators to move bishops from one diocese to another, thereby destroying, or threatening to destroy, the close relationship of knowledge, love and trust that must exist between a bishop and his flock. It is not by accident that when, in 1927, the deputy leader of the Church Metropolitan Sergius tried, at the Bolsheviks’ behest, to use this bad pre-revolutionary habit in order to break the bonds tying Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd to his flock by moving him to another diocese, the patience of the believers finally snapped, and a full-scale schism developed as the faithful refused to be separated from the archpastor whom they knew and trusted.

Sergius Firsov writes: “While C.P. Pobednostsev was over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod, the transfer of hierarchs from see to see was finally turned into a kind of ‘educational’ measure. The paradox consisted in the fact that ‘while exalting the position of bishops from an external point of view, he [Pobedonostsev] at the same time had to increase his control over them’. The over-procurator was quite unable to square this circle: he wanted an intensification of Episcopal activity and at the same time did not want to

\textsuperscript{235} Peshkov, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 7.
present the hierarchs with the freedom of action that was necessary for this. State control over the Church had to be kept up. It was precisely for this reason that the over-procurator so frequently moved Vladykos from see to see. According to the calculations of a contemporary investigator, ‘out of 49 diocesan bishops moved in 1881-1894, eight were moved twice and eight – three times. On average in one year three diocesan bishops were moved and three vicars; four vicars received appointments to independent sees’. In 1892-1893 alone 15 diocesan bishops and 7 vicar bishops were moved, while 14 vicar-bishops were raised to the rank of diocesan. At times the new place of their service and the composition of their flock differed strikingly from the former ones. In 1882, for example, a hierarch was transferred to Kishinev from Kazan, then in his place came the bishop of Ryazan, and he was followed by the bishop of Simbirsk.

“One can understand that this ‘shuffling’ could not fail to affect the attitude of hierarchs to their archpastoral duties: they were more interested in smoothing relations with the secular authorities and in getting a ‘good’ diocese. One must recognise that serious blame for this must attach to the long-time over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod, C.P. Pobedonostev…”

There were essentially two ways of correcting the Caesaropapist bias in Russian Church-State relations: the gradualist approach which removed the obstacles to the Church’s self-government step-by-step without trying to destroy the symbiotic, “symphonic” relationship between Church and State, and the radical approach which sought complete separation of Church and State on the western model. The gradualist approach was in fact adopted by Tsar Nicholas II, who in 1901 removed the words “Supreme Judge” from the Tsar’s title in the oath of allegiance that the bishops had to swear to him. He actively sought the convening of a Church Council that would restore the relationship of Church and State to what it had been in the 17th century. The radical approach was advocated by many liberal critics. It was opposed by Pobednostsev, who, demonstrating a deep awareness of the importance of the Church in Russian life, argued that the power of the State depended on its incarnating the “idea” of the people, and that since that idea was religious, it could not cut itself off from the religious life of the people without profound damage both to itself and to the nation as a whole.

Thus he wrote: “However great the power of the State, it is confirmed by nothing other than the unity of the spiritual self-consciousness between the people and the government, by the faith of the people: the power is undermined from the moment this consciousness, founded on faith, begins to divide. The people in unity with the State can bear many hardships, they can concede and hand over much to State power. Only one thing does the State power have no right to demand, only one thing will they not hand over to it – that in which every believing soul individually and all together lay down as

236 Firsov, op. cit., p. 77.
the foundation of their spiritual being, binding themselves with eternity. There are depths which State power cannot and must not touch, so as not to disturb the root sources of faith in the souls of each and every person…”

But in recent years a division had opened up between the faith of the people and the ideology of the State.

“Political science has constructed a strictly worked out teaching on the decisive separation of Church and State, a teaching in consequence of which, according to the law that does not allow a division into two of the central forces, the Church unfailingly turns out to be in fact an institution subject to the State. Together with this, the State as an institution is, according to its political ideology, separated from every faith and indifferent to faith. Naturally, from this point of view, the Church is represented as being nothing other than an institution satisfying one of the needs of the population that is recognised by the State – the religious need, and the State in its most recent incarnation turns to it with its right of authorization, of supervision and control, with no concern for the faith. For the State as the supreme political institution this theory is attractive, because it promises it complete autonomy, a decisive removal of every opposition, even spiritual opposition, and the simplification of the operations of its ecclesiastical politics…

“If the issue consists in a more exact delineation of civil society from religious society, of the ecclesiastical and spiritual from the secular, of a direct and sincere separation, without cunning or violence – in this case everybody will be for such a separation. If, coming to practical matters, they want the State to renounce the right to place pastors of the Church and from the obligation to pay for them, this will be an ideal situation…

“But they say that we must understand separation in a different, broader sense. Clever, learned people define this as follows: the State must have nothing to do with the Church, and the Church – with the State, and so humanity must devolve in two broad spheres in such a way that in one sphere will be the body and in the other the spirit of humanity, and between the two spheres will be a space as great as between heaven and earth. But is that really possible? It is impossible to separate the body from the spirit; the spirit and the body live one life.

“Can we expect that the Church – I’m not talking just about the Catholic, but any Church – should agree to remove from its consciousness civil society, familial society, human society - everything that is understood by the word ‘State’? Since when has it been decreed that the Church exists in order to form ascetics, fill up monasteries and express in churches the poetry of its rites and processions? No, all this is only a small part of that activity which the Church sets as her aim. She has been given another calling: teach all nations. That is her business. The task set before her is to form people on earth so that people
of the earthly city and earthly family should be made not quite unworthy to enter the heavenly city and the heavenly community. At birth, at marriage, at death – at the most important moments of human existence, - the Church is there with her three triumphant sacraments, but they say that the family is none of her business! She has been entrusted with inspiring the people with respect for the law and the authorities, and to inspire the authorities with respect for human freedom, but they say that society is none of her business!

“No, the moral principle is one. It cannot be divided in such a way that one is a private moral principle and the other public, one secular and the other spiritual. The one moral principle embraces all relationships – private, in the home and political; and the Church, preserving the consciousness of her dignity, will never renounce her lawful influence in questions relations both to the family and to civil society. And so in demanding that the Church have nothing to do with civil society, they only give her greater strength.”

“The most ancient and best known system of Church-State relations is the system of the established or State Church. The State recognises one confession out of all as being the true confession of faith and supports and protects one Church exclusively, to the prejudice of all other churches and confessions. This prejudice signifies in general that all remaining churches are not recognised as true or completely true; but it is expressed in practice in various forms and a multitude of all manner of variations, from non-recognition and alienation to, sometimes, persecution. In any case, under the influence of this system foreign confessions are subject to a certain more or less significant diminution in honour, in law and in privilege by comparison with the native, State confession. The State cannot be the representative only of the material interests of society; in such a case it would deprive itself of spiritual power and would renounce its spiritual unity with the people. The State is the stronger and more significant the clearer its spiritual representation is manifested. Only on this condition is the feeling of legality, respect for the law and trust in State power supported and strengthened in the midst of the people and in civil life. Neither the principle of the integrity or the good of the benefit of the State, nor even the principle of morality are sufficient in themselves to establish a firm bond between the people and State power; and the moral principle is unstable, shaky, deprived of its fundamental root when it renounces religious sanction. A State which in the name of an unbiased relationship to all beliefs will undoubtedly be deprived of this central, centrifugal force and will itself renounce every belief – whatever it may be. The trust of the people for their rulers is based on faith, that is, not only on the identity of the faith of the people and the government, but also on the simple conviction that the government has faith and acts according to faith. Therefore even pagans and Mohammedans have more trust and respect for a government which stands on the firm principles of belief, whatever it may be, than for a government which does not recognise its own faith and has an identical relationship to all beliefs.
“That is the undeniable advantage of this system. But in the course of the centuries the circumstances under which this system received its beginning changed, and there arose new circumstances under which its functioning became more difficult than before. In the age when the first foundations of European civilisation and politics were laid, the Christian State was a powerfully integral and unbroken bond with the one Christian Church. Then in the midst of the Christian Church itself the original unity was shattered into many kinds of sects and different faiths, each of which began to assume to itself the significance of the one true teaching and the one true Church. Thus the State had to deal with several different teachings between which the masses of the people were distributed. With the violation of the unity and integrity in faith a period may ensue when the dominant Church, which is supported by the State, turns out to be the Church of an insignificant minority, and herself enjoys only weak sympathy, or no sympathy at all, from the masses of the people. Then important difficulties may arise in the definition of the relations between the State and its Church and the churches to which the majority of the people belong.

“From the beginning of the 18th century there begins in Western Europe a conversion from the old system to the system of the *levelling* of the Christian confessions in the State – with the removal, however, of sectarians and Jews from this levelling process. [However, it continues to be the case that] the State recognises Christianity as the essential basis of its existence and of the public well-being, and belonging to this or that church, to this or that belief is obligatory for every citizen.

“From 1848 this relationship of the State to the Church changes essentially: the flooding waves of liberalism break through the old dam and threaten to overthrow the ancient foundations of Christian statehood. The freedom of the State from the Church is proclaimed – it has nothing to do with the Church. The separation of the State by the Church is also proclaimed: every person is free to believe as he wants or not believe in anything. The symbol of this doctrine is the *fundamental principles* ([Grundrechte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grundrechte)) proclaimed by the Frankfurt parliament in 1848/1849. Although they soon cease to be considered valid legislation, they served and serve to this day as the ideal for the introduction of liberal principles into the most recent legislation of Western Europe. Legislation in line with these principles is everywhere now. Political and civil law is dissociated from faith and membership of this or that church or sect. The State asks nobody about his faith. The registration of marriage and acts of civil status are dissociated from the Church. Complete freedom of mixed marriages is proclaimed, and the Church principle of the indissolubility of marriage is violated by facilitating divorce, which is dissociated from the ecclesiastical courts...
“Does it not follow from this that the unbelieving State is nothing other than a utopia that cannot be realized, for lack of faith is a direct denial of the State. Religion, and notably Christianity, is the spiritual basis of every law in State and civil life and of every true culture. That is why we see that the political parties that are the most hostile to the social order, the parties that radically deny the State, proclaim before everyone that religion is only a private, personal matter, of purely private and personal interest.

“[Count Cavour’s] system of ‘a free Church in a free State’ is based on abstract principles, theoretically; at its foundation is laid not the principle of faith, but the principle of religious indifferentism, or indifference to the faith, and it is placed in a necessary bond with doctrines that often preach, not tolerance and respect for the faith, but open or implied contempt for the faith, as to a bygone moment in the psychological development of personal and national life. In the abstract construction of this system, which constitutes a fruit of the newest rationalism, the Church is represented as also being an abstractly constructed political institution..., built with a definite aim like other corporations recognised in the State...

“... In fact, [however,] it is impossible for any soul that has preserved and experienced the demands of faith within its depths can agree without qualification, for itself personally, with the rule: ‘all churches and all faiths are equal; it doesn’t matter whether it is this faith or another’. Such a soul will unfaillingly reply to itself: ‘Yes, all faiths are equal, but my faith is better than any other for myself.’ Let us suppose that today the State will proclaim the strictest and most exact equality of all churches and faiths before the law. Tomorrow signs will appear, from which it will be possible to conclude that the relative power of the faiths is by no means equal; and if we go 30 or 50 years on from the time of the legal equalisation of the churches, it will then be discovered in fact, perhaps, that among the churches there is one which in essence has a predominant influence and rules over the minds and decisions [of men], either because it is closer to ecclesiastical truth, or because in its teaching or rites it more closely corresponds to the national character, or because its organisation and discipline is more perfect and gives it more means for systematic activity, or because activists that are more lively and firm in their faith have arisen in its midst...

“... And so a free State can lay down that it has nothing to do with a free Church; only the free Church, if it is truly founded on faith, will not accept this decree and will not adopt an indifferent attitude to the free State. The Church cannot refuse to exert its influence on civil and social life; and the more active it is, the more it feels within itself an inner, active force, and the less is it able to adopt an indifferent attitude towards the State. The Church cannot adopt such an attitude without renouncing its own Divine calling, if it retains faith in it and the consciousness of duty bound up with it. On the Church there lies the duty to teach and instruct; to the Church there belongs the performance of
the sacraments and the rites, some of which are bound up with the most important acts and civil life. In this activity the Church of necessity enters ceaselessly into touch with social and civil life (not to speak of other cases, it is sufficient to point to questions of marriage and education). And so to the degree that the State, in separating itself from the Church, retains for itself the administration exclusively of the civil part of all these matters and removes from itself the administration of the spiritual-moral part, the Church will of necessity enter into the function abandoned by the State, and in separation from it will little by little come to control completely and exclusively that spiritual-moral influence which constitutes a necessary, real force for the State. The State will retain only a material and, perhaps, a rational force, but both the one and the other will turn out to be insufficient when the power of faith does not unite with them. And so, little by little, instead of the imagined equalisation of the functions of the State and the Church in political union, there will turn out to be inequality and opposition. A condition that is in any case abnormal, and which must lead either to the real dominance of the Church over the apparently predominant State or to revolution.

“These are the real dangers hidden in the system of complete Church-State separation glorified by liberal thinkers. The system of the dominant or established Church has many defects, being linked with many inconveniences and difficulties, and does not exclude the possibility of conflicts and struggle. But in vain do they suppose that it has already outlived its time, and that Cavour’s formula alone gives the key to the resolution of all the difficulties of this most difficult of questions. Cavour’s formula is the fruit of political doctrinaireism, which looks on questions of faith as merely political questions about the equalization of rights. There is no depth of spiritual knowledge in it, as there was not in that other famous political formula: freedom, equality and brotherhood, which up to now has weighed as a fateful burden on credulous minds. In the one case as in the other, passionate advocates of freedom are mistaken in supposing that there is freedom in equality. Or is our bitter experience not sufficient to confirm the fact that freedom does not depend on equality, and that equality is by no means freedom? It would be the same error to suppose that the very freedom of belief consists in the levelling of the churches and faiths and depends on their levelling. The whole of recent history shows that here, too, freedom and equality are not the same thing.”

Fearing a separation of Church and State more than anything, Pobedonostev opposed even a gradual reform in Church-State relations. He feared that such a reform, even if desirable in itself from a canonical point of view, might lead to Church-State separation and the gradual dechristianization of society. As Firsov writes: “Pobedonostsev saw and understood better than many that the demolishing of the Petrine Synodal system in Russian conditions would not lead to the recreation of correct mutual relations

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between the Church and the State, but would only strengthen anti-
government forces. To represent the Church and the kingdom as existing in
isolation from each other was psychologically impossible, while any changes
in the ecclesiastical structure could be understood by ‘the simple people’ only
as the abolition of the previous Church-State relationship [because ‘for our
peasant form is everything’]. It was not by chance that Pobedonostsev, while
talking with General A.A. Kireev about Church problems and ‘about learning’,
declared that what he feared above all was a new schism: ‘It’s fine for you,
but where shall we go with our darkness, with the peasant. I fear a schism,
that’s what I fear!’ 238 It is not clear whether he meant a Church schism, or a
schism between the peasants and the State. In either case, the events of 1905,
when liberal reforms by the Tsar led to a wave of worker and peasant
uprisings, showed that the old man had a point...

However, there was a contradiction in Pobedonostev’s position. On the one
hand, he sincerely believed that the Church was the soul of the State and the
People, and should be its teacher, corrector and inspirer. On the other hand,
he acted as if he did not believe this, but rather that the Church should be
tutored and disciplined by the State, and that he himself, as the representative
of the State, should act as the task-master of the Church hierarchy...

Socialism and Christianity

The major forms of Christianity in Eastern and Western Europe – the
“souls” of the eastern and western peoples - reacted quite differently to the
progress of democracy and socialism. In the East, the Orthodox Church
rejected democracy, and upheld autocracy, on principled, scriptural grounds:
that the source of authority in both Church and State is the will of God, not
the will of the people (Romans 13.1), and that the task of political authority is
to incarnate the will of God in the life of the people – the ruler is permitted to
carry out the people’s will only to the extent that it is compatible with the will
of God. The West, however, had become reconciled to the logical
contradiction between “by the grace of God” and “by the will of the people” a
long time since – in England by 1688, in France by 1789 and more solidly by
1848, and in Italy and Germany by 1870. Western Christianity – Roman
Catholicism more than Protestantism, since the latter, in itself a revolutionary
teaching, was almost always on the side of the revolution - offered resistance
to the march of democracy and socialism. But it was half-hearted and
ineffective. By the end of the nineteenth century even the pope had become
reconciled with democracy, and by the end of the twentieth, in accordance
with Dostoyevsky’s prophecy in The Devils, with socialism, too – as long as it
was “with a human face”.

The introduction of the welfare state by Bismarck in Germany, which was
followed by its introduction in all the major West European states, was an

238 Firsov, op. cit. 2001, p. 47.
important milestone on the path to the dechristianization of Europe. Until the nineteenth century, in both East and West, the poor had been looked after by individual wealthy Christians and by the Church. Undoubtedly, there were abuses of this “system”, and it remained true, as the Lord said, that “the poor you always have with you”. But it had the priceless advantage of providing the possibility of true Christian virtue in rich and poor alike – the rich could conquer avarice through compassionate giving in the name of Christ, while the poor could pray for their benefactors while patiently enduring their want – again, in the name of Christ. In this way, as the Holy Fathers explained, social inequality could serve for the salvation of all.

However, beginning with the French revolution, the Christian approach to poverty and inequality was increasingly discarded. Poverty was a “scandal”, whose solution lay not in voluntary charity by the rich to the poor, but in compulsory taxation of the rich and handouts to the poor administered by “expert” intellectuals. (Of course, State intervention on behalf of the poor had taken place in earlier ages, but on a smaller scale and always in cooperation with the Church rather than as a rival to her.) The problem was: the State was still too weak to take on the burdens that the Church had taken on before, while the poor, as a result of the industrial revolution and the increasing hard-heartedness of capitalist morals, multiplied alarmingly…

In the country where this problem was most acute, England, welfare legislation may be said to have begun with Disraeli’s Public Health Act of 1875 and Housing Acts of the late 1870s. However, there was opposition to massive State intervention, not for Christian reasons, but because it contradicted the doctrines of limited government, free trade and manly self-help of which the Victorians were so enamoured. Even as late as 1886, the minister responsible for the Poor Law, Joseph Chamberlain, said: “The spirit of independence which leads so many of the working classes to make great personal sacrifices rather than incur the stigma of pauperism, is one which deserves the greatest sympathy and respect… It is not desirable that the working classes should be familiarised with poor relief.”

However, it was a somewhat different situation on the continent, where pauperism was not such a stigma, free trade was not a dogma, and the socialist movement was much more powerful… And so the modern form of “the nanny state” was first introduced, not in England, but in Germany. According to Arnold Toynbee, the German model of the welfare state showed “how to raise a whole population to a standard of unprecedented social efficiency by a system of compulsory education and of unprecedented social security, by a system of compulsory health and unemployment insurance.”

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In Germany, as in England, welfarism was introduced, not by socialist governments, but by conservative politicians, who were compelled to introduce welfare measures both because they were necessary and in order to defeat their leftist opponents. Thus in 1884 Bismarck said: “Give the working man a right to work as long as he is healthy, assure him care when he is sick, assure him maintenance when he is old. If you do that and do not fear the sacrifice, or cry out at state socialism – if the state will show a little more Christian solicitude for the working man, then I believe that the gentlemen of the social-democratic programme will sound their bird-call in vain.”

In other words, in Bismarck’s view, state socialism – the welfare state - was necessitated by a decline in Christian love; if Christians loved their neighbour more, the ground would be cut from under the feet of the socialists. This was genuine insight. For although, as we have seen in the last section, there were many political, economic and social reasons for the rise of socialism in Europe, these reasons were not fundamental. The most fundamental reason was the decline of Christianity: socialism filled the gap caused by the decline in Christian faith and morality with its own faith and morality. Socialism provided a kind of faith and morality that appeared to the superficial Christian to be Christian, although in fact it was the antithesis of Christianity.

The founders of socialism were certainly antichristian. Marx and Engels, Saint Simon, Fourier and Owen, were all antichristian theorists. This is not to say that minimal socialism, i.e. welfarism, was incompatible with Christianity or Christian governance. On the contrary: it is difficult to see how any modern country in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries could have survived without a vast increase of the state budget and state activity to protect the masses from the consequences of modern urban civilization. Orthodox Russia, as we shall see, was no exception to this rule. In practice, however, - and we see this in even the more moderate socialist parties, - it has proved impossible to “insulate” minimal socialism completely from the antichristian theories of maximal socialism (which we shall simply call “socialism” from now on). To many, welfarism appeared to be a “Christian” product of socialism, a proof that Christianity and socialism were compatible. But this was to ignore both the nature of Christianity and the nature of socialism in its original and “purer” forms. Socialism was much, much more than welfarism. It was and is a whole world-view based on atheism and materialism and directly opposed to Christianity; it stood for an omnipotent State that squeezed religion as far as possible out of the public arena.

Richard Pipes writes: “Socialism is commonly thought of as a theory which aims at a fairer distribution of wealth for the ultimate purpose of creating a free and just society. Indisputably this is the stated program of socialists. But behind this program lurks an even more ambitious goal, which is creating a

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new type of human being. The underlying premise is the idea of Helvétius that by establishing an environment which makes social behaviour a natural instinct, socialism will enable man to realize his potential to the fullest. This, in turn, will make it possible, ultimately, to dispense with the state and the compulsion which is said to be its principal attribute. All socialist doctrines, from the most moderate to the most extreme, assume that human beings are infinitely malleable because their personality is the product of the economic environment: a change in that environment must, therefore, alter them as well as their behaviour.

“Marx pursued philosophical studies mainly in his youth. When, as a twenty-six-year-old émigré in Paris, he immersed himself in philosophy, he at once grasped the political implications of the ideas of Helvétius and his French contemporaries. In *The Holy Family* (1844-45), the book which marked his and Engels’s break with idealistic radicalism, he took his philosophical and psychological premises directly from Locke and Helvétius: ‘The whole development of man...’ he wrote, ‘depends on education and environment.’ ‘If man draws all his knowledge, sensations, etc., from the world of the senses and the experience gained from it, the empirical world must be arranged so that in it man experiences and gets used to what is really human... If man is shaped by his surroundings, his surroundings must be made human.’

“This, the locus classicus of Marxist philosophy, justifies a total change in the way society is organized – that is, revolution. According to this way of thinking, which indeed inexorably flows from the philosophical premises of Locke and Helvétius, man and society do not come into existence by a natural process but are ‘made’. This ‘radical behaviorism’, as it has been called, inspired Marx in 1845 to coin what is probably his most celebrated aphorism: ‘The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways: the point, however, is to change it.’ Of course, the moment a thinker begins to conceive his mission to be not ‘only’ observing the world and adapting to it, but changing it, he ceases to be a philosopher and turns into a politician with his own political agenda and interests.

“Now, the world can conceivably be ‘changed’ gradually, by means of education and legislation. And such a gradual change is, indeed, what all intellectuals would advocate if their exclusive concern were with improving the human condition, since evolution allows for trial and error, the only proven road to progress. But many of those who want to change the world regard human discontent as something not to be remedied but exploited. Exploitation of resentment, not its satisfaction, has been at the center of socialist politics since the 1840s: it is what distinguished the self-styled ‘scientific’ socialists from their ‘utopian’ forerunners. This attitude has led to the emergence of what Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu called in 1902, in a remarkably prescient book, the ‘politics of hatred’. Socialism, he noted, elevates ‘hatred to the heights of principle’, sharing with its mortal enemies, nationalism and
anti-Semitism, the need “chirurgically” to isolate and destroy the alleged enemy.’ Committed radicals fear reform because it deprives them of leverage and establishes the ruling elite more solidly in power: they prefer the most savage repression. The slogan of Russian revolutionaries – ‘chem khuzhe, tem luchshe’ (‘the worse, the better’) spelled out this kind of thinking.”

And this kind of thinking is clearly antichristian. But it is not only in the deliberate whipping up of hatred that the antichristianity of socialism reveals itself. Still more fundamental are its dogmas of materialism and atheism.

This was explained by Archbishop Hilarion (Troitsky): “One of the more prominent misunderstandings which have arisen in this area is the misunderstanding about socialism. On the one hand, they aver that Christ was a socialist; and on the other, that socialism is entirely in agreement with Christianity... In light publicistic literature one may constantly encounter attempts to reconcile pagan socialism and Christianity...

“V.A. Kozhevnikov [who “knows socialism from its very sources, much far better than the majority of our woeful socialists”] states that, as far as the relationship of socialism to Christianity goes, there is no, even partial truth: ‘Here everything is in content contrary to Christian truths, and is in form offensive to Christian sensibilities.’

“In vain do some think that socialism is merely a theory of economics. No, socialism replaces everything with itself; it is founding its own religion. In the resolutions of the various socialist assemblies and the discourses of socialist leaders one finds clearly and definitely expressed the demand for a revolution in all human thought. ‘Socialism is not and cannot be a mere economic science, a question concerning the stomach only... In the final analysis, socialists are striving to bring about revolution throughout the entire juridical, moral, philosophical, and religious superstructure’ (Vandervelde). ‘Is socialism merely an economic theory?’ we read in the socialistic catechism of Bax and Kvelch; ‘In no way! Socialism envelops all the relations of human life.’ According to Bax, in religion socialism is expressed as atheistic humanism.

“If socialism looks upon itself as a world-view, what, then, is this world-view? It is, first of all, a consistent materialism. A materialistic understanding of history, as acknowledged by the socialists themselves, comprises the essence of the entire theory of their teaching, its cornerstone, according to the expression of Bernstein. ‘One must seek the basic reasons of all social changes and revolutions not in the heads of men and not in their views on eternal righteousness and justice, but in changes in the means of production and distribution’ (Engels). If socialism is so closely bound up with materialism, how can it bear any relationship to religion? Crudely distorting the moral and educational significance of religion, the materialistic criticism of Marx and

Engels sees religion as the mere ‘handiwork of man’, the product of ignorant imagination or profit motives; and God Himself as a reflection of economic relations. Even in the Christian God they dare to see an ‘anthropological idealization of a capitalism which thirsts for power and satisfaction.’ Religion is called forth, in the words of Engels, ‘by the dark, primordial ideas of man concerning his personal nature and that which surrounds him,’ and is defined in its permutations ‘by class, and consequently economic, relations’. Religion seemed to Marx to be a superstition which has outlived its time, ‘a dead question for the intelligentsia, but an opium for the people.’ According to this, Marx considered ‘freedom of conscience from the charms of religion’ to be ‘the assistance of the people toward real happiness’.

“True, there are thinkers who maintain that socialism is not inescapably bound up with materialism, but they are not real socialists. Such thinkers try to impart to socialism a philosophical and ethical, even a Christian, coloration. Schtaudinger tries to convince his ‘brother socialists’ that ‘the basic ideas of Christ are the same as ours; His idea of unity is our God. His idea of the existence of this unity is our Christ. And although we deny all dogmas, in principle our ethics are Christian.’

“Dyed-in-the-wool socialists staunchly refuse to accept the recommended ‘deepening’ of the bases of socialism, which, in their opinion, is entirely unsuitable. Bebel rains down mockery upon the invitation that ‘everyone study, and philosophize, and work on oneself’. Conrad Schmidt distances himself from Kantian humanism, because in it there is no agitational power, there are only old metaphysical ideas, monastic asceticism, and morals more appropriate to angels. In the experiments at ‘deepening’ socialism, Plekhanov sees ‘an opium to lull the proletariat to sleep’. Mering sees it as ‘turbid waters in which to catch an unclean fish’. Menger does not understand the reason for loud speeches about unneeded lofty philosophical principles, when we are facing ‘our own ethics, which overturn every religious foundation and are a guarantee even against the rebirth of religious consciousness’. Dietzgen long ago proposed ‘to jettison all that is majestic in morality’, because ‘the special logic of the proletariat delivers us from all philosophical and religious mysticism’. Similar thoughts are expressed by Kautsky, Lenin and Axelrod. We are fed up, says Axelrod, with the boring and monotonous pestering of the critics, teachers, the various perfecters of socialism; it is time for them to cease! To take their path would mean to fall into a dreadful muddle and a demoralization of mind, to take from socialism its living, revolutionary aspect, in other words, its essence, and to replace it again with the reactionary, religious character of the whole philosophical mentality.

“I think that everyone can now see that socialism, as a distinct world-view, is in essence the adversary of all idealism, of all the immutable principles of morality, and the enemy of all religion. Reducing everything in the world to matter, the socialist world-view leaves no place for the divine Principle.
“Such is the theoretical relationship of socialism to religion. In practice, socialists often resort to compromise to gain tactical advantage, which in the language of morality one must call a betrayal of what is true and right... One must of necessity direct serious attention to religion, as Engels puts it, ‘that greatest of conservative powers’. ‘We will never succeed in earning trust if we begin to demand that the government take violent measures against the Church,’ admits Kautsky. What to do? ‘In order to overcome the mistrust of the workers and infiltrate them more quickly, in our own ranks there is arising the aspiration to suppress our fundamental views and, in the name of temporary success, to sacrifice clarity of thought and the sensibilities of our own comrades’. This Anton Pannekoek openly and cynically admits. And so we see how socialists ‘adapt’. According to the Erfurt program, religion is a personal matter. According to the ‘workers’ catechism’, social-democracy demands neither atheism nor theism. Schtampfer maintains that ‘the theses of socialism are concerned neither with God nor the afterlife; it is slander to say that it is the sworn enemy of our Church’. One can be both a Christian and a social-democrat (Kautsky). In all these and similar statements, there is absolutely no sincerity. The Erfurt program does not satisfy the more consistent socialists; they demand that an inimical relationship with the Church be stressed more emphatically. In actual fact, the socialists are waging war against religion, but, in accordance with their tactical ploys, they take refuge behind a personal struggle against ‘clericalists’, and this struggle is justified by the fact that the ‘clericalists’ (1) have pretensions to political power, (2) are fanatics, (3) foster ignorance, and (4) support the capitalist class. Yet all of this is, of course, a mere sham; the socialists are in reality inimical to all religion, are against God.

“But is not such hypocrisy, such falsehood, immoral, scandalously immoral? To this the socialists answer us thus: ‘Mere moral means have nothing to recommend them to us. You will not get far in politics with them’ (Bebel). ‘In each party perfidious tricks are unavoidable, and the laws of traditional morality here recede completely into the background’ (Menger). What can you do with party tactics? But these tactics are such as would move Jesuits to ecstasy. The more direct and (if one can speak of honesty among them) honest socialists, however, let the cat out of the bag and openly state their enmity towards religion. On August 22nd, 1901, the French Social- Revolutionary Party resolved: ‘Citizens, the members of the Party vow that under no circumstances will they carry out any religious acts whatever in conjunction with representatives of any denomination’ (freedom of conscience!!!). On December 31st, 1878, Bebel, in the presence of the entire Reichstag, declared: ‘In the area of religion, we aspire to atheism’; and on September 16th, 1878, he expressed ‘a firm trust that socialist will lead to atheism’. This same blasphemer Bebel calls himself the enemy of all religion, ‘of which people of high quality have no need’. At the Gall Assembly, Liebknecht expressed the hope that ‘the basic principles of socialism will
overcome religious forms of popular ignorance’. According to Todt, ‘He who
is himself not an atheist and does not commit himself with all zeal to the
dissemination of atheism is not fit to be called a socialist’. Lafarge is indignant
‘that religious principles are still not utterly extirpated from the minds of the
learned’, but is comforted by the hope that in the future socialism would
completely erase faith in God from men’s souls….

“It is understood that in the socialist world-view there will also be no place
for belief in the immortality of the soul. The denial of immortality is one of the
main conditions for the success of socialism, ‘because with the weakening of
belief in heaven, socialist demands for heaven on earth will be strengthened’
(Bebel). Dietzgen advises that one prefer ‘a comfortable world here’ to the
other world. On February 3rd, 1893, a certain Catholic deputy asked the
social-democrats of the German Reichstag the question as to whether they
believed in the afterlife. They answered unanimously in the negative. One
socialist newspaper, Neue Zeit, suggested that ‘the threats of hell be mocked,
and that pointing to heaven be disdained’…

“The perfection of the ‘modern socialist movement’ is not in Christian life
on earth, nor in eternal blessedness in heaven. Both the former and the latter
are relegated to the archives. ‘Our ideal is not poverty, nor abstinence, but
wealth, and wealth immeasurable, unheard of. This wealth is the good of all
humanity, its holy object, its Holy of holies, toward the possession of which
all our hopes are directed’ (Dietzgen).

“But enough! Enough of these mindless words! I hope my readers will
forgive me for setting down these blasphemies of the socialists and offending
their Christian sensibilities with them. I have only wanted to show what
moral ugliness socialism is, what an abyss of falsehood lies within it, and,
therefore, how mistaken is any attempt to reconcile socialism and the divine
Christian Faith…”

The Reign of Tsar Alexander III

The conservative views of such men as Pobedonostsev were protected and
nurtured during the 1880s by the Tsar, who quietly reversed the main
direction of his father’s reforms. Although he promised to work within the
institutions created by his father, there was no promise of any new ones, let
alone a constitution - the project of Leris-Melikov was quietly dropped. And
when his new interior minister, Count N.P. Ignatiev, proposed convening a
Zemsky Sobor before his coronation, the tsar said that he was “too convinced
of the ugliness of the electoral representative principle to allow it at any time
in Russia in that form in which it exists throughout Europe”.

243 Troitsky, “Christianity and Socialism”, Orthodox Life, vol. 48, № 3, May-June, 1998, pp. 37,
38-41, 43.
244 Krivosheev & Krivosheev, op. cit., pp. 91, 90, 88.
Once the Tsar received a letter from the executive committee of “The People’s Will”, in which they called on him to give “a general amnesty for all political crimes of the past”, and “to summon representatives from the whole of the Russian people to review the existing forms of state and social life and reconstruct them in accordance with the people’s desires”. As if in answer to this letter, the tsar, in his manifesto, “On the Unshakeableness of the Autocracy”, of April 29, 1881, wrote: “We call on all our faithful subjects to serve us and the state in faith and righteousness, to the uprooting of the abominable rebellion that is devastating the Russian land, to the confirmation of faith and morality, to the good education of children, to the destruction of unrighteousness and theft, to the instilling of order and righteousness in the acts of the institutions given to Russia by her benefactor, our beloved parent.”

His world-view was expressed in the advice he gave his heir, the Tsarevich Nicholas Alexandrovich: “You are destined to take from my shoulders the heavy burden of State power and bear it to the grave exactly as I have borne it and our ancestors bore it. I hand over to you the kingdom entrusted by God to me. I received it thirteen years ago from my blood-drenched father… Your grandfather from the height of the throne introduced many important reforms directed to the good of the Russian people. As a reward for all this he received a bomb and death from the Russian revolutionaries… On that tragic day the question arose before me: on what path am I to proceed? On that onto which I was being pushed by ‘progressive society’, infected with the liberal ideas of the West, or that which my own conviction, my higher sacred duty as Sovereign and my conscience indicated to me? I chose my path. The liberals dubbed it reactionary. I was interested only in the good of my people and the greatness of Russia. I strove to introduce internal and external peace, so that the State could freely and peacefully develop, become stronger in a normal way, become richer and prosper. The Autocracy created the historical individuality of Russia. If – God forbid! – the Autocracy should fall, then Russia will fall with it. The fall of the age-old Russian power will open up an endless era of troubles and blood civil conflicts. My covenant to you is to love everything that serves for the good, the honour and the dignity of Russia. Preserve the Autocracy, remembering that you bear responsibility for the destiny of your subjects before the Throne of the Most High. May faith in God and the holiness of your royal duty be for you the foundation of your life. Be firm and courageous, never show weakness. Hear out everybody, there is nothing shameful in that, but obey only yourself and your conscience. In external politics adopt an independent position. Remember: Russia has no friends. They fear our enormous size. Avoid wars. In internal politics protect the Church first of all. She has saved Russia more than once in times of trouble. Strengthen the family, because it is the foundation of every State.”

245 Alexander III, in Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., p. 354. Prince Sergius Trubetskoy illustrated the link between family feeling and feeling for the monarchy during his childhood under the same Tsar Alexander: “Father and mother, grandfathers and grandmothers were for us in
Tsar Alexander succeeded in most of the tasks he set himself. He avoided war, while gaining the respect of the European rulers. He suppressed the revolution, giving emergency powers to local governors in troubled areas, and checked the power of the zemstva and the press. He increased the prosperity of all classes. And he strengthened the Church and the family.

The Tsar was helped by the fact that “the public reacted with horror,” as Richard Pipes writes, to the murder of his father, “and the radical cause lost a great deal of popular support. The government responded with a variety of repressive measures and counter-intelligence operations which made it increasingly difficult for the revolutionaries to function. And the ‘people’ did not stir, unshaken in the belief that the land which they desired would be given them by the next Tsar.

“There followed a decade of revolutionary quiescence. Russians who wanted to work for the common good now adopted the doctrine of ‘small deeds’ – that is, pragmatic, unspectacular activities to raise the cultural and material level of the population through the zemstva and private philanthropic organizations.

“Radicalism began to stir again in the early 1890s in connection with the spurt of Russian industrialization and a severe famine. The Socialists-Revolutionaries of the 1870s had believed that Russia would follow a path of economic development different from the Western because she had neither the domestic nor the foreign markets that capitalism required. The Russian peasantry, being poor and heavily dependent on income from cottage industries (estimated at one-third of the peasant total income), would be ruined by competition from the mechanized factories and lose that little purchasing power it still possessed. As for foreign markets, these had been pre-empted by the advanced countries of the West. Russia had to combine communal agriculture with rural (cottage) industry. From these premises Socialist-Revolutionary theoreticians developed a ‘separate path’ doctrine according to which Russian would proceed directly from ‘feudalism’ to ‘socialism’ without passing through a capitalist phase.

“This thesis was advanced with the help of arguments drawn from the writings of Marx and Engels. Marx and Engels initially disowned such an interpretation of their doctrine, but they eventually changed their minds, conceding that there might be more than one model of economic development. In 1877, in an exchange with a Russian, Marx rejected the notion that every country had to repeat the economic experience of Western Europe. Should childhood not only sources and centres of love and unquestioned authority; they were enveloped in our eyes by a kind of aura which the modern generation does not know… Our fathers and grandfathers were in our children’s eyes both patriarchs and family monarchs, while our mothers and grandmothers were family tsaritsas.”
Russia enter the path of capitalist development, he wrote, then, indeed, nothing could save her from its ‘iron laws’, but this did not mean that Russian could not avoid this path and the misfortunes it brought. A few years later Marx stated that the ‘historical inevitability’ of capitalism was confined to Western Europe, and that because Russia had managed to preserve the peasant commune into the era of capitalism, the commune could well become the ‘fulcrum of Russia’s social rejuvenation’. Marx and Engels admired the terrorists of the People’s Will, and, as an exception to their general theory, Engels allowed that in Russia the revolution could be made by a ‘handful of people’.

“Thus, before a formal ‘Marxist’ or Social-Democratic movement had emerged in Russia, the theories of its founders were interpreted, with their sanction, when applied to an autocratic regime in an agrarian country, to mean a revolution brought about, not by the inevitable social consequences of matured capitalism, but by terror and coup d’état.

“A few Russians, led by George Plekhanov, dissented from this version of Marxism. They broke with the People’s Will, moved to Switzerland, and there immersed themselves in German Social-Democratic literature. From it they concluded that Russia had no alternative but to go through full-blown capitalism. They rejected terrorism and a coup d’état on the grounds that even in the unlikely event that such violence succeeded in bringing down the tsarist regime, the outcome would not be socialism, for which backward Russia lacked both the economic and cultural preconditions, but a ‘revived tsarism on a Communist base’.

“From the premises adopted by the Russian Social-Democrats there followed certain political consequences. Capitalist development meant the rise of a bourgeoisie committed, from economic self-interest, to liberalization. It further meant the growth of the industrial ‘proletariat’, which would be driven by its deteriorating economic situation to socialism, furnishing the socialist movement with revolutionary cadres. The fact that Russian capitalism developed in a country with a pre-capitalist political system, however, called for a particular revolutionary strategy. Socialism could not flourish in a country held in the iron grip of a police-bureaucratic regime: it required freedom of speech to propagate its ideas and freedom of association to organize its followers. In other words, unlike the German Social-Democrats, who, since 1890, were able to function in the open and run in national elections, Russian Social-Democrats confronted the prior task of overthrowing autocracy.

“The theory of a two-stage revolution, as formulated by Plekhanov’s associate, Paul Akselrod, provided for the ‘proletariat’ (read: socialist intellectuals) collaborating with the bourgeoisie for the common objective of bringing to Russia ‘bourgeois democracy’. As soon as that objective had been
attained, the socialists would rally the working class for the second, socialist phase of the revolution. From the point of view of this strategy, everything that promoted in Russia the growth of capitalism and the interests of the bourgeoisie was – up to a point – progressive and favourable to the cause of socialism.”

These various strands of socialist thinking had little influence in Russia during the reign of Alexander III. And it was not from bomb-throwing raznochintsy and peasants that the real threat to the regime came – at this time. The real threat came, not from socialists, but from liberals, and not from the lower classes, but from the nobility who dominated local government.

Oliver Figes explains: “The power of the imperial government effectively stopped at the eighty-nine provincial capitals where the governors had their offices. Below that there was no real state administration to speak of. Neither the uezd or district town nor the volost or rural townships had any standing government officials. There was only a series of magistrates who would appear from time to time on some specific mission, usually to collect taxes or sort out a local conflict, and then disappear once again. The affairs of peasant Russia, where 85 per cent of the population lived, were entirely unknown to the city bureaucrats. ‘We knew as much about the Tula countryside,’ confessed Prince Lvov, leader of the Tula zemstvo in the 1890s, ‘as we knew about Central Africa.’

“The crucial weakness of the tsarist system was the under-government of the localities. This vital fact is all too often clouded by the revolutionaries’ mythic image of an all-powerful regime. Nothing could be further from the truth. For every 1,000 inhabitants of the Russian Empire there were only 4 state officials at the turn of the century, compared with 7.3 in England and Wales, 12.6 in Germany and 17.6 in France. The regular police, as opposed to the political branch, was extremely small by European standards. Russia’s expenditure on the police per capita of the population was less than half of that in Italy or France and less than one quarter of that in Prussia. For a rural population of 100 million people, Russia in 1900 had no more than 1,852 police sergeants and 6,874 police constables. The average constable was responsible for policing 50,000 people in dozens of settlements stretched across nearly 2000 square miles. Many of them did not even have a horse and cart. True, from 1903 the constables were aided by the peasant constables, some 40,000 of whom were appointed. But these were notoriously unreliable and, in any case, did very little to reduce the mounting burdens on the police. Without its own effective organs in the countryside, the central bureaucracy was assigning more and more tasks to the local police: not just the maintenance of law and order but also the collection of taxes, the implementation of government laws and military decrees, the enforcement of health and safety regulations, the inspection of public roads and buildings, the collection of statistics, and the

246 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 143-145.
general supervision of ‘public morals’ (e.g. making sure that the peasants washed their beards). The police, in short, were being used as a sort of catch-all executive organ. They were often the only agents of the state with whom the peasants ever came into contact.

“Russia’s general backwardness – its small tax-base and poor communications – largely accounts for this under-government. The legacy of serfdom also played a part. Until 1861 the serfs had been under the jurisdiction of their noble owners and, provided they paid their taxes, the state did not intervene in the relations between them. Only after the Emancipation – and then very slowly – did the tsarist government come round to the problem of how to extend its influence to its new ‘citizens’ in the villages and of how to shape a policy to help the development of peasant agriculture.

“Initially, in the 1860s, the regime left the affairs of the country districts in the hands of the local nobles. They dominated the zemstvo assemblies and accounted for nearly three-quarters of the provincial zemstvo boards. The noble assemblies and their elected marshals were left with broad administrative powers, especially at the district level (uezd) where they were virtually the only agents upon whom the tsarist regime could rely. Moreover, the new magistrates (mirovye posredniki) were given broad judicial powers, not unlike those of their predecessors under serfdom, including the right to flog the peasants for minor crimes and misdemeanours.

“It was logical for the tsarist regime to seek to base its power in the provinces on the landed nobility, its closest ally. But this was a dangerous strategy, and the danger grew as time went on. The landed nobility was in severe economic decline during the years of agricultural depression in the late nineteenth century, and was turning to the zemstvos to defend its local agrarian interests against the centralizing and industrializing bureaucracy of St. Petersburg. In the years leading up to 1905 this resistance was expressed in mainly liberal terms: it was seen as the defence of ‘provincial society’, a term which was now used for the first time and consciously broadened to include the interests of the peasantry. This liberal zemstvo movement culminated in the political demand for more autonomy for local government, for a national parliament and a constitution. Here was the start of the revolution: not in the socialist or labour movements but – as in France in the 1780s – in the aspirations of the regime’s oldest ally, the provincial nobility…”

The Volga Famine

The government’s lack of support at the local level was glaringly revealed during the Volga famine of summer, 1891, which was caused by severe frosts in the winter followed by drought in the spring. Covering an area twice the

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size of France, the famine together with the consequent cholera and typhus killed half a million people by the end of 1892. Unfortunately, the government made several blunders, and on November 17, while appointing the Tsarevich Nicholas as president of a special commission to provide help to the suffering, it was forced to appeal to the public to form voluntary organizations.

At the height of the crisis, in October, 1891, Elder Ambrose of Optina died; and with his passing it seemed as if the revolutionary forces, which had been restrained for a decade, came back to life. They were led now by a privileged noble, the writer Count Lev Tolstoy, whom St. Ambrose had called “very proud” and who now joined the relief campaign. Under his influence the lawful expression of compassion for the poor in response to the state’s appeal was turned into an unlawful attack on the very foundations of that state.

“With his two eldest daughters,” writes Figes, “he organized hundreds of canteens in the famine region, while Sonya, his wife, raised money from abroad. ‘I cannot describe in simple words the utter destitution and suffering of these people,’ he wrote to her at the end of October 1891. According to the peasant Sergei Semenov, who was a follower of Tolstoy and who joined him in his relief campaign, the great writer was so overcome by the experience of the peasants’ sufferings that his beard went grey, his hair became thinner and he lost a great deal of weight. The guilt-ridden Count blamed the famine crisis on the social order, the Orthodox Church and the government. ‘Everything has happened because of our own sin,’ he wrote to a friend in December. ‘We have cut ourselves off from our own brothers, and there is only one remedy – by repentance, by changing our lives, and by destroying the walls between us and the people.’ Tolstoy broadened his condemnation of social inequality in his essay ‘The Kingdom of God’ (1892) and in the press. His message struck a deep chord in the moral conscience of the liberal public, plagued as they were by feelings of guilt on account of their privilege and alienation from the peasantry. Semenov captured this sense of shame when he wrote of the relief campaign: ‘With every day the need and misery of the peasants grew. The scenes of starvation were deeply distressing, and it was all the more disturbing to see that amidst all this suffering and death there were sprawling estates, beautiful and well-furnished manors, and that the grand old life of the squires, with its jolly hunts and balls, its banquets and its concerts, carried on as usual.’ For the guilt-ridden liberal public, serving ‘the people’ through the relief campaign was a means of paying off their ‘debt’ to them. And they now turned to Tolstoy as their moral leader and their champion against the sins of the old regime. His condemnation of the government turned him into a public hero, a man of integrity whose word could be trusted as the truth on a subject which the regime had tried so hard to conceal.

“Russian society had been activated and politicized by the famine crisis, its social conscience had been stung, and the old bureaucratic system had been discredited. Public mistrust of the government did not diminish once the
crisis had passed, but strengthened as the representatives of civil society continued to press for a greater role in the administration of the nation’s affairs. The famine, it was said, had proved the culpability and incompetence of the old regime, and there was now a growing expectation that wider circles of society would have to be drawn into its work if another catastrophe was to be avoided. The zemstvos, which had spent the past decade battling to expand their activities in the face of growing bureaucratic opposition, were now strengthened by widespread support from the liberal public for their work in agronomy, public health and education. The liberal Moscow merchants and industrialists, who had rallied behind the relief campaign, now began to question the government’s policies of industrialization, which seemed so ruinous for the peasantry, the main buyers of their manufactures. From the middle of the 1890s they too supported the various projects of the zemstvos and municipal bodies to revive the rural economy. Physicians, teachers and engineers, who had all been forced to organize themselves as a result of their involvement in the relief campaign, now began to demand more professional autonomy and influence over public policy; and when they failed to make any advances they began to campaign for political reforms. In the press, in the ‘thick journals’, in the universities, and in learned and philanthropic societies, the debates on the causes of the famine – and on reforms needed to prevent its recurrence – continued to rage throughout the 1890s, long after the immediate crisis had passed.

“The socialist opposition, which had been largely dormant in the 1880s, sprang back into life with a renewed vigour as a result of these debates. There was a revival of the Populist movement (later rechristened Neo-Populism), culminating in 1901 with the establishment of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. Under the leadership of Viktor Chernov (1873-1952), a law graduate from Moscow University who had been imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress for his role in the student movement, it embraced the new Marxist sociology whilst still adhering to the Populist belief that all the workers and peasants alike – what it called the ‘labouring people’ – were united by their poverty and their opposition to the regime. Briefly, then, in the wake of the famine, there was growing unity between the Marxists and the Neo-Populists as they put aside their differences about the development of capitalism (which the SRs now accepted as a fact) and concentrated on the democratic struggle…

“Marxism as a social science was fast becoming the national creed: it alone seemed to explain the causes of the famine. Universities and learned societies were swept along by the new intellectual fashion. Even such well-established institutions as the Free Economic Society fell under the influence of the Marxists, who produced libraries of social statistics, dressed up as studies of the causes of the great starvation, to prove the truth of Marx’s economic laws. Socialists who had previously wavered in their Marxism were now completely converted in the wake of the famine crisis, when, it seemed to
them, there was no more hope in the Populist faith in the peasantry. Petr Struve (1870-1944), who had previously thought of himself as a political liberal, found his Marxist passions stirred by the crisis: it ‘made much more of a Marxist out of me than the reading of Marx’s Capital’. Martov also recalled how the crisis had turned him into a Marxist: ‘It suddenly became clear to me how superficial and groundless the whole of my revolutionism had been until then, and how my subjective political romanticism was dwarfed before the philosophical and sociological heights of Marxism.’ Even the young Lenin only became converted to the Marxist mainstream in the wake of the famine crisis.248

“In short, the whole of society had been politicized and radicalized as a result of the famine crisis. The conflict between the population and the regime had been set in motion...”249

**Tsar Nicholas II**

When he succeeded to the throne on the death of his father in 1894, Tsar Nicholas II became the ruler of the largest and most variegated empire in world history. Extending from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean, from the Arctic tundra to the sands of Central Asia, it included within its borders a great number of races and religions. It had the largest army in the world and perhaps the fastest-growing economy. And its influence extended well beyond its borders. The Orthodox Christians of Eastern Europe and the Middle East looked to it for protection, as did the Orthodox missions in Persia, China, Japan, Alaska and the United States.

Since Tsar Nicholas has probably been more slandered and misunderstood than any ruler in history, it is necessary to begin with a characterization of him. “Nicholas Alexandrovich,” writes Archpriest Lev Lebedev, “was born on May 6/19, 1868 on the day of the memorial of Job the Much-Suffering. Later he used to say that it was not *by chance* that his reign and his suffering would become much-suffering. In complete accordance with the will of his father, Nicholas Alexandrovich grew up ‘as a normal, healthy Russian person’... From childhood he was able first of all ‘to pray well to God’. His biographer would unanimously note that faith in God was the living condition of his soul. He did not make a single important decision without fervent prayer! At the same time, being a young man and not yet Tsar, Nicholas Alexandrovich externally lived in the same way that almost all worldly young people of his time and his level of education. He loved sport, games, military activities, and acquired a fashionable for that time habit of smoking. He had an affair with the ballerina Kshesinskaya – which, however, he decisively cut short after an

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248 But Lenin was not moved with compassion for the starving. Then, as later in the Volga famine of 1921-22, he saw the suffering of the peasants as an opportunity for revolution. (V.M.)
open and firm explanation with his father. He read a great deal, both spiritual and scientific and artistic literature (he loved L. Tolstoy’s *War and Peace*), he loved amateur dramatics and various ‘shows’ in the circle of his family and friends, he was keen on amusing tricks. But all this was *to a degree*, without extremes, and never going to the service of the passions. He had a strong will, and with the help of God and his parents he was able to control and rule himself. In sum, he preserved a wonderful clarity, integrity and purity of soul. The direct gaze of his deep, grey-blue eyes, which often flashed with welcoming humour, penetrated into the very soul of his interlocuters, completely captivating people who had not yet lost the good, but he was unendurable for the evil. Later, when his relations with the Tsar were already hostile, Count S.Yu. Witte wrote: ‘I have never met a more educated person in my life than the presently reigning Emperor Nicholas II’. Nicholas Alexandrovich was distinguished by a noble combination of a feeling of dignity with meekness (at times even shyness), extreme delicacy and attentiveness in talking with people. He was sincerely and unhypocritically *simple* in his relations with everybody, from the courtier to the peasant. He was organically repelled by any self-advertisement, loud phrases or put-on poses. He could not endure artificiality, theatricality and the desire ‘to make an impression’. He never considered it possible for him to show to any but the very closest people his experiences, sorrows and griefs. It was not cunning, calculated concealment, but precisely humility and the loftiest feeling of personal responsibility before God for his decisions and acts that led him to share his thoughts with almost nobody until they had matured to a point close to decision. Moreover, like his father, he put these decisions into effect in a quiet, unnoticed manner, through his ministers and courtiers, so that it *seemed* as if they were not his decisions... Later only his wife, Tsarina Alexandra Fyodorovna, knew the hidden life of his soul, knew him to the end. But for others, and especially for ‘society’, Nicholas Alexandrovich, like his crown-bearing forbear, Alexander I, was and remained an *enigma*, ‘a sphinx’. It would not have been difficult to decipher this enigma if there had been the desire, if people had looked at his deeds and judged him from them. But ‘educated’ society did not have this desire (there is almost none even now!). However, there was a great desire to represent him as ‘the all-Russian despot’, ‘the tyrant’ in the most unflattering light. And so sometimes spontaneously, at other times *dutifully*, a slanderous, completely distorted image of Tsar Nicholas II was created, in which by no means the least important place was occupied by malicious talk of the ‘weakness’ of his will, his submission to influences, his ‘limitations’, ‘greyness’, etc. One could test the Russian intelligentsia, as if by litmus paper, by their attitude to the personality of Nicholas Alexandrovich. And the testing almost always confirmed the already clearly established truth that in the whole world it was impossible to find a more despicable ‘cultural intelligentsia’ in its poverty and primitiveness than the Russian!... However, the personality of Nicholas II was not badly seen and understood by those representatives of the West who were *duty-bound* to understand it! The German chargé in Russia, Count Rechs,
reported to his government in 1893: ‘… I consider Emperor Nicholas to be a spiritually gifted man, with a noble turn of mind, circumspect and tactful. His manners are so meek, and he displays so little external decisiveness, that one could easily come to the conclusion that he does not have a strong will, but the people around him assure me that he has a very definite will, which he is able to effect in life in the quietest manner.’ The report was accurate. Later the West would more than once become convinced that the Tsar had an exceptionally strong will. President Emile Lubet of France witnessed in 1910: ‘They say about the Russian Tsar that he is accessible to various influences. This is profoundly untrue. The Russian Emperor himself puts his ideas into effect. His plans are maturely conceived and thoroughly worked out. He works unceasingly on their realization.’ Winston Churchill, who knew what he was talking about when it came to rulers, had a very high opinion of the statesmanship abilities of Nicholas II. The Tsar received a very broad higher juridical and military education. His teachers were outstanding university professors, including… C.P. Pobedonostsev and the most eminent generals of the Russian army. Nicholas Alexandrovich took systematic part in State affairs, and was president of various committees (including the Great Siberian railway), sitting in the State Council and the Committee of Ministers. He spoke English, French and German fluently. He had an adequate knowledge of Orthodox theology…"250

In an age when family life, especially among the nobility, was being undermined, the family of Tsar Nicholas presented an icon, as it were, of what Christian family life should be. Love, obedience and humility were at the root of all their relations. It was fitting, therefore, that the family as a whole should receive the crown on martyrdom in 1918...

The Tsar was unparalleled in Russian history for his mercifulness. He pardoned criminals, even revolutionaries, and gave away vast quantities of his own land and money to alleviate the plight of the peasants. It is believed that he gave away the last of his personal wealth during the Great War, to support the war effort. Even as a child he often wore patched clothing while spending his personal allowance to help poor students to pay for their tuition.

The reign of the meek and gentle Tsar Nicholas II gave an unparalleled opportunity to tens of millions of people both within and outside the Russian empire to come to a knowledge of the truth and be saved. Moreover, the strength of the Russian Empire protected and sustained Orthodoxy in other parts of the world, such as the Balkans and the Middle East. The Tsar considered it his sacred duty to restore to Russia her ancient traditional culture, which had been abandoned by many of the "educated" classes in favour of modern, Western styles. He encouraged the building of churches and the painting of icons in the traditional Byzantine and Old Russian styles. In the words of Archpriest Michael Polsky, "In the person of the Emperor

250 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 377-379.
Nicholas II the believers had the best and most worthy representative of the Church, truly 'The Most Pious' as he was referred to in church services. He was a true patron of the Church, and a solicitor of all her blessings.\textsuperscript{251}

During the reign of Nicholas II, the Church reached her fullest development and external power. "By the outbreak of revolution in 1917... it had between 115 and 125 million adherents (about 70 per cent of the population), around 120,000 priests, deacons and other clergy, 130 bishops, 78,000 churches [up by 10,000], 1,253 monasteries [up by 250], 57 seminaries and four ecclesiastical academies."\textsuperscript{252} Traditional church arts were encouraged, and old churches were renovated. The Emperor himself took part in the laying of the first cornerstones and the consecration of many churches. He visited churches and monasteries in all parts of the country, venerating their saints. Moreover, he took a very active part in the glorification of new ones, sometimes urging on an unwilling Holy Synod. Among those glorified during his reign were: St. Theodosius of Chernigov (in 1896), St. Isidore of Yuriev (1897), St. Seraphim of Sarov (1903), St. Euphrosyne of Polotsk (1909), St. Anna of Kashin (1910), St. Joasaph of Belgorod (1911), St. Hermogenes of Moscow (1913), St. Pitirim of Tambov (1914), St. John (Maximovich) of Tobolsk (1916) and St. Paul of Tobolsk (1917).

The Emperor stressed the importance of educating the peasant children within the framework of church and parish and, as a result, the number of parish schools, which were more popular among the peasants than the state, zemstvo schools, grew to 37,000. Moreover, Christian literature flourished; excellent journals were published, such as Soul-Profiting Reading, Soul-Profiting Converser, The Wanderer, The Rudder, The Russian Monk, The Trinity Leaflets and the ever-popular Russian Pilgrim. The Russian people were surrounded by spiritual nourishment as never before.

Nor did the Emperor neglect the material condition of his people. Under his leadership Russia made vast strides in economic development. He changed the passport system introduced by Peter I and thus facilitated the free movement of the people, including travel abroad. The poll tax was abolished and a voluntary programme of hospitalisation insurance was introduced, under which, for a payment of one rouble per year, a person was entitled to free hospitalisation. The parity of the rouble was increased greatly on the international markets during his reign. In 1897, a law was enacted to limit work hours; night work was forbidden for women and minors under seventeen years of age, and this at a time when the majority of the countries...
in the West had almost no labour legislation at all. As William Taft commented in 1913, "the Russian Emperor has enacted labour legislation which not a single democratic state could boast of".

The young Tsar Nicholas was a peacemaker by nature, and early in his reign he suggested that all nations come together in order to cut their military forces and submit to general arbitration on international disputes. "The preservation of universal peace," he wrote, "and the reduction in weapons that weigh on all the peoples is, in the present situation, a goal to which the efforts of all governments should strive." Military expenses were an ever-increasing burden on the peoples, disrupting their prosperity. "Hundreds of millions are spent on the acquisition of terrible means of destruction which, while considered the last word in science today, must lose all value tomorrow in view of new inventions... Thus as the weapons of each state grow, they answer less and less to the goals put forward by governments."

As a result of the Tsar’s proposal, the Hague Peace Conference was convened on May 18, 1899, and was attended by representatives of 26 nations. Several useful resolutions were passed.

"However," writes O.F. Soloviev, "at the very beginning Germany made clear her lack of desire even to consider the central question of disarmament, in spite of the intentions of the other participants. Kaiser Wilhelm II made a sensational speech in Wiesbaden in which he declared that the best guarantee of peace was 'a sharpened sword'. Then, for the sake of consensus, the remaining delegates, at the suggestion of the Frenchman L. Bourgeois (1851-1926), a former president of the council of ministers and a Mason, limited themselves to accepting an evasive formula on the extreme desirability of 'limiting the military burdens which now weigh on the world for the sake of improving both the material and the moral prosperity of mankind'.

"After this the attention of delegates was concentrated on the third commission, which discussed problems of arbitration under the presidency of the same Bourgeois, with [one of the leaders of the Grand Orient of Belgium, Jacques] Decan as secretary. As a result of these efforts, which were supported by other governments, success was obtained in paralysing the attempts of the Germans completely to exclude the application of arbitration procedures in the regulation of conflicts. In the preamble to the convention on 'the peaceful resolution of international conflicts', which was unanimously accepted, it was noted that the conference had been convened on the initiative of 'the most august monarch', Nicholas II, whose thoughts it was necessary to strengthen by an agreement on the principles of right and justice, on which 'the security of states and the prosperity of peoples' rested. The first article of the first section 'On the Preservation of Universal Peace' made the following provision: 'With the aim of averting, if possible, the turning to force in the mutual relations between states, the signatory powers agree to apply all their efforts
to guarantee a peaceful resolution of international disagreements.’... Decan in his report to the commission was apparently the first to use the term ‘League of Nations’ to apply to the union of state approving of similar documents. Later the term was more and more widely used long before the creation, after the First World War, of an international organization of that name.”

In 1921, the American President, Warren Harding, officially acknowledged the Tsar’s noble efforts towards the limitation of armaments by way of binding agreements among the Powers.

The Hague Conference was probably the first – and last – time that the two great opposing ideological forces of Europe – Russian Orthodox Tsarism and Continental Freemasonry – worked together in a fruitful way. However, as was only to be expected, the two powers had quite different understandings of the ultimate uses of peace. We see this most clearly in their attitudes to the two European power blocs that were forming between the French and Russians, on the one hand, and the German and Austrians, on the other.

The French ruling circles were all in favour of the alliance with Russia, since the consuming passion of the French since the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 was the recovery of the former French territories of Alsace-Lorraine from Germany, and this was clearly impossible without the support of some major power such as Russia. However, the Grand Orient of France, whose influence on French politics was increasing all the time (in 1901 Masons founded the Radical party and the party of the Radical Socialists), saw things differently. Their main concern was to effect a reconciliation between the French and German centres of Continental Masonry, a task made much more difficult by the nationalist passions on both sides.

“Evidence of this,” writes Soloviev, “is provided by articles in the secret GOF journal, L’Acacia, which in many ways reflected the intentions of the leadership of the Great Lodge of France and the Great Orient of France. The main editor and author of the editorial articles, writing under the name ‘Hiram’, was the well-known journalist S. Limousène (1840-1909), who touched on the influence of Franco-German relations on world politics. This brother was simultaneously in the lodges of the three French ‘obediences’ and was in close contact with their leaders, which gave an additional weight to his utterances and thoughts.

“At the beginning of 1904 L’Acacia published an article by Limousène entitled ‘The Question of Alsace-Lorraine. Germany, France, Russia and Masonry’, whose central thesis was that the reconciliation of the first two countries would have to come one day ‘because of the necessity of agreeing for the sake of joint resistance to the Russian invasion’, for the State structures

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of Russia and France were ‘socially incompatible’. In the words of the author, the French were sympathetic only to the representatives of the Russian ‘intelligentsia and revolutionaries’. Moreover, [the Russians] have, he said, a different mentality from ours, conditioned by life in ‘the conditions of the most terrible and despotic regime, which is without any intellectual culture and unusually corrupted’. Moreover, even the Russians who are close [to us] in spirit believe in the inevitability of revolution, which will engender still more serious excesses and internal struggle than the revolution in France in 1789. In the end reaction will gain the upper hand thanks to ‘the masses of muzhiks’ – after all, the village population of Russia is much more backward than the French at the end of the 18th century. The result will be the expansion of Russia into Western Europe. But so far France helps Russia materially in the capacity of a friend and ally, which has allowed Moscow to build strategic railways while modernizing her weapons. There followed leisurely reflections on the striving of Russia to realize ‘the dream of world hegemony that was cherished already by Peter I’.

“The objections that Nicholas II was a peace-loving person and the initiator of the Hague conference were declared to be unsustainable in view of Russia’s predatory politics in Manchuria, which ‘will unfailingly lead to war with Japan’. Besides, such a liberal monarch had destroyed representative institutions in Finland, although he had sworn to preserve them. He was also weak-willed and indecisive, like the executed French King Louis XVI. In a word, such an order was not only distinguished by despotism, but also disorganized the country. ‘The genuine politics of Western Europe would have to consist in the dividing up of this colossus as long as it has not yet become too strong. It would have to use a possible revolution in order to re-establish Poland as a defensive rampart for Europe, while the rest of Russia would have to be divided into three or four states. Balance of power politics will remain the only fitting politics in the given conditions until the rise of the United States of Europe, which France will assist.’ In conclusion, the article noted that sooner or later, and without fail, ‘France will have to be reconciled with Germany’.”

Fortunately for Russia, France was not reconciled with Germany. And in spite of an almost entirely Masonic cabinet at the beginning of World War I, nationalist passions continued to keep not only the two governments at loggerheads, but even their Masonic institutions. In other respects, though, the article was remarkably farsighted, from the future dominance of Russia (albeit Soviet, not Tsarist Russia) to the importance of that quintessentially Masonic project, the United States of Europe. In one important respect, however, the article was quite wrong: in its estimate of the character of Tsar Nicholas II. He was neither weak-willed nor a war-monger nor a despot. But he was absolutely determined to uphold the traditional Orthodox world-view and bring it unharmed into the twentieth century. The Grand Orient knew

254 Soloviev, op. cit., pp. 41-42.
that, and was determined to stop him. On the struggle between these two
powers, Orthodox Tsarism and Continental Freemasonry, would depend the
future of the world in the century to come...

The Lure of the East

The two most important decisions of Russian foreign policy around the
turn of the century were the alliance with France in 1894, and the turning
towards the Far East. The former clearly strengthened both France and Russia
against the most dynamic power in Europe, Germany, although it increased
the risk of conflict with Germany insofar as it divided Europe into two
systems of alliances. However, there was no direct threat to Germany in the
Franco-Russian alliance because Russia’s second major foreign-policy
decision, to expand in the Far East, showed that her priorities now lay as
much in Asia as in Europe. Only in the Orthodox peoples of Eastern Europe
did Russia have an important interest. But here tension had been considerably
lowered by the agreement with Austria in 1897 to preserve the status quo in
the Balkans.

As the Tsar remarked to the German Foreign Minister, von Bulow, in 1899:
“There is no problem that finds the interests of Germany and Russia in
conflict. There is only one area in which you must recognize Russian
traditions and take care to respect them, and that is the Near East. You must
not create the impression that you intend to oust Russia politically and
economically from the East, to which we have been linked for centuries by
numerous national and religious ties. Even if I myself handle these matters
with somewhat more scepticism and indifference, I still would have to
support Russia’s traditional interests in the East. In this regard I am unable to
go against the heritage and aspirations of my people.”

But why was Russia so interested in the Far East? One possibility was the
desire to bring Orthodox Christianity to the Eastern peoples.

Now Russia had been baptizing the Asiatic peoples within and beyond her
frontiers for some centuries. And among the greatest achievements of the late
Russian Empire were the missions of St. Macarius (Nevsky) of the Altai, St.
Nicholas of Japan, and St. Innocent of Alaska. Nor was this ideal confined to
chuchmen.

As Oliver Figes points out, Dostoevsky had spoken of Russia’s “civilizing
mission in Asia”: “Inspired by the conquest of Central Asia, Dostoevsky, too,
advanced the notion that Russia’s destiny was not in Europe, as had so long
been supposed, but rather in the East. In 1881 he told the readers of his
Writer’s Diary:

‘Russia is not only in Europe but in Asia as well... We must cast aside our servile fear that Europe will call us Asiatic barbarians and say that we are more Asian than European... This mistaken view of ourselves as exclusively Europeans and not Asians (and we have never ceased to be the latter)... has cost us very dearly over these two centuries, and we have paid for it by the loss of our spiritual independence... It is hard for us to turn away from our window on Europe; but it is a matter of our destiny... When we turn to Asia, with our new view of her, something of the same sort may happen to us as happened to Europe when America was discovered. With our push towards Asia we will have a renewed upsurge of spirit and strength... In Europe we were hangers-on and slaves [the words ‘slave’ and ‘Slav’ are etymologically identical], while in Asia we shall be the masters. In Europe we were Tatars, while in Asia we can be Europeans. Our mission, our civilizing mission in Asia will encourage our spirit and draw us on; the movement needs only to be started.’

This quotation is a perfect illustration of the Russians’ tendency to define their relations with the East in reaction to their self-esteem and status in the West. Dostoevsky was not actually arguing that Russia is an Asiatic culture; only that the Europeans thought of it as so. And likewise, his argument that Russia should embrace the East was not that it should seek to be an Asiatic force: but, on the contrary, that only in Asia could it find new energy to reassert its Europeanness. The root of Dostoevsky’s turning to the East was the bitter resentment which he, like many Russians, felt at the West’s betrayal of Russia’s Christian cause in the Crimean War, when France and Britain had sided with the Ottomans against Russia to defend their own imperial interests. In the only published very he ever wrote (and the qualities of ‘On the European Events of 1854’ are such that one can see why this was so) Dostoevsky portrayed the Crimean War as the ‘crucifixion of the Russian Christ’. But, as he warned the Western readers of his poem, Russia would arise and, when she did so, she would turn toward the East in her providential mission to Christianize the world.

Unclear to you is her [Russia’s] predestination!
The East – is hers! To her a million generations
Untiringly stretch out their hands...
And the resurrection of the ancient East
By Russia (so God had commanded) is drawing near.”

However, the Minister of Finance Count Sergius Witte was not motivated by an enthusiasm for Christian mission in his Far Eastern strategy. His

256 Figes, Natasha’s Dance, pp. 415-416.
257 A man of talent and energy, Witte was distrusted by the conservatives. Thus on October 13, 1901, N.V. Muraviev, the Minister of Justice said that Witte, “thanks to his wife Matilda, a pure-blooded Jewess, has concluded a close union with the Jews and is confusing Russia... In his hands are special organs of his secret police... He is preparing, if there were to be a
philosophy was closer to that of General A.A. Kireev: “We, like any powerful nation, strive to expand our territory, our ‘legitimate’ moral, economic and political influence. This is in the order of things…”

“As the main architect of Russia’s industrialization,” writes Pipes, “[Witte] was eager to ensure foreign markets for her manufactured goods. In his judgement, the most promising export outlets lay in the Far East, notably China. Witte also believed that Russia could provide a major transit route for cargo and passengers from Western Europe to the Pacific, a potential role of which she had been deprived by the completion in 1869 of the Suez Canal. With these objectives in mind, he persuaded Alexander III to authorize a railway across the immense expanse of Siberia. The Trans-Siberian, begun in 1886, was to be the longest railroad in the world. [Tsar] Nicholas, who sympathized with the idea of Russia’s Far Eastern mission, endorsed and continued the undertaking. Russia’s ambitions in the Far East received warm encouragement from Kaiser Wilhelm II, who sought to divert her attention from the Balkans, where Austria, Germany’s principal ally, had her own designs.

“In the memoirs he wrote after retiring from public life, Witte claimed that while he had indeed supported a vigorous Russian policy in the Far East, he had in mind exclusively economic penetration, and that his plans were wrecked by irresponsible generals and politicians. This thesis, however, cannot be sustained in the light of the archival evidence that has surfaced since. Witte’s plans for economic penetration of the Far East were conceived in the spirit of imperialism of the age: it called for a strong military presence, which was certain sooner or later to violate China’s sovereignty and come into conflict with the imperial ambitions of Japan…”

Witte succeeded in persuading the Tsar to his point of view. Thus “before 1904,” writes Dominic Lieven, “Nicholas’s priorities in terms of foreign policy were clear. Unlike Russians of so-called pan-Slav sympathy, he did not believe that his country’s manifest destiny lay in the Balkans, nor did he feel that Petersburg must necessarily support the Balkan Slavs just because they were people of the same race and religion. The Emperor was determined that, should the Ottoman Empire collapse, no other power must steal Constantinople, thereby barring Russia’s route out of the Black Sea and assuming a dominant position in Asia Minor. To avoid such a possibility in 1896-7 he was even willing to contemplate very dangerous military action. But, above all, Nicholas was intent on developing Russia’s position in Siberia

change of reign, to take power into his own hands. He has... influence everywhere” (Vladimir Gubanov (ed.), Nikolai II-ij i Novie Mucheniki (Nicholas II and the New Martyrs), St. Petersburg, 2000, p. 705).

and the Far East. Particularly after 1900, his personal imprint on Russia’s Far Eastern policy became very important.²⁶⁰

In 1900 the Boxer Uprising against western influence broke out in China. For the first and last time, the European colonial powers, including Russia, cooperated to crush the Uprising. Up to this time, Russia’s eastward expansion had been largely peaceful, and had been accompanied by the one true justification of imperialism – missionary work. But now western-style commercial exploitation predominated in the counsels of the government. Russia poured troops into Manchuria “to protect Witte’s precious railway. Once in possession of Manchuria Petersburg was disinclined to retreat, at least until absolute security could be guaranteed to its railway and the Chinese would concede Russia’s economic domination of the province. This Peking was unwilling to do. Its stand was strongly backed by Britain, the USA and Japan, all of which demanded free access for foreign trade to Manchuria. The signatories of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, clearly directed against Russia, in January 1902 further stiffened Chinese resolve.”²⁶¹

And so Russia entered the twentieth century dangerously isolated in the Far East. Moreover, a related event had undermined her moral standing. During the Boxer rebellion, certain Russian military commanders in Blagoveschensk on the Amur had driven some thousands of Chinese out of the city and into the river. This showed that Russia had begun to be infected by the racist and imperialist spirit of the pseudo-Christian West.

She would bear her punishment for it in the Russo-Japanese war only a few years later. This was indicated by Bishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), who “was profoundly saddened by this event and foretold that it was precisely there, in the Far East, that we were bound to await the special punishment of God. The text of this prophecy has unfortunately not been found, but Vladyka Anthony himself spoke about it in his sermon before the service at the conclusion of peace with Japan [in 1905]. Pointing to the fact that the unsuccessful war with Japan was God’s punishment for the apostasy of Russian society from the age-old foundations of Russian life, Vladyka Anthony said: ‘... I will speak about the fact that it is not only the traitors of the fatherland that are guilty before God, I will say what I said five years ago, when I foretold that it would be precisely there, in the Far East, that we had to expect a particular punishment of God. But I will speak not with evil joy, as do our enemies, but with sadness and with shame, as a Christian and a Russian priest. In Blagoveschensk, on the Amur, five years ago, we permitted a cruel action to take place. Several thousand Chinese, who were in service to Russian citizens, for the general security of the latter, were deceitfully led out of the city and forced into the river, where they found inescapable death... It was not for this that the Lord opened up before us the confines of the Far East, from the Volga

²⁶⁰ Lieven, op. cit., p. 94.
²⁶¹ Lieven, op. cit., p. 97.
to the sea of Okhotsk, so that we amazed the foreigners by our heartlessness. On the contrary, it is there, in the East, and not in the West, that lies the missionary and even messianic calling of our people. Russians did not want to understand this calling – not simple people, of course, but people who consider themselves enlightened, who, following the example of their western enlighteners, would not allow themselves the slightest rudeness in relation to any European rascal, but do not consider humble, straightforward and industrious inhabitants of the East even to be people. We were bound to reveal to them Christ, we were bound to show them the Russian breadth of spirit, Russian love of man, Russian trustingness, but we showed them only animal self-preservation that does not stop before anything. This is our first guilt, for God even in the Old Testament imputed the sinful fall of a people’s military commanders to the whole people.”²⁶²

But this does not exhaust the spiritual significance of events in the Far East at the turn of the century. During the Boxer rebellion 222 Chinese Orthodox from the Russian Spiritual Mission in Peking – the first saints of the twentieth century – were martyred. To some, the preaching of the Gospel in the greatest and most inaccessible of the pagan empires, China, and its first-fruits in the form of the Chinese martyrs, indicated that the end was coming, in fulfillment of the Lord’s words: “This Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, and then the end will come (Matthew 24.14)…”²⁶³

**Students and Workers**

“If,” writes Richard Pipes, “one wishes to identify events that not merely foreshadowed 1917 but led directly to it, then the choice has to fall on the disorders that broke out at Russian universities in February, 1899. Although they were soon quelled by the usual combination of concessions and repression, these disorders set in motion a movement of protest against the autocracy that did not abate until the revolutionary upheaval of 1905-6. This First Revolution was also eventually crushed but at a price of major political concessions that fatally weakened the Russian monarchy. To the extent that historical events have a beginning, the beginning of the Russian Revolution may well have been the general university strike of February 1899.”²⁶⁴

We may doubt that “the beginning of sorrows” truly began with the university strike. Nevertheless it was the beginning of disorder, the beginning of a wave of riots and assassinations. And it is significant that this disorder should have begun with those who had not yet completed their education and had not yet received the wisdom that experience of life gives.

There is much in the revolution that resembles the rebellion of an adolescent against his parents. In a healthy society such a rebellion is frowned upon and checked; for it overturns the normal order. The tragedy of these years was that the elders followed the younger, not daring to seem “behind the times”, to resist “progress”. The result was a terrible regression, the destruction of civilization and the ascendancy of barbarism.

“Henceforth, Russian institutions of higher learning became the fulcrum of political opposition. Viacheslav Plehve, the arch-conservative director of the Police Department, was of the opinion that ‘almost all the regicides and a very large number of those involved in political crimes’ were students. According to Prince E.N. Trubetskoï, a liberal academic, the universities now became thoroughly politicized: students increasingly lost interest in academic rights and freedoms, caring only for politics, which made normal academic life impossible. Writing in 1906, he described the university strikes of 1899 as the beginning of the ‘general crisis of the state’…”

Plehve was particularly associated, as Pipes writes, with “a unique experiment in police-operated trade unions, known as ‘Zubatovschchina’, after S.V. Zubatov, the chief of the Moscow political police (Okhrana). It was a bold attempt to remove Russian workers from the influence of revolutionaries by satisfying their economic demands. Russian workers had been stirring since the 1880s. The nascent labour movement was apolitical, confining its demands to improvements in working conditions, wages, and other typically trade-unionist issues. But because in Russia of that time any organized labor activity was illegal, the most innocuous actions (such as the formation of mutual aid or educational circles) automatically acquired a political and, therefore, seditious connotation. This fact was exploited by radical intellectuals who developed in the 1890s the ‘agitational’ technique which called for inciting workers to economic strikes in the expectation that the inevitable police repression would drive them into politics.

“Zubatov was a onetime revolutionary who had turned into a staunch monarchist. Working under Plehve, he had mastered the technique of psychologically ‘working over’ revolutionary youths to induce them to cooperate with the authorities. In the process he learned a great deal about worker grievances and concluded that they were politically harmless and acquired a political character only because existing laws treated them as illegal. He thought it absurd for the government to play into the hands of revolutionaries by transforming the workers’ legitimate economic aspirations into political crimes. In 1898, he presented a memoir to the police chief of St. Petersburg, D.F. Trepov, in which he argued that in order to frustrate radical agitators, workers had to be given lawful opportunities to improve their lot. Radical intellectuals posed no serious threat to the system unless they gained access to the masses, and that could be prevented by legitimizing the workers’

265 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 6-8.
economic and cultural aspirations. He won over Trepov, and other influential officials, including Grand Duke Sergei Aleksandrovich, the ultrareactionary governor-general of Moscow, with whose help he began in 1900 to organize official trade unions. This innovation ran into opposition from those who feared that police-sponsored labor organizations not only would annoy and confuse the business community but in the event of industrial conflicts place the government in a most awkward position of having to support workers against their employers. Plehve himself was sceptical, but Zubatov enjoyed powerful backing of persons close to the Tsar. Great things were expected of his experiment. In August 1902, Zubatov was promoted to head the ‘Special Section’ of the Police Department, which placed him in charge of all the Okhrana offices. He expanded the Okhrana network beyond its original three locations (St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Warsaw) to the provincial towns, assigning it many functions previously exercised by other police groups. He required officials involved in political counterintelligence to be thoroughly familiar with the writings of the main socialist theoreticians as well as the history of European socialist parties.

“Zubatov’s scheme seemed vindicated by the eagerness with which workers joined the police-sponsored trade unions. In February 1903, Moscow witnessed the extraordinary spectacle of 50,000 workers marching in a procession headed by Grand Duke Sergei to the monument of Alexander II. Jewish workers in the Pale of Settlement, who suffered from a double handicap in trying to organize, flocked to Zubatov’s unions in considerable numbers.

“The experiment nearly came to grief, however, in the summer of 1903, following the outbreak in Odessa of a general strike. When Plehve ordered the police to quell the strike, the local police-sponsored trade union collapsed… The following month Plehve dismissed Zubatov, although he allowed some of his unions to continue and even authorized some new ones.

“Witte (Vospominania, II, Moscow, 1960, 218-10) says that in July 1903 Zubatov confided to him that Russia was in a revolutionary situation which could not be resolved by police measures. Zubatov also predicted Plehve’s assassination. This was betrayed to Plehve, who fired Zubatov and exiled him to the provinces. In March 1917, on learning of the Tsar’s abdication, he committed suicide…”

Rebellious Priests

We have seen that sons of priests formed the largest section in the university student population; and the strong representation of former seminarians and students from the priestly caste in the revolutionary movement was a striking, even apocalyptic phenomenon. As Lydia

266 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 11-12 and note.
Sikorskaya writes, “the irreversible process of the weakening of piety and fall of morality that took hold of the whole of Russia could not fail to be reflected in the seminaries. The materialistic and other destructive ideas that were spreading through society were not opposed by a serious scientific-theological apologetics. The young minds enticed by the fashionable teachings did not find satisfaction in the cliché replies of the teachers, who at times were themselves subjected to the winds of fashion. Liberal and revolutionary ideas penetrated more and more into the milieu of the seminaries, from which quite a few of the most ardent revolutionaries emerged.”

Chernyshevsky, Dobroliubov and Nechaiev were early examples. Joseph Stalin was the most famous example of all...

In 1894 Stalin, as Alan Bullock writes, became “one of the 600 students at the Russian Orthodox theological seminary in Tiflis. The Tsarist authorities had refused to allow a university to be opened in the Caucasus, fearing that it would become a centre for nationalist and radical agitation. The Tiflis seminary served as a substitute, and was attended by many young men who had no intention of entering the priesthood...

... The official policy of Russification made the seminary a stronghold of Georgian nationalism. A student expelled for his anti-Russian attitude in 1886 had assassinated the Principal, and only a few months before Stalin’s admission a protest strike of all the Georgian pupils led to the seminary’s closure by the police and the expulsion of eight-seven students...

... [Stalin’s] daughter Svetlana wrote after his death: ‘A church education was the only systematic education my father ever had. I am convinced that the seminary in which he spent more than ten years played an immense role, setting my father’s character for the rest of his life, strengthening and intensifying inborn traits.

‘My father never had any feeling for religion. In a young man who had never for a moment believed in the life of the spirit or in God, endless prayers and enforced religious training could only produce contrary results... From his experiences at the seminary he came to the conclusion that men were intolerant, coarse, deceiving their flocks in order to hold them in obedience; that they intrigued, lied and as a rule possessed numerous faults and very few virtues.’

“One form which Stalin’s rebellion took was spending as much time as possible reading illicit books obtained from a lending library in the town and smuggled into the seminary. Besides Western literature in translation, and the

Russian classics – also forbidden – Stalin became acquainted with radical and positivist ideas which he is said to have picked up from reading translations of Darwin, Comte and Marx, as well as Plekhanov, the first Russian Marxist.

“Growing discontented with the vague romantic ideals of Georgian nationalism, Stalin organized a socialist study circle with other students, including Iremashvili, and according to the latter soon began to show intolerance towards any member who disagreed with him. He found a natural attraction in the Marxist teaching of the inevitability of class war and the overthrow of an unjust and corrupt social order. The attraction was as much psychological as intellectual, appealing to the powerful but destructive emotions of hatred and resentment which were to prove so strong force in Stalin’s character, and offering a positive outlet for an ambition and abilities which would otherwise have been frustrated. As Robert Tucker wrote, the gospel of class war legitimized his resentment against authority: ‘it identified his enemies as history’s’."

One member of Stalin’s group was Lado Ketshoveli, who was a ringleader in the revolt that led to the closing down of the seminary, founded the first underground Marxist press in Transcaucasia, and in 1902 was arrested and shot dead by guards after shouting from his cell window: “Down with the autocracy! Long live freedom! Long live socialism!” “To Stalin he still remained, many years afterwards, the exemplar of a revolutionary fighter and his influence no doubt helped to precipitate Stalin’s break with the seminary. By his fifth year the school authorities regarded Stalin as a hardened troublemaker, and he was expelled in May 1899 on the ground that ‘for unknown reasons’ he failed to appear for the end-of-year examinations. Iremashvili, who had accompanied him to the seminary, wrote later that he took with him ‘a grim and bitter hatred against the school administration, the bourgeoisie and everything in the country that represented Tsarism’."

It is obviously dangerous and unjust to draw any general conclusions about the nature of seminary education from Stalin’s example alone. Nevertheless, the fact that so many former seminarians, sons of priests and even priests (e.g. Gapon in the 1905 revolution) joined the revolutionary movement indicated that something was wrong in the Church. Could the radicalism at the bottom of the hierarchy have had something to do with liberalism at the top? Could the lack of zeal of the leaders of the Church be influencing the followers to look for certainty elsewhere? If so, then only a revival of zeal for the truth of Christianity would be able to quench zeal for the falsehood of the revolution...

The traditional mainstays of Tsarist Russia had been the peasantry and the Church. And the Church in turn gained much from the support of the State. However, it was increasingly accepted that while the Church should be supported by the State, she should not depend on it, financially and administratively, to the degree imposed on her by Peter the Great’s *Spiritual Regulation*, which had abolished the patriarchate and made the Church almost a department of the State. Indeed, by the turn of the century it had become almost an article of faith among the Church and near-Church intelligentsia that Church-State relations needed a thorough overhaul in order to bring them closer to the “symphonic” ideal inherited from Byzantium.

Tsar Nicholas, with his deep love of pre-Petrine Russia, took a close interest in this question. He believed in giving the Church more freedom, and that that freeing the Church from the dead hand of the State would ultimately be to the benefit of both Church and State. But, perhaps under the influence of his former tutor, Pobedonostsev, he acted cautiously. Nevertheless, one of the most important measures of his reign was his removal from the Constitution in 1901 of the phrase describing him as “Supreme Judge” of the Church. And, as we shall see, if political events had not intervened, it is likely that this would have been only the first step in a far-ranging reform of Church-State relations, bringing them back to true “symphony”.

The movement for Church reform first manifested itself publicly in 1901, when, somewhat reluctantly, Pobedonostsev allowed the convening of a series of religio-philosophical meetings between the “God-searching” intelligentsia and the clergy in St. Petersburg. These meetings - the idea of D.S. Merezhkovsky, V.V. Rozanov and a Synodal official, V.A. Ternavtsev - were an attempt to respond to a definite turning away of a part of the intelligentsia from sixties-style positivism to some kind of religion. Unfortunately, however, the conversion was, as often as not, not to Orthodoxy but to some vague kind of mysticism or theosophy. For Russia at that time was teeming with false teachers and prophets: revolutionaries such as Lenin and Trotsky, freethinkers and heretics such as the novelist Lev Tolstoy or the philosopher Vladimir Soloviev, theosophists such as Blavatsky and the “silver age” poets, and a huge army of masons, liberals, nihilists, anti-monarchists and ecumenists who were busy undermining the foundations of Church and State. Even when the intelligentsy did convert to Orthodoxy, as when the philosophers Bulgakov, Berdiaev, Frank and Struve converted from Marxism, it was not to a pure, patristic Orthodoxy, as is proved by the “renovationist Orthodoxy” of Bulgakov and Berdiaev after the revolution. Nevertheless, if these “God-seekers” were ever to acquire true Orthodoxy, they needed to encounter the Church in her more learned representatives. Hence the significance of the religio-philosophical meetings, which were chaired by a rising star of the Russian Church, Bishop Sergius (Stragorodsky).
“Sergius,” writes G.M. Soldatov, “was popular in circles waiting for the introduction of ‘democratic’ reforms in the State. In his sermons and speeches he criticized the relationship between the ecclesiastical and state authorities in the Russian Empire.”

This would have been a risky subject to raise only ten years earlier; but times were changing rapidly, and Sergius, as his future career proved, was always sensitive to how the times were changing, and accommodated himself to them accordingly… At the same time he did make a fair point in the eighth of the religio-philosophical meetings, arguing that only if the State ceased to use the Church as a weapon would it become possible “to raise the question of freedom of conscience. Otherwise it will be only by virtue of indifferentism that the State can give freedom to the sects along with the Church”. But “Russian State power cannot be indifferent or atheist if it does not want to renounce itself”.

In other words: if the State was truly the defender of Orthodoxy, it should free the Church from political tasks and bondage that were alien to her nature. Otherwise, freedom would simply help the sectarians and atheists to fight against the Church, while she remained unable to defend herself freely. Thus the questions of Church reform and freedom of conscience were inescapably linked…

It was not only liberals like Sergius who favoured Church reform. The former revolutionary-turned-monarchist L.A. Tikhomirov published an article arguing that the State should “give the Church independence and the possibility of being the kind of organization she must be in accordance with her own laws, while remaining in union with her”.

The problem was that both conservatives and liberals could argue for Church reform, but for completely different motives. Tikhomirov wrote as one who had seen the revolution from within, and turned away from it with all his heart, acknowledging the only true defence against it to be the strengthening of Church consciousness among the people. The liberals, on the other hand, were motivated, not by a desire to see the Church free and therefore able to exert a more powerful influence on society, but rather the opposite: a desire to humble the State and destroy the Church’s influence once and for all. As for the liberal bishops such as Sergius, they leapt onto the band-wagon of the reform of Church-State relations, and of what later came to be called renovationism, in order to further their own careers…

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270 Soldatov, “Tolstoj i Sergij: IudePodobnie” (Tolstoy and Sergius: Images of Judas), Nasha Strana (Our Country), № 2786; Vernost’ (Fidelity), № 32, January 1/14, 2006
271 Firsov, op. cit., p. 117.
272 Tikhomirov, “Gosudarstvennost’ i religia” (Statehood and religion), Moskovskie Vedomosti (Moscow Gazette), March, 1903, p. 3; in Firsov, op. cit., p. 137.
Another liberal-renovationist cause that Bishop Sergius espoused during the religio-philosophical meetings was the supposed injustice of the novelist Tolstoy’s excommunication from the Church... Now the Church had excommunicated Tolstoy on February 20-23, 1901 in the following words: “In his writings Count Lev Tolstoy has blasphemed against the holy sacraments, denying their grace-filled character, has not venerated the Orthodox Church as his Church, has spoken evil of the clergy, has said that he considers that to venerate Christ and worship Him as God is blasphemy, while saying of himself, by contrast: ‘I am in God, and God in me’. It is not the Church that has rejected him, casting him off from herself, but he himself has rejected the Church: Lev himself has of his own will fallen away from the Church and is no longer a son of the Church, but is hostile to her. All attempts of the clergy to admonish the prodigal have failed to produce the desired fruits: in his pride he has considered himself cleverer than all, less fallible than all and the judge of all, and the Church has made a declaration about the falling away of Count Lev Tolstoy from the Russian Orthodox Church”.

In his “Reply to the Synod”, Tolstoy recognized the justice of this verdict: “I have truly renounced the Church and ceased to carry out her rites, and I have written in my will to those close to me that when I die they should not allow any church servers to approach me... It is completely just that I reject the incomprehensible Trinity and the fairy-tale about the fall of the first man and the story about God being born of a Virgin and redeeming the human race.” Tolstoy was in essence a very liberal Protestant. He reduced Christianity to “pure” morality without the Church or the sacraments. He not only preached his own Gospel (according to his own translation published in Geneva), and created his own sect: he also subjected the teaching and the sacraments of the Orthodox Church to ridicule, as in his novel Resurrection.

In assessing the significance of Tolstoy’s expulsion from the Church, I.L. Solonevich points out that for centuries the Russian Empire lived in the conditions of a military camp. Such conditions required obedience and discipline, but “this obedience and this discipline were not particularly sweet. In the last one hundred years Russia has experienced, so to speak, a permanent revolution. A permanent rebellion against the authorities and against discipline. This rebellion took the most various forms – from Pugachevschina to Tolstoyism. And if we take our greatest writer as an example, we can now, after our ‘great and bloodless’ [revolution of 1917], value his deeds more or less in accordance with their merits. The Tolstoyan rebellion did very much both for the undermining of the Russian monarchy

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273 Gubanov, op. cit., p. 701.
(‘I cannot keep silent’) and for the undermining of Russian Orthodoxy (‘The Gospel of Tolstoy’) and for the undermining of the Russian family (‘The Kreutzer Sonata’), and even for the undermining of the Russian courts, which in Resurrection are portrayed as a talentless and feelingless machine – while the Russian courts were the most merciful and conscientious in the world.”

Tolstoy was opposed especially by the extraordinary priest St. John of Kronstadt, who demonstrated by his wonderful life abounding in good works and extraordinary miracles, that Christianity “does not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God” (I Corinthians 2.5). The confrontation between St. John and Tolstoy polarized society as that between St. Athanasius and Arius had done in the fourth century. St. John wrote of Tolstoy that he had “corrupted his moral personality to the point of deformity and mortification”, and that he had “made himself into a complete savage with regards to the faith and the Church, because of his lack of education in the faith and piety since his youth.” St. John appealed for help: “Holy warriors of the heavenly Church, take up arms, take up arms for the Church of God on earth. She, the beloved bride, is impoverished, she suffers from the savage attacks on her from the atheist Lev Tolstoy…”

St. John especially bemoaned Tolstoy’s influence on youth: “Our intelligently youths have subverted the social and educational order, they have taken politics and the law-courts upon themselves without being called to do so by anyone; they have taken to judging their masters, their teachers, the government and all but kings themselves; together with their head, Lev Tolstoy, they have judged and condemned the universal and fearful Judge Himself… Verily, the day of the dread Judgement is near, for the deviation from God which was foretold has already occurred and the forerunner of the antichrist has already revealed himself, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped.”

Tolstoy was a forerunner of the antichrist in the precise sense of the word since he did not believe in the Divinity of Christ (I John 2.22, 4.3; II John 7). But Bishop Sergius, following the popular trend, defended him against the decision of his own Synod. Soldatov writes: “Sergius compared Lev Tolstoy to Julian the Apostate, whom, as he said, no council had condemned and who had not been excommunicated, but who was an apostate from Christianity. For that reason, he said, ‘it was not necessary to excommunicate Tolstoy, since he himself consciously left the Church’…” After the revolution, Bishop Sergius would become one of the leaders of the pro-communist “Living Church”, and then became the first “Soviet Church” patriarch …

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275 Solonevich, “Etiudy Optimizma” (Studies in Optimism), in Rossia i Revoliutsia (Russia and the Revolution), Moscow, 2007, p. 59.
277 Soldatov, op. cit.
St. John of Kronstadt, a fervent monarchist, was opposed not only to Tolstoy, but also to the whole “proto-renovationist” current in the Church led by Bishop Sergius. “These people,” he wrote, “are rejecting the Church, the sacraments, the authority of the clergy and they have even thought up a journal The New Way [which published published reports on the religio-philosophical meetings in St. Petersburg]. This journal has undertaken to search for God, as if the Lord had not appeared to people and had not revealed the true way. They will find no other way than in Christ Jesus, our Lord. […] It is Satan who reveals all of these new ways and stupid people who don’t understand what they are doing and are driving themselves and their nation to ruin by spreading their satanic ideas among the nation.”

Fr. John had great influence with the royal family, and the tsar visited him secretly. This influence was noted and feared by a new player in church and court circles – the false elder Gregory Rasputin. As Archbishop Theophan (Bystrov), at that time inspector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, witnessed to the Extraordinary Commission investigating the Royal Family in 1917: “Rasputin indicated with unusual skill that he had reservations [about Fr. John]… Rasputin… said of Fr. John of Kronstadt… that he was a saint but, like a child, lacked experience and judgement… As a result Fr. John’s influence at court began to wane…”

Fr. John was supported by the better clergy, such as the future metropolitan and hieromartyr Fr. Joseph (Petrovykh), who wrote: “Lack of faith, impiety and all kinds of harmful tendencies are now pouring over Holy Rus’ in a still more swollen river. They were restrained by this powerful personality [Fr. John], who was put forward by the Providence of God to oppose the heretic Tolstoy.”

Monasticism and Ecumenism

Another arena of conflict between “rightist” church intelligentsy and “leftist” renovationists was monasticism. A movement to promote monasticism, not only within monastic walls, but also within the theological academies and seminaries, was led by Bishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), rector of the Kazan Theological Academy. Many of his pupils were to occupy important posts after the revolution both inside and outside Russia. Bishop Anthony placed particular emphasis on pastoral theology in the system of higher theological education, and his devotion and love effected a gradual change in the system


of education in the direction of a closer and more constant spiritual and moral intercourse between teachers and taught. Almost every day after supper he would arrange tea-parties with the students in his rooms. "On a long table," writes one of the participants, "there stood a samovar and ten to fifteen glasses, with sugar and jam. One of the students would pour out the tea. Over tea a conversation would begin and perplexities would be resolved. Sometimes quarrels would arise. But in general, there were all sorts of people present, and one could learn much."

Another important influence was Bishop Theophan (Bystrov). As rector of the St. Petersburg Academy from 1909, Vladyka Theophan enlivened the religio-moral atmosphere in the academy and created a whole direction among the students, a kind of school of “Theophanites”, as they were called. He tried to instill in the students a respect for the lofty authority of the Holy Fathers of the Church in everything that pertained to Church faith and piety. When replying to a question of a theological or moral character he tried to avoid speaking “from himself”, but immediately went to the bookcase and found a precise answer to the question from the Holy Fathers. And yet this was by no means merely book knowledge: because of his ascetic life, he knew the truth of the teachings of the Fathers from his own experience. He would go to all the services, and often spend whole nights in prayer standing in his cell in front of the analog and the icons. He would even take service books with him on his travels, and read all the daily services. His very look inspired respect, and soon cases of amazing spiritual perspicacity revealed themselves. Never familiar, always correct and restrained in manner, but at the same time warm and attentive, he was a fierce enemy of all modernism and falsehood. If the conversation took a vulgar turn, he would immediately turn away, however distinguished his interlocutor. This caused him to have many enemies, but people also involuntarily respected him. Once the famous writer V.V. Rozanov spoke at length to him against monasticism. Vladyka Theophan did not reply with a single word. But his silence was effective, for at the end the writer simply said: “But perhaps you are right!”

The debate for and against monasticism also affected Moscow Theological Academy, where the proponents of monasticism, especially Archimandrites Nicon (Rozhdestvensky) and Joseph (Petrovykh) were opposed by several of the secular professors.

“This polemic between the professors of the Academy and the steward of the Holy Trinity – St. Sergius Lavra, Archimandrite Nicon (Rozhdestvensky) began already in 1902 and unfolded on the pages of the journals Soul-Profiting Reading and The Theological Herald. The professors subjected monasticism in its contemporary form to sharp criticism and called on the monks to carry out in

280 Monk Anthony (Chernov), Vie de Monseigneur Théophane, Archevêque de Poltava et de Pereiaslav (The Life of his Eminence Theophan, Archbishop of Poltava and Pereyaslavl), Lavardac: Monastère Orthodoxe St. Michel, 1988 (in French)
a practical way the commandment of love for one’s neighbour in the form of social service. Archimandrite Nicon defended the contemplative character of monasticism. The articles on both sides were quite sharp in character. In March, 1904 Metropolitan Vladimir of Moscow banned an article by the Academy Professor N.F. Kapteyev, which was being prepared for the press as a reply to Archimandrite Nicon. On March 18 an extraordinary session of the Academy Council took place for this reason. The decision was taken to protest against the metropolitan’s ban. Archimandrite Joseph did not agree with this decision, supported the ban on the publication and expressed himself against N.F. Kapteyev’s article because of its unbecoming and sharp attacks and even ‘the poison of bars, mockeries and insults directed not only against opponents but also against monasticism itself, but very well concealed under an external mask of objective scholarship’.

“For his words Archimandrite Joseph was publicly and coarsely reproached by the offended N.F. Kapteyev, after which he left the meeting. The scene made a bad impression on everyone, but Fr. Joseph was not spared – it was considered that he had received his due for his conceit and his speech against the professorial corporation and one of its most senior members. Professor I.V. Popov in a letter of April 16, 1904 wrote: ‘Joseph set off straight from the meeting to the elders at the skete. There he wept and wrote a petition for his retirement...’ At Pascha a deputation from the professors was received by Metropolitan Vladimir, who also summoned Archimandrite Joseph. In spite of the warm reception and long conversation with the professors, the ban was not removed, and Kapteyev’s article was not printed.”

In 1909 Metropolitan Vladimir appointed one of Bishop Anthony’s pupils at Kazan, Archimandrite Theodore (Pozdeyevsky), as rector of the Moscow Academy, and consecrated him as Bishop of Volokolamsk. Vladyka Theodore then published a work, *The Meaning of Christian Asceticism*, which became a kind of manifesto of the “new wave” of monasticism. And after the revolution Vladyka Theodore’s Danilov monastery in Moscow would become one of the power-houses of the Catacomb Church.

Bishop Theodore wrote: "Many contemporary renovators of Christianity think it unnecessary to take account of the true attitude of Christianity towards man, his nature and the meaning of life. They create their own ideal of life and judge Christianity in accordance with that ideal. They want to bring in Christianity as the most suitable, so to speak, most vital factor contributing to the realization of their ideal. The most important thing, the question of sin, is completely ignored by them, and they have no idea what it is. That is why, for example, Merezhkovsky, who accuses Christianity of the split between flesh and spirit that destroyed the pagan world, has no explanation of where this split appeared among the pagans or why they lived

by affirming the flesh. But Christianity says that this destructive split and disharmony in the nature of man was not imposed on man from without, but lives within him, as a consequence of sin... This is the corruption, illness and servitude of man to the flesh, and in order to understand what happened in the soul of man through sin it is necessary to penetrated into the psychology of sin. One should point out that, among the representatives of that part of the intelligentsia which is thinking of going along the path of Christianity, this path is indeed new, because, far from wanting to accept Christianity as it is and always was, historically speaking, they want to find - or, better, invent - in this same Christianity certain new ways of incarnating it in life and, through it, of renovating human life... For the man who is used to living in accordance with the ideals of the new philosophy of life, or in accordance with the moods revealed by the philosophy of Nietzsche and the wild heroes of the works of Gorky, L. Andreyev, etc., it is of course not easy immediately to accept Christianity in its historical integrity, and such people find much in the teaching of the Christian Church that is as strange as it is incomprehensible. The Apostle Paul said that the preaching of Christ crucified appeared as very strange and difficult to accept: for some it was simply a deception, and for others - sheer madness... This same teaching about Christ, crucified and suffering, this demand that man should crucify his passions and lusts, this Christianity imbued with the spirit of compunction and the suppression of the carnal principle in the name of spiritual interests - in a word: the ascetical spirit of Christianity has disturbed the new pagans who seek in the Christianity the truth of life (as they understand it, of course) and has become a stone of stumbling and fall in the task of following Christ. Open the pages of any work of Merezhkovsky, Minsky or Rozanov, and you will see that their articles are mainly occupied with a criticism of monasticism, which is identified with asceticism. This strange phenomenon is the result of the fact that a part of the intelligentsia which is seeking God has approached Christianity with the very definite aim of reforming it, which is nothing other than the same decadence applied to the religious life..."

"The proponents of the idea that ascetics should do public service make the direct demand that the antiquated institution of monasticism should be reformed by turning monasteries into associations and congregations with a predominantly practical significance. Among secular writers, Merezhkovsky, for example, in his article 'The Last Saint', directly states that 'the whole of ancient eastern and Russian asceticism is imbued with the spirit of hatred and disdain for society'. Berdyaev for some reason represents asceticism as rejoicing in the existence of diabolical evil in the world, for if this evil did not exist, where would ascetics go in their search for reasons to suffer? This is an example of the contemporary misunderstanding of the nature and meaning of Christian asceticism..."282

Closely related to the assault on monasticism was a less violent but no less insidious and dangerous attack on the dogma of the Unity of the Church. For generations now – in fact, since the time of Peter the Great’s infatuation with Lutheranism – it had been customary among the educated classes to deride the idea that there is only One True Church, and that that Church is the Orthodox Church. Holy hierarchs and elders such as St. Ignatius Brianchaninov and St. Ambrose of Optina had defended the dogma, and warned against the corrosive effects of ecumenist relativism or “indifferentism”, as it was then called. However, pro-Catholic religious philosophers such as Vladimir Soloviev, and the generalised influence of Protestant liberalism, continued to erode the foundations of the True Faith.

“At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries the Russian Church conducted an intensive dialogue of rapprochement with the Old Catholic and Anglican Churches, accompanied by common meetings and prayers. Thus it was in London in 1898, when a Russian delegation headed by Archbishop Anthony (Vadkovsky) of Finland and Vyborg prayed (more exactly, was present) at the triumphant services of the Church of England in connection with the jubilee of Queen Victoria. Thus it was when at the beginning of the 20th century Bishop Grafton of the American Episcopalian Church, accompanied by the well-known activist of Anglican-Orthodox rapprochement, John Birkbeck, came to Russia in order to speed up the negotiations on union. He had many discussions with Russian theologians and was received by Metropolitan Anthony (Vadkovsky) and the holy righteous Protopriest John of Kronstadt. In 1912 an official delegation of the Church of England headed by Bishop of Wakefield Dr. D. Eden (a group of bishops and priests) visited Petersburg and Moscow.”

Such visits helped some Russian theologians to declare their recognition of the Anglicans. Thus in a footnote to his well-known Nastol’naia Kniga, or Handbook for Clergy, published in 1900, S.V. Bulgakov writes: “Accepting confirmed Anglicans [and Catholics] by the ‘Third Rite’ could be permitted only under the condition of recognition that the Anglican Church has a completely legitimate hierarchy, truly having preserved the grace of the priesthood in unbroken succession from the Apostles.” In line with this acceptance of Anglican orders, Bishop Tikhon of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands, the future Martyr-Patriarch, attended the consecration of Reginald Weller as Episcopalian Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin in 1900”. In his diary under December 16/29, 1900, Archbishop Nicholas (Kasatkin) of Japan mentions this fact with some annoyance: “Why did Tikhon worm himself in there in a hierarchical mantia?”

284 Bulgakov, Nastol’naia Kniga sviaschenno-tserkovno-sluzhitelej (Handbook for Church Servers), Kharkov, 1900, p. 928.
285 The Living Church, November 17, 1900.
Even the official service-books of the Russian Church revealed an unclear, ambiguous attitude towards the sacraments of the heretics and schismatics. Thus in the Trebnik, or Book of Needs, we read: “Know this also, that a schismatic baptism, and a heretical one, by those who believe in the Holy Indivisible Trinity, in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Church determines to be ultimately acceptable in every way.” Again, Bulgakov explains that Roman Catholics, if they have been baptised and confirmed, should be received by the “Third Rite”, that is, renunciation of heresies and repentance. If they have not been confirmed, they must be chrismated. They must never be baptised. “Recognising Baptism as a requirement for becoming a member of her, [the Russian Orthodox Church] accepts Jews, Muslims, pagans and those sectarians who distort the fundamental dogmas of the Orthodox Church through Baptism; Protestants are accepted through Chrismation; and those Catholics, Armenians and members of the Anglican Church who have not received Chrismation or Confirmation, and also those who have fallen away from Orthodoxy, she accepts through the Third Rite, through Repentance, repudiation of errors and Communion of the Holy Mysteries.”

In general, it is hard to disagree with Andrew Psarev that “by the time of the Russian Revolution of 1917, Russian theological thought regarding non-Orthodox Christians paralleled the position of Blessed Augustine, which stated that a baptism performed by the non-Orthodox in the name of the Holy Trinity is legitimate, given that it comes from the Lord Himself; however, for as long as the sin of schism from the Orthodox Church is not overcome, this sacrament does not provide salvation for the non-Orthodox….”

However, a stricter view more in accordance with the Church canons was adopted by Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky). He explained that the refusal to rebaptise or reordain a heretic did not entail the belief that the heretic was inside the Church. It was rather an acceptance that the form of these rites was correct and did not have to be repeated; so that this form became as it were a cup receiving the grace that is imparted only in the Orthodox Church. Unfortunately, however, this widespread practice of “economy” in the reception of heretics led to frequent misunderstandings in the ecumenical era that began after the First World War…

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286 With regard to the Syro-Chaldean Nestorians, the position of the Church of Russia was expressed in a Synodal ukaz dated March 17-21, 1898, № 1017, which stated that in accordance with the 95th Canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council they were to be received according to the Third Rite, and that their clergy had be received in full ecclesiastical rank, with no re-ordination.

287 Andrei Psarev, “The Development of Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia’s Attitude Toward Other Local Orthodox Churches”, http://www.sobor2006.com/printerfriendly2.php?id=119_0_3_0, p. 5.
Moreover, in an Epistle to the Ecumenical Patriarch in 1903 the Holy Synod declared that the Russians were against union with heretics and were “unchangeably convinced... that our Eastern Orthodox Church, which has inviolably preserved the complete deposit of Christ, is alone at the present time the Ecumenical Church”. “As regards our relations with the two great ramifications of Christianity, the Latins and the Protestants, the Russian Church, together with all the autocephalous Churches, ever prays, awaits, and fervently desires that those who in times of old were children of Mother Church and sheep of the one flock of Christ, but who now have been torn away by the envy of the foe and are wandering astray, ‘should repent and come to the knowledge of the truth’, that they should once more return to the bosom of the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, to their one Shepherd. We believe in the sincerity of their faith in the All-Holy and Life-Originating Trinity, and on that account we accept the baptism of both the one and the other. We respect the Apostolic Succession of the Latin hierarchy, and those of their clergy who join our Church we accept in the Orders which they then possess, just as we do in the case of Armenians, Copts, Nestorians and other bodies that have not lost Apostolic Succession. ‘Our heart is enlarged’ (II Corinthians 6.11), and we are ready to do all that is possible in order to promote the establishment upon earth of the unity which we so much desire. But, to our great regret and to the common grief of all true children of the Church, at the present time we are obliged to think, not so much of softening our relations towards Western Christians, and of a love-abounding drawing of their communities into union with us, as of a tireless, ever-watchful defence of the rational sheep committed to our charge from unceasing attacks and multiform seducements on the part of the Latins and the Protestants.”

This “proto-ecumenism” was influenced by the fact that the tsars tended, for political reasons, to transgress the Church canons regarding prayer with heretics. For as the Russian empire had expanded, so had the number of subjects of other faiths, to the extent that by this period, as Igor Smolich put it, it was no longer a “confessionally united kingdom”, but an “interconfessional empire”. And so a Buddhist temple was built in St. Petersburg. Again, “Tsar Alexander III... visited Buddhist temples and attended their services; [and] Tsar Nicholas II also (for example, during the world war) visited Catholic churches, Jewish synagogues and Muslim mosques, attended their services, and kissed the Catholic cross. From a purely ecclesiastical-formal point of view the Orthodox tsar should not have done that, but as the head of a super-confessional empire, as emperor, he was forced to it.”

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288 A translation of the whole Epistle is to be found in Athelstan Riley, Birkbeck and the Russian Church, London: Macmillan, 1917, pp. 247-257.


**The New Theology**

We see, then, that the ferment in political and social life was matched by a scarcely less varied, if less violent, ferment of opinions and movements in Church life. On the one hand, we see the conservative churchmen such as St. John of Kronstadt and Bishops Anthony (Khrapovitsky), Theophan (Bystrov), Nicon (Rozhdestvensky), Joseph (Petrovych) and Theodore (Pozdeyevsky). And on the other we see the renovationists such as Bishops Sergius (Stragarodsky) and Antonin (Granovsky), and “the new pagans” such as Tolstoy, Merezhkovsky and Rozanov. These debates were to become more rather than less important in the course of time. For it would be largely along the lines drawn in these pre-revolutionary decades that the Church schisms of the post-revolutionary period would develop. There also arose a movement against what was seen to be the dead scholasticism of contemporary theology. A common target was Metropolitan Macarius (Bulgakov)’s *Dogmatic Theology*, which was considered by many to be lacking in inspiration.²⁹¹

Fairly typical of this tendency was the former Tolstoyan and future martyr, Michael Alexandrovich Novoselov. He advocated a more living, experiential approach to theology in general and anti-heretical polemics in particular. “Our school theology,” he wrote, “on the soil of which the struggle against the opponents of the Church is waged, is foreign to religious experience and not only inspires nobody and brings nobody to God, but even kills the living shoots of religious life which are apprehended in the pious family and in church. The disgust or distrust which theology elicits in many alumni of our theological (and sometimes also secular) educational institutions is hardly a secret to anyone. Indifference to the faith or its rejection – that is our heritage.

“Look: who rules the mind and the aroused conscience of the Russian man? Literature, philosophy, science – only not theology, which in its extreme schematism decisively refuses to see the living human soul with its demands, torments and doubts. It does not take the man with his present spiritual requirements and does not raise him, cautiously and penetratingly, to a higher level of self-knowledge and self-feeling. This role secular literature has

²⁹¹ Thus Professor Nicholas N. Glubokovsky, while not denying that the “undoubted and huge” virtues of Macarius’ book, argued that “the author is dragged towards the past, lives by its traditions and is governed by former methods. For him dogma is a finished theoretical formula that is undeniably obligatory in its abstract, irrefutable completedness. In this case only one scientific operation is permitted in relation to it – the establishment of its truth by the logically interrelated connections of all its parts the crushing force of its external arguments. Hence the whole construction inevitably acquires the character of a priori dryness and bookish lifelessness, and the scientific exposition turns out to be directly scholastic…” *(Russkaia bogoslovskaia nauka v ee istoricheskom razvitii i novejschem sostoiании (Russian theological science in its historical development and contemporary condition)*, Moscow: St. Vladimir Brotherhood, 2002; http://proroza.narod.ru/Glubokovsky.htm, p. 2).
taken upon itself, although unfortunately it is not always in agreement with Christian ideals.

“Who has good success with us in the purely religious sphere? Vladimir Soloviev, Khomiakov, Samarin, Kireevsky, Nesmelov, that is, people who are particularly foreign to the methods of school theologising.

“How do such spiritual writers (who, however, are significant more for those who are not yet far from the Church, and still more those living in it) as Bishop Theophan, Bishop Anthony of Ufa, Fr. John Sergiev (I have in mind his book, *My Life in Christ*) attract people to themselves? By renouncing the stereotypical, the dead and the deadening, the formal-dialectical method of thinking. They have gone along a new path of theological thought, a path which, it would seem, should most accurately be called ‘psychological’”\(^292\)

The call for a more living approach to theology was not wrong in itself; we find it in some of the later Byzantine Fathers, the study of whom was only just beginning in the Russia. However, it contained potential dangers. One was that “exciting” but heretical theologians such as Soloviev were preferred to “boring” but Orthodox ones like Metropolitan Macarius. Another was that false diagnoses of the causes of Russian theology’s supposed “deadness” were offered. Thus, as Protopriest Valentine Asmus writes, “Professor M.M. Tareev of the Moscow Theological Academy tried to demonstrate that Russian Orthodoxy had to cast off the yoke of Byzantine asceticism, which had dried up the Russian religious genius. A vivid representative of ‘the national theology’ was Tareev’s colleague, Vladimir Alexeevich Troitsky, in monasticism Hilarion (he was ordained to the episcopate after the revolution). He shared the ambiguity of Slavophilism, which well understood the universal meaning of Christianity and at the same time was inclined to see in Orthodoxy ‘the wealth of tribal faith’ (Khomiakov), as if it were naturally inherent in the Russians and Slavs as a whole. ‘The spirit of Slavdom is defined by Orthodoxy’ (Troitsky, *The Church as a Union of Love*, Moscow, 1998, p. 333). ‘I always somehow feel a lie in the position of the Slav Catholic’. Everything specifically Catholic ‘must be extremely opposed to the Slavic soul. The betrayal of Orthodoxy is... the betrayal of Slavdom, a going over to a western key in mood and in life’ (this was said about the Poles, p. 334). The remarkable thought of Tertullian that the human soul is by nature Christian is here narrowed to a single tribe taken on its own. The Russian man even in the fall preserves such natural resources as are not to be found in others, and even flirting with the devil is for him child’s play.”\(^293\)


\(^{293}\) Asmus, “Arkheipiskop Ilarion Troitskij i Pravoslavnoe Bogoslovie” (Archbishop Hilarion Troitsky and Orthodox Theology), *Bogoslovsij Sbornik (Theological Anthology)*, issue 7, Moscow, 2001; http://proroza.narod.ru/Asmus-1.htm, p. 1
Another danger was that the perception was created, whether justly or unjustly, that the reformers were striving to form an elite within the Church that would gradually replace the old cadres. Bishop Anthony in particular was seen as trying to create a core body of learned monks who would replace the old professorial cadres. Thus, “recalling the 1890s, N.N. Glubokovsky used to remark that it was precisely at that time that the opinion began to form as if the theological academies ‘did not even have meagre resources of churchliness [tserkovnosti], and were theological [dukhovnie] more because of the sign that stood out on them’. The professor thought that ‘these crafty invectives’ had appeared with the artificial development of a new monasticism, which created a special ‘direction’ in the Russian Church that announced and practised ‘in the spirit of true churchliness’ that ‘everything is permitted, allowed and forgiven to monks’. Later, wrote Glubokovsky, ‘there developed tendentious agitation for the monastic tonsure to be declared one of the sacraments, and if there were meant to be no more than seven, then it was necessary to dethrone marriage and put monasticism in its place, which would serve God following the example of the redemption on the Cross “through the compassionate love” of Christ alone…”

Glubovsky is here referring to Bishop Anthony’s controversial theory of redemption, according to which Christ did not save us through offering an expiatory sacrifice to God’s justice, but only through the power of love. This product of the new, “living” theology, which was shared by other leading theologians such as Bishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) and Archimandrite Hilarion (Troitsky), bordered on heresy. One of its earliest critics was the future New Hieromartyr Archbishop Victor of Vyatka. He noted in 1912 that the “new theology” of Bishops Anthony and Sergius “would shake the Church”. When Sergius caused a huge schism in the Church in 1927, Archbishop Victor saw in this a direct result of Sergius’ pre-revolutionary teaching on salvation...

The Nationalities Policy

Among the many kinds of freedom idolized in the late nineteenth century, by no means the least important, as we have seen, was the freedom of the nation; and in a multi-national empire such as Russia the spread of nationalism could not fail to be a major concern of the authorities. Alexander III’s answer, which was followed by his son, Nicholas II, was to introduce the policy known to historians as “Russification”, a well-meaning attempt to unite the empire around the language and culture of the dominant imperial nation. Let us see how that was applied in the different regions.

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294 Firsov, op. cit., p. 91.
1. Poland and the West. Perhaps the clearest failure of Russian nationalities policy, besides the Jews, was Poland. Alexander I’s grant to the Poles of a very liberal constitution, more liberal than anything on offer in Russia itself, was brought to an end by the revolution of 1831. Then the second revolution of 1863 necessitated a harsher reaction; Russification was part of that reaction. Thus Hosking writes: “Most Polish officials were replaced by Russian ones, and the Russian language was imposed for official business. The University of Warsaw was converted into a wholly Russian institution, whilst it was stipulated that Polish schools, even at primary level, should teach all subjects in Russia, save the Polish language itself. In practice, the government had no means to impose these provisions, and Polish-language schooling continued, albeit clandestinely.

“Poland did derive economic benefits from being included within the empire’s tariff enclosure: it was able to sell its industrial products in a huge market that needed them. With some 8% of the population, Poland produced about a quarter of the empire’s industrial output, notably in textiles, metallurgy and machine tools...”

In spite of these benefits, the Poles remained unremittingly hostile to Russia. “In 1905-6 Poland was perhaps the most violent part of the empire. Immediately after Bloody Sunday, in January 1905, workers in the textile centre of Lodz went on strike and demonstrated with placards proclaiming ‘Down with the autocracy! Down with the war!’ They also had economic demands: an eight-hour day and huge wage rises. The police intervened, and in the resultant fighting perhaps one hundred people were killed. That scene was repeated several times during 1905. At times Poland was in a state of virtual civil war, in which students, schoolchildren and often criminal bands were involved as well as workers. Only the peasants remained relatively quiescent: they had neither the grievances nor the communal solidarity of those in Russia.

“Altogether the armed struggle in Poland during 1905-6 lasted longer than the guerilla war of 1863-4 and claimed more lives. It was also a grave strain on the Russian armed forces: at the height of the troubles some 300,000 men were stationed there, as compared with 1,000,000 on the Japanese front. No clearer example could be imagined of the high cost of trying to Russify a people with a well-developed national identity and sense culture, religion and citizenship quite different from that of Russia.”

True; and yet Russia’s failure in Poland cannot be blamed entirely on the policy of Russification. The root problem was the implacable opposition of Polish Catholicism to Russian Orthodoxy. As long as the combination of

297 Hosking, op. cit., p. 378.
Catholicism and fervent nationalism prevailed, there was no hope, not only of assimilation, but even of peaceful relations between the two peoples. Catherine II’s conquest of Poland, while it had certain geopolitical advantages, proved in the long run to have created the Achilles heel of the Russian empire, in that it included into the empire two peoples – the Poles and the Jews – whose opposition to Russia remained implacable to the end.

2. Ukraine and Belorussia. If Poland was to Russia what Ireland was to England, then Ukraine and Belorussia were to Russia what Scotland and Wales were to England. In the latter comparison, a common faith – Orthodoxy in the case of Russia, Ukraine and Belorussia, Protestantism in the case of England, Scotland and Wales - made coexistence easier. Even so, in an age of increasing nationalism there were bound to be centrifugal pressures; and even where there was considerable identity of civilization – in the sense of “ideas and traditions... inherited from the ancient world and from Christianity”, it was the cultural difference – that is, idiosyncracies of speech, folklore, dress and everyday life - that tended to be emphasised. But underlining cultural differences could lead to a betrayal of the deeper civilizational traditions of the nation seeking to distinguish itself.

The Russians, by contrast, emphasised their civilizational unity with the Ukrainians and Belorussians. All three nations confessed Orthodox Christianity, and Kiev was “the mother of all Russian cities”, the capital of a pan-Russian State which in the eleventh century had covered the territories of all three peoples. Moreover (although here the commonality was cultural rather than civilizational), all three peoples were Eastern Slavic, and their languages could be said to be different dialects of a single original language. So, as the Russians argued, they were all really one nation...

The Ukrainian nationalists, writes Oliver Figes, “took inspiration from the Ukrainian national movement in neighbouring Galicia. As part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Galicia had been granted relatively liberal rights of self-government. This had allowed the Ukrainians, or ‘Ruthenians’ (dog-Latin for ‘Russians’) as they were known by the Austrians, to promote their own Ukrainian language in primary schools and public life, to publish native-language newspapers and books, and to advance the study of Ukrainian history and folk culture. Galicia became a sort of ‘Ukrainian Piedmont’ for the rest of the national movement in tsarist Ukraine: a forcing-house of national consciousness and an oasis of freedom for nationalist intellectuals. Lviv, its capital, also known as Lemberg (by the Germans) and as Lwow (by the Russians), was a thriving centre of Ukrainian culture. Although subjects of the Tsar, both the composer Lysenko and the historian Hrushevsky had found their nation in Galicia. The nationalist intellectuals who pioneered the Ukrainian literary language in the middle decades of the nineteenth century all borrowed terms from the Galician dialect, which they considered the most

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advance, although later, as they tried to reach the peasantry with newspapers and books, they were forced to base it on the Poltavan folk idiom, which, as the dialect of the central Ukraine, was the most commonly understood. The seminal texts of this national literary renaissance were published by the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius prior to its dissolution by the tsarist authorities in 1847. The romantic poetry of Taras Shevchenko, which played the same role as Mickiewicz’s poetry in Poland in shaping the intelligentsia’s national consciousness, was the most important of these. Ukrainian-language publications continued to appear, despite the legal restrictions on them. Many were published by the Kiev section of the Russian Geographical Society, whose nationalist members devoted themselves to the study of Ukrainian folk culture, language and history. 299

The Russians refused to accept the existence either of a distinct Ukrainian people or of a Ukrainian language: “there never has been a distinct Little Russian language, and there never will be one”, declared Minister of the Interior P.A. Valuev. 300 The Ukrainians were called “Little Russians” by contrast with the “Great Russians” to the north. As Lieven writes, tsarist statesmen “focused their attention on the linguistic and cultural foundations of national identity and therefore of subsequent political nationalism. In 1863 General Annenkov, the governor-general of the Kiev region, flatly opposed the publication of the bible in Ukrainian, commenting that by its publication Ukrainian nationalists ‘would achieve so to speak the recognition of the independence of the Little Russian language, and then of course they will make claims to autonomy for Little Russia.’ Thirteen years later a key government memorandum warned of the dangers of ‘various doctrines which superficially contain nothing political and seem to relate only to the sphere of purely academic and artistic interests’. In the long run their danger could be very great. ‘Nothing divides people as much as differences in speech and writing. Permitting the creation of a special literature for the common people in the Ukrainian dialect would signify collaborating in the alienation of Ukraine from the rest of Russia.’ The memorandum went on to emphasize the very great importance of the Ukrainians to the Russian nation and state: ‘To permit the separation... of thirteen million Little Russians would be the utmost political carelessness, especially in view of the unifying movement which is going on alongside us among the German tribe.’ In the light of such views the tsarist regime did its utmost from 1876 to stop the development of a written Ukrainian language or high culture. Virtually all publication in Ukrainian was banned until the period 1905-14, when revolution, the semi-constitution of 1906 and the partial liberalization of politics allowed the language greater leeway. Even in the so-called Constitutional Era, however, not only the government but also the imperial parliament refused to

300 Hosking, op. cit., p. 379.
contemplate any teaching of or in Ukrainian in schools, once again taking a much tougher line over Ukrainian than other languages.  

And yet here was the rub: that the ruling civilization (and culture) of most of Russia’s ruling elites was no longer the Orthodox Christianity that had united all the Eastern Slavic peoples in the past: it was the civilization of contemporary Western Europe. So “Russification” in practice often meant Westernization with a Russian tinge and in the Russian language. A better policy, surely, would have been for the government to emphasise the “civilizational”, - that is, in essence, religious - unity between the three peoples without trying to deny their cultural – especially linguistic - differences. For among the peasants, if not for the intelligentsia, civilizational, religious unity was still strong – and stronger than any nationalist passion. As Figes writes, “in Belorussia and the northern Ukraine there was so much ethnic and religious intermingling – in an area the size of Cambridgeshire there might be a mixture of Belorussian, Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, Jewish and Lithuanian settlements - that it was difficult for anything more than a localized form of ethnic identity to take root in the popular consciousness. One British diplomat… concluded that this was still the case as late as 1918: ‘Were one to ask the average peasant in the Ukraine his nationality he would answer that he is Greek Orthodox; if pressed to say whether he is a Great Russian, a Pole, or an Ukrainian, he would probably reply that he is a peasant; and if one insisted on knowing what language he spoke, he would say that he talked “the local tongue”…”

3. Finland. Lieven writes: “Conquered in 1809, the Grand Duchy of Finland enjoyed a high degree of autonomy throughout the nineteenth century. In Russian terms its status was anomalous, not only because it was uniquely free of Petersburg’s control but also because it possessed representative institutions and a secure rule of law. In the last two decades of the nineteenth century pressure increased from Petersburg to bring parts of Finnish law and administration into line with Russian norms. It stuck in Russian gullets, for instance, that Russians resident in Finland enjoyed fewer rights than ethnic Finns, something that was not true of Finns living in Russia. With Russo-German antagonism growing and Sweden a very possible ally of Germany in any future war, the extent to which Helsinki was almost completely free from Petersburg’s supervision also caused worry. So long as Finland was governed by Count N.V. Adlerberg (1866-81) and then Count F.L. Heiden (1881-98) the very sensible rule prevailed that infringements on Finnish autonomy must be kept to the strictly necessary minimum. When

302 Figes, op. cit., pp. 75-76.
303 Hosking writes: “Its parliament, the Diet, began to meet regularly after 1863, and passed a number of measures which underlined Finland’s distinctive status within the empire: the spread of education, consolidation of freedom of worship, the issue of a separate currency and the establishment of a Finnish army.” (op. cit., p. 380). (V.M.)
General N.I. Bobrikov was appointed Governor-General in 1898, however, not only did he arrive with sweeping plans to increase Petersburg’s control, he also implemented this policy with a tactless, ham-fisted brutality which turned Finland into a hotbed of opposition.

“Real trouble with Finland began when Petersburg imposed its own military conscription system on the Finns and sought to unify the Russian and Finnish armies. Though this scheme had been in the making for a number of years, it was pushed hard by the new Minister of War, Aleksei Kuropatkin, who was appointed in 1898. The majority of Russian senior officials opposed Kuropatkin’s conscription law in the belief that it would needlessly antagonize the Finns and it was actually voted down in the State Council, the body of senior statesmen who advised the Tsar on legislation. As was his right, however, Nicholas overrode the council and Kuropatkin’s conscription law went into effect. In the Emperor’s defence it could be argued that had he failed to back up his new Minister of War the latter’s authority would have been fatally damaged. Moreover, the government’s case vis-à-vis Finland was not entirely unjustified, its fears for the security of Petersburg, very close to the Finnish border, causing it particular alarm. In terms of political wisdom and tact, however, Kuropatkin’s law, not to mention Bobrikov’s antics, were a disaster. The government, which had hoped to play off the ethnic Finnish majority against the country’s Swedish elite, quickly united the whole country against itself. Among those who protested to Nicholas about Bobrikov’s policy was his mother, herself a Scandinavian princess. In what was, coming from her, an extremely angry letter, she accused her son of going back on his promise to her that Bobrikov would be reined in and commented that ‘all that has been and is being done in Finland is based on lies and deceit and leads straight to revolution’. Apart from asserting that the Finns would come round if the government showed itself resolute, Nicholas’s reply to his mother skated around the main issue at stake. Seen from the Russian perspective this issue was, in Kiireev’s words, that ‘thanks to Bobrikov and his system we have created a new Poland at the gates of Saint Petersburg! And it would have been easy to avoid this.’

“In its approach to the Finnish question Petersburg made mistakes which were typical of the Russian government at this time. Policy towards Finland was decided on its own, not in the wider context of an overall strategy for achieving the government’s aims and avoiding danger across the whole range of the empire’s affairs. It made no sense to challenge Finnish nationalism at a time when the regime already had its hands full with a host of other domestic enemies. Nor did the government clearly define its essential interests in Finland in the light of its overall commitments, and then devote the necessary means to achieve these limited goals. By the time Governor-General Bobrikov was assassinated in June 1904 Finland was moving towards open insurrection.
By then, however, much of urban Russia was moving in the same direction…“

4. The Baltic. “The Baltic region,” writes Hosking, “resembled Finland in so far as the Russian authorities supported, up to a point, the claims of the subordinate nationalities, the Estonians and Latvians, against the dominant Germans. But they pursued this policy with much greater caution than in Finland, since the Baltic Germans were far more important to them than the Swedes. Indeed, it could be argued that, of all ethnic groups in the whole empire, the Baltic Germans were the most loyal. However, their loyalty was to the Tsar personally, and to the empire as a multi-national entity, not to Russia as a nation. As Alexander Graf Keyserling, former rector of Dorpat University, wrote in 1889, ‘As long as the Emperor dominates the nation, we shall be able to survive and develop further.’ It was not only the Russian nation he had in mind. The growth of German nationalism was equally ominous for the Baltic landowners, since it threatened to swamp the Ritterschaften (aristocratic corporations) with Germans from the towns and Estonians or Latvians from the countryside, both more numerous than themselves. In the long run they would all become the mere pawns of European great-power politics.

“The first Russian statesman to attack the German domination in the Baltic was Iurii Samarin, who was sent to Riga as a senatorial inspector in 1849. He regarded the German urban guilds and the Ritterschaften as corrupt relics of an antiquated system which prevented the monarch from acting as the protector of ordinary people and obstructed Russians from exercising their legitimate authority in the Russian Empire. ‘We Russians claim the right to be in Russia what the French are in France and the English throughout the British dominions.’ At this stage, before the drive to national homogenization had gripped the authorities, such views were unwelcome to the Tsar: Nicholas ordered that Samarin be detained in the Peter-Paul Fortress for twelve days and personally rebuked him. ‘Your attack is aimed at the government: what you really meant was that since the reign of the Emperor Peter we have been surrounded by Germans and have ourselves become Germanised.’

“By the 1870s, however, different views prevailed in St. Petersburg. Reform had come to Russia, rendering Tsars more reluctant to acknowledge intermediate authorities between themselves and their subjects. Besides, the unification of Germany naturally reinforced the ethnic identification of Baltic Germans, especially those in the towns. Ivan Aksakov had warned of this danger in 1862, when he complained that the Baltic Germans, ‘though devoted to the Russian throne, preach war to the death against the Russian nationality; faithful servants of the Russian state, they care not a fig for the Russian Land’. Alexander III took a symbolically important decision when, on

304 Lieven, Nicholas II, pp. 86-87.
his accession to the throne in 1881, he declined to confirm the privileges of the Ritterschaften, as all his successors had done since Peter the Great.

“Administrative integration began with the introduction of the new municipal institutions in the Baltic in 1877, but the authorities shrank from undermining the Ritterschaften in the countryside by introducing Russian-style zemstvos there. To that extent, the old policy of accommodating local elites continued: the Ritterschaften remained as the ultimate repositories of local authority right through to 1917, though their practical power was gradually being chipped away both by social change and by governmental measures. In the 1880s they lost judicial powers with the introduction of the new Russian courts, along with the use of Russian in all administrative and judicial procedures. Their supervision of schools was weakened by the opening of numerous ‘ministerial schools’ run from St. Petersburg and offering intuition in Russian only: it was here that many Estonians and Latvians received their basic education and began to move into professional and administrative positions, becoming what St. Petersburg hoped would be the agents of future Russian domination. At the same time an attempt was made to make Russian compulsory in all but the lowest forms of primary schools. In 1893 Dorpat University was closed and reopened as Iur’ev University, a Russian institution: professors and lecturers (with the revealing exception of theology) who were not prepared to teach in Russian had to resign.

“In religious matters there was a return to the policy of forbidding Estonians and Latvians who had converted – usually under threat – to Orthodoxy to return to the Lutheran faith. Those who had done so now found that their marriages were declared invalid, while pastors who had celebrated them were suspended investigation. Some 120 suffered this fate before the policy was abandoned in 1894…”

Here Hosking distorts the evidence. There was a genuine, unforced movement of Latvians towards Orthodoxy, of which the most famous product was the future hieromartyr Archbishop John (Pommer) of Riga, who was devoted to Russia. The Latvian peasants of his region had begun to show an interest in Orthodoxy thanks to the preaching of the faith in their native language; and Hieromartyr John's great-grandfather had been one of the first to accept Orthodoxy in the region, for which he was subjected to persecution by the local German landowners. If there was persecution, it was much more likely to be by Lutherans against the Orthodox. Thus when St. John’s great-grandfather died he was buried outside the bounds of the local Lutheran cemetery (there were no Orthodox cemeteries at that time) as the leader of the "rebels". The native peasants raised a mound over the place of his burial and

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put an eight-pointed star on top of it, but both the mound and the cross were removed by the Lutheran authorities.  

5. The Caucasus. The Georgian State and Church are much older than the Russian – the Church was granted autocephaly in the fourth century at the Council of Antioch. The Bagration dynasty was founded in 886, and Georgia’s golden age took place from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries. In the 1220 the Mongols invaded, and thereafter Georgian history consisted of a long succession of Muslim invasions in which the country was repeatedly devastated and many thousands martyred for the Orthodox faith.

Daniel Sargis writes: “In the late eighteenth century, King Irakly II of Georgia, an Orthodox Christian, was threatened by the Islamic rulers of Persia and Turkey. He turned to Russia, his Christian neighbour, for protection. In 1783, Empress Catherine the Great of Russia and King Irakly II signed the treaty of Georgievsk, in which Russia guaranteed the territorial integrity of the Georgian kingdom in return for control of Georgia’s foreign policy. The treaty also guaranteed the royal status of the Bagratid dynasty…: ‘Henceforth Irakly II, as a believer in the same faith as Ours and as an ally of Russia, bears the title of King of Georgia, in which title and rights he and his issue are confirmed by Russia forever and for all time.’

“In 1795, the Persian shah, Aga Muhammad, demanded that King Irakly acknowledge Persian suzerainty over Georgia. King Irakly, declining to break his treaty with Russia, refused. The Persians then invaded. No Russian assistance was provided, but the old King, then more than 80 years old, managed to repulse the invaders three times before he was outnumbered and defeated. Finally, the Russians intervened and pushed out the Persians.

“In 1798, Irakly II died and was succeeded by his son, King George XII. Fearing the Persian threat, King George suggested to Empress Catherine’s son and successor, Tsar Paul I, that he incorporate Georgia into the Russian Empire while allowing the Bagrations to continue to bear the title of King… At first, Emperor Paul agreed, but in the end he simply seized the country, putting an end to the long reign of the Bagrations.”

The annexation of Georgia was proclaimed by Paul I on December 18, 1800, and was reaffirmed by his successor, Alexander I, on September 12, 1801. On the whole Georgia benefited from being part of the Russian empire – it could hardly have survived against the Muslims from outside. And Georgian saints

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306 Lyudmilla Koeller, Sv. Ioann (Pommer), Arhiepiskop Rizhskij i Latvijskij (St. John (Pommer), Archbishop of Riga and Latvia), Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1984.
307 Sargis, The Romanoffs and the Bagrations, 1996; quoted by Brien Horan, “The Russian Imperial Succession”, http://www.chivalricorders.org/royalty/gotha/russucgw.htm. The smaller Georgian kingdoms of Samegrelo and Imereti (western Georgia) were annexed in 1803 and 1804, respectively.
such as Elder Ilarion of Mount Athos, could be sincerely, even fiercely pro-Russian. However, the price was high. “Within ten years,” writes Lado Mirianashvili, “the Russian authorities had abolished the Georgian monarchy, the Church’s autocephaly, and the patriarchal throne – all of which had withstood the Turks, the Mongols, and the Persians. During the subsequent 106 years, nineteen exarchs of the Russian Synod ruled the Georgian Church. Church services in Georgian were terminated, frescoes were whitewashed, and ancient Georgian icons and manuscripts were either sold or destroyed.

“The wanton destruction of the Iberian culture resulted in the emergence of the Georgian independence movement in the last half of the 19th century. Under the leadership of poet, historian, and philosopher St. Ilia Chavchavadze, members of the Georgian intelligentsia sought to preserve their language and culture, while promoting state independence and Church autocephaly. Both the Russian government and the Communist revolutionaries opposed this national movement, the latter because the movement proclaimed Georgia to be a Christian state. In 1907 the militant social democrats killed the ‘father of modern Georgia’, St. Ilia, in an attempt to crush the national movement, whose Christian ideology undermined the Communist agenda.”

Although Georgian nationalism was essentially Christian in nature, harking back nostalgically to the medieval Christian kingdom, according to Hosking it had “an anti-capitalist colouring, owing to the competition with the Armenians”, who dominated banking and commerce in the towns. “They also considered that, as a small nation, their interests were best protected by internationalism, or more specifically, by membership of a democratic multinational federation formed on the framework of the Russian Empire. Two of the leading Georgian radicals, Noa Zhordania and Filip Makharadze, studied in Warsaw, where they became convinced that Poles and Georgians, for all their differences, were conducting a common struggle against the autocratic empire, and must work together. Marxism fulfilled both the internationalist and the anti-capitalist requirements. The Georgians became perhaps the most sophisticated Marxists in the empire, taking over from the Austrian Marxists the notion of individual cultural autonomy as the best way of making possible inter-ethnic cooperation in a multi-national state. They also adapted their original agrarian programme so that it met the demands of peasants, and in that way were able to make themselves the leading political force in the countryside as well as the towns.”

309 Hosking, op. cit, pp. 385-386.
Meanwhile, in the third of the Transcaucasian territories, Azerbaidjan, “the emergence of a national consciousness was complicated by the domination of Islam, which tended towards supra-national forms and blocked the growth of a secular culture and a written language for the masses. To begin with, ironically, it was the Russians who encouraged the Azeris’ secular culture to develop, promoting the plays of Akhundzada, the ‘Tatar Molière’, and commissioning histories of the Azeri folk culture and language, as a way of weakening the influence of the Muslim powers to the south.”310

6. Central Asia. “In Central Asia,” writes Hosking, “the thrust of imperial policy was economic rather than assimilationist. Uniquely in the Russian empire, one may consider this region a genuine colony. Its status differed from that of other parts of the empire in several ways. Its inhabitants were known as inorodtsy, a category common enough in other contemporary empires, but not applied elsewhere in the Russian one: it implied an alien and inferior political status. The whole territory was not even fully incorporated into the empire: the Khanate of Khiva and the Emirate of Bukhara remained nominally sovereign, as protectorates bound to Russia by one-sided treaties which included them in the Russian customs union.

“In the regions incorporated into the empire, the Russian authorities did not interfere in religion, education, local administration or law courts. These were Muslim and so far removed from Russian practice that any attempt to adapt them would have had scant chance of success and would have provoked intense resistance, which might have been exploited by the British to bolster their position in Central Asia. In this way a largely military supreme power in the region overlay a traditional and unchanged medium- and lower-level hierarchy.”311

However, in 1898 the Urmian spiritual mission of the Russian Orthodox Church was opened in Persia. By 1900 there had already been opened more than 60 schools serving 2300 students. On August 21, 1901 the future Hieromartyr, Fr. John Vostorgov was sent to Persia to oversee the work of the mission and began to labour for the conversion of the Syro-Chaldeans to Orthodoxy. For several years he waged a determined battle, the result of which was that three bishops - Mar Elijah, Mar John and Mar Marian - expressed their desire to be united to the Church. Thus was initiated the Syro-Chaldean Mission of the Russian Orthodox Church.312

We may conclude that Russification was not a success in any of the regions of the Russian empire that it was applied, even in those, such as Ukraine and Belorussia, where religious, linguistic and cultural similarities were greatest.

310 Figes, op. cit., p. 75.
Nevertheless, it is an exaggeration to call this policy one of oppression and tyranny (we shall deal with the special case of the Jews later). And the epithet of “the prison of the peoples” given to Russia by her enemies was by no means just. In general, Russia coped remarkably well with the extraordinary diversity of peoples and traditions within her borders. Thus what subordinate people anywhere had more freedom than the Finns, the Muslims of Central Asia or the pagans of Siberia in the Russian empire?

It is not clear that any other contemporary multinational empire succeeded any better in solving one the most intractable problems of politics: how to accommodate different peoples with different cultures and religions within a unitary state. The British had the problem of Ireland, the French—of Algeria; while the Austro-Hungarians had to contend with a whole series of discontented nationalities. “The Russian empire,” writes Lieven, “included a wide range of peoples of very different cultures and levels of socio-economic development. Any attempt to impose a single, ‘coherent’ strategy on all of them would have been unthinkable and catastrophic. Moreover, it should by now be clear that there was no easy solution to the dilemmas of empire in the modern era. If tsarism floundered, so too did all its imperial rivals.”

Lieven thinks that “in principle it might have been possible to strengthen empire by the appeal of the great civilization [understood here in a sense inclusive of “culture”] to which the imperial regime was linked. Together with the economic and military advantages of empire, this might at least have provided some defence against the nationalist challenge… The century before 1914 had witnessed a tremendous flowering of Russian literary and musical culture. Not only had the Russian intelligentsia developed a very impressive high culture, but it was also open to people of varying races and religions, and had genuinely cosmopolitan sympathies and outlooks. Drawing inspiration from all the strands of European culture and speaking many languages, the Russian intelligentsia’s culture was in some respects genuinely broader than the more national perspective common in the individual cultures of Western Europe. Though Polish and German subjects of the tsar were never likely to defer to Russian culture, the educated classes of Ukraine, Belorussia and the other smaller Christian peoples might well do so, especially if they were allowed to develop their own languages and cultures alongside Russian. Even the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Muslim reformers, the so-called Jadids, often had considerable respect for the Russian intelligentsia’s culture and were inclined to ally with it in order to modernize their own societies. Given the deep antagonism between the tsarist regime and much of the Russian intelligentsia, however, the pull of intelligentsia culture on the non-Russians was not much help to the empire’s rulers. If, for example, Ukrainian or Jewish socialists were often drawn to all-

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313 Lieven, Empire, op. cit., p. 275.
imperial revolutionary parties rather than to more narrowly national ones, this was scarcely a gain from the tsar’s point of view…"\(^{314}\)

Here we come to the hub of the matter: Russification was of little value if the Russia it propagated was not Orthodoxy, the root of Russian culture and the one thing that could truly unite its peoples at a deep level. But the Russian government, while generously supporting Orthodox missions to pagan peoples, and in general supporting Orthodoxy everywhere, did not always see its nationalities policy in terms of the spreading of Orthodoxy.

There were several reasons for this. First, the actual preaching of Orthodoxy is a task of the Church, not the State – and the Church was barely able to cope with the task of preaching the Gospel to the Russians themselves. Thus St. John of Kronstadt had wanted to preach Christ to the Alaskan Indians, but decided to stay in Russia, where so many baptised people were still in need of conversion to True Christianity.

Secondly, the principles of religious tolerance and religious indifferentism had let down deep roots into the culture of the elites, who, if they had to preach or impose something, preferred that it would not be a dogmatic religion.

Thirdly and most importantly, as Lieven points out, the dominant culture and religion of the Russian elites was no longer Orthodoxy, but West European liberalism, which led naturally to socialism, anti-tsarism and anti-Russianism.

And so if it was the Russian elites that were to draw the constituent peoples of the empire away from centrifugal nationalism and towards a centripetal universalism, they would not be able to do it through the universalist civilization or “high culture” of Orthodox Christianity, the official religion of the empire, but through the quite different “high culture” of West European liberalism. What actually happened was a kind of bifurcation. Orthodoxy continued to be preached, with positive results, to the pagans and to the peasants, but the intelligentsia also continued to preach their gospel, the gospel of westernism, constitutionalism and ecumenism, with the most catastrophic results for the whole world…

Figes makes the important observation that it was not the liberals with their emphasis on individual human rights who exploited the nationalist unrest among the empire’s non-Russian peoples, but the socialists. “This socialistic aspect of the nationalist movements is worth underlining. For the late twentieth-century reader might be tempted to assume, on the basis of the collapse of Communism and the rise of nationalism in Eastern Europe, that they must have been opposed to socialist goals. What is striking about the nationalist movements within the Russian Empire is that their most successful

\(^{314}\) Lieven, Empire, op. cit., p. 276.
political variants were nearly always socialist in form: Joseph Pilsudski’s Polish Socialist Party led the national movement in Poland; the Socialist Party became the national party of the Finns; the Baltic movements were led by socialists; the Ukrainians Socialist Revolutionaries were the leading Ukrainian national party; the Mensheviks led the Georgian national movement; and the Dashnak socialists the Armenian one. This was in part because the main ethnic conflict also tended to run along social lines: Estonian and Latvian peasants against German landlords and merchants; Ukrainian peasants against Polish or Russian landlords and officials; Azeri workers, or Georgian peasants, against the Armenian bourgeoisie; Kazakh and Kirghiz pastoralists against Russian farmers; and so on. Parties which appealed exclusively to nationalism effectively deprived themselves of mass support; whereas those which successfully combined the national with the social struggle had an almost unstoppable democratic force…”

The Liberation Movement

“By 1902-3,” writes Dominic Lieven, “rumblings of revolution, or at least of fundamental constitutional change, were in the air. Not everyone heard them. Even in April 1904, three months before his assassination, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Vyacheslav Plehve, did not believe in ‘the closeness of danger’ to the regime. Plehve’s optimism was partly based on the belief that ‘in the event of things going to extremes, the government will find support in the peasantry and urban lower-middle class’. In addition he recalled having survived earlier times of crisis and panic. ‘I have lived through more than one moment like the one we are living through now,’ he commented. ‘After the First of March [1881: the day Alexander II was assassinated] Count Loris-Melikov said to Plehve on the day after Alexander III rejected Alexander II’s constitution that “the Tsar will be killed and you and I will be hanged on a gallows”. Nothing happened though.’

“Other senior officials were less optimistic, often understanding better than Plehve that opposition to the government was by now much broader and deeper than had been the case a quarter of a century before. Kireev himself commented, as early as October 1900, that ‘I have seen a lot of intelligent people recently and in one voice, some with joy… others with horror, they all say that the present system of government has outlived its era and we are heading towards a constitution.’ Even the very conservative Konstantin Pobedonostsev agreed on this. A year later Kireev stated that in upper-class and senior bureaucratic circles ‘in the eyes of the great majority a constitutional order is the only salvation’. He himself believed, however, that ‘it is precisely this [constitutional order] which will in fact destroy us’. Like Alexander Polovtsov his eyes were turned towards the peasant masses, with their huge numbers and their potential for anarchy and socialism. ‘For the

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315 Figes, op. cit., p. 71.
time being the peasants are still firm, still untouched. They are, as before, monarchists. But anyone can throw them into a muddle.’

“Those with the greatest interest in throwing the masses ‘into a muddle’ were of course the revolutionary socialist parties. Russian revolutionary socialism in the early twentieth century was divided into two currents, one Marxist, the other not. The former strand was represented by the Social Democrats, who in 1903 split into two factions, Menshevik and Bolshevik. The non-Marxist strand comprised the Socialist Revolutionary Party, formally constituted only in 1901, but deriving its ideas, traditions and older cadres from the nineteenth-century Russian socialist movement. In terms of ideas, the greatest distinction between the two was that the Marxists believed that the urban workers would spearhead the socialist revolution, which could only occur after capitalism had fully developed. The Socialist Revolutionary Party, on the other hand, claimed that a coalition of peasants, workers and poorer members of the intelligentsia and lower-middle class would achieve the socialist revolution, which could come immediately if the revolutionary parties pursued the proper tactics and exploited their opportunities.

“Unlike the Social Democrats, the Socialist Revolutionaries [called SRs] carried out a campaign of terror against leading officials as part of their strategy, killing three ministers between 1901 and 1904 alone and in the process sowing a good deal of alarm and confusion in the government. Partly for this reason the security police tended to regard the Socialist Revolutionaries as a more immediate and dangerous threat than the Social Democrats. The evaluation was not the product of mere panic or short-sightedness. The Marxists’ dogmatism and their obsession with the working class seemed to make them unlikely leaders of a successful revolution in a still overwhelmingly peasant country in which capitalism was only beginning to take root. Moreover, the fact that the majority of Social Democratic leaders were non-Russians, and a great number were Jews, made it seem less likely than ever that they would be able to compete with the Socialist Revolutionaries for the support of the Russian masses. Events were in part to prove the police right. When the monarchy fell in 1917 it was indeed the Socialist Revolutionaries who enjoyed by far the most popularity among the masses, not only in the countryside but also generally in the cities. Russia’s socialist future should have lain in their hands. The combination of their own ineptitude, Lenin’s intelligence and ruthlessness, and the specific conditions of wartime Russia were to deprive the Socialist Revolutionaries of the spoils of victory.

“In Russia socialist parties existed long before liberal ones. The Russian intelligentsia borrowed its ideas from the more developed societies of Central and Western Europe and had already created revolutionary socialist groups by the 1860s. The origins of Russia’s liberal parties on the other hand only go back to the foundation of the so-called Liberation Movement in 1901. From
the very start this movement was divided into two main currents, which were to split in 1905-6 into the more radical, Constitutional Democratic [known as the Cadets], and more conservative, Octobrist, strands of Russian liberalism. In sociological terms this split roughly coincided with the division between members of the professional and intellectual middle class on the one hand, and liberal landowners on the other. In terms of ideas, the basic divide came over whether one would insist on full-scale parliamentary government or accept some compromise combining elements of popular representation with parts of the existing regime. All sections of the Liberation Movement were, however, united in demanding civil rights and the end of the absolute monarchy. By 1904-5 the movement proved capable of mobilizing a broad coalition of supporters from middle- and upper-class Russia and of forging links with parts of the workers’ movement too. Though never likely in the long run to be able to compete with the socialists for mass support, the Liberation Movement was nevertheless a great challenge to the regime. Its wealthy activists, who often dominated the zemstvos, provided protection and patronage for a wide range of people opposed to the regime, some of them very radical. Many figures in the Liberation Movement came from the same world as senior officialdom and were even at times close relations. Such people were not easy to silence by mere repression and their arguments often carried conviction with liberal members of the ruling elite, weakening the government’s unity in the fact of the revolution.316

The stated objectives of the Russian liberals, continues Pipes, “were not different from those of the Western liberals. In their strategy and tactics, however, the Russian liberals drew very close to the radicals: as Paul Miliukov, their leader, like to boast, their political program ‘was the most leftist of all those advanced by analogous groups in Western Europe’. Ivan Petrunkevich, another leading Kadet, thought that Russian ‘liberals, radicals,

316 Lieven, Nicholas II, London: Pimlico, 1993, pp. 89-91. Pipes describes the origin of this movement as follows: “The ranks of zemstvo constitutionalists were augmented in 1901 by a small but influential group of intellectuals, defectors from Social-Democracy who had found intolerable its partisanship and dogmatism. The most prominent among them was Peter Struve, the author of the founding manifesto of the Social-Democratic Party and one of its outstanding theoreticians. Struve and his friends proposed to forge a national front, encompassing parties and groupings from the extreme left to the moderate right, under the slogan ‘Down with the Autocracy’. Struve emigrated to Germany and with money provided by zemstvo friends founded there in 1902 the journal Osvobozhdenie (Liberation). The periodical carried information not permitted in censored publications, including secret government documents supplied by sympathizers within the bureaucracy. Issues smuggled into Russia helped forge a community of ‘Liberationists’ (Osvobozhdentsy) from which, in time, would emerge the Constitutional-Democratic Party. In January 1904, its supporters founded in St. Petersburg the Union of Liberation (Soiuz Osvobozhdenia) to promote constitutionalism and civil rights. Its branches in many towns attracted moderate elements as well as socialists, especially Socialists-Revolutionaries. (The Social-Democrats, insisting on their ‘hegemony’ in the struggle against the regime, refused to collaborate.) These circles, operating semi-legal, did much to stimulate discontent with existing conditions.” (op. cit., pp. 151-152) (V.M.)
and revolutionaries’ were distinguished not by political objectives but by temperament.

“This left-wing tendency was dictated by two considerations. The liberals, appealing to the mass electorate, had to compete with radical parties, which also stood to the left of their Western European counterparts, making the most extreme and utopian promises to the electorate. It was a challenge they had to meet. To steal the thunder from the socialists, the liberals adopted a radical social program, which included a demand for the expropriation of large landed estates (with compensation at ‘fair’ rather than market prices), as well as Church and state properties, for distribution to the peasants. Their platform also called for a comprehensive program of social welfare. They would turn a deaf ear to the counsels of moderation, afraid of ‘compromising’ themselves in the eyes of the masses and losing out to the socialists.

“Even more compelling were tactical reasons. To wrest from the autocracy first a constitution and a legislative parliament and then parliamentary democracy, the liberals required leverage. This they found in the threat of revolution. In 1905-7 and then again in 1915-17, they urged the monarchy to make political concessions to them as a way of avoiding a much worse fate. The party maintained discreet silence in regard to SR terror, which its liberal principles should have caused it to condemn outright.

“The political practice of the Kadets thus displayed a troublesome ambivalence – dread of revolution and exploitation of the revolution – and proved a gross miscalculation: playing with the revolutionary threat contributed not a little to promoting the very thing the liberals most wished to avoid. But this they would realise only after the event, when it was too late.

“Although more moderate than the socialists, the liberals gave the Imperial regime greater trouble, because they had in their ranks socially prominent individuals who could engage in politics under the guise of legitimate professional activity. Socialist students were fair game for the police. But who would dare to lay hands on a Prince Shakhovskoi or a Prince Dolgorukov, even as they were busy organizing a subversive liberal party? And how could one interfere with gatherings of physicians or jurists, although it was common knowledge that the participants discussed forbidden subjects? This difference in social status explains why the directing organizations of the liberals could function inside Russia, virtually free of police interference, while the SRs and SDs had to operate from abroad. It also explains why in both 1905 and 1917 the liberals were the first on the scene and in charge, weeks before their socialist rivals made an appearance.

“The Russian liberal movement had two main bases of support: the zemstva and the intelligentsia.
“The zemstva were elected on a franchise that ensured solid representation of the landed gentry, then considered by the monarchy to be a staunch supporter. They functioned on the district and provincial level, but the government did not allow them to form a national organization, fearing that it would arrogate to itself quasi-parliamentary functions. The elected deputies tended to be either liberal-constitutionalists or Slavophile conservatives, both hostile to the autocracy and bureaucratic rule, but opposed to revolution. The salaried personnel hired by the zemstva (agronomists, physicians, teachers, etc.), known as the Third Element, was more radical but also non-revolutionary.

“Properly treated, the zemstva might have helped stabilize the monarchy. But for the conservatives in the bureaucracy, and especially those in the ministry of the Interior, the zemtsy were an intolerable irritant: busybodies who meddled in affairs that were none of their business and hindered the efficient administration of the provinces. Under their influence, Alexander III in 1890 restricted the authority of the zemstva, giving the governors wide latitude to interfere with their personnel and activities.”

And with good reason: Pipes here fails to mention the degree to which the zemstva’s 70,000 teachers, doctors, statisticians and agronomists, collectively known as the “Third Element” (as opposed to the first two elements, the administrators and elected deputies), inculcated liberal ideas in the young. To consider that these ideas were “radical but also non-revolutionary” is naïve. The Interior Minister Plehve called them “the cohorts of the sans-culottes”; he believed that, coming themselves from a peasant or lower-class background, they were trying to use their position in the zemstva to stir up the peasantry. The radical schoolteachers raised a whole generation of radical schoolchildren. Their influence on millions of the younger generation was undoubtedly one of the main causes of the revolution.

Alexander III and Pobedonostsev, made valiant attempts to counter this corrupting influence by encouraging and financing a vast web of church-parish schools, a policy continued by Nicholas II. However, the struggle was an unequal one: the zemstvo schools had more money, and not all the church-parish schools were of the highest quality in view of the fact that some Church teachers had also been infected by liberal ideas.

Pipes continues: “Harrassed by the authorities, zemstvo leaders in the 1890s held informal national consultations, often disguised as professional and scientific meetings. In 1899, they went further, organizing in Moscow a discussion group called Beseda (Symposium). Its membership was sufficiently prominent socially and professionally for the police to look at its

317 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 149-151.
318 Figes, A People’s Tragedy, p. 51.
meetings through their fingers: these took place in the Moscow mansion of
Princes Peter and Paul Dolgorukov.

“In June 1900, the government once again restricted the competence of the
zemstvo, this time in the realm of taxation. It further ordered the dismissal of
zemstvo deputies who were especially active in promoting constitutional
causes. In response, Symposium, which until then had confined its
deliberations to zemstvo affairs, turned attention to political questions. To
many zemstvy, the government’s persecution raised the fundamental question
whether it made sense to pursue ‘constructive’, apolitical work under a
regime dominated by bureaucracy and police bent on stifling every
manifestation of public initiative. These doubts were heightened by the
publication in 1901 in Germany of a confidential memorandum by Witte
which urged the total abolition of zemstva as institutions incompatible with
autocracy…

“At the beginning of the twentieth century, there were in Russia thousands
of men and women committed to fundamental change. A good part of them
were ‘professional revolutionaries’, a novel breed who dedicated their lives to
plotting political violence. They and their supporters might quarrel among
themselves about strategy and tactics – whether to engage in terror, whether
to ‘socialize’ or ‘nationalize’ the land, whether to treat the peasant as an ally
or as an enemy of the worker. But they were at one on the central issue: that
there was to be no accommodation, no compromise with the existing social,
economic and political regime, that it had to be destroyed, root and branch,
not only in Russian but throughout the world. So strong was the influence of
these extremists that even Russia’s liberals came under their spell…

“The fact that the intelligentsia rejected any accommodation with official
Russia, that it exacerbated discontent and opposed reform, made it unlikely
that Russia’s problems could be peacefully resolved…”319

*Kishinev, 1903*

Alexander Solzhenitsyn writes: “Neither in Middl e, nor Northern, nor
Eastern Russia, never, not even in the upheaval that shook the whole people
in October, 1905, were there any Jewish pogroms (they were against the
revolutionary intelligentsia in general, against their rejoicing and mockery
over the Manifesto of October 17). However: before the whole world pre-
revolutionary Russia – not the Empire, but Russia – was slandered as causing
pogroms, as black-hundredist… But Jewish pogroms were stirred up at all
times and only in the South-West of Russia (as also was the case in 1881).”320

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The Kishinev pogrom began on April 6, 1903 – the last day of the Jewish Pascha and the first day of the Orthodox Pascha. According to the official figures drawn up in the indictment by the procurator of the local court, V.N. Goremykin, it began with “the usual clashes between Jews and Christians which have always taken place in recent years at Pascha” and with “the hostility of the local Christian population towards the Jews”. And then “two weeks before Pascha... rumours began to circulate in Kishinev that there would be a slaughter of Jews in the forthcoming feast”.

A particularly inflammatory role was played here by the newspaper Bessarabets, whose editor, Pavolachi Krushevan, also published The Protocols of the Elders of Zion. The Protocols, which played such an important role in Germany in the 1920s and 1930s, purport to be the minutes of a meeting of Jewish elders somewhere in the West, but are in fact largely plagiarized from Maurice Joly’s Dialogue aux Enfers entre Montesquieu et Machiavel, published in 1864. When the forgery was demonstrated to Tsar Nicholas II by Stolypin, he said: “Drop the Protocols. One cannot defend a pure cause by dirty methods.” Bessarabets printed “from day to day sharp articles of an anti-Jewish tendency, which did not fail to leave a trace... among the salesmen and petty scribes, etc. of the uneducated people of Bessarabia. The latest provocative articles of Bessarabets contained communications about the murder in Dubossary of a Christian child supposedly carried out by Jews by ritual means...”

According to the indictment, 42 people were killed, including 38 Jews. About 500 Jewish shop fronts were destroyed. By April 9, 816 people had been arrested, of which 664 were charged with crimes.

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

“And they were not unearthed by any subsequent investigation.

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

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322 Solzhenitsyn, op.cit., p. 322.
been thought up in the Department of Police and carried out in fulfilment of orders from there’. Although, of course, writes the same M. Krol in the 40s of the 20th century, ‘the scoundrels organized the Kishinev pogrom in strict secrecy, we are profoundly convinced that the Kishinev slaughter was organized from above, with the knowledge, and perhaps even on the initiative of Plehve. Only if we had the most indisputable evidence against them could we tear the mask from these highly-placed murderers and place them in a fitting light before the whole world. Therefore we decided to send the well-known lawyer Zarudny to Kishinev.’ ‘He was the most suitable person to carry out the mission that we had laid on him’, he ‘took it upon himself to discover the hidden springs of the Kishinev slaughter’, after which the police ‘to make a diversion arrested some tens of robbers and thieves’. (Let us recall that on the day after the pogrom 816 were arrested.) – Zarudny collected and took away from Kishinev ‘exceptionally important material’, that is to say: ‘that the main culprit and organizer of the pogrom was the chief of the Kishinev garrison Levendal’.

This “exceptionally important material” was never published anywhere. Goremykin looked into the accusations against Levendal and found them baseless. But Krushevan, whose inflammatory articles had indeed helped the pogrom on arriving in Petersburg two months later, was attacked and wounded with a knife by Pinkhas Dashevsky… The government sacked the governor of Bessarabia, while Plehve issued a circular to all governors, city bosses and heads of police expressing disturbance at the inactivity of the Kishinev authorities and calling for decisive action to cut of violence.

Nor was the Orthodox Church silent. The Holy Synod issued a circular ordering the clergy to take measures to root out hatred of the Jews. Fr. John of Kronstadt said: “Instead of a Christian feast they have arranged a disgusting murder feast to Satan.” And Bishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) said: “The terrible punishment of God will attain those evil-doers who shed blood asking for that of the God-man, His Most Pure Mother, the Apostles and Prophets’; ‘that they should know that the Jewish race, which has been rejected up to now, is dear to the Spirit of God, and that every one who would want to offend it will anger the Lord.’

The Jews and radicals inside Russia, and the European and American press outside Russia, were loud in their accusations that the Russian government was responsible for the Kishinev pogrom. The newspaper magnate William Hurst even used the fateful word “holocaust”… On May 18 The Times of London published a letter of a “completely secret letter” of Plehve to the Kishinev governor von Raaben in which Plehve supposedly asked the governor not to put down any disturbances against the Jews but only to

323 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 327-328.
324 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 329.
325 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 332.
inform him about them.\textsuperscript{326} The letter turned out to be a forgery, as even pro-
Semite sources accept.\textsuperscript{327} However, this did not prevent the 1996 edition of
\textit{The Jewish Encyclopaedia} from reiterating the accusation as if it were fact...\textsuperscript{328}

\textbf{Regicide in the Balkans}

Russia’s victory over the Ottoman empire in 1877-78 fundamentally changed the political situation in the Balkans. The Turks were now in slow, uneven, but inexorable retreat from Europe, while all the Orthodox nations
had independent nation-states (Bulgaria was, strictly speaking, only autonomous, but declared full independence in 1908). However, freedom did not immediately bring prosperity, and certainly not peace...

One problem was that the peasantry, the majority of the population in all
the Balkan countries, was no less oppressed by heavy taxes and indebtedness
under the national regimes than it had been under the Turks. This led to
peasant rebellions in several countries: in Serbia in 1883, in Bulgaria in 1899
and, most seriously, in Romania in 1907, where 120,000 troops were called out
and 10,000 peasants were killed.\textsuperscript{329} There was simply not enough land to
support a rising population, and many thousands of able-bodied men – men
who were greatly needed at home – were forced to emigrate, especially in
Greece and Montenegro.

A second problem was tension between the newly independent states.
Thus in 1885 Serbia invaded Bulgaria (the Bulgars won), and towards the end
of the century the Serbs, the Bulgars and the Greeks were fighting proxy wars
against each other for control of Macedonia. Only rarely did the Orthodox
nations unite against their common foe, the Turks, as in the First Balkan War
of 1912: more often it was Orthodox against Orthodox, as in the Second
Balkan War of 1913, when Greeks, Serbs and Romanians united against the
Bulgars (who were defeated).

Inter-Orthodox rivalries were exarcebated by the fact that, as a result of the
Treaty of Berlin, Austria-Hungary gained a protectorate in Bosnia and greater
influence in the area as a whole. This meant that Serbia was forced to seek
good relations with that great power (until the dynastic coup of 1903 brought
in a pro-Russian dynasty). Meanwhile Bulgaria remained under the influence
of the other great power, Russia – but with a German king, Ferdinand, who
looked to the German powers.

Each of the Orthodox nations, inspired by its recent acquisition of
independence, strove to extend its boundaries at the expense of its neighbours.

\textsuperscript{326} Solzhenitsyn, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 333.
\textsuperscript{327} Vital, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 513.
\textsuperscript{328} Solzhenitsyn, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 335.

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Strong national feeling had served them well in preserving their integrity
during the centuries of the Ottoman yoke. But it served them less well when
that yoke was crumbling, and the virus of nationalism reinvigorated their
enemies as well. Thus the winds of nationalism began to blow in Albania and
Kosovo, which Serbs regard as their national heritage and which had not
hitherto had a strong national movement. Even the Turks, stung by their
defeats, began to abandon the ideal of a multi-national and multi-cultural
empire and look for a “Turkey for the Turks” ideology.

More fundamentally, the Balkan nations had no coherent political ideology.
Orthodoxy was in decline, and the traditional Orthodox “symphony of
powers” had not been revived. Instead, weak autocratic rulers (Nicholas of
Montenegro was a partial exception) worked uneasily or not at all with
embryonic parliaments imbued with western ideas of democracy and
socialism.

The most shocking example of this internal disorder was the killing of King
Alexander and Queen Draga of Serbia in Belgrade in 1903. Indeed, it has been
argued that the murder of the Serbian King in 1903 led to the shots at Sarajevo
in 1914, the First World War and the Russian revolution. For the murderers,
especially Apis, remained in power, and the passions that caused the murder
were not calmed. God is not mocked, and He does not allow anyone to touch
His anointed. And if such a sequence of events was not inevitable (after all,
after the murder of Tsar Paul I, Russia still recovered enough to defeat
Napoleon in 1812), the murder was a symptom of a wider malaise, not only in
Serbian, but in Orthodox Christianity as a whole, that was soon to bring down
upon it the wrath of God and the collapse of the “Sardian” period of
Orthodox Christian history and the whole period of the Orthodox Christian
Empire that lasted from St. Constantine the Great to Tsar Nicholas II…

The Sarov Days

“From 1895 to 1901,” writes Archpriest Lev Lebedev, “four daughters were
born to the Tsar and Tsarina: Great Princesses Olga, Tatiana, Maria and
Anastasia. But an Heir was needed! Because of the absence of an Heir
complications arose in the official definition of the order of succession to the
Throne. From the end of the 19th century and in the first years of the 20th, there
was a sharp increase in students’ and workers’ disturbances. Under the
influence of revolutionaries the workers’ strikes and demonstrations acquired
not only an economic, but also a political character. Terrorist parties appeared
again, and the murders of state functionaries began. In such a situation,
clarity in the matter of the succession of tsarist power was more necessary
than ever – an Heir was needed! It seemed that for a pair who had had four
daughters this could happen only by a miracle, since medical means did not
help. Various people renowned for the gift of healing were invited, beginning
with natives ones (certain ‘blessed’ ones) and ending with foreigners such as
the Frenchman Philippe. But nobody was able to help. The thought arose that a miracle could take place through the intercession of St. Seraphim of Sarov, whose glorification, on the initiative of the Tsar, was already being prepared.

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

The festivities were truly an icon of Holy Russia: the Royal Family and the Great Princes mixed with thousands of peasants in the true, unforced union that only the true worship of God and the veneration of His saints can produce. Many miracles of healing took place, and those who were present witnessed to the extraordinary spiritual peace and joy that was granted the worshippers.

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

“The Sarov days of 1903 became a key event in the whole reign. During the festivities the Tsar received from the widow of P.A. Motovilov a letter of St. Seraphim of Sarov addressed precisely to him, Nicholas II ['to the Tsar in whose reign I shall be glorified'], ‘sealed (but never opened!) with the soft part of a piece of bread. The Tsar read the letter and his face changed, and after reading it... he wept (neither before nor after this did anyone see him in tears). To this day nobody knows what was in the letter. We can guess that it contained some kind of prophecy about his destiny, or the destiny of Russia. In the same period Nicholas II visited the fool-for-Christ Pasha of Sarov... She symbolically (by means of a doll) foretold to the Tsar the birth of a son, and spoke much with him in figurative language. The Tsar left amazed and joyful: ‘I have travelled across the whole of Russia and have not met such a saint. Everyone has received me as Tsar, but she as a simple person,’ he said. Pasha placed the portrait of Nicholas II in her prayer corner and made many prostrations to the earth in front of it, which greatly exhausted her cell-attendants who used to lift and lower Pasha since she could not make prostrations herself because of illness. ‘Matushka, why are you praying to the Tsar?!’ they asked. ‘You know nothing,’ replied the blessed one. ‘He will be higher than all the Tsars.’ When war began in 1914 Pasha, covered in tears, began to kiss the feet of the Tsar on the portrait, saying: ‘Dear one, it is already near the end,’ and sent him the message: ‘Your Majesty, come down from the Throne yourself’...

“The visit to Sarov quickly produced results: On July 30 / August 12, 1904 the Heir to the Throne Alexis Nikolayevich was born! We can imagine the joy of the Crown-Bearing Parents! In the first months of the life of the new-born it was still not known what a terrible disease nestled in him He looked completely healthy, he was simply a beautiful child...

“Now we can understand how the thought of the Tsar about the return of Russia to the pre-Petrine foundations of life were linked into one with the impressions and feeling that arose in the Royal Couple in the Sarov days...”

The Sarov days were like a last warm glow from the fading fire of Holy Rus’. They demonstrated that the ideal of a nation united by the Orthodox faith and in submission to a benevolent Tsar-Father was still a living reality. And indeed, there were many great saints still living in Russia at that time, such as the Optina Elders and St. John of Kronstadt, and many hundreds of thousands more who would suffer martyrdom during the Soviet period. These holy people were the fruit of Holy Russia, and its justification. And this holy fruit did not ripen in spite of the tsarist regime, but under its protection and with its active support, the proof of which would be the holiness of the Tsar-Martyr himself and his martyred family...

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331 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 390.
It was during the Sarov days that “Blessed Pasha” of Sarov, the fool-for-
Christ, prophesied to the Royal Couple that they would have a son and heir. 
Dominic Lieven writes: "Between 1895 and 1901 the Empress had given birth 
to four daughters: Olga, Tatiana, Marie and Anastasia. The four little girls 
were beautiful, healthy and lively children who were greatly loved by their 
parents. Nicholas was a fine father and the family circle was full of love, 
warmth and trust. If the Emperor had a favourite it was probably Tatiana, 
whose personality came closest to that of her mother. Olga, his eldest 
daughter, was the most thoughtful, sensitive and intelligent of the four. 
Marie, the third, with huge grey eyes and a warm-hearted, simple, friendly 
manner, was always the easiest to get on with at first acquaintance. Anastasia, 
born in 1901, was notorious as the family's comedian. Under Russian law, 
however, no woman could inherit the crown. Had Nicholas died before 1904, 
the throne would have gone to his kind-hearted but weak-willed younger 
brother, the Grand Duke Michael. Since Michael was a bachelor in 1904 and 
subsequently contracted an illegal and morganatic marriage, the Romanov 
inheritance would then have passed to a younger brother of Alexander III, the 
Grand Duke Vladimir, and his descendants. Tension and mutual dislike 
between the 'Vladimir branch' and the imperial couple were never far below 
the surface in the twentieth century. Much therefore hung on the life of the 
little boy born in August, 1904. All the more horrifying was the discovery that 
the child had haemophilia.

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

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

Peasant Russia

In spite of the joyous Sarov Days, which witnessed to the survival of true faith among the people, the fact was that on the whole the Russian people was falling away. And not only among the westernized educated classes. The peasants, too – that class which the tsars believed was most devoted to Altar and Throne – were losing their zeal. Thus “according to an analysis of the Church’s books of registration of confession, it was quite usual for Russian peasants at the end of the 19th century not to confess their sins and not to partake of Holy Communion for several years. Only around 20 per cent of the peasants per year in Central Russia used to go to confession.” It was this fact that, more than any other, pointed to the fall of Holy Russia...

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

Dominic Lieven writes: “At the turn of the century... the government was less scared by working-class militancy than by growing evidence of peasant discontent. In June 1901 A.A. Polovtsov wrote: ‘after the students’ disorders there have followed strikes and factor workers’ battles with the police. Next the peasant mass will rise up with a demand for land. Today’s militia [the conscript army], torn away from this very land for a short period, will not use its weapons to curb these appetites, which it itself shares. This will be the end of the Russia which we know.’ Nine months later, when a wave of arson and rioting swept the countryside in Poltava and Kharkov provinces, Polovtsov’s prediction seemed amply justified. In the wake of these agrarian troubles the Secretary to the Committee of Ministers, Anatol Kulomzin, sought to reassure his wife. There had always, he wrote, been agrarian riots of this kind in Russia,

332 Lieven, Nicholas II, pp. 34-35.
during which peasants customarily paid back stewards and foremen for a multitude of old scores and minor injustices. Troops had refused to open fire on only one occasion, and even then out of simple dislike for the officer who gave the order. Alexander Kireev had less reason to hide his fears since his comments were confined to his private diary. ‘I think we can cope with the students and co. without difficulty, but millions of peasants... that’s a completely different matter.’

“Witte’s response was to claim, correctly, that ‘the picture of the peasants’ miserable condition is greatly exaggerated’, particularly by opponents of the government’s economic policy who sought to hide their selfish interests or ideological preferences behind claims that the Ministry of Finance was ruining the peasantry. Throughout the 1890s Witte opposed direct subsidies or cheap credit to agriculture as a waste of scarce resources. In his view investment in industry was more useful even for the rural population because jobs in the cities would reduce land hunger in the villages and, above all, provide agriculture with markets for its produce and therefore with the incentive to modernize. Witte doubted whether big capital investments in noble estates could ever be justified given the low costs of production in the Americas and Australasia, whose agricultural produce was now flooding the world market. Though more sympathetic as regards cheap credit for peasant farms, he argued that the structure of peasant landowning made large-scale lending to the peasantry very dangerous. By law most peasant farms belonged not to individuals or even families but to the whole village community. Nor could this land be sold or mortgaged. As a result there was no way to secure loans or recover debts from the peasantry, as the latter knew only too well.

“By the early twentieth century, however, it was no longer possible for Witte to shrug off attacks on his indifference to peasant needs. Political pressure to ‘do something about agriculture’ was building up, as was fear of peasant discontent. After a tour of the provinces at the turn of the century even the rather dim Dmitri Sipyagin, the Minister of Internal Affairs, commented that ‘we are standing on a volcano’. In addition, the state’s finances were in increasing disarray, and the need to increase its revenues pressing.

“Nicholas II was kept well informed about the problem of both the peasantry and the treasury. In addition to receiving regular reports on these subjects from his ministers, he also on occasion was sent special memoranda by other high officials. In the spring of 1903, for instance, the Emperor received an analysis of his country’s budgetary crisis from Peter Saburov, a senior official whose career had included service both as an ambassador and as a financial expert, a very unusual combination in Victorian Europe. Saburov warned Nicholas that the huge and always increasing costs of the arms race ‘together with the sad economic position of the mass of the tax-
paying population naturally arouse fears for the stability of the state’s finances... To restore the state’s fiscal power is only possible by means of raising the economic position of the peasantry... But it is already becoming clear that to fulfil this necessary but complicated task heavy sacrifices from the treasury will be needed.’

“Both Serge Witte and Vladimir Kokovtsov, who succeeded the critically ill Edvard Pleske as Minister of Finance in 1904, shared Saburov’s concern about the parlous state of Russia’s finances. Kokovtsov indeed commented that ‘I look with alarm on our economic and financial position’ and condemned what he described as the ‘fantasies’ that underlay much government expenditure. ‘These fantasies I see all around,’ he added: ‘in the exorbitant and unreasonable strengthening of the fleet, in our active foreign policy waged at the expense of the peasant’s hungry stomach... [in] the automatic attempt to get money for everything instead of stopping this saturnalia of expenditure and beginning to reduce the tax burden to a measure where it corresponds with the growth in income.’ But whereas Witte and Kokovtsov, like Saburov, believed that excessive armaments were the key to Russia’s financial problems, neither shared his view that international agreement to the reduction of armaments was possible, or indeed his conviction that the first step in this direction should be made through a deal between Nicholas II and the German Kaiser. Nor could the Tsar have any illusions on this score since the failure of his appeal for a reduction of armaments in 1898 had taught him the impossibility of halting the arms race. But, as Serge Witte pointed out to Nicholas in January 1902, if the escalation of defence costs could not be halted, it was hard to see how the peasants’ tax burden could be greatly reduced or large sums provided for the modernization of village life and peasant agriculture. The conclusion drawn by Witte was that improvement of the peasants’ lot would have to come less from the largesse of the treasury than from changes in the system of peasant landholding. The farmer, he told Nicholas, must have individual rights and freedom, including unrestricted property rights to his land. In other words, Witte was calling for the abolition of the peasant commune, the cornerstone of Russia’s rural economy and society.

“Ever since the abolition of serfdom in 1861, indeed to some extent even before that, the commune had been the most important institution in Russian rural life. The peasant community, which was usually but not always made up of inhabitants of a single village, administered and judged by its own members through officials elected by itself. It also bore collective responsibility for paying the state’s taxes. Although in principle the administrative, judicial and fiscal institutions of the village were distinct from the community’s collective ownership of the land, in practice the power of the commune was enormously enhanced by the fact that it controlled, and in many cases periodically redistributed, the villagers’ basic source of wealth.
“Defenders of the commune believed it was a form of social welfare, which would ensure that no peasant would go without the means of survival. They felt that at least until the capitalist economy had developed to the point where millions of secure jobs existed in the cities, the only way to avoid pauperization was to ensure that any peasant, even if he was temporarily resident in a town, would have a plot of land on which to fall back. Because the masses would not be destitute and would have rights to the use of property, it was believed that they would be more immune to radical and socialist propaganda than urban workers and landless agricultural labourers in the West. Not even the most ardent defenders of the commune would probably have argued that, from the narrow perspective of agricultural modernization, it was the best form of landownership; they did deny, and probably rightly, that it was as serious an obstacle to technical improvement as its enemies suggested. The fact that the commune was seen to be an old Russian institution which would preserve the country from the perils that had attended modernization in the West also added to its appeal. Anatol Kulomzin, for instance, was very much on the liberal and Westernizing wing of the ruling elite. He wrote, however, that even he swallowed whole the Russian nationalist view of the commune, so flattering to patriotic pride, and ‘only troubles of 1905-6 which pointed to the socialist spirit which the commune had bred in the life of the peasantry finally sobered me.’”

Here was the central paradox of the peasant question: that its basic institution, the commune, both protected from socialism of the western, Marxist type, and fostered socialism of the eastern, “Asiatic” type. The latter we may also call “peasant socialism”, since it is found to a greater or lesser extent in many peasant societies. For some degree of communal ownership of land is a characteristic of almost all pre-industrial societies, and the transition from a mainly agricultural to a mainly industrial economy is almost always accompanied by the taking over of communal lands into private ownership.

Now the commune and “peasant socialism” was doomed in Russia from the moment that Alexander II decided, after the defeat in the Crimean War, to enter upon the path of industrialization. For industrialization required industrial workers living near industrial centres, which meant that peasants had to be free to sell up and move – in other words, they had to be free citizens in relation to their noble owners and free landholders in relation to their communes. The problem was that, while emancipation had made them citizens and freed them from the bonds of the landowner, it had not made them truly independent of the commune and therefore truly independent landholders. In fact, since emancipation had made many nobles poorer, persuading them, too, - seven out of ten of them - to move to the cities, the communes had become even stronger, moving into the cultural void left by the nobility and controlling more land that used to belong to the nobility.

334 Lieven, Tsar Nicholas II, op. cit., pp. 80-83.
335 Pipes, op. cit., p. 112.
(This was in contrast to, for example, Britain, where the landowning nobility remained powerful in the countryside long into the industrial age.) And so, though doomed in the longer term, peasant socialism for a time became more powerful and more aggressive.

Pipes writes: “The muzhik had no notion of property rights in the Roman sense of absolute dominion over things. According to one authority, Russian peasants did not even have a word for landed property (zemel’naia sobstvennost’): they only spoke of possession (vladenie), which in their mind was indissolubly bound up with physical labor. Indeed, the muzhik was not even able clearly to distinguish the land to which he held legal title by virtue of purchase from his communal allotment and from the land which he leased, all of which he called ‘our land’: ‘The expression “our land” in the mouth of the peasant includes indiscriminately the whole land he occupies for the time being, the land which is his private property… the land held in common by the village (which is therefore only in temporary possession of each household), and also the land rented by the village from neighbouring landlords.’ The muzhik’s whole attitude toward landed property derived from a collective memory of centuries of nomadic agriculture, when land was as abundant as water in the sea and available to all. The ‘slash-and-burn’ method of cultivating virgin forest had gone out of use in most of Russia in the late Middle Ages, but the recollection of the time when peasants roamed the forest, felling trees and cultivating the ash-covered clearings, remained very much alive. Labor and labor alone transformed res nullius into possession: because virgin soil was not touched by labor, it could not be owned. To the peasant’s mind, appropriation of lumber was a crime, because it was the product of labor, whereas felling trees was not. Similarly, peasants believed that ‘he who cuts down a tree with a beehive in it is a thief, because he appropriates human labor; he who cuts down a forest which no one has planted benefits from God’s gift, which is as free as water and air.’ Such a viewpoint, of course, had nothing in common with the rights of property as upheld in Russia’s courts. No wonder that a high proportion of the criminal offenses for which peasants were convicted had to do with illegal cutting of trees. This attitude was not motivated by class antagonism: it applied as much to land and forest owned by fellow peasants. The belief that the expenditure of manual labor alone justified wealth was a fundamental article of faith of the Russian peasantry, and for this reason it despised landlords, bureaucrats, industrial workers, priests, and intellectuals as ‘idlers’. Radical intellectuals exploited this attitude to denigrate businessmen and officials.”

Pipes probably exaggerates the contempt of the ordinary peasant for non-peasants here, and in particular for priests. The priest was often as poor as himself, and had to work his own allotment in order to survive. The period after the revolution showed that the solidarity between priest and peasant was still a powerful bond in many villages. In general, however, there can be

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336 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 116-117.
no question but that a different attitude to landownership put many peasants at odds not only with the property-owning classes, officials and businessmen, but also with the Tsar and the Church, which upheld the traditional – that is to say, the Roman – concept of ownership.

Pipes continues: “Such thinking underlay the universal belief of the Russian peasantry after Emancipation in the inevitable advent of a nationwide repartition of private land. In 1861, the liberated serfs could not understand why approximately one-half of the land which they had previously tilled was given to the landlords. At first, they refused to believe in the genuineness of such an absurd law. Later, after they had reconciled themselves to it, they decided that it was a temporary arrangement, soon to be annulled by a new law that would turn over to them, for communal distribution, all privately held land, including that of other peasants. Legends circulating in the villages had as one of their recurrent themes the prediction of the imminent appearance of a ‘Savior’ who would make all of Russia into a land of communes. ‘The peasants believe,’ according to A.N. Engelgardt, who spent many years living in their midst and wrote what is possibly the best book on their habits and mentality, ‘that after the passage of some time, in the course of census-taking, there will take place a general levelling of all the land throughout Russia, just as presently, in every commune, at certain intervals, there takes place a repartitioning of the land among its members, each being allotted as much as he can manage. This completely idiosyncratic conception derives directly from the totality of peasant agrarian relations. In the communes, after a lapse of time, there takes place a redistribution of land, an equalization among its members. Under the [anticipated] general repartition, all the land will be repartitioned, and the communes will be equalized. The issue here is not simply the seizure of landlord land, as the journalists would have it, but the equalization of all the land, including that which belongs to peasants. Peasants who have purchased land as property, or, as they put it, ‘for eternity’, talk exactly as do all the other peasants, and have no doubt whatever that the ‘lands to which they hold legal title’ can be taken away from their rightful owners and given to others.’ The soundness of this insight would be demonstrated in 1917-18.

“Peasants expected the national repartition of land to occur any day and to bring them vast increments: five, ten, twenty, and even forty hectares per household. It was a faith that kept the central Russian village in a state of permanent tension: ‘In 1879 [following the war with Turkey] all expected that a ‘new decree’ would be issued concerning land. At the time, every small occurrence gave rise to rumors of a ‘new decree’. Should a local village official... deliver the landlord a paper requiring some sort of statistical information about land, cattle, structures, etc., the village would at once call a meeting, and there it would be said that a paper had come to the landlord about the land, that soon a ‘new decree’ would be issued, that in the spring surveyors would come to divide the land. Should the police prohibit the
landlord of a mortgaged estate to cut lumber for sale, it was said that the prohibition was due to the fact that the Treasury would soon take over the forest, and then it would be available to all: pay one ruble and cut all you want. Should anyone take out a loan on his estate, it was said that the landlords had gotten wind that the land would be equalized, and so they hurried to turn their properties over to the Treasury for cash.

“Such thinking meant that the Russian village was forever poised to attack private (non-communal) properties: it was kept in check only by fear. This produced a most unhealthy situation. The revolutionary potential was an ever-present reality, in spite of the peasant’s anti-revolutionary, pro-monarchist sentiments. But then his radicalism was not inspired by political or even class animus. (When asked what should happen to landlords who had been evicted from their lands in consequence of the ‘Black Repartition’, some peasants would suggest they be place on a government salary.) Tolstoy put his finger on the crux of the problem when shortly after Emancipation he wrote: ‘The Russian revolution will not be against the Tsar and despotism but against landed property. It will say: from me, the human being, take what you want, but leave us all the land.’

“In the late nineteenth century, the peasant assumed that the nationwide repartition would be ordered by the Tsar: in peasant legends of the time, the ‘Savior’, the ‘Great Leveller’, was invariably the ‘true tsar’. The belief fortified the peasantry’s instinctive monarchism. Accustomed to the authority of the bol’shak in the household, by analogy it viewed the Tsar as the bol’shak or master (khoziain) of the country. The peasant ‘saw in the Tsar the actual owner and father of Russia, who directly managed his immense household’ – a primitive version of the patrimonial principle underlying Russian political culture. The reason why the peasant felt so confident that the Tsar would sooner or later order a general partition of the land was that, as he saw it, it lay in the monarch’s interest to have all the lands justly distributed and properly cultivated.

“Such attitudes provide the background to the peasant’s political philosophy, which, for all its apparent contradictions, had a certain logic. To the peasant, government was a power that compelled obedience: its main attribute was the ability to coerce people to do things which, left to themselves, they would never do, such as pay taxes, serve in the army, and respect private property in land. By this definition, a weak government was no government. The epithet Groznyi applied to the mentally unbalanced and sadistic Ivan IV, usually rendered in English as ‘Terrible’, actually meant ‘Awesome’ and carried no pejorative meaning. Personas who possessed vlast’ (authority) and did not exercise it in an ‘awe-inspiring’ manner could be ignored. Observance of laws for the peasant invariably represented submission to a force majeure, to the will of someone stronger, not the recognition of some commonly shared principle or interest. ‘Today, as in the
days of serfdom,’ wrote the Slavophile Iurii Samarin, ‘the peasant knows no other sure pledge of the genuineness of imperial commands than the display of armed force: a round of musketry still is to him the only authentic confirmation of the imperial commands.’ In this conception, moral judgement of governments or their actions was as irrelevant as approval or condemnation of the vagaries of nature. There were no ‘good’ or ‘bad’ governments: there were only strong and weak ones, and strong ones were always preferable to weak ones. (Similarly, serfs used to prefer cruel but efficient masters to kindly but ineffective ones.) Weak rulers made it possible to return to primitive freedom or volia, understood as license to do whatever one wanted, unrestrained by man-made law. Russian governments took account of these attitudes and went to great lengths to impress on the country the image of boundless power. Experienced bureaucrats opposed freedom of the press and parliamentary government in good part because they feared that the existence of an overt, legitimised opposition would be interpreted by the peasantry as a sign of weakness and a signal to rebel.”

Again, we may suspect Pipes of some exaggeration here. The large-scale peasant rebellions against Soviet power in Tambov province and Siberia in 1920-21, and still more the rebellion against collectivization in the Black Earth region in the late 1920s and early 1930s, show that large numbers of peasants did know the difference between a “good” and “bad” power, and by no means always identified might with right. Moreover, the rebellion in the Black Earth region was closely linked with the True Orthodox Church and a specifically Orthodox Christian doctrine of political legitimacy: that for Orthodox Russians only the Orthodox tsar could be a legitimate, God-established authority, and that the “authority” that overthrew him could only be an “anti-authority”, established not by God but by the devil (Revelation 13.2).

Nevertheless, this traditional teaching came to the fore again in the peasantry only as a result of the fiery trial of the revolution, when the terrible sufferings caused by the new “authority” had forced the peasants to rethink their assumptions about power and return to the traditional teaching of the Church (especially the commandments on stealing, killing and envy). The very success of the revolution, and the rapidity with which all forms of deference to authority collapsed in 1917, witnesses to the truth of Pipes’ thesis for the majority of the peasants. And therefore the traditional hypothesis of right-wing historians and publicists that the revolution was caused mainly by the ideas of westernizing intellectuals needs to be modified at any rate to this extent: that if Westerners and westernizing ideas started and led the revolution, its success was guaranteed by the support it received from peasants who were scarcely touched by western ideas, but who had fallen away from the traditional teaching of the Orthodox Church in other ways...

And yet, as the Russian proverb goes, “the fish rots from the head”: once the head has rotted, there are few obstacles to the rest of the body undergoing the same corrupting process. Ultimately, the gradual alienation of the peasantry from its Orthodox roots must be attributed to the failure of its teachers, the nobility, the intellectuals and even the clergy, to provide right teaching in word and deed. The close unity of upper and lower classes that we observe in medieval Russia was ruptured by the eighteenth-century tsars and nobility, and while the nineteenth-century tsars were much more pious, they were unable to do more than slow down, but not reverse, the destructive process their predecessors had initiated.

Pipes continues: “At the turn of the century, observers noted subtle changes in the attitudes of the peasantry, particularly the younger generation. They were religiously less observant, less respectful of tradition and authority, restless, and somehow disaffected not only over land but over life in general.

“The authorities were especially perturbed by the behaviour of those who moved into the cities and industrial centers. Such peasants were no longer intimidated by uniformed representatives of authority and were said to act ‘insolently’. When they returned to the village, permanently or to help out with the field work, they spread the virus of discontent. The Ministry of the Interior, observing this development, objected, on security grounds, to further industrialization and excessive rural mobility, but, for reasons previously stated, it had little success.

“One of the causes of changes in the mood of the peasantry seems to have been the spread of literacy, actively promoted by the authorities. The 1897 census revealed a very low level of literacy for the Russian Empire as a whole: only one in five (21 percent) of the inhabitants could read and write. But disaggregated the statistics looked considerably better. As a result of the combined efforts of rural schools and private associations, literacy showed a dramatic spurt among the young, especially males: in 1897, 45 percent of the Empire’s male inhabitants aged ten to twenty-nine were recorded as literate. At this rate, the population of the Empire could have been expected to attain universal literacy by 1925.

“Literate peasants and workers read most of all religious books (the gospels and lives of saints) followed by cheap escapist literature, the Russian equivalent of ‘penny dreadfuls’ – a situation not unlike that observed in England half a century earlier...

“Growing literacy, unaccompanied by proportionately expanding opportunities to apply the knowledge acquired from reading, probably contributed to the restlessness of the lower classes. It has been noted in other regions of the world that schooling and the spread of literacy often produce unsettling effects. African natives educated in missionary schools, as
compared with untutored ones, have been observed to develop a different mentality, expressed in an unwillingness to perform monotonous work and in lower levels of honesty and truthfulness. Similar trends were noted among young Russian peasants exposed to urban culture, who also seemed less ready to acquiesce to the routine of rural work and lived in a state of powerful, if unfocused expectations aroused by reading about unfamiliar worlds.\(^{338}\)

Orlando Figes points out that “the growth of the cities far outstripped the pace of church-building in them, with the result that millions of new workers, having been uprooted from the village with its church, were consigned to live in a state of Godlessness. The industrial suburb of Orekhovo-Zuevo, just outside Moscow, for example, had only one church for 40,000 residents at the turn of the century. Iuzovka, the mining capital of the Donbass, today called Donetsk, had only two for 20,000.”\(^{339}\)

Of course, industrial workers were still half-peasants, and often used to return to their villages at harvest time. But there, instead of recovering their Church consciousness in the more godly atmosphere of the village, they tended to infect the villagers with their own corrupt urban ways. This tendency was accentuated with time, as the older, more godly generation died off, and the younger, revolutionary generation took its place.

Moreover, continues Figes, “the traditional extended peasant family began to break up as the younger and more literate peasants struggled to throw off the patriarchal tyranny [sic] of the village and set up households of their own. They looked towards the city and its cultural values as a route to independence and self-worth. Virtually any urban job seemed desirable compared with the hardships and dull routines of peasant life. A survey of rural schoolchildren in the early 1900s found that half of them wanted to pursue an ‘educated profession’ in the city, whereas less than 2 per cent held any desire to follow in the footsteps of their peasant parents. ‘I want to be a shop assistant,’ said one schoolboy, ‘because I do not like to walk in the mud. I want to be like those people who are cleanly dressed and work as shop assistants.’ Educators were alarmed that, once they had learned to read, many peasant boys, in particular, turned their backs on agricultural work and set themselves above the other peasants by swaggering around in raffish city clothes. Such boys, wrote a villager, ‘would run away to Moscow and take any job’. They looked back on the village as a ‘dark’ and ‘backward’ world of superstition and crippling poverty – a world Trotsky would describe as the Russia of ‘icons and cockroaches’ – and they idealized the city as a force of social progress and enlightenment. Here was the basis of the cultural revolution on which Bolshevism would be built. For the Party rank and file was recruited in the main from peasant boys like these; and its ideology was a

\(^{338}\) Pipes, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 119-120.

science of contempt for the peasant world. The revolution would sweep it all away.”

Unrest in the Army

In addition to the Church and the peasantry there was a third major mainstay of the Tsarist regime that the Tsar particularly valued and that was to prove particularly important in the revolutionary years: the army.

Figes writes: “The patrimonial principle survived longer in the army than in any other institution of the Russian state. Nothing was closer to the Romanov court or more important to it than the military. The power of the Empire was founded on it, and the needs of the army and the navy always took precedence in the formulation of tsarist policies. All the most important reforms in Russian history had been motivated by the need to catch up and compete in war with the Empire’s rivals in the west and south: Peter the Great’s reforms had been brought about by the wars with Sweden and the Ottomans; those of Alexander II by military defeat in the Crimea...

“Many historians have depicted the army as a stalwart buttress of the tsarist regime. That was also the view of most observers until the revolution. Major Von Tettau from the German General Staff wrote in 1903, for example, that the Russian soldier ‘is full of selflessness and loyalty to his duty’ in a way ‘that is scarcely to be found in any other army of the world’. He did ‘everything with a will’ and was always ‘unassuming, satisfied and jolly – even after labour and deprivation’. But in fact there was growing tensions between the military – in every rank – and the Romanov regime.

“For the country’s military leaders the root of the problem lay in the army’s dismal record in the nineteenth century, which many of them came to blame on the policies of the government. Defeat in the Crimean War (1853-6), followed by a costly campaign against Turkey (1877-8), and then the humiliation of defeat by the Japanese – the first time a major European power had lost to an Asian country – in 1904-5, left the army and the navy demoralized. The causes of Russia’s military weakness were partly economic: her industrial resources failed to match up to her military commitments in an age of increasing competition between empires. But this incompetence also had a political source: during the later nineteenth century the army had gradually lost its place at the top of government spending priorities. The Crimean defeat had discredited the armed services and highlighted the need to divert resources from the military to the modernization of the economy. The Ministry of War lost the favoured position it had held in the government system of Nicholas I (1825-55) and became overshadowed by the Ministries of Finance and the Interior, which from this point on received between them the lion’s share of state expenditure. Between 1881 and 1902 the military’s share

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of the budget dropped from 30 per cent to 18 per cent. Ten years before the First World War the Russian army was spending only 57 per cent of the amount spent on each soldier in the German army, and only 63 per cent of that spent in the Austrian. In short, the Russian soldier went to war worse trained, worse equipped and more poorly serviced than his enemy. The army was so short of cash that it relied largely on its own internal economy to clothe and feed itself. Soldiers grew their own food and tobacco, and repaired their own uniforms and boots. They even earned money for the regiment by going off to work as seasonal labourers on landed estates, in factories and mines near their garrisons. Many soldiers spent more time growing vegetables or repairing boots than they did learning how to handle their guns. By reducing the military budget, the tsarist regime created an army of farmers and cobblers.

“The demoralization of the army was also connected to its increasing role in the suppression of civilian protests. The Russian Empire was covered with a network of garrisons. Their job was to provide more or less instant military assistance for the provincial governors or the police to deal with unrest. Between 1883 and 1903 the troops were called out nearly 1,500 times. Officers complained bitterly that this police duty was beneath the dignity of a professional soldier, and that it distracted the army from its proper military purpose. They also warned of the damaging effect it was likely to have on the army’s discipline. History proved them right. The vast majority of the private soldiers were peasants, and their morale was heavily influenced by the news they received from their villages. When the army was called out to put down the peasant uprisings of 1905-6 many of the units, especially in the peasant-dominated infantry, refused to obey and mutinied in support of the revolution. There were over 400 mutinies between the autumn of 1905 and the summer of 1906. The army was brought to the brink of collapse, and it took years to restore a semblance of order.

“Many of these mutinies were part of a general protest against the feudal conditions prevailing in the army. Tolstoy, who had served as an army officer in the Crimean War, described them in his last novel Hadji-Murad. The peasant soldiers, in particular, objected to the way their officers addressed them with the familiar ‘your’ (tyi) – normally used for animals and children – rather than the polite ‘you’ (vyi). It was how the masters had once addressed their serfs; and since most of the officers were nobles, and most of the soldiers were sons of former serfs, this mode of address symbolized the continuation of the old feudal world inside the army. The first thing a recruit did on joining the army was to learn the different titles of his officers: ‘Your Honour’ up to the rank of colonel; ‘Your Excellency’ for generals; and ‘Your Radiance’ or ‘Most High Radiance’ for titled officers. Colonels and generals were to be greeted not just with the simple hand salute but by halting and standing sideways to attention while the officer passed by for a strictly prescribed number of paces. The soldier was trained to answer his superiors in
regulation phrases of deference: ‘Not at all, Your Honour’; ‘Happy to serve you, Your Excellency’. Any deviations were likely to be punished. Soldiers would expect to be punched in the face, hit in the mouth with the butt of a rifle and sometimes even flogged for relatively minor misdemeanours. Officers were allowed to use a wide range of abusive terms – such as ‘scum’ and ‘scoundrel’ – to humiliate their soldiers and keep them in their place. Even whilst off-duty the common soldier was deprived of the rights of a normal citizen. He could not smoke in public places, go to restaurants or theatres, ride in trams, or occupy a seat in a first- or second-class railway carriage. Civic parks displayed the sign: DOGS AND SOLDIERS FORBIDDEN TO ENTER. The determination of the soldiery to throw off this ‘army serfdom’ and gain the dignity of citizenship was to become a major story of the revolution.

“It was not just the peasant infantry who joined the mutinies after 1905. Even some of the Cossack cavalry – who since the start of the nineteenth century had been a model of loyalty to the Tsar – joined the rebellions. The Cossacks had specific grievances. Since the sixteenth century they had developed as an elite military caste, which in the nineteenth century came under the control of the Ministry of War. In exchange for their military service, the Cossacks were granted generous tracts of fertile land – mainly on the southern borders they were to defend (the Don and Kuban) and the eastern steppes – as well as considerable political freedom for their self-governing communities (voiskos, from the word for ‘war’). However, during the last decades of the nineteenth century the costs of equipping themselves for the cavalry, of buying saddles, harnesses and military-grade horses, as they were obliged to in the charters of their estate, became increasingly burdensome. Many Cossack farmers, already struggling in the depression, had to sell part of their livestock to meet their obligations and equip their sons to join. The voiskos demanded more and more concessions – both economic and political – as the price of their military service. They began to raise the flag of ‘Cossack nationalism’…

“The government’s treatment of the army provoked growing resentment among Russia’s military elite. The fiercest opposition came from the new generation of so-called military professions emerging within the officer corps and the Ministry of War itself during the last decades of the old regime. Many of them were graduates from the Junker military schools, which had been opened up and revitalized in the wake of the Crimean defeat to provide a means for the sons of non-nobles to rise to the senior ranks. Career officials dedicated to the modernization of the armed services, they were bitterly critical of the archaic military doctrines of the elite academies and the General Staff. To them the main priorities of the court seemed to be the appointment of aristocrats loyal to the Tsar to the top command posts and the pouring of resources into what had become in the modern age a largely ornamental cavalry. They argued, by contrast, that more attention needed to be paid to
the new technologies – heavy artillery, machine-guns, motor transportation, trench design and aviation – which were bound to be decisive in coming wars. The strains of modernization on the politics of the autocracy were just as apparent in the military as they were in all the other institutions of the old regime…”

The Tsar loved the army, and loved nothing better than marching with it or inspecting it; but in the end the army proved to be one of the Empire’s critical weak points. In 1905 it wavered in its loyalty. And in 1917 it was the open treason of the generals that forced the Tsar to abdicate from the throne...

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341 Figes, A People’s Tragedy, pp. 55-59.
III. WAR (1904-1917)

Thus saith the Lord God: Remove the turban, and take off the crown; things shall not remain as they are; exalt that which is low, and abase that which is high. A ruin, ruin, ruin I will make it; there shall not be even a trace of it until he comes whose right it is; and to him I will give it. 


The more perceptive enemies of Russia and the Orthodox Church always knew that the turmoil created by war was particularly conducive to instability and revolution. That is why Tsar Alexander III had pursued a policy of peace, and entrusted this policy to Nicholas II. Unfortunately, in both Europe and Asia the international situation was developing in such a way as to make the preservation of peace very difficult...

The Russo-Japanese War

“In November 1902,” writes Pipes, “high-ranking Russian officials held a secret conference in Yalta to discuss China’s complaints about Russia’s treaty violations and the problems caused by the reluctance of foreigners to invest in Russia’s Far Eastern ventures. It was agreed that Russia could attain her economic objectives in Manchuria only by intense colonization; but for Russians to settle there, the regime needed to tighten its hold on the area. It was the unanimous opinion of the participants, Witte included, that Russia had to annex Manchuria, or, at the very least, bring it under closer control. In the months that followed, the Minister of War, A.N. Kuropatkin, urged aggressive action to protect the Trans-Siberian Railroad: in his view, unless Russia was prepared to annex Manchuria she should withdraw from there. In February 1903, Nicholas agreed to annexation.”

Russia was also interested in Korea. “The ruler of Korea,” writes J.M. Roberts, “had only taken his title of emperor in 1897; only in 1901 did his government first decide to send representatives to foreign countries (even the Chinese had already done this). Several nations had interests in Korea: the Americans and British had long encouraged the ‘opening’ of the country to trade and reform (as they saw it), the Russians and the Japanese competed there for political supremacy and possible territorial aggrandizement, and (in theory as the suzerain power but actually increasingly powerless in Korean affairs) the Chinese went on claiming that Korea was a dependency of the Middle Kingdom. This was one reason for the Japanese (who had successfully occupied Seoul in the 1890s during a war against China) to promote ‘westernizing’ influences in the court and among officials.”

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“Russia’s main interest in Korea,” writes Lieven, “lay in the proximity of that country’s northern border to Vladivostok, which made domination of the whole country by another great power worrying. In addition, the Russian navy lusted after a Korean port and feared that if the Japanese controlled both sides of the Straits of Tsushima they could easily cut communications between Vladivostok and Port Arthur. The Koreans themselves looked to Russia for protection from Japan, which was clearly the greatest threat to their independence, and offered Russia many inducements to occupy itself in their affairs. But the greatest single complicating factor in Russia’s relations with Korea was the large timber concession which a number of aristocrats close to Nicholas had secured on the river Yalu, with the aim of building up a Russian bridgehead in northern Korea.

“The leaders in the Yalu enterprise were A.M. Bezobrazov and V.M. Vonlyarlyarsky. Both came from prominent families of the Russian aristocracy and were former officers of the Chevaliers Garde, the most exclusive regiment in the Russian army. Bezobrazov gained access to Nicholas II through the former Minister of the Imperial Court, Count I.I. Vorontsov-Dashkov. Neither Bezobrazov nor Vonlyarlyarsky were interested in the Yalu enterprise for the sake of personal gain. They saw their company as a means by which non-official patriots could out-manoeuvre bureaucratic caution and push forward Russia’s cause in the East. There was to be a latter-day version of Britain’s East India Company but without its initially commercial priorities. The whole scheme bore the stamp of aristocratic arrogance and amateurism. Its leaders were convinced of their own innate superiority to mere bureaucrats. Without knowing the East, they nevertheless urged on Nicholas the belief that the Orientals would back down in the face of a confident show of Russian power. There was more than a touch of opera to the Bezobrazov affair. Rather typical was the fact that at one point secret correspondence between Bezobrazov and Nicholas II was sent through their respective batmen so that the ministers should be kept in the dark about it. But there was nothing funny in the effect of Bezobrazov’s influence, which was both to increase Nicholas’s distrust of his official advisers and to encourage him to take a tougher and more intransigent line with the Japanese and Chinese governments. In October 1901, for instance, the Emperor told Prince Henry of Prussia that ‘I do not want to seize Korea – but under no circumstances can I allow the Japanese to become firmly established there. That would be a casus belli.’ Here was the voice of Bezobrazov not of Nicholas’s ministerial advisers, whose position on Korea was much less bellicose.

“Bezobrazov, Vonlyarlyarsky and their supporters in particular urged on Nicholas two ideas to which he was very inclined to listen. They told him that Russia was a proud and mighty country which should speak in a strong voice and take no cheek from foreigners, least of all Orientals. This Guards officers’ patriotism was music to his ears. His aristocratic advisers, loathing the
bureaucracy and above all Witte, also told Nicholas that he was the captive of his ministers, who colluded in keeping information from him, imposing their own views and sabotaging his instructions when they conflicted with their own interests. By 1900 Nicholas felt this to be true, not merely as regards Far Eastern policy but across the whole range of government business. Frustrated by his seeming powerlessness and aware of mounting criticism of his rule, he turned more and more to unofficial advisers in an effort to secure alternative sources of information and greater freedom from ministerial control. Among these advisers Bezobrazov was typical in his aristocratic control. Among these advisers Bezobrazov was typical in his aristocratic origins and in his appeal to Nicholas’s patriotic and anti-bureaucratic instincts. In July 1901 Alexander Polovtsov commented that ‘in no field of policy is there a principled, well considered and firmly directed course of action. Everything is done in bursts, haphazardly, under the influence of the moment, according to the demands of this or that person and the intercessions emerging from various corners. The young Tsar feels more and more contempt for the organs of his own power and begins to believe in the beneficial strength of his own autocracy, which he manifests sporadically, without preliminary discussion and without any link to the overall course of policy.’

“As in his domestic policy Nicholas sought to balance between his groups of advisers, drawing information from both and thereby seeking a basis on which he could determine policy for himself. This had a disastrous impact on Russia’s Far Eastern policy in 1902-3 and on the way it was perceived by foreigners, above all the Japanese. It was not merely that Bezobrazov’s advice was dangerous and mistaken. Outsiders did not know what Petersburg’s policy was. Faced by criticism that divisions between ministers and unofficial advisers were causing government policy in East Asia to be incoherent and uncoordinated, in August 1903 Nicholas appointed Admiral Alekseev Viceroy of the Far East and subordinated to him all responsibility not only for civil and military affairs but also for diplomatic relations with Tokyo and Peking. This was to make a bad situation worse. Alekseev was a sailor, not a diplomat or a statesman. By definition neither he nor other officials in the East could have a balanced overall grasp of the Empire’s many interests for they were committed to pursuing a forward policy in their own bailiwick.

“The Japanese now had to deal with Alekseev in Port Arthur but they knew, of course, that the Viceroy’s decisions would have to be ratified by the Tsar, and therefore by those high officials to whom he chose to listen, in Petersburg. Confusion was compounded by the fact that during the critical period between August and November 1903 Nicholas II was seldom in his capital, spending most of his time on official and private visits to Western Europe. Though Japanese counsels were themselves divided, had Russia consistently stood out for a free hand for herself in Manchuria in return for Japanese control over Korea. Tokyo would almost certainly have agreed in the end. The demilitarization of northern Korea could have been obtained
through such a deal had Petersburg offered some concessions in southern Manchuria. But the Russians overestimated the strength of their position, and the incoherence and delay in their responses to Tokyo convinced the Japanese that Petersburg was simply prevaricating. Nicholas’s own statements betrayed his uncertainty and miscalculations. In October 1903 he telegraphed to Alekseev: ‘I do not want war between Russia and Japan and will not permit this war. Take all measures so that there is no war.’ In late December, however, he commented that the situation reminded him of the 1895 crisis when Japan backed down under firm Russian pressure and surrendered Port Arthur. Referring to Japan, Nicholas remarked: ‘all the same it is a barbarian country. Which is better: to risk war or to continue with concessions?’ In February 1904 the Japanese permitted Russia no more wavering and attacked Port Arthur.”

In April Japan crossed the Yalu River into Russian-occupied Manchuria, forcing the Russians back into Port Arthur. After a series of victories on land and on sea, the Japanese began a long siege of Port Arthur and succeeded in taking the city in January, 1905. This was followed, in May, by the Battle of Tsushima, in which the Russians lost 5000 sailors killed with 6000 captured, while only 117 Japanese sailors died.

Russia sued for peace. In September, 1905, at Portsmouth, U.S.A., thanks to the very tough negotiating stance of Tsar Nicholas, skilfully carried out by Count Sergius Witte, favourable terms were won for Russia. Nevertheless, the loss of prestige was great, and gave renewed encouragement to the revolutionaries.

The Russo-Japanese war is the first instance of a phenomenon that was to be of major importance in 1917: the financing of Russia’s enemies by American Jews. Archpriest Lev Lebedev asserts that “Japan would never have risked attacking Russia herself if she had not been specially incited to it by England and the U.S.A.

“At the end of 1903 the American Jewish banker Jacob Schiff, Morgan and also ‘First National Bank’ and ‘National City Bank’ loaned Japan 30 million dollars so that she should attack Russia.” On January 27, 1904, without declaring war, Japanese ships treacherously attacked the Russian squadron in Port Arthur (on the Lyaodun peninsula in China, where Russia had built a powerful naval base on leased land). The war began which, according to the plans of its inspirers, was bound to be accompanied by a revolution in Russia.

346 In all he loaned $200 million to Japan during the war, while preventing other firms from lending to Russia (Solzhenitsyn, Dvesti let vmeste (Two Hundred Years Together), Moscow, 2001, p. 347). (V.M.)
The military actions developed in a direction unfavourable to Russia. The suddenness of the attack gave Japan many advantages. If all Russia’s military forces in the Far East did not exceed 100,000 men, Japan moved up an army of 300,000. Japan’s numerical and, to a certain degree, technical superiority allowed her to win a series of major victories over the Russian armies. The fortress of Port Arthur fell [in January, 1905] after a lengthy and heroic siege. In other battles at Mukden near Lyaoyan in Manchuria, the Russians were also defeated, and retreated. In the naval battles the Russians more than once defeated the Japanese. But… in [May,] 1905, in the Korean bay of Tsushima, the second Russian squadron under Admiral Rozhdestvensky, which had come from the Gulf of Finland through all the seas and oceans to the place of its destruction, was almost completely annihilated. But here, too, non-Japanese forces inimical to Russia helped… While ‘Rozhdestvensky’s squadron was accomplishing its gigantic voyage as if in the light of a torch lighting up the whole world’, wrote the newspaper Novoe Vremia (New Times), ‘nobody knew about the movements of the Japanese naval forces even in the ports of China’. The Japanese information services were actively helped by the Jews. Some of them acted as spies in the Russian army, others tried to demoralize it, which is witnessed by the commander-in-chief of the armies in the Far East, General Kuropatkin. In 1906 the well-known journalist M.O. Menshikov wrote in the same Novoe Vremia: ‘The last terrible war… was armed with the most active participation of the Jews. In order to thrust Japan against Russia, it was necessary to arrange for Japan not only external loans, but also the most ardent sympathy [for Japan] in America and England. This sympathy, as has now been established beyond doubt, was artificially stirred up in the American press, which almost completely in Jewish hands. In the course of a whole series of years an army of Jewish hacks has slandered Russia, poured an unbelievably dirty torrent of abuse on her, and stirred people up to hate and despise everything Russian. As a result public opinion, and not only in America, was confused. The huge reading world was pitifully deceived…’ At the height of the war the Paris newspaper Presse noted: ‘Japan has not been waging war against Russia alone. She has a powerful ally – Jewry.’…

Undoubtedly the Jews’ support for the revolution at home and for the Japanese abroad was an important factor. But ultimately the Russians could blame only themselves. According to St. John of Kronstadt, the real cause of the defeat was the leaders’ negligent attitude towards Orthodoxy. The theft of Russia’s greatest holy thing, the wonderworking Kazan icon of the Mother of God, on June 29, 1904 indicated that the Mother of God had

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348 “The leader of our army A.N. Kuropatkin left all the icons given to him in captivity with the Japanese pagans, while he took all the secular things. What an attitude to the faith and the holy things of the Church! It was for this that the Lord is not blessing our arms and the enemies are conquering us.” (in Fomin & Fomina, Rossia pered Vtorym Prieshestviem (Russia before the Second Coming), Moscow, 1994, vol. 1, p. 373).
withdrawn her protection from Russia. For “not in vain”, wrote Archbishop Nicon (Rozhdestvensky), “has there long been the belief in the people that as long as this holy icon is intact, and stands guard between Christian Europe and the heterodox, pagan-Muslim world of Asia, we can be calm. But if she, our fervent Intercessor, leaves her place, then woes and misfortunes threaten us, and we shall remain defenceless…”

In the end, Russia lost because “a house that is divided against itself cannot stand” (Mark 3.25). Thus “at the end of 1904, on the eve of the preparation of a general attack against the Japanese army near Lyaodun, strikes began in the major Russian military factories and on the railways, which left the Russian army without ammunition and food and allowed the Japanese to take back the initiative. The first defeats of the Russian army elicited the genuine joy of the liberals and a flow of congratulations on this score to the emperor of Japan... With regard to the surrender to the Japanese of Port Arthur his Majesty Emperor Nicholas II organized a government judicial inquiry, since there were no military reasons for the capitulation…”

In spite of that, “the Russian army conducted its retreat in good order, and its losses in manpower turned out to be almost two times fewer than those of the Japanese... The experience of the war of 1904-1905 allowed Russia in the next three to four years to carry out a military reform and modernize her armaments, munitions and technical equipment in all sections of the army. In spite of colossal credits by the standards of those times from England and the USA, and the participation of Germany in the technical fitting out of the army and fleet, Japan was so exhausted by this military encounter that it was only fourteen years later, at the very end of the First World War, that she was able to re-establish her pre-war military potential and join the Entente.”

The war with Japan caused particular problems for the Russian Orthodox Mission in Japan, headed by Archbishop Nicholas (Kasatkin). A peasant from Smolensk province, St. Nicholas first went to Japan in 1861. Encouraged to learn Japanese by St. Innocent, enlightener of Alaska, he began an astonishingly successful mission that brought tens of thousands of native Japanese to the faith and aroused the admiration of all, including the Japanese. In July, 1882 he presided over the first All-Japanese Orthodox Council. A delegation from Peking was also present, including several churchmen who were later martyred during the Boxer Uprising in 1900.

On the eve of the Russo-Japanese war, “alarmed by the possibility of war with their co-religionists, the Orthodox Japanese turned to their bishop. He replied that they, like all Japanese, were obliged by their oath to carry out

350 Lebedev, op. cit.
their military duty, but to fight was not at all the same as to hate one’s enemy, but meant to defend one’s fatherland. The Saviour Himself bequeathed patriotism to us when He sorrowed over the lot of Jerusalem. The archpastor himself decided to stay in Japan with his flock, even if there was a war... And it began in February 1904. Then Bishop Nicholas handed over all ecclesiastical affairs to the council of priests, and himself served his last liturgy before the war. At the end of the service in his farewell sermon to his flock he called on it to pray for victory for their fatherland, but he, as a subject of the Russian Emperor, could not take part in the common service; but he would be happy to see his flock carrying out their duty. In his encyclical of February 11, 1904, Bishop Nicholas blessed the Japanese to carry out their duty, not sparing their lives, but reminded them that our fatherland is the Church, where all Christians constitute one family; he told them to pray for the re-establishment of peace and asked for mercy to prisoners of war. After this he shut himself away and gave himself over to exploits of prayer... Nobody in Russia understood the hierarch of Japan as well as Emperor Nicholas II. At the end of the war the Tsar wrote to him: ‘You have shown before all that the Orthodox Church of Christ is foreign to worldly dominion and every tribal hatred, and embraces all tribes and languages with her love. In the difficult time of the war, when the weapons of battle destroy peaceful relations between peoples and rulers, you, in accordance with the command of Christ, did not leave the flock entrusted to you, and the grace of love and faith gave you strength to endure the fiery trial and amidst the hostility of war to keep the peace of faith and love in the Church created by your labours...’

Archbishop Nicholas’ noble affirmation, in word and deed, of the primacy of faith over politics did not go unappreciated. After the war he was awarded the Order of St. Alexander Nevsky by the Tsar, and the Holy Synod raised him to the rank of archbishop. His death in 1912 was covered by all the newspapers of Japan. His life witnessed vividly to the fact that Christianity, while supporting true patriotism, is a universalist religion which always places the universalist message of the Gospel above the interests of any individual State or nation.

And yet the question remains: can it be right to bless Orthodox Christians to fight against the Orthodox Empire? In the nineteenth century, other, equally holy men, such as Elder Hilarion the Georgian, had answered: no. The question of when to obey Caesar and when not would continue to torment Orthodox Christians in the twentieth century...

**The Role of the Press**

We have noted that one of the causes of the defeat of the Russians in the war with Japan was the defeatist attitude of the liberals in the rear, which was magnified by the diatribes of the largely Jewish-controlled press. He was not...

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353 *Pravoslavnaja Zhizn’* (Orthodox Life), 1982; in Fomin and Formina, *op. cit.*, volume I, p. 372.
alone in experiencing this problem: Napoleon once said to Metternich: “You see me master of France; well, I would not undertake to govern her for three months with liberty of the press”. If even the ruthless Napoleon had problems with the press, then it can be imagined what difficulties the Jewish-controlled press in Russia created for the much gentler and nobler Tsar Nicholas.

Now the press had emerged as an important factor in international relations for the first time in the Crimean War, when reports in the British press of military incompetence and insanitary conditions in the hospitals, together with photographs from the battlefield, had had an important influence on public opinion, and thence on the government. It became even more important in the Balkan crises of the 1870s when reports of Turkish atrocities in The Daily Telegraph and The Manchester Guardian were an important ally to Gladstone in his campaign to jolt Disraeli’s government out of its pro-Turkish indifference.

“Already in the 70s,” writes Solzhenitsyn, “the ‘unbridledness of the Russian press’ had been noted more than once by Dostoyevsky. In relation to the State it displayed itself even at the conference of March 8, 1881 under the just-crowned Alexander III, and more than once after that: the journalists behaved like self-willed representatives of society.

“The expression: ‘Three hostile newspapers are more dangerous than 100,000 hostile soldiers’ has been ascribed to Napoleon. This phrase became very applicable to the Russo-Japanese war. The Russian press was openly defeatists throughout the war, in each of its battles. And, still more important: it did not hide its sympathy for terrorism and revolution.

“This press, which developed unchecked in 1905, was seen during the Duma period as, in the words of Witte, mainly ‘Jewish’ or ‘half-Jewish’: more precisely, with a predominance of leftist or radical Jews in the key correspondent and editors’ posts. In November, 1905 D.I. Pikhno, the editor of the Russian national newspaper Kievlyanin, who had already been in this post for 25 years and studied the Russian press, wrote: ‘Jewry... has placed huge stakes on the card of the Russian revolution... The serious part of Russian society had understood that at such moments the press is a force, but it did not have this power – it was in the hands of its opponents, who spoke in its name throughout Russia and forced themselves to be read, because there were no other publications, and you can’t create them in one day... and [society] was lost in the multitude of lies in which it could not find its way.’

“L. Tikhomirov saw nothing national in this, but in 1910 he made the following comments on the character of the Russian press: ‘Tearing on the nerves... One-sidedness... They don’t want decency, gentlemanliness... They have no ideal, and have no understanding of it.’ And the public brought up
by this press ‘demands glibness and hooliganism, it cannot value knowledge, and does not notice ignorance’.

“And, from completely the opposite political extreme, a Bolshevik publicist [M. Lemke], expressed himself as follows on the character of this press: ‘In our post-reformation era ideas have become cheap, while information, sensation and unabashed authoritarian ignorance fill the press.’

“Speaking, more specifically, about culture, Andrew Bely complained in 1909, although he was by no means a rightists or ‘chauvinist’: ‘The leaders of national culture turn out to be people who are foreign to this culture… Look at the lists of those working on the newspapers and journals of Russia: who are the musical and literary critics of these journals? You will see almost exclusively Jewish names: among these critics there are some talented and acute people, there are some among them who understand the tasks of a national culture, perhaps, more profoundly than the Russians: but they are exceptions. The general mass of Jewish critics are completely foreign to Russian art. They write in an Esperanto jargon and terrorize every attempt to deepen and enrich the Russian language.’

“In those same years the far-sighted Zionists Vl. Zhabotinsky complained about the ‘leading newspapers sustained on Jewish money and filled with Jewish workers’ and warned: ‘When the Jews hurled themselves en masse to create Russian politics, we foretold them that nothing good would come out of it, neither for Russian politics, nor for Jewish.’

“The Russian press played a decisive role in the pre-revolutionary Cadet-revolutionary storming of the government: its mood was powerfully picked up and expressed by Duma deputy A.I. Shingarev: ‘Let this power sink! We will not cast this power even a bit of rope!’ It is appropriate to mention here that the First Duma stood up in memory of the victims of the Belostok pogrom (not agreeing... that this was an armed battle between anarchists and soldiers); the Second Duma – in honour of the murdered terrorist Iollos. But when Purishkevich suggested standing in honour of those killed at their posts as policemen and soldiers, he was forbidden to speak and excluded from the session: at that time it seemed unthinkable to the enflamed parliamentarians to sympathize with those who kept simple order in the State, which was necessary for all of them, and for a generally quiet life.

“A member of the Union of [Jewish] Complete Equality, A. Kulisher, drew the truthful conclusion - but late, looking back at the past in the emigré Jewish Tribune in 1923: ‘In Russian-Jewish society before the revolution there really were people and whole groups whose activity can be characterized precisely as... the absence of a feeling of responsibility for the turmoil in the minds of Russian Jewry... the spreading of an indefinite and light-minded ‘revolutionism’… The whole essence of their politics consisted in being more
leftist than anyone else. Always remaining in the role of irresponsible critics, never going to the end, they saw their purpose in saying: ‘Not enough!’… These people were ‘democrats’… But there were also democrats who called themselves ‘The Jewish Democratic Group’ who attached this adjective to every unsuitable noun, composing an intolerable Talmud of democratism… They created around themselves an irresponsible mood of groundless maximalism, with no precise limit to their demands. This mood manifested itself with destructive consequences in the revolution.’ The destructiveness proceeding from this press was indeed one of the weakest, most vulnerable points in the Russian State by 1914 and 1917…”

Indeed, the stream of slander turned out by the Jewish-controlled press against the Tsar (and especially the Tsarina) was one of the major causes of the revolution… In the role of the press, as in many other ways, we see how early-twentieth century Russia was a type, a microcosm, as it were, of the problems of modern civilization…

**Bloody Sunday**

On January 22, 1905 some hundreds of demonstrating workers were killed by tsarist troops in St. Petersburg - a tragic event that was used by the intelligenty and revolutionaries as an excuse to undermine faith in the Tsar among the masses. Once again, the press played a fatal role in whipping up unjust accusations against the Tsar and undermining his authority among the masses.

The first myth that needs to be dispelled is that the Tsar was heartless towards the condition of the workers. Of course, conditions for workers in Russia, as in every other industrialized country of the time, were harsh. But it needs to be borne in mind, as Nicholas Kazantsev writes, that “before ‘Bloody Sunday’ special laws had been issued to secure the safety of workers in mining and factory industries, on the railways and in enterprises that were dangerous for their life and health, as for example in munitions factories, etc.

“Child labour until the age of 12 was forbidden, while adolescents and women could not be employed in factory work between 9 in the evening and 5 in the morning. Fines deducted from pay packets could not exceed one third of the packet, moreover every fine had to be confirmed by the factory inspector. Money from fines went into a special fund designed to satisfy the needs of the workers themselves.

“In 1903 workers’ wardens elected by the factory workers on the corresponding sections were introduced. Moreover, in Tsarist Russia – again, before ’Bloody Sunday’ - it was possible to resort to strikes. In factories controlled by the Labour Inspectorate there were 68 strikes in 1893, 118 in

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1896, 145 in 1897, 189 in 1899 and 125 in 1900. While in 1912 social insurance was established.

“At that time the emperor’s social legislation was undoubtedly the most progressive in the world. This caused Taft, the president of the United States at the time to declare publicly two years before the First World War in the presence of some high-ranking Russians: ‘Your Emperor has created such a perfect workers’ legislation as not one democratic state can boast of.’”

However, the demonstration was not really about workers’ conditions. In the petition composed by the demonstration’s leader, the priest Fr. George Gapon, together with his revolutionary friends, demanded, among other things: an amnesty for political prisoners, a government responsible to the people, the separation of the Church and State, a progressive income tax, the abolition of redemption payments from the peasants, an end to the war, the creation of elected trade unions and the abolition of the factory inspectorate.

“From this it was evident,” writes Kazantsev, “that Gapon was completely led by the revolutionaries. But the masses went behind the former Gapon, who had organized his workers’ movement under the protection of the over-procurator of the Synod, Pobedonostsev.

“They went towards the Tsar with by no means a peaceful request, as D. Zubov affirms, but with an ultimatum. Gapon went round the crowd of workers and said everywhere: ‘If the Tsar refuses us, then we have no Tsar.’ The crowd, as if enthralled, repeated his words and cried out: ‘We shall die!’ (L. Gurevich, ‘Narodnoe dvizhenie v Peterburge 9 Ianvaria 1905 g.’, Berlin, 1906, pp. 28, 31). Fine ‘monarchical sentiments’...”

“N. Varnashev, the closest fellow-struggler of the provocateur, tells us that Gapon was warning those close to him: ‘I will have two flags with me – a white and a red; flying the white flag will mean that the tsar accepts our demands, but flying the red will be a signal for revolutionary actions’ (Krasnaia Letopis’, 1922, № 1). While the active participant in Gapon’s organization, I. Pavlov, cites the boastful declaration of Gapon: ‘We shall disarm the whole of the Petersburg police in ten minutes’ (Minuvshie Gody, 1908, № 4). That’s a ‘Workers’ movement free of politics’ for you!...

“Striving to represent the cunning of the tsarist government, Zubov-son writes: ‘The city authorities affirmed that they would not take any measures. However, from the evening of January 8 the guards and the garrison forces were drawn up towards the centre.’

“This is also a lie: two days before January 9 the city commandant hung up

declarations forbidding the crowds from gathering, while the soldiers – the first three thousand of them – were led out onto the streets of the capital on the same day, January 7 (S. Semanov, _Krovavoe voskresenie_, p. 51). Moreover, General Rudanovsky witnesses in his memoirs: ‘The police units tried to persuade the crowd, they warned them that the soldiers would fire – but without effect. At that time an assistant police-officer of the Petersburg area, Lieutenant Zholtkevich, was seriously wounded, while an observer was killed’ (Nachalo pervoj russkoj revoliutsii, p. 51).

“The behaviour of the soldiers, who were sometimes shot at from revolvers 356, was by no means unexpected. A member of Gapon’s organization, A. Karelin, declares firmly and clearly: ‘Everyone knew very well that the workers would be shot at’ (Krasnaia Letopis’, № 1, p. 111). N. Varnashev said the same thing: ‘Nobody was in any doubt of the bloody reprisals the government would take against the people, but let it be thus!’ And this is what Gapon himself said: ‘I am convinced that they will shoot at us. Within the course of tomorrow alone, thanks to the shooting, the working people will be revolutionised in such a way as would be impossible in any other way in the course of 10 years and with the loss of tens of thousand of lives’ (Minuvshie Gody, 1908, № 14, p. 94).

“Zubov-son chants dithyrambs to Gapon: ‘A man who was striving to improve the condition of the workers... striving to help the poor.’ In fact, he turned out to be a demagogue and a provocateur. At the beginning he enjoyed the protection of the tsarist government: as an agent of the Okrana he was entrusted with the task of organizing a society for the improvement of the life of the workers within the limits of loyalty. Therefore he enjoyed the benevolence of the Petersburg commandants Kleigels and Fullon. But having fallen under the influence of the social democrats, Gapon began rapidly to go to the left. As S. Semanov writes, ‘The Okhrana department lost control over Gapon’s organization and its leader for a time. The vainglorious adventurer was attracted by the illusory perspective of becoming a leader of the people and betrayed his police masters as easily as he betrayed the workers who believed in him’ (Krovavoe voskresenie, Leningrad, 1965).

356 Other sources confirm that the first shots were fired at, not by, the soldiers. Thus: “The information on the events of January 9, 1905 in St. Petersburg is filled with lies and unfounded attacks on his August Majesty. The organizers of the demonstration to the Winter Palace headed by the defrocked priest George Gapon well knew that the tsar was not in St. Petersburg, but in his residence in Tsarkoe Selo and was not intending to go to the capital. The city authorities issued a ban on the 200,000-strong crowd of demonstrators going into the centre of the city and stopped all eleven columns at the places where they were assembling. The opposition of the demonstrators and soldiers soon turned to gunfire from the crowd. The first victims turned out to be soldiers. A part of the armed force returned fire on the provocateurs...” (Review of A.M. Khitrov & O.L. Solomina, Khram-pamiatnik v Briussele (The Memorial Church in Brussels), Moscow, 2005, Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia), № 24, December 15/28, 2005, p. 14.). (V.M.)
“But at the first volley he really ‘bolted’. He abandoned the workers whom he had drawn into a fatal trap and, having cut his hair to avoid detection, fled abroad.

“D. Zubov casually drops the remark that ‘in April, 1906 they found Gapon hanged in someone else’s dacha near Petersburg’, but he is cunningly silent about the fact that he was executed by his own political fellow-travellers. The SRs heard that he was planning to betray them to the police and dealt with him…”

Probably no more than a few hundreds were killed on Bloody Sunday. The Tsar sacked the commander responsible for disobeying orders. Then, on January 11, he “received a deputation of workers who repented to him that they had allowed themselves to be drawn into an anti-government provocation. His Majesty mercifully forgave them all and gave to each family of those who suffered an allowance equivalent to half a year’s pay of a highly qualified worker. The police measures of the governments of the western countries, and especially the USA, at the beginning of the 20th century, to break up strikes and demonstrations led to far larger numbers of victims. It is sufficient to recall the shooting of the First of May strikers in Chicago and other cities in America, but democratically-inclined journalists prefer to keep silent about these facts.”

Great Prince Sergius Alexandrovich Romanov, the uncle of the Tsar, was governor of Moscow and one of the foremost pillars of the regime. On February 4, 1905 he was killed by a bomb that exploded almost at the doorstep of the palace that he and his wife, Grand-Duchess Elizabeth - the sister of the Tsaritsa, and, like her, a convert from Lutheranism - inhabited in the Kremlin. At that moment the grand duchess was leaving for her workshops. She was alarmed by the sound of an exploding bomb nearby. Hurrying toward the place (near the Chudov monastery in the Kremlin), she saw a soldier stretching his military overcoat over the maimed body of her husband. The soldier tried to hide the horrible sight from the eyes of the unfortunate wife. But the grand duchess dropped to her knees, on the street, and put her arms out trying to embrace the torn remains of her husband. The bomb had shattered his body to such an extent that fingers of the great prince were found, still in their gloves, on the roof of the neighbouring building.

The lofty spirit in which the Grand Duchess took the tragedy astounded everyone; she had the moral strength even to visit in prison her husband's assassin, Kaliayev, hoping to soften his heart with her Christian forgiveness.

"Who are you?" he asked upon meeting her.

357 Kazantsev, op. cit.
358 Khitrov and Solomina, op. cit.
"I am his widow," she replied, "Why did you kill him?"

"I did not want to kill you," he said. "I saw him several times before when I had the bomb with me, but you were with him and I could not bring myself to touch him."

"You did not understand that by killing him you were killing me," she said.

Then she began to talk to him of the horror of his crime before God. The Gospel was in her hands and she begged the criminal to read it and left it in his cell. Leaving the prison, the Grand Duchess said:

"My attempt was unsuccessful, but, who knows, perhaps at the last minute he will understand his sin and repent."

She then besought the tsar for clemency for him. And the emperor was ready to bestow it provided the bomber did not refuse it. He refused it...

On the memorial cross erected upon the site of her husband's death, the grand-duchess inscribed the Gospel words: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do..." After some years she became a nun and founded the monastery of Saints Mary and Martha in Moscow. The transformation of this scion of royalty and renowned beauty into a strict ascetic astounded and intrigued high society...

Towards the Reestablishment of Symphony

There is strong evidence that not only was the Tsar deeply interested in the project of the convening of Church Council for the first time since the seventeenth century, and in the restoration of the patriarchate, but had even suggested, shortly after the birth of the Tsarevich, and probably on December 17, 1904, his own candidature to the post of patriarch! According to the account of Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), “the senior hierarchs, including myself, were summoned to his Majesty. At that time, in accordance with the will of the Tsar, preparatory work was being conducted for the convening of a Council at which the restoration of the Patriarchate in Russia was to take place. And his Majesty, following the course of the matter, wanted to see us. When we assembled in the palace, the Tsar asked us whether we had chosen a candidate. We glanced at each other and were silent. Each of us was probably thinking about himself as the most fitting Patriarch. After quite a long pause we replied: ‘No, your Majesty.’ A short period ensued; the Tsar again summoned us to himself, and put the same question to us. In our embarrassment we were forced, as before, to give a negative answer. Then the Tsar, after looking at us in silence, fell into thought. Some moments passed. The Tsar again began to speak: ‘If you have not found a candidate, then I have someone in mind.’ We all listened attentively, waiting to see which one of us
the Tsar would point to. But what was our amazement when the Tsar declared to us: ‘I myself am a candidate’. Stunned, we could not even find anything to say in reply. And the Tsar continued: ‘The heir to the throne has been born. When he has grown up a little, Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich will become the regent. The Empress has agreed to go into a monastery. And I will be tonsured.’”

The process that led to this discussion had begun a little earlier, in November, 1904, when a report sponsored by the Minister of the Interior Prince P.D. Sviatopolk-Mirsky was completed envisaging important changes in a liberal direction in both Church and State. This led to the convening of an important conference on December 2 that included all the government ministers and four of the Tsar’s uncles, and an ukaz called “On Plans for the Perfecting of State Order”, which was signed on December 12. The sixth point of this ukaz spoke of the sovereign’s unbending desire to grant tolerance to schismatics and non-Orthodox confessions in the empire. The question this immediately raised was: how would this affect the interests of the dominant confession of the empire, the Orthodox Church? In order to answer this question, a note entitled “On the Contemporary Situation of the Orthodox Church” was composed for the president of the council of ministers, Count Witte, and by professors of the theological academies in the capital.

Sergius Firsov writes: “The note said that while externally free and protected by the State, the Orthodox Church was weighed down by heavy chains. The expulsion of the principle of sobornost from Church life had led to a change in her spirit. The main cause of the disorders was recognized to be Peter’s Church reform, as a result of which the Church’s administration had turned into one of the ‘numerous wheels of the complex machine of State’. The secular bureaucratic element was called a constant barrier between the Church and the people, as also between the Church and the State, while the only way to excite life from the dead was to return to the former, canonical norms of administration.

“Witte also subjected the contemporary situation of the Orthodox parish to sharp criticism; ‘only the name remained’ from it. The reasons for the fall of the parish were attributed by the authors of the note to the development of State centralization and the intensification of serfdom in Russia in the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries; the imposition of police duties on the clergy, as a consequence of which it was separated from its flock; the caste alienation of the clergy, and the payments it demanded for the carrying out of needs. But the autonomous re-establishment of small ecclesiastical units, which is what the parishes were, would not attain its aim if a general reform of the Church administration were not carried out: the parishes had to be linked by spiritual communion and pour into the community of the diocese,

359 Archbishop Anthony, in Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., p. 394.
while ‘diocesan assemblies’ having Local Councils as their model should be convened periodically in parallel with the parish meetings.

“Later the note touched on the problem of the alienation from the Church of a significant part of the intelligentsia. Only the Church herself could resolve this problem and overcome the ‘spiritual schism’. The problem of the theological school was also raised; it was declared to be a task of the whole State, ‘for the degree of the influence of religion on the people depends completely on its organization’. The union of Church and State was wholeheartedly approved, while the ‘self-governing activity’ of the ecclesiastical and state organism, in the opinion of the authors, had to achieve the equilibrium destroyed by Peter the Great. With this aim it was necessary to convene a Local Council in which both white clergy and laity would participate. ‘In view of the present undeniable signs of a certain inner shaking both of society and of the masses of the people,” pointed out Witte, ‘it would be dangerous to wait. Religion constitutes the main foundation of the popular spirit, and through it the Russian land has stood and been strong up to now.’

“And so in S.Yu. Witte’s not the question was posed not about particular changes, but about a general ecclesiastical reform, which would lead to a strengthening of the independence of the Orthodox Church and would sharply reduce the privileges of the over-procurator’s authority. After all, it was a secret to nobody that in speaking about ‘dry bureaucratic principles’, the president of the Committee of Ministers had in mind the rules that found their completed expression in the activity of the department of the Orthodox confession.

“It was at about the same time, in February, that another note appeared expressing the opinion of the capital’s Metropolitan Anthony: ‘Questions relating to desirable transformations in the position of our Orthodox Church’. Vladyka reviewed concrete questions of the reform of the ecclesiastical administration that demanded a very speedy resolution. Referring to the discussions on religious toleration that had taken place in the Committee of Ministers, he noted: the authorities are opening to those who have separated from the Orthodox Church (the Old Ritualists, sectarians and others) ‘a definite position in the State’ without touching their inner church life, at the same time that the ‘ruling’ Church is deprived of such freedom. Citing the Popovtsi Old Ritualists who had accepted ‘the Austrian hierarchs’ as an example, Metropolitan Anthony warned: ‘The danger may occur that this community will be turned into the people’s Church while the Orthodox Church will remain only the State Church’.

“In pointing to the Church’s position within the State, Vladyka placed before the authorities a question of principle: had not the moment come to weaken the control of the secular authorities over the life of the Church? Other questions followed logically from that: should not the Church be given
a greater freedom in the administration of her internal affairs? Should Orthodox priests also have the right to be permanent members of social-state institutions having their place in the parishes? After this it was natural to pose the further question on the desirability of providing the Church hierarchy with the right to participate in the sessions of the State Council, the Committee of Ministers and other higher state institutions with the right to vote in them.

“The note undoubtedly touched on the privileges of the over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod. After all, if the desires expressed by the metropolitan were to be satisfied, the Orthodox episcopate would receive the possibility of independently, with the mediation of the State, influencing legislative proposals touching the Church, that is, it would have the right of a political voice in the empire. It is understandable that C.P. Pobedonostsev could not welcome such self-will, the more so in that, besides questions on the position of the Orthodox Church in Russia, the metropolitan gave reasons for the need to review the structure of the Church and some aspects of the Church’s administration, and spoke about the particular importance of recognizing the parish as a legal person and on the desirability of reviewing the laws that regulated the right of the Church to own, acquire and use property…”

This debate highlighted two contradictions within the present position of religion in the Russian empire, contradictions that could be removed only simultaneously or not at all. The first contradiction was that the 44th and 45th articles of the Basic Laws of the Empire guaranteed freedom of religion - but the Emperor had to be Orthodox and was obliged both to watch over the purity of the Orthodox Faith and to protect the Orthodox population of the empire from threats presented by schisms and heresies. And the second contradiction was that the Orthodox Church was the dominant confession of the empire - but, since it was also a department of State, it was less, rather than more free in relation to the State than the other confessions. Increasing freedom of religion in the sense, not simply of allowing freedom to practise religious rites (which already existed), but of creating real equality between the religions from the point of view of the State (which did not yet exist) would have the effect of abolishing the first contradiction – but only by removing the Emperor’s role as guardian of the Orthodox faith and substantially increasing the threat to Orthodoxy from certain confessions in certain regions (for example, Catholicism in the west). This could be compensated for, in the view of the hierarchs, only by abolishing the second contradiction at the same time – that is, by giving the Church a free hand to defend herself from the competition of other confessions without interference from the State.

Pobedonostsev suspected that Witte and Metropolitan Anthony were in league against him, and mounted a vigorous campaign to stop the projected reforms, defending the Petrine system. On March 13 he succeeded in

360 Firsov, op. cit., pp. 149-153.
persuading the emperor to remove the question of Church reforms from the competence of the Conferences of Ministers and Heads of State Departments and place it before the Holy Synod. However, this was only a seeming victory: the Holy Synod was no less in favour of the reforms than was Witte and the State. On March 17 the Synod recognized the necessity of reviewing the present situation of the Church vis-à-vis the State “in view of the changed situation of the heterodox confessions, the so-called Old Ritualists and sectarians, and transform the Church’s administration”. The restoration of the patriarchate was deemed desirable “for the sake of the honour of the Russian State”, and it was suggested that a Local Council be convened in Moscow composed of the diocesan bishops and their representatives. On March 22 the seven members of the Synod signed an appeal to the Tsar to convene a Council “at the appropriate time” in Moscow, at which a patriarch would be elected and a series of major questions of Church life would be discussed.361

Once again, on March 31, Pobedonostsev succeeded in persuading the Tsar to put off the Synod’s project, and to postpone giving Metropolitan Anthony an audience “for a certain time”. As the Tsar wrote on the Synod’s appeal: “I admit the impossibility of accomplishing, in the anxious times we are living through, such a great work requiring both calm and careful thought as the convening of a Local Council. I reserve for myself, when the fitting time for this will come, in accordance with the ancient examples of the Orthodox Emperors, the task of giving this work momentum and convening a Council of the All-Russian Church for the canonical discussion of matters of faith and Church administration.”

However, Pobedonostsev’s victory was only temporary: society’s interest in the reforms was increasing. Even V.M. Skvortsov in the conservative journal Missionerskoe Obozrenie [Missionary Review], after pointing out that the martyred Great Prince Sergius Alexandrovich had been in favour of the reforms, expressed the opinion that “the reform of the administration of the dominant Church has appeared as the logical end and natural consequence of the confessional reform which was so quickly and decisively pushed through by S.Yu. Witte and a special Conference of the Committee of Ministers”.362 On May 5, the Tsar consented to see the metropolitan, who explained that to delay the reform was neither possible nor desirable. “But as long as Pobedonostsev is alive,” he said, “we cannot expect much.”

But Pobedonostsev did not survive long. On May 18 the Tsar officially thanked the Synod for the icon and the report that had been composed two months before, thereby indicating that Pobedonostsev’s bid to keep the Petrine system untouched had failed... Pobedonostsev soon retired, and with his retirement the period of reaction came to an end...

361 Firsov, Russkaia Tserkov’ nakanune peremen (konets 1890-kh – 1918 g.) (The Russian Church on the Eve of the Changes (the end of the 1890s to 1918), Moscow, 2002, p. 163.
362 Skvortsov, in Firsov, op. cit., p. 172.
The October Manifesto

On April 17, the Sunday of Pascha, 1905, a decree “On the Strengthening of the Principles of Religious Toleration” was published, abolishing the last significant discrimination against non-Orthodox religion. St. John of Kronstadt, among others, was critical of it, seeing it as one product of the revolutionary unrest: “Look what is happening in this kingdom at the present time: everywhere students and workers are on strike; everywhere there is the noise of parties who have as their goal the overthrowing of the true monarchical order established by God, everywhere the dissemination of insolent, senseless proclamations, disrespect for the authority of the ruling powers established by God, for ‘there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God’: children and young people imagine that they are the masters and commanders of their own fates; marriage has lost all meaning for many and divorces at will have multiplied endlessly; many children are left to the whims of fate by unfaithful spouses; some kind of senselessness and arbitrariness rule... Finally, an unpunished conversion from Orthodoxy into any faith whatever is allowed [the Decree of April 17, 1905]; even though the same Lord we confess designated death in the Old Testament for those denying the law of Moses.

“If matters continue like this in Russia and the atheists and crazy anarchists are not subjected to the righteous retribution of the law, and if Russia is not cleansed of its many tares, then it will become desolate like the ancient kingdoms and cities wiped out by God’s righteous judgement from the face of the earth for their godlessness and their wickedness: Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, Greece-Macedonia. Hold fast, then, Russia, to your faith, and your Church, and to the Orthodox Tsar if you do not wish to be shaken by people of unbelief and lawlessness and if you do not wish to be deprived of your Kingdom and the Orthodox Tsar. But if you fall away from your faith, as many intelligentsia have fallen away, then you will no longer by Russia or Holy Rus’, but a rabble of all kinds of other faiths that wish to destroy one another...”363 And again he said: “Russia, if you fall away from your faith, as many intelligentsia have already fallen, you will no longer be Russia or Holy Rus’. And if there is no repentance in the Russian people, the end of the world is near. God will remove the pious tsar and send a whip in the form of impious, cruel, self-called rulers, who will drench the whole land in blood and tears.”364

364 Otets Ioann Kronshadtski (Father John of Kronstadt), Utica, N.Y., 1958. At about the same time, St. John’s friend and fellow-wonderworker, Protopriest Valentine Amphiteatrov said: “Pray well for the Sovereign. He is a martyr. Without him the whole of Russia will perish...” (Protopriest Valentine, in “Zhizneopisanie protoierea Valentina Amfiteatrova (II)” (Life of Protopriest Valentine Amphiteatrov – II), Pravoslavnaja Zhizn’ (Orthodox Life), № 12 (659), December, 2004, p. 29).
The final defeat of the Russian navy at Tsushima in May, 1905 increased the political tensions in Russia. A meeting in Moscow of representatives from the zemstva, the nobility and the municipal councils called for the convocation of a national representative body elected on a secret, equal, universal and direct ballot. On June 6 a delegation from the meeting led by Prince Sergius Trubetskoj was received by the Tsar, and on August 6 what became known as the Bulygin Constitution was published: a proposal for a consultative parliamentary body called the Duma.

Now the Tsar was never against consultative bodies. He welcomed every opportunity to find out more about the opinions and attitudes of his subjects. But he said: “I shall never in any circumstances agree to a representative form of government, for I consider it harmful for the people entrusted to me by God”. The Bulygin Constitution was far from being a representative form of government in the full western sense: its powers were limited, and “the inviolability of autocratic power” was retained. Nevertheless, it was seen as a major concession by the government to the liberal opposition.

On August 27 the government made another unexpected concession: university faculties were allowed to elect rectors and students to hold assemblies. Moreover, the police were told to keep out of the universities, making them in effect “no-go” areas. Soon workers and other non-students joined the student meetings, and, as Richard Pipes writes, “academic work became impossible as institutions of higher learning turned into ‘political clubs’: non-conforming professors and students were subjected to intimidation and harassment... In Witte’s view, the university regulations of August 27 were a disaster: ‘It was the first breach through which the Revolution, which had ripened underground, emerged into the open.’”

At the end of September a wave of strikes, economic in origin, but politicised by the Union of Unions and the radical students, hit Central Russia. They culminated in a vast general strike in mid-October. The country was descending into anarchy. Witte tried to persuade the Tsar to introduce a constitutional monarchy. Both he and D.F. Trepov, the Governor-General of St. Petersburg, were in favour of the creation of a constitutional monarchy along the lines of the resolution of the Zemstvo Congress held in Moscow the month before. “To the question whether he [Trepov] could restore order in the capital without risking a massacre, he answered that ‘he could give no such guarantee either now or in the future: rebellion [kramola] has attained a level at which it was doubtful whether [bloodshed] could be avoided. All that remains is faith in the mercy of God.’

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“Still unconvinced, Nicholas asked Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich to assume dictatorial powers. The Grand Duke is said to have responded that the forces for a military dictatorship were unavailable and that unless the Tsar signed the manifesto he would shoot himself…”\textsuperscript{367} The Tsar gave in because the only real alternative, the imposition of a military dictatorship, was rejected by the man whom he called upon to take up the post: Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolayevich Romanov. The parallel with February, 1917 and the behaviour of the generals then is revealing…

In his Manifesto of October 17, 1905, which was entitled “On the Improvement of Order in the State”, the Tsar declared: “The disturbances and unrest in St Petersburg, Moscow and in many other parts of our Empire have filled Our heart with great and profound sorrow. The welfare of the Russian Sovereign and His people is inseparable and national sorrow is His too. The present disturbances could give rise to national instability and present a threat to the unity of Our State. The oath which We took as Tsar compels Us to use all Our strength, intelligence and power to put a speedy end to this unrest which is so dangerous for the State. The relevant authorities have been ordered to take measures to deal with direct outbreaks of disorder and violence and to protect people who only want to go about their daily business in peace. However, in view of the need to speedily implement earlier measures to pacify the country, we have decided that the work of the government must be unified. We have therefore ordered the government to take the following measures in fulfilment of our unbending will:

1. Fundamental civil freedoms will be granted to the population, including real personal inviolability, freedom of conscience, speech, assembly and association.
2. Participation in the Duma will be granted to those classes of the population which are at present deprived of voting powers, insofar as is possible in the short period before the convocation of the Duma, and this will lead to the development of a universal franchise. There will be no delay to the Duma elect already been organized.
3. It is established as an unshakeable rule that no law can come into force without its approval by the State Duma and representatives of the people will be given the opportunity to take real part in the supervision of the legality of government bodies.

We call on all true sons of Russia to remember the homeland, to help put a stop to this unprecedented unrest and, together with this, to devote all their strength to the restoration of peace to their native land.”\textsuperscript{368}

\textsuperscript{367} Pipes, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 43.
Witte was invited to chair the Council of Ministers, whom he, and not the Tsar, now selected. The position of the Prime Minister under the constitution was now critical – and critically ambiguous. Was he still primarily a servant of the Tsar? Or simply a lackey of the Masons in the Duma?

Fr. Lev Lebedev writes: “When some time had passed, Witte began to praise his Majesty with sweet words for ‘the people’s representation’ in which the Tsar would find support. Nicholas II interrupted him: ‘Sergius Yulyevich: I very well understand that I am creating for myself not a helper, but an enemy, but I comfort myself with the thought that I will succeed in bringing up a state force which will turn out to be useful for providing Russia in the future with a path of peaceful development, without sharp undermining of those supports on which she has lived for so long.’ In the new order the old State Council, composed of high-ranking dignitaries appointed by the Tsar was preserved, as a kind of ‘higher chamber’. However, all this together with the Duma was not a parliament, since his Majesty was not intending to renounce his autocratic power. He made a public declaration about this during a reception of a monarchist organization: ‘The reforms I announced on October 17 will be realized unfailingly, and the freedoms given by me in the same way to the whole of the population are inalienable. But my Autocracy will remained what it was of old.’”

But could the Autocracy remain what it was when there was now a Duma with not merely consultative, but also legislative powers? Although the Manifesto made no mention of the word “constitution”, many thought that the Tsar had committed himself to a constitution that permanently limited his autocratic powers. Of course, the Tsar’s power was not unlimited in an absolute sense – as Protopriest John Vostorgov said, “The supreme power in a pure, true monarchy is unlimited, but not absolute, for it is limited morally by the content of its ideal” – which is the Law of God. It was because he always saw himself as under God’s law that the Tsar himself removed the word “unlimited” from the Basic Laws to describe the nature of his power, while retaining the word “autocratic”. However, the Tsar remained above all human (as opposed to Divine, Church) laws in his realm, since he was the source of them, so that if he bestowed a law, or manifesto, or even a constitution, he was entitled to change it or remove it altogether. Moreover, his subjects were bound by their oath of allegiance to accept such a change, whatever they might think privately of the Tsar’s inconsistency.

As N. Rodzevich wrote in Moskovskie Vedomosti: “Let us assume that the Tsar is not knowledgeable on military affairs. Well, he selects an experienced general and declares that without the agreement of this general no military question may be decided. A time comes and the Tsar realizes that the general selected by him gives bad advice; can he really not change his previous order?

370 Vostorgov, in Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., p. 403.
and dismiss the general? Of course he may do so. Similarly, if the Duma does not warrant the Tsar’s confidence, would he not be justified in dissolving the Duma and then creating a new one or refusing to convocate one at all? This depends on the Autocrat’s will.”

This was true. And yet we must remember that the date of the October Manifesto, October 17, was also the date of the creation of the St. Petersburg Soviet, which was controlled by the socialists (they had twenty-one out of fifty seats on the Executive Committee). In other words, whatever kind of state Russia remained in theory, in practice a great change had taken place – the creation of a revolutionary institution inexorably opposed both to God and the Autocracy that would have been unthinkable in an earlier age. And if this revolution was eventually crushed, it left a general feeling of malaise in the people, and a weakness and uncertainty in state administration (in spite of the efforts of the excellent prime minister, Peter Arkadievich Stolypin), that made 1917 inevitable. And so if the revolution was born in October, 1917, it was conceived twelve years before, in 1905…

**The 1905 Revolution**

The Manifesto, far from calming political passions, excited them to the utmost. Anarchy increased as young revolutionaries rampaged in the cities, the press, freed from all restraints and almost exclusively owned by Jews, raged against the government, and the police, overstretched and unsure of their rights under the new constitution, hesitated to apply strong measures.

Even the peasants, hitherto the strongest support of the monarchy, began to be violent... “The peasantry,” writes Pipes, “completely misunderstood the October Manifesto, interpreting it in its own manner as giving the communes licence to take over the countryside. Some rural disorders occurred in the spring of 1905, more in the summer, but they exploded only after October 17. Hearing of strikes and pogroms [both anti-Christian and anti-Jewish] in the cities going unpunished, the peasants drew their own conclusions. Beginning on October 23, when large-scale disorders broke out in Chernigov province, the wave of rural disorders kept on swelling until the onset of winters, re-emerging in the spring of 1906 on an even vaster scale. It would fully subside only in 1908 following the adoption of savage repressive measures by Prime Minister Stolypin.

“… The principal aim of the *jacquerie* was neither inflicting physical harm nor even appropriating land, but depriving landlords and other non-peasant landowners of the opportunity to earn a livelihood in the countryside – ‘smoking them out’, as the saying went. In the words of one observer: ‘The [peasant] movement was directed almost exclusively against landed properties and not against the landlord: the peasants had no use whatever for

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landlords but they did need the land.’ The notion was simple: force the landlords to abandon the countryside and to sell their land at bargain prices. To this end, the peasants cut down the landlord’s forests, sent cattle to graze on his pasture, smashed his machinery, and refused to pay rent. In some places, manors were set on fire...

“In an effort to stem the agrarian unrest, the government in early November reduced the due instalments of the redemption payments (payments for the land given the emancipated serfs in 1861) and promised to abolish them altogether in January 1907, but these measures did little to calm the rural districts.

“In 1905 and 1906 peasants by and large refrained from seizing the land they coveted from fear that they would not be allowed to keep it. They still expected a grand national repartition of all the non-communal land, but whereas previously they had looked to the Tsar to order it, they now pinned their hopes on the Duma. The quicker they drove the landlords out, they reasoned, the sooner the repartition would take place...

“The government faced one more trial of strength, this time with the radical left. In this conflict, there was no room for compromises, for the socialists would be satisfied with nothing less than a political and social revolution.

“The authorities tolerated the St. Petersburg Soviet, which continued to sit in session although it no longer had a clear purpose. On November 26, they order the arrest of Nosar, its chairman. A three-man Presidium (one of whose members was Leon Trotsky) which replaced Nosar resolved to respond with an armed uprising. The first act, which it was hoped would bring about a financial collapse, was an appeal to the people (the so-called Financial Manifesto), issued on December 2, urging them to withhold payments to the Treasury, to withdraw money from savings accounts, and to accept only bullion or foreign currency. The next day, [the Interior Minister] Durnovo arrested the Soviet, putting some 260 deputies (about one-half of its membership) behind bars. Following these arrests a surrogate Soviet assembled under the chairmanship of Alexander Helphand (Parvus), the theoretician of ‘permanent revolution’. On December 6, the St. Petersburg Soviet issued a call for a general strike to being two days later. The call went unheeded, even though the Union of Unions gave it its blessing.

“The socialists were more successful in Moscow. The Moscow Soviet, formed only on November 21 by intellectuals of the three principal socialist parties, decided to press the revolution beyond its ‘bourgeois’ phase. Their followers consisted of semi-skilled workers, many of them employed in the
textile industry, professionally and culturally less mature than their counterparts in the capital. The principal force behind this effort was the Moscow Bolshevik Committee. The Moscow rising was the first occasion in the 1905 Revolution when the socialists took the lead. On December 6, the Moscow Soviet voted to begin the following day an armed insurrection for the purpose of overthrowing the tsarist government, convoking a Constituent Assembly, and proclaiming a democratic republic.

“On December 7, Moscow was paralyzed: the strike was enforced by Soviet agents who threatened with violence anyone who refused to cooperate. Two days later, government forces launched an attack on the insurgents; the latter responded with urban guerilla tactics. The arrival of the Semeonovskii Regiment, which used artillery to disperse the rioters, settled the issue. On December 18 the Executive Committee of the Moscow Soviet capitulated. Over 1,000 people lost their lives in the uprising and whole areas of the ancient capital were gutted…”

As regards the pogroms, the general pattern was as follows. First the revolutionaries, usually led by young Jews, would call on the population to strike and free prisoners from the prisons, and would themselves tear down the symbols of tsarist authority, although “undoubtedly both Russians and Jews took part in the destruction of portraits and monograms”. Then, a day or two later, when it was clear that the authorities were unwilling or unable to restore order, the anti-Jewish pogrom would begin.

Thus in Kiev the pogrom began on October 18. “A crowd of Jews seized the building of the City Duma, tore down national flags and mocked the portraits of the Tsar. One of the Jews cut the head out of a portrait [of the Tsar], put his own [in the hole] and shouted: ‘Now I’m the Tsar!’ Others

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372 The textile industry was virtually founded in the Orekhovo-Zuevo district of Moscow province by the freed serf Savva Morozov during the Napoleonic Wars. The Morozov family soon became rich, and in the 1850s Savva employed more than 1000 workers. His son Timothy took over the business, but was very cruel to the workers, which led in 1885 to the first organized workers’ strike in Russian history. Savva junior took over after his father’s death, and, as Valentine Tschebotariev Bill writes, “decided to build new, light, and airy living quarters for the workmen and their families. Savva improved medical care with remarkable efficiency and reduced the accident rate. And most important of all, he did away with the system of fines.” However, Savva admired Maxim Gorky, and gave large sums to the Social Democratic Party. Early in 1905, his mother heard of this and promptly removed him from the management of the firm. A few weeks later, on May 13, Savva Morozov shot himself. As Bill writes, the history of the Morozovs “is typical of the times and the development of the Russian bourgeoisie: the painful efforts of the first generation to extricate themselves from the burden of servitude, the coldblooded, uncompromising tyranny displayed by the second generation, and the rising tide of revolution which confronted the third.” It is thought that Gorky’s novel The Artamanov Business is based on the history of the Morozov family. A comparison between the fortunes of the Morozovs and the Artamanovs discloses a number of interesting parallels (“The Morozovs”, The Russian Review) (V.M.)


374 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 375.
declared to the stunned Kievans: ‘Soon your St. Sophia cathedral will become our synagogue!’”

“‘In its initial stage the pogrom undoubtedly had the character of revenge taken for the offence to national feeling. Subjecting the Jews they met on the street to blows, smashing shops and trampling the goods they took out of them into the dirt, the pogromists would say: “There’s your freedom, there’s your constitution and revolution; there are your tsarist portraits and crown”. And then on the following morning, the 19th, a thousand-strong crowd made its way from the Duma to St. Sophia square carrying the empty frames from the broken portraits of the tsar, the tsarist monogram and smashed mirrors. They went to the university, repaired the damaged portraits and served a moleben, while ‘Metropolitan Flavian exhorted the crowd not to behave badly and to disperse to their homes’. ‘But at the same time that the people constituting the centre of the patriotic demonstration… maintained exemplary order in it, people joining it from the street allowed themselves to commit all kinds of violence in relation to the Jews they met and to people wearing the uniforms of academic institutions [students].’ Then the demonstrators were joined by ‘black workers, homeless inhabitants of the flea market and bare-footed people from the river-bank’, ‘groups of pogromists smashed up Jewish flats and stalls and threw out property and goods onto the street. Then they would be partly destroyed and partly stolen.’… The pogromists passed by the stalls of the Karaite Jews without touching them, and also ‘those Jewish flats where they were shown portraits of the emperor’. [On the 19th the wealthiest Jewish shops in the centre were looted.] Proceeding from the fact that ‘almost two thirds of all the trade in the city was in the hands of the Jews’, [Senator] Turau calculates the losses, including the homes of the rich, ‘at several million roubles’. They set out to destroy not only Jewish houses, but also the flats of well-known liberal social activists…

“In all during the days of the pogrom, according to the approximate estimate of the police (some of those who suffered were taken away by the crowd), 47 people were killed, including 12 Jews, while 205 were wounded, one third of whom were Jews.

“Turau concludes his report with the conclusion that ‘the main cause of the Jewish pogrom in Kiev was the long-existing enmity between the Little Russian and Jewish population, based on the difference in their world-views. The immediate cause was the insult to national feeling by the revolutionary manifestations, in which a prominent role belonged to Jewish youth.’ The simple people saw ‘the Jews alone as being to blame for the insults and imprecations against everything that was holy and dear to it. It could not understand the revolutionary movement after the concessions given it, and explained it by the striving of the Jews to gain “their own Yiddish freedom”’. ‘The failures of the war, at which Jewish youth always openly expressed its

375 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 428.
most lively joy, their avoidance of military service, their participation in the revolutionary movement, in a series of violent acts and murders of high-ranking people, and undoubtedly the irritation of the simple people against the Jews – that is why there were incidents in Kiev when many Russians openly gave refuge in their houses to poor Jews hiding from the violence, while sharply refusing to give it to young Jews.’

“The newspaper Kievolyanin also wrote about this. ‘Unfortunate Jews! What were these thousands of families guilty of?… To their own woe and misfortune the Jews have not been able to restrain their madmen… But, you know, there are madmen among us Russians, too, and we have not been able to restrain them.’

“The revolutionary youth went mad – and it was the elderly and peaceful Jews who had to pay for it…” 376

Indeed, the older generation of Jewry did not support the young. “[Jewish] orthodoxy was in a struggle, not always open, but hidden, against the Jewish intelligentsia. It was clear that orthodoxy, in condemning the liberation movement in Jewry, was striving to win the goodwill of the government.’ But it was already late. By 1905 the autocracy had generally lost control in the country. While traditional Jewry by that year had completely lost a whole, and already not the first, generation, which had departed into Zionism, into secular liberalism, rarely into enlightened conservatism, and – the most significant in its consequences – into the revolutionary movement.” 377

“It is not surprising,” continues Solzhenitsyn, “that ‘in many places… an active struggle of prosperous religious elements in Jewry against the revolution was noticed. They helped the police to catch Jewish revolutionaries, and to break up demonstrations, strikes, etc.’ Not that it was nice for them to be on the side of the government. But… they not want to accept the revolutionary law, for they honoured their own. While for many young revolutionaries the religious ‘Union of the Jews’ in Bialystok and other places was ‘Blackhundredist’. “ 378

It must also be emphasized that the main motivation for this flood of Jews into the revolutionary movement was not the restrictions placed by the government on the civil rights of Jewry (which were in any case being quickly whittled down), but infection with the same liberal and revolutionary ideas as infected so many contemporary Russians. “The participation of Jews in the general Russian revolutionary movement can only to a very small degree be

377 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 358.
378 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 367-368. At the same time it must not be forgotten that the Jewish religion is revolutionary by nature – the Talmud preaches a kind of permanent revolution against the non-Jewish world.
explained by their inequality... The Jews only shared the general mood’ of the struggle against the autocracy. Is that to be wondered at? The young members of intelligentsia families, both Russian and Jewish, had for years heard at home [such phrases as]: ‘the crimes of the authorities’, ‘a government of murderers’. They then rushed into revolutionary action with all their energy and ardour.”

The pattern of the Kievan pogroms was repeated almost exactly in Odessa, except on a larger scale, as the report of Senator Kuzminsky makes clear. On the 18th, the morning after the declaration of the Manifesto, “General Kauldbars, the commander of the Odessa military district, in order to ‘give the population the unhindered opportunity to use the freedom given by the Manifesto in all its forms’, ordered all the soldiers not to appear on the streets, ‘so as not to spoil the joyful mood in the population’. However, ‘this mood did not last for long. From all sides individual groups, mainly of Jews and young students, streamed towards the centre of the city’ with red flags of shouts of “Down with the autocracy!” and “Down with the police!” And orators summoned them to the revolution. From a metallic image on the Duma of the words ‘God save the Tsar!’, the first two words were broken off. They rushed into the Duma hall, ‘a huge portrait of his Majesty the Emperor was torn to pieces, while in the Duma the national flag was replaced with the red flag. They removed the hats from a protopriest, deacon and reader who were passing by in a cab to a pannikhida, and then later at the burial they stopped the procession ‘and interrupted the singing of “Holy God” with shouts of “Hurrah!”’. ‘They dragged along a dead cat and a scarecrow without its head and with the inscription “This is the autocracy”, and collected money on the spot “for killing the Tsar” or “for the death of Nicholas”’. ‘The young people, and especially the Jews, with an evident consciousness of their superiority began to point out to the Russians that freedom had not been given voluntarily, but had been snatched away from the government by the Jews... They openly said to the Russians: “Now we will rule you”’, and also: ‘We gave you God, we will also give you a tsar’.”

Prophetic words when we remember that it was little more than twelve years to the Jewish Soviet “tsardom”... 

Soon the students were forcing workers to take off their hats in front of the red flag. When the workers refused, they were shot at. But though unarmed, they succeeded in dispersing the crowd. Then, however, another thousand-strong crowd of Jews began to fire at the workers... Four workers were killed. Thus “in various places there began fights and armed confrontations between Russians and Jews: Russian workers and people without fixed occupations, the so-called hooligans, began to catch and beat up Jews. They went on to break into and destroy Jewish houses, flats and stalls.”

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379 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 361.
381 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 393.
The next day the “counter-pogrom” of the Russians against the Jews began in earnest. Crowds of Russians of all classes carrying icons and portraits of the tsar, and singing “Save, O Lord, Thy people” marched into the centre of the town. There the revolutionaries shot at them, a boy carrying an icon was killed, bombs were thrown... Open warfare between Jews and Russians now began. The violence continued on October 20 and 21...

“On October 31 [21?] a crowd of Jews destroyed state emblems and seized the Duma, proclaiming a ‘Danubian-Black Sea Republic’ headed by the Jew Pergament. It was suggested that the Don and Kuban lands should be ‘cleansed’ of Cossacks and handed over to Jewish settlers. Moreover, Jewish organizations armed from four to five thousand warriors, and not a little blood was shed in conflicts with soldiers. All this was described by the correspondent of the [London] Times, who was a witness of the events, in an article entitled ‘A Regime of Terror’ (Jewish terror was meant). Then in London the chief rabbi of the Spanish communities Gasper came out in print denying everything (‘Not one Jew insulted the Majesty’ of the Tsar) and affirming that that Tsarist troops and police had killed four thousand completely innocent Jews! The Times correspondent from Odessa refuted this fabrication: in general there had not been thousands of Jews killed. During the Odessa disorders only 293 Jews had been buried, of whom many died a natural death.382 The Englishman also pointed out that the provocation had been arranged by the ‘central Jewish organization in Switzerland which sent its emissaries from Poland to Odessa’. He quoted L.Ya. Rabinovich on how the transfer of arms had taken place. But such witnesses from objective foreign observers were extremely rare! On the other hand, the whole of the world’s press was filled with descriptions of the horrors of the Jewish pogroms, which rolled in an especially powerful wave from October 18 to 21 in the cities of Orel, Kursk, Simferopol, Rostov-on-Don, Ryazan, Velikie Luki, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Kaluga, Kazan, Novgorod, Smolensk, Tula, Ufa, Tomsk, Warsaw, many others and in all the cities of the ‘Pale of Settlement’. Of course, nothing was said about how these pogroms had been provoked by the Jews themselves (especially often by firing at Russians from the windows of well-known Jewish houses). In our days it has become clearer that at that time social-democratic organizations led by Jews deliberately spread leaflets among the people calling on them to [start] Jewish pogroms.”383

The wrath of the people was directed not only against the Jews but against leftists generally. Thus in Tver a crowd set fire to the theatre in which the leftists were sitting – 200 perished. Another crowd threatened to do the same

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382 “According to information provided by the police, those killed numbered more than 500, of whom 400 were Jews, while the wounded registered by the police numbered 289... of whom 237 were Jews” (Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 397) (V.M.).
thing in Balashov, but thanks to the courageous actions of the governor, Peter Arkadyevich Stolypin, there were no victims.

And yet, considering the scale of the disturbances, there were far fewer victims than might have been expected – 1000 dead and several thousand wounded, according to one Jewish source. Again, the Jew G. Sliozberg, a contemporary witness who was in possession of all the information, wrote: “Fortunately, all these hundreds of pogroms did not bring in their wake significant violence against the persons of Jews, and in the vast majority of places the pogroms were not accompanied by murders.”384 For in 1905 faith and morality still held the great majority of the Orthodox people back from taking revenge against their persecutors. It would be a different story during the Civil War...

On October 27 the Tsar wrote to his mother “that the pogromshchiki represented ‘a whole mass of loyal people’, reacting angrily to ‘the impertinence of the Socialists and revolutionaries… and, because nine-tenths of the trouble-makers are Jews, the People’s whole anger turned against them.’ This analysis was accepted by many foreign observers, notably British diplomats like the ambassador at St. Petersburg, Sir Charles Hardinge, his councillor, Cecil Spring Rice, and the Consul-General in Moscow, Alexander Murray.”385

This analysis was also supported by Senator Kuzminsky, who concluded that “the October disturbances and disorders [in Odessa] were caused by factors of an undeniably revolutionary character and were crowned by a pogrom of Jews exclusively as a result of the fact that it was the representatives of this nationality who took the dominant part in the revolutionary movement”.386

Alexander Solzhenitsyn has shown by extensive quotations from Jewish sources that the Jews were well aware of the true state of affairs. Even the more honest Jews had to admit that 1905 was in essence “a Jewish revolution”. “Thus in November, 1905 a certain Jacob de Haas in an article entitled ‘The Jewish Revolution’ in the London Zionist journal Maccabee wrote directly: ‘The revolution in Russia is a Jewish revolution, for it is the turning point in Jewish history. This situation stems from the fact that Russia is the fatherland of about half of the overall number of Jews inhabiting the world…’”387

384 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 401.
387 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 421.
What part did the Church play in the disturbances? There were some lower clergy who expressed themselves against the Tsar. And when the revolutionary Peter Schmidt was shot in 1906, Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky), who was at that time rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, served a pannikhida at his grave. Sergius also gave refuge in his hierarchical house in Vyborg to the revolutionaries Michael Novorussky and Nicholas Morozov. Having such sympathies, it is not surprising that he was not liked by the Royal Family: in 1915 the Empress wrote to the Emperor that Sergius “must leave the Synod”.

However, the great majority of the clergy were patriots. The higher clergy conducted themselves in general with great distinction. Thus, as we have seen, Metropolitan Flavian tried to restrain the patriotic crowds in Kiev. Other clergy were similarly brave. Thus Protopriest Michael Yedlinsky, the future catacomb hieromartyr, in full vestments, together with his clerics, choir and banners, headed a procession in the direction of the Kontaktov Square and Gostini Place, where some Jewish shops were located. The procession moved along the boulevard, cutting off the rioters from Gostini Place. People in the crowd removed their hats out of respect. When Batyushka turned to the rioters admonishing them, many of them calmed down and began to disperse, even more so because a squadron of cavalrymen began to move onto the square from Alexander Street.

Another hero was Archbishop Platon, the future Metropolitan of North America. Charles Johnston writes: “On October 22, 1905... a huge throng of wildly excited townsmen assembled, inflamed by stories and rumors of misdoings, determined to raid the Jewish quarter [of Kiev]. Their pretext was that a Jew had cursed the Emperor and spat upon his portrait.

“When the multitude assembled Archbishop Platon was in his own church in full canonicals, with his miter upon his head. He heard the angry storming of the crowd without and realized its meaning and purpose. Instantly he came to a decision, and in robes and miter went forth to meet the multitude. Of the church attendants only two accompanied him. So the tumultuous throng came on, crying for vengeance upon the Jews, and Archbishop Platon went to meet them. It had rained heavily all night and was raining still. Paying no heed to the pools of water and mud that covered the street, the Archbishop, seeing that there was but one way to check the hysterically excited mob, knelt down in the street immediately in the path of the turbulently advancing throng and began to pray.

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“The profound love and veneration for the Church which is at the center of every Russian heart was touched, and the multitude wavered, halted, grew suddenly silent. Those who were in front checked those who were behind, and a whisper ran through the crowd carrying word that the Archbishop was kneeling in the street praying, in spite of the mud and rain.

“After he had prayed Archbishop Platon rose and confronted the huge throng.

“He spoke, and his fiery words so dominated the multitude that he led the turbulent thousands to the church and made them promise, calling God to witness, that they would leave the Jews unharmed and return quietly to their homes. Thus the multitude was checked and the work of destruction was prevented by the great churchman’s fearless devotion.

“The impression which this exhibition of devoted valor made on the public of Kieff was immediate and profound. The Jews especially were full of gratitude…”

Another bishop who spoke powerfully against the rebels was Archbishop Nicon of Vologda, who was martyred in 1919. And in Moscow, another future hieromartyr, Metropolitan Vladimir, powerfully raised his archpastoral voice, rebuking the rebels and exposing the essence of the revolution. Thus on October 16, after the liturgy in the Kremlin Dormition cathedral, he said: “The heart bleeds when you see what is happening around us... It is no longer the Poles, or external enemies, but our own Russian people, who, having lost the fear of God, have trusted the rebels and are holding our first capital as it were in a siege. Even without this we have been having a hard time because of our sins: first harvest failures [in 1891, 1897, 1898 and 1901], then illnesses, then an unsuccessful war [the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05], and now something unheard of is taking place in Rus’: it is as if God has deprived Russian people of their minds. By order of underground revolutionaries, strikes have begun everywhere, in the factories, in the schools, on the railways... Oh if only our unfortunate workers knew who is ruling them, who is sending them troublemaker-agitators, then they would have turned from them in horror as from poisonous snakes! You know these are the so-called social-democrats, these are the revolutionaries, who have long ago renounced God in their works. They have renounced Him, and yet it may be that they have never known the Christian faith. They denounce her servants, her rites, they mock her holy things. Their main nest is abroad: they are dreaming of subduing the whole world to themselves; in their secret protocols they call us, the Christians, animals, to whom God, they say, has given a human face only in order that it should not be repulsive to them, His chosen ones, to use our services... With

satanic cunning they catch light-minded people in their nets, promising them paradise on earth, but they carefully hide from them their secret aims, their criminal dreams. Having deceived the unfortunate, they drag him to the most terrible crimes, as if for the sake of the common good, and, in fact they make him into an obedient slave. They try in every way to cast out of his soul, or at any rate to distort, the teaching of Christ. Thus the commandments of Christ say: do not steal, do not covet what belongs to another, but they say: everything is common, take from the rich man everything you like. The commandments of Christ say: share your last morsel, your last kopeck with your neighbour, but they teach: take from others everything that you need. The commandments of Christ say: give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, fear God, venerate the Tsar, but they say: we don’t need any Tsar, the Tsar is a tyrant... The commandments of God say: in patience possess your souls, but they say: in struggle acquire your rights. The commandment of Christ orders us to lay down our souls for our friends, but they teach to destroy people who are completely innocent, to kill them only for the fact they do not agree with them, and do not embark on robbery, but just want to work honourably and are ready to stand for the law, for the Tsar, for the Church of God…”

“The sermon of Metropolitan Vladimir elicited the annoyance of the liberal-democratic press, and also of the liberal clergy. The latter either read the sermon in a shortened version, or did not read it at all. In the leftist newspaper Russkoe Slovo 76 priests published a declaration regarding their ‘complete non-solidarity’ with ‘the “Word” of Metropolitan Vladimir…”

“As a result of the actions of the priests quarrels also arose amidst their flock. The Synod, in response to this, unfortunately saw in the epistle of Metropolitan Vladimir, not a call to defend the Faith and the Fatherland, but ‘a call to the local population to defend themselves in the sphere of political convictions’, and in their ‘Resolution of October 22, 1905 № 150’ instructed the diocesan bishops and the clergy subject to them to make efforts ‘to remove quarrels in the population’, which, to a large extent, were continuing because of the opposition of the liberal priests to their metropolitan.

“But nothing could devalue or undermine the influence of the epistle of Metropolitan Vladimir on the Muscovites, and the true Russian people responded to it. The day after the publication of the ‘Word’, the workers began to serve molebens and return to work; the city water-supply began to work, the trams began to run, etc. Metropolitan Vladimir himself went to the factories and, after prayer, conducted archpastoral discussions with the workers.

"Later, in evaluating the labours of the holy hierarch Vladimir in overcoming the disturbances of 1905, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) said the following notable words about him: ‘Meek and humble, never seeking anything for himself, honourable and a lover of righteousness,
Vladyka Vladimir gradually and quietly ascended the hierarchical ladder and was immediately exalted by his authority, drawing the hearts of ecclesiastical and patriotic Russia to himself during the days of general instability and treachery, when there were few who remained faithful to their duty and their oath, firm in the defence of the Orthodox Church, the Tsar-Autocrat and the Homeland… when everything began to shake in our Rus’, and many pillars began to waver…’ (speech of Archbishop Anthony of Zhitomir and Volhynia at the triumphal dinner given by Metropolitan Vladimir in honour of Patriarch Gregory of Antioch who was visiting Russia, 22 February, 1913).

“By ‘pillars’ Vladyka Anthony probably had in mind the liberal members of the Most Holy Synod, who did not support their brother, Metropolitan Vladimir…”

Metropolitan Vladimir’s strong monarchist convictions were apparent already at his ordination, when he said: “A priest who is not a monarchist is unworthy to stand at the Holy Altar. A priest who is republican is always of little faith. A monarch is consecrated to his power by God, a president receives power from the pride of the people; a monarch is powerful through his carrying out of the commandments of God, a president holds on to power by pleasing the mob; a monarch leads his faithful subjects to God, a president leads them away from God.”

The 1905 revolution was crushed. But the revolutionary spirit remained alive, and the country remained divided. The Empire had struck back; but the bell was tolling for the Empire...

The Stolypin Reforms

The restoration of order in Russia was accomplished largely through the efforts of one of the great servants of the tsarist regime, the Interior Minister and later Prime Minister Peter Arkadyevich Stolypin. In the Duma his military field tribunals, which decreed capital punishment for the revolutionaries, were often criticized. But he replied to one such critic: “Learn to distinguish the blood on the hands of a doctor from the blood on the hands of an executioner…”

However, Stolypin’s most important achievement was not his crushing of the revolution as interior minister, but his land reforms introduced when he

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391 Riasophor-Monk Anempodist, “Sviashchennomuchenik mitropolit Vladimir (Bogoavlenskij) i bor’ba s revoliutsii” (Hieromartyr Metropolitan Vladimir (Bogoavlensky) and the struggle against the revolution), Pravoslavnaja Zhizn’ (Orthodox Life), 53, № 1 (636), January, 2003, pp. 2-10.
392 In Valentina Sologub, Kto Gospoden – Ko Mne! (He who is the Lord’s – Come to me!), Moscow, 2007, p. 45.
was prime minister. These were designed to relieve the crushing poverty in the countryside and create a strong, independent peasant class (the “kulaks”, as the Soviets called them).

As Archpriest Lev Lebedev writes, the land reforms were essentially the brain-child of the Tsar himself: “A special problem of the reign of his Majesty Nicholas II was, of course, the peasant or land question. By the beginning of the 20th century the peasants owned 160 million desyatins of land in Russia (moreover, it was the most fertile), while the landowners owned 52 million and about 30 million were owned by merchants, foreigners, stock companies and city unions. In the Central Black-Earth region more than half of the land was in the hands of the peasantry (in places up to 80%). State and appanage lands consisted mainly of woods and plots that were not suitable for cultivation. However, since the reforms of 1861 peasant landowning suffered from a noticeable inadequacy created artificially by the commune character of land-use. The notorious land field strip system (whereby a peasant received his allotment not in the form of an integral plot, but in the form of strips and bits scattered in various places), and also the periodic re-partitions, the redistribution of allotments by the village mir, made agriculture exceptionally difficult and deprived the peasant of all interest in his plot, which in fact did not belong to him and could be taken from him or substituted by another at any time. In essence, the power of the mir (community) over the peasant took the place of the power of the landowner and often was even worse than it. In right-bank Ukraine, in Belorussia and in the Baltic region there were no mirs, there the peasants were private owners of their allotments. But on the other hand these allotments were significantly smaller than in Great Russia… All this, together with other less significant inadequacies of village life led to the fact that during the times of poor harvests the peasantry suffered greatly and was not able to secure its existence without special subsidies. Moreover, for a time they still had to pay redemption payments, although in truth these were very insignificant. In the provinces where there was famine there appeared revolutionary agitators who called on the peasants to rob the landowners’ agriculture, mills and store-houses and gave them revolutionary literature. They were often successful. Thus in 1902 a wave of peasant disorders with robberies rolled through Kharkov and Poltava provinces. In some cases the army had to be called out. Several people were killed. In the government and the zemstva work of various kinds was done to clarify the needs of village agriculture and the means of its amelioration. His Majesty took the whole land-peasant question very closely to heart. On August 29, 1902 he visited Kursk, where he met deputies of the peasants and nobility. Addressing the Kursk peasants, Nicholas II qualified the Poltava-Kharkov disturbances as inadmissible and said the notable words: ‘Remember that people get rich, not from seizing other people’s good, but from honest labour, thrift and life in accordance with the commandments of God.’ He could have said this (and often said it, directly or indirectly!) to the whole of Russian society and the whole world! In essence this was a short expression of the main idea of the whole of his
internal and external politics. But the Tsar understood that the idea had to be ensured by concrete measures. To the same people of Kursk he promised: ‘I will not forget your real needs.’ And he did not forget them. From the beginning of 1903 his Majesty set about a consistent new ‘emancipation’ and liberation of the peasants with an amelioration of their material and cultural situation. In his manifesto of February 26, 1903, while still keeping the mir, measures were announced to ease the exit from it of individual peasants, and the system of bail was rescinded. Also, privileged conditions were created for the resettlement of those who wanted to suitable lands in Siberia. Thus was prefigured the new great reform of agriculture. Immersing himself in a study of the matter, his Majesty departed more and more both from his teachers and from the politics of his father, and even from ‘society’. They were all unanimous in striving to preserve the mir, although for various reasons (some of the liberals and democrats considered it [following Herzen] to be ‘embryonic socialism’). Finally, having thought it all through, his Majesty came to the thought of the necessity of abolishing the village mir altogether. The more so, in that the majority of provincial committees created to discuss the land question had expressed themselves in one way or another against the preservation of the mir. He entrusted the carrying out of this idea to a man exceptionally well chosen – P.A. Stolypin, who was appointed President of the Council of Ministers. Stolypin carried out the reforms in constant consultation with his Majesty, from which they received their name, ‘The Stolypin Reforms’. They began with the law of November 9, 1906, which allowed the peasants freely to leave the mir... and to have their own private agriculture. Immediately two-and-a-half million petitions to leave were submitted. In order to carry out the exit, 483 special commissions and seven thousand land-surveyors were mobilized. Redemption payments were rescinded. At the same time a new impulse was given to the resettlement movement of peasants in the East. Those who wanted were given plots in Siberia, in the Altai and in the Far East at fifteen hectares per person (45 per person), with each family being offered a mortgage at 200 roubles with the opportunity of moving with all their possessions to the new lands at state expense. In Siberia previously prepared warehouses of agricultural instruments awaited the re-settlers. They were sold at extremely low prices. For a long time the re-settlers were freed from all taxes. His Majesty personally owned forty million desyatins of land in Siberia. All these lands Nicholas II handed into the land fund for free, he simply gave them away to the Russian peasantry! Especially valuable gifts were the very extensive fertile lands of the Altai, which had formerly been exclusively the property of the Emperor. In these former possessions of his given away to the peasants his Majesty at his own expense constructed new roads, schools, hospitals and churches... Finally, the third component of the reforms were the enterprises of the State Peasant Bank, which began to snap up landowners’ lands and sell them to the peasants on extremely advantageous conditions to their peasants. The bank offered them up to 90% of the valued of the bought land in credit at a rate of 4.5% at huge instalments. In sum, by 1917 100% of the arable land in the Asiatic part of
Russia, and about 90% of it in the European part was either owned or rented by peasants. By 1914 almost all the mir lands had passed into private peasant ownership. The results of the reforms exceeded all expectations. The harvest sharply increased, so that Russia exported up to a quarter of its bread abroad and became the main supplier of bread to Europe. The wheat harvest rose from about two billion poods in 1894 to four billion in 1913 and 1914. In 1913 the wheat harvest in Russia was about one third higher than those in Argentina, Canada and the USA put together! In 1908 a little more than 858 million pounds of wheat and flour were exported to England alone, and in 1910—about three billion. The production of rye rose from two billion poods in 1894 to four billion in 1913. Also doubled in this period was the production of cotton, the consumption of sugar and tea per head of population, and other products. Half the world’s trade in eggs belonged to Russia. She possessed 80% of the world’s output of flax. Russia had not known such a rapid rise in agriculture as took place from 1907 to 1911 in connection with the reforms, throughout the whole period of her history. ‘Give us twenty more years of internal and external peace,’ said P.A. Stolypin, ‘and you will not know the present Russia!’ By 1914 the country was already unrecognizable in many things...”

Both friends and foes tended to agree with Stolypin. The Germans did—fear of Russian growth was their main motive for starting World War One. So did Lenin; he calculated that if Stolypin’s plans for the creation of an independent peasantry had been given some more years in which to come to fruition, thereby reducing the flow of poor, discontented peasants into the cities, the revolution would not have taken place. The French economist Edmond Thierry was of the same opinion. In 1914 he published a detailed report for the French ministers that concluded: “If the affairs of the European nations continue in the same way from 1912 to 1950 as they have done from 1900 to 1912, then Russia by the middle of the present century will dominate Europe, both in the political and in the economic and financial spheres.”

Even so, enough progress had been made to create one of the toughest nuts for the revolution to crack. The peasants—and especially those who had acquired lands in Siberia under Stolypin—rose up in several vast rebellions in the early years of the revolution, and were finally crushed only by the horrors of dekulakization and collectivization in the 1930s...

Another important initiative of Stolypin’s related to the western provinces of which he was a native (he was a landowner from Kovno), especially Belorussia. Here, although there was a governor appointed from St. Petersburg, political and cultural power belonged to the Poles, and economic power—to the Jews. This left the Russian peasant in a desperate state.

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“The political balance of forces in pre-war Belorussia,” writes the Belorussian Ivan Solonevich, “was as follows. The region had been comparatively recently joined to the Empire and was populated by Russian peasants. Besides the peasants, there were almost no Russians. Our Belorussian nobles very easily betrayed both the faith of their fathers and the language of their people and the interests of Russia. The Tyshkeviches, the Mitskeviches and the Senkeviches were all approximately as Belorussian as I. But they were traitors. The people remained without a governing class. Without intelligentsia, without bourgeoisie, without aristocracy, even without a proletariat and without craftsmen. The path to economic advancement was simply blocked by the Jews of the cities and hamlets. Count Muraviev... opened for the Belorussian peasant the path at any rate into the lower levels of the intelligentsia. Our newspaper [financed by Stolypin] depended on these intelligentsy, so to speak, on the Belorussian staff-captains of the time: popular teachers, volost scribes, village priests, doctors, low-ranking officials. Then, as now, we had to fight on two fronts. This mass of people was inclined towards revolution. We had to prove to them that it could defend its political, economic and every other form of life only in a struggle against the Jews and Polonization. The struggle was very difficult. It was very difficult to prove to the readers of Chernyshevsky, Dobroliubov, and the venerated of Aladin, Rodichev and Miliukov the completely obvious fact that if the monarchy retreated, they, these readers, would be eaten up by the Jews and Poles. And that it was only in the bound of the empire and the monarchy that these people could defend their national being. This was proven. The Belorussian intelligentsia was converted to the national-imperial point of view...”

Stolypin moved to strengthen this patriotic movement among the Belorussian intelligentsia. He introduced into the Council for Local Agricultural Affairs a bill for the introduction of self-governing zemstva in the provinces of Vitebsk, Minsk, Mogilev, Kiev, Volhynia and Podolsk. However, the bill was fiercely criticized in the State Council on the grounds that it would violate racial equality in the region. This was doubly ironical, in that Stolypin, on the one hand, wanted to bring the position of the Russian peasant to a position of equality with his Jewish and Polish neighbours, and on the other hand was in favour of removing many of the restrictions on the Jews in the region of the Pale. For, on the one hand, these restrictions were extremely complex, sometimes contradictory and difficult to enforce. And on the other hand, the lack of full equality of rights for the Jews gave them and their supporters in the Duma and the press a powerful weapon with which to beat the government...

**The Roots of the Revolution**

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396 Solonevich, “Puti, Oshibki i Itogi” (Ways, Mistakes and Conclusions), in Rossia i Revoliutsia (Russia and the Revolution), Moscow, 2007, p. 98.
In 1909 a collection of articles written by a group of converts from socialism was published under the title *Vekhi* (Landmarks), which criticized the revolutionary credo of the intelligentsia from several points of view. One of the contributors, the philosopher, Simeon Ludvigovich Frank, wrote: “The Symbol of Faith of the Russian intelligent is the good of the people, the satisfaction of the needs of ‘the majority’. The service of this aim is for him the highest and in general the only duty of man, and what is more than this is of the evil one. It is precisely for this reason that he not only simply denies or does not accept other values – he even directly fears and hates them. One cannot serve two gods at the same time, and if God, as Maxim Gorky had already openly made known, was ‘the essence of the people’s soul’, then all the other gods were false gods, idols or devils. Activity guided by love for science or art, life overshadowed by a religious light in the direct sense, that is, communion with God, all this distracts from service to the people, weakens or destroys moralistic enthusiasm and signifies, from the point of view of the intelligent’s faith, a dangerous hunting after mirages. Therefore all this is rejected, partly as stupidity or ‘superstition’, partly as an immoral direction of the will. This, of course, does not mean that the Russian intelligentsia is in fact alien to scientific, aesthetic and religious interests and experiences. It is impossible to kill the spirit and its inveterate demands, and it is natural that living people who have clothed their soul in the moral uniform of the ‘intelligent’ should retain in themselves all the feelings intrinsic to man. But these feelings live in the soul of the Russian intelligent in approximately the same way as the feeling of pity for an enemy lives in the soul of a warrior, or as the striving for the free play of fantasy in the consciousness of a strictly scientific thinker: they live precisely as an unlawful, albeit ineradicable weakness, as something in the best case merely tolerable. Scientific, aesthetic and religious experiences are always referred here, so to speak, to the private, intimate life of a man; more tolerant people look on them as a luxury, an amusement for hours of leisure, as a sweet eccentricity; the less tolerant condemn them in others and hide them with shame in themselves. But the intelligent, as an intelligent, that is, in his conscious faith and public activity, must be alien to them – his world-view and his ideal are hostile to these sides of human life. From science he takes several popularized, distorted or ad hoc positions, and although he often prides himself in the ‘scientificness’ of his faith, he also rejects scientific criticism with annoyance, as well as all the pure, disinterested work of scientific thought; while aesthetics and religion are completely unnecessary for him. All this – pure science, and art, and religion – is incompatible with moralism, with the service of the people; all this relies on love for objective values and, consequently, is alien, and for that reason also hostile, to that utilitarian faith which the Russian intelligent confesses. The religion of the service of earthly needs and the religion of the service of ideal values strike against each other, and however complex and varied their irrational psychological interweaving in the soul of the intelligent, in the sphere of the intelligent’s consciousness their conflict leads to the complete
annihilation and expulsion of ideal demands in the name of the integrity and purity of the moralistic faith.

“Nihilistic moralism is the fundamental and most profound trait of the spiritual physiognomy of the Russian intelligentsia: from the denial of objective values there proceeds the deification of the subjective interests of one’s neighbour (‘the people’), hence there follows the recognition that the highest and only task of man is the service of the people, and hence in its turn there follows ascetic hatred for everything that hinders or even merely does not assist the realization of this task. Life has no other objective, inner meaning; its only good is to be materially provided for, to be satisfied in one’s subjective demands; therefore man is bound to devote all his strength to the amelioration of the lot of the majority, and everything that distracts from this is evil and must be mercilessly rooted out - that is the strange, logically badly founded, but psychologically strongly welded together chain of judgements that rules the whole behaviour and all the valuations of the Russian intelligentsia. Nihilism and moralism, lack of faith and a fanatical severity of moral demands, and a lack of principle in a metaphysical sense - for nihilism is also the denial of principled demands, it is an idiosyncratic, rationally unfathomable and at the same time in real life a strong merging together of antagonistic motives into a powerful psychical force. And it is that frame of mind which we call nihilistic moralism.”

If we look more closely at the nature and origins of this atheistic but moralistic, rationalistic but at the same time quasi-mystic faith of the Russian intelligentsia we may find it in the Jewish chiliasm of the early Christian centuries.

Thus Lev Alexandrovich Tikhomirov, who in the 1870s was still a revolutionary, but who later repented and became an ardent monarchist, wrote: “In spite of the seeming irreligiousness of the 19th century, in its most passionate dreams it is reminiscent of a moment not so much of cold unbelief, as of an error of religious thought, Jewish messianism or the Christian chiliasm that was born from it. The idea of earthly all-blessedness, whether it is expressed in the expectation of ‘the sensible kingdom of Christ’ or of a sorrowless ‘future order’ in the most various of philosophies, grows on the soil of one and the same psychology. The new chiliasm has consciously abandoned religion. But this difference is not as decisive as it seems. The very dreams about an earthly blessedness are already a rebuke to the weakness of spiritual feeling. On the other hand, the unconscious feeling which makes our rationally unbelieving revolutionaries, not simple epicureans, but fanatical dreamers about their future sorrowless order, bear unmistakeable signs of the spiritual strivings of an erring religious quest…

397 Frank, “Etika nigilizma” (The Ethics of Nihilism), in Vekhi (Landmarks), Moscow, 1909, pp. 183-185.
“One may even now foresee some features of a future mystical anarchism, which is still thought now by the revolutionaries to be sick and illogical, but - as in Count L. Tolstoy, for example, - is already making itself talked about, and not only in Russia…

“It is not the inadequacies of the old order, but an insuperable dream about the new order that was and will remain the moving power of the revolution…”

“There is nothing that can be done against further corruption until people understand the source of the mistake.

“This mistake consists in the concept of the autonomy of the personality. The false teaching of its supposed autonomy appears first of all as a result of its rebellion against God. Being left without God, and in this condition feeling itself to be autonomous, the personality at first tries to find a full satisfaction of its strivings in this earthly world. But this is impossible. The world is not capable of that. From here there begins the renunciation of the world in the form that it is according to these earthly laws. One after another there appear dreams of ‘the future order’. Trying these orders, the autonomous personality rejects them one after the other, intensifying its rejection of the real world more and more…”

“Among us revolutionary destruction constitutes the faith, hope and duty of every good radical. Everything that is rebellion, protest, overthrow is looked upon as something useful, containing the seed of progress. Destruction is considered still more useful if it is directed against the preservation of the existing order.”

Frank also saw the desire for autonomy as lying at the root of the revolution: “Socialism is at the same time the culmination and the overthrow of liberal democracy. It is ruled by the same basic motive that rules the whole modern era: to make man and mankind the true master of his life, to present him with the possibility of ordering his own destiny on his own authority… Socialism is the last stride in the great rebellion of mankind and at the same time the result of its total exhaustion - the complete spiritual impoverishment of the prodigal son in the long centuries of his wandering far from his father’s home and wealth.”

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399 Tikhomirov, “Pochemu ia perestal byt’ revoliutsionerom” (Why I ceased to be a Revolutionary), in “Korni zla” (The Roots of Evil), Prawoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia), № 7 (1412), April 1/14, 1990.
Utopianism-chiliasm is based not only on a heretical eschatology, but also on a false anthropology that denies the fall of man. For utopia on earth is possible only on the assumption that men are sinless, 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 unfaillingly to evil ends.

As Solzhenitsyn has said, “If only it were all so simple! If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the dividing line between good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being, and who is willing to destroy his own heart?” If the line between good and evil passes, not between classes or nations, but down the middle of each human heart, it follows that the triumph of good over evil is possible only through the purification of the human heart, every human heart. And that is a spiritual task which is accomplished by spiritual, not material or political means, by confession of the faith and repentance of sin, not by rebellion against the king and the redistribution of property.

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

“Cosmic possession,” writes Fr. George Florovsky, “is how we can define the utopian experience. The feelings of unqualified dependence, of complete determination from without and full immersion and inclusion into the universal order define utopianism’s estimate of itself and the world. Man feels himself to be an ‘organic pin’, a link in some all-embracing chain – he feels unambiguously, irrevocably 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

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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...”402

As another contributor to Vekhi, Nicholas Berdyaev, wrote: “Just as pious mystics once strove to make themselves into an image of God, and finally to become absorbed in Him, so now the modern ecstasies of rationalism labour to become like the machine and finally to be absorbed into bliss in a structure of driving belts, pistons, valves and fly-wheels...”403

**The Counter-Revolution**

Although the revolution had been crushed, monarchist thinkers felt that the concessions that the Tsar had given in his October Manifesto should be rescinded. For, as Lev Tikhomirov wrote in a letter to Stolypin in 1911, the new political order created in 1905-06, “being ambiguous in concept and deviating from a clear attitude to any Supreme Power, was formed in such a way that in it everyone can get in every one else’s way but there is no one who could force the institutions of state to collaborate. His Majesty the Emperor himself can independently only not allow a law to be enforced, but he cannot independently create a law that is necessary for the country. But... the state, on the contrary, has the task of working, and especially in a country that has been so disturbed during the preceding years of woes and troubles.

“This order, which is extremely bad from the point of view of its apparatus, is, in addition to that, complete antinational, that is, it does not correspond either to the character of the nation or to the conditions of the general situation of the Empire. As a result of this, disorganization in the country is being engendered on all sides. Unifying elements are weakening. A friable, bored, discontented mood has appeared. The Russians are losing their spirit, their faith in themselves, they are not inspired by patriotism. Moreover, class and inter-racial quarrels are necessarily becoming sharper.

“Russia constitutes a nation and a state great in instincts and means, but also surrounded by great dangers. It was created by Russians and is preserved only by Russians. Only Russian power brings the remaining elements to some solidarity amongst themselves and with the Empire.... We have a huge non-Russian population... The strongest of the other races are foreign to our patriotism. They are eternally quarrelling amongst themselves, but are inclined to rebel against the dominion of the Russians. The unifying element, the general bond is we, the Russians. Without us the Empire will disintegrate, and these other races will perish. Therefore we must remember our mission and support the conditions of our strength. We must remember

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that our state is a matter not simply of national egoism, but a global duty. We occupy a post that is necessary for all. But in order to keep this post we need a one-person Supreme Power, that is, the Tsar, not as the adornment of a pediment, but as a real state power.

“No combinations of popular representation or elective laws can guarantee the supremacy of the Russians. We must understand ourselves. As a people that is essentially statist, the Russians are unfitting for petty political struggles, they can do politics only wholesale, not retail, by contrast with the Poles, the Jews, etc. The aims of the supremacy of such a people (as with the Romans) are attainable only by a one-person Supreme Power that realizes its ideals. With such a power we become stronger and more skilful than all, for no Poles can compare with the Russians in the capacity for discipline and solidarity around a one-person power endowed with a moral character.

“But if it has no centre of unity, the Russian people loses her head and particularist peoples begin to obstruct her. Historical practice has created a Supreme Power in accordance with the Russian character. The Russian people has grown for itself a Tsar in union with the Church. [But] since 1906 that which was proper to the people has been undermined, and it is being forced to live in a way that it is not able to and does not want. This was undoubtedly a huge constitutional mistake, for whatever theoretical preferences there may be, practically speaking state reason requires institutions that conform to the character of the people and the general conditions of its supremacy. In destroying that, 1906 deprived us of that without which the Empire cannot exist - the possibility of creating a dictatorship immediately. Such a possibility was given first of all by the presence of a Tsar having the right to engage in the situation with all his unlimited Supreme Power.

“The consciousness alone of the possibility of an immediate concentration [of power] filled the Russians with confidence in their strength, while inspiring our rivals with fear and dread. Now that has been taken away. And without our watchfulness there is nobody to keep the remaining races in unity...”

But if the monarchy would not take back its autocratic powers, what was to be done? The answer, in the minds of many monarchists, was the creation of a grass-roots monarchist party - “The Union of the Russian People”, or “the Black Hundreds”, as it was called by its opponents, who reviled it as being the mainstay, not only of monarchism, but also of “anti-semitism” in the Russian people. The Union became an important force in the government’s

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successful counter-revolution of 1906-07, and was not so much anti-semitic as anti-Judaist, anti-revolutionary and, of course, pro-monarchical. 405

“The Union of the Russian People” was a mass phenomenon. In 1906-07 it had about 11,000 local sections, and its members comprised several hundreds of thousands of people from all walks of life. 406 The higher ranks of the clergy were divided about the Union. Thus Metropolitan Anthony (Vadkovsky) of St. Petersburg, who was suspected by many of being a closet liberal 407, opposed it. But Metropolitan Vladimir of Moscow 408, Archbishop Tikhon (Bellavin) of Yaroslavl, Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Volhynia, Bishop Hermogen of Saratov, St. John of Kronstadt, Elder Theodosius of Minvody, Fr. John Vostorgov and many others joined it without doubting.

In general, however, the Union was plagued by poor leadership that gave it a bad name. It was led by A. Dubronin, who was only superficially Orthodox. Thus he was for the tsar - but against hierarchy! And he wanted to rid the empire of “the Germans”, that is, that highly efficient top layer of the administration which proved itself as loyal to the empire as any other section of the population. When interviewed years later by the Cheka, Dubronin declared: “By conviction I am a communist monarchist, that is, [I want] there to be monarchist government under which those forms of government [will flourish] which could bring the people an increase in prosperity. For me all kinds of cooperatives, associations, etc. are sacred.”

405 It is ironic that the “anti-semites” were helped in these years by a large loan secured in France by Witte through the mediation of one of the Rothschilds – for which the Alliance Israelite Universelle labelled Rothschild a traitor.
408 Monk Anempodist writes: “Metropolitan Vladimir went on to take part in the movement of the right conservative forces of Russia that was being formed. Thus in 1907 he took part in the work of the All-Russian congress of ‘The Union of the Russian People’. In 1909, while taking part in the work of the First Monarchist congress of Russian People, Metropolitan Vladimir was counted worthy of the honour of passing on a greeting to the congress from his Majesty the Emperor Nicholas II in the following telegram:

“'To his Eminence Vladimir, Metropolitan of Moscow. I entrust to you, Vladiko, to pass on to all those assembled in the first capital at the congress of Russian people and members of the Moscow Patriotic Union My gratitude for their loyal feelings. I know their readiness faithfully and honourably to serve Me and the homeland, in strict observance of lawfulness and order. St. Petersburg. 30 September. Nicholas.”’ Riasophor-Monk Anempodist, “Sviatschennomuchenik mitropolit Vladimir (Bogoavlenskij) i bor’ba s revolutsii” (Hieromartyr Metropolitan Vladimir (Bogoavlensky) and the struggle against the revolution), Pravoslavnaia Zhizni’ (Orthodox Life), 53, №1 (636), January, 2003, pp. 2-10.
Fr. John Vostorgov, one of the founders of the Union, considered Dubronin an enemy of the truth... And in general he stressed that true patriotism can only be founded on true faith and morality. “Where the faith has fallen,” he said, “and where morality has fallen, there can be no place for patriotism, there is nothing for it to hold on to, for everything that is the most precious in the homeland then ceases to be precious.”

On Great Friday, March 31, 1906 Fr. John – who was replacing his great friend, Fr. John of Kronstadt, as the foremost champion of Tsarist Russia - said the following in the cathedral of Christ the Saviour: "Our homeland has entered upon a new path of life, before and ahead of us is - a new Russia.

"Forgive us, forgive us, old, thousand-year-old Russia! Before our eyes they have judged you, condemned you and sentenced you to death... Threatening and merciless judges have spat in your face and have found nothing good in you. The judgement was strict, implacable and merciless. Everything has merged into the cry: 'Take her, crucify her!'

"We also know that nothing human was alien to you; we know that you had many faults. But we also know and see that you made Russia holy, and her people - a God-bearing people, if not in actuality, at any rate in the eternal, undying ideal of the people's soul; you gave birth to and raised a mighty people, preserving it in its bitter fate, in the crucible of its historical trials through a whole series of centuries; you gave birth to and raised an array of saints and righteous ones; you did not perish under the blows, the heavy blows of destiny, but became stronger under them, strong in faith; with this faith, this great power of spirit, you endured all the burdens, and yet you created, and entrusted to us and left behind, a great kingdom. For all this we bow down to the earth in gratitude..."

The major problem for the monarchists was the paradoxicality of the idea of a monarchical party within a monarchy. Tsarism has the major advantage over other political systems of standing above the various interests and classes, being in thrall to the interests of no single party and reconciling them all in obedience to the tsar. But the October manifesto had appeared to many to divide ultimate power between the Tsar and the Duma. And this made party politics inevitable. So the monarchists were forced to conduct party politics in favour of the idea that the state should not be the product of party politics, but incarnate in the tsar who was above all party politics...

There could be no real unity between those who ascribed ultimate power to the Tsar and those who ascribed it to the Duma. Moreover, the struggle between the “reds” and the “blacks” was not simply a struggle between different interpretations of the October manifesto, or between monarchists and constitutionalists, but between two fundamentally incompatible world-

409 Vostorgov, in Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., p. 400.
views - the Orthodox Christian and the Masonic-Liberal-Ecumenist. It was a struggle between two fundamentally opposed views of where true authority comes from – God or the people; it was a struggle for the very heart of Russia. As Bishop Andronicus, the future hieromartyr, wrote: “It is not a question of the struggle between two administrative regimes, but of a struggle between faith and unbelief, between Christianity and antichristianity. The ancient antichristian plot, which was begun by those who shouted furiously to Pilate about Jesus Christ: ‘Crucify Him, crucify Him: His blood be on us and on our children’ - continued in various branches and secret societies. In the 16th century it poured into the special secret antichristian order of the Templars, and in the 18th century it became more definite in the Illuminati, the Rosicrucians and, finally, in Freemasonry it merged into a universal Jewish organization. And now, having gathered strength to the point where France is completely in the hands of the Masons, it – Masonry – already openly persecutes Christianity out of existence there. In the end Masonry will be poured out into one man of iniquity, the son of destruction – the Antichrist (II Thessalonians 2). In this resides the solution of the riddle of our most recent freedoms: their aim is the destruction of Christianity in Rus’. That is why what used to be the French word ‘liberal’, which meant among the Masons a ‘generous’ contributor to the Masonic aims, and then received the meaning of ‘freedom-loving’ with regard to questions of faith, has now already passed openly over to antichristianity. In this resides the solution of the riddle of that stubborn battle for control of the school, which is being waged in the zemstvo and the State Duma: if the liberal tendency gains control of the school, the success of antichristianity is guaranteed. In this resides the solution of the riddle of the sympathy of liberals for all kinds of sects in Christianity and non-Christian religions. And the sectarians have not been slumbering – they have now set about attacking the little children… And when your children grow up and enter university – there Milyukov and co. will juggle with the facts and deceive them, teaching them that science has proved man’s origin from the apes. And they will really make our children into beasts, with just this difference, that the ape is a humble and obedient animal whereas these men-beasts will be proud, bold, cruel and unclean.…”

Archbishop Anthony of Volhynia

One of the best-known “black-hundredists” was Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Volhynia, who after the revolution became first-hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad. On all the major issues of the day he was uncompromisingly Orthodox. Thus while condemning the anti-Jewish riots, he also condemned Jewish exploitation. In his Volhynia diocese the Union of the Russian People was led by his disciple, Archimandrite Vitaly (Maximenko). Its astonishing success in uniting all classes in the province in defence of the autocracy showed what could be done with inspired leadership,

410 Bishop Andronicus, “Russkij grazhdanskij stroj zhizni pered sudom khristianina” (The Russian civil order before the judgement of the Christian), Fryazino, 1995, pp. 24-25.
and how, if such leadership had been found throughout the country, the revolution would not have taken place. Archbishop Anthony wrote: “The Pochaev Lavra has united around itself into the Union of the Russian People almost as many members as all the secular activists throughout Russia – almost two million! It has established several central consumer shops, distributed during the present famine 75 wagons of cheap bread from Chelyabinsk and thereby forced the Jews to lower the price to 18 kopecks per pound, destroying their malicious syndicate. The undoubting devotion of a grateful people and the trust of the village priests arranged matters such during the elections to the second and third Dumas in Volhynia that the elections were decided by Archimandrite Vitaly, while the enraged cadets viciously called him the dictator of the South-Western region.”

Inevitably Archbishop Anthony was accused of anti-semitism. He replied: “… It is unpleasant to talk about oneself, but if you ask anyone who is close to me or knows me well: what is he most interested in? they would tell you: monasticism, communion with the Eastern Churches, the struggle with Latinism, the transformation of the theological schools, the creation of a new direction of Orthodox theology [in opposition to scholasticism], the Yedinoverie [Old Ritualists in union with the Orthodox Church], the typicon of Divine services, Slavophilism, Orthodoxy in Galicia… etc. But no one would name Judophobia as one of my most important interests…

“… Concerning the Jews I delivered and published a sermon in 1903 (against pogroms), thanks to which the pogroms that enveloped the whole of the south-western region did not take place in Volhynia in that year. In 1905 in the sixth week of the Great Fast the Jews in Zhitomir shot at portraits of his Majesty and were beaten for that by the inhabitants of the suburb. The day before Palm Sunday I arrived from Petersburg and in Holy Week again delivered a speech against the pogrom being prepared for the first day of Pascha. This pogrom did not take place, and only after the murder by a Jewish hireling of the popular police-officer Kuyarov on the evening of Thomas Sunday, when I was leaving Zhitomir for Petersburg, did fights begin with the Jews, who later said that ‘the government deliberately summoned our hierarch to Petersburg because while he was in the city they did not beat us’. In 1907 I published… a brochure with the article: ‘The Jewish question and the Holy Bible’, which has now been reissued in Yiddish. All this, however, did not stop the liberals from printing about me that I was going in cross processions to incite pogroms. Meanwhile, all pogroms have ceased in Volhynia since the Pochaev Union of the Russian People was formed in 1906… If they are talking about the limitation of rights [of the Jews], not for the highest motives of defending the poor Little Russians from Jewish exploiters, but out of hatred for the latter, then this is truly disgusting, but if

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the patriots do not hate the Jews, but love and pity them, but do not want to give horns to a cow that butts, then this is reasonable, just and humane..."412

Vladyka laid the blame for the pogroms, not only on the Jews, but on the whole of liberal society. In 1899 he rebuked the liberal, “unchurched” part of the population: “It is no longer a people, but a rotting corpse, which takes its rotting as a sign of life, while on it, or in it, live only moles, worms and foul insects... for in a living body they would find no satisfaction for their greed, and there would be nothing for them to live on”.413

In 1911, a Christian boy, Andrew Yuschinksy, was killed. In connection with this, in 1913, the trial took place in Kiev of a Jew named Beilis, which became an international cause célèbre. The verdict of the court was that the boy had been ritually murdered, but Beilis was acquitted.414

Now stories of ritual murder of Christian children by Jews have surfaced in many countries in many ages, leading to many formal trials and convictions. These are completely dismissed by western authors, who speak about the “blood libel” against the Jews. However, the Orthodox Church has canonized at least one victim of such a murder, Child-Martyr Gabriel of Zverki, Belorussia, for whose feast Archbishop Anthony wrote a service in 1908.415

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412 Pis’ma Blazhenneishago Mitropolita Antonia (Khrapovitskago) (The Letters of his Beatitude Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky)), Jordanville, 1988, pp. 37, 39.
413 Quoted in N. Talberg, Istoria Russkoj Tserkvi (History of the Russian Church), Jordanville, 1959, p. 831.
415 S.V. Bulgakov, Nastol’naia Kniga dlya Sviashchenno-Slavno-Sluzhitel’ia (Handbook for Church Servers), Kharkov, 1900, p. 143. For ritual murders demonstrated in court, see V. Dal’, Rozyskanie o ubijenii evreev khristianskikh mladentsvo i upotreblenii krovi ikh (Investigation into the Killing by Jews of Christian Children and the Use of their Blood), St. Petersburg, 1844; V. Rozanov, Oboniatel’noe i osyazatel’noe otnoshenie evreev k krovi (The Senses of Smell and Touch of the Jews towards Blood), St. Petersburg, 1913. Over a hundred well-documented cases of the murder of Christian children by the Jews for ritual purposes in various countries are cited by Oleg Platonov, who goes on to cite the detailed account of Monk Neophytus, who until the age of 38 was a Jewish rabbi, as giving especially valuable evidence, not only of the real existence of this horrific practice, but also of the religious rationale behind it (Ternovyi venets Rossii (Russia’s Crown of Thorns), Moscow, 1998, pp. 748-754).

In 1855 Bishop Porphyrius (Uspsensky) of Chigirinsk wrote to the director of the Department of foreign confessions, Khruschev: “Just as the Christian peoples have retained many pagan superstitions, so the Jews – it goes without saying, not all of them – continue to shed the blood of children and youths who are not of their tribe according to very ancient tradition, which points to the redemption of their whole race in a bloody human sacrifice... In the East everyone is convinced that the killing of Christian boys by the Jews is ordered in such a way that this evil is accomplished in one year in Thessalonica, for example, in another in Damascus, in a third in Spain, or Russia, or Wallachia, etc., and that the towels soaked in the blood of the unfortunate victim are burned, and their ashes are scattered to all the
Archbishop Anthony’s attitude to Jewish blood rituals in general, and the Beilis trial in particular, was expressed in an interview he gave to A. Chizhevsky. After reminding his readers of how, at the request of Rabbi Skomorovsky, he had twice, in 1903 and 1905, spoken up against the antisemite pogroms in Zhitomir, he went on: “But in both of the above-mentioned cases of my conversation with the rabbi, I decisively refused to say that I did not recognize the existence of ritual murders carried out by Jews, but on the contrary I expressed to my interlocutor my conviction that these murders exist, perhaps as belonging to one or another sect of the Jewish religion, perhaps as a secret of the highest spiritual government of the Jews, but there undoubtedly have been cases of ritual murders both in recent times and in antiquity.

“When my Jewish academic acquaintances pointed to the fact that Jewish law forbids the drinking of the blood even of animals, so that the thought of their mixing Christian blood with the paschal matsa was absurd, I replied that what seemed more probable to me was the link between the ritual killings and, not the Jewish feast of Pascha, but the feast that precedes it of ‘Purim’, in which the story of Esther, Haman and Mordecai is remembered, when the Persian king, having executed the enemy of the Jews, Haman, allowed them, synagogues so that they can be baked into the paschal bread... Judge, after this, how difficult it is to catch the terrible crime... I sorrow over the existence of such a horror among the Jews... And Jews have penetrated onto Athos, and one of them in the rank of hieromonk and spiritual father killed monks coming to him for confession, and hid their corpses under his floor...” (in Fomin, S. and Fomina, T., op. cit, vol. II, p. 632)

Lisa Palmieri-Billig (“Historian gives credence to blood libel”, The Jerusalem Post, February 7 and 8, 2007) writes: “An Israeli historian of Italian origin has revived ‘blood libel’ in an historical study set to hit Italian bookstores on Thursday. Ariel Toaff, son of Rabbi Elio Toaff, claims that there is some historic truth in the accusation that for centuries provided incentives for pogroms against Jews throughout Europe.

“Toaff’s tome, Bloody Passovers: The Jews of Europe of Ritual Murders, received high praise from another Italian Jewish historian, Sergio Luzzatto, in an article in the Corriere della Serra entitled ‘Those Bloody Passovers’.

“Luzzatto describes Toaff’s work as a ‘magnificent book of history... Toaff holds that from 1100 to about 1500... several crucifixions of Christian children really happened, bringing about retaliations against entire Jewish communities – punitive massacres of men, women, children. Neither in Trent in 1475 nor in other areas of Europe in the late Middle Ages were Jews always innocent victims.’

“‘A minority of fundamentalist Ashkenazis... carried out human sacrifices,’ Luzzatto continued.

“Toaff offers as an example the case of Saint Simonino of Trent in March 1475, shortly after a child’s body was found in a canal near the Jewish area of Trent, the city’s Jews were accused of murdering Simonino and using his blood to make mazot.

“After a medieval trial in which confessions were extracted by torture, 16 members of Trent’s Jewish community were hanged.

“Toaff reveals that the accusations against the Jews of Trent ‘might have been true’.

“Toaff refers to kabbalistic descriptions of the therapeutic uses of blood and asserts that ‘a black market flourished on both sides of the Alps, with Jewish merchants selling human blood, complete with rabbinic certification of the product – kosher blood.’”
who had not long before been condemned to general killing, to kill their enemies themselves. Purim in 1911 [the year of the ritual killing of Andrew Yushchinsky] took place on March 14 and 15, while the Jewish Pascha was from March 15-18...

“Already in deep antiquity the Jews were causing various disorders against various symbols hostile to them during this feast. Thus in 408 and 412 the Byzantine emperor issued two special decrees forbidding the Jews from celebrating Purim and mocking Christian crosses instead of Haman. I think that Christian children were also killed on this feast…”

The Beilis trial polarized Russian society and, through the Jewish press, had international ramifications. Liberal opinion throughout the world pilloried Russia, which was now the country, supposedly, not only of the cruellest tyranny and retrograde religion, but also of systematic persecution and slander of the Jews.

Unfortunately, these criticisms, though unjust, helped to create the very phenomenon they decried. Racial anti-semitism, as opposed to religious anti-Judaism and anti-Talmudism, had been rare in Russia – rarer than in most western countries. But in the decade that followed the Beilis trial, under the stress of war and revolution, real anti-semitism took root in Russia, with massacres far exceeding anything seen in the times of the tsars...

Archbishop Anthony was also not silent about other instigators of violence behind the scenes, such as the Old Ritualists. While sympathising with the Old Ritualists, and serving sometimes according to the Old Rite, in his 1912 encyclical to the Old Ritualists he rebuked them for supporting the revolution: “The spirit of this world... winks at real revolutionaries and the money of your rich men to create the Moscow rebellion of 1905.” And at the Congress of the Yedinoverie in 1912 he made it quite clear that the Old Ritualists who refused to join the Orthodox Church were outside the One True Church.

416 Archbishop Anthony, in Zhizn’ Volynii (The Life of Volhynia), № 221, 2 September, 1913.
417 As regards freedom, it is a paradoxical but true fact that Russia in the last decades before the revolution was one of the freest countries in the world. Thus Duma deputy Baron A.D. Meyendorff admitted: “The Russian Empire was the most democratic monarchy in the world” (Lebedev, op. cit., p. 405). This view was echoed by foreign observers, such as Sir Maurice Baring: “There is no country in the world, where the individual enjoys so great a measure of personal liberty, where the ‘liberté de moeurs’ is so great, as in Russia; where the individual man can do as he pleases with so little interference or criticism on the part of his neighbours, where there is so little moral censorship, where liberty of abstract thought or aesthetic production is so great.” (in Eugene Lyons, Our Secret Allies, 1953).
418 Quoted in “Otnoshenia s Staroobriadchestvom (Relations with Old Ritualism)”, Vozdvizhenie, (Exaltation), Winter, 2000, p. 76.
Archbishop Anthony was a strong supporter of the autocracy. In February, 1907 he wrote: "Perhaps there are countries which are best ruled not by tsars, but by many leaders. But our kingdom, which consists of a multitude of races, various faiths and customs that are hostile to each other, cannot stand only when at its head there stands one Anointed of God, who gives account to nobody except God and His commandments. Otherwise all the races that inhabit the Russian land would go against each other with knives, and would not be pacified until they had themselves destroyed each other, or had submitted to the power of the enemies of Russia. Only the White Tsar is venerated by all the peoples of Russia; for his sake they carry out the civil laws, go into the army and pay their taxes. Our tsars are the friends of the people and preservers of the holy faith, and the present Sovereign Nicholas Alexandrovich is the meekest and quietest of all the kings of the whole world. He is the crown of our devotion to our native land and you must stand for him to your last drop of blood, not allowing anybody to diminish his sacred power, for with the fall of this power, Russia also will fall…

"Russian man, lend your ear to your native land: what does it tell you? 'From the righteous Princess Olga, from the equal-to-the-apostles Vladimir until the days of Seraphim of Sarov and to the present day and to future ages all the wise leaders of my people think and say the same,' that is what the land will reply to you... 'They taught their contemporaries and their descendants one and the same thing: both the princes, and the tsars, and the hierarchs who sat on the Church sees, and the hermits who hid amidst the forest and on the islands of the sea, and the military commanders, and the warriors, and the boyars, and the simple people: they all taught to look on this life as the entrance courtyard into the future life, they all taught to use it in such a way as not to console the flesh, but to raise the soul to evangelical virtue, to preserve the apostolic faith unharmed, to keep the purity of morals and truthfulness of speech, to honour the tsars and those placed in authority by them, to listen to and venerate the sacred monastic order, not to envy the rich, but to compete with the righteous ones, to love to work the land as indicated by God to our race through Adam and Noah, and to turn to other crafts only out of necessity or because of a special talent; not to borrow the corrupt habits of foreigners, their proud, lying and adulterous morals, but to preserve the order of the fatherland, which is fulfilled through chastity, simplicity and evangelical love; to stand fearlessly for your native land on the field of battle and to study the law of God in the sacred books.' That is what our land teaches us, that is what the wise men and righteous ones of all epochs of our history entrusted to us, in which there was no disagreement between them, but complete unanimity. The whole of Rus' thinks in the same way. But she knows that only the Anointed of God must preserve this spirit and defend it from enemies visible and invisible by his mighty right hand. And look he hardly stepped back from life when his popular privileges were snatched from him by deception and violence by his enemies and the enemies of the people. Yes, the Russian people thinks and feels one thing: in its eyes
public life is a general exploit of virtue, and not the realm of secular pleasures, it is the laborious increase of the Kingdom of God amongst us ourselves and its implanting in the unenlightened tribes, and not the equalisation of all faiths and superstitions. The Orthodox people knows and feels this. It feels that without one ruling royal right hand it is impossible for our land of many tribes to exist. In it are 102 different faiths, 102 tribes that will now nourish malicious enmity against each other immediately they cease to feel the ruling right hand of the White Tsar above them. Let him hear out the reports of the people’s delegates, let him allow them to express their opinions on various matters of the kingdom. But the final decision will be made by him himself, and he will give an account for this only through his conscience before the Lord God. One only submission, one only limitation of his power is necessary to the people: that openly on the day of his crowning he should confess his Orthodox faith to God and the people in accordance with the Symbol of the Fatherland – so that he should not have human arbitrariness, but the evangelical law of God as his unfailing guide in his sovereign decisions and undertakings. That is the kingdom we need, and this is understood not only by Russian people, but also by people other faiths who live in our land with a healthy people’s reasoning, and not through lies and deceit: both Tatars and Kirgiz and the old Jews who believe in their own way, and the distant Tunguz. All of them know that shaking the Tsar’s Autocracy means beginning the destruction of the whole of Russia, which has been confirmed in the last three years…”

Archbishop Anthony made an especially valuable contribution to the Pre-Conciliar Convention in 1906 in his report “On Freedom of Confession”: “Freedom of confession (not ‘freedom of conscience’: that is a senseless expression),” he wrote, “must of course be preserved in the state: there is no point in keeping anybody by force in the ruling Church; it is also necessary to excommunicate from the Church those who declare themselves to be outside her confession after exhorting them twice. But this is quite another matter than freedom of religious propaganda…”

“Orthodoxy has very little to fear from the preaching of foreign religious dogmas, and hardly any religion would decide to address Orthodox listeners with such preaching; this would mean hoping to draw people from the light of the sun to a dim kerosene lamp. The propaganda of heterodoxy is possible only through cunning, deception and violence. Who does not know by what means the Latins drew to themselves 200,000 Orthodox Christians last year? They persistently spread the rumour that the Royal Family and even St. John of Kronstadt was joining their heresy, assuring the people that supposedly all Catholics would be re-ascribed to the Polish gentry and be given lands, while the Orthodox would be returned to the status of serfs. But that was still only half the sorrow. Representing in themselves almost the whole of the landowning class in the western and south-western region, the Polish gentry

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and counts are oppressing the Orthodox in their factories... The peasants there are completely in the hands of these contemporary feudal lords, and when they meet them they kiss their feet.

“And so even now, when there is not yet equality of religious confessions, they are bestowing on the renegades from Orthodoxy both money and forests and lands, while the faithful sons of the Church are being insulted, deprived of employment and expelled together with their earnings from the factories. What will the situation be when there is equality of confessions?

“The Protestants are acting by the same means in the north-western region, as are various sects in the Crimea and New Russia. Orthodoxy and the Orthodox, by contrast, despise such ways of acting. The Muslim or Jew, on accepting holy baptism, is often immediately lynched, that is, killed by his former co-religionists... Can the government leave them defenceless? Thousands of Christians have fallen into Mohammedanism in the last year; even several purely Russian families in Orenburg diocese have done so, having been subjected to threats, bribes and absurd rumours about the imminent re-establishment of the Kirghiz kingdom with its hereditary dynasty, together with expulsion and even the beating up of all Christians.

“If the governments of all cultured countries punish falsification in trade, as well as the spreading of sensational false rumours and deliberate slander, etc., then our government, too, if it is to remain consistent, must protect the Orthodox people from the deceit, blackmail and economic and physical violence of the heterodox. They are able to act only by these means, as did the Catholics during the time of the Polish kingdom, when they seduced the Orthodox into the unia.

“Let us remember one more important circumstance that is completely ignored when talking about religious toleration.

“If our flock were catechized both in the truths of the faith and in how they should look on various faiths, peoples and estates, it would be possible to present them to themselves and to the spiritual influence of their pastors in the struggle for faith and nationality.

“But our government – more precisely, our state – has been attracted in the time of Peter and after by the aims of purely cultural and state centralization, constricting, distorting and even half eclipsing the religious consciousness and religious life of the Orthodox people. In the 17th century the latter had nothing to fear from any propaganda (except that of the Old Ritualists, of course), because, if not each peasant family, at any rate every village had its own teachers of dogmas, who lived the same peasant life as all the other village dwellers. Moreover, discipline in Church and everyday life was as strong as among the Jewish hassidim or, to take a closer example, our
contemporary *vedinovertsy*, to whom also, thanks to their conditions of life, no propaganda presented any danger.

“But the government of the 18th century tore away the clergy from the people, driving the former into the ranks of a separate caste, and educating it, not in the concepts and everyday discipline of popular Orthodoxy, but in the traditions of the Latin school and scholastic theological theory. The people was further and further estranged from Church literature and Church services, and which is still more sad, remained alone in its religious way of life, in its fasts, its prayers, its pilgrimages. The clergy became more and more learned and cultured, while the people became more and more ignorant and less steeped in Orthodox discipline. That is what happened with the Great Russian people, which was Orthodox from ages past. But what are we to say about the down-trodden, enslaved Western Little Russians and Belorussians, or about the descendants of the formerly baptized non-Russian peoples beyond the Volga and in Siberia?

“All these people, abandoned as regards spiritual development, chained to the land, had, willingly or unwillingly, to be reconciled to the thought that the Tsar, the lords, the bishops and the priests were reading sacred books and studying the holy faith for them, while they themselves would listen to them - learned people who could find the leisure and the means to read.

“The grey village hardly distinguishes between spiritual bosses and secular ones, spiritual books and science from secular ones. Everything that comes from the legislative authorities comes from God; everything that is published in the newspapers comes from the Tsar and the bishops. Look at what views on life our poor people has come up against: the mountains of proclamations, the blasphemous brochures, the caricatures of August Personages and Fr. John of Kronstadt and all the rest with which yester-year’s enlighteners have blessed their homeland.

“This is the clue how the people can believe the Catholic proclamations about his Majesty accepting this religion, and the revolutionary proclamations to the effect that the Tsar has supposedly ordered the landowners to be robbed, etc. And so, having taken into its hand the people’s conscience, can the Russian government renounce Orthodoxy before the people has been catechized in it consciously? If it would like to take an extra-confessional stance, then let it first return to the people the confessional conscience it leased from it, let it give out millions over several years for the establishment of catechists – at least one for every 300 people (now there is one priest for every 2000 Orthodox Christians). But until then it is obliged to protect the Orthodox people from violent deception, from economic compulsion to apostasy.
“We said that an elective authority will not dare to violate the people’s will, but it must get to know it and obey it. Government authority has, of course, lofty privileges, but it too is obliged to go in agreement, if not with everything that is contemporary, but in any case with the historically unchanged will of the people. It is in it that Russia, as a growing collective organism, as a nation, as an idea pouring out in history, is recognized. And what is this people in its history and its present? Is it an ethnographical group or a group, first of all, of self-defence at the level of the state? No, the Russians define themselves as a religious group, as a confessional group, including in this concept both the Georgians and the Greeks who cannot even speak Russian. According to the completely just definition of K. Aksakov and other Slavophiles, the Russian people thinks of itself as the flock of God, the Church, a society of people that accomplishes their salvation with the guidance of its faith and through prayer and labour. The people looks on its life as a cross given it by God, and the whole of its earthly state prosperity it has entrusted to the Tsar. Let the Tsar with his boyars and warriors repel the enemies of his Orthodox country, let him take taxes and recruits for this end, let the Tsar judge his servants and punish thieves, robbers and other evil-doers; all this is of little interest to the Russian man, his work is to struggle in labour and prayer, and to learn virtue from the people of God. And let the Tsar and his warriors take care that nobody hinders him in this.

“True, in this country there are many people who are foreign to the aim of life that is embraced by the whole people, that is, salvation. But they do not hinder Russian people in this, let them without hindrance live in accordance with their ‘pagan habits’ and pray to their gods, until they recognize the true faith. But, of course, not only the personal life of each man, but also the mission of the whole Orthodox country is seen by each Russian as consisting in exalting the light of Orthodoxy both among his own ‘heathen’, and beyond the frontiers of his native land, as is proved for us by the constant missionary colonization by Russians of the East and the North, beginning from the 9th century, and their constant consciousness of their historical duty to liberate their co-religionists from under the Turk and bring down his ‘God-hated kingdom’, for which a litany is raised at the New Year moleben since the days of Ivan III to the days of Nicholas II.

“To renounce this task, which the people has considered for nine centuries to be its most important work, and to establish equality of rights for all faiths in the Russian state – this means to annihilate Russia as an historical fact, as an historical force; it means carrying out a great violation on the thousand-year-old people than the Tatar khans or the usurpers of the Time of Troubles carried out…”421

One of Vladyka Anthony’s major concerns was the defence of the Orthodox population of Austria-Hungary. The Hungarian government and

the uniates tried by all means to prevent the return of the Carpatho-Russians to their ancestral Orthodox faith. "Vladyka Anthony struggled with the unia and both by the printed word and in his sermons he often addressed this theme. He tried by all means to destroy the incorrect attitude towards the unia which had been established in Russia, according to which it was the same Orthodoxy, only commemorating the Pope of Rome. With profound sorrow and irritation he said: ‘They can in no way accept this simple truth, that the unia is a complete entry into the Roman Catholic church with the recognition of the Orthodox Church as a schism., with the recognition of all the Latin saints and with a condemnation of the Orthodox saints as having been schismatics outside the true Church…’

“…Vladyka Anthony also laboured much to establish in Russian society an Orthodox attitude towards Catholicism. In educated Russian society and in ecclesiastical circles in the Synodal period of the Russian Church the opinion was widespread that Catholicism was one of the branches of Christianity which, as V.S. Soloviev taught, was bound at the end of time to unite into one Christianity with the other supposed branches - Orthodoxy and Protestantism, about which the holy Church supposedly prayed in her litanies: ‘For the prosperity of the Holy Churches of God and for the union of all’.

“The correct attitude towards Catholicism as an apostate heresy was so shaken that the Holy Synod under the influence of the Emperor Peter I and with the blessing of his favourite, the protestantizing Metropolitan Theophan Prokopovich, allowed Swedish prisoners-of-war in Siberia to marry Russian girls with the obligatory conversion to Orthodoxy. Soon this uncanonical practice of mixed marriages became law and spread, especially in the western regions. In his diocese Vladyka Anthony strictly forbade the clergy to celebrate mixed marriages.

“Vladyka Anthony well knew that Catholic influence in the midst of the Russian clergy was introduced through the theological schools: ‘We have lost (an Orthodox attitude towards Catholicism) because those guides by which we studied in school and which constitute the substance of our theological, dogmatic and moral science, is borrowed from the Catholics and Protestants; we are left only with straight heterodox errors which are known to all and have been condemned by ecclesiastical authorities…”

“Seeing the abnormal situation of church life in subjugated Carpathian Rus’, Vladyka Anthony turned to the Ecumenical Patriarch Joachim III with a request to accept the Orthodox Galicians and Carpatho-Russians under his omophorion, since the Russian Synod for political reasons was unable to spread its influence there. The patriarch willingly agreed and appointed Vladyka Anthony as his exarch for Galicia and Carpathian Rus’. The Galicians, after finishing work in the fields and in spite of the great obstacles involved in crossing the border, sometimes with a direct danger to their lives, made
pilgrimages in large groups to the Pochaev Lavra. Many Carpatho-Russians and Galicians entered the Volhynia theological seminary.

“Under the influence of all these undertakings, the Orthodox movement in these areas began to grow in an elemental manner with each year that passed. This elicited repressions on the part of the Austro-Hungarian government, which tried to suppress the movement. The persecution grew and soon Vladyka was forced to speak out in defence of the persecuted Christians. In August, 1913 he published an encyclical letter in which he eloquently portrayed all the woes and persecutions of the Orthodox population of the western regions. In going through the various instances of Catholics humiliating Orthodox, he cited the following example of the firmness of the persecuted and the cruelty of the persecutors: ‘Virgins who had gathered together to save their souls in fasting and prayer were stripped in winter and driven out onto a frozen lake, like the 40 martyrs of Sebaste, after which some of them soon died. Thus do they torture our Russians in Hungary and Austria in broad daylight in our civilized age…’

“But when massive arrests and tortures of the Orthodox began, and there was a trial of 94 Orthodox in Sihet, Vladyka Anthony composed a special prayer and petitions in the litanies, which were read in all the churches of the Volhynia diocese in the course of the whole period of the trial, which lasted for two months. This was the only voice raised in defence of the persecuted, not only in Russia but also throughout Europe.

“The Austro-Hungarian political circles, in agreement with the Vatican, undertook decisive measures to suppress the incipient mass return to Orthodoxy of the Carpatho-Russians and Galicians. It seems that they undertook diplomatic negotiations in St. Petersburg in order to remove the main cause of the movement that had arisen, Vladyka Anthony, from his Volhynia see.”

On May 20, 1914 Archbishop Anthony was duly transferred from the see of Volhynia to that of Kharkov...

However, where human leaders fail, the King of kings intervenes. The First World War removed – temporarily, at any rate – many of the dangers that had arisen in the pre-war period and against which Archbishop Anthony had struggled. Thus patriotic emotion and reverence for the Tsar revived. And concern for the fate of the Orthodox Christians in Serbia and the south-west regions made the struggle, in the minds of many, into a holy war in defence of Orthodoxy against militant Catholicism and Protestantism...

Russia and the Balkans

Russia could never remain indifferent to, or detached from, events in the Balkans for both religious and historical reasons. In the tenth century Russia received her Orthodox faith from the Greeks of the New Rome of Constantinople. For nearly five hundred years, until the council of Florence in 1438-39 and the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the rulers of Russia, although de facto independent of, and much more powerful than, the Byzantine Emperor, considered themselves de jure only junior partners of the Emperor, while the huge Russian Church remained only a single metropolitan district of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. After the fall of Constantinople, the Balkan Slavs and Greeks looked to the Russians as potential liberators from the Turkish yoke, and in 1562 Tsar Ivan IV received a gramota from the Ecumenical Patriarch Joasaph calling him “our Tsar”, ascribing to him authority over “Orthodox Christians in the entire universe”, and applying to him the same epithets, “pious, God-crowned and Christ-loving” as had been applied to the Byzantine Emperors. Moscow “the Third Rome” been born...

The idea of the Third Rome has been subjected to much mockery and revilement as if it were just an excuse for nationalist ambition. But exactly the reverse is true: in acknowledging themselves to be the successors of the Byzantines, “the Second Rome”, the Russians took upon themselves an internationalist obligation: to fight for the protection of all Orthodox Christians throughout the inhabited world. In some, rare cases – Georgia and Bessarabia - this involved annexation of the territory involved. In most cases, however, it involved shedding blood for their fellow Orthodox Christians with no territorial or economic gain whatsoever, as in the liberation of Bulgaria from the Turks in 1877. To a large extent the history of Russia from the fifteenth century onwards can be seen as a slow, painful but inexorable advance to the fulfilment of the ideal of Christian Rome: the liberation of all fellow Orthodox Christians living under the yoke of heretical or pagan rulers.

The cost was enormous. It has been calculated that, quite apart from losses in terms of men killed, Russians taken into slavery by the Turks from the 15th to the 18th century inclusive numbered between three and five million, while the population of the whole of Russia in the time of Ivan the Terrible (16th century) numbered less than five million souls. Nor, of course, did it end in the 18th century: Russia fought the enormously costly Crimean War for the sake of the Holy Places in Jerusalem, and the war of 1877-78 for the sake of the Balkan Slavs. And yet losses of men killed or driven into slavery abroad were only the beginning of the cost. Both the institution of serfdom, which so upset the liberals, and that of military service from youth until (virtually) death, were the results, not of the despotic cruelty of the tsars, but of sheer

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423 I.L. Solonevich, Narodnaia Monarkhia (The People’s Monarchy), Minsk, 1998, pp. 403-404. The slaves included some who have been numbered among the saints, such as St. John the Russian (imprisoned in Turkey itself) and St. Paul of Cairo.
military necessity – a necessity that the Russians (and not only the tsars, but also the peasants, who prayed every day for the liberation of those under the Turkish yoke) felt obliged to submit to as long as “the Hagarenes” lorded it over the heartlands of Orthodox Christianity.

Russia’s victory over the Ottoman empire in 1877-78 fundamentally changed the political situation in the Balkans. The Turks were now in slow, uneven, but inexorable retreat from Europe, while all the Orthodox nations acquired independent nation-states. However, freedom (although there was still no freedom for those living in Thrace and Anatolia, and for the Arab Orthodox of the Middle East) did not immediately bring prosperity, and certainly not peace…

One problem was that the peasantry, the majority of the population in all the Balkan countries, was no less oppressed by heavy taxes and indebtedness under the national regimes than it had been under the Turks. This led to peasant rebellions in several countries: in Serbia in 1883, in Bulgaria in 1899 and, most seriously, in Romania in 1907, where 120,000 troops were called out and 10,000 peasants were killed. There was simply not enough land to support a rising population, and many thousands of able-bodied men – men who were greatly needed at home – were forced to emigrate, especially in Greece and Montenegro.

A second problem was tension between the newly independent states. Thus in 1885 Serbia invaded Bulgaria (the Bulgars won), and towards the end of the century the Serbs, the Bulgars and the Greeks were fighting proxy wars against each other for control of Macedonia. Only rarely did the Orthodox nations unite against their common foe, the Turks, as in the First Balkan War of 1912: more often it was Orthodox against Orthodox, as in the Second Balkan War of 1913, when Greeks, Serbs and Romanians united against the Bulgars (who were defeated).

Inter-Orthodox rivalries were exacerbated by the fact that, as a result of the Treaty of Berlin, Austria-Hungary gained a protectorate in Bosnia and greater influence in the area as a whole. This meant that Serbia was forced to seek good relations with Austria (until the dynastic coup of 1903 brought in a pro-Russian dynasty), while Bulgaria remained under the influence of the other great power in the region, Russia. In 1908 Russia had been forced to acquiesce in Austria’s annexation of Bosnia – but this created pressure on her leaders not to back down again…

Each of the Orthodox nations, inspired by its recent acquisition of independence, strove to extend its boundaries at the expense of its neighbours. Strong national feeling had served them well in preserving their integrity during the centuries of the Ottoman yoke. But it served them less well when

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that yoke was crumbling, and the virus of nationalism reinvigorated their enemies as well. Thus the winds of nationalism began to blow in Albania and Kosovo, which Serbs regard as their national heritage and which had not hitherto had a strong national movement. Even the Turks, stung by their defeats, began to abandon the ideal of a multi-national and multi-cultural empire and look for a “Turkey for the Turks” ideology.

More fundamentally, the Balkan nations had no coherent political ideology. Orthodoxy was in decline, and the traditional Orthodox “symphony of powers” had not been revived. Instead, weak autocratic rulers (Nicholas of Montenegro was a partial exception) worked uneasily or not at all with embryonic parliaments imbued with western ideas of democracy and socialism. The most shocking example of this internal disorder was the killing of King Alexander and Queen Draga of Serbia in Belgrade in 1903, which, according to Rebecca West, was the real trigger that led to the shots at Sarajevo in 1914, the First World War and the Russian revolution…

Now in order to counter the increasing economic and military power of the German empire, and the threat posed to the Balkan Slavs by the German-Austrian alliance, Russia had formed an alliance with France in 1894, which was joined in 1907 by Britain. “The division of Europe into two military alliances,” writes Dominic Lieven, “made it almost certain that any conflict between great powers would engulf the entire continent. Nevertheless, in the first decade of Nicholas’s reign Russia’s relations with Berlin and Vienna were friendly. This was in part because much of Petersburg’s attention was devoted to the Far East, which in turn made it easier to agree with Austria on a policy of supporting the status quo in the Balkans.

“Russia’s defeat by Japan in 1904-05 and the subsequent Russian revolution of 1905-06 changed matters very much for the worse. Awareness of Russian impotence encouraged first Germany and then Austria to defend their interests in the Moroccan Crisis of 1905-06 and in the 1908-09 Bosnian crisis [when Austria annexed Bosnia and Russia was powerless to do anything about it] in a more aggressive manner than would otherwise have been the case. In Berlin’s defence, however, it does need to be stressed that Germany did not seize the opportunity offered by Russia’s weakness to impose its domination on Europe, as it could easily have done at any time between 1905 and 1909. The Russian government, acutely aware both of its international vulnerability and of its lack of prestige at home, became over-fearful of Austrian aggression in the Balkans after 1909, against which it helped to organize a league of Balkan states. The latter’s existence in turn contributed to instability in the Balkan peninsula and to Russo-Austrian tensions. The tsarist regime’s position was also challenged by the emergence of liberal-nationalist political parties in Russian which asserted their patriotic credentials by stressing Russia’s mission in the Balkans and contrasting their own support for that mission with the government’s caution and
cowardice. Under all these pressures, a gap opened between Petersburg’s strong rhetorical defence of its international interests and its actual willingness to stand up for these interests when challenged. Russia’s rivals were thereby rather encouraged to discount Petersburg’s pronouncements and to believe that pressure would bring rewards. This mattered in 1914.”

It mattered because in 1914, while Germany and Austria thought that Russia would bow to pressure as she had done in the Bosnian crisis of 1909, Russia felt she could not bow to such pressure a second time – not only because of the objective threat to Serbia, but also because the liberal-nationalist parties would not allow her prestige as the protector of Orthodoxy in the Balkans to be destroyed...

**German Nationalism**

If nationalist pressures were beginning to play an important role in Russian foreign policy, as they had already, and to a much greater degree, in the foreign policies of the Balkan states, we must not neglect to describe the growth of nationalism in the most powerful state in Europe – Germany.

German nationalism was first elicited by Prussia’s defeat at the hands of Napoleon at the battle of Jena in 1806. This engendered a feeling of resentfulness and a desire to show that Germany was the equal of France not only militarily but also culturally, a desire that was finally satisfied by the victory over France at Sedan in 1870 and the foundation of the German Empire under Prussia’s leadership. Germany’s victory over France in 1870 both calmed the wounded pride elicited by the defeats inflicted by Napoleon.

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425 “Between 1907 and 1914 the outlines of a coalition between sections of Russia’s economic, political and intellectual elites based on a combination of liberal and nationalist ideas began to emerge. It encompassed a number of leading Moscow industrialists, some of Russia’s greatest liberal intellectuals and many Duma leaders. By 1914 this shadowy coalition had important friends in both the army and the bureaucracy. Prince Grigori Trubetskoy, who ran the Foreign Ministry’s department of Near Eastern and Balkan affairs, was closely linked to the Moscow industrialists and to Peter Struve, the leading intellectual spokesman for the coalition of the liberal-conservative and nationalist elites. Even Alexander Krivoshein, the Minister of Agriculture, was a potential ally of this coalition. His ministry, and indeed he himself, maintained cordial relations with the Duma and the zemstva. On the whole, they enjoyed a good press. And Krivoshein was not merely inclined towards pro-Slav nationalist sympathies, he had also married a daughter of one of Moscow’s leading industrialist families. It needs to be stressed that this coalition was still in embryo in 1907-9 and that Germany’s own aggressive policies played a role in bringing it to life in later years. Nevertheless the Germans were not wrong to watch Russian domestic developments with great concern in the pre-war era. The idea that the liberal-nationalist, anti-German and pro-Slav coalition represented the wave of the future was not unreasonable and was widely believed both in Russia and abroad...” (Lieven, Nicholas II, pp. 191-192). (V.M.)

and stoked up a new pride in the new, united nation-state and a new belief in its rights in relation to its neighbours.

Later, however, a general feeling of dissatisfaction set in in Germany. Many were unhappy at the triumph of Prussia and its regimented, despotic spirit. Engels had welcomed Bismarck’s success in reducing German “particularism”, but “the main disadvantage,” he said, “and it is a very big one, is the inevitable swamping of Germany by the Prussian spirit”. The liberals were unhappy that Germany was not a fully parliamentary state, but was still largely controlled by the king, the army and the Prussian aristocracy. Antisemites like Paul de Lagarde, on the other hand, were unhappy that Germany was becoming too liberal, and that the new unified German state was the “little” one, excluding Austria. The Catholics were unhappy with Bismarck’s Kulturkampf legislation for obligatory civil marriage and the prohibition of the Jesuit order, resistance to which caused most Prussian bishops and thousands of priests to be thrown into prison. Over all this was a vaguer feeling that something was rotten in the house of Germany with its “hard-boiled Realpolitik and oppressive piety, ostentatious theatrical poses, self-righteous nationalism combined with internal discord, and finally materialism, overwhelmed by the successes of the natural sciences, but yet prepared suddenly to change into cheap mysticism”.

The feeling began to spread that only war could clear the atmosphere. Thus while Germany’s problem in 1806 had been defeat in war, the temptation after 1870 was victory and the hubris that came from it. War had humbled the old enemy and united the nation (almost): why should it not continue to cure the nation’s ills?

The roots of war-worship were to be found in Germany’s not-so-distant past. Thus in his treatise On War (1832) the Prussian general Karl von Clausewitz had famously declared that “war is the continuation of politics by other means”. Gradually the idea became entrenched that war is a cleansing process sweeping away the decadence that comes from too much peace. And there were more mystical reasons for supporting war. Thus Hegel considered that “the German spirit is the spirit of the new world. Its aim is the realization of absolute Truth as the unlimited self-determination of freedom.” Clearly war could not be taboo to “unlimited self-determination”…

As Barbara Ehrenreich writes: “In the opinion of Hegel and the later theorists of nationalism, nations need war – that is, the sacrifice of their citizens – even when they are not being menaced by other nations. The reason is simple: The nation, as a kind of ‘organism’, exists only through the emotional unity of its citizens, and nothing cements this unity more decisively than war. As Hegel explained, peace saps the strength of nations by allowing citizens to drift back into their individual concerns: ‘In times of peace civil life

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expands more and more, all the different spheres settle down, and in the long
run men sink into corruption, their particularities become more and more
fixed and ossified. But health depends upon the unity of the body and if the
parts harden, death occurs.’ Meaning, of course, the death of the nation,
which depends for its life on the willingness of the citizens to face their own
deaths. War thus becomes a kind of tonic for nations, reviving that passion for
collective defence that alone brings the nation to life in the minds of its
citizens. Heinrich von Treitschke, the late-nineteenth-century German
nationalist, put it excitedly: ‘One must say in the most decided manner: “War
is the only remedy for ailing nations!” The moment the State calls, “Myself
and my existence are at stake!” social self-seeking must fall back and every
party hate be silent. The individual must forget his own ego and feel himself a
member of the whole... In that very point lies the loftiness of war, that the
small man disappears entirely before the great thought of the State...’”

Fortunately, while Bismarck was no liberal, he was not a warmonger,
defining politics, contrary to Clausewitz, as “the art of the possible”. He did
not look for Lebensraum in the East or in the Balkans (they were not worth
“the bones of a Pomeranian grenadier”), which meant that he tried hard to
avoid conflict with Russia. Nor did he join in the scramble for colonies
overseas. Moreover, his nationalism was a provincial, Prussian one rather
than a pan-German one. Bismarck renounced the idea of a “greater Germany”
that included Austria, which would really have destroyed the balance of
power and created the political revolution that Disraeli feared. In any case,
not having Austria was no disadvantage in terms of power, because Prussia
without Austria was so much more powerful than all the other German
princes put together that the new state, in spite of the resentment of its junior
members at the preponderance of Prussia, was never in danger of fissiparous
disintegration in the way that Austro-Hungary had been and continued to be.

As for Austria, she was henceforth bound to depend on her more powerful
“sister” if she was to retain her power in the face of Russia, and could be
relied on not to enter into alliances with other great powers. With her
complex mixture of nationalities, Germanic, Hungarian, Slav and Latin, she
was weak; so it was not in Germany’s interests that she should be dissolved
into her constituent nationalities, thereby creating conflicts and involving the
great powers on different sides of the conflicts. So Bismarck did not
encourage Austria’s forays into the Balkans, which might have involved
Russia on the side of the Slavs and Germany on the side of Austria - which is
precisely what happened in 1914... So while Bismarck was at the helm of the
German state, it was not likely that she would engage in rash military
enterprises. Nevertheless, he did encourage militarism as a cultural tendency.
And as Russia grew stronger, the idea was born in militaristic circles of a
quick war against Russia in order to bring her down to size...

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These ideas gained currency especially after William II came to the throne in 1888. Bismarck was dismissed, and a treaty with Russia was allowed to lapse. “The monarch,” writes Spellman, was moving Germany “into an aggressive and expansionist posture…”

The Young Turks

At the same time that Russia was organizing a coalition of Balkan states to counter Austrian aggression, important changes were taking place in the other great power in the region – Turkey… Two conflicting legal systems were operating in the Ottoman Empire: the Islamic Sharia law combined with the Sultan’s personal decrees, and the liberal system, introduced under pressure from the Western powers, whose main idea was the equality of all citizens, both Muslim and Christian. The liberal legislation, which was incorporated into the Constitution in 1876, was displeasing to Muslims and Christians alike. For, on the one hand, the Muslims felt that they were losing their superiority to the “infidel”. And on the other hand, the Christians were worried about losing some of the exemptions they enjoyed under the old “millet” system. For “in some ways,” as Taner Akçam writes, “Christians were better off than the average Turkish peasant, given their exemption from military service, and often the support of a foreign consulate, which excluded them from Ottoman courts, protected their homes from being searched by the authorities and freed them from Ottoman taxes. The maligned Turkish peasant, at the other end of the social scale, was generally no better off than the ordinary non-Muslim and as much oppressed by maladministration… He was as much in need of reformed government as the Church, but [h]e had neither treaty, foreign power, nor patriarch to protect him, and his lot was generally unknown in Europe.”

Defeat at the hands of Russia in 1877-78, and the gradual liberation of their European Christian subjects, increased the sense of grievance and frustration among the Turks. Massacres of Christians began, notably the killings of two hundred thousand Armenians in 1894-96, followed by a nearly two million in 1915. And a new nationalist ideology began to be worked out on the basis of the empire’s Muslim Turks being the “millet-i Hakime”, or “ruling nation”. The Union and Progress movement, otherwise known as the Young Turks, declared: “We can compromise with the Christians only when they accept our position of dominance.” One of their leaders, Namik Kemal, spoke of the Turks as “occupying the pre-eminent position in the Ottoman collective… on account of their great numbers and abilities, excellent and meritorious qualities such as ‘breadth of intelligence’, ‘cool-headedness’, ‘tolerance and

repose”. Another leader, Ali Suavi, declared that “the Turkish race [is] older and superior… on account of its military, civilizing and political roles”.

Although this ideology was secular and nationalist, rather than religious, in its motivation, “and the beginning and end of their thoughts were with rescuing the state”, at this stage it did not openly avow its secular nature. Thus in 1904 Yusuf Akçura wrote: “Let’s not err in praying in the name of Turkishness, Ottomanism, or Islam, which our friend has mistakenly taken as distinct from one another.”

Paradoxically, however, the nationalists were strongly influenced by western ideas, such as Social Darwinism and the German concept of the nation as defined essentially by race, blood and culture. Also typically western was their enthusiasm for science – it was Ottoman backwardness in science that explained its weakness in relation to the West, - and their characterization of their struggle as one of “freedom” against the oppression of a backward and tyrannical old regime. Thus the aim of Atatürk’s “Motherland and Freedom Society”, which was founded in Syria in 1906 and was later merged into the Committee of Union and Progress, was, as he told his friends, nothing less than to liberate the Homeland from tyranny and enable the Turks to rule themselves: “Today, they wish to separate the Rumelia region in Macedonia from the homeland. Foreigners are now exercising their partial and actual influence and control over parts of the country, The Padishah is one who capable of committing all evils, who thinks of nothing but his pleasures and the sultanate. The people are being crushed under tyranny and oppression. There is death and collapse in a country in which there is no freedom. The reason for all advancement and formation is liberty. Today history is burdening us, her sons, with some major tasks. I have established a society in Syria. We have started the struggle against tyranny and oppression. I came to set up the foundations of this society here as well. It is imperative to work in secrecy and awaken the organization. I expect self-sacrifice from all of you. I invite you to the task of rebelling against this damned oppression, tearing down this rotten, worn-out administration, so that the people can rule themselves – in short, to save the motherland.”

“The Young Turks,” writes Dominic Lieven, “were the products of the Western-style schools and colleges created by the Ottoman regime from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. The movement’s core often consisted of army officers but included many civilian professionals as well. They had many similarities with Russian revolutionaries of their time and with later Third World radicalism. Their great enemy was their country’s backwardness, which they blamed on the Ottoman regime and, usually, on religion, which they saw as the main cause of the people’s ignorance, sloth and conservatism.

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431 Akçam, op. cit, p. 39.
432 Akçam, op. cit, pp. 44, 41.
Their own creed was a rather crude belief in science and materialism, combined with a linguistic and ethnic Turkish nationalism based on European models. They were populists but also great Jacobin elitists, convinced that it was the new Westernized elite’s duty to lead the nation to prosperity and power. They were seldom themselves of traditional upper-class origin, and their radicalism owed much to the sense that their own professional merit went unnoticed by a regime whose rulers promoted clients on the basis of personal connection and political loyalty. The initial base of the Young Turk movement was Macedonia, where its rank and file developed a powerful sense of Turkish solidarity and nationalism in response to pressure by Bulgarian nationalist bands on the Muslim population. The development of mass Turkish nationalism in the Anatolian heartland came later: it was partly a product of the Greek invasion of Anatolia in 1920 and partly the creation of the schools and propaganda of Ataturk’s republican regime of the 1920s and 1930s. In this pattern whereby mass nationalism spread from the borderlands to a people’s core territories, the Turkish experience was relatively common. It was in the borderlands that a people often had most cause to meet and clash with foreigners, and it was here too that insecurity and disputes over frontiers had most resonance.

“Once in power, the Young Turks’ official policies and pronouncements were imperial and Ottoman: in other words, they stressed their loyalty to the supranational empire, the Islamic faith and the bonds that united Turks and Arab in common loyalty to dynasty and religion. In their private conversations and plans, however, Turkish nationalism was a more dominant theme. The Young Turks in reality looked down on the Arabs as backward, poor fighters and potential traitors to the empire, quite unlike non-Turkish Balkan Muslims (e.g. Albanians) whom the Turks in general respected and trusted, seeing them as potential members of the Turkish national community. 434

“These views were no secret to many Arab leaders and caused great distrust. The Young Turk regime was committed to military power, centralization and efficiency. In pursuit of these goals it sought a near-monopoly of power. Its leaders hoped to extend the centre’s control over the provinces, to increase and equalize military and fiscal burdens, and to spread the Turkish language and a common, basically Turkish, imperial patriotism. Imperial realities quickly persuaded them, however, that some concessions to Arab notables’ determination to control their own provinces were essential; otherwise these notables, especially in Syria, would swing overwhelmingly to

434 The sultan whom the Young Turks had deposed, Abdulhamid, had had an important advantage in keeping Turk and Arab together in his position as caliph of all Muslims. Moreover, he had sought to bring Arabs into his court and administration. So “when the Young Turks subsequently purged these Arab placements in the name of progressive politics and administrative efficiency they contributed greatly to growing distrust of the new regime in the Arab provinces…” (Lieven, op. cit. pp. 137-138). (V.M.)
the camp of Arab nationalism which in some regions was already beginning
to emerge as a threat by 1914. The result was the granting of considerable
autonomy to the Arab provinces in 1913. Whether in reality a peacetime
Young Turk regime in Constantinople would have been willing and able to
maintain a *modus vivendi* with Arab provincial elites remains uncertain,
since the war and the empire’s collapse came before the new policy had time
to take effect.”

On July 23, 1908 the Young Turks imposed a constitution on the empire. In
1909 the Sultan was deposed. And by 1913 the government had come under
the complete control of the Committee of Union and Progress. The new
government was Masonic. Both its leader, Mehment Talaat Pasha (Grand
Master of the Turkish Grand Orient), and its most famous member, Kemal
Ataturk (initiated into an Italian lodge in Macedonia), were Freemasons…

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In fact, already after the establishment of the constitutional government in 1908 a number
of sheikhs in Tripoli and Benghazi rebelled. They said that the caliph’s authority had been
reduced by the advent of the new government. Ataturk was sent to pacify the sheiks and “re-
established the state’s authority only after speaking with them in a convincing manner”

Some words on the origin of Masonry in the Ottoman empire. As the Ottoman empire
declined in power, it became more and more cosmopolitan, liberal and ecumenist, at least in
the capital; and Freemasonry played no small part in this process. Thus Philip Mansel writes:
“From 1884 the *Cercle d’Orient*, one of the main centres of news and gambling in the city, was
housed in a magnificent building on the Grande Rue de Pera. It was open to men of every
race and religion, and viziers were members ex officio. Freemasons had existed in
Constantinople since the eighteenth century; the Bektashki order had remarkable, and
remarked on, similarities with the Masons, perhaps due to contacts with France through
Bonneval Pasha. The masonic message of universal fraternity and abolition of religious and
national differences seemed especially appropriate to the Ottoman Empire. The lodge *Le
Progrès*, founded in 1868, held meetings in Ottoman and Greek. It was joined by men of
different religions… In another lodge called the *Union d’Orient*, in 1866, a French atheist cried,
perhaps for the first time in Constantinople: ‘God does not exist! He has never existed.’”

An important member of *Le Progrès* was the wealthy Greek banker and believer in the
Ottoman Empire Cleanti Scalieris (Kleanti Skalyeri in Turkish), who was born into a noble
family in Constantinople in 1833. According to Jasper Ridley, he was “initiated in 1863 into a
lodge which had been established in Constantinople by the French Grand Orient. He was
friendly with Midhat Pasha, a high official in the Sultan’s government who was secretly the
leader of the Young Turks. Midhat Pasha had been initiated as a Freemason while he was a
student in England. After he returned to Turkey he was appointed Governor of the Danube
region, and established a regime in which there was no religious persecution. In 1872 he was
for a short time Grand Vizier, the head of the Turkish government.

“Scalieris and Midhat Pasha were able to exercise their influence on Prince Murad, the
nephew of the Sultan Abd-Ul Aziz and the heir to the throne. Murad listened with sympathy
to their progressive liberal views, and at their suggestion became a Freemason in 1872, joining
a Greek-speaking lodge in Constantinople under the authority of the French Grand Orient. In
1876, while the Bulgarian revolt against Turkish rule was taking place and Russia was
preparing to go to war with Turkey in support of the Bulgarians, Midhat Pasha carried out a
coup, deposed Abd-Ul Aziz, and proclaimed Murad as the Sultan Murad V.

“A liberal-minded Freemason was now Sultan of Turkey; but within a few months he was
deposed after another coup which placed the tyrannical Abd-Ul Hamid II on the throne.
The Balkan Wars

One result of the Young Turk revolution in 1908 was the stirring of unrest in Albania. Now, as Jason Tomes writes, “it was easy for the rest of the world to overlook the Albanians, given that the Ottoman Empire categorised subjects by religion only. Muslim Albanians were labelled Turks and Orthodox Albanians assumed to be Greeks. At the Congress of Berlin (1878), Bismarck insisted: ‘There is no Albanian nationality.’ Partisans of Serbia and Bulgaria emphasised that Albanians volunteered to fight on the Turkish side in Balkan wars. What sort of oppressed nationality assisted its oppressors?

“Albanians believed themselves to be the aborigines of the Balkans, beside whom all other Europeans were newcomers. Their ancestors do appear to have occupied the same mountain valleys throughout recorded history. They were sometimes identified with the semi-mythical Pelasgians (mentioned by Homer) or the ancient Illyrians. Whatever their origins, Albanians had never paid much heed to those who successively claimed to rule over them: Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Normans, Serbs, Bulgars, Venetians, and then Turks. In places where the state meant nothing, who cared if the state were foreign?”

In fact, the Albanians were in general quite content with Turkish rule, because, being mainly Muslims, they were given leading posts in the Empire, and could lord it over both the Serbs in Kosovo and the Bulgarians in Macedonia.

This, continues Tomes, “helps to explain why Albania was apparently unmoved by the tide of Balkan nationalism. The nineteenth century had transformed south-eastern Europe with the creation of Greece, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria as modern states, but the majority of Albanians seemed as content (or discontent) with Turkish rule in 1900 as they had been a hundred years earlier. The handful of brave intellectuals who wanted to teach in the Albanian language were clearly cultural nationalists, yet even they eschewed early independence, knowing that the fall of the Ottoman Empire would probably entail their ‘liberation’ by the Slavs.”

But the winds of nationalism began to blow even among the Albanians. “In 1910,” writes Mark Mazower, “an uprising in northern Albania was only

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During his thirty-three-year reign he acquired international notoriety both by his despotic government and by the sexual excesses of his private life. At first he maintained Midhat Pasha as Grand Vizier, but then arranged for him to be assassinated. He kept Murad imprisoned in the palace. Sciliaris tried to arrange for Murad to escape, but the rescue attempt failed. Murad died in 1904, having been kept as a prisoner in the palace for 28 years.

“Abd-Ul Hamid continued to reign until 1909, when he was deposed and imprisoned after the revolution of the Young Turks.” (The Freemasons, London: Constable, 1999, pp. 216-217)


Tomes, op. cit., p. 13.
defeated with the aid of 20,000 Ottoman troops. And the next year – as Italy went to war with the Ottoman Empire in Libya and contemplated an invasion of Albania – an even larger revolt saw the rebels call for the first time for the recognition of Albania as a separate nation and for virtual self-government. ‘The formation of a commission at Dibra to consider a demand for the recognition of Albanians in official registers as “Albanians” and not as “Moslems” or “non-Moslems” is especially significant, noted the British Ambassador in Constantinople. ‘The notables forming the commission are apparently themselves Moslems and that they should even consider a proposal to demand a national instead of a religious status is an entirely new and very remarkable development…””

One of the leading nationalists was Ahmed Bey Zogolli, a clan leader from the Mati region of central Albania. Sent by his mother to Istanbul, he became an admirer of Napoleon Bonaparte and involved in student politics at about the time of the Young Turk revolution in July, 1908. This “galvanized those with any interest in politics, as prisons were thrown open, women tore off their veils, and banners extolled ‘Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, Justice’. A new parliament was elected (including Albanian deputies) with the aim of radical reform. When the Sultan obstructed it, he was swept aside. Zogolli, with his head full of Napoleonic France, shared in the euphoria. Everything that he had learnt convinced him of the merits of modernisation, and even his countrymen back home assumed that change could only be for the better. Like them, he did not appreciate that the Young Turk ‘Union and Progress’ movement would be far from congenial to Albanians.

“The new regime set out to revive the Ottoman Empire by imposing uniformity. Turkish law, regular taxation, military service, and the Arabic alphabet would be enforced from Baghdad to Shkodra. Faced with the threat of effective Ottoman rule, the Albanians predictably revolted, demanding the right to remain a law unto themselves. Every spring, our years running, a major clan or region rebelled and suffered violent reprisals (including Mati in 1909). It was not until 1911, however, that the Albanians scented success, as the Italo-Turkish War weakened their opponents.

“Despite his sympathy for some Young Turk ideas, Ahmed never doubted where his loyalties lay. He had kept himself informed of events, not from the newspapers (which were censored), but from speaking to Albanians newly arrived in the city. In late 1911 or 1912, he abandoned his studies, slipped away to Salonika, and met up with a cousin at school there. Together they made for Mati to play their part in the imminent historic developments. Recalling this reunion with his mother over twenty years later, King Zog came close to tears. In a few days, he ceased to be a schoolboy and became a chieftain. Ahmed Bey Zogolli, in his native valley, passed for a man of the world at sixteen. Battle-scarred warriors bowed before him and elders

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deferred to his learning. But there was only one place where he could really prove his worth: on the field of battle. When the northern clans launched a fresh revolt in April 1912, it swept the land as never before and Mati joined in the conflict. This time the Albanians were victorious. The Turks, tired of conflict, conceded autonomy. Ahmed had fought in no more than a skirmish, but, if he wanted to see serious action, he had not long to wait. The First Balkan War broke out on 8 October, 1912, his seventeenth birthday. The Balkan League of Montenegro, Serbia, Greece and Bulgaría turned on the Ottoman Empire with the goal of driving the Turks from Europe once and for all.

“Most Albanians reacted to this with a dramatic turn about face. They had just been fighting the Turks themselves to block unwelcome reforms. Now they had to fight ‘liberation’ by Greeks and Slavs. Serbia was demanding access to the sea, which could only mean part of Albania. Greece said that the south was ‘Northern Epirus’ and claimed all its Christians as Greeks.441 King Nicholas of Montenegro swore that Shkodra was the sacred burial place of his forefathers. Under simultaneous attack from north, south and east, Albanians could scarcely stay neutral. Zogolli sent a request to the Prefect of Dibra for arms and ammunition. In return, he rallied Mati in defence of the Ottoman Empire…” 442

Paradoxically, the union of the Balkan Orthodox against the Ottomans and Albania was opposed by Orthodox Russia. Edvard Radzinsky writes: “The tsar understood how that impudent disruption of the status quo in the Balkans would ignite an explosion of indignation among the great powers. The minister of foreign affairs was instructed to persuade Montenegro to end its occupation of the fortress [of Shkodra or Scutari]. But [King Nikolai] knew of the bellicose mood in Petersburg and of the support of Grand Duke Nikolai, the ‘dread uncle’, and he callously continued the siege of Scutari.

“And then more threatening news came from the dangerous Balkans. On 5 (18 NS) October Serbia and Bulgaría entered the war against Turkey, followed by Greece the day after. And the Turkish army sustained defeat after defeat. News of the successes of the Balkan alliance – of their brothers in the faith – against the Turkish Moslems gave rise to an outpouring of joyous nationalism in Russia. There were continual demonstrations in Petersburg bearing the slogan, ‘A Cross of Holy Sophia’… Everyone was again caught up in the old dream of the Russian tsars: of taking Constantinople back by force from Turkey – Constantinople, the ancient capital of Byzantium, from which Rus’ had adopted its Christian faith.

441 The Greeks claimed southern Albania, or northern Epirus, as they called it, for themselves, on the basis that it had been within the ancient Greek and Byzantine cultural sphere, and bishops from Epirus (northern and southern) had taken part in the First and Fourth Ecumenical Councils. (V.M.)
“The response was immediate. The Austrians and Germans threatened war.

“And again the Balkan boiler was about to blow up the whole world.

“On 10 and 29 November and on 5 December 1912, the Council of Ministers met in Petersburg. And the situation of a few years before was repeated. Russian society wanted to fight: the demands for military assistance to its ‘Balkan brothers’ were unanimous, and the registering of volunteers began. Even Rasputin’s friend Filippov was for war at the time. And there was no Stolypin powerful enough to overcome public opinion (or, more accurately, public insanity). War was again at the very threshold. And once again it would be a world war. The Austrian fleet and the ships of the great powers had already blockaded the Montenegrin coast. General mobilization was anticipated in Russia. Speaker of the State Duma Rodzyanko counselled the tsar to fight.

“And then the tsar suddenly demonstrated character: he resolutely moved against public opinion. He demanded that the minister of foreign affairs put pressure on Montenegro. And on 21 April 1913 the Montenegrin king, after many hours of persuasion, consented to withdraw from Scutari in return for monetary indemnification. And the Russian foreign minister, Sergei Sazonov, announced with relief, ‘King Nikola was going to set the world on fire to cook his own little omelette.’”

Radzinsky attributes the tsar’s sudden firmness (which was not, as he implies, out of character) to the fact that Rasputin and the Empress were against the war. “And the tsar was forced to submit…” But this is to ignore the fact that the tsar had already shown similar firmness during the Bosnian annexation crisis of 1909, and that his behaviour was perfectly consistent with his beliefs – that it was not in Russia’s interests to go to war to defend the territorial ambitions of the Balkan Slavs. Only in 1914 would he be forced to submit to the call for war. But the situation then, as we shall see, was different: Russia was not called to help the Serbs in some madcap aggression, but to defend them from annihilation in a just war…

The First Balkan War ended in victory and substantial territorial gains for the Balkan Orthodox. But Bulgaria under her German king was unhappy with the distribution of the spoils of victory, especially in Macedonia, and attacked Greece and Serbia. This led to the outbreak of the Second Balkan War in 1913, which ended with the victory of Greece, Serbia, Romania and Turkey over Bulgaria.

A Carnegie Endowment report describes the racial hatred of the time:

“Day after day the Bulgarians were represented as a race of monsters, and

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443 Radzinsky, op. cit., pp. 188-189.
public feeling was roused to a pitch of chauvinism which made it inevitable that war, when it should come, should be ruthless. In talk and in print one phrase summed up the general feeling of the Greeks towards the Bulgarians. ‘Dhen einai anthropoi!’ (They are not human beings). In their excitement and indignation the Greeks came to think of themselves as the appointed avengers of civilization against a race which stood outside the pale of humanity.

“When an excitable southern race, which has been schooled in Balkan conceptions of vengeance, begins to reason in this way, it is easy to predict the consequences. Deny that your enemies are men, and presently you will treat them as vermin. Only half realizing the full meaning of what he said, a Greek officer remarked to the writer, ‘When you have to deal with barbarians, you must behave like a barbarian yourself. It is the only thing they understand.’ The Greek army went to war, its mind inflamed with anger and contempt. A gaudily coloured print, which we saw in the streets of Salonika and the Piraeus, eagerly bought by the Greek soldiers returning to their homes, reveals the depth of the brutality to which this race hatred had sunk them. It shows a Greek evzone (highlander) holding a living Bulgarian soldier with both hands, while he gnaws the face of the victim with his teeth, like some beast of prey. It is entitled Bulgarophagos (Bulgar-eater), and is adorned with the following verses:

\[
\textit{The sea of fire which boils in my breast}  \\
\textit{And calls for vengeance with the savage waves of my soul,}  \\
\textit{Will be quenched when the monster of Sofia is still,}  \\
\textit{And thy life blood extinguishes my hate.}^{444}\]

When Christians hate each other so much, it is hardly to be expected that non-Christians will be treated any better. Hence the revival of “ethnic cleansing”.

As Tim Judah writes, “The Carnegie Endowment’s account of the crushing of the Albanian revolt in Kosovo is also important because in 1913 as in 1941 or the 1990s it was quite clear to all involved what the purpose of ethnic cleansing was:

“‘Houses and whole villages are reduced to ashes, unarmed and innocent populations massacred \textit{en masse}, incredible acts of violence, pillage and brutality of every kind – such were the means which were employed by the Serbo-Montenegrin soldiery, with a view to the entire transformation of the ethnic character of regions inhabited exclusively by Albanians.

“‘We thus arrive at the second characteristic feature of the Balkan wars, a feature which is the necessary correlative of the first. Since the population of the countries about to be occupied knew, by tradition, instinct and experience,

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what they had to expect from the armies of the enemy and from the neighbouring countries to which these armies belonged, they did not await their arrival, but fled. Thus generally speaking, the army of the enemy found on its way nothing but villages which were either half deserted or entirely abandoned. To execute the orders for extermination, it was only necessary to set fire to them. The population, warned by the glow from these fires, fled all in haste. There followed a veritable migration of peoples, for in Macedonia, as in Thrace, there was hardly a spot which was not, at a given moment, on the line of march of some army or other. The Commission everywhere encountered this second fact. All along the railways interminable trains of carts drawn by oxen followed one another; behind them came emigrant families and, in the neighbourhood of the big towns, bodies of refugees were found encamped.

"Just as conversion had been accepted as a means to escape death in earlier times, in some places it once again became an issue. When the Montenegrins captured the village of Plav, Rebecca West, whose pro-Serbian bent somewhat undermines her otherwise masterly account of Yugoslavia in the 1930s, characteristically dismisses a major massacre as an ‘unfortunate contretemps’. During this little misunderstanding a former Muslim cleric, now converted to Orthodoxy and a major in the Montenegrin Army, demanded that his former congregation convert. They refused and so 500 of them were shot. In another incident, some Macedonian villagers had their church surrounded by Serbian soldiers during the Sunday service. On emerging they found that a table had been set up on which was a piece of paper and a revolver. Either they could sign that they were Serbs rather than Bulgarians – or they could die. They chose the former option."

It is sometimes asserted that the Christian commandment to love our enemies cannot be applied in a war situation. Certainly, it is necessary to obey lawful authorities and fight the enemies of the State. At the same time, personal hatred and unnecessary cruelty are forbidden both in war and peace. Even in the Old Testament, and even in relation to non-Jews, cruelty was forbidden: “You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall not afflict any widow or orphan. If you do afflict them, and they cry out to Me, I will surely hear their cry, and My wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows, and your children fatherless” (Exodus 22.21-24). Unfortunately, the Orthodox peoples were to learn the truth of these words very soon. Thus the Balkan Wars of 1912-13 constituted a political and military victory for the Balkan Orthodox (except Bulgaria), but a spiritual defeat for Orthodoxy – and therefore a significant factor hastening the catastrophe of World War One and the Russian revolution.

The plight of Bulgaria was particularly tragic. Spurred on by their Austrian King Ferdinand, the Bulgars went to war against their Orthodox brothers in both 1913 and 1915. The words of Tsar Nicholas on the betrayal of the Bulgars, whom the Russians had liberated in 1877-78, were deeply felt. 446

Although possibly biased by the sufferings of the Serbs at the hands of the Bulgars, the Serbian Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich’s explanation of the Bulgarian defection is insightful: “The Bulgarians... did not acquire freedom through their own efforts, and did not have kings coming from their own people. They were spoiled, instructed and nursed by Russia. And like every spoiled child, they are indiscreet. Having Austrians on their throne for the last thirty-seven years, the Bulgars have completely adapted to the Austrian way of thinking both in politics and in deeds. Russia gave the Bulgarians only a body, while their spirit was breathed into them by Austria.

“The kings always played an important part in political intrigues. Imperialist Germany understood this better than the democratic countries of France and England. Germany was convinced that it was better to have one king who was a German than one dreadnought in the Middle East. It seems to me that today [during the First World War] both England and France have become convinced that one king who is a German in the Balkans (it is not important whether he is called Ferdinand or something else) is a more destructive power than batteries of howitzers.” 447

The Balkan Wars had another unfortunate consequence for the Orthodox: the creation of an independent Albanian state on December 20, 1912. The Russians agreed to this only reluctantly, and secured most of Kosovo with its mixed Serb and Albanian population for Serbia.

Meanwhile, in May, 1914 there took place, as N.Yu. Selischev writes, “the signing of the document widely known in Greece as ‘the Corfu protocol’. The Corfu protocol gave the Orthodox Greeks a broad autonomy and sealed their religious, civil and social rights. The international control commission of the

446 Tsar Nicholas wrote on October 6, 1915: “Impossible as it has seemed, but treacherously preparing from the very beginning of the war, Bulgaria has betrayed the Slav cause. The Bulgarian army has attacked Our faithful ally Serbia, [which is already] bleeding profusely in a struggle with a strong enemy. Russia and Our allied Great Powers tried to warn Ferdinand of Coburg against this fatal step. The fulfilment of an age-old aspiration of the Bulgar people – union with Macedonia – has [already] been guaranteed to Bulgaria by a means more in accord with the interests of the Slav world. But appeals by the Germans to secret ambitions and fratricidal enmity against the Serbs prevailed. Bulgaria, whose [Orthodox] faith is the same as Ours, who so recently has been liberated from Turkish slavery by the brotherly love and the blood of the Russian people, openly took the side of the enemies of the Christian faith, the Slav world and of Russia. The Russian people react with bitterness to the treachery of a Bulgaria which was so close to them until recently, and draw their swords against her with heavy hearts, leaving the fate of these traitors to the Slav world to God’s just retribution” (http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/1915/nickbulg.html).

447 Velimirovich, Dusha Serbii (The Soul of Serbia), Moscow, 2007, p. 528.
great powers (Russia was represented by the consul-general M. Petriaev) acted as a mediator in the quarrel and became the trustee of the fulfilment of the Corfu accord. In Russia the Corfu protocol... was known as the ‘Epirot-Albanian accord’. That is, the question of Epirus was not reduced to the level of an ‘internal affair’ of the newly created Albania, but was raised to the significance of an international agreement when the Orthodox Greek Epirots and the Mohammedan Albanians were recognized as parties to the agreement having equal rights. Our [Russian] press at that time – Pravitel’stejniy Vestnik, Sankt-Peterburgskia Vedomosti and the conservative Novoe Vremia – looked at the events in Epirus in precisely this way.

“Unfortunately, to this day the protocol of Corfu has not been fulfilled and is not being fulfilled by the Albanian side, neither in the part relating to the religious, nor in the part relating to the civil and educational rights of the Greek Epirots. In this sense the unchanging character of Albanian hostility is indicative. In 1914 the Albanian prime-minister Turkhan Pasha declared to the Rome correspondent of Berliner Tageblatt that ‘there can be no discussion’ of the autonomy of Epirus, and ‘for us there are no longer any “Epirots”, but there are only the inhabitants of provinces united to us by the London conference.’…” 448

The Name-Worshipping Heresy

At the beginning of the 20th century the Greek and Russian monks on Mount Athos were not on friendly terms. “The Greeks cannot speak with equanimity about the Russians,” wrote I.I. Sokolov, “while the Russians do not speak with approval about the Greeks. The former complain about the unlawful seizure by the Russians of Greek monasteries, cells and lands, while the Russians speak about violence and oppression on the part of the Greeks. And as time passes, mutual dissatisfaction grows, and spitefulness flames up more strongly. We can say that now [at the beginning of the 20th century] we are witnessing a repetition, to some degree, of what happened in the 1870s, during the infamous Greek-Russian law-suit to do with the St. Panteleimon monastery. There can be no doubt that leaven from this suit has not died out, and now in the quarrel between the Greek and Russian monks on Athos we must see a reflection of the earlier turmoil. Ten years ago one could see a certain calm in the mutual dissatisfaction of the Athonite population, but it turns out that this was the calm before a storm that has now broken out ‘in the great wilderness of Athos’ to quite a significant degree. What is it about?

“In the gradual increase in the numbers of Russian monks on Athos the Greeks see a blow to Hellenism. There was a time, and not so long ago, not more than 30-40 years ago, when there were very few Russian monks on Athos; they had no constant, well-organised refuge, they were poor, and

deprived of influence on Athonite affairs. Now their position has changed unrecognisably by comparison with the past. There are now more Russian monks than the Greeks themselves. They have well constructed monasteries and cells, and the main thing – they are rich and do not spare money on acquiring new possessions. They are gradually increasing in numbers and are ready to take over the whole of the Holy Mountain, and squeeze the Greeks completely out. This Russian advance on Athos is based, according to the opinion of the Greeks, on national-political motives: it is the march of Panslavism against Hellenism. It is well-known how attached the Greeks are to their nation, how they preserve all the centres of Hellenism, how they defend every pound of their native soil. And here we are talking about one of the most prominent refuges of Hellenism, the acropolis of the Greek nation, where the Hellenist standard was unfurled already in Byzantine times, and did not disappear in the Turkish era as a consequence of the special international-political position of Athos. Hence arises the enmity which appears in the fact that the Greek monasteries try not to sell to the Russian monks a single clump of land, surround the use of the cells with various obstacles, deprive the elders in the cells of the right of bequeathing them to their disciples, charge inordinate prices for cells and kalyvas, etc. Is such an attitude of the Greeks to the Russians just?

“We think that the enmity of the Greeks towards the Russians is unjustly motivated by considerations of a political nature. The political slant given to Russian monasticism on Athos is an artificial, false thing, which does not correspond to the real strivings of the Russians on Athos. Panslavism, which the Greeks talk about in relation to the Russian Athonites, is a myth, an empty word, having no definite content. It was created by the immoderately passionate fantasy of the Athonite – or more accurately, of the Athenian intriguers from the Greeks, who see enemies of Hellenism in its most recent formation everywhere: this is a common phenomenon among peoples that are feverish with political tendencies after their birth or rebirth to new public life. The Greeks saw the advance of Panslavism into the East already in the 1870s, when the notorious St. Panteleimon’s case flared up, but even they did not have a clear idea about it, which is why Panslavism was for them some kind of scarecrow. In this respect the matter has not changed even at the present time. Moreover, it would be strange to impute political tendencies to people coming from our remote village and settlements, who have set off for Athos with exclusively religious aims. After all, Russian Athos can without exaggeration be called ‘the peasants’ kingdom’. There are very few intelligentsy here – perhaps 50 out of 4000 monks in all. There are also few from the ranks of the upper and lower middle classes, who differ very little from the peasants, so that on Athos the peasantry is the dominant and even the all-engulfing element. The inhabitants of our villages and settlements set off for Athos exclusively for religious motives – to pray and save themselves: what have they to do with politics? And then politicising requires a corresponding intellectual preparation, which the Greek monks possess, but
the Russians do not. Justice requires us to say that among the Russian monks of Athos there are very few educated people, the majority are semi-literate: what have they to do with politics? While the leaders of the monks, penetrated with the same ideas of prayer and salvation, are so burdened with the administration of the brotherhood and the complex monastic economy that politics is impossible for them…”

However, while this semi-literacy of the Russian monks made involvement in politics difficult for them, it presented another danger that was soon to reveal itself - a weakness in theological debate and vulnerability to heresy… This danger became a reality with the publication, in 1907, by Schema-monk Hilarion, of a book on the Jesus prayer entitled *On the Mountains of the Caucasus*. This book was at first well-received and passed the spiritual censor; but later its claim that the name of God is God - more precisely, that the Name of God as uttered in the Jesus prayer is not only holy and filled with the grace of God, but is holy *in and of itself*, being *God Himself* - elicited criticism.

Soon monastic opinion in Russia was polarised between those who, like the monks of the Kiev Caves Lavra, approved of the book and its name-worshipping thesis (*imiabozhie* in Russian), and those, like the monks of the Pochaev Lavra and the Optina Desert, who rejected it. The heresy was condemned as a form of pantheism by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1912 and 1913. It was also condemned by the Russian Holy Synod in its Epistle of May 18, 1913 and Decree of August 27, 1913 (No. 7644).

However, as Vladimir Gubanov writes, “the illiterate G.E. Rasputin interceded for the heretical name-worshippers and even tried to incite the empress to attack the fighters against the heresy of name-worshipping.” In 1914 the leading heretics, including Hieroschemamonk Anthony (Bulatovich), author of *An Apology of Faith in the Name of God and the Name of Jesus* (1913), were justified by the Moscow Diocesan Court, which declared: “… The Synodal Office has found that in the confessions of faith in God and in the Name of God coming from the named monks, in the words, ‘I repeat that in naming the Name of God and the Name of Jesus as God and God Himself, I reject both the veneration of the Name of God as His Essence, and the veneration of the Name of God separately from God Himself as some kind of special Divinity, as well as any deification of the very letters and sounds and any chance thoughts about God’ – there is contained information allowing us to conclude

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that in them there is no basis for leaving the Orthodox Church for the sake of
the teaching on the Names of God.’ (decree № 1443 of May 8, 1914).

Of course, this decree did not constitute a “justification” of the name-
worshippers’ teaching, especially in view of the fact that on the same day the
Office, led by Metropolitan Macarius, affirmed that name-worshipping – “the
new false-teachings on the names of God proclaimed by Schema-Monk Hilarion and
Anthony Bulatovich” – was a heresy (decree № 1442 of May 8, 1914). Moreover,
in rejecting “any deification of the very letters and sounds and any chance
thoughts about God”, Bulatovich was obliged also to renounce his words in
the Apology: “Every mental representation of a named property of God is the
Name of God [and therefore, according to the name-worshippers, God
Himself]”, “the contemplation of the His name is God Himself”, “the
conscious naming of God is God Himself”, “Every idea about God is God
Himself”, “we call the very idea of God – God”. But did he in fact repent?

Unfortunately, the repentance of the name-worshippers turned out to be
fictional. Bulatovich concealed his continuing adherence to the heresy behind
ambiguous words and phrases. Thus on May 18, 1914, in a letter to
Metropolitan Macarius, Bulatovich thanked him for his “justification”, and
nobly deigned to declare that he was now ready to return into communion
with the Orthodox Church (!). And he added: “Concerning the Name of God
and the Name of Jesus Christ, we, in accordance with the teaching of the Holy
Fathers, confessed and confess the Divinity and the Divine Power of the
Name of the Lord, but we do not raise this teaching to the level of a dogma,
for it has not yet been formulated and dogmatised in council, but we expect
that at the forthcoming Council it will be formulated and dogmatised. There-
fore we, in accordance with the teaching of the Holy Fathers, in the
words of the ever-memorable Father John of Kronstadt said and say that the
Name of God is God Himself, and the Name of the Lord Jesus is the Lord
Jesus Christ Himself, understanding this not in the sense of a deification
of the created name, but understanding it spiritually, in the sense of the
inseparability of the God-revealed Truth, Which is the Action of the Divinity.”

These words show that Bulatovich was not sincere in his signature below
the Confession of faith in God and in the Name of God, but deceived Metropolitan
Macarius, who was probably under pressure from the Over-Procurator Sabler,
who was in turn under pressure from Rasputin. “Mixing truth with
unrighteousness” (Romans 1.18), Bulatovich mixed Orthodoxy with heresy.
Thus Orthodoxy recognises that there is a “Divine Power” in the name of
Jesus, but does not recognise that it is “Divinity”. Again, Orthodoxy
recognises that in prayer the name of God is indeed inseparable from God,
but it does not confuse the two, as does Bulatovich. For while a shadow is
inseparable from the body that casts it, this is not to say that the shadow is the
body. Finally, Bulatovich’s “dogma” is still not “formulated and dogmatised
in council” – because it is not a dogma, but heresy!
The Holy Synod accepted that Bulatovich and his fellows had not really repented, so they set aside decree № 1442 of the Moscow Synodal Office, and confirmed the sentences against the name-worshippers (decree № 4136 of May 10-24, 1914), which confirmation was again confirmed by decree № 2670 of March 10, 1916. “In this decree of the Most Holy Synod,” wrote the future Hieromartyr Basil (Zelentsov), Bishop of Priluki, “we find a confirmation of the basic rule that the name-worshippers must be received into ecclesiastical communion and admitted to the sacraments of the Church only on the unfailing condition that they reject the false teaching of name-worshipping and witness to their faithfulness to the dogmas and teaching of the Church and to their obedience to Church authority.”

Although name-worshipping was on the agenda of the 1917-18 Council and a subcommission to study it under the leadership of Archbishop Theophan of Poltava and Fr. Sergius Bulgakov was formed, the subcommission did not have time to complete its work before the Council was terminated by the Bolsheviks. However, on October 8/21, 1918, Patriarch Tikhon and the Most Holy Synod declared: “The Most Holy Synod does not change its former judgement on the error itself [of name-worshipping]... and has in no way changed its general rule, according to which the name-worshippers, as having been condemned by the Church authorities, can be received into Church communion... only after they have renounced name-worshipping and have declared their submission to the Holy Church... The petition of Hieroschemamonk Anthony to allow him to serve is to be recognised as not worthy of being satisfied so long as he continues to disobey Church authority and spread his musings which have been condemned by the Church hierarchy to the harm of the Church”.

After this decision, the leading name-worshipper, Anthony Bulatovich, broke communion for the second time with the Russian Church and was shortly afterwards killed by robbers.

In spite of all these condemnations, the name-worshipping movement did not die out; it survived in the Caucasus and South Russian regions (where the Tsar had transported the rebellious monks); and the sophianist heretics Florensky and Bulgakov also confessed name-worshipping in the inter-war period. In modern times the heresy has enjoyed a revival in intellectualist circles in Russia, especially in the works of Hieromonk Gregory (Lourié) of St. Petersburg, who supports the heretical views of Bulatovich, considers Bulatovich himself to be a saint, and those who oppose his ideas, including several hieromartyrs of the Russian Church, to be “enemies of the Name”!

One reason for the failure to stamp out the heresy was the comparatively weak defence of the truth produced by the Greek and Russian theologians. Others were: the aura of martyrdom which was attached to the name-
worshippers as a result of their forcible expulsion from Mount Athos to Russia on a Russian cruiser, and the fact that the heresy coincided with the end of the Balkan wars and the transfer of Mount Athos from Turkish to Greek dominion after the Treaty of Bucharest, which meant that mutual suspicions between the Greeks and the Russians concerning the status of Athos hindered a united and thorough approach to the problem. Many took up the cause of the name-worshippers as part of their general attack on the Russian Holy Synod, and the whole debate soon acquired political overtones, with the democratic and socialist left generally taking the side of the name-worshippers and the monarchists - the side of the Orthodox.\textsuperscript{452}

Patriarch Tikhon indicated that the controversy needed further study “in essence” at a future Pan-Russian (or Ecumenical) Council. But this did not mean, as some have claimed, that the Church had not delivered its verdict on the question. She has delivered her verdict: but the reasons for that verdict need to be more extensively elaborated, and the “positive” teaching of the Church on the relationship between the uncreated and the created in prayer needs to be expounded still more clearly and thoroughly.

\textit{Symbolism and Futurism}

Just as the ascetic name-worshippers of Mount Athos wished to identify the Divinity with a created name, so the decadent artists of the Symbolist movement in Russia wanted to capture the Divinity in artistic symbols. For them, symbolism took the place of religion; it was a new kind of religion. “In the Symbolist aesthetic,” as J.W. Burrow writes, “the intense focusing on the thing taken as a symbol, the perception of its numinous aura, gave access to another, as it were, parallel, invisible world of light and ecstasy.”\textsuperscript{453} This “parallel, invisible world of light and ecstasy” was demonic. Thus the Symbolist painter Michael Vrubel achieved fame with a large mosaic-like canvas called “Seated Demon” (1890), and went mad while working on the dynamic and sinister “Demon Downcast” (1902).\textsuperscript{454}

Symbolist ideas are most vividly expressed in the music and thought of the composer Alexander Scriabin, who in his \textit{First Symphony} praised art as a kind of religion. \textit{Le Divin Poem} (1902-1904) sought to express the evolution of the human spirit from pantheism to unity with the universe. \textit{Poème de l'extase} (1908) was accompanied by the elaborately selected colour projections on a screen. In Scriabin's synthetic performances music, poetry, dancing, colours, and scents were used so as to bring about \textit{supreme, final ecstasy}. Similar ideas on the stage fusion of all arts were elaborated by the poet Andrej Bely and the

\textsuperscript{452} Constantine Papoulides, \textit{Oi Rossoi onomolatroi tou Agiou Orous} (The Russian Name-Worshippers of the Holy Mountain) Thessaloniki, 1977 (in Greek).
\textsuperscript{454} \url{http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Symbolism}.

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In 1909, after a spell in Paris with the impresario Diaghilev, Scriabin returned to Russia permanently, where he continued to compose, working on increasingly grandiose projects. For some time before his death he had planned a multi-media work to be performed in the Himalayas, that would bring about Armageddon, "a grandiose religious synthesis of all arts which would herald the birth of a new world."\(^{456}\)

Another of Diaghilev’s composer-protégés, Sergei Prokofiev, was also influenced by Symbolism - and Mary Baker Eddy’s Christian Science. Among the propositions of his theory of creative action were: “1. I am the expression of Life, i.e. of divine activity. 2. I am the expression of spirit, which gives me power to resist what is unlike spirit… 9. I am the expression of perfection, and this leads me to the perfect use of my time…”\(^{457}\)

These strivings for godhood – in defiance of the only God-Man - among Russia’s creative intelligentsia were associated by them with a revolutionary future that rejected the past more or less totally. Hence the brief fashion for the European movement of Futurism with its radical rejection of the past and all past and present ideas of what is beautiful and tasteful. In reality, however, these strivings were as unoriginal as the revolution itself proved to be, and were rather a sign that Russia’s future would consist, not in producing a radically new civilization, but in a catastrophic regression to her pre-Christian, pagan past.

This is most evident in perhaps the most shocking of all the works of Russian art in the period: Igor Stravinsky’s ballet, The Rite of Spring. As Oliver Figes writes, “the idea of the ballet was originally conceived by the painter Nikolai Roerich... a painter of the prehistoric Slavs and an accomplished archaeologist in his own right. He was absorbed in the rituals of neolithic Russia, which he idealized as a pantheistic realm of spiritual beauty where life and art were one, and man and nature lived in harmony. Stravinsky approach Roerich for a theme and he came to visit him at the artists’ colony of Talashkino, where the two men worked together on the scenario of ‘The Great Sacrifice’, as The Rite of Spring was originally called. The ballet was conceived as a re-creation of the ancient pagan rite of human sacrifice. It was meant to be that rite – not to tell the story of the ritual but (short of actual murder) to re-create that ritual on the stage and thus communicate in the most immediate way the ecstasy and terror of the human sacrifice...

“Artistically, the ballet strived for ethnographic authenticity. Roerich’s costumes were drawn from peasant clothes in Tenisheva’s collection at Talashkino. His primitivist sets were based on archaeology. Then there was Nijinsky’s shocking choreography – the real scandal of the ballet’s infamous

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Paris première at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées on 29 May 1913. For the music was barely heard at all in the commotion, the shouting and the fighting, which broke out in the auditorium when the curtain first went up. Nijinsky had choreographed movements which were ugly and angular. Everything about the dancers' movements emphasized their weight instead of their lightness, as demanded by the principles of classical ballet. Rejecting all the basic positions, the ritual dancers had their feet turned inwards, elbows clutched to the sides of their body and their palms held flat, like the wooden dolls that were so prominent in Roerich's mythic paintings of Scythian Russia. They were orchestrated, not by steps and notes, as in conventional ballets, but rather moved as one collective mass to the violent off-beat rhythms of the orchestra. The dancers pounded their feet on the stage, building up a static energy which finally exploded, with electrifying force, in the sacrificial dance. This rhythmic violence was the vital innovation of Stravinsky's score. Like most of the ballet's themes, it was taken from the music of the peasantry. There was nothing like these rhythms in Western art music (Stravinsky said that he did not really known how to notate or bar them) – a convulsive pounding of irregular downbeats, requiring constant changes in the metric signature with almost every bar so that the conductor of the orchestra must throw himself about and wave his arms in jerky motions, as if performing a shamanic dance. In these explosive rhythms it is possible to hear the terrifying beat of the Great War and the Revolution of 1917...

Sarajevo, 1914

“In the period 1911-14,” writes Dominic Lieven, “the Ottoman empire appeared to be on the verge of disintegration. Defeat by the Italians in 1911-12 and then by the Balkan League in 1912-13 was accompanied by political turmoil in Constantinople. The fate of the Ottoman lands and of the Balkans affected the interests of all the major European powers and had major implications for the European balance of power. As regards the Balkans, the powers most involved were Austria and Russia. Both general staffs attached great importance to the support of the Balkan states’ armies in the event of a European war. The likelier the latter became, the more this priority obsessed Petersburg and Vienna. For the Russians, Constantinople and the Straits possessed huge strategic and economic importance. In the event of a great power rival controlling the Straits, Russia’s Black Sea trade and ports would be at the latter’s mercy, as would the grain exports on which the empire’s commerce and finances rested. Constantinople was also important to Austria, but still more so was the threat of Balkan nationalism to domestic stability within the multi-ethnic Habsburg Empire. The Balkan wars of 1912-13 had greatly enlarged Serbian and Rumanian territory, together with the ambitions and self-confidence of Serbian and Rumanian nationalists. The Habsburg Monarchy contained large and discontented Serbian and Rumanian minorities. In 1914 Vienna feared that it would soon lose all its influence over...”

the independent Balkan states, which in turn would contribute to its inability to control the Slav and Rumanian populations of the Monarchy. In more general terms, the rulers of the Habsburg state believed that a reassertion of the empire’s power and vitality was essential in order to overawe its potential foreign and domestic enemies, and to contradict the widely prevalent assumption that the Monarchy was moribund and doomed to disappear in the era of nationalism and democracy. The Austrian ultimatum to Serbia of July 1914 was, of course, also designed to punish Belgrade for the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand: more basically, however, it aimed to turn Serbia into an Austrian protectorate and to reassert the Habsburg regime’s power and prestige both in the Balkans and at home.”

“The Balkan Wars,” writes Niall Ferguson, “had revealed both the strengths and the limits of Balkan nationalism. Its strength lay in its ferocity. Its weakness was its disunity. The violence of the fighting much impressed the young Trotsky, who witnessed it as a correspondent for the newspaper Kievskaia mysl. Even the peace that followed the Balkan Wars was cruel, in a novel manner that would become a recurrent feature of the twentieth century. It no longer sufficed, in the eyes of nationalists, to acquire foreign territory. Now it was peoples as well as borders that had to move. Sometimes these movements were spontaneous. Muslims fled in the direction of Salonika as the Greeks, Serbs and Bulgarians advanced in 1912; Bulgarians fled Macedonia to escape from invading Greek troops in 1913; Greeks chose to leave the Macedonian districts ceded to Bulgaria and Serbia by the Treaty of Bucharest. Sometimes populations were deliberately expelled, as the Greeks were from Western Thrace in 1913 and from parts of Eastern Thrace and Anatolia in 1914. In the wake of the Turkish defeat, there was an agreed population exchange: 48,570 Turks moved one way and 46,764 Bulgarians the other across the new Turkish-Bulgarian border. Such exchanges were designed to transform regions of ethnically mixed settlement into the homogeneous societies that so appealed to the nationalist imagination. The effects on some regions were dramatic. Between 1912 and 1915, the Greek population of (Greek) Macedonia increased by around a third; the Muslim and Bulgarian population declined by 26 and 13 per cent respectively. The Greek population of Western Thrace fell by 80 per cent; the Muslim population of Eastern Thrace rose by a third. The implications were distinctly ominous for the many multi-ethnic communities elsewhere in Europe…

“The alternative to outright war was to create a new South Slav state through terrorism. In the wake of the annexation of Bosnia, a rash of new organizations sprang up, pledged to resisting Austrian imperialism in the Balkans and to liberate Bosnia by fair means or foul…”

459 Lieven, “Russia, Europe and World War I”, op. cit., p. 42.
David Stevenson writes: “On 28 June 1914 in Sarajevo, the capital of the Austro-Hungarian province of Bosnia, a nineteen-year-old Bosnian Serb, Gavrilo Princip, shot and killed the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austrian throne, and the Archduke’s wife, the Duchess of Hohenberg. Franz Ferdinand was an unattractive man, authoritarian, choleric, and xenophobic, but he was devoted to the Duchess, whom he had married against the wishes of the Emperor Franz Joseph, her aristocratic pedigree falling short of Habsburg requirements. Visiting Sarajevo, and the army’s annual manoeuvres, would be a rare occasion when she could ride in public with him. Yet this act of kindness courted disaster. A date heavy with symbolism, 28 June was the anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, a catastrophe for the medieval kingdom of Serbia in whose aftermath a Serb had assassinated the Turkish sultan. Despite the emergence of a terrorist movement that targeted Habsburg officials, security arrangements for the state visit were extraordinarily lax. On the fateful day, despite a bomb attempt against the motor-car procession by another member of Princip’s group, the Archduke continued his tour, making an unscheduled change of itinerary to console an injured victim. It brought his vehicle right by Princip, who did not miss his chance. “These details matter because although in summer 1914 international tension was acute, a general war was not inevitable and if one had not broken out then it might not have done so at all. It was the Habsburg monarchy’s response to Sarajevo that caused a crisis. Initially all it seemed to do was order an investigation. But secretly the Austrians obtained a German promise of support for drastic retaliation. On 23 July they presented an ultimatum to their neighbour, Serbia. Princip and his companions were Bosnians (and therefore Habsburg subjects), but the ultimatum alleged they had conceived their plot in Belgrade, that Serbian officers and officials had supplied them with their weapons, and that Serbian frontier authorities had helped them across the border. It called on Serbia to denounce all separatist activities, ban publications and organizations hostile to Austria-Hungary, and co-operate with Habsburg officials in suppressing subversion and conducting a judicial inquiry. The Belgrade government’s reply, delivered just within the forty-eight hours deadline, accepted nearly every demand but consented to Austrian involvement in a judicial inquiry only if that inquiry was subject to Serbia’s constitution and to international law. The Austrian leaders in Vienna seized on this pretext to break off relations immediately, and on 28 July declared war. The ultimatum impressed most European governments by its draconian demands, although if Serbian complicity was indeed as alleged the substance of the document was arguably moderate…”

This last remark is false: the Austrian document was immoderate in the extreme and demanded an interference in the affairs of a sovereign state that was unjustified even if the Austrian charge – that Belgrade had supported the

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terrorists – had been true. But it was not. As Rebecca West writes: “It is clear, and nothing could be clearer, that certain Serbian individuals supplied the [Bosnian] conspirators with encouragement and arms. But this does not mean that the Serbian Government was responsible…

“There were overwhelming reasons why the Serbian Government should not have supported this or any other conspiracy. It cannot have wanted war at that particular moment. The Karageorges must have been especially anxious to avoid it. King Peter had just been obliged by chronic ill-health to appoint his son Alexander as regent and it had not escaped the attention of the Republican Party that the King had had to pass over his eldest son, George, because he was hopelessly insane. Mr. Pashitch and his Government can hardly have been more anxious for a war, as their machine was temporarily disorganized by preparations for a general election. Both alike, the royal family and the Ministers, held disquieting knowledge about the Serbian military situation. Their country had emerged from the two Balkan wars victorious but exhausted, without money, transport, or munitions, and with a peasant army that was thoroughly sick of fighting. They can have known no facts to offset these, for none existed. Theoretically, they could only rely on the support of France and Russia, and possibly Great Britain, but obviously geography would forbid any of these powers giving her practical aid in the case of an Austrian invasion.

“In fact, the Karageorges and the Government knew perfectly well that, if there should be war, they must look forward to an immediate defeat of the most painful sort, for which they could receive compensation only should their allies, whoever they might be, at some uncertain time win a definite victory. But if there should be peace, then the Karageorges and the Government could consolidate the victories they had won in the Balkan wars,… develop their conquered territory [the Serbs had doubled their territory and increased their population from 2.9 to 4.4 million], and organize their neglected resources. Admittedly Serbia aimed at the ultimate absorption of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and the South Slav provinces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. But this was not the suitable moment. If she attained her aims by this method she would have to pay too heavy a price, as, in fact, she did. No country would choose to realize any ideal at the cost of the destruction of one-third of her population. That she did not so choose is shown by much negative evidence. At the time the murder was committed she had just let her reservists return home after their annual training, her Commander-in-chief was taking a cure at an Austrian spa, and none of the Austrian Slavs who had fought in the Balkan War and returned home were warned to come across the frontier. But the positive evidence is even stronger. When Austria sent her ultimatum to Serbia, which curtly demanded not only the punishment of the Serbians who were connected with the Sarajevo attentat, but the installation of Austrian and Hungarian officers in Serbia for the purpose of suppressing Pan-Slavism, Mr. Pashitch bowed to all the
demands save for a few gross details, and begged that the exceptions he had made should not be treated as refusals but should be referred for arbitration to The Hague Tribunal. There was not one trace of bellicosity in the attitude of Serbia at this point. If she had promoted the Sarajevo attentat in order to make war possible, she was very near to throwing her advantage away.”

Moreover, the Serbs had warned the Austrian minister in charge of the Sarajevo visit that a plot was afoot. And, as Stevenson admits, “the summary time limit gave the game away, as did the peremptory rejection of Belgrade’s answer. The ultimatum had been intended to start a showdown…” In any case, justice required that the trial of the assassins should take place before it could be concluded that the Serbian Government was guilty. But in fact the trial began a full ten weeks after Austria declared war on Serbia. And then nothing implicating the Serbian government was discovered. As Princip said: “Anyone who says that the inspiration for this attentat came from outside our group is playing with the truth. We originated the idea, and we carried it out. We loved the people. I have nothing to say in my defence.”

In a deeper sense, however, the Serbian nation was guilty of having encouraged, over a period of generations, that nationalist-revolutionary mentality which, among other factors, brought down the civilized world. Thus it is fact denied by nobody that Princip and his fellow conspirators were helped by the secret nationalist society known as the “Black Hand”. “This society,” writes West, “had already played a sinister part in the history of Serbia. It was the lineal descendant of the group of officers who had killed King Alexander and Queen Draga and thus exchanged the Obernovitch dynasty for the Karageorgevitch. The Karageorges, who had played no part in this conspiracy, and had had to accept its results passively, have never resigned themselves the existence of the group, and were continually at odds with them. The ‘Black Hand’ was therefore definitely anti-Karageorgevitch and aimed at war with Austria and the establishment of a federated republic of Balkan Slavs. Their leader was a man of undoubted talent but far too picturesque character called Dragutin Dmitriyevitch, known as ‘Apis’, who had been for some time the head of the Intelligence Bureau of the Serbian General Staff.”

‘Apis’, besides taking part in the regicide of 1903, confessed to participation in plots to murder King Nicholas of Montenegro, King Constantine of Greece, Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany and King Ferdinand of Bulgaria! That such a murderous fanatic should be in charge of Serbia’s military intelligence tells us much about the influence within Serbia of the

463 Stevenson, op. cit.
464 West, op. cit., p. 376.
465 West, op. cit., p. 358.
466 West, op. cit., p. 369.
nationalist-revolutionary heresy. “In fact,” as Stevenson writes, “Serbia’s army and intelligence service were out of control.” They were brought back under control only three years later, after the nation had gone through fire and water. In 1917 ‘Apis’ was tried and executed...

“The Serbian evidence,” continues Stevenson, “confirms that Austria-Hungary had good grounds for rigorous demands. But it also shows that the Belgrade government was anxious for a peaceful exit from the crisis whereas the Austrians meant to use it as the pretext for violence. Austria-Hungary’s joint council of ministers decided on 7 July that the ultimatum should be so stringent as to ‘make a refusal almost certain, so that the road to a radical solution by means of a military action should be opened’. On 19 July it agreed to partition Serbia with Bulgaria, Albania, and Greece, leaving only a small residual state under Habsburg economic domination. Yet previously Vienna had been less bellicose: the chief of the general staff, Franz Conrad von Hötzendorff, had pressed for war against Serbia since being appointed in 1906, but his appeals had been rejected. The Emperor Franz Joseph was a cautious and vastly experienced ruler who remembered previous defeats. He and his advisers moved to war only because they believed they faced an intolerable problem for which peaceful remedies were exhausted.”

This “intolerable problem” was the South Slav problem, which the Austro-Hungarian state, being composed of a patchwork of small peoples, all striving for advantages against each other, found “peculiarly intractable”, and which it feared “might set a precedent for the other subject peoples. The Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes were beginning to co-operate as the Yugoslav enthusiasts intended. By 1914 a terrorist campaign had started in Croatia as well as Bosnia. But the most exasperating characteristic of the agitation was Serbia’s support for it, at any rate after the 1903 coup that installed King Peter in Belgrade. Previously a secret treaty had given Austria-Hungary a veto over Serbian foreign policy. Now Serbia became more independent and its stance more nationalist. In the ‘pig war’ of 1906-11 Austria-Hungary retaliated by boycotting Serbia’s exports of livestock, but the Serbs found alternative markets and turned from Vienna to Paris as their main artillery supplier. Similarly, despite Austrian hopes in 1908 that annexing Bosnia-Herzegovina would dispel South Slav dreams of unification, covert Serb support for Bosnian separatism persisted.

467 Stevenson, op. cit. Oleg Platonov claims that “in the course of the investigation into the case of the murder of the Archduke Ferdinand it emerged that the assassins Princip and Gabrilovich were Masons. The plan of the assassination was worked out by the political organization, ‘The People’s Defence’. Later, already in 1926, a representative of the Masonic circles of Serbia, Lazarevich, at a masonic banquet in the House of the Serbian Guard in Belgrade, officially recognized that ‘Masonry and “The People’s Defence” are one and the same’” (Ternovij Venets Rossii (Russia’s Crown of Thorns), Moscow, 1998, p. 344).

468 Stevenson, op. cit.
The next upheaval came in 1912-13, when the Balkan Orthodox defeated Turkey in the First Balkan War before Bulgaria attacked its former allies and was defeated by them in the Second. Austrian pressure limited the Serbs’ success by forcing them to evacuate the Adriatic coast and by sponsoring the creation of Albania as a new state to counterbalance them. None the less, the wars heightened the threat on Austria-Hungary’s south-eastern borders. Turkey and Bulgaria were weakened as potential Austrian allies, and in the second war Romania fought alongside Serbia. From being Austria-Hungary’s secret partner, Bucharest became another enemy, eyeing the Romanian speakers in Transylvania. Finally, Franz Joseph’s new foreign minister, Leopold Berchtold, concluded from the Balkan Wars that working with the other powers through the Concert of Europe achieved little. He got results when in spring 1913 he threatened to use force unless Serbia’s ally, Montenegro, transferred the town of Scutari to Albania, and again in October when he demanded that Serbia itself should evacuate Albanian territory.

By this stage many Austro-Hungarian leaders agreed with Conrad that only violence could solve the Serbian problem. The main exception were [the Hungarian leader Stephen] Tisza and Franz Ferdinand – and after the Sarajevo assassinations, Tisza alone.

“This context helps to explain why the Austrians used the assassinations to force a war they already considered unavoidable. The outrage confirmed Berchtold and Franz Joseph in support of Conrad’s views. Tisza was won over by an agreement that Austria-Hungary would not annex more South Slavs, by evidence that Romania would stay neutral, and - above all - by new that Germany encouraged military action. Given Russia’s position, this latter was indispensable. Austria-Hungary had long competed with the Russians in south-eastern Europe, but in 1897 the two powers reached an understanding to keep the Balkans ‘on ice’, and for a decade, while the Russians focussed their attention on Asia, they kept to it. Here again, however, the Bosnian annexation crisis, if a short-term triumph, exacerbated Austria-Hungary’s plight in the longer term. In 1908 the Russians, still reeling from their defeat by Japan, could do nothing to support their fellow Slavs in Serbia, but they did not forget their humiliation. In 1912, by contrast, they helped to create the Serb-Bulgarian ‘Balkan League’ that attacked Turkey in the First Balkan War, and they mobilized thousands of troops in order to deter Austria-Hungary from intervening. Although the Russians urged Serbia to compromise in the Scutari and Albanian crises of 1913, they were clearly becoming more assertive. By 1914 almost all the Austro-Hungarian leaders expected war against Serbia to mean a war against Russia as well, and without German encouragement they would not have risked one. And whereas the Austrians were so focused on their Balkan dilemmas that they accepted a general European war without even seriously discussing it, the Germans were much more conscious of what they were doing. It is ultimately in Berlin that we must seek the keys to the destruction of peace...
“Before dispatching their ultimatum to Belgrade the Austrians sent the head of Berchtold’s private office, Count Hoyos, to Germany. Hoyos convened a memorandum from Berchtold and a letter from Franz Joseph, both of which strongly hinted at war with Serbia without being explicit. But when the German Emperor Wilhelm II met Hoyos on 5 July, he responded that Austria-Hungary must ‘march into Serbia’, with Germany’s backing even if war with Russia resulted. The next day the German chancellor (head of government), Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg, reaffirmed the message. Following this secret assurance – usually referred to as the ‘blank cheque’ – Wilhelm went cruising in the Baltic, while Bethmann and his foreign minister Gottliev von Jagow urged the Austrians first to send the ultimatum and then to declare war without delay, while advising them to disregard British proposals to refer the crisis to a conference. Only on 28-29 July, after Austria-Hungary had declared war on Serbia, did the Germans urge Vienna to compromise. But once it became clear that Russia was supporting Serbia and had started military preparations the Germans plunged ahead, issuing ultimatums to Russia and its ally, France, on 31 July and declaring war on them on 1 and 3 August respectively. By simultaneously demanding that Belgium should allow free passage for German troops they also brought in Britain, which declared war on Germany on 4 August. Germany willed a local war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, deliberately raised a continental war against France and Russia, and finally actually started one…”

This important conclusion is confirmed by Fritz Fischer: “The official documents afford ample proof that during the July crisis the emperor, the German military leaders and the foreign ministry were pressing Austria-Hungary to strike against Serbia without delay, or alternatively agree to the despatch of an ultimatum to Serbia couched in such sharp terms as to make war between the two countries more than probable, and that is doing so they deliberately took the risk of a continental war against Russia and France.”

Further proof of the guilt of the German-speaking powers, and of the sincere desire of the Orthodox powers to avert war by all honourable means, is contained in the telegrams exchanged between Tsar Nicholas and the Serbian regent, Prince Alexander in the last hours before the catastrophe.

469 Stevenson, op. cit., pp. 14-16.
470 Fischer, Germany’s Aims in the First World War, 1961, chapter 2. Again, as J.M. Roberts points out, it was Germany that first declared war on France and Russia when neither country threatened her; and by August 4 Germany had “acquired a third great power [Britain] as an antagonist, while Austria still had none… In the last analysis, the Great War was made in Berlin…” (The Penguin History of Europe. London: Penguin, 1997, pp. 510-511). And David Fromkin writes: “The generals in Berlin in the last week of July were agitating for war - not Austria’s war, one aimed at Serbia, but Germany’s war, aimed at Russia... Germany deliberately started a European war to keep from being overtaken by Russia…” (Europe’s Last Summer, London: Vintage, 2005, pp. 272, 273).
Prince Alexander, who had commanded the First Serbian Army in the Balkan wars and later became king, wrote to Tsar Nicholas: “The demands of the Austro-Hungarian note unnecessarily represent a humiliation for Serbia and are not in accord with the dignity of an independent state. In a commanding tone it demands that we officially declare in Serbian News, and also issue a royal command to the army, that we ourselves cut off military offensives against Austria and recognize the accusation that we have been engaging in treacherous intrigues as just. They demand that we admit Austrian officials into Serbia, so that together with ours they may conduct the investigation and control the execution of the other demands of the note. We have been given a period of 48 hours to accept everything, otherwise the Austro-Hungarian embassy will leave Belgrade. We are ready to accept the Austro-Hungarian demands that are in accord with the position of an independent state, and also those which would be suggested by Your Majesty; everyone whose participation in the murder is proven will be strictly punished by us. Certain demands cannot be carried out without changing the laws, and for that time is required. We have been given too short a period... They can attack us after the expiry of the period, since Austro-Hungarian armies have assembled on our frontier. It is impossible for us to defend ourselves, and for that reason we beseech Your Majesty to come as soon as possible to our aid…”

To this the Tsar replied on July 14/27: “In addressing me at such a serious moment, Your Royal Highness has not been mistaken with regard to the feelings which I nourish towards him and to my heart-felt disposition towards the Serbian people. I am studying the present situation with the most serious attention and My government is striving with all its might to overcome the present difficulties. I do not doubt that Your Highness and the royal government will make this task easier by not despising anything that could lead to a decision that would avert the horrors of a new war, while at the same time preserving the dignity of Serbia. All My efforts, as long as there is the slightest hope of averting bloodshed, will be directed to this aim. If, in spite of our most sincere desire, success is not attained, Your Highness can be assured that in no case will Russia remain indifferent to the fate of Serbia.”

“The Austrian ultimatum to Serbia,” writes Dominic Lieven, “faced the Russian government with a terrible dilemma. In 1914 Russia’s rulers did not want war. Whatever hankering Nicholas II may ever have had for military glory had been wholly dissipated by the Japanese war. That conflict had taught the whole ruling elite that war and revolution were closely linked. Though war with Germany would be more popular than conflict with Japan had been, its burdens and dangers would also be infinitely greater. Russian generals usually had a deep respect for the German army, to which on the whole they felt their own army to be inferior. Above all, Russian leaders had every reason to feel that time was on their side. In strictly military terms, there was good reason to postpone conflict until the so-called ‘Great Programme’ of
armaments was completed in 1917-18. In more general terms, Russia already controlled almost one-sixth of the world’s land surface, whose hitherto largely untapped potential was now beginning to be developed at great speed. It was by no means only Petr Stolypin who believed that, given 20 years of peace, Russia would be transformed as regards its wealth, stability and power. Unfortunately for Russia, both the Germans and the Austrians were well aware of all the above facts. Both in Berlin and Vienna it was widely believed that fear of revolution would stop Russia from responding decisively to the Austro-German challenge: but it was also felt that war now was much preferable to a conflict a decade hence.

“In fact, for the Russian government it was very difficult not to stand up to the Central Powers in July 1914. The regime’s legitimacy was at stake, as were the patriotism, pride and self-esteem of the key decision-makers. Still more to the point was the conviction that weakness would fatally damage Russia’s international position and her security. If Serbia became an Austrian protectorate, that would allow a very significant diversion of Habsburg troops from the southern to the Russian front in the event of a future war. If Russia tamely allowed its Serbian client to be gobbled up by Austria, no other Balkan state would trust its protection against the Central Powers. All would move into the latter’s camp, as probably would the Ottoman Empire. Even France would have doubts about the usefulness of an ally so humiliatingly unable to stand up for its prestige and its vital interests. Above all, international relations in the pre-1914 era were seen to revolve around the willingness and ability of great powers to defend their interests. In the age of imperialism, empires that failed to do this were perceived as moribund and ripe for dismemberment. In the judgement of Russian statesmen, if the Central Powers got away with the abject humiliation of Russia in 1914 their appetites would be whetted rather than assuaged. At some point in the near future vital interest would be threatened for which Russia would have to fight, in which case it made sense to risk fighting now, in the hope that this would deter Berlin and Vienna, but in the certainty that if war ensued Serbia and France would fight beside Russia, and possibly Britain and certain other states as well.”

Austria invaded Serbia the next day, which was followed by Russia’s partial mobilization. However, the Tsar made one last appeal to the Kaiser: “I foresee that very soon I shall be overwhelmed by the pressure brought upon me and forced to take extreme measures which will lead to war.” On July 30 the Kaiser replied that he was neutral in the Serbian question (which he was not). Sazonov then advised the Tsar to undertake a full mobilization because “unless he yielded to the popular demand for war and unsheathed the sword in Serbia’s behalf, he would run the risk of a revolution and perhaps the loss of his throne”.

With great reluctance, the Tsar gave the order for partial mobilization on July 31 - he was not to know that, for technical reasons, a partial mobilization could not be easily repeated at a later date, and so amounted to full mobilization. Although he knew that resisting popular national feeling could lead to revolution, he also knew an unsuccessful war would lead to it still more surely. The decisive factor in his decision to go to war was Russia’s ties of faith with Serbia. According to the witness of Grand Duchess Elizabeth Fyodorovna, herself a German by birth, the Tsar had not wanted war. She blamed her cousin, Kaiser Wilhelm, “who disobeyed the bidding of Frederick the Great and Bismarck to live in peace and friendship with Russia.”

Nor did the Tsar’s support for Serbia fail during the war. In 1915, tens of thousands of Serbs began to die after their forced march to the Albanian coast. Their allies looked upon them with indifference from their ships. The Tsar informed his allies by telegram that they must immediately evacuate the Serbs, otherwise he would consider the fall of the Serbs as an act of the greatest immorality and he would withdraw from the Alliance. This telegram brought prompt action, and dozens of Italian, French and English ships set about evacuating the dying army to Corfu. But western propagandists could not forgive the Tsar for his intercession and rumours that he wanted a separate peace began to seep out.

The Tsar’s support for Serbia is perhaps the clearest example in the whole of human history that not only the lives of individual men, but also the realm of international politics, of Realpolitik, can be guided by love rather than egoism. And if one good thing came out of the First World War it was the strengthening of that bond between Russia and Serbia both during and after it. For as Prince Alexander replied to the Tsar: “Difficult times cannot fail to strengthen the bonds of deep attachment that link Serbia with Holy Slavic Rus’, and the feeling of eternal gratitude for the help and defence of Your Majesty will be reverently preserved in the hearts of all Serbs.”

As the Serbian Bishop Nicholas (Velimirovich) of Zhicha, wrote: “Great is our debt to Russia. The debt of Serbia to Russia, for help to the Serbs in the war of 1914, is huge - many centuries will not be able to contain it for all following generations. This is the debt of love, which without thinking goes to its death, saving its neighbour. ‘There is no greater love than this, that a man should lay down his life for his neighbour.’ These are the words of Christ. The Russian Tsar and the Russian people, having taken the decision to enter the war for the sake of the defence of Serbia, while being unprepared for it, knew that they were going to certain destruction. The love of the Russians for their Serbian brothers did not fear death, and did not retreat before it. Can we ever forget that the Russian Tsar, in subjecting to danger both his children and

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The First World War

Germany declared war on Russia on July 19 / August 1, the feast of St. Seraphim of Sarov, the great prophet of the last times... The First World War was the great watershed in modern European history. In 1914 Europe was a family of nations united by a single royal dynasty and a cosmopolitan elite confessing what most considered, according to ecumenist fashion, to be a single Christianity, albeit divided into Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant varieties, that tried to maintain the pax Europaica throughout the world. The family was German in origin, being made up of branches of the Saxe-Coburg dynasty. Thus even the matriarch of the family, Queen Victoria of England, once told King Leopold of the Belgians: “My heart is so German...”

For many generations, the Russian tsars and princes had taken brides from German princely families; Nicholas II, though thoroughly Russian in spirit, had much more German blood than Russian in his veins; and the Tsaritsa Alexandra and her sister Grand Duchess Elizabeth were Hessian princesses. However, as Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky) pointed out, the sisters were more English than German in their tastes and upbringing, taking after their English mother rather than their German father.

In the summer of 1914 many hoped that the family links between the Kaiser and the Tsar would prevent war. And they did talk, even after the outbreak of war. But to no avail, because in the last resort family unity counted for less for the Kaiser than nationalist pride.

The same could be said of the confessional links. Tsar Nicholas II became the godfather of the future King Edward VIII at his Anglican baptism – and in 1904 Kaiser Wilhelm was invited to be godfather of the Tsarevich Alexis.

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474 Victor Salni and Svetlana Avlasovich, “Net bol’she toj liubvi, kak esli kto polozhit dushu svoiu za drugi svoia” (There is no greater love than that a man should lay down his life for his friend), http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page pid=966.
475 Ferguson, op. cit., p. 97.
478 Ferguson, op. cit., p. 100.
But these spiritual links counted for less than the Orthodox faith: Tsar Nicholas went to war with Catholic Austria in order to defend his Orthodox Serbian co-religionists. And in this we may see one providential reason for the war. It was not so much a war between Slavdom and Germanism, as between Orthodoxy and Westernism, and saved the Orthodox, not only from violent conquest by those of another race, but also, and primarily, from peaceful, ecumenist merging with those of another faith.

The religious nature of the war was understood by many Russians. In 1912 the country had celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Borodino, and in 1913 – the three-hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the Romanov dynasty. These were patriotic celebrations, but also religious ones; for both the commemorated events had taken place on the background of great threats to the Orthodox Faith from western nations. When the Tsar, however reluctantly, declared war on August 1, 1914, this was again seen as the beginning of a great patriotic and religious war.

Thus on that day, as Lubov Millar writes, “large patriotic crowds gathered before the Winter Palace, and when the Emperor and Empress appeared on the balcony, great and joyful ovations filled the air. When the national anthem was played, the crowds began to sing enthusiastically.

“In a sitting room behind this balcony waited Grand Duchess Elizabeth, dressed in her white habit; her face was aglow, her eyes shining. Perhaps, writes Almedingen, she was thinking, ‘What are revolutionary agents compared with these loyal crowds? They would lay down their lives for Nicky and their faith and will win in the struggle.’ In a state of exaltation she made her way from the Winter Palace to the home of Grand Duke Constantine, where his five sons – already dressed in khaki uniforms – were preparing to leave for the front. These sons piously received Holy Communion and then went to the Romanov tombs and to the grave of Blessed Xenia of Petersburg before joining their troops.”

The great tragedy of the war was that this truly patriotic-religious mood did not last, and those who rapturously applauded the Tsar in 1914 were baying for his blood only three years later...

In the defeat of Germany and Austria, which started the war, we must see the judgement of God against those who were, after all, the aggressors and initiators of the conflict. But all the participant nations, with the possible exception of the United States, were significantly weaker, spiritually as well as politically, as a result of it. In a deeper sense, however, the judgement fell hardest on the Orthodox, for “judgement begins at the household of God”.

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479 Millar, op. cit., p. 171.
Thus the Russians were deprived of victory by revolution from within, and came to almost complete destruction afterwards; the Serbs suffered proportionately more than any other country, even if they were on the winning side in the end; the Romanians were crushed by the Germans before also appearing on the winning side; the Bulgarians betrayed their Russian benefactors but still appeared on the losing side. Only the Greeks emerged from the war relatively unscathed – but their judgement would come only a few years later, in the Asia Minor catastrophe of 1922-23.

So the First World War was a judgement on the whole of European civilization, and first of all on the Orthodox nations who had allowed Europeanism gradually to replace their God-given inheritance...

The First World War was, for Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich, a struggle between the All-Man, Christ, and the Superman of Nietzsche, between the doctrine that Right is Might and the opposite one that might is right. For German Christianity with its all-devouring scientism and scepticism had already surrendered to Nietzscheanism: “I wonder... that Professor Harnack, one of the chief representatives of German Christianity, omitted to see how every hollow that he and his colleagues made in traditional Christianity in Germany was at once filled with the all-conquering Nietzscheanism. And I wonder... whether he is now aware that in the nineteen hundred and fourteenth year of our Lord, when he and other destroyers of the Bible, who proclaimed Christ a dreamy maniac [and] clothed Christianity in rags, Nietzscheanism arose [as] the real religion of the German race.”

The Germans were not only penetrated with Nietzscheanism: they had adopted the doctrine of Social Darwinism. Thus Conrad von Hőtzendorff, chief of the Austrian general staff at the outbreak of war believed that the struggle for existence was “the basic principle behind all the events on this earth”. Militarism was the natural consequence of this philosophy: “Politics consists precisely of applying war as method”.

In another place Bishop Nikolai spread the blame more widely on Europe as a whole: “The spirit was wrong, and everything became wrong. The spirit of any civilization is inspired by its religion, but the spirit of modern Europe was not inspired by Europe’s religion at all. A terrific effort was made in many quarters to liberate Europe from the spirit of her religion. The effort-makers forgot one thing, i.e. that no civilization ever was liberated from religion and still lived. Whenever this liberation seemed to be fulfilled, the respective civilization decayed and died out, leaving behind barbaric materialism in towns and superstitions in villages. Europe had to live with

Christianity, or to die in barbaric materialism and superstitions without it. The way to death was chosen. From Continental Europe first the infection came to the whole white race. It was there that the dangerous formula [of Nietzsche] was pointed out: ‘Beyond good and evil’. Other parts of the white world followed slowly, taking first the path between Good and Evil. Good was changed for Power. Evil was explained away as Biological Necessity. The Christian religion, which inspired the greatest things that Europe ever possessed in every point of human activity, was degraded by means of new watchwords: individualism, liberalism, conservatism, nationalism, imperialism, secularism, which in essence meant nothing but the de-christianization of European society, or, in other words, the emptiness of European civilization. Europe abandoned the greatest things she possessed and clung to the lower and lowest ones. The greatest thing was – Christ.

“As you cannot imagine Arabic civilization in Spain without Islam, or India’s civilization without Hinduism, or Rome without the Roman Pantheon, so you cannot imagine Europe’s civilization without Christ. Yet some people thought that Christ was not so essentially needed for Europe, and behaved accordingly without Him or against Him. Christ was Europe’s God. When this God was banished from politics, art, science, social life, business, education, everybody consequently asked for a God, and everybody thought himself to be a god… So the godless Europe became full of gods!

“Being de-christianized, Europe still thought to be civilized. In reality she was a poor valley full of dry bones. The only thing she had to boast of was her material power. By material power only she impressed and frightened the unchristian (but not antichristian) countries of Central and Eastern Asia, and deprived the rustic tribes in Africa and elsewhere. She went to conquer not by God or for God, but by material power and for material pleasure. Her spirituality did not astonish any of the peoples on earth. Her materialism astonished all of them… What an amazing poverty! She gained the whole world, and when she looked inside herself she could not find her soul. Where has Europe’s soul fled? The present war will give the answer. It is not a war to destroy the world but to show Europe’s poverty and to bring back her soul. It will last as long as Europe remains soulless, Godless, Christless. It will stop when Europe gets the vision of her soul, her only God, her only wealth.”

The disciple and admirer of Bishop Nikolai, Archimandrite Justin (Popovich), attributed the cause of God’s wrath against Christian Europe in the two world wars to its betrayal of True Christianity and its embracing an antichristian humanistic metaphysics of progress. The end of such a metaphysic could only be death, death on a massive scale, death with no redeeming purpose, no resurrection in Christ: “It is obvious to normal eyes: European humanistic culture systematically blunts man’s sense of

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immortality, until it is extinguished altogether. The man of European culture affirms, with Nietzsche, that he is flesh and nothing but flesh. And that means: I am mortal, and nothing but mortal. It is thus that humanistic Europe gave itself over to the slogan: man is a mortal being. That is the formula of humanistic man; therein lies the essence of his progress.

“At first subconsciously, then consciously and deliberately, science, philosophy, and culture inculcated in the European man the proposition that man is completely mortal, with nothing else left over... Humanistic man is a devastated creature because the sense of personal immortality has been banished from him. And without that sentiment, can man ever be complete?

“European man is a shrunken dwarf, reduced to a fraction of man’s stature, for he has been emptied of the sense of transcendence. And without the transcendent, can man exist at all as man? And if he could, would there be any meaning to his existence? Minus that sense of the transcendent, is he not but a dead object among other objects, and a transient species among other animals?

“... [Supposedly] equal to the animals in his origin, why should he not also assimilate their morals? Being part of the animal world of beasts in basic nature, he has also joined them in their morals. Are not sin and crime increasingly regarded by modern jurisprudence as an unavoidable by-product of the social environment and as a natural necessity? Since there is nothing eternal and immortal in man, ethics must, in the final analysis, be reduced to instinctive drives. In his ethics, humanistic man has become equal to his progenitors, monkeys and beasts. And the governing principle of his life has become: homo homini lupus.

“It could not be otherwise. For an ethic that is superior to that of the animals could only be founded on a sentiment of human immortality. If there is no immortality and eternal life, neither within nor around man, then animalistic morals are entirely natural and logical for a bestialized humanity: let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die (cf. I Corinthians 15.32).

“The relativism in the philosophy of European humanistic progress could not but result in an ethical relativism, and relativism is the father of anarchism and nihilism. Wherefore, in the last analysis, the practical ethic of humanistic man is nothing but anarchy and nihilism. For anarchy and nihilism are the unavoidable, final and apocalyptic phase of European progress. Ideological anarchism and nihilism, ideological disintegration, necessarily had to manifest themselves in practical anarchism and nihilism, in the practical disintegration of European humanistic man and his progress. Are we not eyewitnesses to the ideological and practical anarchism and nihilism that are devastating the European continent? The addenda of European progress are such that, no matter how they might be computed, their sum is always
anarchism and nihilism. The evidence? Two world wars (actually European wars).

“European man is stupid, catastrophically stupid, when, while disbelieving in God and the immortality of the soul, he still professes belief in progress and life’s meaning and acts accordingly. What good is progress, if after it comes death? What use are the world, the stars, and cultures, if behind them lurks death, and ultimately it must conquer me? Where there is death, there can be no real progress. If there is any, it can only be the cursed progress of the mill of death, which ought to be demolished totally and without a trace…”

The unprecedented destructiveness of the war had been predicted by Engels as early as 1887: “Prussia-Germany can no longer fight any war but a world war; and a war of hitherto unknown dimensions and ferocity. Eight to ten million soldiers will swallow each other up and in doing so eat all Europe more bare than any swarm of locusts. The devastation of the Thirty Years War compressed into the space of three or four years and extending over the whole continent; famine, sickness, want, brutalizing the army and the mass of the population; irrevocable confusion of our artificial structure of trade, industry and credit, ending in general bankruptcy; collapse of the old states and their traditional statecraft, so that crowns will roll by dozens in the gutter and no one can be found to pick them up. It is absolutely impossible to predict where it will end and who will emerge from the struggle as victor. Only one result is absolutely certain: general exhaustion and the establishment of conditions for the final victory of the working class.”

And truly: after the war, everything was different. The Russian empire was gone, and with its disappearance all the islands of Orthodoxy throughout the world began to tremble and contract within themselves. Also gone were the German and Austrian empires, and the very principle of monarchy was fatally undermined, surviving in a truncated form for a short time only in Orthodox Eastern Europe. Christianity as a whole was on the defensive; in most places it became a minority religion again, and in some it was fiercely persecuted, as if the Edict of Milan had been reversed and a new age of the catacombs had returned. The powerful, if superficial pax Europaica had been succeeded by a new age of barbarism, in which nations were divided within and between themselves, and neo-pagan ideologies held sway.

The nature of the war itself contributed to this seismic change. It was not like almost all the wars of earlier centuries – short, fought between professional armies, with only limited effects on the civilian population. It was (with the possible exception of the Napoleonic wars) the first of the total

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483 Popovich, The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism, Thessaloniki, 1974, translated in Orthodox Life, September-October, 1983, pp. 26-27.

wars, making possible the appearance of the totalitarian age. Its length, the unprecedented numbers of killed and wounded, and the sheer horror of front-line combat succeeded in depriving it, after the patriotic élan of the first month or two, of any chivalric, redemptive aspects – at any rate, for all but the small, truly Orthodox minority who fought for the true Faith, the Tsar and the Fatherland. Its main legacy was simply hatred – hatred of the enemy, hatred of one’s own leaders – a hatred that did not die after the war’s end, but was translated into a kind of universal hatred that presaged still more horrific and total wars to come.

But this was not its only legacy. As we have seen, the Tsar’s support for Serbia in August, 1914 constituted a legacy of love. And it may be hoped that in the grand scheme of Divine Providence this legacy will prove the stronger...

**On the Eve of Victory**

The first year of the war went badly for Russia, and in August, 1915, after a series of heavy defeats, the Tsar took control of the army as Supreme Commander. Almost everyone was appalled at the decision, but “God’s will be done,” wrote the Tsar to the Tsaritsa after arriving at headquarters. “I feel so calm” – like the feeling, he said, “after Holy Communion”.

“In the autumn,” writes Robert Massie, “the Tsar brought his son, the eleven-year-old Tsarevich, to live with him at Army Headquarters. It was a startling move, not simply because of the boy’s age but also because of his haemophilia. Yet, Nicholas did not make his decision impetuously. His reasons, laboriously weighed for months in advance, were both sentimental and shrewd.

“The Russian army, battered and retreating after a summer of terrible losses, badly needed a lift in morale. Nicholas himself made constant appearances, and his presence, embodying the cause of Holy Russia, raised tremendous enthusiasm among the men who saw him. It was his hope that the appearance of the Heir at his side, symbolizing the future, would further bolster their drooping spirits. It was a reasonable hope, and, in fact, wherever Alexis appeared he became a center of great excitement…”

Taking advantage of the Tsar’s absence at the front, the liberals on the home front formed a “progressive bloc” designed to force the tsar to give them “a government responsible to the people” – that is, to give power to themselves in a constitutional monarchy. However, while things got worse in the rear they got better at the front. Thanks to organizational changes introduced by the Tsar, the crisis in supplies that had contributed so significantly to the defeats of 1915 was overcome. In 1916 the Brusilov offensive threw back the enemy, and the British military attaché in Russia

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said that Russia’s prospects from a military point of view were better in the
winter of 1916-17 than a year before.

This estimate was shared by Grand Duke Sergius Mikhailovich, who was
at Imperial Headquarters as Inspector-General of Artillery. As he said to his
brother, Grand Duke Alexander: “Go back to your work and pray that the
revolution will not break out this very year. The Army is in perfect condition;
artillery, supplies, engineering, troops - everything is ready for a decisive
offensive in the spring of 1917. This time we will defeat the Germans and
Austrians; on condition, of course, that the rear will not deprive us of our
freedom of action. The Germans can save themselves only if they manage to
prove revolution from behind…”

“By 1916,” writes David Stevenson, “Russia, exceptionally among the
belligerents, was experiencing a regular boom, with rising growth and a
bullish stock exchange: coal output was up 30 per cent on 1914, chemicals
output doubled, and machinery output trebled. Armaments rode the crest of
the wave: new rifle production rose from 132,844 in 1914 to 733,017 in 1915,
and 1,301,433 in 1916; 76mm field guns from 354 to 1,349 to 3721 in these
years; 122mm heavy guns from 78 to 361 to 637; and shell production (of all
types) from 104,900 to 9,567,888 to 30,974,678. During the war Russia
produced 20,000 field guns, against 5,625 imported; and by 1917 it was
manufacturing all its howitzers and three-quarters of its heavy artillery. Not
only was the shell shortage a thing of the past, but by spring 1917 Russia was
acquiring an unprecedented superiority in men and matériel.”

As. F. Vinberg, a colonel of a regiment in Riga, wrote: “Already at the end
of 1916 and the beginning of 1917 many knew that, insofar as it is possible to
calculate the future, our victories in the spring and summer of 1917 were
guaranteed. All the deficiencies in the material and technical sphere, which
had told so strongly in 1914 and 1915, had been corrected. All our armies had
every kind of provisions in abundance. While in the German armies the
insufficiency in everything was felt more strongly every day…”

“The price of this Herculean effort, however, was dislocation of the civilian
economy and a crisis in urban food supply. The very achievement that moved
the balance in the Allies’ favour by summer 1916 contained the seeds of later
catastrophe.” Fr. Lev Lebedev cites figures showing that the production for
the front equalled production for the non-military economy in 1916, and
exceeded it in 1917. This presaged complete economic collapse in 1918; so if
Russia did not defeat Germany in 1917 she was bound to lose the war…

486 Millar, op. cit., p. 182.
487 Stevenson, op. cit., p. 237.
488 Vinberg, op. cit., p. 149.
489 Stevenson, op. cit., p. 237.
490 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 465.
Nevertheless, from a purely military point of view there were good reasons for thinking that Russia could defeat her enemies in 1917. Thus Dominic Lieven denies that there was “any military reason for Russia to seek a separate peace between August 1914 and March 1917. Too much attention is usually paid to the defeats of Tannenburg in 1914 and Gorlice-Tarnow in 1915. Russia’s military effort in the First World War amounted to much more than this. If on the whole the Russian army proved inferior to the German forces, that was usually true of the French and British as well. Moreover, during the Brusilov offensive in 1916 Russian forces had shown themselves quite capable of routing large German units. Russian armies usually showed themselves superior to Austrian forces of comparable size, and their performance against the Ottomans in 1914-16 was very much superior to that of British forces operating in Gallipoli, Egypt and Mesopotamia. The Russian defence industry performed miracles in 1916 and if there were legitimate doubts as to whether this level of production could be fully sustained in 1917, the same was true of the war economies of a number of other belligerents. It is true that Rumania’s defeat necessitated a major redeployment of troops and supplies to the southern front in the weeks before the revolution and that this, together with a particularly severe winter, played havoc with railway movements on the home front. Nevertheless, in military terms there was absolutely no reason to believe that Russia had lost the war in February 1917.

“Indeed, when one raised one’s eyes from the eastern front and looked at the Allies’ overall position, the probability of Russian victory was very great, so long as the home front could hold. Although the British empire was potentially the most powerful of the Allied states, in 1914-16 France and Russia had carried the overwhelming burden of the war on land. Not until July 1916 on the Somme were British forces committed en masse against the Germans, and even then the British armies, though courageous to a fault, lacked proper training and were commanded by amateur officers and generals who lacked any experience of controlling masses of men. Even so, in the summer of 1916 the combined impact of the Somme, Verdun and the Brusilov offensive had brought the Central Powers within sight of collapse. A similar but better coordinated effort, with British power now peaking, held out excellent prospects for 1917. Still more to the point, by February 1917 the German campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare made American involvement in the war in the immediate future a near certainty: the Allied superiority in resources would thereby become overwhelming.

“Once stalemate set in on the battlefield in 1914, the First World War became as much as anything a contest over which belligerent’s home front would collapse first. This fate befell Russia in large part because even its upper and middle classes, let alone organized labour, were more hostile to the existing regime and less integrated into the legal political order than was the case even in Italy, let alone in France, Germany or Britain in 1914. In addition,
opposition to the regime was less divided along ethnic lines than was the case in Austria-Hungary, and Russia was more geographically isolated from military and economic assistance from its allies than was the case with any of the other major belligerents. Nevertheless, unrest on the domestic front was by no means confined to Russia. The Italian home front seemed on the verge of collapse after the defeat of Caporetto in 1917 and the French army suffered major mutinies that year. In the United Kingdom the attempt to impose conscription in Ireland made that country ungovernable and led quickly to civil war. In both Germany and Austria revolution at home played a vital role in 1918, though in contrast to Russia it is true that revolution followed decisive military defeats and was set off in part by the correct sense that the war was unwinnable.

“The winter of 1916-17 was decisive not just for the outcome of the First World War but also for the history of twentieth-century Europe. Events on the domestic and military fronts were closely connected. In the winter of 1915-16 in both Germany and Austria pressure on civilian food consumption had been very severe. The winter of 1916-17 proved worse. The conviction of the German military leadership that the Central Powers’ home fronts could not sustain too much further pressure on this scale was an important factor in their decision to launch unrestricted submarine warfare in the winter of 1916-17, thereby (so they hoped) driving Britain out of the war and breaking the Allied blockade. By this supreme piece of miscalculation and folly the German leadership brought the United States into the war at precisely the moment when the overthrow of the imperial regime was preparing Russia to leave it...” 491

Russia was not defeated militarily from without, but by revolution from within. And yet the losses sustained by Russia during the war had a significant bearing on the outcome of the revolution. For in the first year almost all the old cadres, from privates to colonels, had been killed – that is, the best and the most loyal to the Tsar. The pre-revolutionary aristocracy of Russia was almost completely wiped out in the first two years of the war.492 From 1916, to fill up the losses in the ranks of the junior and middle commanders, the officer schools were forced to take 9/10ths of their entrance from non-noble estates. These new commanders were of much lower quality than their predecessors, who had been taught to die for the Faith and the Fatherland. Especially heavy losses were suffered in the same period by the military chaplains. The older generation of clergy had enjoyed considerable spiritual authority among the soldiers. But they were replaced by less experienced men enjoying less authority.493

491 Lieven, “Russia, Europe and World War I”, op. cit.
492 Sergius Vladimirovich Volkov, “Pervaia mirovaia vojna i russkij ofitserskij korpus”, Nasha Strana, N 2874, August 29, 2009, p. 3.
The critical factor was the loss of morale among the rank and file. In general, the appeals of the socialists and Bolsheviks before the war that the workers of different countries should not fight each other had not been successful. Patriotic feelings turned out to be stronger than class loyalties. However, the terrible losses suffered in the war, the evidence of massive corruption and incompetence in arms deliveries, the propaganda against the Tsar and the return of Bolshevik agitators began to take their toll.

“... Evidence suggests that many soldiers were convinced by 1915 that they could not beat the Germans, and that by the end of 1916 they were full of despondency and recrimination against the authorities who had sent them into war without the wherewithal to win. The evidence that victory was as remote as ever, despite Brusilov’s initial successes and another million casualties, produced a still uglier mood. Soldiers’ letters revealed a deep anxiety about the deteriorating quality and quantity of their provisions (the daily bread ration was reduced from three pounds to two, and then to one, during the winter), as well as anger about rocketing inflation and scarcities that endangered their loved ones’ welfare. Many wanted to end the war whatever the cost, and over twenty mutinies seem to have occurred in October-December 1916 (the first on this scale in any army during the war), some involving whole regiments, and in each case taking the form of a collective refusal of orders to attack or to prepare to attack.”

The Germans were well aware of this, which is why they smuggled Lenin and a lot of money into Russia in a sealed train. This plan went back to 1915, when Alexander Helphand, code-named Parvus, a German agent, persuaded the German Foreign Ministry that they might engineer a mass strike in Russia. In March, 1917, Arthur Zimmermann convinced the Kaiser and the army that the Bolsheviks’ leader, Lenin, who was living in exile in Switzerland, should be smuggled back into Russia.” The Germans must have known that if Lenin, a sworn enemy of all governments, were to succeed in Russia, they would have created a scourge for their own backs. But they knew that the Russian offensive of spring, 1917, if combined with simultaneous attacks from the west, would very likely be successful. So their only hope was the disintegration of Russia from within...

The Actors in the Revolution: (1) The Jews

If the root of the revolution was a nihilistic-messianic-chiliastic kind of faith built out of many strands of European and Jewish thought, the actual composition of forces that brought about the revolution was no less varied. We need to distinguish between at least three levels at which the revolution took place. First, there was the level of the out-and-out revolutionaries, intelligently supported by many from the industrial proletariat and the

494 Stevenson, op. cit., p. 218.
495 Strachan, op. cit., p. 256.
revolutionary-minded peasantry, who were aiming to destroy Russian tsarism and Russian Orthodox civilization completely before embarking on a world revolution that would dethrone God and traditional authority from the hearts and minds of all men everywhere. This level was led by Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin; it was composed mainly of Jews, but also contained numbers of Russians, Latvians, Georgians, Poles and other nationalities. They were possessed by the revolutionary faith to the greatest extent, and owed no allegiance to any nation or traditional creed or morality.

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

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

The extraordinary prominence of Jews in the revolution is a fact that must be related, at least in part, to the traditionally anti-Russian and anti-Christian attitude of Jewish culture, which is reflected in both of its major political offspring – Bolshevism and Zionism. For, as Chaim Weitzmann, the first president of Israel, showed in his Autobiography, the atheist Bolshevik Jews and the theist Zionist Jews came from the same milieu, often the very same families. Thus Weitzmann’s own mother was able to witness her sons’ triumph both in Bolshevik Moscow and Zionist Jerusalem...496

Liberals ascribed the revolutionary character of the Jews to antisemitism, and, in the Russian case, to pogroms and the multitude of restrictions placed on the Jews by the Russian tsars. However, as we have seen, far fewer Jews died in the pogroms than Russian officials in terrorist attacks (1845 by the year 1909), while the restrictions were placed on the Jews in order to protect the Russian peasant, who was ruthlessly exploited by them. As the future

Hieromartyr John Vostorgov said in 1906: “The Jews are restricted in their rights of residence not as a confessional unit, but as a predatory tribe that is dangerous in the midst of the peaceful population because of its exploitative inclinations, which... have found a religious sanction and support in the Talmud... Can such a confession be tolerated in the State, when it allows its followers to practise hatred and all kinds of deceit and harm towards other confessions, and especially Christians? ... The establishment of the Pale of Settlement is the softest of all possible measures in relation to such a confession. Moreover, is it possible in this case not to take account of the mood of the masses? But this mood cannot be changed only by issuing a law on the complete equality of rights of the Jews. On the contrary, this can only strengthen the embitterment of the people...”

“Let us remember,” writes Solzhenitsyn: “the legal restrictions on the Jews in Russia were never racial [as they were in Western Europe]. They were applied neither to the Karaites [who rejected the Talmud], nor to the mountain Jews, nor to the Central Asian Jews.” In other words, restrictions were placed only on those Jews who practised the religion of the Talmud, because of its vicious anti-Christianity and double morality. Moreover, the restrictions were very generously applied. The boundaries of the Pale (a huge area twice the size of France) were extremely porous, allowing large numbers of Jews to acquire higher education and make their fortunes in Great Russia – to such an extent that by the time of the revolution the Jews dominated Russian trade and, most ominously, the Russian press.

Stolypin wanted to remove the restrictions on the Jews. But in this case the Tsar resisted him, as his father had resisted Count Witte before him. This was not because the Tsar felt no responsibility to protect the Jews; he spoke about “my Jews”, as he talked about “my Poles”, “my Armenians” and “my Finns”. And his freedom from anti-semitism is demonstrated by his reaction to the murder of Stolypin by a Jewish revolutionary, Bogrov, in Kiev on September 1, 1911. As Robert Massie writes: “Because Bogrov was a Jew, the Orthodox population was noisily preparing a retaliatory pogrom. Frantic with fear, the city’s Jewish population spent the night packing their belongings. The first light of the following day found the square before the railway station

498 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 292.
499 As Witte recorded in his Memoirs: ‘Are you right to stand up for the Jews?’ asked Alexander III. In reply Witte asked permission to answer the question with a question: ‘Can we drown all the Russian Jews in the Black Sea? If we can, then I accept that resolution of the Jewish question. If not, the resolution of the Jewish question consists in giving them a chance to live. That is in offering them equal rights and equal laws.’” (Edvard Radzinskiy, The Last Tsar, The Last Tsar, London: Arrow, 1993, p. 69). But Witte’s reply misses the point, as if the choice lay between killing all the Jews or giving them complete equality. No State can give complete freedom to a section of the population that does not respect the law and endangers the lives or livelihoods of the majority.
jammed with carts and people trying to squeeze themselves on to departing trains. Even as they waited, the terrified people heard the clatter of hoofs. An endless stream of Cossacks, their long lances dark against the dawn sky, rode past. On his own, Kokovtsev had ordered three full regiments of Cossacks into the city to prevent violence. Asked on what authority he had issued the command, Kokovtsev replied: ‘As head of the government.’ Later, a local official came up to the Finance Minister to complain, ‘Well, Your Excellency, by calling in the troops you have missed a fine chance to answer Bogrov’s shot with a nice Jewish pogrom.’ Kokovtsev was indignant, but, he added, ‘his sally suggested to me that the measures which I had taken at Kiev were not sufficient... therefore I sent an open telegram to all governors of the region demanding that they use every possible means – force if necessary – to prevent possible pogroms. When I submitted this telegram to the Tsar, he expressed his approval of it and of the measure I had taken in Kiev.’”

In the end, the Pale of Settlement was destroyed, not by liberal politicians, but by right-wing generals. In 1915, as the Russian armies retreated before the Germans, some Jews were accused of spying for the enemy and were shot, while the Jewish population in general was considered unreliable. And so a mass evacuation of the Jews from the Pale was ordered by the authorities. But the results were disastrous. Hordes of frightened Jews fleeing eastwards blocked up vital roads along which supplies for the front were destined. Landing up in large cities such as Moscow and Petrograd where there had been no large Jewish population before, these disgruntled new arrivals only fuelled the revolutionary fires. And so was created precisely the situation that the Pale of Settlement had been designed to avert. As the Jews poured from the western regions into the major cities of European Russia, they soon acquired prominent executive positions in all major sectors of government and the economy...

As Alexander Solzhenitsyn wrote, February brought only harm and destruction to the Russian population. However, “Jewish society in Russia received in full from the February revolution everything that it had fought for, and the October coup was really not needed by it, except that cutthroat part of the Jewish secular youth that with its Russian brother-internationalists had stacked up a charge of hatred for the Russian state structure and was rearing to ‘deepen’ the revolution.” It was they who through their control of the Executive Committee of the Soviet – over half of its members were Jewish socialists – assumed the real power after February, and propelled it on – contrary to the interests, not only of the Russian, but also of the majority Jewish population, - to the October revolution.  

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500 Massie, op. cit., p. 229.
501 Solzhenitsyn, Doesti Let Vmeste (Two Hundred Years Together), vol. 2, Moscow, 2002, pp. 41, 43.
Nevertheless, at the time of the October revolution only a minority of the Jews were Bolsheviks (in the early 1900s they constituted 19% of the party). “At the elections to the Constituent Assembly ‘more than 80% of the Jewish population of Russia voted’ for Zionist parties. Lenin wrote that 550,000 were for Jewish nationalists. ‘The majority of the Jewish parties formed a single national list, in accordance with which seven deputies were elected – six Zionists’ and Gruzenberg. ‘The success of the Zionists’ was also aided by the [published not long before the elections] Declaration of the English Foreign Minister Balfour [on the creation of a ‘national centre’ of the Jews in Palestine], ‘which was met by the majority of the Russian Jewish population with enthusiasm [in Moscow, Petrograd, Odessa, Kiev and many other cities there were festive manifestations, meetings and religious services]’.”

The simultaneous triumph of the Jews in Russia and Palestine was indeed an extraordinary “coincidence”: Divine Providence drew the attention of all those with eyes to see this sign of the times when, in one column of newsprint in the London Times for November 9, 1917, there appeared two articles, the one announcing the outbreak of revolution in Petrograd, and the other – the promise of a homeland for the Jews in Palestine (the Balfour declaration).

This coincidence was reinforced by the fact that the theist Jews who triumphed in Israel in 1917, and especially in 1948 after the foundation of the State of Israel, came from the same region and social background – the Pale of Settlement in Western Russia – as the Jews who triumphed in Moscow in 1917, and sometimes even from the same families. Thus Chaim Weitzmann, the first president of Israel, points out in his Autobiography that his brothers and sisters were all either Zionists or Bolsheviks. M. Heifetz also points to the coincidence in time between the October revolution and the Balfour declaration. “A part of the Jewish generation goes along the path of Herzl and Zhabotinsky. The other part, unable to withstand the temptation, fills up the band of Lenin and Trotsky and Stalin.” “The path of Herzl and Bagritsky allowed the Jews to stand tall and immediately become not simply an equal nation with Russia, but a privileged one.”

Indeed, the Russian revolution may be regarded as one branch of that general triumph of Jewish power which we observe in the twentieth century in both East and West, in both Russia and America and Israel. The mainly Jewish nature of the Bolshevik leadership – and of the world revolution in general – cannot be doubted. Such a view was not confined to “anti-Semites”. Thus Winston Churchill wrote: “It would almost seem as if the Gospel of Christ and the gospel of anti-Christ were designed to originate among the same people; and that this mystic and mysterious race had been chosen for the supreme manifestations, both of the Divine and the diabolical… From the days of ‘Spartacus’ Weishaupt to those of Karl Marx, and down to Trotsky

502 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 73.
(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.”

Douglas Reed writes: “The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, which wielded the supreme power, contained 3 Russians (including Lenin\(^{505}\)) and 9 Jews. The next body in importance, the Central Committee of the Executive Commission (or secret police) comprised 42 Jews and 19 Russians, Letts, Georgians and others. The Council of People’s Commissars consisted of 17 Jews and five others. The Moscow Che-ka (secret police) was formed of 23 Jews and 13 others. Among the names of 556 high officials of the Bolshevik state officially published in 1918-1919 were 458 Jews and 108 others. Among the central committees of small, supposedly ‘Socialist’ or other non-Communist parties… were 55 Jews and 6 others.”\(^{506}\)

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.”\(^{507}\)

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\(^{505}\) However, Lenin was partly Jewish. His grandfather was called Israel before his baptism by an Orthodox priest, and his father’s name was Moishe Blank. See Lina Averina, "Evrejskij koren’" (The Jewish Root), Nasha Strana (Our Country), January 22, 1997.

\(^{506}\) Reed, op. cit., p. 274. According to Donald Rayfield (Stalin and his Hangmen, London: Viking, 2004, p. 74), in 1922, the Jews “reached their maximum representation in the party (not that they formed a coherent group) when, at 15 per cent, they were second only to ethnic Russians with 65 per cent.”

\(^{507}\) Pipes, op. cit., pp. 112-13.
The London *Times* correspondent in Russia, Robert Wilton, reported: “Taken according to numbers of population, the Jews represented *one* in ten; among the commissars that rule Bolshevik Russia they are *nine* in ten; if anything the proportion of Jews is still greater.”

On June 9, 1919 Captain Montgomery Shuyler of the American Expeditionary Forces telegraphed from Vladivostok on the makeup of the presiding Soviet government: “… (T)here were 384 ‘commissars’ including 2 negroes, 13 Russians, 15 Chinen, 22 Armenians, and more than 300 Jews. Of the latter number, 264 had come to Russia from the United States since the downfall of the Imperial Government.”

The Jews were especially dominant in the most feared and blood-thirsty part of the Bolshevik State apparatus, the Cheka, which, writes Brendon, “consisted of 250,000 officers (including 100,000 border guards), a remarkable adjunct to a State which was supposed to be withering away. In the first 6 years of Bolshevik rule it had executed at least 200,000. Moreover, the Cheka was empowered to act as ‘policeman, gaoler, investigator, prosecutor, judge and executioner’. It also employed barbaric forms of torture.”

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

But *why* were the Jews the most active revolutionaries? What was it in their upbringing and history that led them to adopt the atheist revolutionary teachings and actions of Russia’s “superfluous young men” more ardently than the Russians themselves? Hatred of Christ and the Christians was, of course, deeply imbedded in the Talmud and Jewish ritual – but the angry young men that began killing thousands of the Tsar’s servants even before the

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508 Reed, *op. cit.*, p. 276.
revolution of 1905 had rejected the Talmud as well as the Gospel, and even all religion in general.

Donald Rayfield writes: “The motivation of those Jews who worked for the Cheka was not Zionist or ethnic. The war between the Cheka and the Russian bourgeoisie was not even purely a war of classes or political factions. It can be seen as being between Jewish internationalism and the remnants of a Russian national culture…

“…What was Jewish except lineage about Bolsheviks like Zinoviev, Trotsky, Kamenev or Sverdlov? Some were second- or even third-generation renegades; few even spoke Yiddish, let alone knew Hebrew. They were by upbringing Russians accustomed to a European way of life and values, Jewish only in the superficial sense that, say, Karl Marx was. Jews in anti-Semitic Tsarist Russia had few ways out of the ghetto except emigration, education or revolution, and the latter two courses meant denying their Judaism by joining often anti-Jewish institutions and groups.”

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

At the same time, the Bolshevik Jews did appear to sympathize with Talmudism more than with any other religion. Thus in 1905, as we have seen, the Jewish revolutionaries in Kiev boasted that they would turn St. Sophia cathedral into a synagogue. Again, in 1918 they erected a monument to Judas Iscariot in Sviazhsk, and in 1919 - in Tambov! And when the Whites reconquered Perm in 1918 they found many Jewish religious inscriptions in the former Bolshevik headquarters – as well as on the walls of the basement of the Ipatiev House in Yekaterinburg where the Tsar and his family were shot.

Moreover, while officially rejecting the Talmud and all religion in general, the revolutionaries did not reject the unconscious emotional energy of

512 Rayfield, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
513 Yurovsky, in Radzinsky, *op. cit.*, p. 177.
514 The Danish writer Halling Keller was present at the unveiling of the monument to Judas in Sviazhsk. He wrote: “The local Soviet discussed to whom to raise a statue for a long time. It was thought that Lucifer did not completely share the idea of communism. Cain was too much of a legendary personality, so they decided on Judas Iscariot since he was a completely historical personality. They represented him at full height with his fist raised to heaven.” (M. Nazarov, “Presledovania Tserkvi i dukhovnaia sut’ bol’shevizma” (The Persecutions of the Church and the spiritual essence of Bolshevism), in *Vozhdii Tret’ego Rima* (To the Leader of the Third Rome), chapter 3)
515 See *Leningradskaia Panorama* (Leningrad Panorama), № 10, 1990, p. 35.
Talmudic Judaism, which was concentrated in a fiercely proud nationalism that was more passionately felt by virtue of the Jews having once truly been the chosen people of God. Having fallen away from that chosen status, and been scattered all over the world by the wrath of God, they resented their replacement by the Christian peoples with an especially intense resentment. Roma delenda est – Christian Rome had to be destroyed, and Russia as “The Third Rome”, the Rome that now reigned, had to be destroyed first of all. The atheist revolutionaries of the younger generation took over this resentment and hatred even while rejecting its religious-nationalist-historical basis...

The Actors in the Revolution: (2) The Freemasons

As we have seen, at the beginning of the war national loyalties proved stronger than both class loyalties and, it would seem, the loyalty created by brotherhood in Masonry. Oleg Platonov points out “that all the main Masonic orders of the warring countries were in favour of war: the Great national lodge of England, the Grand Orient of France, the Grand Orient of the nations of Russia, the Old Prussian lodges and the Great lodge of Hamburg. The latter was the foundation of the Great Serbian lodge, members of which were involved in the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo.”

However, the Masons of different countries were united in their desire to destroy the monarchy – or, at any rate, the monarchy in its traditionally Orthodox, autocratic form. And their anti-monarchical activity had been increasing inside Russia since the Tsar’s October Manifesto removed many of the restrictions on free speech. “At this time,” writes Eduard Radzinsky, “as once before in the nineteenth century, the opposition was allying itself increasingly in secret masonic lodges, which flourished in Russia after the 1905 revolution. By 1917 they had united society’s liberal elite, which was fed up with the Rasputin business. The paradox of the situation was that on the eve of 1905, when the police had frightened Nicholas with masons, masonry scarcely existed in Russia. Now, on the eve of 1917, when masonry had become a real force, the police knew little about it. Meanwhile the Masonic lodges included among their members tsarist ministers, generals, members of the State Council, Duma figures, prominent diplomats, industrialists.”

If the October revolution was engineered by Bolshevik Jews, the February revolution which preceded it and made it possible was engineered by Masonic Russians. I.L. Solonevich sees the Masonic aristocracy as no less guilty of the revolution than the Jews: “The whole of the nineteenth century was filled with the struggle of the autocracy against the aristocratic elite. In this struggle both warring sides perished. However, the monarchy perished with some chance of resurrection, but the aristocracy – with absolutely no chance (I am speaking of the destruction of the aristocracy as a ruling class).

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516 Platonov, op. cit., p. 344.
517 Radzinsky, The Last Tsar, p. 154.
“The roots of this struggle go deep into the past – perhaps as far as Kalita and the Terrible one. But we shall not descend to the depths of the ages. We shall only recall that while the mystical beginning of the Russian revolution is usually ascribed to the Decembrists, there were no Jews among them. Then there came Belinsky and Chernyshevsky and Bakunin and Herzen and Plekhanov and Lavrov and Milyukov and Lenin and many other sowers of ‘the rational, the good and the eternal’. In the course of a whole century they shook and undermined the building of Russian statehood. All this work was covered by the moral authority of Prince Peter Alexeyevich Krapotkin, who had not been bought by the Jews, and Count Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy, who, although taking no bribes from the Jews, undermined both the State and the Church and even the family very thoroughly.

“And any Berdichev chemist from the [Jewish] Bund or from the Bolsheviks, in his struggle again the order created by history, could have taken me by the lapel and said: ‘Listen, are you an intelligent person? Can’t you see that I am walking in the steps of the best lights of Russian thought?’

“And what could I as ‘an intelligent person’ reply to this chemist? Truly he was walking in their steps! And Chernyshevsky really was a ‘light’…

“If we, out the whole of this extraordinarily complicated combination of factors that was making and supporting the revolution, concentrate our fire only on one – on Jewry, - then we have lost the plot. It’s all not so simple. They say: the [American] Jew Jacob Schiff gave money for the Russian revolution. Yes, he did. But [the Old Ritualist] Savva Morozov also gave money for the same revolution. And Germany gave more than any – not the Germany of Weimar and Ebert, and still less Hitler, but the Germany of the Hohenzollerns… It’s not a secret to anybody that all these ‘entrenched truths’ were published on German money, while in the Kshesinskaya palace German marks were valued above all… But if you simplify the matter to such a degree that one can make a revolution in the world with money, then the October revolution was made on German money. À la guerre comme à la guerre. However, it was with the closest and most powerful participation of almost the whole of Russian Jewry…

“And so: the elite of the aristocracy laid the main weight of the struggle against the monarchy on their own shoulders. Then they were joined by the ‘raznochintsy’, and by the very last decades of the past century this anti-monarchist front received powerful support from the whole of Russian Jewry.’”

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518 Solonevich, “Rossia, Revoliutsia i Yevrejstvo” (Russia, the Revolution and Jewry), Rossia i Revoliutsia (Russia and the Revolution), Moscow, 2007, pp. 26-27.
Fr. Lev Lebedev writes: “Soon after the manifesto of October 17, 1905 which gave certain freedoms, legal Masonic lodges, which before had been banned, began to appear. And although, practically speaking, secret Masonry never ceased to exist in Russia, the absence of legal lodges was for the Masons a great obstacle... A ‘reserve’ was being prepared in France by the ‘Grand Orient’. Already in the 60s some Russians had entered French Masonry in Paris. Among them was the writer I.S. Turgenev, later – Great Prince Nicholas Mikhailovich (the ‘Bixio’ lodge), and then the philosopher V. Vyrubov, the psychiatrist N. Bazhenov, the electrophysicist P. Yablochkov, the historian M. Kovalevsky. In 1887 the ‘Cosmos’ (no. 288) lodge was founded for Russians – the writer A. Amphiteatroy, the zemstvo activist V. Maklakov and the activist of culture V.N. Nemirovich-Danchenko. From 1900 the Masonic Russian School of social sciences began its work in Paris, and there arose yet another Russian lodge, ‘Mount Sinai’.519 At the beginning of 1906, with the agreement of the ‘Grand Orient of France’ M. Kovalevsky opened a lodge of French obedience in Russia. The first such lodge was joined by the already mentioned Kovalevsky, Bazhenov, Maklakov, Nemirovich-Danchenko, and also new people such as S. Kotlyarovskiy, E. Kedrin (the jurist), the historian V.O. Klyuchevsky, Prince S. Urusov, the Jewish doctor and lawyer M. Margulies, the diplomat I. Loris-Melikov and others. This lodge had two main affiliates: in Moscow – ‘Regeneration’, and in St. Petersburg – ‘Polar Star’. They were ‘opened’ by two high-ranking Masons, Sencholle and Boulet, who came specially from France. Later, in 1908, they gave ‘Polar Star’ the right to open new lodges in Russia without the prior agreement of the French. Many lodges with various names appeared [such as ‘the Iron Ring’ in Nizhni], but the leading role continued to be played by ‘Polar Star’, which was led by Count A. Orlov-Davydov, and only Masons of no lower rank than the 18th degree were admitted into it. The Masons were also joined by the Cadet A. Kolyubakin, Prince Bebutov, Baron G. Maidel, the public library worker A. Braudo, the historians N. Pavlov-Silvansky and P. Schegolev, the lawyers S. Balavinsky and O. Goldovsky, the Octobrist A.I. Guchkov, his comrade in the party M.V. Rodzyanko, the Cadet N.V. Nebrasov, the workers’ party A.F. Kerensky (in 1912, through the ‘Ursa Minor’ lodge520), the Mensheviks A. Galpern, Chkheidze, the Bolsheviks Trotsky, Lunacharsky, Skvortsov-Stepanov, Krasin, Bokh, Sereda, Chicherin, the millionaires N.I. Tereshchenko, A. Konovalov, P.P. Ryabushinsky (with his two brothers), Prince V. Obolensky, Countess S.V. Panina, Baron V. Meller-Zakomelsky (not to be confused with the general), M. Gorky, his wife E. Peshkova, his godson the Jew Zenobius Peshkov (the brother of Ya. Sverdlov), their friend E.D. Kuskova (a female Mason of the higher degrees), her husband S.

519 Both ‘Cosmos’ and ‘Mount Sinai’ were under the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, according to the Mason Boris Telepneff, Russian Assistant Consul in Paris in 1922 (An Outline of the History of Russian Freemasonry). (V.M.)

520 According to George Sprukts, Kerensky also belonged to the “Grand Orient of the Peoples of Russia” and the Scottish Rite (32nd degree) (“Re: [paradosis] Re: White army”, orthodox-tradition@yahooogroups.com, June 9, 2004). (V.M.)
Prokopovich, Prince G. Lvov (president of the Zemstvo and City Unions), Prince A. Khatistov (the city commandant of Tiflis), Prince P. Dolgorukov, Major-General P. Popovtsev (of the 33rd degree), Mark Aldanov, Fyodorov, Chelnokov, the Menshevik G. Aronson, the artist Mark Chagall, the cadet V. Velikhov and very many other prominent activists of that time. The lists of Russian Masons do not contain the name of the Cadet historian P. Milyukov (he even concealed his Masonry), but only because he had for a long time been in purely French Masonry... Masonic lodges appeared and functioned also, besides Moscow and Petersburg, in Kiev, Odessa, Nizhni-Novgorod, Minsk, Vitebsk, Tver, Samara, Saratov, Tiflis, Kutaisi and other cities. In the words of Kuskova, before 1917 the whole of Russia was covered by a net of Masonic lodges of which many thousands of people were members."

The Mason Boris Telepneff wrote: “This was done accordingly until 1911, when some of their members decided to renew their activities with due prudence. One would not call these activities Masonic in any sense, as their chief aim was purely political – the abolition of the autocracy, and a democratic regime in Russia; they acknowledged allegiance to the Grand Orient of France. This political organization comprised about forty Lodges in 1913. In 1915-1916 disagreements arose between their members who belonged to two political parties (the constitutional democrats and the progressives) and could not agree on a common policy. Ten Lodges became dormant. The remaining thirty Lodges continued to work, and took part in the organization of the 1917 March revolution and in the establishment of the Provisional Government. Their political aim being attained, the organisation began to decay; twenty-eight Lodges existed on the eve of the Bolshevik revolution, and since then most of their members have left Russia.”

Lebedev continues: “Besides lodges of the ‘Polar Star’ structure there also existed lodges of a mystical tendency. Among them were the Martinists (old-style) headed by a ‘Great Master’, Count Musin-Pushkin, which was joined by many from the aristocracy and even from the Imperial Family – Great Princes Nicholas Nikolayevich [supreme commander of the Russian armed forces in 1914-15], Peter Nikolayevich and George Mikhailovich. Among them at one time was the noted Mason and occultist Papius, who was very active. Papius

521 Lebedev, op. cit. “Telepneff reported that two Russian Lodges had been formed in Paris under the auspices of the Grand Lodge of France while a Russian Lodge existed in Berlin, the Northern Star Lodge, under a warrant of the Grand Lodge of the Three Globes.” (Richard Rhoda, “Russian Freemasonry: A New Dawn”, a paper read at the Orient Lodge no. 15 on June 29, 1996, [http://members.aol.com/houltonme/rus/htm](http://members.aol.com/houltonme/rus/htm).  
522 Telepneff, op. cit.  
523 Telepneff also reported that “an independent lodge of the so-called Martiniste Rite was formed among the entourage of Czar Nicholas II under the name of ‘The Cross and the Star’,... which suspended its work in 1916.” Perhaps Great Prince Nicholas Mikhailovich Romanov, the Chairman of the Russian History Society, was a member of this lodge. Edvard Radzinsky (The Last Tsar, London: Arrow Books, 1993, p. 111) writes that he “was a mystic, a mason, and a freethinker... In the family he was called Monsieur Égalité, as the eighteenth-century liberal, the Duc d’Orléans, was called.” (V.M.)
even hoped to draw his Majesty Nicholas II, but was not successful! Among the mystics were the Masons Philaletes, who were joined by Great Prince Alexander Mikhailovich (the brother of George) and a string of aristocrats, about one thousand people in all. Their main occupation was spiritist séances (supposed ‘communion’ with the spirits and souls of the dead), which quite a lot of the intelligentsia were interested in at that time. Finally, there was the directly Satanist lodge ‘Lucifer’, which included many from the ‘creative’ sort, basically decadents such as Vyacheslav Ivanov, V. Bryusov and A. Bely...

“On the direct orders of the ‘Grand Orient of France’, Masonry extended its tentacles into the State apparatus, into the diplomatic corps. Thus according to the data of N. Verberova in her book, People and Lodges, the Masons in the diplomatic service were: K.D. Nabokov (England), A.D. Kandaurov (France), G.P. Zabello (Italy), A.V. Nekludov (Sweden), I.G. Loris-Melikov (Norway), K.M. Onu (Switzerland), B.A. Bakhmetev (USA), N.A. Kudashev (China), A.I. Scherbatsky (Brazil), etc.

“All the Masonic lodges in Russia were linked and communicated with each other and with foreign centres, first of all with the ‘Grand Orient of France’. And all of them together were ruled by the purely Jewish community (called sometimes a ‘lodge’ and sometimes an ‘order’) Bnai Brith, which was at the head of united world Zionism, with its centre in the USA.

“For the western centres, the most important thing from a political point of view was Russian political Masonry of the ‘Polar Star’ structure. In 1909 it declared that it was liquidating itself. This was a manoeuvre, well-known from the times of [the Decembrist] P. Pestel, whose aim, on the one hand, was to get rid of ‘ballast’ and spies that had penetrated into its midst, and on the other hand, to create a new secret union for the political struggle that would not be subject to the suspicion and danger its legal ‘brothers’ were in. Thus in the same year of 1909 a deeply conspiratorial ‘Military lodge’ was formed headed by A.I. Guchkov, and in 1910 – the ‘Ursa Minor’ lodge for work with ‘state’ society, in which the main roles gradually came to be played by Prince G. Lvov, M.V. Rodzyanko, A.F. Kerensky, N.V. Nekrasov, P.P. Ryabushinsky,
M.I. Tereschenko and A. Konovalov... Over them, that is, over the whole of Russian Masonry of this tendency, there weighed the Masonic *oath of fidelity* to the ‘Grand Orient of France’, which was given already in 1908 in the form of a special document called ‘Obligation’. This oath-obligation was kept faithfully both before and after the ‘self-liquidation’ and the emergence of a new leadership and a new structure. In 1910 this leadership declared its formal *independence* from Russian Masonry – but with the *agreement* of the French of the ‘Grand Orient’. The new leadership significantly simplified the reception of new members, it rejected (for conspiratorial reasons) many elements of Masonic symbolism and ritual, and thereby became, in the language of the Masons, ‘unlawful’. But all this was part of the conspiracy (so that in the event of something World Masonry could declare its complete ‘non-involvement’ in the conspirators and the conspiracy). In actual fact the whole course of the conspiracy was led and controlled precisely through *foreign Masons* (through the embassies of Germany, England and France in Russia). In 1910 Guchkov, a long-time member of the State Council and the Third State Duma, became the president of the Duma. However, in 1911 he voluntarily resigned from this post, which was immediately taken by his ‘brother’ Rodzyanko. In 1913 Guchkov and other ‘brothers’ created a secret ‘Supreme Council of Peoples of Russia’, which was joined by up to 400 members. But the presidents of the lodges knew only its secretaries – Nekrasov, Kerensky, Tereschenko. Each new lodge consisted of no more than 12 members. The Council and its ‘Convent’ coordinated the actions of the ‘Military Lodge’ and the structures of ‘Ursa Minor’. At this time Guchkov headed the military committee of the State Duma, and was in charge of defence questions. ‘In accordance with service obligations’, he was linked with the General Staff, and the most prominent military men, diplomats and industrialists. Gradually, one by one, Guchkov attracted into his ‘Military Lodge’ Generals N.N. Yanushkevich, A.S. Lukomsky, A.A. Polivanov, A.Z. Myshlayevsky, V.I. Gurko, Colonel Baron Korf, and then Generals A.V. Alexeyev, N.V. Ruzsky, A.M. Krymov, L.G. Kornilov, A.A. Brusilov, A.A. Manikovsky, V.F. Dzhunkovsky and many other eminent officers.

“In essence, in the years 1909-1913 Guchkov had already prepared a general plan of action, which he borrowed from the ‘Young Turk’ Masons in 1908 in Turkey, where he went specially to study the experience of the Turkish revolution. The essence of the plan consisted in the higher military officers, including those in the Tsar’s closest entourage, being able, at the necessary moment, to *isolate* their Monarch from all the levers of administration and *force* him to whatever deed or word the conspirators needed at that moment.

“As we can see, Masonry contained prominent activists and members of the leadership of almost *all the parties* and major organizations. Kerensky later recalled that in Masonry they almost never allowed themselves to violate the unity of the ‘brotherhood’ by party disagreements. But ‘in public’ a sharp
polemic between the parties went on, a struggle that sometimes seemed irreconcilable to the public (the ‘profanes’)! So that whatever party came to power in the event of the revolution, there would in any case be ‘brother-masons’ at the helm of this power!”

Yana Sedova writes: “This group of Masons – about 300 people – had absolutely no interest in the [official] aims of Masonry and rituals. They had their own clearly defined aim – to gain political power in the Russian Empire. However, in spite of the fact that amongst them there were very many prominent public figures, they did not have the real strength for a coup. For that reason, in order to organize the coup, the Masons attracted outsiders who did not guess who was using them and for what.”

The Actors in the Revolution: (3) The Christians

Long before the Jews began to join terrorist organizations, or the intelligentsia to weave their plots against the tsar, the Russian Orthodox people began to fall away from the faith. This was mentioned by Saints Seraphim of Sarov and Tikhon of Zadonsk; and St. Ignatius Brianchaninov spoke about “hypocrisy”, “scribes and Pharisees” and “the salt losing its savour”. By the eve of the revolution this decline was still more noticeable.

Worst of all was the corruption of the Church hierarchy, which included renovationists such as Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) and Bishop Antoninus (Granovsky). Even among the faithful hierarchs, there were few who spoke out openly against the revolutionary madness.

In the monasteries it was the same story. Thus the future Elder Gabriel of Seven Lakes was warned by St. Ambrose of Optina “to go wherever he please, so as only not to live in Moscow”, where monasticism was at such a low level. A generation later, in 1909, St. Barsanuphius of Optina said: “Contemporary monasticism strives in all things to fulfil its own will. Abba Dorotheus says: ‘I know of no other fall for a monk than as a consequence of his own will.’” The ignorance and superstition of the name-worshipping monks did not grow on an empty place; and pseudo-elders such as Rasputin and Iliodor could not have flourished in a more truly pious society.

A particular characteristic of the pre-revolutionary period – and a propaganda gift for the revolutionaries - was the excessive expenditure of the rich and their flagrant immorality. The Romanovs – with the shining

528 Sedova, “Byl li masonskij zagovor protiv russkoj monarkhii?” (Was there a masonic plot against the Russian Monarchy?), Nasha Strana, November 24, 2006, no. 2808, p. 4.
529 Fr. Simeon Kholmogorov, One of the Ancients, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1988, p. 67.
530 St. Barsanuphius, in Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., p. 409.
exception of the tsar and his immediate family, and some others – were among the worst sinners. The increasing hard-heartedness of wealthy Russian Christians to the poor was bewailed by many leading churchmen, such as St. John of Kronstadt. Both rich and poor tended to forget the Christian teaching on social inequality, namely, that it is an opportunity for the rich to show compassion and for the poor to display patience.\(^{531}\)

But the rich in every age have been corrupt. What of the poor? In the villages and factories, as we have seen, revolutionary propaganda made deep inroads. Although only a minority of peasants took part in the burning of landowners’ estates in the 1905 revolution, by 1917 the experience of the war and the lying propaganda directed against the Tsar and his family had increased the numbers of deserters, thieves and arsonists. In the elections to the Constituent Assembly in 1918 80\% of the population voted for socialist deputies.\(^{532}\) Moreover, support for the Bolsheviks in the elections, as Richard Pipes writes, “came not from the region of Jewish concentration, the old Pale of Settlement, but from the armed forces and the cities of Great Russia, which had hardly any Jews.”\(^{533}\) So blame for the Russian revolution must fall on Russians as well as Jews, and not only the aristocratic or Masonic Russians, but on large swathes of the Christian working population.

F. Vinberg writes: “Everyone was guilty! Both the higher circles of the nobility, and the major and minor merchants, and the representatives of science, and the servant classes, and in particular the adulterers of the word, the corrupters of thought, many Russian writers of the last decades, lawyers and professors: for all these categories of Russian citizens there can be no forgiveness for the great crime they committed.”\(^{534}\) And so Ivan Solonevich’s words applied to all sections of the population: “With the substitution of faith in absolute Good with faith in relative sausages, everything else also begins to take on a relative character, including man. With the loss of faith in God, loss of faith in man is also lost. The Christian principle, ‘love your neighbour as yourself’, for your neighbour is also a part of absolute Good, is exchanged for another principle: ‘man is a means for the production of sausages’. The feeling of absolute morality is lost... Consequently faith ceases to exist not only in man generally, but also in one’s ‘neighbour’ and even in the neighbour himself. And then begins mutual extermination...”\(^{535}\)

\(^{531}\) For, as Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich wrote, “it is God’s desire that men be unequal in externals: riches, power, status, learning, position and so forth. But he does not recommend any sort of competitiveness in this. God desires that men compete in the multiplying of the inner virtues.” (Homilies, volume 2).


\(^{533}\) Pipes, op.cit., p. 113.

\(^{534}\) Vinberg, op.cit., p. 7.

The roots of the revolution lay in “the mystery of iniquity”, the mystery of satanic rebellion against the order established by God, which arises from within the People of God. In the early nineteenth century Joseph de Maistre wrote: “There have always been some forms of religion in the world and wicked men who opposed them. Impiety was always a crime, too... But only in the bosom of the true religion can there be real impiety... Impiety has never produced in times past the evils which it has brought forth in our day, for its guilt is always directly proportional to the enlightenment which surrounds it... Although impious men have always existed, there never was before the eighteenth century, and in the heart of Christendom, an insurrection against God.”  De Maistre was speaking, of course, about the French revolution, and his “true religion” was in fact the heresy of Papism. Nevertheless, in essence his words are profoundly true, and apply with still greater accuracy and force to the Russian revolution and the true religion of Orthodox Christianity. It is therefore to the insurrection against God within the heart of Orthodox Christianity that we must look for the deepest cause of the revolution. The crime of the people was the worse in that Tsar Nicholas was probably the most genuine Christian that has ever sat upon a Christian throne. Not only did he not exploit his people in any way: he brought them immeasurable benefits, both spiritual and material, building churches, canonizing saints, spreading the true faith, strengthening the economy, helping the poor, introducing just labour legislation and finally laying down his crown and life in order to save his people from civil war.

When the revolution finally came, and people saw the demonic horror they had voted for, many repented. They realized that they were reaping the fruits of what they themselves had sown. This relationship of pre-revolutionary decadence to post-revolutionary horror was pointed out by Hieromartyr Damascene, Bishop of Glukhov: “The absence of zeal in Christians and of a firm confession of their faith makes many of our enemies (who do not, of course, consciously arise up against the Holy Spirit) to see in Christianity – hypocrisy, and in the Church – an organization of exploiters. In the same way, the absence in us of Christian zeal can be seen as an indirect reason why those who are perishing in the darkness of atheism and the spite of anti-theism leave the Church. It goes without saying that real, especially spiteful ‘rising up against the Lord and against His Christ’ has other, deeper, age-old reasons. Still, if such a significant quenching of the spirit of faith and love amidst believers in the preceding age had not taken place, the faithful servants of the prince of darkness would not have found among us so many voluntary and involuntary helpers. It was said at one Masonic congress: ‘Russia has preserved the most ardent love for our eternal Enemy, and He Whose name I do not want to name will send a horde of His invisible powers to the defence

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of the Russian people’... And it was decided in counter-action to this to implant lack of faith in Russia…”

The Lord would indeed have sent “a horde of His invisible powers to the defence of the Russian people” – if they had been worthy of it. But they were not. And so instead of “the mystery of piety”, there triumphed “the mystery of iniquity”. For, as St. John Maximovich explained: “The sin against him [the Tsar] and against Russia was perpetrated by all who in one way or another acted against him, who did not oppose, or who merely by sympathizing participated in those events which took place forty years ago. That sin lies upon everyone until it is washed away by sincere repentance…”

Archbishop Averky (Taushev) of Syracuse continues the theme: “It is small consolation for us that the Royal Family was killed directly by non-Russian hands, non-Orthodox hands and non-Russian people. Although that is so, the whole Russian people is guilty of this terrible, unprecedented evil deed, insofar as it did not resist or stand against it, but behaved in such a way that the evil deed appeared as the natural expression of that mood which by that time had matured in the minds and hearts of the undoubted majority of the unfortunate misguided Russian people, beginning with the ‘lowers’ and ending with the very ‘tops’, the upper aristocracy.”

The Actors in the Revolution: (4) Rasputin

Special mention should be made of the influence of the so-called “elder”, Gregory Rasputin. Slanderous stories about his relationship with the Empress, blown up and distorted beyond measure by the press, had a particularly corrosive influence on the reputation of the monarchy during the war. Let us examine his story more closely.

As the revolutionary threat receded (temporarily) after 1905, a new, more subtle and sinister threat appeared: theosophy, occultism, spiritism and pornography flooded into Russia. The most famous occult figure of the time, whose sexual excesses, both real and imagined, were the talk of Russia, was the peasant Rasputin. His association with the Royal Family was a devil-sent weapon in the hands of the enemies of the Tsar.

537 E.L., Episkopy-Ispovednik (Bishop Confessors), San Francisco, 1971.
541 See Archpriest Michael Polsky, The New Martyrs of Russia, Wildwood, Alberta: Monastery Press, 2000, pp. 121-122; Monk Anthony (Chernov), Vie de Monseigneur Théophile, Archevêque de Poltava et de Pereiaslav (The Life of his Eminence Theophan, Archbishop of Poltava and Pereyaslavl), Lavardac: Monastere Orthodoxe St. Michel, 1988 (in French); Monk Anthony
The fateful introduction of Rasputin to the Royal Family has been laid at the door of Archbishop Theophan of Poltava, at one time rector of the Petersburg Theological Academy and tutor of the Tsar’s children. However, this charge was rejected by Archbishop Theophan when he witnessed before the Extraordinary Commission into Rasputin’s doings in 1917: “How Rasputin came to know the family of the former emperor, I have absolutely no idea. And I definitely state that I took no part in that. My guess is that Rasputin penetrated the royal family by indirect means… Rasputin himself never talked about it, despite the fact that he was a rather garrulous person… I noticed that Rasputin had a strong desire to get into the house of the former emperor, and that he did so against the will of Grand Duchess Militsa Nikolayevna. Rasputin himself acknowledged to me that he was hiding his acquaintance with the royal family from Militsa Nikolayevna.”

The first meeting between the Royal Family and Rasputin, as recorded in the Tsar’s diary, took place on November 1, 1905. Archbishop Theophan testified: “I personally heard from Rasputin that he produced an impression on the former empress at their first meeting. The sovereign, however, fell under his influence only after Rasputin had given him something to ponder.” According to the Monk Iliodor, Rasputin told him: “I talked to them for a long time, persuading them to spit on all their fears, and rule.”

On hearing that Rasputin had impressed the empress, Grand Duchess Militsa Nikolayevna said to him, as Archbishop Theophan testified: “‘You, Gregory, are an underhand person.’ Militsa Nikolayevna told me personally of her dissatisfaction with Rasputin’s having penetrated the royal family on his own, and mentioned her warning that if he did, it would be the end of him. My explanation of her warning,” said Archbishop Theophan, “… was that there were many temptations at court and much envy and intrigue, and that Rasputin, as a simple, undemanding wandering pilgrim, would perish spiritually under such circumstances.”


542 In fact, “Rasputin first appeared in St. Petersburg most probably in 1902, having by that time ‘won the heart’ of the Kazan bishop Chrisanth who recommended him to the rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, Bishop Sergius [Stragorodsky]. The latter, in his turn, presented Rasputin to the professor, celibate priest Veniamin, and to the inspector of the Academy, Archimandrite Theophan” (Alexander Bokhanov, Manfred Knott, Vladimir Oustimenko, Zinaida Peregudova, Lyubov Tyutyunnik, The Romanovs, London: Leppi, 1993, p. 233).
It was at about this time that Rasputin left Fr. Theophan’s lodgings and moved in with the woman who was to become one of his most fanatical admirers, Olga Lokhtina. Archbishop Theophan writes: “He only stayed with me a little while, since I would be off at the Academy for days on end. And it got boring for him... and he moved somewhere else, and then took up residence in Petrograd at the home of the government official Vladimir Lokhtin,” who was in charge of the paved roads in Tsarskoe Selo, and so close to the royal family...

Rasputin returned to his family in Pokrovskoe, Siberia, in autumn, 1907, only to find that Bishop Anthony of Tobolsk and the Tobolsk Consistory had opened an investigation to see whether he was spreading the doctrines of the khlysty - perhaps, as was suspected, at the instigation of Grand Duchess Militsa Nikolayevna. Olga Lokhtina hurried back to St. Petersburg and managed to get the investigation suspended. Soon afterwards, testifies Fr. Theophan, “the good relations between the royal family and Militsa, Anastasia Nikolayevna [the sister of Militsa], and Peter and Nikolai Nikolayevich [the husbands of the sisters] became strained. Rasputin himself mentioned it in passing. From a few sentences of his I concluded that he had very likely instilled in the former emperor the idea that they had too much influence on state affairs and were encroaching on the emperor’s independence.”

The place that the Montenegrin Grand Duchesses had played in the royal family was now taken by the young Anya Vyrubova, who was a fanatical admirer of Rasputin. Another of Rasputin’s admirers was the royal children’s nurse, Maria Vishnyakova. And so Rasputin came closer and closer to the centre of power...

Contrary to the propaganda of the Masons, Rasputin never had sexual relations with any member of the Royal Family. Moreover, his influence on the political decisions of the Tsar was much exaggerated. But he undoubtedly had a great influence on the Tsarina through his ability, probably through some kind of hypnosis, to relieve the Tsarevich’s haemophilia, a tragedy that caused much suffering to the Tsar and Tsarina, and which they carefully hid from the general public. It is this partial success in curing the Tsarevich that wholly explains Rasputin’s influence over the Royal Family...

Bishop Theophan began to have doubts about Rasputin. These doubts related to rumours that Rasputin was not the pure man of God he seemed to be. “Rumours began reaching us,” testified Vladyka, “that Rasputin was unrestrained in his treatment of the female sex, that he stroked them with his hand during conversation. All this gave rise to a certain temptation to sin, the more so since in conversation Rasputin would allude to his acquaintance with me and, as it were, hide behind my name.”
At first Vladyka and his monastic confidants sought excuses for him in the fact that “we were monks, whereas he was a married man, and that was the reason why his behaviour has been distinguished by a great lack of restraint and seemed peculiar to us… However, the rumours about Rasputin started to increase, and it was beginning to be said that he went to the bathhouses with women… It is very distressing… to suspect [a man] of a bad thing…”

Rasputin now came to meet Vladyka and “himself mentioned that he had gone to bathhouses with women. We immediately declared to him that, from the point of view of the holy fathers, that was unacceptable, and he promised us to avoid doing it. We decided not to condemn him for debauchery, for we knew that he was a simple peasant, and we had read that in the Olonets and Novgorod provinces men bathed in the bathhouses together with women, which testified not to immorality but to their patriarchal way of life… and to its particular purity, for… nothing was allowed. Moreover, it was clear from the Lives of the ancient Byzantine holy fools Saints Simeon and John [of Edessa] that both had gone to bathhouses with women on purpose, and had been abused and reviled for it, although they were nonetheless great saints.”

The example of Saints Simeon and John was to prove very useful for Rasputin, who now, “as his own justification, announced that he too wanted to test himself – to see if he had extinguished passion in himself.” But Theophan warned him against this, “for it is only the great saints who are able to do it, and he, by acting in this way, was engaging in self-deception and was on a dangerous path.”

To the rumours about bathhouses were now added rumours that Rasputin had been a khlyst sectarian in Siberia, and had taken his co-religionists to bathhouses there. Apparently the Tsar heard these rumours, for he told the Tsarina not to receive Rasputin for a time. For the khlysts, a sect that indulged in orgies in order to stimulate repentance thereafter, were very influential among the intelligentsia, especially the literary intelligentsia, of the time.

It was at that point that the former spiritual father of Rasputin in Siberia, Fr. Makary, was summoned to Tsarskoe Selo, perhaps on the initiative of the Tsarina. On June 23, 1909 the Tsar recorded that Fr. Makary, Rasputin and Bishop Theophan came to tea. There it was decided that Bishop Theophan, who was beginning to have doubts about Rasputin, and Fr. Makary, who had a good opinion of him, should go to Rasputin’s house in Pokrovskoye and investigate.

Bishop Theophan was unwell and did not want to go. But “I took myself in hand and in the second half of June 1909 set off with Rasputin and the monk of the Verkhoturye Monastery Makary, whom Rasputin called and acknowledged to be his ‘elder’”. The trip, far from placating Vladyka’s suspicions, only confirmed them, so that he concluded that Rasputin did not
“occupy the highest level of spiritual life”. On the way back from Siberia, as he himself testified, he “stopped at the Sarov monastery and asked God’s help in correctly answering the question of who and what Rasputin was. I returned to Petersburg convinced that Rasputin... was on a false path.”

While in Sarov, Vladyka had asked to stay alone in the cell in which St. Seraphim had reposed. He was there for a long time praying, and when he did not come out, the brothers finally decided to enter. They found Vladyka in a deep swoon.

He did not explain what had happened to him there. But he did relate his meeting with Blessed Pasha of Sarov the next year, in 1911. The eldress and fool-for-Christ jumped onto a bench and snatched the portraits of the Tsar and Tsarina that were hanging on the wall, cast them to the ground and trampled on them. Then she ordered her cell-attendant to put them into the attic.

This was clearly a prophecy of the revolution of 1917. And when Vladyka told it to the Tsar, he stood with head bowed and without saying a word. Evidently he had heard similar prophecies...

On returning from Siberia and Sarov, Vladyka conferred with Archimandrite Benjamin and together with him summoned Rasputin. “When after that Rasputin came to see us, we, to his surprise, denounced him for his arrogant pride, for holding himself in higher regard than was seemly, and for being in a state of spiritual deception. He was completely taken aback and started crying, and instead of trying to justify himself admitted that he had made mistakes. And he agreed to our demand that he withdraw from the world and place himself under my guidance.”

Rasputin then promised “to tell no one about our meeting with him.” “Rejoicing in our success, we conducted a prayer service... But, as it turned out, he then went to Tsarkoye Selo and recounted everything there in a light that was favourable to him but not to us.”

In 1910, for the sake of his health, Vladyka was transferred to the see of Tauris and Simferopol in the Crimea. Far from separating him from the royal family, this enabled him to see more of them during their summer vacation in Livadlia. He was able to use the tsar’s automobile, so as to go on drives into the mountains, enjoy the wonderful scenery and breathe in the pure air. He often recalled how he celebrated the Divine Liturgy in the palace, and how the Tsarina and her daughters chanted on the kliros. This chanting was always prayerful and concentrated.

Vladyka used to say: “During this service they chanted and read with such exalted, holy veneration! In all this there was a genuine, lofty, purely
monastic spirit. And with what trembling, with what radiant tears they approached the Holy Chalice!"

“The sovereign would always begin every day with prayer in church. Exactly at eight o’clock he would enter the palace church. By that time the serving priest had already finished the proskomedia and read the hours. With the entry of the Tsar the priest intoned: ‘Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.’ And exactly at nine o’clock the Liturgy ended. Nor were there any abbreviations or omissions. And the priest did not give the impression of being in a hurry. The secret lay in the fact that there were no pauses at all. This enabled the Liturgy to be completed within one hour. For the priest this was an obligatory condition. The sovereign always prayed very ardently. Each petition in the litany, each prayer found a lively response in his soul.

“After the Divine service the working day of the sovereign began.”

However, the issue of Rasputin was destined to bring an end to this idyllic phase in the relations between Vladyka Theophan and the Royal Family.

“After a while,” testifies Vladyka, “rumours reached me that Rasputin had resumed his former way of life and was undertaking something against us… I decided to resort to a final measure – to denounce him openly and to communicate everything to the former emperor. It was not, however, the emperor who received me but his wife in the presence of the maid of honour Vyrubova.

“I spoke for about an hour and demonstrated that Rasputin was in a state of spiritual deception... The former empress grew agitated and objected, citing theological works... I destroyed all her arguments, but she... reiterated them: ‘It is all falsehood and slander’... I concluded the conversation by saying that I could no longer have anything to do with Rasputin... I think Rasputin, as a cunning person, explained to the royal family that my speaking against him was because I envied his closeness to the Family... that I wanted to push him out of the way.

“After my conversation with the empress, Rasputin came to see me as if nothing had happened, having apparently decided that the empress’s displeasure had intimidated me... However, I told him in no uncertain terms, ‘Go away, you are a fraud.’ Rasputin fell on his knees before me and asked my forgiveness... But again I told him, ‘Go away, you have violated a promise given before God.’ Rasputin left, and I did not see him again.”

At this point Vladyka received a “Confession” from a former devotee of Rasputin’s. On reading this, he understood that Rasputin was “a wolf in sheep’s clothing” and “a sectarian of the Khlyst type” who “taught his
followers not to reveal his secrets even to their confessors. For if there is allegedly no sin in what these sectarians do, then their confessors need not be made aware of it.”

“Availing myself of that written confession, I wrote the former emperor a second letter… in which I declared that Rasputin not only was in a state of spiritual deception but was also a criminal in the religious and moral sense… In the moral sense because, as it followed from the ‘confession’, Father Gregory had seduced his victims.”

There was no reply to this letter. “I sensed that they did not want to hear me out and understand… It all depressed me so much that I became quite ill – it turned out I had a palsy of the facial nerve.”

In fact, Vladyka’s letter had reached the Tsar, and the scandal surrounding the rape of the children’s nurse, Vishnyakova, whose confessor was Vladyka, could no longer be concealed. Vishnyakova herself testified to the Extraordinary Commission that she had been raped by Rasputin during a visit to Verkhoturye Monastery in Tobolsk province, a journey undertaken at the empress’s suggestion. “Upon our return to Petrograd, I reported everything to the empress, and I also told Bishop Theophan in a private meeting with him. The empress did not give any heed to my words and said that everything Rasputin does is holy. From that time forth I did not see Rasputin, and in 1913 I was dismissed from my duties as nurse. I was also reprimanded for frequenting the Right Reverend Theophan.”

Another person in on the secret was the maid of honour Sophia Tyutcheva. As she witnessed to the Commission, she was summoned to the Tsar.

“You have guessed why I summoned you. What is going on in the nursery?”

She told him.

“So you too do not believe in Rasputin’s holiness?”

She replied that she did not.

“But what will you say if I tell you that I have lived all these years only thanks to his prayers?”

Then he “began saying that he did not believe any of the stories, that the impure always sticks to the pure, and that he did not understand what had suddenly happened to Theophan, who had always been so fond of Rasputin. During this time he pointed to a letter from Theophan on his desk.”
"‘You, your majesty, are too pure of heart and do not see what filth surrounds you.’ I said that it filled me with fear that such a person could be near the grand duchesses.

‘Am I then the enemy of my own children?’ the sovereign objected.

“He asked me never to mention Rasputin’s name in conversation. In order for that to take place, I asked the sovereign to arrange things so that Rasputin would never appear in the children’s wing.”

But her wish was not granted, and both Vishnyakova and Tyutcheva would not long remain in the tsar’s service…

It was at about this time that the newspapers began to write against Rasputin. And a member of the circle of the Grand Duchess Elizabeth Fyodorovna, Michael Alexandrovich Novoselov, the future bishop-martyr of the Catacomb Church, published a series of articles condemning Rasputin. "Why do the bishops,” he wrote, “who are well acquainted with the activities of this blatant deceiver and corrupter, keep silent?… Where is their grace, if through laziness or lack of courage they do not keep watch over the purity of the faith of the Church of God and allow the lascivious khlyst to do the works of darkness under the mask of light?” The brochure was forbidden and confiscated while it was still at the printer's, and the newspaper The Voice of Moscow was heavily fined for publishing excerpts from it.

Also disturbed by the rumours about Rasputin was the Prime Minister Peter Arkadievich Stolypin. But he had to confess, as his daughter Maria relates: “Nothing can be done. Every time the opportunity presents itself I warn his Majesty. But this is what he replied to me recently: ‘I agree with you, Peter Arkadievich, but better ten Rasputins than one hysterical empress.’ Of course, the whole matter is in that. The empress is ill, seriously ill; she believes that Rasputin is the only person in the whole world who can help the heir, and it is beyond human strength to persuade her otherwise. You know how difficult in general it is to talk to her. If she is taken with some idea, then she no longer takes account of whether it is realisable or not… Her intentions are the very best, but she is really ill…”

In November, 1910, Bishop Theophan went to the Crimea to recover from this illness. But he did not give up, and inundated his friend Bishop Hermogen with letters. It was his aim to enlist this courageous fighter against freethinking in his fight against Rasputin. But this was difficult because it had been none other than Vladyka Theophan who had at some time introduced Rasputin to Bishop Hermogen, speaking of him, as Bishop Hermogen himself said, “in the most laudatory terms.” Indeed, for a time Bishop Hermogen and Rasputin had become allies in the struggle against freethinking and modernism.
Unfortunately, a far less reliable person then joined himself to Rasputin’s circle – Sergius Trophanov, in monasticism Iliodor, one of Bishop Theophan’s students at the academy, who later became a co-worker of Dzerzhinsky, a Baptist, married and had seven children. In an interview with the newspaper Rech’ (January 9, 1913) Fr. Iliodor said: “I used to be a magician and fooled the people. I was a Deist.” He built a large church in Tsaritsyn on the Volga, and began to draw thousands to it with his fiery sermons against the Jews and the intellectuals and the capitalists. He invited Rasputin to join him in Tsaritsyn and become the elder of a convent there. Rasputin agreed.

However, Iliodor’s inflammatory sermons were not pleasing to the authorities, and in January, 1911 he was transferred to a monastery in Tula diocese. But he refused to go, locked himself in his church in Tsaritsyn and declared a hunger-strike. Bishop Hermogen supported him, but the tsar did not, and ordered him to be removed from Tsaritsyn. But at this point Rasputin, who had taken a great liking to Iliodor, intervened, and as Anya Vyubova testified, “Iliodor remained in Tsaritsyn thanks to Rasputin’s personal entreaties”. From now on, Olga Lokhtina would bow down to Rasputin as “Lord of hosts” and to Iliodor as “Christ”...

When Rasputin’s bad actions began to come to light, Hermogen vacillated for a long time. However, having made up his mind that Vladyka Theophan was right, and having Iliodor on his side now too, he decided to bring the matter up before the Holy Synod, of which he was a member, at its next session. Before that, however, he determined to denounce Rasputin to his face. This took place on December 16, 1911. According to Iliodor’s account, Hermogen, clothed in hierarchical vestments and holding a cross in his hand, “took hold of the head of the ‘elder’ with his left hand, and with his right started beating him on the head with the cross and shouting in a terrifying voice, ‘Devil! I forbid you in God’s name to touch the female sex. Brigand! I forbid you to enter the royal household and to have anything to do with the tsarina! As a mother brings forth the child in the cradle, so the holy Church through its prayers, blessings, and heroic feats has nursed that great and sacred thing of the people, the autocratic rule of the tsars. And now you, scum, are destroying it, you are smashing our holy vessels, the bearers of autocratic power… Fear God, fear His life-giving cross!”

Then they forced Rasputin to swear that he would leave the palace. According to one version of events, Rasputin swore, but immediately told the empress what had happened. According to another, he refused, after which Vladyka Hermogen cursed him. In any case, on the same day, December 16, five years later, he was killed...

Then Bishop Hermogen went to the Holy Synod. First he gave a speech against the khlysty. Then he charged Rasputin with khlyst tendencies.
Unfortunately, only a minority of the bishops supported the courageous bishop. The majority followed the over-procurator in expressing dissatisfaction with his interference “in things that were not of his concern”.

Vladyka Hermogen was then ordered to return to his diocese. As the director of the chancery of the over-procurator witnessed, “he did not obey the order and, as I heard, asked by telegram for an audience with the tsar, indicating that he had an important matter to discuss, but was turned down.”

The telegram read as follows: “Tsar Father! I have devoted my whole life to the service of the Church and the Throne. I have served zealously, sparing no effort. The sun of my life has long passed midday and my hair has turned white. And now in my declining years, like a criminal, I am being driven out of the capital in disgrace by you, the Sovereign. I am ready to go wherever it may please you, but before I do, grant me an audience, and I will reveal a secret to you.”

But the Tsar rejected his plea. On receiving this rejection, Bishop Hermogen began to weep. And then he suddenly said: “They will kill the tsar, they will kill the tsar, they will surely kill him.”

The opponents of Rasputin now felt the fury of the Tsar. Bishop Hermogen and Iliodor were exiled to remote monasteries (Iliodor took his revenge by leaking forged letters of the Empress to Rasputin). And Vladyka Theophan was transferred to the see of Astrakhan. The Tsar ordered the secular press to stop printing stories about Rasputin. Before leaving the Crimea, Vladyka called on Rasputin’s friend, the deputy over-procurator Damansky. He told him: “Rasputin is a vessel of the devil, and the time will come when the Lord will chastise him and those who protect him.”

Later, in October, 1913, Rasputin tried to take his revenge on Vladyka by bribing the widow of a Yalta priest who knew Vladyka, Olga Apollonovna Popova, to say that Vladyka had said that he had had relations with the empress. The righteous widow rejected his money and even spat in his face…

In December, 1916 the Empress visited the prophetess Maria Mikhailovna at the Desyatina convent in Novgorod. She was 107 years old and a severe ascetic. “You, beautiful lady, shall know suffering,” she told the empress. “Don’t fear the heavy cross”… A few days later Rasputin was killed, bringing great suffering to the Empress. Logically, however, this should have removed one of the main reasons for the people’s anger against the Royal Family. But the Russian revolution had little to do with logic…

Pierre Gilliard, the Tsarevich’s tutor, said: “The illness of the Tsarevich cast a shadow over the whole of the concluding period of Tsar Nicholas II’s reign, and… was one of the main causes of his fall, for it made possible the
phenomenon of Rasputin and resulted in the fatal seduction of the sovereigns who lived in a world apart, wholly absorbed in a tragic anxiety which to be concealed from the eyes of all.”

Following this line of argument, Kerensky said: “Without Rasputin, there could have been no Lenin”…

But no, Rasputin was not the cause of the Russian revolution. God would not have allowed the greatest Christian empire in history to fall because of the sinfulness of one man! Nevertheless, Rasputin’s influence on the Empress because of his seeming ability to stem the haemophiliac blood-flows of the Tsarevich did undermine the popularity of the Monarchy at a critical time.

Moreover, Rasputin was a symbol of the situation of Russia in her last days. The Tsarevich represented the dynasty, and therefore Russia herself, losing blood, that is, spiritual strength, as a result of her sins. Rasputin represented the enemies of Russia, who offered their own pseudo-spiritual remedies. But Russia was not cured, but died. “And the child, “who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron… was caught up to God and His throne” (Revelation 12.5)...

**The Case for the Monarchy (1)**

The factor which undermined morale most of all in the ranks of the Russians was the loss of faith in the institution of the monarchy and (especially because of the rumours surrounding the name of Rasputin) the person of the monarch. He was, as it were, the favourite enemy of educated society – and, increasingly, of the uneducated also. In Solzhenitsyn’s novel, *October 1916*, there is a dialogue on the subject of the monarchy between the socialist Obodovsky, the monarchist Andozerskaya and the disillusioned army officer Vorotyntsev, which, though fictional, well captures the arguments on both sides at that critical time:-

**And.** How quickly and decisively you have marched towards the republic, gentlemen! How lightly you have cast aside the monarchy! But are you not simply following a fashion? Someone shouted first, and everyone repeats his words almost parrot-fashion: that the monarchy is the main obstacle on the path to progress. And this has become the distinguishing mark of our people – blaspheming the monarchy in the past, in the future, and in general at all times on the earth…

For everything in Rus’ the autocracy is to blame. The favourite enemy. But by the way, the word ‘autocrat’ historically means only: ‘non-subject’. Sovereign. And it by no means signifies that he does everything he wants. Yes, all the prerogatives of his power are inseparable, and no other earthly power can place limits on it, and he cannot be placed before an earthly court. But over him is the court of his own conscience and the Divine court. And he must
consider the boundaries of his power to be sacred, holding on to them still more fiercely than if they were limited by a constitution.

Obod. But unlimited power is formed by the greed of courtiers and flatterers, and by no means by a Divine conscience!... Having snatched away the will of the people, the autocracy is growing dull, it is dying away and cannot of itself manifest a well-directed will, but only an evil one! In the best case it is languishing under its own might. The history of all dynasties without exception, and not only ours, is - criminal!

And. Yes, many peoples have hastened to raise their hands against their monarchs. And some have irrevocably lost them. But for Russia, where public consciousness is only a thin film, nobody will ever think up anything better than the monarchy for a long, long time.

Obod. But allow me - the monarchy is first of all stagnation. How is it possible to wish stagnation for one’s country?

And. Caution with regard to what is new and conservative feelings do not mean stagnation. A far-seeing monarch carries out reforms - but those which have really matured. He will not rush at them without thinking, like a republic, so as to manoeuvre and not give up power. And it is precisely a monarch who has the power to carry out long-term reforms stretching far into the future.

Obod. But generally speaking what rational reasons can be produced in our age in favour of the monarchy? Monarchy is the negation of equality. And the negation of the freedom of citizens!

And. Why? Under a monarchy it is perfectly possible for both the freedom and the equality of citizens to flourish.

First, a firm hereditary system delivers the country from destructive disturbances. Secondly, under a hereditary monarchy there is no periodic upheaval of elections, and political disputes in the country are weakened. Thirdly, republican elections lower the authority of the power, we are not obliged to respect it, but the power is forced to please us before the elections and serve us after them. But the monarch promised nothing in order to be elected. Fourthly, the monarch has the opportunity to weigh up things in an unbiased way. The monarchy is the spirit of national unity, but under a republic divisive competition is inevitable. Fifthly, the good and the strength of the monarch coincide with the good and the strength of the whole country, he is simply forced to defend the interests of the whole country if only in order to survive. Sixthly, for multi-national, variegated countries the monarch is the only tie and the personification of unity...
Obod. But how can you count on his self-criticism? The monarch is surrounded by whirlwinds of flattery. He is placed in the pitiful role of an idol. He fears all kinds of stratagems and plots. What counsellor can count on logically dissuading the tsar?

And. In order to push forward one’s views, one has to convince someone, come what may. And if it is not the monarch, then it is one’s party, and then the various views current in society. And it is by no means more difficult to convince a monarch, and takes no longer, than convincing society. But is not public opinion in the power of ignorance, passions, advantages and interests? And are there so few that flatter public opinion – and, moreover, with some success? In free regimes man-pleasing has still more dangerous consequences even than in absolute monarchies.

Obod. And does not submitting to a monarch jar on you?

And. But you will always have to submit to someone. Why is it more pleasant to submit to the elective majority, so grey and mediocre? But the tsar himself submits to the monarchy, even more than you, he is its first servant.

Obod. But under a monarchy we are slaves! Do you like being a slave?

And. Monarchy in no way makes people slaves, but a republic deprives them of personality in a much worse way. On the contrary, the elevated image of a man living only for the state also raises his subjects.

Obod. But what is the value of all these reasonings if they are all cut off by the chance of birth? A man is born a fool – and automatically reigns for a quarter of a century. And nobody can do anything about it!

And. The chance of birth is a vulnerable spot, I grant you that. But chance operating in the opposite direction gives us a successful birth! A talented person at the head of a monarchy – what republic can compare with that? A monarch can be lofty, or not, but the chosen one of the majority is almost unfailingly a mediocrity. A monarch may be an average person, but if deprived of the temptations of wealth, power and orders, he does not need to do disgusting things in order to elevate himself and has complete freedom of judgement. And then: the chance of birth is corrected from childhood by his preparation for power, his being directed towards it and the selection of the best teachers… And finally there is the metaphysical…

Obod. But look – Nicholas I and Alexander III ascended the throne without ever preparing for it. These are not small examples. While as regards the present Sovereign, with his unrivalled ability to surround himself with nincompoops, and betray honourable men – all these reasons apply badly to
him. And when the chance of becoming autocrat is turned into the chance of becoming Supreme Commander…

And, … the metaphysical concept of his power as the fulfilment of a higher will. As the Anointed of God.

Obod. What kind of a rotten formula is ‘the Anointed of God’? What kind of maniacal hypnosis is ‘anointedness’ in the most ordinary person? What educated person today can believe that here some God actually elected and appointed Nicholas the Second for Russia?

And. It is by no means a dead formula! It expresses that sufficient reality that it was not people who elected and appointed him, and that he himself did not seek to attain this post. If hereditary succession to the throne is not violated by violence, and we, of course, are examining precisely this variant, then the will of the people interfered only in the election of the first member of the dynasty. However, with the enthronement of the first member of this dynasty a certain finger of God, you must agree, has been on Rus’.

Obod. Perhaps there was a finger, but then they committed follies. They both fought for the throne, and snatched it away, and killed people…

And. But then the tradition of the dynasty flows on independently of people and the political struggle. As in Japan: one dynasty for a third of a millennium. That’s already like nature herself…

This is the essence of the anointing, that the monarch is not even at liberty to refuse it. He did not fight for this power, but he cannot avoid it. He accepted it – like a slave. It is more a duty than a right.

Vorot. Then what is the aim of this unfortunate anointing? That Russia should perish hopelessly?

And. Now that is not given to us to know… It will be understood in time. When we are gone already…

And under a republic? All rational decisions are incomparably more complicated, because you have to force your way through to them through a thicket of human vices. Vanity burns much more strongly under a republic: after all, you have to be able to satisfy it in a limited time period. And what a fireworks of election lies! Everything depends on popularity: will they like you? In the pre-election campaign the future head of the republic is a petitioner, a flatterer, a demagogue. And no person of a lofty soul can win in such a struggle. And he is hardly elected when he is bound again with the chains of distrust. Every republic is built on distrust for the head of the government, and in this whirlpool of distrust even the most talented personality cannot decide on demonstrating his talent. A republic cannot guarantee consistent development in any direction…
Obod. Under a republic the people is given back its reason and will. And freedom. And the fullness of the people’s life.

And. People think that you only have to call a country a republic, and it will immediately become happy. But why the political upheaval – is this the fullness of the people’s life? Politics must not eat up all the spiritual forces of the people, all its attention, all its time. From Rousseau to Robespierre they tried to convince us that a republic is equivalent to freedom. But it isn’t! And why must freedom be preferable to honour and dignity?

Obod. Because the law guarantees the honour and dignity of each person. The law, which stands above all! But under a monarchy what law can there be if the monarch can step over it?

And. But is the law sinless? Is it always composed by prescient minds? Is there no element of chance in the birth of laws? And even an imbalance in favour of avariciousness? And personal calculation? Dura lex sed lex – this is a pre-Christian, very stupid principle. Yes, the anointed one, and only he, can step over even the law. With his heart. At a moment of danger he can step over it in firmness. And at another time – in mercifulness. And this is more Christian than the law.

Obod. What a justification! With such a formulation any tyrant can enthusiastically break the law. And by the way whose anointed one is a tyrant? The devil’s?...

And. A tyrant is a tyrant in that he breaks the law for himself, and not through a power given from above. A tyrant has no responsibility before Heaven, that is the difference between him and a monarch...

The Case for the Monarchy (2)

However, there are stronger arguments in justification of the Orthodox Autocracy than those cited by Solzhenitsyn. Just as the Roman Empire was born at almost the same time as the Nativity of Christ, so the Russian Autocracy was born and grew up together with the conversion of Russia to Orthodoxy, being called into being in order to protect this last, most precious child in the family of Christian nations. And so from the time of St. Vladimir the Great, who both baptized Russia (in 988) and became her first Autocrat, the Russian Autocracy and Russian Orthodoxy have been inseparable.

After about 1100, the autocratic principle went into decay because of the internecine struggles of the Kievan princes and the corrupting influence of the Novgorodian veche. However, in the north-east, in the land of Vladimir-

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Suzdal, autocracy was reborn under St. Andrew Bogoliubovo, strengthened by St. Alexander Nevsky, and then, with the active support of the holy Metropolitans Peter and Alexis, and of St. Sergius of Radonezh, was transplanted to Moscow. From there disunity was dispelled through the acceptance of the principle of primogeniture, through victorious wars against the Tatars, and above all through the exaltation of Orthodoxy.

Muscovite Russia had few holy tsars (Tsar Theodore Ioannovich was the exception) and some definitely unholy ones (Tsar Ivan the Terrible). But what characterized this period especially was the fierce determination of the people to defend Orthodoxy at any cost, and their love for, and obedience to, the tsar – even if he was cruel and unjust - as the leader of the people in the defence of Orthodoxy, without whom the state would disintegrate and become a prey to heterodox invaders. This solidarity of tsar and people, which westerners find so difficult to believe in or approve of, was demonstrated by the fact that even during the reigns of the worst tsars there was no “democratic” movement, no mass movement of rebellion (as opposed to the intrigues of individual or groups of boyars, or noblemen). Order broke down only when, at the end of the sixteenth century, the Riurik dynasty came to an end, and there was no clearly legitimate successor to the throne. For a few years groups of nobles tussled for power while the Catholic Poles and Swedes invaded the country. But the people did not see in this deliverance from tsarist rule any kind of good: rather, when they came together to restore order in the land in 1613, they elected Michael Romanov to rule over them, and called a curse upon themselves if they should ever disobey him or his descendants.

This unity of “Faith, Tsar and Fatherland” began to weaken only when Tsar Alexis unlawfully defrocked the Patriarch in the false council of 1666, and then, in 1721, Peter the Great abolished the patriarchate. This destruction of the “symphony” between the spiritual and the secular powers did not destroy faith in the people, but it undermined the primary purpose of the autocracy, which is to support and strengthen the Orthodox Church as the spiritual heart of the nation. Moreover, it allowed elements of heresy – Lutheranism and Freemasonry - to enter the educated classes. The result was a weakening of the Autocracy, which, having alienated from itself its chief supports in the Church and the People, - who did not rebel against, but could not support, the tsars’ westernized way of life, - fell prey to the intrigues of ambitious nobles. Two tsars were murdered in palace coups, and a third attempted coup, in December, 1825, might have overthrown the autocracy altogether, if it had been successful; for its leaders were imbued with western constitutionalist ideas. However, the new tsar who emerged from that turmoil, Nicholas I, not only re-established order by firm government and the suppression of revolutionary ideas; he also began a slow but steady return to the traditional, Muscovite idea of the Autocracy. This process was accelerated especially, as we have seen, by Nicholas II, who dreamed of a Church Council that would restore a true Church-State symphony on the pre-1666 model.
Unfortunately, however, this healthy process developed in tandem with the unhealthy process of westernization begun by Peter the Great. Moreover, the threat now came, as we have seen, not from the nobles only, as in the eighteenth century, but from every class of society which, in various degrees and ways, had been infected with the disease of westernism, its exaltation of democracy and denigration of the Orthodox Autocracy.

As we shall see in more detail later, Nicholas II could have chosen to suppress the rebellion against him by force. But the country had changed drastically between 1825 and 1917: the rebels and heretics were now not one small and unrepresentative segment of the population, but the majority. The Russian Autocracy, with the exception of some of the eighteenth-century tsars, had never acted against the people or in conflict with the people’s ideal – this is what distinguished it from western-style absolutism. So now that the majority of the people were no longer in solidarity with the tsar, having exchanged his and Holy Russia’s ideal of Orthodox Christianity for the western idols of democracy and material goods, there was nothing that the Tsar could honourably do but abdicate. The people had renounced Orthodoxy and the Autocrat who stood on guard for Orthodoxy; so now God, honouring its free will, granted it to taste the bitter fruits of “freedom”…

But was there not a “third way”, the English alternative – a constitutional monarchy which preserved religion and the monarchy while allowing the people participation in government? This was certainly the ideal of what Lebedev calls “the first echelon” of the revolution – the Cadets and Octobrists who did not want the Tsar to abdicate (at first) but demanded from him a “responsible” government (i.e. one controlled by them). Let us briefly compare the Russian and English ways in the same period from 988 to 1917.

It is striking to note that from 988 to the fall of the English Orthodox monarchy in 1066, the paths of Russia and England were the same. Both nations confessed the Orthodox faith, and both were ruled by Orthodox Autocrats working in solidarity with the people and in defence of Orthodoxy. In spite of constant wars with external enemies (the Vikings in England, the Polovtsians and others in Russia), both nations were prosperous, well-organized and just societies.

However, after the Norman Conquest, England lost her Orthodox faith and her inner unity – and never recovered them. Her rulers were tyrants (William I collectivized all the land) who spoke a different language (French) and imposed a different faith (Catholicism). The sufferings of the people did not cease when Catholicism was exchanged for Protestantism, and Norman tyrants for Tudor ones: indeed, the Tudor tyranny was more complete than the Norman one because from the 1530s it included complete control of the Church, whose head became the monarch. In the seventeenth century a bitter civil war destroyed the monarchy and all zeal for Christianity in the upper
classes... But in the same period Muscovite Russia prospered mightily under the Romanov tsars.

But what of the famed English democracy? In *Magna Carta* (1215) the greedier barons succeeded in limiting - to some degree, and temporarily, - the power of the king. But this had no effect on the people, who rebelled in 1381, were crushed by the king, and continued in subjection and without representation until the early nineteenth century. In the same period until Peter the Great, the Russian tsars frequently convened *Zemskie Sobory*, or “Councils of the Land”, which did not attempt to limit the tsars’ power (only a few of the greedier nobles wanted that!) but did enable the tsars to consult with leading representatives of every section of the people. The English “Glorious Revolution” of 1688 did move democracy a little forward. But since only very rich people could enter politics, this “democracy” was essentially a staged contest between two aristocratic parties (the Whigs and the Tories) who pursued essentially the same policies with essentially the same aim – the increase in their personal wealth – while making the monarch into a merely symbolic figure. By the mid-nineteenth century, in spite of some widening in the franchise, the differences in wealth between the rich and the poor in England had become so shocking and so blatant that the condition of the English working classes (not to mention the extremely poor agricultural workers) became the main evidence on which Marx and Engels composed their *Communist Manifesto*; while the Russian Autocracy freed the serfs, increased the prosperity of all classes and spread the Gospel to other races.

By almost every measure, the Russian Autocracy compares well with the English monarchy. Moreover, it shows an inner spiritual consistency and purpose that is completely lacking in its English rival. For all the Russian tsars consciously – albeit with differing levels of success – pursued the aim of the defence of Orthodoxy and the eternal salvation of all the people through Orthodoxy; whereas the English monarchy after 1066 had no such spiritual purpose, and from the eighteenth century would not have been able to pursue any such purpose in any case because of its subjection to parliament – which as a result of its “multimutinous” essence (Tsar Ivan IV’s word) could have no single purpose either.

For in the last resort, in spite of many human failings, the Russian Autocracy tried to serve God, and precisely for that reason submitted to no other authority than God’s, seeing its authority as derived from God; whereas the English monarchy, after its fall from grace in 1066, served many masters, all of them human, seeing its authority as derived from man...
For these reasons Nicholas II was completely justified in his firm attachment to the autocratic principle.\(^{544}\) And his choice was vindicated by his own conduct: no autocrat conducted himself with a more profound feeling of responsibility before God – and more patient condescension before the failings of men. He was truly an autocrat, and not a tyrant. The tragedy of Russia was that she was about to exchange the most truly Christian of monarchs for the most horrific of all tyrannies – all in the name of freedom!

**The Plot**

Many people think that the Russian revolution was the result of an elemental movement of the masses. This is not true – although the masses later joined it. The February revolution was a carefully hatched plot whose leader was the industrialist and conservative parliamentarian, A.I. Guchkov.

The plot was successful. But it succeeded in eventually bringing to power, not the Masonic liberals, but the Bolsheviks, who destroyed all the plotters and all their Masonic lodges, forcing the Masons themselves to flee back to their mother lodges abroad... Thus in October Kerensky and his Masonic colleagues fled to France, where they set up lodges under the aegis of the Grand Orient.\(^{545}\)

Yana Sedova writes: “Already in 1906, after a meeting with the Emperor, A.I. Guchkov came to the unexpected conclusion: ‘We are in for still more violent upheavals’. Then he wanted ‘simply to step aside’. But already in those years he began to talk about a ‘coup d’état’.

“In the next few years Guchkov’s attention was temporarily occupied by work in the State Duma. But in 1911 after the murder of Stolypin, as he later recalled, there arose in him ‘an unfriendly feeling’ towards the Emperor Nicholas II.

“At the beginning of 1913, at a meeting in his Petersburg flat, Guchkov talked about a military coup in Serbia. The discussion moved to a coup in Russia. At this point one of the participants in the meeting said that ‘the party of the coup is coming into being’.

“Several months later, at a congress of his [Octobrist] party in Petersburg, Guchkov proclaimed the principle by which he was governed in the next four years: ‘the defence of the monarchy against the monarch’.

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\(^{544}\) As he said to Count Witte in 1904: “I will never, in any circumstances, agree to a representative form of government, for I consider it harmful for the people entrusted to me by God.” (Fomin & Fomina, *pp. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 376).

“The next year, during the ‘great retreat’, Guchkov created the Military-Industrial Committees, an organization whose official task was to help provide the army with ammunition. In fact, however, the committees turned out to be an instrument for the preparation of a coup.

“However, Guchkov would probably have continued to the end of his life only to ‘platonically sympathize’ with the coup, and do nothing himself, if once there had not appeared in his flat the leader of Russian masonry, N.V. Nekrasov.

“The two of them became the ‘initiators’ of a plan: ‘a palace coup, as a result of which his Majesty would be forced to sign his abdication passing the throne to his lawful Heir’.

“Soon another Mason, M.I. Tereschenko, joined the plot, and, as Guchkov recalled, ‘the three of us set about a detailed working out of this plan’.”

546 Sedova, “Ne Tsar’, a Ego Poddanie Otvetsvenny za Febral’skij Perevorot 1917 Goda” (Not the Tsar, but his Subjects were Responsible for the Coup of 1917”), Nasha Strana, N 2864, March 14, 2009, p. 3.

“Armis”, a pseudonym for a Duma delegate and a former friend of Guchkov, has more details about Guchkov’s evolution as a plotter: “Already in 1909, in the Commission of State Defence, its president, the well-known political and social activist Guchkov declared that it was necessary to prepare by all means for a future war with Germany.

“In order to characterize this activist it is necessary to say that in order to achieve his ends he was never particularly squeamish about methods and means. In the destruction of Russia he undoubtedly played one of the chief roles.

“In the following year, 1910, the newspaper Novoe Vremia became a joint-stock company, and a little later Guchkov was chosen as president of its editorial committee. From this moment there began on the columns of Novoe Vremia a special campaign against the Germans and the preparation of public opinion for war with Germany.

“Guchkov wrote to the workers of Novoe Vremia, Golos Moskvy and Golos Pravdy, which were unfailingly ruled by his directives: ‘Rattle your sabres a little more, prepare public opinion for war with the Germans. Write articles in such a way that between the lines will already be heard peals of weapon thunder.’

“People who know Guchkov well say that in his flat, together with the well-known A. Ksyunin, he composed articles of the most provocative character in relation to Germany.

“In 1912, during a reception for an English military mission, Guchkov turned to those present with the following toast: ‘Gentlemen! I drink to the health of the English army and fleet, who are not only our friends, but also our allies.’

“And within the close circle of the members of the Commission of State Defence, he declared: ‘Today Germany has suffered a decisive defeat: war is inevitable, if only the Tsar does not stop it.’

“In March, 1914, Guchkov at one dinner warned his acquaintances that they should not go abroad in the summer, and in particular – not to Germany.

“I don’t advise you to go abroad. War will unfailingly break out this summer: it has been decided. Germany can turn as she wants, but she cannot turn away from war.’ And at these words Guchkov smiled.

“To the question of one of those present: who needed a war?, Guchkov replied:
On September 8, 1915 a “Committee of National Salvation” issued “Disposition Number 1”. “It affirmed,” writes N. Yakovlev, “that there were two wars going on in Russia – against a stubborn and skilful enemy from outside and a no less stubborn and skilful enemy from inside. The attainment of victory over the external enemy was unthinkable without a prior victory over the internal enemy. By the latter they had in mind the ruling dynasty. For victory on the internal front it was necessary… immediately to appoint a supreme command staff, whose basic core consisted of Prince G.E. Lvov, A.I. Guchkov and A.F. Kerensky.”

Shtormakh considers that the main plotters were A.I. Guchkov, Prince G.E. Lvov, N.V. Nekrasov and M.I. Tereschenko, all of whom became ministers in the Provisional Government. Lvov was leader of the Union of Zemstvos and Cities.

Some of the plotters may have considered regicide. Thus Shtormakh writes: “In 1915,’ recounts the Mason A.F. Kerensky in his memoirs, ‘speaking at a secret meeting of representatives of the liberal and moderate conservative majority in the Duma and the State Council, which was discussing the Tsar’s politics, V.A. Maklakov, who was to the highest degree a conservative liberal, said that it was possible to avert catastrophe and save Russia only by repeating the events of March 11, 1801 (the assassination of Paul I).’ Kerensky reasons that the difference in views between him and Maklakov came down only to time, for Kerensky himself had come to conclude that killing the Tsar was ‘a necessity’ ten years earlier. ‘And besides,’ continues Kerensky,

“France must have Alsace-Lorraine and the Rhine; Russia – all the Slavic lands and an exit from the Black Sea; England will lap up the German colonies and take world trade into her hands.’

“To the objection that the Russian and German emperors would hardly enter such a dangerous world war, there followed Guchkov’s bold reply:

“‘We have foreseen this… and we shall arrange it so that both of them will find themselves before a fait accompli.

“Then it was pointed out to Guchkov that the Triple Alliance represented a formidable military power, to which Guchkov objected:

“Italy, in accordance with a secret agreement with England, will not be on the side of Germany and Austria, and if the war goes well can stab them in the back. The plan of the future war has already been worked out in details by our allied staffs (English, French and Russian), and in no way will the war last for more than three months.’

“Then Guchkov was asked: ‘Tell us, Alexander Ivanovich, don’t you think that the war may be prolonged contrary to your expectations? It will require the most colossal exertion of national nerves, and very possibly it will be linked with the danger of popular discontent and a coup d’etat.’

“Smiling Guchkov replied: ‘In the extreme case, the liquidation of the Dynasty will the greatest benefit for Russia.’”


547 Yakovlev, 1 Avgusta, 1914, Moscow, 1974, p. 13.

548 http://rushistory.3dn.ru/forum/4-86-1
‘Maklakov and those who thought like him would have wanted that others do it. But I suggested that, in accepting the idea, one should assume the whole responsibility for it, and go on to execute it personally’. Kerensky continued to call for the murder of the Tsar. In his speech at the session of the State Duma in February, 1917 he called for the ‘physical removal of the Tsar, explaining that they should do to the Tsar ‘what Brutus did in the time of Ancient Rome’.”

According to Guchkov, they worked out several variants of the seizure of power. One involved seizing the Tsar in Tsarskoye Selo or Peterhof. Another involved doing the same at Headquarters. This would have had to involve some generals who were members of the military lodge, especially Alexeyev (a friend of Guchkov’s) and Ruzsky. However, this might lead to a schism in the army, which would undermine its capability for war. So it was decided not to initiate the generals into the plot – although, as we shall see, they played a very important role quite independently of Guchkov’s band, prevented loyal military units from coming to the aid of the Tsar, and themselves demanded his abdication. A third variant, worked out by another Mason, Prince D.L. Vyazemsky, envisaged a military unit taking control of the Tsar’s train between Military Headquarters and Tsarskoye Selo and forcing him to abdicate in favour of the Tsarevich. Yet another plan was to seize the Tsar (on March 1) and exile him abroad. Guchkov claims that the agreement of some foreign governments to this was obtained.

The Germans got wind of these plans, and not long before February, 1917 the Bulgarian Ambassador tried to warn the Tsar about them. The Germans were looking to save the Tsar in order to establish a separate peace with him. But the Tsar, in accordance with his promise to the Allies, rejected this out of hand.

Yet another plan was worked out by Prince G.E. Lvov. He suggested forcing the Tsar to abdicate and putting Great Prince Nicholas Nikolayevich on the throne in his place, with Guchkov and Lvov as the powers behind the throne. The Mason A.I. Khatisov, a friend of the Great Prince, spoke with him and his wife about this, and they were sympathetic to the idea. Sedova claims that Lvov actually offered the throne to Nikolasha...

At a meeting between members of the Duma and some generals in the study of Rodzyanko in February, 1917 another plot to force the Tsar to

549 http://rushistory.3dn.ru/forum/4-86-1
550 Sedova, after arguing that the generals were never initiated into Guchkov’s plot, goes on: “Finally, nevertheless, Guchkov revealed his plan to Ruzsky. But this took place already after the coup. On learning of the plot, Ruzsky cried out: ‘Ach, Alexander Ivanovich, if you had told me about this earlier, I would have joined you.’ But Guchkov said: ‘My dear, if I had revealed the plan, you would have pressed a button, and an adjutant would have come and you would have said: “Arrest him”.’” (“Ne Tsar…”, p. 4)
551 Sedova, “‘Byl li masonskij zagovor…?’
abdicate was formed. The leading roles in this were to be played by Generals Krymov and Ruzsky and Colonel Rodzyanko, the Duma leader’s son.

Finally, the so-called naval plot was formed, as Shulgin recounts, according to which the Tsaritsa (and perhaps also the Tsar) was to be invited onto a warship and taken to England.552

Besides the formal conspirators, there were many others who helped them by trying to undermine the resolve of the Tsar. Thus “before the February coup,” writes Yana Sedova, “in the Russian empire there were more and more attempts on the part of individual people to ‘open the eyes of his Majesty’ to the internal political situation.

“This ‘search for truth’ assumed a particularly massive character in November, 1916, beginning on November 1, when Great Prince Nicholas Mikhailovich arrived at Stavka to have a heart-to-heart conversation with his Majesty…

“Very many considered it their duty to ‘open the eyes of his Majesty’: Great Princes Nicholas and Alexander Mikhailovich, Nicholas Nikolayevich and Paul Alexandrovich, the ministers Ignatiev and Pokrovsky, Generals Alexeyev and N.I. Ivanov, the ambassadors of allied governments Buchanan and Paléologue, the president of the Duma M. Rodzyanko, Protopresbyter of the army and navy G. Shavelsky, the court commandant V.N. Voejkov, the chief representative of the Red Cross P.M. Kaufmann-Turkestansky, the official A.A. Klopop, the dentist S.S. Kostritsky…

“This is far from a complete list. It includes only conversations, but many addressed his Majesty in letters or try to influence the Empress (Great Prince Alexander Mikhailovich both spoke with his Majesty and sent him a very long letter and spoke with the Empress). ‘It seemed,’ wrote Rodzyanko later, ‘that the whole of Russia was beseeching his Majesty about one and the same thing, and it was impossible not to understand and pay heed to the pleas of a land worn out by suffering’.

“But what did ‘the whole of Russia’ ask about? As a rule, about two things: the removal of ‘dark powers’ and the bestowing of ‘a ministry of confidence’. The degree to which the boundaries between these two groups was blurred is evident from the fact that the Duma deputy Protopopov at first considered himself a candidate for the ‘ministry of confidence’, but when his Majesty truly appointed him a minister, the name of Protopopov immediately appeared in the ranks of the ‘dark powers’. By the ‘dark powers’ was usually understood Rasputin and his supposed protégés. Few began to think at that time that ‘the Rasputin legend’ was invented, and not invented in vain.

552 http://rushistory.3dn.ru/forum/4-86-1. 
“It was less evident what the ‘ministry of confidence’ was. For many this term had a purely practical meaning and signified the removal from the government of certain ministers who were not pleasing to the Duma and the appointment in their place of Milyukov, Rodzyanko and other members of the Duma.

“But the closer it came to the February coup, the more demands there were in favour of a really responsible ministry, that is, a government which would be formed by the Duma and would only formally be confirmed by his Majesty. That a responsible ministry was no longer a real monarchy, but the end of the Autocracy was not understood by everyone. Nobody at that time listened to the words of Scheglovitov: ‘A monarchist who goes with a demand for a ministry of public confidence is not a monarchist’.

“As for the idea of appointed people with no administrative experience, but of the Duma, to the government in conditions of war, this was evidently thought precisely by those people. All these arguments about ‘dark forces’ and ‘a ministry of confidence’ first arose in the Duma and were proclaimed from its tribune. Evidently the beginning of the mass movements towards his Majesty in November, 1916 were linked with the opening of a Duma session at precisely that time. These conversations were hardly time to coincide with the opening of the Duma: rather, they were elicited by the Duma speeches, which were distributed at the time not only on the pages of newspapers, but also in the form of leaflets. ‘We,’ wrote Shulgin later, ‘ourselves went mad and made the whole country mad with the myth about certain geniuses, ‘endowed with public confidence’, when in fact there were none such...’

“In general, all these conversations were quite similar and usually irrelevant. Nevertheless, his Majesty always listened attentively to what was expressed in them, although by no means all his interlocutors were easy to listen to.

“Some of them, like many of the Great Princes and Rodzyanko, strove to impose their point of view and change his political course, demanding a ministry endowed with confidence or even a responsible ministry. His Majesty listened to them in silence and thanked them for their ‘advice’.

“Others, like General Alexeyev or S.S. Kostritsky, were under the powerful impression (not to say influence) of the Duma speeches and political agitation, which the truly dark forces who had already thought up the February coup were conducting at the time. Those who gave regular reports to his Majesty and whom he trusted were subjected to particularly strong pressure. If they began a heart-to-heart conversation, his Majesty patiently explained to them in what he did not agree with them and why.
“There existed a third category which, like P.M. Kaufmann, got through to his Majesty, even though they did not have a report to give, so as to tell him ‘the whole bitter truth’. They did not clearly know what they wanted, and simply said ‘everything that had built up in their souls’. Usually they began their speeches with the question: could they speak to him openly (as if his Majesty would say no to such a question!), and then spoke on the same two subjects, about the ‘dark powers’ and the government, insofar as, by the end of 1916, the same things, generally speaking, had built up in all their souls. The speech of such a ‘truth-seeker’ usually ended in such a sad way (Kaufmann just said: ‘Allow me: I’ll go and kill Grishka!’) that his Majesty had to calm them down and assure them that ‘everything will work out’.

“One cannot say that his Majesty did not listen to his interlocutors. Some ministers had to leave their posts precisely because of the conversations. For example, on November 9, 1916 his Majesty wrote to the Empress that he was sacking Shturmer since nobody trusted that minister: ‘Every day I hear more and more about him. We have to take account of that.’ And on the same day he wrote in his diary: ‘My head is tired from all these conversations’.

“By the beginning everyone noticed his tiredness, and his interlocutors began more often to foretell revolution to him. Earlier he could say to the visitor: ‘But you’ve gone out of your mind, this is all in your dreams. And when did you dream it? Almost on the very eve of our victory?! And what are you frightened of? The rumours of corrupt Petersburg and the babblers in the Duma, who value, not Russia, but their own interests?’ (from the memoirs of Mamantov). And then the conversation came to an end. But now he had to reply to the most senseless attacks. And he replied. To the rumours of betrayal in the entourage of the Empress: ‘What, in your opinion I’m a traitor?’ To the diagnosis made by the Duma about Protopopov: ‘When did he begin to go mad? When I appointed him a minister?’ To the demand ‘to deserve the confidence of the people’: ‘But is it not that my people has to deserve my confidence?’ However, they did not listen to him…”

Given that the tsar had the God-given right to rule, and had been anointed to the kingdom in special church rite, how was he to exercise his rule in relation to rebels? This was truly a most difficult problem, which required both the meekness of David and the wisdom of Solomon – and the firmness of Tsar Nicholas I. Tsar Nicholas II, as we have seen, was the most merciful of men, and the least inclined to manifest his power in violent action. Once the head of the police promised him that there would be no revolution in Russia for a hundred years if the Tsar would permit 50,000 executions. The Tsar quickly refused this proposal... And yet he could manifest firmness, and was by no means as weak-willed as has been claimed. Thus once, in 1906, Admiral F.V. Dubasov asked him to have mercy on a terrorist who had tried to kill him.

The Tsar replied: “Field tribunals act independently and independently of me: let them act with all the strictness of the law. With men who have become bestial there is not, and cannot be, any other means of struggle. You know me, I am not malicious: I write to you completely convinced of the rightness of my opinion. It is painful and hard, but right to say this, that ‘to our shame and gall’ [Stolypin’s words] only the execution of a few can prevent a sea of blood and has already prevented it.”

The eve of the revolution of February, 1917 was, of course, no less serious a crisis than 1905. In the Duma in November Milyukov had uttered his famously seditious evaluation of the regime’s performance: “Is it stupidity – or treason?” Treason was certainly afoot among the Masons. And so, it could be argued, the Tsar should have acted against the conspirators at least as firmly as he had against the revolutionaries of 1905. Moreover, this was precisely what the Tsaritsa argued in private letters to her husband: “Show to all, that you are the Master & your will shall be obeyed – the time of great indulgence & gentleness is over – now comes your reign of will & power, & obedience…” (December 4, 1916). And again: “Be Peter the Great, John [Ivan] the Terrible, Emperor Paul – crush them all under you.” (December 14, 1916). She urged him to prorogue the Duma, remove Trepov and send Lvov, Milyukov, Guchkov and Polivanov to Siberia.

But he did not crush them. And in attempting to understand why we come close to understanding the enigma of the reign of this greatest of the tsars.

One false explanation is that he was deterred by the death of Rasputin on December 16 at the hands of Grand Prince Dmitri Pavlovich Romanov, Prince Felix Yusupov and a right-wing member of the Duma, Purishkevich. Rasputin had “prophesied”: “Know that if your relatives commit murder, then not one of your family, i.e. your relatives and children, will live more than two years…” Now Rasputin had been murdered by relatives of the tsar. Did this mean that resistance to the revolution was useless? However, the tsar was not as superstitious as his enemies have made out. One pseudo-prophecy could not have deterred him from acting firmly against the conspirators if that is what his conscience told him to do. Rasputin was certainly the evil genius of the Royal Family, and they – or the Tsaritsa, at any rate – were deceived in believing him to be a holy man. But his real influence on the course of events was only indirect – in giving the enemies of the Tsar an excuse for viciously slandering him.

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554 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 430.
555 It is now thought that the third and fatal shot that killed Rasputin was actually fired by a British secret service agent. See Michael Smith, A History of Britain’s Secret Intelligence Service, London: Dialogue; Annabel Venning, “How Britain’s First Spy Chief Ordered Rasputin’s Murder”, Daily Mail, July 22, 2010, pp. 32-33.
556 The Tsar did not condone the murder. But Grand Duchess Elizabeth wrote to the Tsar on December 29: “Crime remains crime, but this one being of a special kind, can be counted as a duel and it is considered a patriotic act and for these deeds the law I think is alternating.
Archpriest Lev Lebedev has another hypothesis: “We shall not err by one iota if we suppose that such question arose at that time in the consciousness of the Tsar himself, that he too experienced movements of the soul in the direction of deciding everything by simply and speedily dealing with the conspirators. We remember his words, that ‘with men who have become bestial there is not, and cannot be, any other means of struggle’ (besides shooting them) and that ‘only the execution of a few can prevent a sea of blood’. But there appeared before the Tsar at that time in the persons of Lvov, Rodzyanko, Guchkov, etc. not ‘bestialized’ criminal murderers like the Bolsheviks, but respectable people with good intentions! Yes, they were in error in thinking that by removing the Tsar from power they rule Russia better [than he]. But this was a sincere error, they thought that they were truly patriots. It would have been wrong to kill such people! Such people should not even have been sent to Siberia (that is, into prison). It was necessary to show them that they were mistaken. And how better to show them than by victory over the external enemy, a victory which was already in their hands, and would be inevitable in four or five months! The tsar did not know that his closest generals had already prepared to arrest him and deprive him of power on February 22, 1917. And the generals did not know that they were doing this precisely in order that in four or five months’ time there should be no victory! That had been decided in Bnai-Brit, in other international Jewish organizations (Russia must not be ‘among the victor-countries’!). Therefore through the German General Staff (which also did not know all the plots, but thought only about its own salvation and the salvation of Germany), and also directly from the banks of Jacob Schiff and others (we shall name them later) huge sums of money had already gone to the real murderers of the Tsar and the Fatherland - the Bolsheviks. This was the second echelon [of plotters], it hid behind the first [the Russian Masons]. It was on them (and not on the ‘noble patriots’) that the world powers of evil placed their hopes, for they had no need at all of a transfigured Russia, even if on the western (‘their’) model. What they needed was that Russia and the Great Russian people should not exist as such! For they, the powers of evil, knew Great Russia better (incomparably better!) than the whole of Russian ‘society’ (especially the despised intelligentsia). Did Guchkov know about the planned murder of the whole of Great Russia? He knew! The Empress accurately called him ‘cattle’. Kerensky also knew, and also several specially initiated Masons, who hid this from the overwhelming majority of all the ‘brothers’ – the other Russian Masons. The specially initiated had already for a long time had secret links (through Trotsky, M. Gorky and several others) with Lenin and the Bolsheviks, which the overwhelming majority of the Bolsheviks, too, did not know!

Maybe nobody has had the courage to tell you now, that in the street of the towns people kissed like at Easter week, sang the hymn in the theatres and all moved by one feeling – at last the black wall between us and our Emperor is removed” (Bokhanov et al., The Romanovs, p. 237). To Felix Yusupov’s parents she wrote: “May the Lord bless the patriotic exploit of your son” (Yusupov, Memoirs (Memoirs), Moscow, 1998, p. 235).
“And what did his Majesty know? He knew that society was eaten up by Judaeo-Masonry, he knew that in it was error and cowardice and deception. But he did not know that at the base of the error, in its secret places, was treason. And he also did not know that treason and cowardice and deception were all around him, that is, everywhere throughout the higher command of the army. And what is the Tsar without an army, without troops?! Then there is the question: could the Tsar have learned in time about the treachery among the generals? Why not! Let’s take, for example, Yanushkevich, or Gurko, or Korfa (or all of them together), whom Sukhomlinov had pointed to as plotters already in 1909 (!). In prison, under torture – such torture as they had with Tsars Ivan and Peter – they would have said everything, given up all the rest…! But in this case, he, Nicholas II, would have needed to be truly like Ivan IV or Peter I from the beginning – that is, a satanist and a born murderer (psychologically), not trusting anyone, suspecting everyone, sparing nobody. It is significant that her Majesty joined to the names of these Tsars the name of Paul I. That means that she had in mind, not Satanism and bestiality, but only firmness (that is, she did not know who in actual fact were Ivan the Terrible and his conscious disciple, Peter I). But she felt with striking perspicacity that her husband was ‘suffering for the mistakes of his royal predecessors’. Which ones?! Just as we said, first of all and mainly for the ‘mistakes’ precisely of Ivan IV and Peter I. Not to become like them, these predecessors, to overcome the temptation of replying to evil with evil means – that was the task of Nicholas II. For not everything is allowed, not all means are good for the attainment of what would seem to be the most important ends. The righteousness of God is not attained by diabolic methods. Evil is not conquered by evil! There was a time when they, including also his Majesty Nicholas II, suppressed evil by evil! But in accordance with the Providence of God another time had come, a time to show where the Russian Tsar could himself become a victim of evil – voluntarily! – and endure evil to the end. Did he believe in Christ and love Him truly in such a way as to suffer voluntarily like Christ? The same Divine providential question as was posed for the whole of Great Russia! This was the final test of faith – through life and through death. If one can live only by killing and making oneself one with evil and the devil (as those whom one has to kill), then it would be better not to live! That is the reply of the Tsar and of Great Russia that he headed! The more so in that it was then a matter of earthly, historical life. Here, in this life and in this history to die in order to live again in the eternal and new ‘history’ of the Kingdom of Heaven! For there is no other way into this Kingdom of Heaven – the Lord left no other. He decreed that it should be experienced only by this entry… That is what turned out to be His, God’s will!

“We recall that his Majesty Nicholas II took all his most important decisions after ardent prayer, having felt the goodwill of God. Therefore now, on considering earnestly why he then, at the end of 1916 and the very beginning of 1917 did not take those measures which his wife so warmly
wrote to him about, we must inescapably admit one thing: he did not have God’s goodwill in relation to them! Her Majesty’s thought is remarkable in itself, that the Tsar, if he had to be ruled by anyone, should be ruled only by one who was himself ruled by God! But there was no such person near the Tsar. Rasputin was not that person. His Majesty already understood this, but the Tsaritsa did not yet understand it. In this question he was condescending to her and delicate. But, as we see, he did not carry out the advice of their ‘Friend’, and did not even mention him in his replies to his wife. The Tsar entrusted all his heart and his thoughts to God and was forced to be ruled by Him alone.”

There is much of value in this hypothesis, but it is too kind to the Masonic plotters. Yes, they were “sincere” – but so were the Bolsheviks! It seems unlikely that the Tsar should have considered the Bolsheviks worthy of punishment, but the Masons not. More likely, in our opinion, is that he thought that acting against the Masons would bring forward the revolution at precisely the moment when he wanted peace in the rear of the army. Moreover, the Masons controlled the public organizations, like the Military-Industrial Committees and the zemstva, which, in spite of their disloyalty, were nevertheless making their contribution to the providing ammunition for the army and helping the wounded. “The Emperor held the opinion that ‘in wartime one must not touch the public organizations’.”

Almost all the plotters repented of their actions when they saw their disastrous outcome. Thus “in the summer of 1917,” writes F. Vinberg, “in Petrograd and Moscow there circulated from hand to hand copies of a letter of the Cadet leader Milyukov. In this letter he openly admitted that he had taken part, as had almost all the members of the State Duma, in the February coup, in spite of the fact that he understood the danger of the ‘experiment’ he had undertaken. ‘But,’ this gentleman cynically admitted in the letter, ‘we knew that in the spring we were were about to see the victory of the Russian Army. In such a case the prestige and attraction of the Tsar among the people would again become so strong and tenacious that all our efforts to shake and overthrow the Throne of the Autocrat would be in vain. That is why we had to resort to a very quick revolutionary explosion, so as to avert this danger. However, we hoped that we ourselves would be able to finish the war triumphantly. It turned out that we were mistaken: all power was quickly torn out of our hands by the plebs... What is to be done? Our mistake turned out to be fatal for Russia’…”

558 Sedova, “ne Tsar...”, p. 3.
559 Vinberg, op. cit., p. 151.
IV. REVOLUTION (1917-1922)

You deserve to die, because you have not guarded your master, the Lord’s Anointed.

I Samuel 26.16.

The February Revolution

The decision of the plotters to begin putting their plans into action was taken in January, 1917. In that month, there arrived in Petrograd an Allied Commission composed of representatives of England, France and Italy. After meeting with Guchkov, who was at that time president of the military-industrial committee, Prince G.E. Lvov, president of the State Duma Rodzyanko, General Polivanov, Sazonov, the English ambassador Buchanan, Milyukov and others, the mission presented the following demands to the Tsar:

1. The introduction into the Staff of the Supreme Commander of allied representatives with the right of a deciding vote.
2. The renewal of the command staff of all the armies on the indications of the heads of the Entente.
3. The introduction of a constitution with a responsible ministry.

The Tsar replied to these demands, which amounted to a demand that he renounce both his autocratic powers and his powers as Commander-in-Chief of the Russian armies, as follows:

1. “The introduction of allied representatives is unnecessary, for I am not suggesting the introduction of my representatives into the allied armies with the right of a deciding vote.”
2. “Also unnecessary. My armies are fighting with greater success than the armies of my allies.”
3. “The act of internal administration belongs to the discretion of the Monarch and does not require the indications of the allies.”

When the reply of the Tsar was made known there was a meeting in the English Embassy attended by the same people, at which it was decided: “To abandon the lawful path and step out on the path of revolution”.

On February 14, Kerensky proclaimed this decision more or less openly at a session of the State Duma: “The historical task of the Russian people at the present time is the task of annihilating the medieval regime immediately, at whatever cost... How is it possible to fight by lawful means against those whom the law itself has turned into a weapon of mockery against the

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people?... There is only one way with the violators of the law – their physical removal."561

And yet loyalists still existed. Thus on February 21 Bishop Agapetus of Yekaterinoslav together with members of the Yekaterinoslav section of the Union of the Russian People, headed by their president, Obraztsov, wrote to the chancellery of the Over-Procurator: “The gates of hell will not prevail over the Church of Christ, but the destiny of Orthodoxy in our fatherland is indissolubly bound up with the destiny of the Tsarist Autocracy. Remembering on the Sunday of Orthodoxy the merits of the Russian Hierarchs before the Church and the State, we in a filial spirit dare to turn to your Eminence and other first-hierarchs of the Russian Church: by your unanimous blessings and counsels in the spirit of peace and love, strengthen his Most Autocratic Majesty to defend the Sacred rights of the Autocracy, entrusted to him by God through the voice of the people and the blessing of the Church, against which those same rebels who are encroaching against our Holy Orthodox Church are now encroaching.”562

“In the middle of 1916,” writes Fr. Lev Lebedev, “the Masons had designated February 22, 1917 for the revolution in Russia. But on this day his Majesty was still at Tsarksoye Selo, having arrived there more than a month before from Headquarters, and only at 2 o’clock on the 22nd did he leave again for Mogilev. Therefore everything had to be put back for one day and begin on February 23.563 By that time special trains loaded with provisions had been deliberately stopped on the approaches to Petrograd on the excuse of heavy snow drifts, which immediately elicited a severe shortage of bread, an increase in prices and the famous ‘tails’ – long queues for bread. The population began to worry, provocateurs strengthened the anxiety by rumours about the approach of inevitable famine, catastrophe, etc. But it turned out that the military authorities had reserves of food (from ‘N.Z.’) that would allow Petrograd to hold out until the end of the snow falls. Therefore into the affair at this moment there stepped a second very important factor in the plot – the soldiers of the reserve formations, who were in the capital waiting to be sent off to the front. There were about 200,000 of them, and they since the end of 1916 had been receiving 25 roubles a day (a substantial boost to the revolutionary agitation that had been constantly carried out among

561 Kerensky, in Voprosy Istori (Questions of History), 1990, N 10, p. 144
562 Tatyana Groyan, Tsariu Nebesnomu i Zemnomu Vernij (Faithful to the Heavenly and Earthly King), Moscow, 1996, pp. CXX-CXXI.
563 There is conflicting evidence on this point. Sedova writes: “Later Guchkov said that the coup was planned for March-April, 1917. However his comrades in the plot were more sincere. In Yekaterinoslav, where Rodzyanko’s estate was situated, there came rumours from his, Rodzyanko’s house that the abdication of the Tsar was appointed for December 6, 1917. At the beginning of 1917 Tereschenko declared in Kiev that the coup, during which the abdication was supposed to take place, was appointed for February 8” (“Ne Tsar’, a Ego Poddanie Otvetsvenny za Febral’skij Perevorot 1917 Goda” (Not the Tsar, but his Subjects were Responsible for the Coup of 1917"), Nasha Strana, N 2864, March 14, 2009, p. 3) (V.M.)
them) from a secret ‘revolutionary fund’. Most important of all, they did not want to be sent to the front. They were reservists, family men, who had earlier received a postponement of their call-up, as well as new recruits from the workers, who had been under the influence of propaganda for a long time. His Majesty had long ago been informed of the unreliability of the soldiers of the Petrograd garrison and had ordered General Alexeyev to introduce guards units, including cavalry, into the capital. However, Alexeyev had not carried out the order, referring to the fact that, according to the information supplied by the commandant of the Petrograd garrison General Khabalov, all the barracks in the capital were filled to overflowing, and there was nowhere to put the guardsmen!... In sum, against 200,000 unreliable reservists who were ready to rebel the capital of the Empire could hardly number 10,000 soldiers – mainly junkers and cadets from other military schools – who were faithful to his Majesty. The only Cossack regiment from the reserves was by that time also on the side of the revolution. The plotters were also successful in gaining the appointment of General Khabalov to the post of commandant of the capital and district. He was an inexperienced and extremely indecisive man. Had Generals Khan-Hussein of Nakhichevan or Count Keller been in his place, everything might have turned out differently.

“On February 23, at a command, 30,000 (according to other data, 90,000) workers went on strike with the slogans ‘Bread!’ and ‘Down with the War!’ The police had difficulty in dispersing their demonstrations. On February 24 up to 170,000 workers poured out onto the streets of Petrograd. Their slogans were: ‘Down with the Tsarist Government!’, ‘Long Live the Provisional Government!’ (although it did not exist yet!) and ‘Down with the War!’. About 40,000 gathered in Nevsky Prospekt. The police and the soldiers pushed them away, but they went into the side streets, smashed shop windows, robbed the shops, stopped trams, and already sang the ‘Marseillaise’ and ‘Rise, Stand up, Working People!’ However, Protopopov reported to her Majesty in Tsarskoye that the disorders were elicited only by a lack of bread. In the opinion of many ministers, everything had begun with a chance ‘women’s rebellion’ in the queues. They did not know, or simply were frightened to know, that a previously organized revolution had begun. The Cossacks did nothing, protecting the demonstrators. On February 25 already 250,000 people were on strike! In their hands they held a Bolshevik leaflet (‘... All under the red flag of the revolution. Down with the Tsarist monarchy. Long live the Democratic Republic... Long live the Socialist International’.) At a meeting at the Moscow station the police constable Krylov hurled himself at a demonstrator in order to snatch a red flag from him, and was killed... by a Cossack! The crowd lifted the murderer on their shoulders. In various places they were beating, disarming and killing policemen. At the Trubochny factory Lieutenant Hesse shot an agitator, and those who had assembled, throwing away their red flags and banners, ran away. The same happened in the evening on Nevsky, where the demonstrators opened fire on the soldiers and police, and in reply the soldiers shot into the crowd (several people were immediately killed), who
then ran away. The speeches of the workers, as we see, were the work of the hands of the second echelon of the revolution (the social democrats). But it is also evident that without the soldiers it would not have worked for either the first or the second echelon...

“On the evening of the same February 25, a Saturday, his Majesty sent Khabalov a personal telegram: ‘I order you to stop the disturbances in the capital tomorrow, disturbances that are inadmissible in the serious time of war against Germany and Austria. Nicholas.’ Khabalov panicked. Although everything said that there was no need to panic, decisive action even by those insignificant forces that were faithful and reliable, that is, firing against the rebels, could have stopped everything in its tracks. The Duma decreed that their session should stop immediately. But the deputies remained and continued to gather in the building of the Tauris palace.

“On February 26, a Sunday, it was peaceful in the morning and Khabalov hastened to tell his Majesty about this. What lengths does fear for themselves and for their position or career take people to!... On that day the newspapers did not come out, and at midday demonstrations began again and the Fourth company of the reserve battalion of the Pavlovsky regiment mutinied. It was suppressed, and the mutineers arrested. It was difficult to incite soldiers to rebel, even those like the Petrograd reservists. They replied to the worker-agitators: ‘You’ll go to your homes, but we’ll get shot!’... The plotters understood that the troops could be aroused only by some kind of exceptional act, after which it would no longer be possible for them to go back. Such an act could only be a serious military crime – a murder... The heart of the Tsar sensed the disaster. On the evening of the 26th he noted in his diary: ‘This morning during the service I felt a sharp pain in my chest... I could hardly stand and my forehead was covered with drops of sweat.’ On that day Rodzyanko sent the Tsar a telegram in which, after describing the disorders in the capital, the clashes of military units and the firing, he affirmed: ‘It is necessary immediately to entrust a person enjoying the confidence of the country (!) to form a new government. There must be no delay. Delay is like death. I beseech God that at this hour responsibility may not fall on the Crown-bearer.’ A liar and a hypocrite, Rodzyanko had more than once very bombastically expressed his ‘devotion’ to his Majesty, while at the same time preparing a plot against him. He immediately sent copies of this telegram to the commanders of the fronts – Brusilov and Ruzsky, asking them to support his demand for a ‘new government’ and a ‘person’ with the confidence of the country before his Majesty. They replied: ‘task accomplished’.

“On the night from the 26th to the 27th in the Reserve battalion of the Light-Guards of the Volhynia regiment (the regiment itself was at the front), the under-officer of the Second Company Kirpichnikov (a student, the son of a professor) convinced the soldiers ‘to rise up against the autocracy’, and gained their promise to follow his orders. The whole night the same agitation
was going on in other companies. By the morning, when Captain Lashkevich came into the barracks, they told him that the soldiers had decided not to fire at the people any more. Lashkevich hurled himself at under-officer Markov, who had made this declaration, and was immediately killed. After this the Volhynians under the command of Kirpichnikov went to the reserves of the Preobrazhensky regiment. There they killed the colonel. The rebels understood that now they could escape punishment (and at the same time, being sent to the front) only if they would all act as a group, together (there was no going back). The ‘professional’ revolutionaries strengthened them in their feelings. The Volhynians and Preobrazhenskys were joined on the same morning of the 27th by a company of the Lithuanian regiment, the sappers, a part of the Moscow regiment (reservists, of course). The officers saved themselves from being killed, they started firing and ran. The workers united with the soldiers. Music was playing. They stormed the police units and the ‘Kresty’ prison, from which they freed all those under arrest, including recently imprisoned members of the ‘Working Group’ of the Military-Industrial Committee, who had fulfilled the task of being the link between the Masonic ‘headquarters’ and the revolutionary parties, and first of all – the Bolsheviks. They burned the building of the District Court. The appeal sounded: ‘Everyone to the State Duma’. And a huge crowd rolled into the Tauris palace, sacked it, ran amok in the halls, but did not touch the Duma deputies. But the Duma delegates, having received on the same day an order from his Majesty to prorogue the Duma until April, did not disperse, but decided to form a Provisional Committee of the State Duma ‘to instil order in the capital and to liaise with public organizations and institutions’. The Committee was joined by the whole membership of the bureau of the ‘Progressive Bloc’ and Kerensky and Chkeidze (the first joining up of the first and second echelons). Immediately, in the Tauris palace, at the same time, only in different rooms, revolutionaries of the second echelon, crawling out of the underground and from the prisons, formed the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers’ Deputies (which later added ‘and of Soldiers’ to its name). The Soviet was headed by Alexandrovich, Sukhanov (Gimmer) and Steklov (Nakhamkes), and all the rest (97%) were Jews who had never been either workers or soldiers. Immediately the Executive Committee sent invitations round the factories for deputies to the Congress of Soviets, which was appointed to meet at 7 o’clock in the evening, and organized ‘requisitions’ of supplies from the warehouses and shops for ‘the revolutionary army’, so that the Tauris Palace immediately became the provisioning point for the rebels (the Provisional Committee of the Duma had not managed to think about that!).

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564 “The reports of the Petrograd department of the Okhrana concerning the preparations for the coup by forces of the Central Military-Industrial Committee became so eloquent that on January 27 the working group of the Committee was arrested. But this did not stop the plotters – the sessions of the workers in the Committee continued. However, the Okhrana department lost its informers from the workers’ group” (Sedova, “Ne Tsar…”, p. 3). (V.M.)
“The authorities panicked. Khabalov hastily gathered a unit of 1000 men under the command of Colonel A.P. Kutepov, but with these forces he was not able to get through to the centre of the uprising. Then soldiers faithful to his Majesty, not more than 1500-2000 men (!) gathered in the evening on Palace Square in front of the Winter Palace. With them was the Minister of War Belyaev, and Generals Khabalov, Balk and Zankevich. Khabalov telegraphed the Tsar that he could not carry out his instructions. He was joined by Great Prince Cyril Vladimirovich, who declared that the situation was hopeless. Then, during the night, there arrived Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich, the (younger) brother of the Tsar, who said that the soldiers would have to be taken out of the Palace since he ‘did not want the soldiers to fire at the people from the House of the Romanovs’. And he suggested telegraphing the Tsar to ask him to appoint Prince Lvov as the new President of the Council of Ministers... The completely bewildered generals were moved to the Admiralty, and the soldiers began to disperse. On the afternoon of the 28th their remnants left the Admiralty at the demand of the Minister of the Navy and, laying down their weapons, dispersed. One should point out that many members of the Imperial House behaved very unworthily in those days. They even discussed a plan for a ‘palace coup’ (to overthrow his Majesty and ‘seat’ one of the Great Princes on the throne). And some of the Great Princes directly joined the revolution. There were still some members of the Council of Ministers and the State Council in the Mariinsky Palace. They advised Protopopov (who was especially hated by ‘society’) to say that he was ill, which he did. Prince Golitsyn telegraphed the Tsar with a request that he be retired and that he grant a ‘responsible ministry’. His Majesty replied that he was appointing a new leader of the Petrograd garrison, and gave an order for the movement of troops against Petrograd. He gave Golitsyn all rights in civil administration since he considered ‘changes in the personal composition (of the government) to be inadmissible in the given circumstances’. His Majesty was very far from a Tolstoyan ‘non-resistance to evil’! On the same day, the 27th, he gave an order to send a whole group of military units that were brave and faithful to the Fatherland from all three fronts to Petrograd, and told everyone that on the 28th he would personally go to the capital. At the same time his Majesty ordered General N.I. Ivanov to move on Petrograd immediately with a group of 700 Georgievsky cavalrymen, which he did the next day. At that time, on February 27, the ministers and courtiers, gathering together for the last time, suddenly received the news that an armed crowed was heading for the Mariinsky Palace. They decided to disperse! They dispersed forever! The crowd came and began to sack and loot the Mariinsky.

“It was all over with the government of Russia. On the evening of the 27th, as has been noted, there took place the first session of the Soviet of Workers’ Deputies, who elected Chkheidze as their president. They also elected a ‘literary commission’ and ordered the publication of the Soviet’s Izvestia. At that point, on the night from the 27th to the 28th, the Provisional Committee of
the State Duma began to try and persuade Rodzyanko ‘to take power into his hands’, since, in the words of Milyukov, ‘the leaders of the army were in cahoots with him’. 15 minutes of tormented waiting passed. Finally, Rodzyanko agreed. The Provisional Committee proclaimed itself to be the ‘power’ of Russia. But…, as became clear, with the prior agreement of the Soviet’s Executive Committee! From that moment all the members of the Provisional Government, that is, the first ‘echelon’, would be led by the leaders of the Soviet, that is, the second ‘echelon’ of the revolution, although there were few who knew about that.

“Oh February 28th the uprising spread to the suburbs of Petrograd. In Kronstadt drunken soldiers killed Admiral Viren and tens of officers. In Tsarkoye Selo the troops who were guarding the Family of his Majesty declared that they were ‘neutral’.

“At 6 o’clock in the morning of February 28, 1917 Rodzyanko twice telegraphed General Alexeyev in Headquarters. The first telegram informed him that ‘power has passed to the Provisional Committee’, while the second said that this new power, ‘with the support of the troops and with the sympathy of the population’ would soon instil complete order and ‘re-establish the activity of the government institutions’. It was all a lie!”

Tsar Nicholas’ Abdication

“Oh the 28th the Tsar set off by train from Headquarters to Tsarskoye Selo.

“The time had come to carry out Guchkov’s old plan. The Tsar’s train was stopped first at Malaya Vishera station, then at Dno station, supposedly because the stations further down the line were in the hands of the rebels, which, as it turned out, was a deception. Movement along the railway lines was already controlled by the appointee of the Masons and revolutionary Bublikov (a former assistant of the Minister of Communications). Incidentally, he later admitted: ‘One disciplined division from the front would have been sufficient to put down the rebellion’. But Alexeyev, Brusilov and Ruzsky did not allow even one division as far as Petrograd, as we shall now see! It was decided to direct the Tsar’s train to Pskov, so as then to attempt to get through to Tsarskoye Selo via Pskov. The Tsar hoped that the whole situation could be put right by General Ivanov, who at that moment was moving towards Tsarskoye Selo by another route. So everything was arranged so that his Majesty should be in Pskov, where the Headquarters of the

565 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 477-481.
566 “Dno” in Russian means “abyss, bottom” – an extraordinary coincidence, since the Russian autocracy had now reached the “bottom” of its historical existence! (V.M.)
567 “The plotters had earlier prepared a group to seize the train from among the reserve Guards units in the so-called Arakcheev barracks in Novgorod province. That is why the train had to be stopped nearer these barracks, and not in Pskov” (Sedova, “Ne Tsar…”, p. 4). (V.M.)
Commander of the Northern Front, General Ruzsky, was. The Tsar was very much counting on him. Not knowing that he was one of the main traitors... It has to be said again that this lack of knowledge was not the result of bad work on the part of the police. The Masons had done their conspiring well. Moreover, it did not enter the heads either of the police or of his Majesty that fighting generals, commanders of fronts, the highest ranks in the army, ‘the most noble gentlemen’ from the Duma, the ministries and institutions could be plotters!...

“On March 1 there arrived at the Duma new military units, or their deputations, with declarations of fidelity to ‘the new power’. At 4 o’clock in the afternoon there arrived Great Prince Cyril Vladimirovich at the head of the Guards Naval Squadron. He told Rodzyanko that he was at his disposal. Before that the Great Prince had sent to the leaders of the military units at Tsarskoye Selo, who had sent deputies to the Soviet, notes suggesting that they ‘unite with the new government’, following his example. In his memoirs Rodzyanko writes that Cyril Vladimirovich arrived ‘with a red bow on his chest’ and that this ‘signified a clear violation of his oath’ and ‘the complete dissolution of the idea of the existing order… even among the Members of the Royal House’. One cannot believe Rodzyanko. Other witnesses to the event do not recall the ‘red bow’. The Great Prince himself wrote during those days that he was forced to go to Rodzyanko ‘to save the situation’. Cyril Vladimirovich offered the Guards Squadron to Rodzyanko for the restoration of order in the capital, but they replied to him that there was no need for that. In 1924 Cyril Vladimirovich took upon himself the title of Emperor. While the memoirs of Rodzyanko appeared in 1925. Thus the invention of the ‘red bow’ and Great Prince Cyril’s welcoming of the revolution began to form. But the fact that they for some reason refused the services of the Guards does not tally with the invention. They gave the Great Prince neither encouragement nor any task to carry out, and he was the first to leave Russia during the Provisional Government, before the October revolution... Great Prince Cyril thought that he would be able to help the Duma to suppress the armed bands of the Soviet, he thought that Rodzyanko wanted this... But he was mistaken, and soon he understood his mistake. For this he was slandered.

“On the same March 1 the Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies issued the famous ‘Order No. 1’ to the army, signed by the Mason N.D. Sokolov. Its essence was that soldiers’ committees should be elected by the troops and that only those orders of the Military Commission of the State Duma should be carried out which did not contradict the orders of the Soviet (!), and that all the weapons of the army should be at the disposal and under the control of the company and battalion elected committees and in no circumstances were ‘to be given to the officers, even at their demand’. Saluting and addressing [officers] by their titles were also rescinded. This was the beginning of the collapse of the Russian army. After the departure of his Majesty from Stavka General Alexeyev at 1.15 a.m. on March 1, without the knowledge of the Tsar,
sent General Ivanov telegram No. 1833, which for some reason he dated February 28, in which he held Ivanov back from decisive actions by referring to ‘private information’ to the effect that ‘complete calm had arrived’ in Petrograd, that the appeal of the Provisional Government spoke about ‘the inviolability of the monarchical principle in Russia’, and that everyone was awaiting the arrival of His Majesty in order to end the matter through peace, negotiations and the averting of ‘civil war’. Similar telegrams with completely false information were sent at the same time to all the chief commanders (including Ruzsky). The source of this lie was the Masonic ‘headquarters’ of Guchkov. ‘Brother’ Alexeyev could not fail to believe the ‘brothers’ from the capital, moreover he passionately wanted to believe, since only in this could there be a ‘justification’ of his treacherous actions. General Ivanov slowly, but surely moved towards the capital. The railwaymen were forced, under threat of court martial, to carry out his demands. At the stations, where he was met by revolutionary troops, he acted simply – by commanding them: ‘On your knees!’ They immediately carried out the command, casting their weapons on the ground…”

“Meanwhile, the Tsar arrived in Pskov. On the evening of March 1, 1917 there took place between him and General Ruzsky a very long and difficult conversation. N.V. Ruzsky, who thought the same about the situation in the capital as Alexeyev, on the instructions of Rodzyanko kept saying unashamedly to the members of the royal suite: ‘It remains only to cast ourselves on the mercy of the conquerors’, supposing that ‘the conquerors’ were the Masonic ‘Progressive Bloc’ of the State Duma… Unexpectedly for Nicholas II, Ruzsky ‘heatedly’ began to demonstrate to him the necessity of a ‘responsible ministry’. His Majesty calmly objected: ‘I am responsible before God and Russia for everything that has happened and will happen; it does not matter whether the ministers will be responsible before the Duma and the State Council. If I see that what the ministers are doing is not for the good of Russia, I will never be able to agree with them, comforting myself with the thought that the matter is out of my hands.’ The Tsar went on to go through the qualities of all the main actors of the Duma and the ‘Bloc’, showing that none of them had the necessary qualities to rule the country. However, all this was not simply an argument on political questions between two uninvolved people. From time to time in the course of this strange conversation his Majesty received witnesses to the fact that this was the position not only of Ruzsky, but also of Alexeyev. The latter sent a panicky telegram from Headquarters about the necessity immediately of bestowing ‘a responsible ministry’ and even sent him the text of a royal manifesto composed by him to this effect! Besides, it turned out that his Majesty could not even communicate with anyone by direct line! The Tsar sent [V.N.] Voeikov (the palace commandant) to telegraph his reply to Alexeyev. Voeikov demanded access to the telegraph apparatus from General Davydov (also a traitor from Ruzsky’s headquarters). Ruzsky heard the conversation and declared that it was impossible to hand over the

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568 Lebedev, *op. cit.*, pp. 477-482.
apparatus. Voeikov said that he was only carrying out ‘the command of his Majesty’. Ruzsky said that ‘he would not take such an insult (?!), since he, Ruzsky, was the commander-in-chief here, and his Majesty’s communications could not take place through his headquarters without his, Ruzsky’s, knowledge, and that at the present worrying time he, Ruzsky would not allow Voeikov to use the apparatus at all! The Tsar understood that practically speaking he was already separated from the levers and threads of power. The members of his suite also understood this. One of them recalled that the behaviour and words of Ruzsky (on casting themselves ‘on the mercy of the conquerors’) ‘undoubtedly indicated that not only the Duma and Petrograd, but also the higher commanders at the front were acting in complete agreement and had decided to carry out a coup. We were only perplexed when this took place.’

It began ‘to take place’ already in 1915, but the final decision was taken by Alexeyev and Ruzsky during a telephone conversation they had with each other on the night from February 28 to March 1. I. Solonevich later wrote that ‘of all the weak points in the Russian State construction the heights of the army represented the weakest point. And all the plans of his Majesty Emperor Nicholas Alexandrovich were shattered precisely at this point’.

“In view of the exceptional and extraordinary importance of the matter, we must once again ask ourselves: why was it precisely this point in the ‘construction’ that turned out to be the weakest? And once again we reply: because it was eaten up from within by the rust of Masonry, its propaganda. Then there is one more question: how did this become possible in the Russian Imperial army? And again the reply: only because, since the time of Peter I, through the implanting of Masonry into Russia, the ideological idol of ‘service to Russia and the Fatherland’ was raised in the consciousness of the nobility, and in particular the serving, military nobility, above the concept of service to God and the Tsar, as was demanded by the direct, spiritual-mystical meaning of the Oath given by the soldiers personally, not to some abstraction, but to a given, concrete Sovereign before God! The emperors of the 19th century did not pay due attention to this danger, or were not able to destroy this idol-worship. In truth, the last of them, his Majesty Nicholas II, was now paying in full for this, ‘suffering for the mistakes of his predecessors’.

“Seeing the extreme danger of the situation, at 0.20 a.m. on the night from March 1 to March 2 the Tsar sent this telegram to General Ivanov, who had already reached Tsarskoye Selo: ‘I ask you to undertake no measures before my arrival and your report to me.’ It is possible that, delighted at this text, Ruzsky, behind the back of his Majesty, on his own authority and against the will of the Tsar, immediately rescinded the sending of soldiers of the Northern Front to support Ivanov and ordered them to return the military echelons which had already been sent to Petrograd. At the same time Alexeyev from Headquarters, in the name of his Majesty, but without his knowledge and agreement,

569 As we have seen, however, Guchkov claims that the generals were not initiated into the plot, but acted independently. Sedova agrees with this assessment. (V.M.)
ordered all the units of the South-Western and Western fronts that had earlier been sent to Petrograd to return and stop the loading of those who had only just begun to load. The faithful officers of the Preobrazhensky regiment (and other units!) recalled with pain how they had had to submit to this command. They did not know that this was not the command of the Tsar, but that Alexeyev had deceived them!

“After this everything took place catastrophically quickly. His Majesty agreed to a ‘responsible government’. But when Rodzyanko was told about this in Petrograd, he replied that this was already not enough: for the salvation of Russia and the Dynasty, and the carrying through of the war to victory, everyone (who was everyone?) were demanding the abdication of his Majesty Nicholas II in favour of his son, the Tsarevich Alexis, with Great Prince Michael as regent over him. Moreover, Rodzyanko again, without any gnawing of conscience, lied to Alexeyev and Ruzsky that the Provisional Government had complete control of the situation, that ‘everybody obeyed him (i.e. Rodzyanko) alone’… He was hiding the fact that ‘everybody’ (that is, the Soviet first of all) were frightened, as of fire, of the return of the Tsar to the capital! For they were not sure even of the mutinous reservists, and if even only one warlike unit (even if only a division) were to arrive from the front – that would the end for them all and for the revolution! We can see what the real position of the Provisional Government was from the fact that already on March 1 the Soviet had expelled it from its spacious accommodation in the Tauris palace, which it occupied itself, into less spacious rooms, and refused Rodzyanko a train to go to negotiate with the Tsar. So Rodzyanko was compelled to beg. The Soviet gave him two soldiers to go to the post, since on the road the ‘ruler of Russia’, whom everyone supposedly obeyed, might be attacked or completely beaten up… One of the main leaders of the Soviet in those days was Sukhanov (Himmer). In his notes he conveyed an accurate general picture of the state of things. It turns out that the ‘progressivists’ of the Duma on that very night of March 1 in a humiliating way begged Himmer, Nakhamkes and Alexandrovich to allow them to create a ‘government’. Himmer wrote: ‘The next word was mine. I noted either we could restrain the masses or nobody could. The real power, therefore, was with us or with nobody. There was only one way out: agree to our conditions and accept them as the government programme.’ And the Provisional Committee (the future ‘government’) agreed! Even Guchkov (!) refused to take part in such a government. He joined it later, when the Bolsheviks allowed them to play a little at a certain self-sufficiency and supposed ‘independence’ before the public.

“… But Rodzyanko lied and deceived the generals, since it was his direct responsibility before the ‘senior brothers’ by all means not to allow the arrival of military units and the Tsar into Petrograd at that moment!
“At 10.15 a.m. on March 2 Alexeyev on his own initiative sent to all the front-commanders and other major military leaders a telegram in which, conveying what Rodzyanko was saying about the necessity of the abdication of his Majesty for the sake of the salvation of the Monarchy, Russia and the army, and for victory over the external foe, he added personally on his own part (as it were hinting at the reply): ‘It appears that the situation does not allow any other resolution.’ By 2.30 on March 2 the replies of the commanders had been received. Great Prince Nicholas Nikolayevich replied, referring to the ‘fateful situation’: ‘I, as a faithful subject (!?), consider it necessary, in accordance with the duty of the oath and in accordance with the spirit of the oath, to beseech Your Imperial Majesty on my knees’ (… to abdicate). General Brusilov (the future Bolshevik ‘inspector of cavalry’) also replied that without the abdication ‘Russia will collapse’. General Evert expressed the opinion that ‘it is impossible to count on the army in its present composition for the suppression of disorders’. This was not true! The army as a whole, and some units in particular, was devoted to his Majesty. Masonic and revolutionary propaganda was indeed being carried out in it, but it did not have the necessary success as long as the Tsar remained at the head of his Army. General Sakharov, while reviling the Duma for all he was worth (‘a thieving band of men… which has taken advantage of a propitious moment’), nevertheless, ‘sobbing, was forced to say that abdication was the most painless way out’… To these replies Alexeyev appended his own opinion, which was also in favour of the abdication of the Tsar. Only the commander of the Guards Cavalry, General Khan-Hussein of Nakhichevan (a Muslim) remained faithful to the Russian Orthodox Autocrat!570 ‘I beseech you not to refuse to lay at the feet of His Majesty the boundless devotion of the Guards Cavalry and our readiness to die for our adored Monarch’, was his reply to Alexeyev. But the latter did not pass on this reply to the Tsar in Pskov. They also did not tell him that Admiral Rusin in Headquarters had more or less accused Alexeyev and his assistant General Lukomsky of ‘treason’ when they had suggested that the admiral sign the text of a general telegram to his Majesty in the name of all the commanders expressing the opinion that abdication was necessary. Then Rusin voluntarily refused to serve the enemies of Russia and resigned his post. So at that time there were still leaders who were completely faithful to the Tsar, and not only traitors like Alexeyev, Lukomsky, Ruzsky and Danilov, or like Generals Brusilov, Polivanov, Manikovsky, Bonch-Bruevich, Klembovsky, Gatovsky, Boldyrev and others, who tried to please the Bolsheviks. At 10 a.m. on March 2 his Majesty was speaking to Ruzsky about the abdication: ‘If it is necessary that I should step aside for the good of Russia, I am ready, but I am afraid that the people will not understand this’… At this point they brought the text of Alexeyev’s telegram to the commanders. It was decided to wait for the replies. By 3 p.m. the replies had arrived from Headquarters. Ruzsky, accompanied by Danilov and Savich, came with the text of the telegram to his Majesty’s carriage. The Tsar, as Danilov recalled, ‘seemed calm, but was paler than usual: it was evident that he had passed

570 Also General Theodore Keller, who was later martyred. (V.M.)
most of the night without sleep. He was dressed in a dark blue Circassian coat, with a dagger in a silver sheath in his belt.’ Having sat down at the table, his Majesty began to listen to Ruzsky. He informed him of the events of the past hours and handed the Tsar the replies of the commanders. The Tsar read them. Ruzsky, ‘emphasizing each word’, began to expound his own opinion, which consisted in the fact that his Majesty had to act as the generals advised him. The Tsar asked the opinion of those present. Danilov and Savich said the same as Ruzsky. ‘A deathly silence ensued,’ wrote Danilov. ‘His Majesty was visibly perturbed. Several times he unconsciously looked at the firmly drawn window of the carriage.’ His Majesty’s widowed mother, Empress Maria Fyodorovna, later, from the words of her son, affirmed that Ruzsky had even dared to say: ‘Well, decide.’

“What was his Majesty thinking about at that moment? According to the words of another contemporary of the events, the Tsar ‘clearly understood that General Ruzsky would not submit to his command if he ordered him to suppress the mutiny raging in the capital. He felt that a secret betrayal was encompassing him like a sticky spider’s web.’ Immediately the Empress learned that his Majesty was in Pskov, she expressed herself with maximum accuracy: ‘It’s a trap!’ Danilov continues: ‘Then, standing up and turning quickly towards us, [the Tsar] crossed himself and said: “I have decided... I have decided to renounce the Throne in favour of my son Alexis!... I thank all of you for your brilliant and faithful service. I hope that it will continue under my son...” It was as if a stone that had been pressing on us fell from our shoulders. It was a profoundly triumphant moment. The behaviour of the abdicated Emperor was worthy of every kind of praise.’

“The moment was fateful. But for the traitor-generals themselves. Each of them would later receive his recompense from the Bolsheviks and God. But it was also a fateful moment for the whole of Russia!”

Why did the Tsar finally agree to abdicate? Yana Sedova finds the explanation in a letter he wrote to his mother at the very similar turning-point of October, 1905. “His Majesty himself explained the reason for his agreement [to concede a constitution]. He wrote about two paths, between which he had to choose: a dictatorship and a constitution. A dictatorship, in his words, would give a short ‘breathing space’, after which he would ‘again have to act by force within a few months; but this would cost rivers of blood and in the end would lead inexorably to the present situation, that is, the power’s authority would have been demonstrated, but the result would remain the same and reforms could not be achieved in the future’. So as to escape this closed circle, his Majesty preferred to give a constitution with which he was not in sympathy.

571 Lebedev, op. cit., pp. 481-486.
“These words about a ‘breathing-space’ after which he would again have to act by force could perhaps have been applied now [in 1917]. In view of the solitude in which his Majesty found himself in 1917, the suppression of the revolution would have been the cure, not of the illness, but of its symptoms, a temporary anaesthesia – and, moreover, for a very short time.” 572

“By contrast with Peter I, Tsar Nicholas II of course was not inclined to walk over other people’s bodies. But he, too, was able, in case of necessity, to act firmly and send troops to put down the rebellious city. He could have acted in this way to defend the throne, order and the monarchical principle as a whole. But now he saw how much hatred there was against himself, and that the February revolution was as it were directed only personally against him. He did not want to shed the blood of his subjects to defend, not so much his throne, as himself on the throne… [He said:] ‘I have always protected, not the autocratic power, but Russia.’” 573

Archpriest Lev Lebedev argues that the Tsar agreed to abdicate, because he believed that the general dissatisfaction with his personal rule could be assuaged by his personal departure from the scene. But he never saw in this the renunciation of the Monarchy and its replacement by a republic; he never thought this would mean the destruction of the Monarchy, but only its transfer to another member of the Dynasty – his son, under the regency of his brother. This transfer, he thought, would placate the army and therefore ensure victory against the external enemy, Germany.

Let us look at this hypothesis in detail… The first evidence of the Tsar’s real intentions is contained in his diary-entry for March 2: “My abdication is necessary. Ruzsky transmitted this conversation [with Rodzianko] to the Staff HQ, and Alexeyev to all the commanders-in-chief of the fronts. The replies from all arrived at 2:05. The essence is that for the sake of the salvation of Russia and keeping the army at the front quiet, I must resolve on this step. I agreed. From the Staff HQ they sent the draft of a manifesto. In the evening there arrived from Petrograd Guchkov and Shulgin, with whom I discussed and transmitted to them the signed and edited manifesto. At one in the morning I left Pskov greatly affected by all that had come to pass. All around me I see treason, cowardice, and deceit.”

Commenting on these last words, Fr. Lev writes: “The Tsar was convinced that this treason was personally to him, and not to the Monarchy, not to Russia! The generals were sincerely convinced of the same: they supposed that in betraying the Tsar they were not betraying the Monarchy and the Fatherland, but were even serving them, acting for their true good!... But

572 Sedova, “Pochemu Gosudar’ ne mog ne otrech’sa?” (Why his Majesty could not avoid abdication), Nasha Strana, March 6, 2010, no. 2887, p. 2
betrayal and treason to God’s Anointed is treason to everything that is headed by him. The Masonic consciousness of the generals, drunk on their supposed ‘real power’ over the army, could not rise even to the level of this simple spiritual truth! And meanwhile the traitors had already been betrayed, the deceivers deceived! Already on the following day, March 3, General Alexeyev, having received more detailed information on what was happening in Petrograd, exclaimed: ‘I shall never forgive myself that I believed in the sincerity of certain people, obeyed them and sent the telegram to the commanders-in-chief on the question of the abdication of his Majesty from the Throne!’… In a similar way General Ruzsky quickly ‘lost faith in the new government’ and, as was written about him, ‘suffered great moral torments’ concerning his conversation with the Tsar, and the days March 1 and 2 ‘until the end of his life’ (his end came in October, 1918, when the Bolsheviks finished off Ruzsky in the Northern Caucasus). But we should not be moved by these belated ‘sufferings’ and ‘recovery of sight’ of the generals (and also of some of the Great Princes). They did not have to possess information, nor be particularly clairvoyant or wise, they simply had to be faithful to their oath – and nothing more! One of the investigators of the generals’ treason, V. Kobylin, is right in saying that no later ‘regrets’ or even exploits on the fields of the Civil war could wash away the stain of eternal shame from the traitor-military commanders. ‘The world has never heard of such an offence,’ he writes. ‘After that, nothing other than Bolshevism could or should have happened… The Russian Tsar had been betrayed… The whole of Russia had been betrayed… The Army had been betrayed, and after this it would also betray. As a consequence of the acts of Alexeyev and the commanders-in-chief there would be ‘Order N 1’ (of the Soviet), which was carried out to the letter by the same Alexeyev…’ The whole of this ‘chain reaction’ of betrayals and deceits was determined, according to the just word of N. Pavlov, ‘by the connection of the Tsars with Orthodoxy and the people and the act of anointing by God. Before… the past and the future (of Russia) his Majesty stood alone,’ says Pavlov. ‘On no other Monarch had the burden of such a decision ever been laid, since there is no greater or more important country than Russia…’ Archimandrite Constantine (Zaitsev) adds: [Russia] ‘in general ceased to exist as a certain conciliar [sobornaia] personality’ – an exceptionally important observation! Although, in spite of the thought of Fr. Constantine, this did not happen immediately, at the moment of abdication.

“The whole point is that to the mysticism of Tsarist power as the ‘Head’ of Russia there corresponded the mysticism of its people’s ‘Body’. If you cut off the head of an ordinary person, then the body, like the head, is doomed to a rapid dying. But it was not like that with the mystical ‘Body’ of the people, Great Russia as a Conciliar Personality! This ‘Body’, this Personality was able in similar cases to generate a new Head in the form of a new Tsar, as had already happened more than once, for example in 1613! His Majesty Nicholas II knew this well. Therefore, in abdicating from his power personally, he firmly believed and knew that this power would be inherited by another Monarch, and in no
other way, and he was completely right! A thousand times right! And wrong are those who rebuked (and to this day continue to rebuke) Nicholas II for ‘not thinking’ about the people, the Fatherland and Russia, and that by his abdication he ‘doomed’ them to something terrible. Nothing of the sort! After the inevitable period of a new Time of Troubles, the Great Russian people, that is, more than 80% of the population, which was deeply monarchist in the whole of its nature and psychology, could not fail to engender a new Orthodox Autocrat and nothing other than a restored Orthodox Kingdom!...

“… At that time, March 1-2, 1917, the question was placed before the Tsar, his consciousness and his conscience in the following way: the revolution in Petrograd is being carried out under monarchical banners: society, the people (Russia!) are standing for the preservation of tsarist power, for the planned carrying on of the war to victory, but this is being hindered only by one thing – general dissatisfaction personally with Nicholas II, general distrust of his personal leadership, so that if he, for the sake of the good and victory of Russia, were to depart, then he would save both the Homeland and the Dynasty!

“Convinced, as were his generals, that everything was like that, his Majesty, who never suffered from love of power (he could be powerful, but not power-loving!), after 3 o’clock in the afternoon of March 2, 1917, immediately sent two telegrams – to Rodzyanko in Petrograd and to Alexeyev in Mogilev. In the first he said: ‘There is no sacrifice that I would not undertake in the name of the real good of our native Mother Russia. For that reason I am ready to renounce the Throne in favour of My Son, in order that he should remain with Me until his coming of age, under the regency of My brother, Michael Alexandrovich’. The telegram to Headquarters proclaimed: ‘In the name of the good of our ardently beloved Russia, her calm and salvation, I am ready to renounce the Throne in favour of My Son. I ask everyone to serve Him faithfully and unhypocritically.’ His Majesty said, as it were between the lines: ‘Not as you have served Me…’ Ruzsky, Danilov and Savich went away with the texts of the telegrams.

“On learning about this, Voeikov ran into the Tsar’s carriage: ‘Can it be true… that You have signed the abdication?’ The Tsar gave him the telegrams lying on the table with the replies of the commanders-in-chief, and said: ‘What was left for me to do, when they have all betrayed Me? And first of all – Nikolasha (Great Prince Nicholas Nikolayevich)... Read!’” 574

As in 1905, so in 1917, probably the single most important factor influencing the Tsar’s decision was the attitude of his uncle and the former Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolayevich Romanov, “Nikolasha” as he was known in the family. It was indeed the case that there was very little he could do in view of the treason of the generals and Nikolasha. He could probably continue to defy the will of the social and political élite, as he had done more than once in the past – but not the generals…

E.E. Alferev writes: “Factually speaking, in view of the position taken by [Generals] Ruzsky and Alexeev, the possibility of resistance was excluded. Being cut off from the external world, the Sovereign was as it were in captivity. His orders were not carried out, the telegrams of those who remained faithful to their oath of allegiance were not communicated to him. The Empress, who had never trusted Ruzsky, on learning that the Tsar’s train had been help up at Pskov, immediately understood the danger. On March 2 she wrote to his Majesty: ‘But you are alone, you don’t have the army with you, you are caught like a mouse in a trap. What can you do?’”

Perhaps he could count on the support of some military units. But the result would undoubtedly be a civil war, whose outcome was doubtful, but whose effect on the war with Germany could not be doubted: it would give the Germans a decisive advantage at a critical moment when Russia was just preparing for a spring offensive. It was this last factor that was decisive for the Tsar: he would not contemplate undermining the war effort for any reason. For the first duty of an Orthodox Tsar after the defence of the Orthodox faith is the defence of the country against external enemies – and in the case of the war with Germany the two duties coincided. And so he laid aside the crown for his country’s sake.

“The Lord allowed the satanic plan of Guchkov – borrowed by him, as we recall, from the Young Turks – to be carried out exactly. The Tsar, having left Headquarters, was, while on his way (isolated from the concrete, immediate levers and threads of the administration of the army and state), seized by plotters from the highest officers of the army and by deceit forced to abdicate.

“The ‘monarchists’ Guchkov and Shulgin, who did not yet know of his decision, and were only thinking to incline him towards it, that is, to carry out the work which Ruzsky, Alexeyev and the others had already done, left Petrograd for Pskov without the Soviet of Deputies knowing (!). They arrived at about 10 p.m. on March 2. By this time, that is, in the evening, the Tsar had somewhat changed his original decision. The point was the extremely dangerous illness of his Son, the Tsarevich Alexis, who was still destined to rule, albeit under the regency of his uncle, Michael. The Tsar-Father, worrying

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about his, asked the doctors for the last time: was there the slightest hop of
Alexis Nikolayevich being cured of haemophilia? And he received a negative
reply: there was no hope. Then the Tsar took the decision to keep his sick son
completely with himself and abdicate in favour of his brother Michael.
However, the text of the abdication manifesto was still marked as March 2,
15.00 hours, that is, the moment when he decided to renounce his power. So
when Guchkov and Shulgin brought the text of the manifesto that they had
composed they found that it was not necessary. The Tsar gave them his. And
they had to admit with shame how much more powerful, spiritual and
majestic in its simplicity was the manifesto written by the Tsar that their
talentless composition. They begged the Tsar to appoint Prince Lvov as
President of the Council of Ministers and General L.G. Kornilov as
Commander of the Petrograd military district. The Tsar signed the necessary
orders. These were the last appointments made by the Tsar.

“Seeing themselves as the controllers of the destinies and rulers of Russia,
Guchkov and Shulgin both arrived in a concealed manner, bewildered,
unshaven, in noticeably dirty collars, and departed with all the papers they
had been given in a conspiratorial manner, looking around them and
concealing themselves from ‘the people’ whom they thought to rule…
Thieves and robbers! Guchkov’s plan had been carried out, while as for
Guchkov himself – what a boundlessly pitiful situation did this very clever
Mason find himself in, he who had worked for so many years to dig a hole
under Tsar Nicholas II!

“Nicholas II’s manifesto declared: ‘During the days of the great struggle
against the external foe which, in the space of almost three years, has been
striving to enslave our Native Land, it has pleased the Lord God to send
down upon Russia a new and difficult trial. The national disturbances that
have begun within the country threaten to reflect disastrously upon the
further conduct of the stubborn war. The fate of Russia, the honour of our
heroic army, the well-being of the people, the entire future of our precious
Fatherland demand that the war be carried out to a victorious conclusion,
come what may. The cruel foe is exerting what remains of his strength, and
nor far distant is the hour when our valiant army with our glorious allies will
be able to break the foe completely. In these decisive days in the life of Russia,
We have considered it a duty of conscience to make it easy for Our people to
bring about a tight-knit union and cohesion of all our national strength, in
order that victory might be the more quickly attained, and, in agreement with
the State Duma We have concluded that it would be a good thing to abdicate

\[576\] Shulgin wrote: “How pitiful seemed to me the sketch that we had brought him... It is too
late to guess whether his Majesty could have not abdicated. Taking into account the position
that General Ruzsky and General Alexeyev held, the possibility of resistance was excluded:
his Majesty’s orders were no longer passed on, the telegrams of those faithful to him were not
communicated to him... In abdicating, his Majesty at least retained the possibility of
appealing to the people with his own last word” (in S.S. Oldenburg, Tsarstvovanie Imperatora
the Throne of the Russian State and to remove Supreme Power from Ourselves. Not desiring to be separated from Our beloved Son, We transfer Our legacy to Our Brother Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovich, and bless Him to ascend the Throne of the Russian State. We command Our Brother to conduct State affairs fully and in inviolable unity with the representatives of those men who hold legislative office, upon those principles which they shall establish, swearing an inviolable oath to that effect. In the name of our ardently beloved Native Land We call upon all faithful sons of the Fatherland to fulfil their sacred duty before it, by submitting to the Tsar during the difficult moment of universal trials, and, aiding Him, together with the representatives of he people, to lead the Russian State out upon the path of victory, well-being and glory. May the Lord God help Russia. Pskov. 2 March, 15.00 hours. 1917. Nicholas.’ Countersigned by the Minister of the Court Count Fredericks.577

“Then – it was already night on March 2 – the Tsar telegraphed the essence of the matter to his brother Michael and asked forgiveness that he ‘had not been able to warn’ him. But this telegram did not reach its addressee.

“Then the train set off. Left on his own, in his personal compartment, the Tsar prayed for a long time by the light only of a lampada that burned in front of an icon. Then he sat down and wrote in his diary: ‘At one in the morning I left Pskov greatly affected by all that had come to pass. All around me I see treason, cowardice, and deceit.’

“This is the condition that reigned at that time in ‘society’, and especially in democratic, Duma society, in the highest army circles, in a definite part of the workers and reservists of Petrograd. But what of the rest of Russia?

“In Moscow on February 28th there were massive demonstrations under red flags. The garrison (also composed of reservists) passed over to the side of the rebellion on March 1. In those days a Soviet of workers’ deputies and a Committee of public organizations was formed in the Moscow Duma, as in Petrograd. Something similar took place also in Kharkov and Nizhni-Novgorod. In Tver a crowd killed Governor N.G. Byunting, who, as the crowd approached, had managed to make his confession to the bishop. And that’s all…”578

It has been argued that this telegram-manifesto was not an abdication, but a final coded appeal to the army to support him. But such a supposition cannot be reconciled with the plain meaning of the text. And since all agree on the crystal-clear sincerity of Nicholas’ character, there is no reason not to believe the plain meaning of the text. What is true, however, is that the Tsar considered himself to be still Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of

577 Lebedev’s text has been slightly altered to include the whole text of the manifesto (V.M.).
578 Lebedev, op. cit., pp. 488-489.
Russia. That is why his train now moved towards Mogilev, and why neither Ruzsky nor Alexeyev nor even Guchkov prevented him from returning there.

And for almost a whole week he continued to lead all the Armed Forces of Russia!... But, although there were many senior officers there who were ready to die for him, the Tsar made no move to make use of his powerful position to march against the revolution. For, according to Lebedev, he was sincerely convinced that “his departure from power could help everyone to come together for the decisive and already very imminent victory over the external enemy (the general offensive was due to take place in April). Let us recall his words to the effect that there was no sacrifice which he was not prepared to offer for the good of Russia. In those days the Tsar expressed himself still more definitely: ‘... If Russia needs an atoning sacrifice, let me be that sacrifice’. The Tsar was convinced (and they convinced him) that... the Provisional Government, society and the revolution were all (!) for the preservation of the Monarchy and for carrying through the war to a glorious victory...”  

Lebedev is less than convincing here. Certainly, the Tsar’s first priority was a successful conclusion to the war. After all, on the night of March 2, after the abdication, he wrote in his diary: “For the sake of Russia, and to keep the armies in the field, I decided to take this step...” But it is hard to believe that he still, after all the treason he had seen around him, believed that “the Provisional Government, society and the revolution [!] are all for the preservation of the Monarchy”... It is more likely is that, while entertaining no illusions, he still regarded a continuation of the war to a successful conclusion as the first objective, without which all other objectives would fail.

*Tsar Michael’s Abdication*

In any case, if he had any such illusions, they were soon to be shattered... “On March 3, 1917 it became clear that the Provisional Government and society were by no means for the Monarchy. On that day the members of the new government in almost their complete composition appeared before Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich with the text of Nicholas II’s manifesto on his abdication in favour of his brother. Only Guchkov and Milyukov expressed themselves for the preservation of the Monarchy (a constitutional one, it goes without saying), that is, for the Great Prince’s accepting power. The rest, especially Kerensky, Rodzyanko and Lvov, ardently tried to prove the impossibility and danger of such an act at the present time. They said openly that in that case Michael Alexandrovich could be killed, while the Imperial Family and all the officers could ‘have their throats cut’. A second historically important moment had arrived. What would the Great Prince decide, who was then from a juridical point of view already the All-Russian Emperor?”

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Edvard Radzinsky describes the scene:-

“Michael came in, tall, pale, his face very young.

“They spoke in turn.

“Socialist Revolutionary Alexander Kerensky: ‘By taking the throne you will not save Russia. I know the mood of the masses. At present everyone feels intense displeasure with the monarchy. I have no right to conceal that the dangers taking power would subject you to personally. I could not vouch for your life.’

“Then silence, a long silence. And Michael’s voice, his barely audible voice: ‘In these circumstances, I cannot.’

“Michael was crying. It was his fate to end the monarchy. Three hundred years – and it all ended with him.”\textsuperscript{581}

However, continues Lebedev, “Michael Alexandrovich... did not decide [completely] as Kerensky and the others wanted. He did not abdicate from the Throne directly in favour of the Provisional Government. In the manifesto that he immediately wrote he suggested that the question of his power and in general the form of power in Russia should be decided by the people itself, and in that case he would become ruling Monarch if ‘that will be the will of our Great People, to whom it belongs, by universal suffrage, through their representatives in a Constituent Assembly, to establish the form of government and the new basic laws of the Russian State’. For that reason, the manifesto goes on to say, ‘invoking the blessing of God, I beseech all the citizens of the Russian State to submit to the Provisional Government, which has arisen and been endowed with all the fullness of power at the initiative of the State Duma (that is, in a self-willed manner, not according to the will of the Tsar – Prot. Lebedev), until the Constituent Assembly, convened in the shortest possible time on the basis of a universal, direct, equal and secret ballot, should by its decision on the form of government express the will of the people. Michael.’ The manifesto has been justly criticised in many respects. But still it is not a direct transfer of power to the ‘democrats’!”\textsuperscript{582} Nevertheless, Tsar Michael had effectively given the people the final say in how they were to be ruled, thereby destroying the monarchy. “The talk was not,” writes M.A. Babkin, “about the Great Prince’s abdication from the throne, but about the impossibility of his occupying the royal throne without the clearly expressed acceptance of this by the whole people of Russia.”\textsuperscript{583}

\textsuperscript{581} Radzinsky, \textit{The Last Tsar}, p. 173.
\textsuperscript{582} Lebedev, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 491.
\textsuperscript{583} Babkin, “Sviatejshij Sinod Pravoslavnoj Rossijskoj Tserkvi i Revoliutsionnie Sobytia Fevralia-Marta 1917 g.” (“The Most Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church and the
Tsar Nicholas clearly saw what had happened, writing in his diary: “God knows who gave him the idea of signing such rot”.  

Some have compared March, 1917 to the people’s election of the first Romanov tsar in 1613. At that time there was no tsar, it was a time of anarchy; so it was incumbent upon the people to take the initiative in choosing their ruler. But here, as we have seen, Michael was already from a juridical point of view tsar by a lawful transfer of power from the former tsar. So, unlike Tsar Nicholas, who simply transferred power from himself to his lawful successor, with no hint of people-power, Tsar Michael undermined the very basis of the Monarchy by acting as if he were not the lawful tsar already. Like King Saul in the Old Testament he listened to the voice of the people rather than the voice of God – with fateful consequences for himself and the people.

It has been argued that Tsar Nicholas’ abdication had no legal force because there was no provision for abdication in the Basic Laws. As Michael Nazarov points out, the Basic Laws of the Russian Empire, which had been drawn up by Tsar Paul I and which all members of the Royal Family swore to uphold, “do not foresee the abdication of a reigning Emperor (‘from a religious… point of view the abdication of the Monarch, the Anointed of God, is contrary to the act of His Sacred Coronation and Anointing: it would be possible only by means of monastic tonsure’ [N. Korevo]). Still less did his Majesty have the right to abdicate for his son in favour of his brother; while his brother Michael Alexandrovich had the right neither to ascend the Throne during the lifetime of the adolescent Tsarevich Alexis, nor to be crowned, since he was married to a divorced woman, nor to transfer power to the Provisional government, nor refer the resolution of the question of the fate of the monarchy to the future Constituent Assembly.

“Even if the monarch had been installed by the will of such an Assembly, ‘this would have been the abolition of the Orthodox legitimating principle of the Basic Laws’, so that these acts would have been ‘juridically non-existent’, says M.V. Zyzykin585… ‘Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich… performed only an act in which he expressed his personal opinions and abdication, which had an obligatory force for nobody. Thereby he estranged himself from the succession in accordance with the Basic Laws, which juridically in his eyes did not exist, in spite of the fact that he had earlier, in his capacity as Great Prince on the day of his coming of age, sworn allegiance to the decrees of the Basic Laws on the inheritance of the Throne and the order of the Family Institution’.

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584 Radzinsky, The Last Tsar, p. 172.
585 Zyzykin, Tsarskaia Vlast’, Sophia, 1924. (V.M.)
“It goes without saying that his Majesty did not expect such a step from his brother, a step which placed the very monarchical order under question…”

In defence of Michael, it should be pointed out that he, too, acted under duress, “under the pressure,” as Nazarov writes, “of the plotters who came to his house. Kerensky admitted that this had been their aim: ‘We decided to surround the act of abdication of Mikhail Alexandrovich with every guarantee, but in such a way as to give the abdication a voluntary character.’”

The further question arises: was Tsar Nicholas right to abdicate? The saints’ words on this subject are not crystal-clear. Eldress Paraskeva (Pasha) of Sarov (+1915), who had foretold his destiny during the Sarov Days, said: “Your Majesty, descend from the throne yourself”. But Blessed Duniushka of Ussuriusk, who was martyred in 1918, said: “The Tsar will leave the nation, which shouldn’t be, but this has been foretold to him from Above. This is his destiny. There is no way that he can evade it.”

And yet confusion and searching of consciences continued, as can be seen in a letter of some Orthodox Christians to the Holy Synod dated July 24, 1917: “We Orthodox Christians most ardently beseech you to explain to us in the newspaper Russkoe Slovo [Russian Word] what... the oath given to us to be faithful to the Tsar, Nicholas Alexandrovich, means. People are saying in our area that if this oath is worth nothing, then the new oath to the new Tsar [the Provisional Government?] will be worth nothing. Which oath must be more pleasing to God. The first or the second? Because the Tsar is not dead, but is alive and in prison...”

Since Great Prince Michael had presented the choice of the form of State government to the Constituent Assembly, many opponents of the revolution were prepared to accept the Provisional Government on the grounds that it was just that – provisional. They were not to know that the Constituent Assembly would hardly be convened before it would be forcibly dissolved by the Bolsheviks in January, 1918. So the results of the Tsar’s abdication for Russia were different from what he had hoped and believed. Instead of an orderly transfer of power from one member of the royal family to another, the whole dynasty and autocratic order collapsed. And instead of preventing civil war for the sake of victory in the world war, the abdication was followed by defeat in the world war and the bloodiest civil war in history, followed by unprecedented sufferings and persecutions of the faith for generations.

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587 Nazarov, op. cit., p. 69.
588 N. Gubanov (ed.), Nikolai II-ij i Novie Mucheniki, St. Petersburg, 2000, p. 70.
590 In Groyan, op. cit., pp. 122, 123.
Indeed, in retrospect we can see that the two royal abdications of March, 1917 brought to an end the 1600-year period of the Orthodox Christian Empire that began with the coming to power of St. Constantine the Great. “He who restrains” the coming of the Antichrist, the Orthodox Christian Emperor, “was removed from the midst” (II Thessalonians 2.7) – and very soon “the collective Antichrist”, Soviet power, began its savage torture of the Body of Holy Russia. St. John of Kronstadt had said that Russia without the Tsar would no longer even bear the name of Russia, and would be “a stinking corpse” - and so it proved to be, when the country’s name was officially changed to “The Soviet Union” in 1922.

And yet in a real sense the Tsar saved the monarchy for the future by his abdication. For in abdicating he resisted the temptation to apply force and start a civil war in a cause that was just from a purely juridical point of view, but which could not be justified from a deeper, eschatological point of view. In this he followed the example of Saints Boris and Gleb, and the advice of the Prophet Shemaiah to King Rehoboam and the house of Judah as they prepared to face the house of Israel: “Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren, the children of Israel. Return every man to his house…” (I Kings 12.24)).

The Tsar-Martyr resisted the temptation to act like a Western absolutist ruler, thereby refuting those in both East and West who looked on his rule as just that – a form of absolutism. He showed that the Orthodox Autocracy was not a form of absolutism, but something completely sui generis – the external aspect of the self-government of the Orthodox Church and people on earth. He refused to treat his power as if it were independent of the Church and people, but showed that it was a form of service to the Church and the people from within the Church and the people, in accordance with the word: “I have raised up one chosen out of My people... with My holy oil have I anointed him” (Psalm 88.18, 19). So not “government by the people and for the people” in a democratic sense, but “government by one chosen out of the people of God for the people of God and responsible to God alone”...

Paradoxically, one of the best tributes to the Tsar came from Winston Churchill, first Lord of the Admiralty in the British government and a Mason since 1902 (Master, “Rosemary” lodge no. 2851): ‘Surely to no nation has Fate been more malignant than to Russia. Her ship went down in sight of port... Every sacrifice had been made; the toil was achieved... In March the Tsar was on the throne: the Russian Empire and the Russian army held up, the front was secured and victory was undoubted. The long retreats were ended, the munitions famine was broken; arms were pouring in; stronger, larger, better equipped armies guarded the immense front... Moreover, no difficult action was no required: to remain in presence: to lean with heavy weight upon the far stretched Teutonic line: to hold without exceptional activity the weakened...
hostile forces on her front: in a word to endure – that was all that stood between Russia and the fruits of general victory… According to the superficial fashion of our time, the tsarist order is customarily seen as blind, rotten, a tyranny capable of nothing. But an examination of the thirty months of war with Germany and Austria should correct these light-minded ideas. We can measure the strength of the Russian Empire by the blows which it suffered, by the woes it experienced, by the inexhaustible forces that it developed, and by the restoration of forces of which it showed itself capable… In the government of states, when great events take place, the leader of the nation, whoever he may be, is condemned for failures and glorified for successes. The point is not who did the work or sketched the plan of battle: reproach or praise for the outcome is accorded to him who bears the authority of supreme responsibility. Why refuse this strict examination to Nicholas II? The brunt of supreme decisions centred upon him. At the summit where all problems are reduced to Yea and Nay, where events transcend the faculties of men and where all is inscrutable, he had to give the answers. His was the function of the compass needle. War or no war? Advance or retreat? Right or left? Democratise or hold firm? Quit or persevere? These were the battlefields of Nicholas II. Why should he reap no honour for them?...

“The regime which he personified, over which he presided, to which his personal character gave the final spark, had at this moment won the war for Russia. Now they crush him. A dark hand intervenes, clothed from the beginning in madness. The Tsar departs from the scene. He and all those whom he loved are given over to suffering and death. His efforts are minimized; his actions are condemned; his memory is defiled…”  

The Church, the People and the Revolution

Why did the Church not intervene at this great crisis, as she had intervened on many similar occasions in Russian history? After all, on the eve of the revolution, she had canonized St. Hermogen, Patriarch of Moscow in the Time of Troubles, as if to emphasize that, just as St. Hermogen had refused to recognize the false Demetrius as a legitimate political authority, so the time was coming when it would again be necessary to distinguish between true and false political authorities. So surely the Church would stand up against Bolshevism and in defence of the monarchy as St. Hermogen did then?

However, the Synod showed itself to be at a loss at this critical moment. At its session of February 26, it refused the request of the assistant procurator, Prince N.D. Zhevakhov, to threaten the creators of disturbances with ecclesiastical punishments. Then, on February 27, it refused the request of the over-procurator himself, N.P. Rayev, that it publicly support

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the monarchy. Ironically, therefore, that much-criticised creation of Peter the Great, the office of Over-Procurator of the Holy Synod, proved more faithful to the Anointed of God at this critical moment than the Holy Synod itself…

“On March 2,” writes Babkin, “the Synodal hierarchs gathered in the residence of the Metropolitan of Moscow. They listened to a report given by Metropolitan Pitirim of St. Petersburg asking that he be retired (this request was agreed to on March 6 – M.B.). The administration of the capital’s diocese was temporarily laid upon Bishop Benjamin of Gdov. But then the members of the Synod recognized that it was necessary immediately to enter into relations with the Executive committee of the State Duma. On the basis of which we can assert that the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church recognized the Provisional Government even before the abdication of Nicholas II from the throne. (The next meeting of the members of the Synod took place on March 3 in the residence of the Metropolitan of Kiev. On that same day the new government was told of the resolutions of the Synod.)

“The first triumphantly official session of the Holy Synod after the coup d’état took place on March 4. Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev presided and the new Synodal over-procurator, V.N. Lvov, who had been appointed by the Provisional government the previous day, was present. Metropolitan Vladimir and the members of the Synod (with the exception of Metropolitan Pitirim, who was absent – M.B.) expressed their sincere joy at the coming of a new era in the life of the Orthodox Church. And then at the initiative of the over-procurator the royal chair… was removed into the archives… One of the Church hierarchs helped him. It was decided to put the chair into a museum.

“The next day, March 5, the Synod ordered that in all the churches of the Petrograd diocese the Many Years to the Royal House ‘should no longer be proclaimed’. In our opinion, these actions of the Synod had a symbolical character and witnessed to the desire of its members ‘to put into a museum’ not only the chair of the Tsar, but also ‘to despatch to the archives’ of history royal power itself.

“The Synod reacted neutrally to the ‘Act on the abdication of Nicholas II from the Throne of the State of Russia for himself and his son in favour of Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich’ of March 2, 1917 and to the ‘Act on the refusal of Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich to accept supreme power’ of March 3. On March 6 it decreed that the words ‘by order of His Imperial Majesty’ should be removed from all synodal documents, and that in all the churches of the empire molebens should be served with a Many Years ‘to the God-preserved Russian Realm and the Right-believing Provisional Government’.”

593 Babkin, op. cit., pp. 2, 3. Archbishop Nathanael of Vienna (+1985), the son of over-procurator Vladimir Lvov, said that his family used to laugh at the incongruity of wishing
But was the new government, whose leading members, as we have seen, were Masons\textsuperscript{594}, really “right-believing”? Even leaving aside the fact of their membership of Masonic lodges, which is strictly forbidden by the Church, the answer to this question has to be: no. When the Tsar opened the First State Duma in 1906 with a moleben, the Masonic deputies sniggered and turned away, openly showing their disrespect both for him and for the Church. And now the new government, while still pretending to be Christian, openly declared that it derived its legitimacy, not from God, but from the revolution. Thus when the foreign minister, Paul Milyukov, was asked who had elected his government, he replied: “The Russian revolution elected us”.\textsuperscript{595} But the revolution cannot be lawful, being the incarnation of lawlessness. How, then, could the Church allow her members to vote for Masonic or social-democratic delegates to the Constituent Assembly? After all, that Assembly would determine the future form of government of the Russian land.

On March 7 the Synod passed a resolution “On the Correction of Service Ranks in view of the Change in State Administration”. In accordance with this resolution, a commission headed by Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) was formed that removed all references to the Tsar in the services of the Church. This involved changes to, for example, the troparion for the Church New Year, where the word “Emperor” was replaced by “people”, and a similar change to the troparion for the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross.

Again, on March 7-8 the Synod passed a resolution, “On Changes in Divine Services in Connection with the Cessation of the Commemoration of the Former Ruling House”. The phrase “formerly ruling” (tsarstvoyavshego) implied that there was no hope of a restoration of any Romanov to the throne.

Then, on March 9, the Synod addressed all the children of the Orthodox Russian Church: “The will of God has been accomplished. Russia has entered on the path of a new State life. May God bless our great Homeland with happiness and glory on its new path... For the sake of the many sacrifices offered to win civil freedom, for the sake of the salvation of your own families, for the sake of the happiness of the Homeland, abandon at this great historical moment all quarrels and disagreements. United in brotherly love for the good of Russia. Trust the Provisional Government. All together and everyone

\textsuperscript{594} This is also now generally accepted even by western historians. Thus Tsuyoshi Hasegawa writes: “Five members, Kerensky, N.V. Nekrasov, A.I. Konovalov, M.I. Tereshchenko and I.N. Efremov are known to have belonged to the secret political Masonic organization” (“The February Revolution”, in Edward Acton, Vladimir Cherniaev, William Rosenberg (eds.), \textit{Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution 1914-1921}, Bloomington and Indianopolis: Indiana University Press, 1997, p. 59).

individually, apply all your efforts to the end that by your labours, exploits, prayer and obedience you may help it in its great work of introducing new principles of State life…”

Now it is understandable that the Synod would not want to risk a civil war by displaying opposition to the new government. But was it true that “the will of God has been accomplished”? Was it not rather that God had allowed the will of Satan to be accomplished, as a punishment for the sins of the Russian people? And if so, how could the path be called a “great work”? As for the “new principles of State life”, everyone knew that these were revolutionary in essence…

Babkin writes: “This epistle was characterised by B.V. Titlinov, professor of the Petrograd Theological Academy, as ‘an epistle blessing a new and free Russia’, and by General A.I. Denikin as ‘sanctioning the coup d’état that has taken place’. To the epistle were affixed the signatures of the bishops of the ‘tsarist’ composition of the Synod, even those who had the reputation of being monarchists and ‘black hundredists’, for example, Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow. This witnessed to the ‘loyal’ feelings of the Synodal hierarchs…”

Why did the hierarchs sanction the coup so quickly? Probably in the hope of receiving internal freedom for the Church. This is hinted at in a declaration of six archbishops to the Holy Synod and Lvov on March 8: “The Provisional Government in the person of its over-procurator V.N. Lvov, on March 4 in the triumphant opening session of the Holy Synod, told us that it was offering to the Holy Orthodox Russian Church full freedom in Her administration, while preserving for itself only the right to halt any decisions of the Holy Synod that did not agree with the law and were undesirable from a political point of view. The Holy Synod did everything to meet these promises, issued a pacific

596 Babkin, op. cit., pp. 3-4. Other hierarchs echoed the words of the Address in still more revolutionary tones. Thus Bishop Andrew of Ufa wrote: “The abdication from the throne of Nicholas II frees his former subjects from their oath to him. But besides this, every Orthodox Christian must remember the words of one Church song, that ‘if thou hast sworn, but not for the good, it is better for thee to break thine oath’ than to do evil (from the service on the day of the Beheading of John the Forerunner). I wrote about this in Thoughts on February 9, 1916, when I pointed to the great church-civil exploit of Metropolitan Philip of Moscow, who found in his conscience support for his rebuking the iniquities of the Terrible one. And so the question of the oath for those who have been disturbed and are weak in conscience completely falls away…. The Autocracy of the Russian tsars degenerated first into absolutism [samovlastie] and then into despotism [svoevlastie] exceeding all probability… And lo! their power has collapsed – the power that turned away from the Church. The will of God has been accomplished… The Catholic Church of Christ has been delivered from the oppression of the State.” (Ufimskie Vedomosti (Ufa Gazette), 1917, № 5-6, pp. 138-139; Monk Benjamin, Letopis’ tserkovnykh sobytij Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi nachinaiu s 1917 goda (Chronicle of Church Events, beginning from 1917), www.zlatoust.ws/letopis.htm, pp. 6-7).
epistle to the Orthodox people and carried out other acts that were necessary, in the opinion of the Government, to calm people’s minds.”

Lvov broke his promises and proceeded to act like a tyrant, which included expelling Metropolitan Macarius from his see. It was then that Metropolitan repented of having signed the March 9 epistle. And later, after the fall of the Provisional Government, he said: “They [the Provisional Government] corrupted the army with their speeches. They opened the prisons. They released onto the peaceful population convicts, thieves and robbers. They abolished the police and administration, placing the life and property of citizens at the disposal of every armed rogue... They destroyed trade and industry, imposing taxes that swallowed up the profits of enterprises... They squandered the resources of the exchequer in a crazy manner. They radically undermined all the sources of life in the country. They established elections to the Constituent Assembly on bases that were incomprehensible to Russia. They defiled the Russian language, distorting it for the amusement of half-illiterates and sluggards. They did not even guard their own honour, violating the promise they had given to the abdicated Tsar to allow him and his family free departure, by which they prepared for him inevitable death...

“Who started the persecution on the Orthodox Church and handed her head over to crucifixion? Who demanded the execution of the Patriarch? Was it those whom the Duma decried as ‘servants of the dark forces’, labelled as enemies of the freedom of the Church?... No, it was not those, but he whom the Duma opposed to them as a true defender of the Church, whom it intended for, and promoted to the rank of, over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod – the member of the Provisional Government, now servant of the Sovnarkom – Vladimir Lvov.”

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597 Quoted by M.A. Babkin, Duchovenstvo Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi i Sverzhenie Monarkhii (The Clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Overthrow of the Monarchy), Moscow, 2007, pp. 195-198.
598 Quoted in Groyan, op. cit., pp. 183-184. Basil Lurye writes: “Metropolitan Macarius together with the hierarchs who were members with him of the last Tsarist composition of the Synod shared the sin of justifying the February coup. His signature is under the appeal to the flock released by the Synod on March 9, 1917 which began with the blasphemous words: ‘The will of God has been accomplished’. Instead of anathematizing the ‘Provisional Government’ - in accordance with what the Order of Orthodoxy said about all those who plot against Tsarist power, and with what the former over-procurator, N.P. Rayev, suggested, - the bishops displayed their own lack of belief in what they themselves declared every year on the Sunday of Orthodoxy. They began to ‘work’ with the ‘Provisional Government’ as if it were a lawful power, and not a group of plotters who were under the anathema of the Church and who drew under this same all those who followed them. The Synod did not give in to the pressure of the new authorities, who tried to force it to issue a special act concerning the loss by the Tsar of his anointing, but, in sanctioning the sin against the Anointed one, it blessed the people to go on the path of the king-killers. To the great honour of Metropolitan Macarius it is necessary to say that it was precisely he among the older hierarchs who was the first to come to his senses. It was for that reason that he took up the strictly canonical position, not agreeing with his retirement from the Moscow Metropolia. Having uncanonically replaced Vladyka Macarius on the Moscow kathedra, the future Patriarch Tikhon understood this, but
Lvov was indeed thoroughly unsuited for the post of over-procurator – he ended up as a renovationist and enemy of Orthodoxy. In appointing him the Provisional Government showed its true, hostile attitude towards the Church. It also showed its inconsistency: having overthrown the Autocracy and proclaimed freedom for all people and all religions, it should have abolished the office of over-procurator as being an outdated relic of the State’s dominion over the Church. But it wanted to make the Church tow the new State’s line, and Lvov was to be its instrument in doing this. Hence his removal of all the older, more traditional hierarchs, his introduction of three protopriests of a Lutheran orientation into the Synod and his proclamation of the convening of an All-Russian Church Council – a measure which he hoped would seal the Church’s descent into Protestant-style renovationism, but which in fact, through God’s Providence, turned out to be the beginning of the Church’s true regeneration and fight back against the revolution...

Similarly uncompromising was the position of the future hieromartyr, Archbishop Andronicus of Perm. On March 4, in an address “To All Russian Orthodox Christians”, he called the present situation an “interregnum”. And although he called on all to obey the Provisional Government, he went on: “We shall beseech the All-Generous One that He Himself establish authority and peace on our land, that He not abandon us for long without a Tsar, as children without a mother. May He help us, as three hundred years ago He helped our ancestors, that we may unanimously and with inspiration receive a native Tsar from His All-Good Providence.”

Prince Lvov wrote to Andronicus demanding an explanation for his actions in support of the old regime, which “aimed at the setting up of the clergy against the new order”. The archbishop replied: “The act on the refusal of Michael Alexandrovich which legitimizes the Provisional Government declared that after the Constituent Assembly we could have a monarchical government, or any other, depending on how the Constituent Assembly will pronounce on this. I have submitted to the Provisional Government, I will also submit to a republic if it will be established by the Constituent Assembly. But until then not one citizen is deprived of the freedom of expressing himself on the form of government for Russia; otherwise a Constituent Assembly would be superfluous if someone could irrevocably predetermine the question on the form of government in Russia.”

A similar position was taken by Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), who on March 5, at the end of the liturgy, declared: “When we received news of only much later (at the end of his life he asked forgiveness from Metropolitan Macarius). In 1957 the relics of the hierarch Macarius were found to be incorrupt.” (review of Molis’, Boris’, spasajtejd, a collection of the letters of Metropolitan Macarius, in Verlograd-Inform, N 7 (40), July, 1998, p. 37.
the abdication from the throne of His Most Pious Emperor Nicholas Alexandrovich, we prepared, in accordance with his instructions, to commemorate His Most Pious Emperor Michael Alexandrovich. But now he too has abdicated, and commanded that we should obey the Provisional Government, and for that reason, and only for that reason, we are commemorating the Provisional Government. Otherwise no power could force us to cease the commemoration of the Tsar and the Royal Family... We must do this, first, in fulfilment of the oath given by us to His Majesty Nicholas II, who handed over power to Prince Michael Alexandrovich, who handed this power over to the Provisional Government until the Constituent Assembly. Secondly, we must do this so as to avoid complete anarchy, larceny, fighting and sacrilege against the holy things. Only in one thing must we listen to nobody, neither now nor in the past, neither tsars nor rulers nor the mob: if they demand that we renounce the faith, or defile the holy things, or in general carry out clearly lawless and sinful acts.”

Following the Holy Synod, Archpriest John Vostorgov, a leading monarchist, considered the Provisional Government “completely lawful”: “Our former Emperor, who has abdicated from the throne, transferred power in a lawful manner to his brother. In his turn the brother of the Emperor, having abdicated from power until the final decision of the Constituent Assembly, in the same lawful manner transferred power to the Provisional Government, and to that permanent government that would be given to Russia by the Constituent Assembly. And so we now have a completely lawful Provisional Government which is the powers that be, as the Word of God calls it. To this power, which is now the One Supreme and All-Russian power, we are obliged to submit in accordance with the duty of religious conscience; we are obliged to pray for it; we are obliged also to obey the local authorities established by it. In this obedience, after the abdication of the former Emperor and his brother, and after their indications that the Provisional Government is lawful, there can be no betrayal of the former oath, but in it consists our direct duty.”

However, Fr. John remained devoted to the monarchy, and on March 25-26, in a small journal intended for soldiers and workers, he published an appeal to remain faithful to the anointed of God. On March 27 this appeal was noted and condemned during a meeting of Council of the United Clergy and Laity of Moscow, and the resolution was passed that “Fr. Vostorgov should be removed completely from the clergy of the Moscow Church as an element in it that is strange and undesirable”. And so on May 13 Fr. John was removed


601 Hieromartyr John, quoted in Groyan, *op. cit.*, p. 128.
from the posts of supervisor of church schools of the Trans-Volga and Urals dioceses and synodal missionary-preacher. He was shot in 1918.

But there were other “conservatives” who took a more revolutionary position. Thus on March 7 Archbishop Seraphim (Chichagov) of Tver and Kashin, who had taken such a prominent part in the canonization of St. Seraphim, said: “By the mercy of God, the popular uprising against the old, wretched order in the State, which led Russia to the edge of destruction in the harsh years of world war, has taken place without many victims, and Russia has easily passed to the new State order, thanks to the firm decision of the State Duma, which formed the Provisional Government, and the Soviet of workers’ deputies. The Russian revolution has turned out to be almost the shortest and most bloodless of all revolutions that history has known…”

And then there were the liberals, like Bishop Nicon (Bessonov) of Krasnoyarsk, who on March 10 said to his flock: “I suppose there should be a REPUBLIC in Russia, but not a democratic one, but a common one – a REPUBLIC in general; in its administration ALL classes participate, and not only the “proletariat.” And on March 12 he addressed a meeting of the Cadet Party: “I am for a Russian republic. Our many Russian monarchs, and especially the last of them, Nicholas II, with his wife, so humiliated, so degraded and shamed monarchy that monarchy should not even be mentioned among us, even a constitutional one.”

Meanwhile, the Council of the Petrograd Religio-Philosophical Society went still further, denying the very concept of Sacred Monarchy. Thus on March 11 and 12, it resolved that the Synod’s acceptance of the Tsar’s abdication “does not correspond to the enormous religious importance of the act, by which the Church recognized the Tsar in the rite of the coronation of the anointed of God. It is necessary, for the liberation of the people’s conscience and to avoid the possibility of a restoration, that a corresponding act be issued in the name of the Church hierarchy abolishing the power of the Sacrament of Royal Anointing, by analogy with the church acts abolishing the power of the Sacraments of Marriage and the Priesthood.”

Fortunately, the Church hierarchy rejected this demand. For not only can the Sacrament of Anointing not be abolished, since it is of God: even the last Tsar still remained the anointed Tsar after his abdication. As Shakespeare put it in Richard II (III, ii, 54-7):


\[\text{Archbishop Seraphim, } \textit{Tverskie Eparkhiial’nie Vedomosti} \text{ (Tver Diocesan Gazette), 1917, № 9-10, pp. 75-76; in Monk Benjamin, } \textit{op. cit.}, \text{ p. 4.}

\[\text{Bishop Nicon, in Babkin, } \textit{Dukhovenstvo, } \textit{op. cit.}, \text{ p. 233.}

\[\text{Groyan, } \textit{op. cit.}, \text{ p. 142. Italics mine (V.M.).}\]
Not all the water in the rough rude sea
Can wash the balm off from an anointed king;
The breath of worldly men cannot depose
The deputy elected by the Lord. 606

As St. John Maximovich wrote: “Having received, not the Old Testament
pouring of oil on the head, but the grace-filled ‘Seal of the gift of the Holy
Spirit’ in the Mystery of Chrismation, Emperor Nicholas II was faithful to his
high calling till the end of his life and was conscious of his responsibility
before God.” 607 As such, he remained an anointed tsar to the end of his life.

St. John of Kronstadt had said that if Russia were to be deprived of her tsar,
she would become a “stinking corpse”. And so it turned out: as a strictly
logical and moral consequence, “from the day of his abdication,” as St. John
Maximovich wrote, “everything began to collapse. It could not have been
otherwise. The one who united everything, who stood guard for the truth,
was overthrown…” 608 For, as St. John said in another place: “The Tsar was the
embodiment of the Russian people’s… readiness to submit the life of the state
to the righteousness of God: therefore do the people submit themselves to the
Tsar, because he submits to God. Vladyka Anthony [Khrapovitsky] loved to

606 Again, an Orthodox Jewish rabbi has written: “King Saul lost the power of his anointing
when he deliberately disobeyed God’s command. King Jehu was anointed to obey God’s
commands, but he also failed. Divine blessing was withdrawn. That, however, was God’s
decision. Can the anointed person, of himself, resign…
“The mystery of anointing and crowning creates a special person; a person not
untouchable or infallible, nor all-powerful or absolute, but sacred, consecrated and set apart
from others and above the waves of politics.
“Tsar Nicholas II, anointed, crowned and consecrated in May, 1896, bore within himself,
and shared with his Tsarina and wife, an inner calm and tranquillity of faith beyond all
changes in politics and political forces. Spiritually speaking, his abdication on March 2, 1917,
was of no effect. Those who are anointed cannot resign their spiritual elevation, though they
may lay down the earthly trappings of power or have them torn away. Those who are true
and devoted adherents of the Russian Orthodox Church have no right to speak of His Late
Majesty as the ‘ex-Tsar’ or as the ‘Tsar-abdicate’. Clearly, those of the Russian Orthodox faith
should recognize the direct link that has come down from the days of Moses, through the
High Priests and Kings of Israel, to Tsar Nicholas II, in the God-commanded ceremony of
anointing.” (“The Mystery of the Anointed Sovereigns”, Orthodox Life, vol. 32, no. 4, July-
August, 1982, pp. 44, 45).

608 St. John Maximovich, “Homily before a Memorial Service for the Tsar-Martyr”, in Man of
God, op. cit, p. 133. Cf. Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev): “There is no need to say how terrible
a ‘touching’ of the Anointed of God is the overthrow of the tsar by his subjects. Here the
transgression of the given command of God reaches the highest degree of criminality, which
is why it drags after it the destruction of the state itself” (Russkaia Ideologia (The Russian
Ideology), St. Petersburg, 1992, pp. 50-51). And so, insofar as it was the disobedience of the
people that compelled the Tsar to abdicate, leading inexorably to his death, “we all,” in the
words of Archbishop Averky, “Orthodox Russian people, in one way or another, to a greater
or lesser degree, are guilty of allowing this terrible evil to be committed on our Russian land”
(Istinnoe Pravoslavie i Sovremennuy Mir (True Orthodoxy and the Contemporary World),
recall the Tsar’s prostration before God and the Church which he makes during the coronation, while the entire Church, all its members, stand. And then, in response to his submission to Christ, all in the Church make a full prostration to him.”

In agreement with this, the philosopher Ivan Alexandrovich Ilyin wrote: “Faithfulness to the monarchy is a condition of soul and form of action in which a man unites his will with the will of his Sovereign, his dignity with his dignity, his destiny with his destiny… The fall of the monarchy was the fall of Russia herself. A thousand-year state form fell, but no ‘Russian republic’ was put in its place, as the revolutionary semi-intelligentsia of the leftist parties dreamed, but the pan-Russian disgrace foretold by Dostoyevsky was unfurled, and a failure of spirit. And on this failure of spirit, on this dishonour and disintegration there grew the state Anchar of Bolshevism, prophetically foreseen by Pushkin – a sick and unnatural tree of evil that spread its poison on the wind to the destruction of the whole world. In 1917 the Russian people fell into the condition of the mob, while the history of mankind shows that the mob is always muzzled by despots and tyrants… The Russian people unwound, dissolved and ceased to serve the great national work – and woke up under the dominion of internationalists. History has as it were proclaimed a certain law: Either one-man rule or chaos is possible in Russia; Russia is not capable of a republican order. Or more exactly: the existence of Russia demands one-man rule – either a religiously and nationally strengthened one-man rule of honour, fidelity and service, that is, a monarchy, or one-man rule that is atheist, conscienceless and dishonourable, and moreover anti-national and international, that is, a tyranny.”

In view of this fact, the Church hierarchy must be considered to have betrayed the monarchy, paradoxically, by obeying it too slavishly. Instead of obeying the Tsar’s call to obey a self-appointed republican government composed of Masons and traitors, they should have rallied round the sacred principle of the Orthodox Autocracy and used their still considerable influence among the people to restore monarchical rule. A clear precedent existed: in the recently canonized Patriarch Hermogen’s call to liberate Russia from foreign rule and restore a lawful monarchy in 1612. Like Hermogen, they could have called the Russian people to arms against those who had forced the abdication of both the Tsar and Great Prince Michael, and who were therefore, in effect, rebels against lawful authority and subject to anathema. But the opportunity was lost through a combination of a commendable desire to avoid bloodshed and a less commendable lack of courage. Some hierarchs supported the revolution, others rejected it; but none were prepared to lead the people in such a way as to oppose the rebels and protect the monarchical

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610 Ilyin, Sobranie Sochinenij (Collected Works), Moscow, 1994, volume 4, p. 7; in Valentina D. Sologub, Kto Gospoden’ – Ko Mne! (He who is the Lord’s – to me!), Moscow, 2007, p. 53.
principle. Nor did the Church approach any member of the Romanov dynasty with an invitation that he ascend the throne and end the interregnum.\(^{611}\)

In this way, as some have argued, Russia came under the curse pronounced in 1613 against those who did not obey the Romanov dynasty: “It is hereby decreed and commanded that God’s Chosen One, Tsar Michael Feodorovich Romanov, be the progenitor of the Rulers of Rus’ from generation to generation, being answerable in his actions before the Tsar of Heaven alone; and should any dare to go against this decree of the Sobor - whether it be Tsar, or Patriarch, or any other man, may he be damned in this age and in the age to come, having been sundered from the Holy Trinity...”

Of course, following the example of St. Hermogen in this way would have been very difficult, requiring great courage. But it was not impossible. And we know the tragic, truly accursed consequences of the failure to follow it...

The weakness of the Church at this critical moment was the result of a long historical process. Having been deprived of its administrative independence by Peter the Great, the Church hierarchy was not ready to stand alone against the new regime and in defence of the monarchical principle in March, 1917. Instead, in the early days of March, it hoped that, in exchange for recognizing it and calling on the people to recognize it, it would receive full administrative freedom. But it was deceived: when Lvov came to power, he began to act like a tyrant worse than the old tsarist over-procurators. And then a wave of democratization began at the diocesan and parish levels which the hierarchs did not have the strength to resist...

Thus was the prophecy of Bishop Ignatius Brianchaninov (+1867) fulfilled: “Judging from the spirit of the times and the intellectual ferment, we must suppose that the building of the Church, which has already been wavering for a long time, will collapse quickly and terribly. There will be nobody to stop this and withstand it. The measures undertaken to support [the Church] are borrowed from the elements of the world hostile to the Church, and will rather hasten her fall than stop it...”\(^{612}\)

If the Church hierarchy, traditionally the main support of the Autocracy, faltered, it is not surprising that the people as a whole faltered, too.

\(^{611}\) As Babkin writes, in March, 1917 “the monarchy in Russia, in accordance with the act of Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich, continued to exist as an institution”. Consequently the Synod should have acted as if there was an “interregnum” in the country (Dukhovenstvo, op. cit., p. 210). Again, Bishop Diomedes of Anadyr and Chukotka writes: “It was necessary in the name of the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church to persuade the Ruling House not to leave the Russian State to be destroyed by rebels, and to call all the rebels to repentance by anathematizing them with the 11\textsuperscript{th} anathema of the Sunday of Orthodoxy” (Address of November 21 / December 4, 2008, http://www.russia-talk.com/otkliki/ot-601.htm).

I.L. Solonevich writes: “I remember the February days of our great and bloodless [revolution] - how great a mindlessness descended on our country! A 100,000-strong flock of completely free citizens knocked about the prospects of Peter’s capital. They were in complete ecstasy, this flock: the accursed bloody autocracy had come to an end! Over the world there was rising a dawn deprived of ‘annexations and contributions’, capitalism, imperialism, autocracy and even Orthodoxy: now we can begin to live! According to my professional duty as a journalist, overcoming every kind of disgust, I also knocked about among these flocks that sometimes circulated along the Nevsky Prospect, sometimes sat in the Tauris palace, and sometimes went to watering holes in the broken-into wine cellars. They were happy, this flock. If someone had then begun to tell them that in the coming third of a century after the drunken days of 1917 they would pay for this in tens of millions of lives, decades of famine and terror, new wars both civil and world, and the complete devastation of half of Russia, - the drunken people would have taken the voice of the sober man for regular madness. But they themselves considered themselves to be completely rational beings…”

But even the more pious part of the population was confused – not least by the behaviour of the Church. Thus a telegram sent to the Holy Synod on July 24, 1917 concerning the oath of loyalty that the Provisional Government was trying to impose on them read: “We Orthodox Christians ardently beseech you to explain to us in the newspaper Russkoye Slovo what constitutes before the Lord God the oath given by us to be faithful to the Tsar, Nicholas Alexandrovich. People are saying amongst us that if this oath is worth nothing, then the new oath to the new Tsar is also worth nothing.

“Is that so, and how are we to understand all this? Following the advice of someone we know, we want this question decided, not by ourselves, but by the Governing Synod, so that everyone should understand this in the necessary way, without differences of opinion. The zhids [Jews] say that the oath is nonsense and a deception, and that one can do without an oath. The popes [priests] are silent. Each layman expresses his own opinion. But this is no good. Again they have begun to say that God does not exist at all, and that the churches will soon be closed because they are not necessary. But we on our part think: why close them - it’s better to live by the church. Now that the Tsar has been overthrown things have got bad, and if they close the churches it’ll get worse, but we need things to get better. You, our most holy Fathers, must try to explain to all of us simultaneously: what should we do about the old oath, and with the one they are trying to force us to take now?

“Which oath must be dearer to God. The first or the second? Because the Tsar is not dead, but is alive in prison. And is it right that all the churches...

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613 Solonevich, in “Ot Ipatyevskogo Monastery do Doma Ipatyevskogo” (From the Ipatiev Monastery to the Ipatiev House), Pravoslavnie Monastyri (Orthodox Monasteries), 29, 2009, p. 10.
should be closed? Where then can we pray to the Lord God? Surely we should not go in one band to the zhids and pray with them? Because now all power is with them, and they’re bragging about it…”

So the hierarchs were confused and unhappy, the believing people were confused and unhappy – and the Tsar was alone, abandoned by all and bitterly repenting of his decision to abdicate the throne in favour of the so-called representatives of the people. And yet, as the holy eldress said, this was his destiny and he could not evade it. For since the leadership of a Christian State must be dual – through a partnership or “symphony” of Church and State – he could not continue to rule as an Orthodox Christian tsar if the Church and people did not want it. Just as it takes two willing partners to make a marriage, so it takes a head and a body who are willing to work with each other to make a Christian state. In Deuteronomy 17.14 the Lord had laid it down as one of the conditions of the creation of a God-pleasing monarchy that the people should want a God-pleasing king. The bridegroom in this case was willing and worthy, but the bride was not…

As P.S. Lopukhin wrote: “At the moment of his abdication his Majesty felt himself to be profoundly alone, and around him was ‘cowardice, baseness and treason’. And to the question how he could have abdicated from his tsarist service, it is necessary to reply: he did this because we abdicated from his tsarist service, from his sacred and sanctified authority…”

Archimandrite Constantine (Zaitsev) wrote that the tragedy of the last days of the Russian Empire consisted in the fact the people were ever more strongly attracted to the European path with its liberation from all paths hindering the attainment of ever greater prosperity and ever greater freedom. “In this striving for civil freedom, the Russian man lost the capacity and the readiness freely to submit to the power given by God, and rational freedom was transformed in the consciousness of Russian people into freedom from spiritual discipline, into a cooling towards the Church, into lack of respect for the Tsar. The Tsar became, with the civil flourishing of Russia, spiritually and psychologically speaking unnecessary. He was not needed by free Russia. The closer to the throne, and the higher up the ladder of culture, prosperity and intellectual development, the more striking became the spiritual abyss.

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614 In Groyan, op. cit., pp. CXXII-CXXIII.
615 As Lev Alexandrovich Tikhomirov writes: "Without establishing a kingdom, Moses foresaw it and pointed it out in advance to Israel... It was precisely Moses who pointed out in advance the two conditions for the emergence of monarchical power: it was necessary, first, that the people itself should recognize its necessity, and secondly, that the people itself should not elect the king over itself, but should present this to the Lord. Moreover, Moses indicated a leadership for the king himself: ‘when he shall sit upon the throne of his kingdom, he must... fulfil all the words of this law’. (Monarkhicheskaia Gosudarstvennost (Monarchical Statehood), St. Petersburg, 1992, pp. 127-129).
616 Lopukhin, “Tsar’ i Patriarkh” (Tsar and Patriarch), Pravoslavnij Put’ (The Orthodox Way), Jordanville, 1951, pp. 103-104.
opening up between the Tsar and his subjects. Only in this way, generally speaking, can we explain the fact of the terrifying emptiness that was formed around the Tsar from the moment of the revolution."

The demand for his abdication was “a sharp manifestation of that psychological feeling of the unnecessariness of the Tsar which took hold of Russia. Every person acted according to his own logic and had his own understanding of what was necessary for the salvation and prosperity of Russia. Here there might have been much cleverness, and even much state wisdom. But that mystical trembling before the Tsar’s power and that religious certainty that the Tsar and Anointed of God bore in himself the grace of God which it was impossible to distance oneself from by substituting one’s own ideas for it, no longer existed, it had disappeared…”617

What, then, in the final analysis, caused the Russian revolution? As Archbishop Andrew (Rymarenko) of Rockland explained to Alexander Solzhenitsyn in 1975, the root cause was the loss of God, ungodliness: “In your recent address you said that you were born a slave. That means that you were born after the revolution. But I saw everything that happened before the revolution and what prepared it. It was ungodliness in all forms, and chiefly the violation of family life and the corruption of youth…”618 And so the Scripture was fulfilled: “We have no king, because we feared not the Lord…” (Hosea 10.3)

Apocalyptic Visions

On February 21, 1917, just before the February revolution, a 14-year-old Kievan novice, Olga Zosimovna Boiko, fell into a deep trance lasting for forty days during which many mysteries were revealed to her. She saw the following: “In blinding light on an indescribably wonderful throne sat the Saviour, and next to Him on His right hand – our sovereign, surrounded by angels. His Majesty was in full royal regalia: a radiant white robe, a crown, with a sceptre in his hand. And I heard the martyrs talking amongst themselves, rejoicing that the last times had come and that their number would be increased. They said that they would be tormented for the name of Christ and for refusing to accept the seal [of the Antichrist], and that the churches and monasteries would soon be destroyed, and those living in the monasteries would be driven out, and that not only the clergy and monastics would be tortured, but also all those who did not want to receive ‘the seal’ and would stand for the name of Christ, for the Faith and the Church.”619

619 Letter of Sergius Nilus, 6 August, 1917; in V. Gubanov, Tsar’ Nikolai II-i i Novie Mucheniki (Tsar Nicholas II and the New Martyrs), St. Petersburg, 2000, p. 121.
So the coming age was to be an apocalyptic struggle against the Antichrist, an age of martyrdom for Christ’s sake – and the Tsar would be among the martyrs. More was revealed a few weeks later, on March 2, the very day of the Tsar’s abdication, when the Mother of God appeared to the peasant woman Eudocia Adrianovna and said to her: “Go to the village of Kolomenskoye; there you will find a big, black icon. Take it and make it beautiful, and let people pray in front of it.” Eudocia found the icon at 3 o’clock, the precise hour of the abdication. Miraculously it renewed itself, and showed itself to be the “Reigning” icon of the Mother of God, the same that had led the Russian armies into war with Napoleon. On it she was depicted sitting on a royal throne dressed in a dark red robe and bearing the orb and sceptre of the Orthodox Tsars, as if to show that the sceptre of rule of the Russian land had passed from earthly rulers to the Queen of Heaven...

So the Orthodox Autocracy, as symbolized by the orb and sceptre, had not been destroyed, but was being held “in safe keeping”, as it were, by the Queen of Heaven, until the earth should again be counted worthy of it...

A third vision was given in this year to Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow, who alone in the Church's hierarchy had refused to accept the Provisional Government because of his oath of allegiance to the Tsar: "I saw a field. The Saviour was walking along a path. I went after Him, crying,"

"Lord, I am following you!"

"Finally we approached an immense arch adorned with stars. At the threshold of the arch the Saviour turned to me and said again:

"Follow me!"

And He went into a wondrous garden, and I remained at the threshold and awoke. Soon I fell asleep again and saw myself standing in the same arch, and with the Saviour stood Tsar Nicholas. The Saviour said to the Tsar:

"You see in My hands two cups: one which is bitter for your people and the other sweet for you."

"The Tsar fell to his knees and for a long time begged the Lord to allow him to drink the bitter cup together with his people. The Lord did not agree for a long time, but the Tsar begged importunately. Then the Saviour drew out of the bitter cup a large glowing coal and laid it in the palm of the Tsar's hand.

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620 It is said that during the siege of the Moscow Kremlin in October, 1917, the Mother of God ordered the “Reigning” icon to be taken in procession seven times round the Kremlin, and then it would be saved. However, it was taken round only once... (Monk Epiphany (Chernov), *Tserkov' Katakombnaia na Zemle Rossijskoj* (The Catacomb Church in the Russian Land), Old Woking, 1980 (MS), [http://www.vs-radoste.narod.ru/photoalbum09.html](http://www.vs-radoste.narod.ru/photoalbum09.html).
The Tsar began to move the coal from hand to hand and at the same time his body began to grow light, until it had become completely bright, like some radiant spirit. At this I again woke up.

"Falling asleep yet again, I saw an immense field covered with flowers. In the middle of the field stood the Tsar, surrounded by a multitude of people, and with his hands he was distributing manna to them. An invisible voice said at this moment:

"The Tsar has taken the guilt of the Russian people upon himself, and the Russian people is forgiven."

Many have doubted the idea that the Russian people could be forgiven through the Tsar. However, A.Ya. Yakovitsky has expressed the following interesting interpretation. The aim of the Provisional Government was to create the conditions for elections to the Constituent Assembly, which would finally have rejected the monarchical principle. But this would also have brought the anathema of the Zemsky Sobor of 1613 upon the whole of Russia, because the anathema invoked a curse on the Russian land if it ever rejected Tsar Michael Romanov and his descendants. Now according to Yakovitsky, the vision of Metropolitan Macarius demonstrates that through his martyrlic patience the Tsar obtained from the Lord that the Constituent Assembly should not come to pass – through its dissolution by the Bolsheviks in January, 1918. Moreover, his distributing manna to the people is a symbol of the distribution of the Holy Gifts of the Eucharist. So the Church hierarchy, while it wavered in its loyalty in 1917, did not finally reject monachism, and so did not come under anathema and was able to continue feeding the people spiritually. In this way the Tsar saved and redeemed his people.

Returning to the Reigning icon, Yakovitsky says about the significance of her blood-red robe: “Through innumerable sufferings, blood and tears, and after repentance, the Russian people will be forgiven and Royal power, preserved by the Queen of Heaven herself, will undoubtedly be returned to Russia. Otherwise, why should the Most Holy Mother of God have preserved this Power?”

“With this it is impossible to disagree,” continues Yakovitsky. “The sin committed can be purified only by blood. But so that the very possibility of redemption should arise, some other people had to receive power over the people that had sinned, as Nebuchadnezzar received this power over the Jewish people (as witnessed by the Prophet Jeremiah), or Baty over the Russian people (the first to speak of this after the destruction was the council

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of bishops of the Kiev metropolia)... Otherwise, the sufferings caused by fraternal blood-letting would only deepen the wrath of God..."622

So redemption could be given to the Russian people only if they expiated their sin through the sufferings of martyrdom and repentance, and provided that they did not reject the Orthodox Autocracy in principle. The Tsar laid the foundation to this redemption by his petition before the throne of the Almighty. The New Martyrs built on this foundation through their martyric sufferings.

And yet redemption, as revealed in the restoration of the Orthodox Autocracy, has not yet come. And that because the third element – the repentance of the whole people – has not yet taken place.

In the same fateful year of 1917 Elder Nectarius of Optina prophesied: "Now his Majesty is not his own man, he is suffering such humiliation for his mistakes. 1918 will be still worse. His Majesty and all his family will be killed, tortured. One pious girl had a vision: Jesus Christ was sitting on a throne, while around Him were the twelve apostles, and terrible torments and groans resounded from the earth. And the Apostle Peter asked Christ:

"O Lord, when will these torments cease?"

"And Jesus Christ replied: 'I give them until 1922. If the people do not repent, do not come to their senses, then they will all perish in this way.'"

"Then before the throne of God there stood our Tsar wearing the crown of a great-martyr. Yes, this tsar will be a great-martyr. Recently, he has redeemed his life, and if people do not turn to God, then not only Russia, but the whole of Europe will collapse..."623

**Dual Power**

On March 2, at the Tauris palace in Petrograd, Pavel Milyukov announced the formation of a “Provisional” government to oversee the administration of the country until the convening of an elected Constituent Assembly. The "poisonous question" was put to him: "Who elected you?" Many years later Milyukov wrote: "I could have read out a whole dissertation in reply. We were not ‘elected’ by the Duma. Nor were we elected by Lvov in accordance with the tsar’s order prepared at Headquarters, of which we could not have been informed. All these sources for the succession of power we ourselves had consciously cast out. There remained only one reply, the clearest and most convincing. I replied: ‘The Russian revolution has elected us!’ This

622 Yakovitsky, “Sergianstvo: mif ili real’nost’”, *Vernost’* (Fidelity), N 100, January, 2008.
simple reference to the historical process that brought us to power shut the
mouths of the most radical opponents.\textsuperscript{624}

This explains why none of the leaders of the Provisional Government, from
Milyukov to Lvov to Kerensky, offered any real opposition to the Bolshevik
revolution in October, and were so easily swept into “the dustbin of history”,
in Trotsky’s phrase. Indeed, as P. 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 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 demagogy. Hence it
turned out that the legalized anarchy of Prince Lvov and Kerensky naturally
and inevitably gave way to the demagogic depotism of Lenin.\textsuperscript{625}

The only possible source for the legitimate, ordered succession of power
after the abdication of the Tsar was the Tsar’s own orders, given on the same
day, transferring royal power to his brother, Great Prince Michael, and
appointing – at the request of the Duma representatives Guchkov and Shulgin
- Prince V.E. Lvov as President of the Council of Ministers and General L.G.
Kornilov as Commander of the Petrograd military district. But the Duma
politicians had no intention of accepting Great Prince Michael as tsar
(Milyukov and Guchkov were in favour of a constitutional monarchy, but not
a true autocracy), and soon compelled him, too, to abdicate. As for Lvov, he
was made head of the Provisional Government, but not by virtue of any order
of the Tsar, whose authority the Duma politicians rejected.

Since the legitimizing power of the Tsar’s orders had been rejected, there
remained only the authority of a popular election, according to liberal theory.
But the Provisional Government had not, of course, been elected. Rather, its
purpose was to supervise the election of a Constituent Assembly which alone,
according to liberal theory, could bring a legitimate government into power.

\textsuperscript{624} Katkov, \textit{Fevral’skaia Revoliutsia}, p. 370.

So Miliukov resorted to a deliberate paradox: they had been “elected” by the revolution. The paradox consists in the fact that revolutions do not “elect” in accordance with established legal procedures; for the revolution is the violent overthrow of all existing procedures and legalities...

But if the Provisional Government came to power through the revolution – that is, through the violent overthrow of all existing procedures and legalities – it had no legal authority to suppress the continuation of the revolution through the violent overthrow of its own power. In this fact lies the clue to the extraordinarily weak and passive attitude of the Provisional Government towards all political forces to the left of itself. It could not rule because, according to its own liberal philosophy, it had no right to rule...

No such inhibitions were felt by the radical socialists, for whom might was right and the niceties of liberal political philosophy and procedure were irrelevant. Already the previous night the Duma had begged Himmer, Nakhamkes and Alexandrovich of the Petrograd Soviet to allow them to create a government; which showed that the Soviet, and not the Provisional Government, was the real ruler. And now, on March 2, in its very first act, “Soviet Order Number One”, it rubbed the government’s nose in the dust: “The orders of the military commission of the State Duma are to be obeyed only in such instances when they do not contradict the orders and decrees of the Soviet”. In other words, the Provisional Government that officially came into being on March 3, and which was formed from liberal Duma deputies, was to rule only by permission of the real ruler, the Soviet, which had come into being on March 1 and supposedly represented the soldiers and workers.

The immediate effect of Order Number One was to destroy discipline in the army, as soldiers refused to salute or obey their officers – or simply went home to join in the looting of landowners’ and church estates. And so the Tsar’s main purpose in abdicating – to preserve the army as a fighting force capable of defeating the Germans – was frustrated before the ink was dry on his manifesto. The lesson was clear: if the Russians did not want to be ruled by the God-anointed Tsar, then, by God’s permission and as punishment for their sins, they would be ruled by the Satan-appointed Soviets...

The inequality of the “dual-power” system was evident from the beginning. Thus M.V. Rodzianko, who more than anyone had forced the Tsar to sign his abdication, was excluded from the list of ministers as being unacceptable to the masses; and Guchkov and Miliukov, the Ministers of War and Foreign Affairs, who had also played major roles in the abdication of the Tsar, did not last beyond the April Crisis after their continued support for the war became apparent. This left the government in the hands of a group of leftist Masons: Kerensky (the link with the Petrograd Soviet), Nekrasov, Konovalov, Tereshchenko and Efremov. Together with the Soviet, they immediately passed a series of laws: political prisoners and revolutionaries were amnestied,
trade unions were recognized, an eight-hour day for workers was introduced, the Tsarist police was replaced by a “people’s militia”, and full civil and religious freedoms, including the removal of all restrictions on the Jews, were introduced.

This orgy of liberal freedoms – accompanied by an orgy of violence throughout the country - earned the government the plaudits, not only of deadly enemies of Tsarism such as the Jewish banker Jacob Schiff in New York, but also of the western governments, whose democratic prejudices blinded them to the fact that the revolution was turning Russia from their most faithful ally into their deadliest enemy... But as time passed and the chaos spread throughout the country, it became clear that neither the Provisional Government, nor even the Soviets, nor even a coalition between the two on a pro-war platform, would be able to control the revolutionary masses, who wanted peace at any price with the Germans abroad and the most radical social revolution at home. Of all the parties represented in the Soviets, it was only the Bolsheviks (for the soldiers and workers) and the Left Social Revolutionaries (for the peasants) who understood this, who had their fingers on the nation’s revolutionary pulse...

Anarchy was the order of the day, and the only “justice” was imposed by lynchings. Thus Gorky claimed to have seen 10,000 cases of summary justice in 1917 alone. 626 The Church suffered particularly in this period...

In an article written in 1923 G. Mglinsky explained why the government proved so weak: “Understanding the absence of firm ground under their feet because of the absence of those layers of the population on which it was possible to rely, the new government fell immediately into dependence on the ‘Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies’ which had been formed even before the abdication of his Majesty the Emperor, and behind which there stood the capital’s working masses who had been propagandized by the same Russian intelligentsia. Although it did not really sympathize with the content of Order Number 1, which destroyed the army, and understood all its danger, the Provisional Government nevertheless allowed the carrying out of this order – so criminal in relation to the fatherland - by the hands of its Minister of War Guchkov.

“Fearing a reaction in the Russian people, which, as it well understood, would hardly be likely to be reconciled with the seizure of power by a bunch of intriguers, the Provisional Government from the very beginning of its activity tried hard to destroy the state-administrative apparatus. With a stroke of the pen all administrative power in Russia was destroyed. The governors were replaced by zemstvo activists, the city commanders – by city-dwellers, the police – by militia.

“But, as is well known, it is always easy to destroy, but very difficult to create. And so it was here: having destroyed the old state apparatus, the Provisional Government did not think of, or, more likely, was simply not able to create anything in its place. Russia was immediately handed over to itself and nepotism was introduced as a slogan for the whole of the state administration, and this at precisely the moment when a strong power was required as never before.

“When representatives of the old and new administrations came to the head of the Provisional Government, Prince [G.E.] Lvov, and demanded directions, they unfailingly received the same refusal which Prince Lvov gave to the representatives of the press in his interview of 7 March, that is, five days after the coup. ‘This is a question of the old psychology. The Provisional Government has removed the old governors and is not going to appoint anybody. They will be elected on the spot. Such questions must be resolved not from the centre, but by the population itself... We are all boundlessly happy that we have succeeded in living to this great moment when we can create a new life of the people – not for the people, but together with the people... The future belongs to the people which has manifested its genius in this historical days. What great happiness it is to live in these great days!...’

“These words, which sound now like pure irony, were not invented, they are found in the text of the 67th page of the first volume of A History of the Second Russian Revolution written, not by any die-hard or black-hundredist, but by Paul Milyukov ‘himself’, who later on the pages of his history gives the following evaluation of the activity of the head of the government which he himself joined as Minister of Foreign Affairs:

“‘This world-view of the leader of our inner politics,’ says Milyukov, ‘led in fact to the systematic cessation of activity of his department and to the self-limitation of the central authority to a single task – the sanctioning of the fruits of what in the language of revolutionary democracy is called the revolutionary creation of rights. The population, left to itself and completely deprived of protection from the representatives of the central power, necessarily had to submit to the rule of party organizations, which acquired, in new local committees, a powerful means of influence and propagandizing certain ideas that flattered the interests and instincts of the masses, and for that reason were more acceptable for them.’”

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627 Mglinsky, “Grekhi russkoj intelligentsii” (The Sins of the Russian Intelligentsia), Staroe Vremia (Old Times), 1923; in Prince N.D. Zhevakov, Vospominanit (Reminiscences), Moscow, 1993. Zhevakov, who was assistant over-procurator during the February Revolution, comments on these words: “If Milyukov, who took the closest participation in the overthrow of Tsarist Power in Russia, could talk like this, then what was it like in reality! ‘Things were no better in other departments. Everywhere complete chaos reigned, for none of the departmental bosses, nor the government as a whole, had any definite, systematically realizable plan. They broke down everything that was old, they broke it down out of a spectral fear of a return to the old. Without thinking of tomorrow, with a kind of mad haste,
There was no real opposition to this wanton destruction of old Russia because the forces on the right were in a state of shock and ideological uncertainty that left them incapable of undertaking any effective countermeasures. We search in vain for a leader, in Church or State, who called for the restoration of the Romanov dynasty at this time. Perhaps the deputy overprocurator, Raev, who called on the Synod to support the monarchy, was an exception to this rule, or the only Orthodox general who remained faithful to his oath, Theodore Keller. Or perhaps Archimandrite Vitaly (Maximenko) of Pochaev monastery, the future Archbishop of Eastern America, who, “having found out about the emperor’s abdication... travelled to the Tsar’s military headquarters in Mogilev in order to plead with the sovereign to rescind his abdication. He was not allowed a meeting…” 628

Orthodox monarchism, it seemed, was dead... The abdication of the Tsar was greeted with joy by people of all classes - even the peasantry. As Oliver Figes writes, “the news from the capital was joyously greeted by huge assemblies in the village fields. ‘Our village,’ recalls one peasant, ‘burst into life with celebrations. Everyone felt enormous relief, as if a heavy rock had suddenly been lifted from our shoulders.’ Another peasant recalled the celebrations in his village on the day it learned of the Tsar’s abdication: ‘People kissed each other from joy and said that life from now on would be good. Everyone dressed in their best costumes, as they do on a big holiday. The festivities went on for three days.’ Many villages held religious processions to thank the Lord for their newly won freedoms, and offered up prayers for the new government. For many peasants, the revolution appeared as a sacred thing, while those who had laid down their lives for the people’s freedom were seen by the peasants as modern-day saints. Thus the villagers of Bol’she-Dvorskaya volost in the Tikhvinski district of Petrograd province held a ‘service of thanksgiving for the divine gift of the people’s victory and the eternal memory of those holy men who fell in the struggle for freedom’. The villagers of Osvyshi village in Tver province offered, as they put it, ‘fervent prayers to thank the Lord for the divine gift of the people’s victory... and since this great victory was achieved by sacrifice, we held a requiem for all our fallen brothers’. It was often with the express purpose of reciprocating this sacrifice that many villages sent donations, often amounting to several hundred roubles, to the authorities in Petrograd for the benefit of those who had suffered losses in the February Days.”  629

This confusion of the values of Christianity with those of the anti-Christian revolution was also evident in contemporary literature - in, for example, Blok’s poem The Twelve, in which Christ is portrayed at the head of the Red

Guards. The prevalence of this confusion among all classes of society showed how deeply the democratic-revolutionary ideology had penetrated the masses in the pre-revolutionary period. For those with eyes to see it showed that there could be no quick return to normality, but only a very long, tortuous and tormented path of repentance through suffering…

**The Religion of Leninism**

In February, 1917 Lenin, the Bolshevik leader, was living behind enemy lines in Switzerland, where he was supported by the German government as one of their agents. Lenin had been on the German payroll for some time. Thus on December 29, 1915 the German agent Parvus (Gelfond) recorded receiving a million rubles in Russian banknotes to support the revolutionary movement in Russia from the German envoy in Copenhagen.\(^{630}\) Still larger sums were given by Jewish bankers in the West\(^ {631}\) But until 1917 the German and Jewish investment in Lenin did not seem to have paid off. His message that the proletariat should turn the war between nations into a civil war between classes had not been listened to even by other socialist parties.

However, the February revolution – which took Lenin completely by surprise – changed everything. “The German special services guaranteed his passage through Germany in the sealed carriage. Among the passengers were: Zinoviev, Radek, Rozenblum, Abramovich, Usievich, and also the majors of the German General Staff, the professional spies Anders and Erich, who had been cast in for subversive and diversionary work in Russia in favour of Germany and the organization of a coup d’état. The next day there arrived in Berlin an urgent secret report from an agent of the German General Staff: ‘Lenin’s entrance into Russia achieved. He is working completely according to our desires.’…”\(^ {632}\)

Although History had not revealed to her acolyte what had been abundantly obvious to many, that the Russian empire at the beginning of 1917 was on the verge of collapse, nevertheless Lenin made up for being found lagging by trying to jump ahead of her immediately he returned to Russia. Ignoring Marxist teaching that the proletarian revolution must be preceded by a period of bourgeois rule, he called for non-recognition of the Provisional Government, all power to the Soviets and the immediate cessation of the war. Even his own party found his position extreme, if not simply mad\(^ {633}\) – but it was what the maddened revolutionary masses wanted…

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\(^{630}\) *Istoki Zla (Tajna Kommunizma)* (The Sources of Evil (The Secret of Communism)), Moscow, 2002, p. 35.


\(^{632}\) *Istoki Zla*, pp. 35-36.

\(^{633}\) I.P. Goldenberg saw Lenin as the successor of Bakunin, not Marx, and his tactics those of “the universal apostle of destruction” (in Robert Service, *Lenin*, 2000, p. 267).
It was precisely the madness of Lenin that made him the man of the moment, the politician best suited for those mad times. The word “madness” here is not used in a wholly metaphorical sense. Of course, in 1917 he was not mad in the sense that he had lost contact with ordinary, everyday reality – his clever tactical manoeuvring and his final success in October proves that he was more realistic about Russian politics than many. But the photographs of him in his last illness reveal a man who was truly mad – post-mortem showed that his brain had been terribly damaged by syphilis. Moreover, in a spiritual sense he was mad with the madness of the devil himself: he was demonized, with an irrational rage against God and man, an urge to destroy and kill and maim that can have no rational basis.

Lenin, a hereditary nobleman of Russian, German and Jewish origins, was a professional revolutionary who lived on party funds and income from his mother’s estate. Choosing to live in the underground, he had very little direct knowledge of the way ordinary people lived, and cared even less. “According to Gorky, it was this ignorance of everyday work, and the human suffering which it entailed, which had bred in Lenin a ‘pitiless contempt, worthy of a nobleman, for the lives of the ordinary people… Life in all its complexity is unknown to Lenin. He does not know the ordinary people. He has never lived among them.”

This contempt was directed as much against his own people as against any other. “I spit on Russia”, he said once; and his actions showed his contempt for Russians of all classes. Nothing is further from the truth than the idea that Lenin’s revolution was carried out for the sake of Russia or the Russians: it was carried out, not out of love for anybody or anything, but simply out of irrational, demonic, universal hatred…

Lenin’s single-minded pursuit of one supreme goal to the exclusion of all other interests could be considered admirable if that goal had been good rather than evil. Moreover, by comparison with most tyrants, Lenin was personally ascetic (he lived very simply, and had only one, not very passionate affair with Inessa Armand). But, as Figes writes, “asceticism was a common trait of the revolutionaries of Lenin’s generation. They were all inspired by the self-denying revolutionary Rakhmetev in Chernyshevsky’s novel *What Is To Be Done?* By suppressing his own sentiments, by denying himself the pleasures of life, Lenin tried to strengthen his resolve and to make himself, like Rakhmetev, insensitive to the sufferings of others. This, he

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634 In *What is to be Done?* (1902), Lenin argued that in the conditions of Tsarist Russia it was impossible for the party to live openly among the people, but had to be an underground organization with strictly limited membership. “In an autocratic state the more we confine the membership of such a party to people who are professionally engaged in revolutionary activity and who have been professionally trained in the art of combating the political police, the more difficult it will be to wipe out such an organization” (in M.J. Cohen and John Major, *History in Quotations*, London: Cassell, 2004, p. 678).
635 Figes, *op. cit.*, p. 386.
believed, was the ‘hardness’ required by every successful revolutionary: the ability to spill blood for political ends. ‘The terrible thing in Lenin,’ Struve once remarked, ‘was that combination in one person of self-castigation, which is the essence of all real asceticism, with the castigation of other people as expressed in abstract social hatred and cold political cruelty...

“The root of this philistine approach to life was a burning ambition for power. The Mensheviks joked that it was impossible to compete with a man, such as Lenin, who thought about revolution twenty-four hours every day. Lenin was driven by an absolute faith in his own historical destiny. He did not doubt for a moment, as he had once put it, that he was the man who was to wield the ‘conductor’s baton’ in the party. This was the message he brought back to Russia in April 1917. Those who had known him before the war noticed a dramatic change in his personality. ‘How he had aged,’ recalled Roman Gul’, who had met him briefly in 1905. ‘Lenin’s whole appearance had altered. And not only that. There was none of the old geniality, his friendliness or comradely humour, in his relations with other people. The new Lenin that arrived was cynical, secretive and rude, a conspirator “against everyone and everything”, trusting no one, suspecting everyone, and determined to launch his drive for power.’...

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

“Much of Lenin’s success in 1917 was no doubt explained by his towering domination over the party. No other political party had ever been so closely tied to the personality of a single man. Lenin was the first modern party leader to achieve the status of a god: Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler and Mao
Zedong were all his successors in this sense. Being a Bolshevik had come to imply an oath of allegiance to Lenin as both the ‘leader’ and the ‘teacher’ of the party. It was this, above all, which distinguished the Bolsheviks from the Mensheviks (who had no close leader of their own)..."636

Archpriest Lev Lebedev writes that Lenin “understood the main thing in Marx and Marxism and created not simply a political revolutionary party on the basis of the economic and social ‘scientific’ theory of Marxism: he founded a religion, and one, moreover, in which ‘god’ turned out to be himself! In this lies the essence of all the disagreements between Lenin and the legal Marxists like Struve and Plekhanov, and the Mensheviks – that is, all those who through naivety and evident misunderstanding took Marxism to be precisely a ‘scientific’ theory able to serve the ‘radiant future’ of humanity, beginning with Russia... For Lenin, as for Marx, the only thing that was necessary and important was his personal power with the obligatory deification of his own person, regardless not only of objections or criticisms, but even simply of insufficient servility. Lenin (like Marx) considered himself to be nothing less than the ‘Messiah’ – the ‘teacher’ and ‘leader’ not only of Russian, but also of world significance. This was the psychology of the Antichrist, which was reflected both in Lenin’s teaching on ‘the new type of party’, and in the ‘world revolution’, and in the construction of socialism in Russia, and in his ‘philosophy’, and in his methods of ‘leadership’, when he and his ‘comrades’ came to power. In the sphere of politics Lenin was always, from the very beginning, an inveterate criminal. For him there existed no juridical, ethical or moral limitations of any kind. All means, any means, depending on the circumstances, were permissible for the attainment of his goal. Lies, deceit, slander, treachery, bribery, blackmail, murder – this was the almost daily choice of means that he and his party used, while at the same time preserving for rank-and-file party members and the masses the mask of ‘crystal honesty’, decency and humanity – which, of course, required exceptional art and skillfulness in lying. Lenin always took a special pleasure in news of murders, both individual and, still more mass murders – carried out with impunity. At such moments he was sincerely happy. This bloodthirstiness is the key to that special power that ‘the leader of the world proletariat’ received from the devil and the angels of the abyss. In the sphere of philosophy Lenin was amazingly talentless. How to lie a little more successfully – that was essentially his only concern in the sphere of ideas. But when he really had to think, he admitted blunders that were unforgivable in a ‘genius’...

“But the question is: how could a teaching that conquered millions of minds in Russia and throughout the world be created on the basis of such an intellectually impoverished, primitive basis?! An adequate answer can never be given if one does not take into account the main thing about Marxism-Leninism – that it is not simply a teaching, but a religion, a cult of the personality of its founders and each of the successive ‘leaders’, that was nourished, not by

human, but by demonic forces from ‘the satanic depths’. Therefore its action on
the minds took place simultaneously with a demonic delusion that blinded
and darkened the reasoning powers. In order to receive such support from
hell, it was necessary to deserve it in a special way, by immersing oneself
(being ‘initiated’) into Satanism. And Lenin, beginning in 1905, together with
his more ‘conscious comrades’ immersed himself in it (in particular, through
the shedding of innocent blood), although there is not information to the effect
that he personally killed anybody. The ‘leader’ had to remain ‘unsullied’... By
contrast with certain other satanic religions, the religion of Bolshevism had
the express character of the worship of the man-god (and of his works as sacred
scripture). This was profoundly non-coincidental, since what was being
formed here was nothing other than the religion of the coming Antichrist. Lenin
was one of the most striking prefigurations of the Antichrist, one of his
forerunners, right up to a resemblance to the beast whose name is 666 in
certain concrete details of his life (his receiving of a deadly wound and
healing from it). Lenin was not able to create for himself a general cult during
his lifetime, since he was forced to share the worship of the party and the
masses with such co-workers as, for example, Trotsky. But the ‘faithful
Leninist’ Stalin was able truly to take ‘Lenin’s work’ to its conclusion, that is, to
the point of absurdity... He fully attained his own cult during the life and
posthumous cult of personality of his ‘teacher’. Lenin, who called religion
‘necrophilia’, was the founder of the religion of his own corpse, the main ‘holy
thing’ of Bolshevism to this day! All this conditioned, to an exceptional degree,
the extraordinary power of Lenin and his party-sect.”

The Bolshevik party was indeed more like a religious sect than a political
party in the conventional sense. While members of other parties, even
socialist ones, had a private life separate from their political life, this was not
so for the Bolsheviks and the parties modelled on them throughout the world.
Thus Igor Shafarevich writes: “The German publicist V. Schlamm tells the
story of how in 1919, at the age of 15, he was a fellow-traveller of the
communists, but did not penetrate into the narrow circle of their functionaries.
The reason was explained to him twenty years later by one of them, who by
that time had broken with communism. It turns out that Schlamm, when
invited to join the party, had said: ‘I am ready to give to the party everything
except two evenings a week, when I listen to Mozart.’ That reply turned out
to be fatal: a man having interests that he did not want to submit to the party
was not suitable for it.

“Another aspect of these relations was expressed by Trotsky. Having been
defeated by his opponents, in a speech that turned out to be his last at a party
congress, he said: ‘I know that it is impossible to be right against the party.
One can be right only with the party, for History has not created any other
ways to realize rightness.’

637 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 445-447.
“Finally, here is how Piatakov, already in disgrace and expelled from the party, explained his relationship to the party to his party comrade N.V. Valentinov. Remembering Lenin’s thesis: ‘the dictatorship of the proletariat is a power realized by the party and relying on violence and not bound by any laws’ (from the article, ‘The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky’), Piatakov added that the central idea here was not ‘violence’ but precisely ‘not being bound by any laws’. He said: ‘Everything that bears the seal of human will must not, cannot be considered inviolable, as being bound by certain insuperable laws. Law is a restriction, a ban, a decree that one phenomenon is impermissible, another act is possible, and yet another impossible. When the mind holds to violence as a matter of principle, is psychologically free, and is not bound by any laws, limitations or obstacles, then the sphere of possible action is enlarged to a gigantic degree, while the sphere of the impossible is squeezed to an extreme degree, to the point of nothingness... Bolshevism is the party that bears the idea of turning into life that which is considered to be impossible, unrealizable and impermissible... For the honour and glory of being in her ranks we must truly sacrifice both pride and self-love and everything else. On returning to the party, we cast out of our heads all convictions that are condemned by it, even if we defended them when we were in opposition... I agree that those who are not Bolsheviks and in general the category of ordinary people cannot in a moment make changes, reversals or amputations of their convictions... We are the party consisting of people who make the impossible possible; penetrated by the idea of violence, we direct it against ourselves, while if the party demands it, if it is necessary and important for the party, we can by an act of will in 24 hours cast out of our heads ideas that we have lived with for years... In suppressing our convictions and casting them out, it is necessary to reconstruct ourselves in the shortest time in such a way as to be inwardly, with all our minds, with all our essence, in agreement with this or that decision decreed by the party. Is it easy violently to cast out of one’s head that which yesterday I considered to be right, but which today, in order to be in complete agreement with the party, I consider to be false? It goes without saying – no. Nevertheless, by violence on ourselves the necessary result is attained. The rejection of life, a shot in the temple from a revolver – these are sheer trivialities by comparison with that other manifestation of will that I am talking about. This violence on oneself is felt sharply, acutely, but in the resort to this violence with the aim of breaking oneself and being in complete agreement with the party is expressed the essence of the real, convinced Bolshevik-Communist... I have heard the following form of reasoning... It (the party) can be cruelly mistaken, for example, in considering black that which is in reality clearly and unquestionably white... To all those who put this example to me, I say: yes, I will consider black that which I considered and which might appear to me to be white, since for me there is no life outside the party and outside agreement with it.”

Having completely surrendered their minds and wills to the party, much as the Jesuits surrendered their minds and wills to the Pope, the Bolsheviks were able to proceed to violence and bloodshed on a scale that far exceeded the Inquisition or any previous tyranny in the history of the world, casting aside the restraint of any and every morality. Lenin called for “mass terror against the kulaks, priests and White Guards”. And Trotsky said: “We must put an end, once and for all, to the papist-Quaker babble about the sanctity of human life.” Again, the first issue of the Kiev Cheka, Krasnij Mech (The Red Sword) for 1918 proclaimed: “We reject the old systems of morality and ‘humanity’ invented by the bourgeoisie to oppress and exploit the ‘lower classes’. Our morality has no precedent, and our humanity is absolute because it rests on a new ideal. Our aim is to destroy all forms of oppression and violence. To us, everything is permitted, for we are the first to raise the sword not to oppress races and reduce them to slavery, but to liberate humanity from its shackles... Blood? Let blood flow like water! Let blood stain forever the black pirate’s flag flown by the bourgeoisie, and let our flag be blood-red forever! For only through the death of the old world can we liberate ourselves from the return of those jackals!”

In view of the fact that communism is by a wide margin the most bloodthirsty movement in human history, it is necessary to say a few words about this aspect of its activity, which cannot be understood, according to Lebedev, without understanding the movement’s “devil-worshipping essence. For the blood it sheds is always ritualistic, it is a sacrifice to demons. St. John Chrysostom wrote: ‘It is a habit among the demons that when men give Divine worship to them with the stench and smoke of blood, they, like bloodthirsty and insatiable dogs, remain in those places for eating and enjoyment.’ It is from such bloody sacrifices that the Satanists receive those demonic energies which are so necessary to them in their struggle for power or for the sake of its preservation. It is precisely here that we decipher the enigma: the strange bloodthirstiness of all, without exception all, revolutions, and of the whole of the regime of the Bolsheviks from 1917 to 1953.”

That communism, a strictly “scientific” and atheist doctrine, should be compared to devil-worshipping may at first seem strange. And yet closer study of communist history confirms this verdict. The communists’ extraordinary hatred of God and Christians, and indeed of mankind in general, can only be explained by demon-possession – more precisely, by an unconscious compulsion to bring blood-sacrifices to the devil, who was, in Christ’s words, “a murderer from the beginning” (John 8.44)...

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641 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 429.
The Revolution in the Church

As we have seen, in March, 1917 the Church – de facto, if not de jure - renounced Tsarism, one of the pillars of Russian identity for nearly 1000 years. With the exception of one or two hierarchs, such as Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow, the hierarchy hastened to support the new democratic order. As Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) writes: “There were few who understood the whole significance of what had happened at that moment. Events were evaluated in society only from a political point of view and proceeded from a condemnation of everything that was old. The religio-moral side of what had happened could not be presented in a single organ of the press. Unlimited freedom was presented only for the criticism and condemnation of everything connected with the Church. There were few who understood at that moment that, in accepting this coup, the Russian people had committed the sin of oath-breaking, had rejected the Tsar, the Anointed of God, and had gone along the path of the prodigal son of the Gospel parable, subjecting themselves to the same destructive consequences as he experienced on abandoning his father.”

On March 7, with the support of Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) of Finland, the newly appointed Over-Procurator, V.E. Lvov, transferred the Synod’s official organ, Tserkovno-Obshchestvennij Vestnik (Church and Society Messenger), into the hands of the “All-Russian Union of Democratic Orthodox Clergy and Laity”, a left-wing grouping founded in Petrograd on the same day and led by Titlinov, a professor at the Petrograd Academy of which Sergius was the rector. Archbishop (later Patriarch) Tikhon protested against this transfer, and the small number of signatures for the transfer made it illegal. However, in his zeal to hand this important Church organ into the hands of the liberals, Lvov completely ignored the illegality of the act and handed the press over to Titlinov, who promptly began to use it to preach his Gospel of “Socialist Christianity”, declaring that “Christianity is on the side of labour, not on the side of violence and exploitation”.

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642 Grabbe, (Russkaia Tserkov' pered litsom gospodstviuishecheho zla (The Russian Church in the Face of Dominant Evil), Jordanville, 1991, p. 4.
643 Lvov was, in the words of Bishop Gregory (Grabbe), “a not completely normal fantasist” (op. cit., p. 4). Grabbe’s estimate of Lvov is supported by Oliver Figes, who writes: “a nobleman of no particular talent or profession, he was convinced of his calling to greatness, yet ended up in the 1920s as a pauper and a madman living on the streets of Paris” (p. 449).
644 As Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) testified, “already in 1917 he [Sergius] was dreaming of combining Orthodox Church life with the subjection of the Russian land to Soviet power…” (“Preemstvennost’ Grekh” (The Heritage of Sin), Tsaritsyn, p. 7).
On April 14, a stormy meeting took place between Lvov and the Synod during which Lvov’s actions were recognised to be “uncanonical and illegal”. At this session Archbishop Sergius apparently changed course and agreed with the other bishops in condemning the unlawful transfer. However, Lvov understood that this was only a tactical protest. So he did not include Sergius among the bishops whom he planned to purge from the Synod; he thought – rightly - that Sergius would continue to be his tool in the revolution that he was introducing in the Church. The next day Lvov marched into the Synod at the head of a detachment of soldiers and read an order for the cessation of the winter session of the Synod and the retirement of all its members with the single exception of Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) of Finland.646

Thus in little more than a month since the coup, the Church had been effectively placed in the hands of a lay dictator, who had single-handedly dismissed her most senior bishops in the name of the “freedom of the Church”. So there was a striking difference in the way in which the Provisional Government treated secular or political society, on the one hand, and the Church, on the other. While Prince G.E. Lvov, the head of the government, refused to impose his authority on anyone, whether rioting peasants or rampaging soldiers, granting “freedom” – that is, more or less complete licence – to any self-called political or social “authority”, Prince V.E. Lvov, the over-procurator, granted quite another kind of “freedom” to the Church – complete subjection to lay control...

On April 29, the new Synod headed by Archbishop Sergius accepted an Address to the Church concerning the establishment of the principle of the election of the episcopate, and the preparation for a Council and the establishment of a Preconciliar Council. This Address triggered a revolution in the Church. The revolution consisted in the fact that all over the country the elective principle with the participation of laymen replaced the system of “episcopal autocracy” which had prevailed thereto. In almost all dioceses Diocesan Congresses elected special “diocesan councils” or committees composed of clergy and laity that restricted the power of the bishops. The application of the elective principle to almost all ecclesiastical posts, from parish offices to episcopal sees, resulted in the removal of several bishops

646 According to I.M. Andreyev, “the whole of the Synod had decided to go into retirement. Archbishop Sergius had taken part in this resolution. But when all the members of the Synod, together with Archbishop Sergius, actually came to give in their retirement, the Over-Procurator, who had set about organizing a new Synod, drew Archbishop Sergius to this. And he took an active part in the new Synod” (Kratkij Obzor Istoriij Russkoj Tserkvi ot revoliutsii do nashikh dnej (A Short Review of the History of the Russian Church from the Revolution to our Days), Jordanville, 1952, p. 74. Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) wrote: “I can remember the opinions of those who knew him and who considered him to be a careerist and the complaints of hierarchs that he promised to retire with other members of the Synod in protest against Lvov, then he changed his mind and became head of the Synod” (Letter of April 23 / May 6, 1992 to Nicholas Churilov, Church News, April, 2003, p. 9).
from their sees and the election of new ones in their stead. Thus Archbishops Basil (Bogoyavlensky) of Chernigov, Tikhon (Nikanorov) of Kaluga and Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kharkov were removed. Archbishop Joachim (Levitsky) of Nizhni-Novgorod was even arrested and imprisoned for a time before being shot. The retirement of Archbishop Alexis (Dorodnitsyn) of Vladimir was justified by his earlier closeness to Rasputin. The others were accused of being devoted to the Autocracy. 647

Although the spirit behind this revolutionary wave was undoubtedly anti-ecclesiastical in essence, by the Providence of God it resulted in some changes that were beneficial for the Church. Thus the staunchly monarchist Archbishop Anthony, after being forced to retire, was later reinstated at the demand of the people. Again, Archbishop Tikhon (Bellavin) of Lithuania was elected metropolitan of Moscow (the lawful occupant of that see, Metropolitan Macarius, was later reconciled with him), and Archbishop Benjamin (Kazansky) was made metropolitan of Petrograd. However, there were also harmful changes, such as the election of Sergius Stragorodsky as Archbishop of Vladimir.

In the countryside, meanwhile, “there was a strong anti-clerical movement: village communities took away the church lands, removed priests from the parishes and refused to pay for religious services. Many of the local priests managed to escape this fate by throwing in their lot with the revolution.” 648 However, several priests were savagely killed – the martyrdom of the Church began, not with the Bolshevik coup, but with the liberal democratic revolution.

The turmoil in both Church and State in Russia gave the opportunity to the Georgian Church to reassert its autocephalous status, which it had voluntarily given up over a century before. On March 12, without the agreement of the Holy Synod of the Russian Church, and in spite of the protests of the exarch of Georgia, Archbishop Platon, a group of Georgian bishops proclaimed the autocephaly of their Church and appointed Bishop Leonid (Okropiridze) of Mingrelia as locum tenens of the Catholicos with a Temporary Administration composed of clergy and laity. 649 The Russian Synod sent Bishop Theophylact to look after the non-Georgian parishes in Georgia. But he was removed from Georgia. And the new exarch, Metropolitan Cyril (Smirnov), was not allowed into the capital. The result was a break in communion between the two Churches. 650

647 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 8.
648 Figes, op. cit., p. 350.
649 V. Egorov, K istorii provozglashenia gruzinami avtokefalii svoej Tserkvi v 1917 godu (Towards a History of the Proclamation by the Georgians of the Autocephaly of their Church in 1917), Moscow, 1917, p. 9; in Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 6.
In the same month of March the Russian government ceased subsidising the American diocese. The ruling Archbishop Eudocimus (Mescheriakov) went to the All-Russian Council in August, leaving his vicar, Bishop Alexander (Nemolovsky) of Canada, as his deputy. But then Protopriest John Kedrovsky with a group of renovationist priests tried to remove Bishop Alexander from administering the diocese and take power into their own hands “without submitting to imperial power or hierarchical decrees".\textsuperscript{651}

From June 1 to 10 the All-Russian Congress of clergy and laity took place in Moscow consisting of 800 delegates from all the dioceses. As Shkarovskii writes, it “welcomed the revolution, but expressed the wish that the Church continue to receive the legal and material support of the state, that divinity continue to be an obligatory subject in school, and that the Orthodox Church retain its schools. Consequently, a conflict soon broke out with the government. The Synod protested against the law of 20 June which transferred the [37,000] parish church schools to the Ministry of Education. A similar clash occurred over the intention to exclude divinity from the list of compulsory subjects.”\textsuperscript{652}

On June 20, the Provisional Government transferred 37,000 church-parish schools into the administration of the Ministry of Enlightenment. The transfer of the church schools to the state system was disastrous for the Church because the state’s schools were infected with atheism. It would be one of the first decrees that the coming Council of the Russian Orthodox Church would seek (unsuccesfully) to have repealed…

In general, the June Congress carried forward the renovationist wave; and although the June 14 decree “On Freedom of Conscience” was welcome, the government still retained \textit{de jure} control over the Church. Even when the government allowed the Church to convene its own All-Russian Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in August, it retained the right of veto over any new form of self-administration that Council might come up with. Moreover, the Preconciliar Council convened to prepare for the forthcoming Council was to be chaired by the Church’s leading liberal, Archbishop Sergius.

Thus it looked as if the All-Russian Council would finally seal the break with the pre-revolutionary past and bring the Russian Church into the mainstream of twentieth-century ecclesiastical life, by which the liberals meant, in effect, her Protestantization and Democratization.

However, by the Providence of God, it was not to be…

\textsuperscript{651} Monk Benjamin, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 7.
\textsuperscript{652} Shkarovskii, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 418.
The October Revolution

The abysmal failure of the Russian army’s offensive in June, 1917 made the Bolshevik coup possible. Order number one (issued under pressure from the Soviets by Guchkov in his capacity as Minister of War) and the success of the Bolshevik propaganda against the war deprived the army of the minimum discipline required for any successful offensive. In the event, while General Alexeyev calculated that the losses would be about 6000, they turned out to be 400,000. An offensive that had been designed by Kerensky and the liberals to bolster the state and the forces of law and order by bringing all classes together on a patriotic wave ended by opening the path to the final destruction of the state.

The coup began with the setting up of a separate government by the Bolshevized sailors of Kronstadt, which precipitated a confused “semi-insurrection”, in Trotsky’s words, in early July. But the insurrection failed, Kerensky became prime minister and a crackdown on the Bolsheviks began. Lenin fled into hiding in Finland, and many party members were arrested: it was left to Stalin and Sverdlov to keep the party afloat inside Russia.

The Mensheviks and other socialists to the right of the Bolsheviks also helped at this critical point. Believing that there were “no enemies to the Left”, and fearing a counter-revolution, they protected the Bolsheviks from treason charges. A year later, the Bolsheviks proved their ingratitude by imprisoning the Mensheviks…

In spite of this setback, support for the Bolsheviks continued to grow, especially after they adopted the SR slogan, “Land to the Peasants!” recognizing the peasants’ seizure of the landowners’ estates as in keeping with “revolutionary legality”. As their wars against the peasantry in 1918-22 and 1928-1934 were to show, the Bolsheviks were never a pro-peasant party, and really wanted to nationalize the land rather than give it to the peasants. This was in accordance with Marxist teaching, which saw the industrial proletariat as the vanguard of the revolution, but looked down on the peasants, with their religiosity, old-fashioned ways and rejection of state interference, as being relics of the old order. However, towards the end of his life, in 1881, Marx had entered into correspondence with the narodnik Vera Zasulich, and had recognized the possibility that the revolution in Russia could begin with the agrarian socialists. So Lenin had some precedent in making tactical concessions to the SRs at this point – concessions he was soon to take back once he was in power. It paid off: many Left SRs joined the party, and others voted for the Bolsheviks in the Soviets.

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653 Figes, op. cit., p. 408.
654 Figes, op. cit., p. 436.
In late August, alarmed by the increasing power of the Bolsheviks, and by the German advance on Petrograd, which was creating chaos in the rear, General Kornilov, the new commander-in-chief of the Russian armies, ordered his troops to march on Petrograd in order to restore order. As he said on August 11: “It is time to put an end to all this. It is time to hang the German agents and spies, with Lenin at their head, to dispel the Council of Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies and scatter them far and wide, so that they should never be able to come together again.”

Right-wing forces in politics (Rodzyanko, Guchkov, Milyukov), in business and in the army (the Officers’ Union and the Union of Cossacks) soon rallied around him, hoping to prevent the Russian revolution from following the pattern of the French revolution and passing from a bourgeois, liberal phase to a Jacobin, terrorist one. It may be that Kerensky originally invited Kornilov to save the Provisional Government from the Bolsheviks. Be that as it may, Kerensky soon renounced Kornilov, and Kornilov renounced the Provisional Government. But on the approaches to Petrograd, Bolshevik agitators and railwaymen managed to infiltrate Kornilov’s troops and persuade them to give up the coup attempt.

Figes writes: “The social polarization of the summer gave the Bolsheviks their first real mass following as a party which based its main appeal on the plebeian rejection of all superordinate authority. The Kornilov crisis was the critical turning point, for it seemed to confirm their message that neither peace nor radical social change could be obtained through the politics of compromise with the bourgeoisie. The larger factories in the major cities, where the workers’ sense of class solidarity was most developed, were the first to go over in large numbers to the Bolsheviks. By the end of May, the party had already gained control of the Central Bureau of the Factory Committees and, although the Menshevik trade unionists remained in the ascendency until 1918, it also began to get its resolutions passed at important trade union assemblies. Bolshevik activists in the factories tended to be younger, more working class and much more militant than their Menshevik or SR rivals. This made them more attractive to those groups of workers – both among the skilled and the unskilled – who were becoming increasingly prepared to engage in violent strikes, not just for better pay and working conditions but also for the control of the factory environment itself. As their network of party cells at the factory level grew, the Bolsheviks began to build up their membership among the working class, and as a result their finances grew through the new members’ contributions. By the Sixth Party Conference at the end of July there were probably 200,000 Bolshevik members, rising to perhaps 350,000 on the eve of October, and the vast majority of these were blue-collar workers.”

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656 Kornilov, in Cohen and Major, op. cit., p. 727.
657 Figes, op. cit., p. 457.
Similar swings to the Bolsheviks took place in the city Duma elections of August and September, and in the Soviets. “As early as August, the Bolsheviks had won control of the Soviets in Ivanovo-Voznesensk (the ‘Russian Manchester’), Kronstadt, Yekaterinburg, Samara and Tsaritsyn. But after the Kornilov crisis many other Soviets followed suit: Riga, Saratov and Moscow itself. Even the Petrograd Soviet fell to the Bolsheviks... [On September 9] Trotsky, appearing for the first time after his release from prison, dealt the decisive rhetorical blow by forcing the Soviet leaders to admit that Kerensky, by this stage widely regarded as a ‘counter-revolutionary’, was still a member of their executive. On 25 September the leadership of the Petrograd Soviet was completely revamped, with the Bolsheviks occupying four of the seven seats on its executive and Trotsky replacing Chkheidze as its Chairman. This was the beginning of the end. In the words of Sukhanov, the Petrograd Soviet was ‘now Trotsky’s guard, ready at a sign from him to storm the coalition [between the Soviet and the Provisional Government].’”

On October 10 Lenin returned secretly to Petrograd. He was determined that the Bolsheviks should mount an armed insurrection now, even before the convening of the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets on October 20; for he did not want to share power with the other parties represented at the Congress. On October 10, by a margin of ten to two (Zinoviev and Kamenev voted against) his views prevailed in the Central Committee, and on October 16 Trotsky set up the Petrograd Revolutionary Military Committee, which was theoretically under the control of the Petrograd Soviet but was in fact designed to be the spearhead of the Bolsheviks’ seizure of power.

Trotsky’s support for the Leninist line was crucial to the success of the revolution. For a long time he had not seen eye-to-eye with Lenin. Originally a Menshevik, in 1904 he accurately summed up Lenin’s dictatorial aims: “The party organization is substituted for the party, the Central Committee is substituted for the party organization, and finally a ‘dictator’ is substituted for the Central Committee”. And as late as March, 1917, Lenin had expressed his wariness of Trotsky: “The main thing is not to let ourselves get caught in stupid attempts at ‘unity’ with social patriots, or still more dangerous... with vacillators like Trotsky & Co.” Nevertheless, by 1917 there were no major differences between the two revolutionaries, so it was logical that Trotsky should join the party eventually - it was probably his vanity and ambition that prevented him from surrendering to the party he had criticized for so long. And now his oratorical power to sway the mob, and the key position he occupied in the Petrograd Soviet and in its Revolutionary Military Committee, supplied the vital element that propelled the Bolsheviks to power.

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658 Figes, op. cit., p. 459.
659 Trotsky, Our Political Tasks (1904); in Cohen and Major, op. cit., p. 679.
Figes continues: “The rising fortunes of the Bolsheviks during the summer and autumn were essentially due to the fact that they were the only major political party which stood uncompromisingly for Soviet power. This point bears emphasizing, for one of the most basic misconceptions of the Russian Revolution is that the Bolsheviks were swept to power on a tide of mass support for the party itself. The October insurrection was a coup d’état, actively supported by a small minority of the population (and indeed opposed by several of the Bolshevik leaders themselves). But it took place amidst a social revolution, which was centred on the popular realization of Soviet power as the negation of the state and the direct self-rule of the people, much as in the ancient peasant ideal of volia. The political vacuum brought about by this social revolution enabled the Bolsheviks to seize power in the cities and consolidate their dictatorship during the autumn and winter. The slogan ‘All Power to the Soviets!’ was a useful tool, a banner of popular legitimation covering the nakedness of Lenin’s ambition (which was better expressed as All Power to the Party). Later, as the nature of the Bolshevik dictatorship became apparent, the party faced the growing opposition of precisely those groups in society which in 1917 had rallied behind the Soviet slogan…”

The lack of opposition to the Bolshevik coup was almost farcical. First, the Bolsheviks decreed that the Petrograd garrison should go to the front, which so enraged it that it mutinied, leaving the government no substantial forces in the capital. Then, on the night of the 24th, Kerensky fled in a stolen car. The rest of the ministers huddled in the Winter Palace guarded by some Cossacks, cadets and 200 women from the Shock Battalion of Death – about 3000 in all. But such was their lack of morale that by the evening only 300 of these were left. Very little fighting actually took place.

The Bolsheviks’ most potent weapon was the blank round fired by the cruiser Aurora at 9.40 p.m. “The huge sound of the blast, much louder than a live shot, caused the frightened ministers to drop at once to the floor. The women from the Battalion of Death became hysterical and had to be taken away to a room at the back of the palace, where most of the remaining cadets abandoned their posts.” When the Bolsheviks finally stormed into the Palace, their first act was to break open the wine cellars and get drunk...

The only real drama took place at the Soviet Congress, which finally convened at 10.40 p.m. The delegates at first supported the formation of a Soviet government, which, if the Bolsheviks had really believed their slogan: “All Power to the Soviets!” should have stopped their coup in its tracks. “Martov proposed the formation of a united democratic government based upon all the parties in the Soviet: this, he said, was the only way to avert a civil war. The proposal was met with torrents of applause. Even Lunacharsky

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661 Figes, op. cit., pp. 460-461.
662 Figes, op. cit., p. 488.
was forced to admit that the Bolsheviks had nothing against it – they could not abandon the slogan of Soviet Power – and the proposal was immediately passed by a unanimous vote. But just as it looked as if a socialist coalition was at last about to be formed, a series of Mensheviks and SRs bitterly denounced the violent assault on the Provisional Government. They declared that their parties, or at least the right-wing sections of them, would have nothing to do with this ‘criminal venture’, which was bound to throw the country into civil war, and walked out of the Congress hall in protest, while the Bolshevik delegates stamped their feet, whistled and hurled abuse at them.

“Lenin’s planned provocation – the pre-emptive seizure of power – had worked. By walking out of the Congress, the Mensheviks and SRs undermined all hopes of reaching a compromise with the Bolshevik moderates and of forming a coalition government of all the Soviet parties. The path was now clear for the Bolshevik dictatorship, based on the Soviet, which Lenin had no doubt intended all along. In the charged political atmosphere of the time, it is easy to see why the Mensheviks and SRs acted as they did. But it is equally difficult not to draw the conclusion that, by their actions, they merely played into Lenin’s hands and thus committed political suicide…”

Trotsky shouted after the departing delegates: “You are miserable bankrupts, your role is played out; go where you ought to go – into the dustbin of history.” Then he proposed a resolution condemning the “treacherous” attempts of the Mensheviks and SRs to undermine Soviet power. The mass of the remaining delegates (Bolsheviks and Left SRs) fell into the trap and voted for the motion, thereby legitimating the Bolshevik coup in the name of the Soviet Congress.

At 2 a.m. the ministers in the Winter Palace were arrested and cast into the Peter and Paul fortress. Kamenev announced the arrest of the ministers to the Congress.

“And then Lunacharsky read out Lenin’s Manifesto ‘To All Workers, Soldiers and Peasants’, in which ‘Soviet Power’ was proclaimed, and its promises on land, bread and peace were announced. The reading of this historic proclamation, which was constantly interrupted by the thunderous cheers of the delegates, played an enormous symbolic role. It provided the illusion that the insurrection was the culmination of a revolution by ‘the masses’. When it had been passed, shortly after 5 a.m. on the 26th, the weary but elated delegates emerged from the Tauride Palace. ‘The night was yet heavy and chill,’ wrote John Reed. ‘There was only a faint unearthly pallor stealing over the silent streets, dimming the watch-fires, the shadow of a terrible dawn rising over Russia…”

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663 Figes, op. cit., pp. 489-490.
664 Figes, op. cit., p. 492.
“We have it on the authority of Trotsky himself,” writes Richard Pipes, “that the October ‘revolution’ in Petrograd was accomplished by ‘at most’ 25,000-30,000 persons – this in a country of 150 million and a city with 400,000 workers and a garrison of over 200,000 soldiers.

“From the instant he seized dictatorial power Lenin proceeded to uproot all existing institutions so as to clear the ground for a regime subsequently labelled ‘totalitarian’. This term has fallen out of favour with Western sociologists and political scientists determined to avoid what they consider the language of the Cold War. It deserves note, however, how quickly it found favour in the Soviet Union the instant the censor’s prohibitions against its use had been lifted. This kind of regime, unknown to previous history, imposed the authority of a private but omnipotent ‘party’ on the state, claiming the right to subject to itself all organized life without exception, and enforcing its will by means of unbounded terror…”

In the elections to the Constituent Assembly, which took place in November, Russians voted in large numbers for socialist parties – but not necessarily for the Bolsheviks, who polled less than a quarter of the vote. Many also voted for nationalist parties. Most of the Jews voted for Zionists. Thus Solzhenitsyn writes: “‘More than 80% of the Jewish population of Russia voted’ for Zionist parties. Lenin wrote that 550,000 were for Jewish nationalists. ‘The majority of the Jewish parties formed a single national list, in accordance with which seven deputies were elected – six Zionists’ and Gruzenberg. ‘The success of the Zionists’ was also aided by the [published not long before the elections] Declaration of the English Foreign Minister Balfour [on the creation of a ‘national centre’ of the Jews in Palestine], ‘which was met by the majority of the Russian Jewish population with enthusiasm [in Moscow, Petrograd, Odessa, Kiev and many other cities there were festive manifestations, meetings and religious services].’”

In any case, the Bolsheviks were not going to allow any such Assembly. In January, 1918, after the Assembly’s first and only session, they dispersed it, thus bringing Russian democracy to an abrupt and inglorious end…

The Moscow Council of 1917-18

On August 15, 1917 the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church convened. 564 delegates, including 299 laymen, assembled in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow. On the one hand, the delegates included such open Freemasons as Lvov, and on the other, it excluded such pious hierarchs as Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow because of his monarchist views.

666 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 5, 149.
667 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 73.
However, in spite of this and other flaws, this was the first Council in the history of the Russian Church since 1682, and was to prove to be a critical point of repose, refreshment and regrouping for the Church before the terrible trials that awaited her. It coincided with the fall of the Provisional Government and the Bolshevik coup, the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and the beginning of the Civil War. On all these events it made declarations that expressed the opinion of Believing Russia. In a real sense, it was the voice of Russia – or, at any rate, of that large part of the population that had not yet been engulfed by the revolutionary frenzy. As for the Bolsheviks, whose decrees with regard to the Church were either ignored or outrightly defied by the Council, they made no serious attempt to impede its work before closing it down on September 20, 1918…

At the beginning, however, there was little sign that more than a minority of the delegates understood the full apocalyptic significance of the events they were living through. On August 24, and again on October 20, the Council issued statements condemning the violence, theft and sacrilege against churches, monasteries and priests that had been increasing ever since February. But in general revolutionary sentiment was dominant. Thus according to Princess Urusova, the Council even decreed that there should be no discussion of “politics” – that is, no condemnation of the revolution. Instead property questions were discussed. But then a professor from Belorussia said: “We should not be discussing these questions now! Russia is perishing, the throne is mocked. Without an Anointed of God, an Orthodox Tsar, she will soon fall under the power of darkness.” But he could not continue his speech since he had touched on “politics”…

Neither the Holy Synod nor the Council alluded to the primary cause of the general moral degradation: the nation’s – and the Synod’s – betrayal of the Tsar and Tsarism. “I have long asked myself,” writes N. Kusakov, “why did the council not demand of the Provisional Government the immediate release of the Royal Family from under guard? Why did Metropolitan Pitirim of Petrograd and Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow remain in prison under the Provisional Government during the days of the Council? The cold breath of February blew in the corridors of the Council…”

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668 Metropolitan Tikhon said: “Look! Her unfortunate, maddened children are tormenting our dear mother, your native Rus’, they are trying to tear her to pieces, they wish to take away her hallowed treasure – the Orthodox Faith. They defame your Father-Tsar, they destroy His portraits, they disparage his Imperial decrees, and mock him. Can your heart be calm before this, O Russian man? Again ask of your conscience. It will remind you of your truly loyal oath. It will say to you – be a loving son of your native land” (in Archimandrite Luke, “Nationalism, Russia, and the Restoration of the Patriarchate”, Orthodox Life, vol. 51, № 6, November-December, 2001, pp. 30-31).
On October 21, during Vespers in the Dormition cathedral of the Kremlin, two people dressed in soldiers’ uniforms went up to the shrine and relics of St. Hermogen, Patriarch of Moscow, threw off the covers and began to remove the vestments. When taken to the commissariat, they told the police that “now there is freedom and everyone can do anything he wants”. Three days later a penitential moleben was carried out in front of the shrine. The next day, the October revolution took place. St. Hermogen, who been canonized by the Church only a few years before, was notable for his refusal to recognize the government of the False Demetrius, and for his call to the nation to rise up in arms against it. For those with eyes to see, the incident at his shrine just before the Bolshevik coup was a sign that the time had come to act in his spirit, against another false or anti-government.

The Council seemed to understand this, for after the Bolsheviks came to power on October 25, a new spirit of defiance began to prevail in it, a spirit that became still stronger after the Bolsheviks dispersed the Constituent Assembly in January. One of the delegates, Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris and Western Europe, described the change thus: “Russian life in those days was like a sea tossed by the storm of revolution. Church life had fallen into a state of disorganization. The external appearance of the Council, because of the diversity of its composition, its irreconcilability and the mutual hostility of its different tendencies and states of mind, was at first matter for anxiety and sadness and even seemed to constitute a cause for apprehension... Some members of the Council had already been carried away by the wave of revolution. The intelligentsia, peasants, workers and professors all tended irresistibly to the left. Among the clergy there were also different elements. Some of them proved to be ‘leftist’ participants of the previous revolutionary Moscow Diocesan Congress, who stood for a thorough and many-sided reform of church life. Disunion, disorder, dissatisfaction, even mutual distrust... – such was the state of the Council at first. But – O miracle of God! – everything began gradually to change... The disorderly assembly, moved by the revolution and in contact with its sombre elements, began to change into something like a harmonious whole, showing external order and internal solidarity. People became peaceable and serious in their tasks and began to feel differently and to look on things in a different way. This process of prayerful regeneration was evident to every observant eye and perceptible to every participant in the Council. A spirit of peace, renewal and unanimity inspired us all...”

The three most important decisions of the Council were (1) the restoration of the Patriarchate (November, 1917), (2) the anathematization of Soviet power (February, 1918), and (3) the declaration of the invalidity of all defrockings of clergy for their political opinions (August, 1918).

1. The Restoration of the Patriarchate. The election of Metropolitan Tikhon of Moscow as Patriarch of Moscow and All-Russia was a profoundly conservative act, a recreation of one of the major institutions of Muscovite Russia that Peter the Great had destroyed, at a time when open war had just been proclaimed on the whole of the Russian past. Through it the wish of one of the peasant delegates was fulfilled: “We have a tsar no more; no father whom we love. It is impossible to love a synod; and therefore we, the peasants, want a Patriarch.” Archbishop Hilarion (Troitsky) triumphantly declared: “The eagle of Petrine autocracy, shaped in imitation of the West, tore asunder the Patriarchate, that sacred heart of Russian Orthodoxy. The sacrilegious hand of the impious Peter pulled down the senior hierarch of the Russian Church from his traditional seat in the Dormition Cathedral. The Council, by the authority given it by God, has once more placed the patriarch of Moscow in the chair, which belongs to him by inalienable right.”

Metropolitan Tikhon was enthroned on November 21 in the Kremlin Dormition cathedral to the sound of rifle fire from the battle for Moscow outside. With his enthronement, as Sergius Firsov writes, “an historical event took place – the Orthodox Church received its canonical head, whose voice had not been heard for a whole 217 years. Not only formally, but effectively this was the closing of the last page in the history of the Synodal period.”

According to the new constitution of the Russian Church agreed at the Council, the Church’s supreme organ was the Sacred All-Russian Council, composed of bishops, clergy and laity, which was to be periodically convoked by the Patriarch but to which the Patriarch himself was responsible. Between Councils, the Patriarch administered the Church with the aid of two permanent bodies: the Synod of Bishops, and the Higher Church Council, on which parish clergy and laity could sit. Questions relating to theology, religious discipline and ecclesiastical administration were to be the prerogative of the Synod of Bishops, while secular-juridical, charity and other church-related social questions were to be the prerogative of the Higher Church Council. On December 7 the Holy Synod was elected, and on December 8 – the Higher Church Council.

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672 Hilarion, quoted in John Shelton, Church and State in Russia: The Last Years of the Empire 1900-1917, New York: Octagon Books, 1965, p. 260. Archimandrite Luke writes: “The idea that a Patriarch would replace the Tsar (especially after his execution) was not absent from the delegates’ understanding. ‘The proponents for the scheme to re-establish the Patriarchate emphasized the fact that ‘the state desired to be non-confessional, openly severing its alliance with the church’, and consequently the Church ‘must become militant and have its own spiritual leader’’. ‘Somehow the thought of Patriarch became associated with that of Tsar, while those opposed to the reestablishment of the Patriarchate brought forward democratic and republican principles’”. (“Nationalism, Russia and the Restoration of the Patriarchate”, Orthodox Life, November-December, 2001, p. 32)

673 Firsov, Russkiaia Tserkov’ nakannune Peremen (konets 1890-x – 1918 gg.) (The Russian Church on the eve of the Changes (end of the 1890s to 1918), Moscow, 2002, p. 542.
On January 25, the Council heard that Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev had been murdered by the Bolsheviks. These events concentrated minds on the danger the Patriarch was in; and on the same day the Council immediately passed a resolution entrusting him with the drawing up of the names of three men who could serve as locum tenentes of the Patriarch in the event of his death and before the election of a new Patriarch. These names were to be kept secret - on February 3/16 Prince Trubestkoy said that there had been “a closed session of the Council” to discuss this question, and that “it was decreed that the whole fullness of the rights of the Patriarch should pass to the locum tenens”, and that “it is not fitting to speak about all the motivation behind the decision taken in an open session”.674

The Patriarch’s will was revised by him towards the end of 1924, and was published only after his death in 1925. It was read out in the presence of sixty hierarchs and declared: “In the event of our death our patriarchal rights and obligations, until the canonical election of a new Patriarch, we grant temporarily to his Eminence Metropolitan Cyril (Smirnov). In the event of the impossibility, by reason of whatever circumstances, of his entering upon the exercise of the indicated rights and obligations, they will pass to his Eminence Metropolitan Agathangelus (Preobrazhensky). If this metropolitan, too, does not succeed in accomplishing this, then our patriarchal rights and obligations will pass to his Eminence Peter (Polyansky), Metropolitan of Krutitsa.”

Since both Metropolitans Cyril and Agathangelus were in exile at the time of the Patriarch’s death, Metropolitan Peter became the patriarchal locum tenens.

Patriarch Tikhon’s choice turned out to be inspired, although Metropolitan Peter was not well known at the time of the Council. As Regelson comments: “That the first-hierarchical authority in the Russian Church after the death of Patriarch Tikhon was able to be preserved was thanks only to the fact that one of the patriarchal locum tenentes Patriarch Tikhon chose in 1918 was Metropolitan Peter, who at the moment of the choice was only a servant of the Synod! Many hierarchs were amazed and disturbed by his subsequent swift ‘career’, which changed him in the course of six years into the metropolitan of Krutitsa and Kolomna... But it was precisely thanks to the extraordinary nature of his destiny that he turned out to be the only one chosen by the Patriarch (in actual fact, chosen by the Council, as entrusted to the Patriarch) who was left in freedom at the moment of the death of Patriarch Tikhon. It is difficult even to conjecture how complicated and, besides, tragic would have been the destiny of the Russian Church if the wise thought of the Council and the Patriarch had not been realized in life.”675

674 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 15.
2. The **Attitude towards Soviet power.** The Council refused to recognize the legitimacy of Soviet power. Thus when, on the day after the coup, October 26, Lenin nationalized all land, making the Church’s and parish priests’ property illegal, the Council addressed a letter to the faithful on November 11, calling the revolution “descended from the Antichrist and possessed by atheism”: “Open combat is fought against the Christian Faith, in opposition to all that is sacred, arrogantly abasing all that bears the name of God (II Thessalonians 2.4)… But no earthly kingdom founded on ungodliness can ever survive: it will perish from internal strife and party dissension. Thus, because of its frenzy of atheism, the State of Russia will fall… For those who use the sole foundation of their power in the coercion of the whole people by one class, no motherland or holy place exists. They have become traitors to the motherland and instigated an appalling betrayal of Russia and her true allies. But, to our grief, as yet no government has arisen which is sufficiently one with the people to deserve the blessing of the Orthodox Church. And such will not appear on Russian soil until we turn with agonizing prayer and tears of repentance to Him, without Whom we labour in vain to lay foundations…”

This recognition of the real nature of the revolution came none too early. On November 15, a Tver peasant, Michael Yefimovich Nikonov, wrote to the Council: “We think that the Most Holy Synod made an irreparable mistake when the bishops went to meet the revolution. We do not know the reasons for this. Was it for fear of the Jews? In accordance with the prompting of their heart, or for some laudable reasons? Whatever the reason, their act produced a great temptation in the believers, and not only in the Orthodox, but even among the Old Ritualists. Forgive me for touching on this question – it is not our business to judge that: this is a matter for the Council, I am only placing on view the judgement of the people. People are saying that by this act of the Synod many right-thinking people were led into error, and also many among the clergy. We could hardly believe our ears at what we heard at parish and deanery meetings. Spiritual fathers, tempted by the deception of freedom and equality, demanded that hierarchs they dislike be removed together with their sees, and that they should elect those whom they wanted. Readers demanded the same equality, so as not to be subject to their superiors. That is the absurdity we arrived at when we emphasized the satanic idea of the revolution. The Orthodox Russian people is convinced that the Most Holy Council in the interests of our holy mother, the Church, the Fatherland and Batyushka Tsar, should give over to anathema and curse all self-called persons and all traitors who trampled on their oath together with the satanic idea of the revolution. And the Most Holy Council will show to its flock who will take over the helm of administration in the great State. We suppose it must be he who is in prison [the Tsar], but if he does not want to rule over us

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676 On the same day, however, the Council decreed that those killed on both sides in the conflict should be given Christian burials.
traitors,... then let it indicate who is to accept the government of the State; that is only common sense. The act of Sacred Coronation and Anointing with holy oil of our tsars in the Dormition Cathedral [of the Moscow Kremlin] was no simple comedy. It was they who received from God the authority to rule the people, giving account to Him alone, and by no means a constitution or some kind of parliament of not quite decent people capable only of revolutionary arts and possessed by the love of power... Everything that I have written here is not my personal composition alone, but the voice of the Russian Orthodox people, the 100-million-strong village Russia in which I live.”

Many people were indeed disturbed by such questions as: had the Church betrayed the Tsar in March 1917? Were Christians guilty of breaking their oath to the Tsar by accepting the Provisional Government? Should the Church formally absolve the people of their oath to the Tsar? The leadership of the Council passed consideration of these questions, together with Nikonov’s letter, to a subsection entitled “On Church Discipline”. This subsection had several meetings in the course of the next nine months, but came to no definite decisions...

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

On December 11 Lenin decreed that all Church schools be transferred to the Council of People’s Commissars. As a result, the Church was deprived of all its academies, seminaries, schools and all the property linked with them. Then, on December 18, ecclesiastical marriage was deprived of its legal status and civil marriage introduced in its place.

As if to test the decree “On the Legal Status of the Russian Orthodox Church”, on January 13, Alexandra Kollontai, the People’s Commissar of Social Welfare (and Lenin’s mistress), sent a detachment of sailors to occupy

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the Alexander Nevsky monastery and turn it into a sanctuary for war invalids. They were met by an angry crowd of worshippers and in the struggle which followed one priest, Fr. Peter Skipetrov, was shot dead.679

According to Orlando Figes, Lenin was not yet ready for a confrontation with the Church, but Kollontai’s actions forced his hand.680 On January 20 a law on freedom of conscience, later named the “Decree on the Separation of the Church from the State and of the School from the Church”, was passed (it was published three days later in Izvestia). This was the Bolsheviks’ fiercest attack yet on the Church. It forbade religious bodies from owning property (all property of religious organizations was declared to be the heritage of the people), from levying dues, from organizing into hierarchical organizations, and from teaching religion to persons under 18 years of age. Ecclesiastical and religious societies did not have the rights of a juridical person. The registering of marriages was to be done exclusively by the civil authorities. Thus, far from being a blow struck for freedom of conscience, it was, as the Council put it, a decree on freedom from conscience, and an excuse for large-scale pillaging of churches and murders, often in the most bestial manner.

Fr. Alexander Mazyrin points out that this decree in effect deprived the Church of its rights as a legal person. “This meant that de jure the Church ceased to exist as a single organization. Only local religious communities could exist in legal terms, the authorities signing with them agreements on the use of Church property. The Eighth Department of the People’s Commissariat of Justice, which was due to put into practice Lenin’s decree, was officially dubbed the ‘Liquidation’ Department. It was the elimination of the Church, not its legalization as a social institution, that was the aim pursued by the ‘people’s commissars’ government.”681

On January 19 / February 1, Patriarch Tikhon, anticipating the decree, and even before the Council had reconvened683, issued his famous anathema against the Bolsheviks: “By the power given to Us by God, we forbid you to approach the Mysteries of Christ, we anathematize you, if only you bear Christian names and although by birth you belong to the Orthodox Church. We also adjure all of you, faithful children of the Orthodox Church of Christ,

681 Professor Ivan Andreyev, “The Catacomb Church in the Soviet Union”, Orthodox Life, March-April, 1951. For details of the destruction wrought against the Church in these years, see Vladimir Rusak, Pir Satany (Satan’s Feast), London, Canada: Zarya, 1991.
683 “When they asked the holy Patriarch why he had issued his epistle on the eve of the Council’s Sitting, Vladyka replied that he did not want to put the Council under the hammer and preferred to take it on himself alone” (Andreyev, op. cit., p. 9).
not to enter into any communion with such outcasts of the human race: ‘Remove the evil one from among you’ (I Corinthians 5.13)." The decree ended with an appeal to defend the Church, if necessary, to the death. For “the gates of hell shall not prevail against Her” (Matthew 16.18).

The significance of this anathema lies not so much in the casting out of the Bolsheviks themselves, as in the command to the faithful to have no communion with them. In other words, the government were to be regarded, not only as apostates from Christ (that was obvious), but also as having no moral authority, no claim to obedience whatsoever – an attitude taken by the Church to no other government in the whole of Her history. Coming so soon after the Bolsheviks’ dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, it indicated that now that constitutionalism had proved its uselessness in the face of demonic barbarism, it was time for the Church to enter the struggle in earnest...

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

It was important that the true significance of the anathema for the Church’s relationship with the State be pointed out. This was done immediately after the proclamation of the anathema, when Count D.A. Olsufyev pointed out that at the moleben they had just sung ‘many years’ to the powers that be – that is, to the Bolsheviks whom they had just anathematized! “I understand

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685 In a letter to Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) that was captured by the Bolsheviks, the Patriarch called the Bolsheviks “oprichniki” – that is, he compared them to the murderous henchmen of Ivan the Terrible ( Za Khrista Posstradavshie, Moscow, 1997, vol. 1, p. 426).


687 Gubonin, op. cit., p. 151.
that the Apostle called for obedience to all authorities – but hardly that ‘many years’ should be sung to them. I know that his ‘most pious and most autocratic’ [majesty] was replaced by ‘the right-believing Provisional Government’ of Kerensky and company... And I think that the time for unworthy compromises has passed.”

On January 22 / February 4 the Patriarch’s anathema was discussed in a session of the Council presided over by Metropolitan Arsenius of Novgorod, and the following resolution put forward by a special commission attached to the Conciliar Council was officially accepted by the Council: “The Sacred Council of the Orthodox Russian Church welcomes with love the epistle of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, which punishes the evil-doers and rebukes the enemies of the Church of Christ. From the height of the patriarchal throne there has thundered the word of excommunication [preschenia] and a spiritual sword has been raised against those who continually mock the faith and conscience of the people. The Sacred Council witnesses that it remains in the fullest union with the father and intercessor of the Russian Church, pays heed to his appeal and is ready in a sacrificial spirit to confess the Faith of Christ against her blasphemers. The Sacred Council calls on the whole of the Russian Church headed by her archpastors and pastors to unite now around the Patriarch, so as not to allow the mocking of our holy faith.” (Act 67.35-37).

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689 Deiania, op. cit., vol. 6, p. 36. Another source quotes the following response of the Council to the patriarch’s anathema: “The Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia in his epistle to the beloved in the Lord archpastors, pastors and all faithful children of the Orthodox Church of Christ has drawn the spiritual sword against the outcasts of the human race – the Bolsheviks, and anathematised them. The head of the Russian Orthodox Church adjures all her faithful children not to enter into any communion with these outcasts. For their satanic deeds they are cursed in this life and in the life to come. Orthodox! His Holiness the Patriarch has been given the right to bind and to loose according to the word of the Saviour... Do not destroy your souls, cease communion with the servants of Satan – the Bolsheviks. Parents, if your children are Bolsheviks, demand authoritatively that they renounce their errors, that they bring forth repentance for their eternal sin, and if they do not obey you, renounce them. Wives, if your husbands are Bolsheviks and stubbornly continue to serve Satan, leave your husbands, save yourselves and your children from the soul-destroying infection. An Orthodox Christian cannot have communion with the servants of the devil... Repent, and with burning prayer call for help from the Lord of Hosts and thrust away from yourselves ‘the hand of strangers’ – the age-old enemies of the Christian faith, who have declared themselves in self-appointed fashion ‘the people’s power’... If you do not obey the Church, you will not be her sons, but participants in the cruel and satanic deeds wrought by the open and secret enemies of Christian truth... Dare! Do not delay! Do not destroy your soul and hand it over to the devil and his stooges.” (“Iz sobrania Tsentral'nogo gosudarstvennogo arkhiva Oktyabr'skoj revoliutsii: listovka bez vykhodnykh danniyh, pod No 1011” (From the collection of the Central State Archive of the October Revolution: pamphlet without dates, under No 1011), Nauka i Religia (Science and Religion), 1989, No 4; partly translated in Arfed Gustavson, The Catacomb Church, Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1960, p. 9). One member of the Council said: “If the father, mother, brothers and sisters did not receive the returning evil-
At this session A.A. Vasiliev said: “We thank the Lord for giving us what we have been waiting for - that is, finally to hear the true Church voice of our Most Holy Father and Patriarch. For the first time in this year of disorder, a truly ecclesiastical word, a word spoken with regard to the events about which nothing has been said up to now. And a pastoral judgement delivered on all those who are guilty of these events... Our Christian conscience must suggest to each of us what concessions he can and cannot make, and when he must lay down his life for the truth. People are puzzled about precisely who is subject to this ban which his Holiness the Patriarch speaks about in his epistle. After all, it is not just since yesterday, and not since the coming of the Bolsheviks, that we have been experiencing a real satanic attack on the Church of Christ, these fratricides, fights and mutual hatred. At the very beginning of the revolution the authorities carried out an act of apostasy from God (voices: “Right!”). Prayer was banned in the armies, banners with the cross of Christ were replaced by red rags. It is not only the present powers that be that are guilty of this, but also those who have already departed from the scene. We shall continue to hope that the present rulers also, who are now shedding blood, will depart from the scene.”

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

“The derailing of the train of history took place at the end of February, 1917; it was aided first of all by the Jewish-Masonic global organization, which cast into the masses the slogans of socialism, the slogans of a mythical freedom... So much has been said here about the terrors brought upon the country by Bolshevism. But what is Bolshevism? - the natural and logical development of Socialism. And Socialism is – that antichristian movement which in the final analysis produces Bolshevism as its highest development
doer, but expelled him, saying: ‘You are a scoundrel, your hands are covered in blood, you are not our son, nor our brother,’ the disorders would cease.” (Deiania, op. cit, vol. 6, p. 40).

690 Deiania, op. cit., vol. 6, p. 40; Yakovitsky, op. cit.
and which engenders those phenomena completely contrary to the principles of Christian asceticism that we are living through now.

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

“The Council must say that in February-March a violent coup took place which for the Orthodox Christian is oath-breaking that requires purification through repentance. We all, beginning with Your Holiness and ending with myself, the last member of the Council, must bow the knee before God, and beseech Him to forgive us for allowing the growth in the country of evil teachings and violence. Only after sincere repentance by the whole people will the country be pacified and regenerated. And God will bestow upon us His mercy and grace. But if we continue only to anathematize without repenting, without declaring the truth to the people, then they will with just cause say to us: You, too, are guilty that the country has been reduced to this crime, for which the anathema now sounds out; you by your pusillanimity have allowed the development of evil and have been slow to call the facts and phenomena of state life by their real names!

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

“We all must unite into one Christian family under the banner of the Holy and Life-Creating Cross and under the leadership of his Holiness the
Patriarch, to say that Socialism, which calls people as if to brotherhood, is an openly antichristian and evil phenomenon, that the Russian people has become the plaything of the Jewish-Masonic organizations behind which the Antichrist is already visible in the form of an internationalist tsar, that by playing on false freedom, the people is forging for itself slavery to the Judaeo-Masons. If we say this openly and honestly, then I do not know what will happen to us, but I know that Russian will be alive!""\(^{691}\)

On February 27 / March 12, 1918 (94th Act) the Council reaffirmed the patriarch’s anathema, proclaiming: “To those who utter blasphemies and lies against our holy faith and Church, who rise up against the holy churches and monasteries, encroaching on the inheritance of the Church, while abusing and killing the priests of the Lord and zealots of the patristic faith: Anathema”.

The Bolshevik decree on the separation of Church and State elicited strong reactions from individual members of the Council. Thus one exclaimed: “We overthrew the tsar and subjected ourselves to the Jews!” And another said: “The sole means of salvation for the Russian nation is a wise Orthodox Russian tsar!” In reply to this remark, Protopriest Elijah Gromoglasov said: “Our only hope is not that we may have an earthly tsar or president... but that there should be a heavenly Tsar, Christ.”\(^{692}\)

The section of the Council appointed to report on the decree made the following recommendations: “The individuals wielding the governmental authority audaciously attempt to destroy the very existence of the Orthodox Church. In order to realize this satanic design, the Soviet of People’s Commissars published the decree concerning the separation of the Church from the State, which legalized an open persecution not only of the Orthodox Church, but of all other religious communions, Christian or non-Christian. Not despising deceit, the enemies of Christ fraudulently put on the appearance of granting by it religious liberty.

“Welcoming all real extension of liberty of conscience, the Council at the same time points out that by the provisions of the said decree, the freedom of the Orthodox Church, as well as of all other religious organizations and communions in general, is rendered void. Under the pretence of ‘the separation of the Church from the State’, the Soviet of People’s Commissars attempts to render impossible the very existence of the churches, the ecclesiastical institutions, and the clergy.

“Under the guise of taking over the ecclesiastical property, the said decree aims to destroy the very possibility of Divine worship and ministration. It declares that ‘no ecclesiastical or religious association has the right to possess property’, and ‘all property of the existing ecclesiastical and religious

\(^{691}\) Deiania, op. cit., vol. 6, pp. 41-43.
\(^{692}\) Deiania, op. cit., p. 159.
associations in Russia is declared to be national wealth.' Thereby the
Orthodox churches and monasteries, those resting-places of the relics of the
saints revered by all Orthodox people, become the common property of all
citizens irrespective of their credal differences – of Christians, Jews, Muslims
and pagans, and the holy objects designated for the Divine service, i.e. the
holy Cross, the holy Gospel, the sacred vessels, the holy miracle-working
icons are at the disposal of the governmental authorities, which may either
permit or not (as they wish) their use by the parishes.

“Let the Russian people understand that they (the authorities) wish to
deprive them of God’s churches with their sacred objects! As soon as all
property of the Church is taken away, it is not possible to offer any aid to it,
for in accordance with the intention of the decree everything donated shall be
taken away. The support of monasteries, churches and the clergy alike
becomes impossible.

“But that is not all: in consequence of the confiscation of the printing
establishments, it is impossible for the Church independently to publish the
holy Gospel as well as other sacred and liturgical books in their wonted
purity and authenticity.

“In the same manner, the decree affects the pastors of the Church.
Declaring that ‘no one may refuse to perform his civil duties on account of his
religious views’, it thereby constrains them to fulfil military obligations
forbidden them by the 83rd canon of the holy Apostles. At the same time,
ministers of the altar are removed from educating the people. The very
teaching of the law of God, not only in governmental, but even in private
schools, is not permitted; likewise all theological institutions are doomed to
be closed. The Church is thus excluded from the possibility of educating her
own pastors.

“Declaring that ‘the governmental functions or those of other public-
juridical institutions shall not be accompanied by any religious rites or
ceremonies,’ the decree thereby sacrilegiously sunders all connections of the
government with the sanctities of the faith.

“On the basis of all these considerations, the holy Council decrees:

“1. The decree published by the Soviet of People’s Commissars regarding
the separation of the Church from the State represents in itself, under the
guise of a law declaring liberty of conscience, an inimical attempt upon the
life of the Orthodox Church, and is an act of open persecution.

“2. All participation, either in the publication of the law so injurious to the
Church, or in attempts to put it into practice, is not reconcilable with
membership of the Orthodox Church, and subjects all transgressors belonging
to the Orthodox communion to the heaviest penalties, to the extent of excommunicating them from the Church (in accordance with the 73rd canon of the holy Apostles, and the 13th canon of the Seventh Ecumenical Council).^693

These recommendations were then adopted by the Council as its official reply to the decree (February 7). In the same spirit, on April 15 the Council decreed: "Clergymen serving in anti-ecclesiastical institutions, as well as those who put into effect the decrees on freedom of conscience which are inimical to the Church and similar acts, are subject to being banned from serving and, in the case of impenitence, are deprived of their rank."^694

Although, as we have said, it was unprecedented for a Local Church to anathematize a government, there have been occasions in the history of the Church when individual hierarchs have not only refused to obey or pray for a political leader, but have actually prayed against him. Thus in the fourth century St. Basil the Great prayed for the defeat of Julian the Apostate, and it was through his prayers that the apostate was killed, as was revealed by God to the holy hermit Julian of Mesopotamia. Neither St. Basil nor his friend, St. Gregory the Theologian, recognised the rule of Julian the Apostate to be legitimate. ^695 Moreover, they considered that St. Gregory’s brother, St. Caesarius, should not remain at the court of Julian, although he thought that, being a doctor, he could help his relatives and friends through his position there. ^696 These and other examples show that, while the principle of authority as such is from God (Romans 13.1), individual authorities or rulers are sometimes not from God, but are only allowed to exist by Him, in which case the Church must offer resistance to them out of loyalty to God Himself.^697

As Bishop Gregory (Grabbe), the foremost canonist of the Russian Church Abroad, wrote: "With regard to the question of the commemoration of authorities, we must bear in mind that now we are having dealings not simply with a pagan government like Nero’s, but with the apostasy of the last times. Not with a so far unenlightened authority, but with apostasy. The Holy Fathers did not relate to Julian the Apostate in the same way as they did to the other pagan Emperors. And we cannot relate to the anticristian authorities in the same way as to any other, for its nature is purely satanic."^698

There were some who took the anathema very seriously and fulfilled it to the letter. Thus in 1918, the clairvoyant Elder Nicholas (Parthenov), later

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^694 Bogoslovskij Vestnik (The Theological Herald), № 1, 1993, p. 217.
^695 V.A. Konovalov, Otnoshenie khristiantva k sovytskoj vlasti (The Relationship of Christianity to Soviet Power), Montreal, 1936, p. 35.
^696 Protopriest Benjamin Zhukov, Russkaia Pravoslammaia Tserkov’ na Rodine i za Rubezhom (The Russian Orthodox Church in the Homeland and Abroad), Paris, 2005, p. 17.
^697 Konovalov, op. cit., p. 35.
^698 Grabbe, Pis’ma (Letters), Moscow, 1998, p. 85.
Hieromartyr Bishop of Aktar, “following the anathema contained in the Epistle of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, and not wishing to enter into relations with ‘the outcasts of the human race’, went into reclusion...”

The Council had exhorted the faithful to protect church property, and soon there were reports of people mobbing the officials and soldiers detailed to carry out the decree. Several hundred thousand people marched through Petrograd in protest.

Michael Shkarovskii writes: “Numerous religious processions, some of which were fired upon, took place in the towns; services in defence of the patriarchate were held in public places and petitions were sent to the government. There followed a mass religious upsurge in Russia. From 1918, thousands of new converts, including some prominent intellectuals, joined the now persecuted Orthodox Church. And an ‘All-Russian Union of United Orthodox Parishes’ was also formed.

“The Sovnarkom had expected its decree to be implemented quickly and relatively painlessly, but this was prevented first and foremost by the opposition of millions of peasants, who supported the expropriation of church and monastic property but were against making births, marriages and deaths a purely civil affair, depriving parishes of their property rights, and dropping divinity from the school curriculum. Peasants thus resisted Bolshevik efforts to break the ‘unshakable traditions’ of ‘a life of faith’ in the Russian countryside. The implementation of the law was also hindered by the lack of suitable officials to carry it out, and by the inconsistence of the local authorities’ understanding of the law.”

A Barmenkov wrote: “Some school workers began to interpret [the principle of Church-School separation] as a transition to secular education, in which both religious and anti-religious propaganda in school would be excluded. They supposed that the school had to remain neutral in relation to religion and the Church. A.V. Lunacharsky and N.K. Krupskaia spoke against this incorrect interpretation..., emphasising that in the Soviet state the concept of the people’s enlightenment had unfailingly to include ‘a striving to cast out of the people’s head religious trash and replace it with the light of science.’”

“On March 14/27,” writes Peter Sokolov, “still hoping that the existence of the Church could be preserved under the communist regime and with the aim of establishing direct relations with the higher state authorities, a Church


700 Shkarvoskii, “The Russian Orthodox Church”, op. cit, pp. 420-421.

deputation set out in the name of the Council to the Council of People’s Commissars in Moscow. They wanted to meet Lenin personally, and personally present him with their ideas about the conditions acceptable to the Church for her existence in the state of the new type.” This initiative hardly accorded with the anathema against the Bolsheviks, which forbade the faithful from having any relations with them. It was therefore unsuccessful. “The deputation was not received by Lenin. The commissars (of insurance and justice) that conversed with it did not satisfy its requests. A second address to the authorities in the name of the Council that followed soon after the first unsuccessful audience was also unsuccessful…”

3. The Amnesty for Political Traitors. The Council made two other decisions relating to Soviet power and its institutions. On April 15 it decreed: “Clergymen serving in anti-ecclesiastical institutions… are subject to being banned from serving and, in the case of impenitence, are deprived of their rank”. On the assumption that “anti-ecclesiastical institutions” included all Soviet institutions, this would seem to have been a clearly anti-Soviet measure.

However, on August 15, 1918, the Council took a step in the opposite direction, declaring invalid all defrockings based on political considerations, applying this particularly to Metropolitan Arsenius (Matsevich) of Rostov and Priest Gregory Petrov. Metropolitan Arsenius had indeed been unjustly defrocked in the reign of Catherine II for his righteous opposition to her anti-Church measures. However, Fr. Gregory Petrov had been one of the leaders of the Cadet party in the Duma in 1905 and was an enemy of the monarchical order. How could his defrocking be said to have been unjust in view of the fact that the Church had officially prayed for the Orthodox Autocracy, and Petrov had worked directly against the fulfilment of the Church’s prayers? The problem was: too many people, including several hierarchs, had welcomed the fall of the Tsarist regime. If the Church was not to divide along political lines, a general amnesty was considered necessary. But if true recovery can only begin with repentance, and repentance must begin with the leaders of the Church, this decree amounted to covering the wound without allowing it to heal.

As Bishop Dionysius (Alferov) of Novgorod writes, the Council could be criticized for its “weakening of Church discipline, its legitimization of complete freedom of political orientation and activity, and, besides, its rehabilitation of the Church revolutionaries like Gregory Petrov. By all this it doomed the Russian Church to collapse, presenting to her enemies the best conditions for her cutting up and annihilation piece by piece.

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702 Sokolov, “Put’ Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi v Rossii-SSSR (1916-1961)” (The Path of the Russian Orthodox Church in Russia and the USSR (1916-1961), in Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ v SSSR: Sbornik (The Russian Orthodox Church in the USSR: a Collection), Munich, 1962, p. 15.
“That this Council... did not express the voice of the complete fullness of the Russian Church is proved by the decisions of two other Councils of the time: that of Karlovtsy in 1921, and that of Vladivostok in 1922.

“At the Karlovtsy Council remembrance was finally made of the St. Sergius’ blessing of the Christian Sovereign Demetrius Donskoj for his battle with the enemies of the Church and the fatherland, and of the struggle for the Orthodox Kingdom of the holy Hierarch Hermogenes of Moscow. The question was raised of the ‘sin of February’, but because some of the prominent activists of the Council had participated in this, the question was left without detailed review. The decisions of this Council did not receive further official development in Church life because of the schisms that began both in the Church Abroad and in the monarchist movement. But the question of the re-establishment of the Orthodox Kingdom in Russia had been raised, and thinkers abroad worked out this thought in detail in the works, first of Prince N.D. Zhevakhov and Protopriest V. Vostokov, and then, more profoundly, in the works of Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev), Professor M.V. Zzyzkin, Archimandrite Constantine Zaitsev, V.N. Voejkov and N.P. Kusakov.

“The Church-land Council in Vladivostok, which is now almost forgotten, expressed itself more definitely, recognizing the Orthodox autocracy to be the only lawful authority in Russia.”

This Council decreed: “The Congress recognizes that the only path to the regeneration of a great, powerful and free Russia is the restoration in it of the monarchy, headed by a lawful Autocrat from the House of the Romanovs, in accordance with the Basic laws of the Russian Empire”.

**The Murder of the Tsar**

The Bolsheviks had been very fortunate. At one time the Party had once been so thoroughly penetrated by Tsarist agents as to make its success extraordinarily improbable. Again, Kornilov’s attempted coup, and Kerensky’s reaction to it, had played into their hands at a critical time. But it was one thing for the Bolsheviks to have won power: it was quite another thing to keep it. Everybody was against them, even the other socialist parties, who felt – rightly – that they had been tricked into surrendering power to them at the Congress of Soviets in October.

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703 Alferov, op. cit., pp. 16-17.
704 Alan Bullock writes: “One of the most celebrated Okhrana agents, Roman Malinovski, became Lenin’s trusted chief agent in Russia and led the Bolshevik deputies in the Fourth Duma. In 1908-10, four out of five members of the Bolsheviks’ St. Petersburg Committee were Okhrana agents. Persistent rumours that Stalin was one as well have never been confirmed…” ([Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives](https://www.harpercollins.com/9780006552405), London: HarperCollins, 1991, p. 433, note)
That the Bolsheviks hung on to power in their first year was probably owing to three factors. First, they decided very quickly not to nationalise the land that the peasants had seized from the landowners, thus neutralizing the appeal of their main political opponents, the Social Revolutionaries. Secondly, on December 20, 1917 the Cheka, with Felix Dzerzhinsky at its head, was founded in order to defend “the fruits of October” by all means possible, including the most extreme cruelties. And thirdly, in spite of strong opposition within the Party and throughout the country, Lenin moved to neutralize the external threat coming from his own paymasters, the Germans.

In March, 1918 the Bolsheviks took Russia out of the First World War in the most shameful way possible: they signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany, depriving Russia of about a quarter of her territory, a third of her population and a half of her industry. It was immediately denounced by Patriarch Tikhon, but justified by Lenin on the grounds that now Soviet Russia could recuperate while Germany and the Western Powers fought each other. The Tsar had promised that he would never sign a unilateral truce with Germany – and kept his promise. Lenin promised to take Russia out of the war – and did so on the worst possible terms, in order to turn the international war into a civil war fought, not against Germans (of whom Lenin was, after all, a paid agent\ bibliography{705}), but against Russians. That war had already begun in the south of the country, where the White armies, having survived a difficult first winter, were gathering their strength.

The critical question was: were the Whites going to fight under the banner of Orthodoxy and Tsarism or not? Tsarism meant, not Tsar Nicholas necessarily, who had abdicated, but the monarchical principle. However, the physical presence of Tsar Nicholas, whether as the actual ruler or as the senior representative of the old dynasty, was important. As long as the Tsar was alive, the possibility of a just and successful war against Bolshevism under the banner of Orthodoxy and Tsarism still existed. That is why the attempts to rescue the Tsar from captivity were not romantic side-shows, but critically important. And that is why the Bolsheviks proceeded to kill the Tsar... For, as Trotsky wrote: “In essence this decision was inevitable. The execution of the tsar and his family was necessary, not simply to scare, horrify and deprive the enemy of hope, but also to shake up our own ranks, show them that there was no going back…” 706

And so, on the night of July 17, 1918 Blessed Maria Ivanovna, the fool-for-Christ of Diveyevo, began to shout and scream: “The Tsar’s been killed with bayonets! Cursed Jews!” That night Tsar Nicholas II was shot in

705 Even after smuggling Lenin and his men into Russia in the sealed train, the Germans continued to pay him vast sums of money. Thus a “top secret” document of the Reichsbank in Berlin dated January 8, 1918 informed the Foreign Affairs Commissar that 50 million rubles were to be sent to the Sovnarkom (Istoki Zla, op. cit., p. 39).

Yekaterinburg together with Tsarina Alexandra, the Tsarevich Alexis, the Tsarevnas Olga, Tatiana, Maria and Anastasia, and several family servants in a decidedly Judaist-ritualistic manner. Strange cabbalistic symbols were found on the walls of the room where the crime took place which have been deciphered to mean: "Here, by order of the secret powers, the Tsar was offered as a sacrifice for the destruction of the state. Let all peoples be informed of this."707

The Royal Family had given a wonderful example of truly Christian love in their lives. And in their deaths they showed exemplary patience and love for their enemies. Thus Martyr-Great-Princess Olga Nikolayevna wrote from Tobolsk: "Father asks the following message to be given to all those who have remained faithful to him, and to those on whom they may have an influence, that they should not take revenge for him, since he has forgiven everyone and prays for everyone, that they should not take revenge for themselves, and should remember that the evil which is now in the world will be still stronger, but that it is not love that will conquer evil, but only love..." And in the belongings of the same holy martyr were found the following verses by S. Bekhteyev:

Now as we stand before the gates of death,  
Breathe in the lips of us Thy servants  
That more than human, supernatural strength  
To meekly pray for those that hurt us.

The next day, at Alapayevsk, Grand Duchess Elizabeth was killed together with her faithful companion, the Nun Barbara, and several Great Princes.

The murder of the Tsar and his family was not the responsibility of the Bolsheviks only, but of all those who, directly or indirectly, connived at it. As St. John Maximovich explained: "The sin against him and against Russia was perpetrated by all who in one way or another acted against him, who did not oppose, or who merely by sympathizing participated in those events which took place forty years ago. That sin lies upon everyone until it is washed away by sincere repentance..."708

707 See Nikolai Kozlov, Krestnij Put' (The Way of the Cross), Moscow, 1993; Enel, "Zhertva" (Sacrifice), Kolokol' (Bell), Moscow, 1990, № 5, pp. 17-37, and Michael Orlov, "Ekaterinburgskaya Gologfa" (The Golgotha of Yekaterinburg), Kolokol' (Bell), 1990, № 5, pp. 37-55; Lebedev, op. cit., p. 519; Prince Felix Yusupov, Memuary (Memoirs), Moscow, 1998, p. 249. However, some doubt is cast on the ritual murder hypothesis by the fact that when Sokolov's archive was sold at Sotheby's in 1990, the critical piece of evidence - the symbols on the wall-paper - were missing (Bishop Ambrose of Methone, personal communication, June 4, 2010).

708 St. John, "Homily before a Memorial Service for the Tsar-Martyr", in Man of God: Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco, Richfield Springs, N.Y, 1994, p. 133. Archbishop Averky of Syracuse continues the theme: "It is small consolation for us that the Royal Family was killed directly by non-Russian hands, non-Orthodox hands and non-Russian people. Although that is so, the whole Russian people is guilty of this terrible, unprecedented evil deed, insofar as it did not resist or stand against it, but behaved itself in such a way that the evil deed appeared
On hearing the news of the Tsar’s murder, Patriarch Tikhon immediately condemned it. He had already angered the government by sending the Tsar his blessing in prison; and he now celebrated a pannikhida for him, blessing the archpastors and pastors to do the same. Then, on July 21, he announced in the Kazan cathedral: “We, in obedience to the teaching of the Word of God, must condemn this deed, otherwise the blood of the shot man will fall also on us, and not only on those who committed the crime…”

However, the people as a whole did not condemn the evil deed. The result was a significant increase in their suffering... In August, 1918 an attempt was made on the life of Lenin. Shaken, the Bolsheviks initiated the Red Terror. Of course, they had been terrorizing the population of Russia from the beginning. But now the terror assumed more organized forms, and was on a much greater scale...

The Goals of Leninism

We have seen that Leninism, far from being a scientifically based doctrine, was much closer in essence to pagan demon-worship with its incessant demand for more and more blood. As the number of victims mounted, the Church, slow hitherto in exposing the full horror of the persecution, began to protest more loudly. Thus on August 8, 1918, in an address “to all the faithful children of the Russian Orthodox Church”, the Patriarch said: “Sin has fanned everywhere the flame of the passions, enmity and wrath; brother has risen up against brother; the prisons are filled with captives; the earth is soaked in innocent blood, shed by a brother’s hand; it is defiled by violence, pillaging, fornication and every uncleanness. From this same poisonous source of sin has issued the great deception of material earthly goods, by which our people is enticed, forgetting the one thing necessary. We have not rejected this temptation, as the Saviour Christ rejected it in the wilderness. We have wanted to create a paradise on earth, but without God and His holy commandments. God is not mocked. And so we hunger and thirst and are naked upon the earth, blessed with an abundance of nature’s gifts, and the seal of the curse has fallen on the very work of the people and on all the undertakings of our hands. Sin, heavy and unrepented of, has summoned Satan from the abyss, and he is now bellowing his slander against the Lord and against His Christ, and is raising an open persecution against the Church.”

as the natural expression of that mood which by that time had matured in the minds and hearts of the undoubted majority of the unfortunate misguided Russian people, beginning with the ‘lowers’ and ending with the very ‘tops’, the upper aristocracy” (Religioznomysticheskij smysl ubienia Tsarkoj Sem’i” (The Religious-Mystical Meaning of the Killing of the Royal Family),


709 Gubonin, op. cit., p. 143.

710 Regelson, op. cit., p. 52; Gubonin, op. cit., p. 146.
In characterizing Socialism in similar terms to those used by Dostoyevsky’s Grand Inquisitor, as the temptation to create bread out of stones which Christ rejected, the Patriarch certainly gave a valid critique of Socialism as it was and still is popularly understood – that is, as a striving for social justice on earth, or, as the former Marxist Fr. Sergius Bulgakov put it in 1917, “the thought that first of all and at any price hunger must be conquered and the chains of poverty broken… Socialism does not signify a radical reform of life, it is charity, one of its forms as indicated by contemporary life – and nothing more. The triumph of socialism would not introduce anything essentially new into life.” From this point of view, Socialism is essentially a well-intentioned movement that has gone wrong because it fails to take into account God, the commandments of God and the fallenness of human nature. The guilt of the Socialists consists in the fact that, rather than seeking paradise in heaven and with God through the fulfilment of His commandments, they “have wanted to create a paradise on earth, but without God and His holy commandments”. The result has been hell in this life and (to quote from the anathema of 1918) “the fire of Gehenna in the life to come”...

However, as Igor Shafarevich has demonstrated, Socialism in its more radical form – that is, Revolutionary Socialism (Bolshevism, Leninism) as opposed to Welfare Socialism - is very little concerned with justice and not at all with charity. Its real motivation is simply satanic hatred, hatred of the whole of the old world and all those in it, and the desire to destroy it to its very foundations. Its supposed striving for social justice is only a cover, a fig-leaf, a propaganda tool for the attainment of this purely destructive aim, which can be analyzed into four objects: the destruction of: (i) hierarchy, (ii) private property, (iii) the family, and (iv) religion.

1. Hierarchy. Hierarchy had already largely been destroyed by the time the Bolsheviks came to power: from that time the only hierarchy was the Communist Party and all others were equally miserable in relation to it.

2. Private Property. Lenin’s famous slogan: “Loot the loot” (граб’ нажранные) expresses the Party’s relationship to property. And by the end of the Civil War all property and privilege of any significance had passed into the hands of the new aristocracy, the Communist Party. Lenin’s plans were aided by a characteristic of the peasants (not all of them, of course, but probably the majority) that has already been noted: their refusal to admit the right of any but peasants to the land. Pipes writes: “The peasant was revolutionary in one respect only: he did not acknowledge private ownership of land. Although on the eve of the Revolution he owned nine-tenths of the country’s arable, he craved for the remaining 10 percent held by landlords,

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711 Bulgakov, Sotsializm i Khristianstvo (Socialism and Christianity), Moscow, 1917; quoted in Shafarevich, op. cit., pp. 288, 289.
712 Shafarevich, op. cit., p. 265.
merchants, and noncommunal peasants. No economic or legal arguments could change his mind: he felt he had a God-given right to that land and that someday it would be his. And by his he meant the commune’s, which would allocate it justly to its members. The prevalence of communal landholding in European Russia was, along with the legacy of serfdom, a fundamental fact of Russian social history. It meant that along with a poorly developed sense for law, the peasant also had little respect for private property. Both tendencies were exploited and exacerbated by radical intellectuals for their own ends to incite the peasants against the status quo.

"Russia’s industrial workers were potentially destabilizing not because they assimilated revolutionary ideologies – very few of them did and even they were excluded from leadership positions in the revolutionary parties. Rather, since most of them were one or at most two generations removed from the village and only superficially urbanized, they carried with them to the factory rural attitudes only slightly adjusted to industrial conditions. They were not socialists but syndicalists, believing that as their village relatives were entitled to all the land, so they had a right to the factories..."

3. The Family. Oliver Figes writes: “The Bolsheviks envisaged the building of their Communist utopia as a constant battle against custom and habit. With the end of the Civil War they prepared for a new and longer struggle on the ‘internal front’, a revolutionary war for the liberation of the communistic personality through the eradication of individualistic (‘bourgeois’) behaviour and deviant habits (prostitution, alcoholism, hooliganism and religion) inherited from the old society. There was little dispute among the Bolsheviks that this battle to transform human nature would take decades. There was only disagreement about when the battle should begin. Marx had taught that the alteration of consciousness was dependent on changes to the material base, and Lenin, when he introduced the NEP, affirmed that until the material conditions of a Communist society had been created – a process that would take an entire historical epoch – there was no point trying to engineer a Communist system of morality in private life. But most Bolsheviks did not accept that the NEP required a retreat from the private sphere. On the contrary, as they were increasingly inclined to think, active engagement was essential at every moment and in every battlefield of everyday life – in the family, the home and the inner world of the individual, where the persistence of old mentalities was a major threat to the Party’s basic ideological goals. And as they watched the individualistic instincts of the ‘petty-bourgeois’ masses become stronger in the culture of the NEP, they redoubled their efforts. As Anatoly Lunacharsky wrote in 1927: ‘The so-called sphere of private life cannot slip away from us, because it is precisely here that the final goal of the Revolution is to be reached.’

713 Pipes, op. cit., p. 494.
"The family was the first arena in which the Bolsheviks engaged the struggle. In the 1920s, they took it as an article of faith that the ‘bourgeois family’ was socially harmful: it was inward-looking and conservative, a stronghold of religion, superstition, ignorance and prejudice; it fostered egotism and material acquisitiveness, and oppressed women and children. The Bolsheviks expected that the family would disappear as Soviet Russia developed into a fully socialist system, in which the state took responsibility for all the basic household functions, providing nurseries, laundries and canteens in public centres and apartment blocks. Liberated from labour in the home, women would be free to enter the workforce on an equal footing with men. The patriarchal marriage, with its attendant sexual morals, would die out – to be replaced, the radicals believed, by ‘free unions of love’.

"As the Bolsheviks saw it, the family was the biggest obstacle to the socialization of children. ‘By loving a child, the family turns him into an egotistical being, encouraging him to see himself as the centre of the universe,’ wrote the Soviet educational thinker Zlata Lilina. Bolshevik theorists agreed on the need to replace this ‘egotistic love’ with the ‘rational love’ of a broader ‘social family’. The ABC of Communism (1919) envisaged a future society in which parents would no longer use the word ‘my’ to refer to their children, but would care for all the children in their community. Among the Bolsheviks there were different views about how long this change would take. Radicals argued that the Party should take direct action to undermine the family immediately, but most accepted the arguments of Bukharin and NEP theorists that in a peasant country such as Soviet Russia the family would remain for some time the primary unity of production and consumption and that it would weaken gradually as the country made the transition to an urban socialist society.

"Meanwhile the Bolsheviks adopted various strategies – such as the transformation of domestic space – intended to accelerate the disintegration of the family. To tackle the housing shortages in the overcrowded cities the Bolsheviks compelled wealthy families to share their apartments with the urban poor – a policy known as ‘condensation’ (uplotnenie). During the 1920s the most common type of communal apartment (kommunalka) was one in which the original owners occupied the main rooms on the ‘parade side’ while the back rooms were filled by other families. At that time it was still possible for the former owners to select their co-inhabitants, provided they fulfilled the ‘sanitary norm’ (a per capita allowance of living space which fell from 13.5 square metres in 1926 to just 9 square metres in 1931). Many families brought in servants or acquaintances to prevent strangers being moved in to fill up the surplus living space. The policy had a strong ideological appeal, not just as a war on privilege, which is how it was presented in the propaganda of the new regime (‘War against the Palaces!’), but also as part of a crusade to engineer a more collective way of life. By forcing people to share communal apartments, the Bolsheviks believed that
they could make them communistic in their basic thinking and behaviour. Private space and property would disappear, the individual (‘bourgeois’) family would be replaced by communistic fraternity and organization, and the life of the individual would become immersed in the community. From the middle of the 1920s, new types of housing were designed with this transformation in mind. The most radical Soviet architects, like the Constructivists in the Union of Contemporary Architects, proposed the complete obliteration of the private sphere by building ‘commune houses’ (doma kommuny) where all the property, including even clothes and underwear, would be shared by the inhabitants, where domestic tasks like cooking and childcare would be assigned to teams on a rotating basis, and where everybody would sleep in one big dormitory, divided by gender, with private rooms for sexual liaisons. Few houses of this sort were ever built, although they loomed large in the utopian imagination and futuristic novels such as Yevgeny Zamiatin’s *We* (1920). Most of the projects which did materialize, like the Narkomfin (Ministry of Finance) house in Moscow (1930) designed by the Constructivist Moisei Ginzburg, tended to stop short of the full communal form and included both private living spaces and communalized blocks for laundries, baths, dining rooms and kitchens, nurseries and schools. Yet the goal remained to marshal architecture in a way that would induce the individual to move away from private (‘bourgeois’) forms of domesticity to a more collective way of life.

“The Bolsheviks also intervened more directly in domestic life. The new Code on Marriage and the Family (1918) established a legislative framework that clearly aimed to facilitate the breakdown of the traditional family. It removed the influence of the Church from marriage and divorce, making both a process of simple registration with the state. It granted the same legal rights to de facto marriages (couples living together) as it gave to legal marriages. The Code turned divorce from a luxury for the rich to something that was easy and affordable for all. The result was a huge increase in casual marriages and the highest rate of divorce in the world – three times higher than in France or Germany and twenty-six times higher than in England by 1926 – as the collapse of the Christian-patriarchal order and the chaos of the revolutionary years loosened sexual morals along with family and communal ties.”

Figes, *The Whisperers*, op. cit., pp. 7-10. Figes continues: “In the early years of Soviet power, family breakdown was so common among revolutionary activists that it almost constituted an occupational hazard. Casual relationships were practically the norm in Bolshevik circles during the Civil War, when any comrade could be sent at a moment’s notice to some distant sector of the front. Such relaxed attitudes remained common through the 1920s, as Party activists and their young emulators in the Komsomol [Communist Youth League] were taught to put their commitment to the proletariat before romantic love or family. Sexual promiscuity was more pronounced in the Party’s youthful ranks than among Soviet youth in general. Many Bolsheviks regarded sexual licence as a form of liberation from bourgeois moral conventions and as a sign of ‘Soviet modernity’. Some even advocated promiscuity as a
In November, 1920 the Bolsheviks also legalized abortions; they were made available free of charge at the mother’s request. For “in Soviet Russia,” writes Pipes, “as in the rest of Europe, World War I led to a loosening of sexual mores, which here was justified on moral grounds. The apostle of free love in Soviet Russia was Alexandra Kollontai, the most prominent woman Bolshevik. Whether she practiced what she preached or preached what she practiced, is not for the historian to determine; but the evidence suggests that she had an uncontrollable sex drive coupled with an inability to form enduring relationships. Born the daughter of a wealthy general, terribly spoiled in childhood, she reacted to the love lavished on her with rebellion. In 1906 she joined the Mensheviks, then, in 1915, switched to Lenin, whose antiwar stand she admired. Subsequently, she performed for him valuable services as agent and courier.

“In her writings, Kollontai argued that the modern family had lost its traditional economic function, which meant that women should be set free to choose their partners. In 1919 she published The New Morality and the Working Class, a work based on the writings of the German feminist Grete Meisel-Hess. In it she maintained that women had to be emancipated not only economically but also psychologically. The ideal of ‘grand amour’ was very difficult to realize, especially for men, because it clashed with their worldly ambitions. To be capable of it, individuals had to undergo an apprenticeship in the form of ‘love games’ or ‘erotic friendships’, which taught them to engage in sexual relations free of both emotional attachment and personal domination. Casual sex alone conditioned women to safeguard their individuality in a society dominated by men. Every form of sexual relationship was acceptable: Kollontai advocated what she called ‘successive polygamy’. In the capacity of Commissar of Guardianship (Prizrenia) she promoted communal kitchens as a way of ‘separating the kitchen from way to counteract the formation of coupling relationships that separated lovers from the collective and detracted from their loyalty to the Party.

“It was a commonplace that the Bolshevik made a bad husband a father because the demands of the Party took him away from the home. ‘We Communists don’t know our own families,’ remarked one Moscow Bolshevik. ‘You leave early and come home late. You seldom see your wife and almost never your children.’ At Party congresses, where the issue was discussed throughout the 1920s, it was recognized that Bolsheviks were far more likely than non-Party husbands to abandon wives and families, and that this had much to do with the primacy of Party loyalties over sexual fidelity. But in fact the problem of absent wives and mothers was almost as acute in Party circles, as indeed it was in the broader circle of the Soviet intelligentsia, where most women were involved in the public sphere.

“Trotzky argued that the Bolsheviks were more affected than others by domestic breakdown because they were ‘most exposed to the influence of new conditions’. As pioneers of a modern way of life, Trotsky wrote in 1923, the ‘Communist vanguard merely passes sooner and more violently through what is inevitable’ for the population as a whole. In many Party households there was certainly a sense of pioneering a new type of family – one that liberated both parents for public activities – albeit at the cost of intimate involvement with their children.” (pp. 10-11)

marriage’. She, too, wanted the care of children to be assumed by the community. She predicted that in time the family would disappear, and women should learn to treat all children as their own. She popularized her theories in a novel, *Free Love: The Love of Worker Bees* (*Svobodnaja liubov’: liubov’ pchel trudovykh*) (1924), one part of which was called, ‘The Love of Three Generations’. Its heroine preached divorcing sex from morality as well as from politics. Generous with her body, she said she loved everybody, from Lenin down, and gave herself to any man who happened to attract her.

“Although often regarded as the authoritarian theoretician of Communist sex morals, Kollontai was very much the exception who scandalized her colleagues. Lenin regarded ‘free love’ as a ‘bourgeois’ idea – by which he meant not so much extramarital affairs (with which he himself had had experience) as casual sex…”

“Studies of the sexual mores of Soviet youth conducted in the 1920s revealed considerable discrepancy between what young people said they believed and what they actually practiced: unusually, in this instance behaviour was less promiscuous than theory. Russia’s young people stated they considered love and marriage ‘bourgeois’ relics and thought Communists should enjoy a sexual life unhampered by any inhibitions: the less affection and commitment entered into male-female relations, the more ‘communist’ they were. According to opinion surveys, students looked on marriage as confining and, for women, degrading: the largest number of respondents – 50.8 percent of the women and 67.3 of the women – expressed a preference for long-term relationships based on mutual affection but without the formality of marriage.

“Deeper probing of their attitudes, however, revealed that behind the façade of defiance of tradition, old attitudes survived intact. Relations based on love were the ideal of 82.6 percent of the men and 90.5 percent of the women: ‘This is what they secretly long for and dream about,’ according to the author of the survey. Few approved of the kind of casual sex advocated by Kollontai and widely associated with early Communism: a mere 13.3 percent of the men and 10.6 of the women. Strong emotional and moral factors continued to inhibit casual sex: one Soviet survey revealed that over half of the female student respondents were virgins…”

In this continuing conservatism of Soviet youth we see the continuing influence of the Orthodox Church, into which most Russians had been baptized. The Church resisted all the Soviet innovations, including civil marriage, abortion and divorce on demand. And soon the State, too, reversed its teaching, outlawing abortion in 1936 and condemning free love...

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4. Religion. Of these four destructive ends of Bolshevism, the most fundamental is the destruction of religion – if not all religion (for Socialism itself is arguably a kind of religion), at any rate the true religion, Christianity. The incompatibility between Socialism and Christianity was never doubted by the apostles of Socialism. Religion was to Marx “opium for the people”, and to Lenin – “spiritual vodka”. Lenin wrote that “every religious idea, every idea of a god, even flirting with the idea of God is unutterable vileness of the most dangerous kind”. And in 1918 he said to Krasin: “Electricity will take the place of God. Let the peasant pray to electricity; he’s going to feel the power of the central authorities more than that of heaven.”

As regards the Bolshevik attitude to law, this was described by Latsis: “In the investigation don’t search for materials and proofs that the accused acted in word or deed against Soviet power. The first question which you must put to him is: what is his origin, education, upbringing or profession. These are the questions that must decide the fate of the accused... If it is possible to accuse the Cheka of anything it is not in excessive zeal in executions, but in not applying the supreme penalty enough... We were always too soft and magnanimous towards the defeated foe.”

As for morality, in his address to the Third All-Russian congress of the Union of Russian Youth in October, 1920, Lenin wrote: "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 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.”

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719 Latsis, Ezhenedel’nik ChK (Cheka Weekly), № 1, November 1, 1918; in Priest Vladimir Dmitriev, Simbirskaya Golgota (Simbirsk’s Golgotha), Moscow, 1997, p. 4.

720 Lenin, op. cit., vol. 41, p. 309.
Of course, there is an inner contradiction here. If God exists, and all the older systems of morality are nonsense, why entertain any notions of good and evil? And why prefer the interests of the proletariat to anyone else’s? In fact, if God does not exist, then, as Dostoyevsky said, everything is permitted and nothing is sacred – not even the interests of the proletariat. And this is what we actually find in Bolshevism – a complete disregard of the interests of any class or person, excepting only of the Communist Party and its leader.

In any case, as Alexander Solzhenitsyn wrote: “The line dividing good and evil passes not between states, not between classes, and not between parties – it passes through each human heart – and through all human hearts...” Solzhenitsyn, Arkhipelag GULag (The GULag Archipelago), Paris: YMCA Press, volume 2, p. 602. And again he wrote: “Within the philosophical system of Marx and Lenin, and at the heart of their psychology, 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...” Solzhenitsyn, Acceptance Speech, Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion, 1983; Russkaia Mysl‘ (Russian Thought), № 3465, 19 May, 1983, p. 6.

That militant atheism, and the rejection of all religiously based morality, was the central pivot of Marxism-Leninism was to become abundantly evident in the next seventy years. And in proportion as the Bolsheviks’ actions became more bloody, so the Patriarch’s condemnation became sterner. Using his position as the head of the Church and last man in Russia who was allowed to speak his mind, on October 26, 1918 he wrote to the Sovnarkom: “All those who take up the sword will perish by the sword’ (Matthew 26.52). This prophecy of the Saviour we apply to you, the present determiners of the destinies of our fatherland, who call yourselves ‘people’s commissars’. For a whole year you have held State power in your hands and you are already preparing to celebrate the anniversary of the October revolution, but the blood poured out in torrents of our brothers pitilessly slaughtered in accordance with your appeals, cries out to heaven and forces us to speak to you this bitter word of righteousness.

“In truth you gave it a stone instead of bread and a serpent instead of a fish (Matthew 7.9, 10). You promised to give the people, worn out by bloody war, peace ‘without annexations and requisitions’. In seizing power and calling on the people to trust you, what promises did you give it and how did you carry out these promises? What conquests could you renounce when you had brought Russia to a shameful peace [the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk] whose humiliating conditions you yourselves did not even decide to publish fully? Instead of annexations and requisitions our great homeland has been conquered, reduced and divided, and in payment of the tribute imposed on it you will secretly export to Germany the gold which was accumulated by
others than you... You have divided the whole people into warring camps, and plunged them into a fratricide of unprecedented ferocity. You have openly exchanged the love of Christ for hatred, and instead of peace you have artificially inflamed class enmity. And there is no end in sight to the war you have started, since you are trying to use the workers and peasants to bring victory to the spectre of world revolution... It is not enough that you have drenched the hands of the Russian people in the blood of brothers, covering yourselves with contributions, requisitions and nationalisations under various names: you have incited the people to the most blatant and shameless looting. At your instigation there has been the looting or confiscation of lands, estates, factories, houses and cattle; money, objects, furniture and clothing are looted. At first you robbed the more wealthy and industrious peasants under the name of ‘bourgeois’, thereby multiplying the numbers of the poor, although you could not fail to realise that by devastating a great number of individual citizens the people’s wealth is being destroyed and the country itself ravaged.

“Having seduced the dark and ignorant people with the opportunity of easy and unpunished profit, you darkened their consciences and drowned out in them the consciousness of sin. But with whatever names you cover your evil deeds – murder, violence and looting will always remain heavy sins and crimes that cry out to heaven for revenge.

“You promised freedom. Rightly understood, as freedom from evil, that does not restrict others, and does not pass over into licence and self-will, freedom is a great good. But you have not given that kind of freedom: the freedom given by you consists in indulging in every way the base passions of the mob, and in not punishing murder and robbery. Every manifestation both of true civil and the higher spiritual freedom of mankind is mercilessly suppressed by you. Is it freedom when nobody can get food for himself, or rent a flat, or move from city to city without special permission? Is it freedom when families, and sometimes the populations of whole houses are resettled and their property thrown out into the street, and when citizens are artificially divided into categories, some of which are given over to hunger and pillaging? Is it freedom when nobody can openly express his opinion for fear of being accused of counter-revolution?

“Where is freedom of the word and the press, where is the freedom of Church preaching? Many bold Church preachers have already paid with the blood of their martyrdom; the voice of social and state discussion and reproach is suppressed; the press, except for the narrowly Bolshevik press, has been completely smothered. The violation of freedom in matters of the faith is especially painful and cruel. There does not pass a day in which the most monstrous slanders against the Church of Christ and her servers, and malicious blasphemies and sacrilege, are not published in the organs of your press. You mock the servers of the altar, you force a bishop to dig ditches (Bishop Hermogen of Tobolsk), and you send priests to do dirty work. You
have placed your hands on the heritage of the Church, which has been
gathered by generations of believing people, and you have not hesitated to
violate their last will. You have closed a series of monasteries and house
churches without any reason or cause. You have cut off access to the Moscow
Kremlin, that sacred heritage of the whole believing people... It is not our task
to judge earthly powers; every power allowed by God would attract to itself
Our blessing if it were in truth a servant of God subject to the good, and was
‘terrible not for good deeds, but for evil’ (Romans 13.3,4). Now we extend to
you, who are using your power for the persecution of your neighbours and
the destruction of the innocent, Our word of exhortation: celebrate the
anniversary of your coming to power by liberating the imprisoned, by
stopping the blood-letting, violence, destruction and restriction of the faith.
Turn not to destruction, but to the establishment of order and legality. Give
the people the rest from civil war that they desire and deserve. Otherwise
‘from you will be required all the righteous blood that you have shed’ (Luke
11.51), ’and you who have taken up the sword will perish by the sword’.”

Pipes writes: “The effect that persecution had on religious sentiments and
practices during the first decade of Communist rule is difficult to assess.
There is a great deal of circumstantial evidence, however, that people
continued to observe religious rituals and customs, treating the Communists
as they would heathen conquerors. Although the observance of religious
holidays had been outlawed, the prohibition could not be enforced. As early
as 1918 workers received permission to celebrate Easter provided they did not
absent themselves from work for more than five days. Later on, the
authorities acquiesced in the suspension of work on Christmas under both the
old and new calendars. There are reports of religious processions (krestnye
khody) in the capital as well as in provincial towns. In the rural districts, the
peasants insisted on regarding as legitimate only marriages performed by a
priest.

“Religious fervor, which, along with monarchic sentiments, had
 perceptibly ebbed in 1917, revived in the spring of 1918, when many
Christians courted martyrdom by demonstrating, holding protest meetings,
and fasting. The fervor increased with each year: in 1920, ‘The Churches filled
with worshippers; among them there was not that predominance of women
that could be noted before the revolution. Confession acquired particular
importance... Church holidays attracted immense crowds. Church life in 1920
was fully restored and perhaps even exceeded the old, pre-Revolutionary one.
Without a doubt, the inner growth of church self-consciousness among
Russian believers attained a height unknown during the preceding two
centuries.’

723 Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement),
“Tikhon confirmed this judgement in an interview with an American journalist the same year, saying that ‘the influence of the church on the lives of the people was stronger than ever in all its history’. Confirming these impressions, one well-informed observer concluded in 1926 that the church had emerged victorious from its conflict with the Communists: ‘The only thing the Bolsheviks had achieved was to loosen the hierarchy and split the church’.

“But ahead of it lay trials such as no church had ever endured…”

The Russian Civil War

The Russian Civil War was the bloodiest conflict in human history to that date, causing the deaths of up to twenty million people according to some estimates, eight or nine million according to others. Pipes estimates the human casualties of the revolution until 1922 at 23 million. By August, 1920, 29 percent of the age group 16-49 had been eliminated.

The defeat of the Whites has been attributed to many factors – the Reds’ occupation of the centre, the Whites’ difficulties of communication, the fitful intervention of the western powers, the betrayal of the Whites by the Poles… Certainly the Reds did not represent a formidable opponent. Having destroyed the old Imperial army, it was extremely difficult for them to build up an effective new army. By the spring of 1920 80% of the officer corps was staffed by former tsarist officers, who services were retained only by the threat that their families would be massacred if they did not comply. Even so, there were very many desertions to the Whites – 1.76 million in 1919 alone.

But the sad and most fundamental fact was that, as Elder Aristocles of Moscow (+1918) said, “The spirit [among the Whites] is not right.” For many of them were aiming, not at the restoration of Orthodoxy and the Orthodox tsardom, but at the reconvening of the Constituent Assembly or the restoration of the landowners’ lands. Although this conclusion is disputed by some, the evidence is in its favour.

Gregory Benevich even goes so far as to say that “the Civil War was not a war between the true Christians and unbelievers. It was a war between those who were seduced only by Western culture and spirituality, and those who

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725 Pipes, op. cit., p. 509.
726 Pipes, op. cit., p. 60.
727 For example, by Protodeacon German Ivanov-Trinadtsaty, who writes: “Even if the White Army officially supported the principle of ‘non-pre-determination’ in relation to the future political order of Russia, according to the witness of General P.N. Wrangel, 90% of his Russian Army was composed of monarchists, and set itself only one task – the overthrow of the Bolshevik yoke” (“90 let Velikogo Rossijskogo Iskhoda” (90 Years of the Great Russian Exodus), Nasha Strana, N 2905, December 4, 2010, p. 2).
went to the end in their fall, as far as communism. Both of them were not true Orthodox Christians. Both of them were punished by God”.\(^{728}\) However, this is an exaggerated opinion…

Of course, as noted above, if the White armies approaching Yekaterinburg from the East in July, 1918 had managed to rescue the Tsar and his family alive, the task of the Whites would have been easier – which is precisely why the Reds killed them. But even a living Tsar would probably have availed little in view of the fact that in their majority neither the White soldiers nor the populations whose interests they sought to represent were monarchists. Thus in 1919, when the Romanov Great Princes who were in the Crimea approached General Denikin with a request to enter the ranks of the White Army, they were refused. “The reasons,” writes Prince Felix Yusupov, “were political: the presence of relatives of the imperial family in the ranks of the White Army was not desirable. The refusal greatly upset us…”\(^{729}\)

Again, as Michael Nazarov points out, “there sat in the White governments at that time activists like, for example, the head of the Archangel government Tchaikovsky, who gave to the West as an explanation of the Bolshevik savageries the idea that ‘we put up with the destructive autocratic regime for too long,… our people were less educated politically than the other allied peoples’?”\(^{730}\)

Again, the leading White General A.I. Denikin said: “It is not given us to know what state structure Russia would have accepted in the event of the victory of the White armies in 1919-20. I am sure, however, that after an inevitable, but short-lived struggle of various political tendencies, a normal structure would have been established in Russia based on the principles of law, freedom and private property. And in any case – no less democratic than that which the reposed Marshal [Pisludsky] introduced in Poland…”\(^{731}\)

Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) commented: “Unfortunately, the most noble and pious leader of this [the White] army listened to those unfitting counsellors who were foreign to Russia and sat in his Special council and destroyed the undertaking. The Russian people, the real people, the believing and struggling people, did not need the bare formula: ‘a united and undivided Russia’. They needed neither ‘Christian Russia’, nor ‘Faithless Russia’, nor ‘Tsarist Russia’, nor ‘the Landowners’ Russia’ (by which they will always understand a republic). They needed the combination of the three

dear words – ‘for the Faith, the Tsar and the Fatherland’. Most of all, they needed the first word, since faith rules the whole of the state’s life; the second word was necessary since the tsar guards and protects the first; and the third was needed since the people is the bearer of the first words.”732

Not having firmly Orthodox and monarchical convictions, but rather, as V. Shambarov writes, “a complete absence of a political programme”733, the Whites were bound to be disunited amongst themselves and weak in opposing Red propaganda in their rear. This was especially evident on the northern front, where Red propaganda was effective amongst both the White Russians and the British.734 But it was hardly less true on the other fronts.

In this failure, the Whites lost their own major weapon in the propaganda war. For as Trotsky said: “If the White Guardists had thought of unfurling the slogan of the kulaks’ Tsar, we would not have lasted for two weeks…” So anti-monarchism not only destroyed the monarchy: it destroyed any chance of delivering Russia from the Bolshevik nightmare.

St. John Maximovich summed up the situation: “If the higher military leaders, instead of beseeching his Majesty ‘on their knees’ to abdicate, had carried out what they were bound to do in accordance with their oath, the artificially incited rebellion would have been suppressed and Russia would have been saved… A terrible sin before God and a state crime was carried out. God only knows the extent to which any of them expiated their sin. But there was hardly any open repentance. After the fall of the Provisional Government, and the loss of the power it had seized, there was a call to struggle for Russia. But although it elicited noble feelings among many and a corresponding movement, there was no expression of repentance on the part of the main criminals, who continued to think of themselves as heroes and saviours of Russia. Meanwhile, Trotsky in his Memoirs admitted that they (the Soviets) feared above all the proclamation of a Tsar, since then the fall of Soviet power would have been inevitable. However, this did not happen, the ‘leaders’ were also afraid. They inspired many to struggle, but their call was belated and their courage did not save Russia. Some of them laid down their lives and shed their blood in this struggle, but far more innocent blood was shed. It continues to be poured out throughout Russia, crying out to heaven.”735

Another weakness of the Whites was their failure to curb anti-semitic excesses in their ranks, especially among the Cossacks. However, as Pipes writes, “while the Cossack detachments of the Southern Army committed numerous atrocities (none can be attributed to the Volunteer army), a careful

732 Khrapovitsky, op. cit., p. 4.
733 Shambarov, Belogvardeischina (Whiteguardism), Moscow, 2002.
735 St. John Maximovich, in Fomin, op. cit., p. 286.
reckoning of the pogroms by Jewish organizations indicates that the worst crimes were the work of independent gangs of Ukrainians." The fact is that hatred of Jews was common to all classes of society, of all ideological persuasions, at this time, and similar atrocities committed by the Reds have been glossed over by historians.

Nevertheless, the fact is that shameful acts of plunder, torture and rape took place; and while, as Pipes goes on to say, "it is incorrect to lay wholesale blame for the massacres of the Jews on the White Army, it is true that Denikin [commander of the Volunteer Army] remained passive in the face of these atrocities, which not only stained the reputation of his army but also demoralized it...

"Personally, Denikin was not a typical anti-Semite of the time: at any rate, in his five-volume chronicle of the Civil War he does not blame the Jews either for Communism or for his defeat. On the contrary, he expresses shame at their treatment in his army as well as the pogroms and shows awareness of the debilitating effect these had on the army’s morale. But he was a weak, politically inexperienced man who had little control over the behaviour of his troops. He yielded to the pressures of anti-Semites in his officer corps from fear of appearing pro-Jewish and from a sense of the futility of fighting against prevailing passions. In June 1919 he told a Jewish delegation that urged him to issue a declaration condemning the pogroms, that ‘words here were powerless, that any unnecessary clamor in regard to this question will only make the situation of Jews harder, irritating the masses and bringing out the customary accusations of “selling out to the Yids”.’ Whatever the justice of such excuses for passivity in the face of civilian massacres, they must have impressed the army as well as the population at large that the White Army command viewed Jews with suspicion and if it did not actively encourage pogroms, neither was it exercised about them...

"The only prominent public figure to condemn the pogroms openly and unequivocally was the head of the Orthodox Church, Patriarch Tikhon. In an Epistle issued on July 21, 1919, he called violence against Jews ‘dishonor for the perpetrators, dishonour for the Holy Church’."

Paradoxically, the population was probably more anti-Bolshevik in the Red-occupied areas than elsewhere – because they had had direct experience of Bolshevik cruelty. As General A.A. von Lampe writes, “the border regions, which naturally attracted to themselves the attention of those Russians who did not want to submit to the dictatorship established in the centre, did not know Bolshevism, that is, they probably did not know the results of its practical application on the skin of the natives. They had not experienced the delights

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737 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 110, 111.
of the Soviet paradise and were not able to exert themselves fully to avoid the
trials and torments that were coming upon them.

“The population of these provinces, of course, knew the war that was
exhausting the whole of Russia. The population also knew the revolution,
which gave them the so-called ‘freedoms’!... The population, with the
complicity of the soldiers, who had known on the front only the declaration of
rights, but not the obligations of the soldier, knew only about their rights and
did not at all represent to themselves that all these rights were bound up with
certain obligations.

“On the territory of this population a real war was being waged, a civil war
with its gunfights that did not always hit only those who were fighting in the
direct line of fire; with its repressions, not only in relation to people and their
property, but also to the settlements themselves, which sometimes, in the
course of a battle, were mercilessly and inexorably razed to the ground... The
population had to sacrifice their rights and their comforts. The White army
was not that equipped and organized army that we are accustomed to
imagine when we pronounce that word; immediately on coming into contact
with the population it was forced to take from it fodder, horses, reserves of
food and, finally, the people themselves!

“War on a given territory always brings with it many deprivations and
sufferings. War, and in particular civil war, feeds itself and supplements itself!
And, of course, the population could not welcome this; it, as I have already
said, thought not about its responsibilities, but only about its rights, and it
expected from the Whites only the immediate restoration of order and normal
conditions of life, not thinking on its side to offer it any help at all.

“The whole sum of unpleasantnesses brought by the drawn-out war was
very sharply experienced by the population; and at the same time it was being
forcibly corrupted by the Red and socialist propaganda promising them
deliverance from all these woes, promises of complete prosperity and
complete dominion, promises which, as we know, have seduced not only
Russia, but are disturbing no small part of the population of the whole world
to this day...

“All this came down to the fact that the inconveniences caused by the
Whites ranged the population against them...

“The Reds threatened and threatened very unambiguously to take
everything and in fact took a part - the population was deceived and...
relieved. The Whites promised legality, and took only a little - and the
population was embittered...
“The Reds promised everything, the Whites only that which was fitting according to the law…

“The Reds had terror and machine-guns as arguments and measures of persuasion; the Whites threatened – with the law…

“The Reds decisively rejected everything and raised arbitrariness into a law; the Whites, in rejecting the Reds, of course could not also reject the methods of arbitrariness and violence employed by the Reds…

“The population demanded nothing from the Reds since the only thing they could wish for once they had fallen into their hands was peace, and they did not, of course, demand that! But from the Whites the population demanded… a miracle, they demanded that the Whites, with one wave of their white hands, should remove all the blood from Russia…”738

The Church in the Civil War

However, a miracle was not forthcoming, because Russia was yet worthy of it, nor able to profit from it spiritually. Moreover, to bless the White armies would have been equivalent to a call to the population in the Red-occupied areas to rise up against their oppressors. It is probably for these reasons that in mid-1918, in spite of the pleas of his close advisor, Prince G.I. Trubetskoj, the Patriarch refused to bless a White general in the south, saying that he was not engaging in politics.

In Siberia, however, the White armies under Admiral A.V. Kolchak, the most monarchist of the White leaders and their formal head, were close to the Church; and in November, 1918, in view of the lack of communication with the Patriarch, an autonomous Temporary Higher Church Authority (THCA) was formed under the leadership of Archbishop Sylvester of Omsk. At the request of Admiral Kolchak, it moved to Omsk, and sent 2000 out of the 3500 clergy living on the territories occupied by Kolchak’s armies to serve in the armies as military chaplains. In April, 1919 a Council of the THCA took place in Omsk which anathematised the leaders of the Bolshevik party and ordered the commemoration of Kolchak during Divine services as the Supreme Ruler of Russia. In an address to the clergy the Council declared: “The pastors of the Church have the moral right to struggle against Bolshevism, and nobody must look on this struggle as unfitting to the Church, as the Church’s interference into political and social affairs of the State.”739


739 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 35-36.
Kolchak believed that the Orthodox Church combined with an authoritarian system of power based on theocratic principles would help him stabilize the situation in Siberia. “The spiritual power of the soldiers has weakened,” he said. “Political slogans and the ideas of the Constituent Assembly and of an undivided Russia no longer have any effect. Much more comprehensible is the struggle for the faith, and this only religion can do.”

Perhaps for this reason, in January, 1919 the Patriarch appeared to reverse his apolitical stance, at any rate in relation to the Siberian armies. For to Admiral Kolchak he sent a disguised priest with a tiny photograph of an icon of St. Nicholas and the following message: “As is well known to all Russians and, of course, to your Excellency, before this Icon, revered by the whole of Russia, every day on December 6, the day of the Winter Nicholas feast, there was a prayer service, which ended with the whole people chanting: ‘Save, O Lord, Thy people…’ with all the worshippers on their knees. And then on December 6, 1917, after the October revolution, the people of Moscow, faithful to the faith and tradition, at the end of the prayer service, chanted on their knees: ‘Save, O Lord…’ Soldiers and police came up and drove away the worshippers, and fired at the Icon from rifles and weapons. The holy hierarch on this icon on the wall of the Kremlin was depicted with a cross in his left hand and a sword in his right. The bullets of the fanatics flew around the holy hierarch without touching the God-pleaser anywhere. However, fragments of shells from the explosions tore off the plaster on the left side of the Wonderworker, which destroyed almost the whole of the left side of the holy hierarch on the Icon with the hand in which was the cross. On the same day, on the orders of the powers of the antichrist this Holy Icon was draped with a big red flag with a satanic emblem. It was firmly attached to the lower and side edges. On the wall of the Kremlin the inscription was made: ‘Death to the Faith – the Opium of the People’. On December 6 in the next year, many people gathered for the prayer service, which was coming to its end undisturbed by anyone! But when the people fell on their knees and began to chant: ‘Save, O Lord…’ the flag fell from the Icon of the Wonderworker. The atmosphere of prayerful ecstasy cannot be described! One had to see it, and he who saw it remembers it and feels it to this day. There was chanting, sobbing, cries and hands raised on high, rifle fire, many were wounded, many were killed… and… the place was cleared. The next day, early in the morning, with My Blessing, it was declared in front of the whole people what the Lord had shown through His God-pleaser to the Russian people in Moscow on December 6, 1918. I am sending you a photographic copy of the Wonderworking Icon as my blessing to you, Your Excellency, in your struggle with the temporary atheist power over the suffering people of Russia… I ask you, honoured Alexander Vasilyevich, look how the Bolsheviks succeeded in striking out the left hand of the God-pleaser with the cross, which demonstrates as it were the temporary trampling of the Orthodox faith… But the punishing sword of the God-pleaser has remained as a help and blessing

to your Excellency in your Christian struggle for the salvation of the Orthodox Church in Russia.\footnote{Kniazev, V.V. Zhizn’ za vsekh i smert’ za vsekh (Life for all and death for all), Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1971, pp. 20-23; S. Volkov, Admiral Aleksandr Vasilevich Kolchak, Moscow, 1991, pp. 70-81; Fr. Stefan Krasovitsky, "Otvet apologetu kommunisticheskoj ideologii" (Reply to an Apologist of the Communist Ideology), Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia), № 1553, February 15/28, 1996, p. 15. According to another source, the Patriarch sent Bishop Nestor with the icon of St. Nicholas to Kolchak in Omsk with the instruction: “Tell the people that if they do not unite and take Moscow again by armed force, then we will perish and Holy Rus’ will perish with us” (Gubanov, op. cit., p. 131).}

However, this anti-Soviet stance was not maintained. On October 8, 1919, much to the sorrow of the Whites, the Patriarch issued a decree entitled “On the non-interference of the clergy in the civil war”, in which he called on the clergy to “refrain from participation in political parties and demonstrations”, and to submit to the “orders” of the Soviet authorities. “People point out that with a change in authority the Church servers sometimes welcome this change with the ringing of bells and the organization of triumphant services and various ecclesiastical festivities. But if this happens in some places, it takes place either at the demand of the new authorities themselves, or in accordance with the desire of the masses of the people, but not at all at the initiative of the Church servers, who in accordance with their rank must stand higher and beyond all political interests. They must remember the canonical rules of the Holy Church, by which She forbids Her servers from interfering in the political life of the country, and from belonging to any parties, and still more from making service rites and sacred actions into an instrument of political demonstrations.\footnote{Regelson, op. cit., p. 237; Sokolov, op. cit., p. 16; Shkarovskii, “The Russian Orthodox Church”, op. cit., p. 423; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 38-39; Zhukov, op. cit., p. 92.}

This statement marks the beginning of a significant shift in the Church’s attitude from one of open enmity towards the Bolsheviks to qualified neutrality and civil obedience. Izvestia commented on it as follows: “The Patriarch and the circles around him have evidently become convinced of the solidity of Soviet power and become more cautious. [Soviet power], of course, is not expecting that the Patriarch should invite the clergy subject to him to express sympathy for Soviet power. The most that these circles are capable of is neutrality. Such tactics are recommended by the Patriarch’s appeal... In any case, the epistle of the Patriarch is characteristic in this respect, that it involuntarily confirms the strength of Soviet power, and that the Orthodox clergy are now too frightened to quarrel with it openly.”\footnote{Izvestia, October 22, 1919; in Zhukov, op. cit., pp. 92-93, footnote 50.}

This shift in attitude took place when Denikin’s Volunteer Army looked on the point of breaking through to Moscow. So we cannot excuse it on the grounds that the Patriarch thought that the Reds were going to win the war. More probably, the Patriarch realised that the Whites, though better than the
Reds, were motivated, as we have seen, not so much by the positive ideal of Orthodoxy as by the negative ideal of anti-Bolshevism – and only that which is truly positive and spiritual can merit the blessing of God and His Church.

It may well have been right for the Patriarch not to follow the example of St. Hermogen and call the people to rise up against Bolshevism. Nevertheless, the failure of the Church to issue an unequivocal condemnation of Bolshevism was a weakness that her enemies, both political and ecclesiastical, were quick to exploit. The Patriarch’s anti-Soviet statements were construed as dabbling in politics; while his refusal to bless the White armies was construed as the equivalent of a blessing on the Soviet State...

However, even if the Church did not expose the evil of Bolshevism with complete clarity, the Bolsheviks were providing their own proofs of their antichristianity by their behaviour. Thus Shkarovskii writes: “The spread of civil war was accompanied by a hardening of Bolshevik anti-religious policies. The RKP(b) anticipated that religious faith and the Church would soon die away completely, and that with a ‘purposeful education system’ and ‘revolutionary action’, including the use of force, they could be overcome fairly quickly. At a later stage Soviet atheist literature referred to this period as ‘Sturm und Drang’. In the programme adopted at the Eighth RKP(b) Congress in March 1919, the party proposed a total assault on religion, and talked of the coming ‘complete disappearance of religious prejudice’.

“In order to attain this goal the authorities brought in ever-increasing restrictions. On 3 April 1919 the Commissariat of Justice decreed that voluntary monetary collections among the faithful were permissible ‘only for the needs of a particular church building’. At the beginning of 1919 a complete ban was introduced on religious instruction for anybody under the age of 18. Existing monasteries were only permitted to function if they turned themselves into labour communes or workshops. The closure of cloisters began at the end of 1918. By 1921, 722 monasteries had been nationalized, over half of those existing in Russia. From the summer of 1918 the authorities waged a campaign to destroy ‘holy relics’. This offended the faithful and was a crude intervention in the affairs of the Church, an attempt to regulate its way of life and worship. In the spring of 1919 these actions became widespread, and became a means of conducting anti-religious propaganda by deeds. On 14 March the Commissariat of Justice decreed that they should be welcomed. The authorities also looked upon the Church as a ready source of additional state funds. In 1919 they began a speculative trade in valuable artefacts, including items which they had seized from churches....

“... Despite all the obstacles placed in its way, the Orthodox Church was able to conserve its structure during the civil war. Thousands of small churches which were supposed to have been closed down, even in the capitals, continued to function, as did religious schools. Charitable works
continued, and religious processions took place, until the autumn of 1921 in Petrograd.

“A very small number of priests served in the Red Army. The right-wing section of the clergy was active in its support of the White cause... Military chaplains served with the White armies – Kolchak had around 2,000, Denikin had more than 1,000, and Wrangel had over 500. All this provided further ammunition for the Bolsheviks’ anti-clerical campaign. During 1920 state bodies continued the tactic of excluding religion from all aspects of life. A circular issued by the People’s Commissariat of Justice on 18 May resulted in almost all the diocesan councils being liquidated in Russia. A further 58 holy relics were uncovered by the summer. On 29 July the Sovnarkom approved a proposal from the justice commissariat ‘On the Countrywide Liquidation of Relics’. However, the authority of the Church prevented this proposal from being carried out in full. Eight months late, on 1 April 1921, a secret circular issued by the commissariat admitted defeat on this score. By the autumn of 1920 the nationalization of church property had been completed. A report produced by the Eighth Department of the Commissariat of Justice stated that 7,150 million roubles, 828,000 desiatiny of church lands, and 1,112 buildings for rent had been expropriated by the state.”

Still more staggering than the material losses in this period were the losses in lives. Thus in 1918–19, according to Ermhardt, 28 bishops and 1,414 priests were killed; according to Edward E. Roslof, estimates of numbers of clergy killed between 1918 and 1921 range from 1434 to 9000; while by the end of 1922, according to Shumilin, 2233 clergy of all ranks and two million laymen had been executed. These figures prove the truth of Vladimir Rusak’s assertion: “The Bolsheviks’ relationship to the Church was realized independently of legislation. Violence, bayonets and bullets – these were the instruments of the Bolsheviks’ ‘ideological’ struggle against the Church.”

The campaign was counter-productive from the Bolsheviks’ point of view because the relics of the saints were often found to be incorrupt. Thus “St. Sergius of Radonezh was said to have been found perfectly preserved, to the rapturous joy of the onlookers and the consternation of the monastery’s communist custodian, who was subsequently beaten up by the crowd.” (Richard Overy, The Dictators, London: Penguin, 2005, p. 274). The relics of St. Theodosius of Chernigov were also found to be incorrupt (see photograph opposite page 182 in I.M. Andreyev, Russia’s Catacomb Saints, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 1982. (V.M.)

Shkarovskii, “The Russian Orthodox Church”, op. cit., pp. 422, 423.

Russkaia pravoslavnaia tserkov’ i kommunisticheskoe gosudarstvo, 1917-1941 (The Russian Orthodox Church and the Communist State, 1917-1941), Moscow: Terra, 1996, p. 69.


Gustavson, op. cit., p. 34. In Petrograd alone 550 clergy and monks of all ranks were shot in the period 1917-1922 (Anatoly Latyshev, "Provesti besposhadnij Massovij Terror Protiv Popov" (The Conducting of Ruthless Mass Terror against the Priests), Argumenty i Fakty (Arguments and Facts), № 26, 1996).

Rusak, Pir Satany, op. cit.
However, as Shkarovskii writes, “the first wave of attacks on religion had not brought the results which had been expected by such Bolshevik theorists as N.I. Bukharin. The majority of the population of Russia remained religious, for all the barbaric methods which had been tried to tear people away from the Church. The patriarchate also emerged from the civil war undefeated.”

Moreover, with the gradual suppression of all military and political opposition to the Bolsheviks after the war, the Church remained the only significant anti-communist force in the country. (It should be remembered that this was exclusively an anti-Orthodox rather than an anti-religious struggle; for Lenin viewed Islam as an ally in spreading world revolution to the countries of the East, and he did not persecute the Catholics or Protestants.) So the Bolsheviks were compelled to resort to a kind of warfare that had a far more sophisticated ideological content...

**Divide and Rule**

The Bolsheviks believed that the roots of religion lay in poverty and ignorance, so that the elimination of these evils would naturally lead to the withering away of religion. This being the case, they could not believe that religious belief had any deeper roots in the nature of things. Therefore, writes Roslof, “the party explicitly rejected ‘God-building’, an attempt by its own members to develop a ‘socialist religion of humanity’. Led by A.V. Lunacharskii, Leonid Krasin, and Bogdanov (A.A. Malinovskii), Bolshevik God-builders maintained that the proletariat would create a non-transcendent, earth-centered religion to complement its formation of the ultimate human society. Only this group within the party ‘recognized that religion’s power lay in its response to people’s psychic needs and argued that a revolutionary movement could not afford to ignore these’.”

In May, 1921 Lenin supported a resolution calling for the replacement of the religious world-view by “a harmonious communist scientific system embracing and answering the questions to which the peasants’ and workers’ masses have hitherto sought answers in religion.” At the same time he said that the Bolsheviks must “definitely avoid offending religious sensibilities”. The result was the suspension of the “dilettantist” anti-religious commissions (Lenin’s phrase) that had existed thereto, and their replacement by a Commission on the Separation of Church and State attached to the Politburo which lasted until 1929 under the Jew Emelian Yaroslavsky and whose aim was clearly the extirpation of all religion. The importance of this Commission in the Bolsheviks’ eyes was clearly indicated by the extreme secrecy in which its protocols were shrouded and by the active participation in it, at one time

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751 Roslof, Red Priests, op. cit., p. 28.
or another, of all the top party leaders. The strategy of the Commission was
directly defined, at the beginning by Lenin, and later – by Stalin.⁷⁵²

An important aspect of the Commission’s strategy was “divide and rule”. For while physical methods continued to be applied, the Bolsheviks recognized that the Church could not be defeated by direct physical assault alone, and that they needed subtler methods including the recruitment of agents among the clergy and the creation of schisms among them.

Thus already in December, 1920, T. Samsonov, head of a secret department of the Cheka, the forerunner of the KGB, wrote to Dzerzhinsky that “communism and religion are mutually exclusive… No machinery can destroy religion except that of the [Cheka]. In its plans to demoralize the church the Cheka has recently focussed its attention on the rank and file of the priesthood. Only through them, by long, intensive, and painstaking work, shall we succeed in destroying and dismantling the church completely.”⁷⁵³

“According to archival data,” writes Fr. Victor Potapov, “the politics of enrolling the clergy began de facto already in the first years of Soviet power. This is what one of these Cheka documents, dated 1921, says about this:

“‘The question of having agents and informers among the clergy is the most difficult one in the Cheka both because of the difficulty of carrying out the work and because for the most part the Cheka has paid little attention to it up to now…

“There is no doubt that we have to stir them up and shift them from their places. And to realise this aim more quickly and efficiently it is necessary at the beginning to take the following measures:

“‘1. Use the clergy themselves for our own ends, especially those who have an important position in Church life – hierarchs, metropolitans, etc., forcing them under threat of severe punishment to distribute among their clergy this or that instruction that could be useful to us, for example: the cessation of forbidden agitation with regard to [Soviet anti-ecclesiastical] decrees, the closure of monasteries, etc.

“‘2. Clarify the character of individual bishops and vicars, encouraging their desires and plans.

“‘3. It is proposed that informers be recruited among the clergy after some acquaintance has been gained with the clerical world and the character traits of each individual servant of the cult has been clarified. This material can be

⁷⁵² S. Savelev, “Bog i komissary” (God and the Commissars), in Bessmertny A.R. and Filatov, S.B., Religia i Demokratia (Religion and Democracy), Moscow: Progress, 1993, pp. 164-216.
gained in various ways, but mainly through removing correspondence at searches and through personal acquaintance with the clerical environment.

“‘It is necessary to interest this or that informer among the clergy with material rewards, since only on this soil is it possible to come to an agreement with the popes. It is impossible to hope for their benevolent attitude to Soviet power, while subsidies in money and in kind will undoubtedly also bind them to us more in another respect – namely, in that he will an eternal slave of the Cheka, fearing that his activity will be unmasked.

“‘The recruitment of informers is carried out, and must be carried out, by frightening them with the threat of prison and the camps for insignificant reasons, for speculation, the violation of the rules and orders of the authorities, etc.

“‘True, a fairly unreliable method can be useful only if the object of recruitment is weak and spineless in character. Above all attention must be paid to the quality, and not to the quantity, of the informers. For only when those recruited are good informers and the recruitment has been carried out with care can we hope to draw from this or that environment the material that we need.’”

The movement for a “Soviet Orthodox Church” was supported by Trotsky, who in a protocol of the secret section of the Cheka discussed recruiting clergy with money to report on themselves and others in the Church and to prevent anti-Bolshevik agitation...

The Church in the Borderlands

The fall of the Russian Autocracy, and the principle of national self-determination proclaimed at the Versailles peace conference in 1919, encouraged several nationalities of the former Russian empire to declare their independence. At the same time, these nations wanted their own independent Orthodox Churches, so several schisms from the Russian Orthodox Church took place. However, in the East as in the West, the attainment of sovereignty by several smaller nations exacerbated rather than resolved the national question in several regions.

The problem was that each newly formed nation-state contained within itself still smaller nationalities; and these felt less secure under their new rulers than they had under the larger empires that had now passed away – the Russian, the Ottoman, the Habsburg and the Hohenzollern. In the East, the Pandora’s box effect created by this process greatly facilitated the ultimate

754 Potapov, “‘Molchaniem predaetsa Bog’” (God is Betrayed by Silence), Posev (Sowing), № 166, 1992, pp. 209-210.
755 Grabbe, op. cit., p. 42.
triumph of Soviet power, which first encouraged nationalist separatism, and then, when each newly formed nation was particularly small and vulnerable, pounced like an eagle on its prey to include all in the new empire...

**1. Ukraine.** After leading the rite of the enthronement of Patriarch Tikhon, Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev returned to his flock, his heart heavy with forebodings about the future. Already in March, on his first return to Kiev after the February revolution, he had had to hold back the waves of incipient revolution there. For an "Executive Committee of clergy and laymen" was organized in Kiev at this time, and a "Commissar for ecclesiastical affairs" was appointed.

In a dialogue with representatives of the executive committee, Metropolitan Vladimir stated candidly that "the Executive Committee of clergy and laymen is an illegitimate institution which is trying gradually to expand its power and to usurp prerogatives which do not belong to it." However, in spite of this his opinion of the new organ of the Kievan Church which had been formed as a result of the revolution, Metropolitan Vladimir did not refuse in principle to work with its members to lead the Church in a new direction. He gave his blessing for "the Executive Committee of clergy and laymen" to convene, in Kiev on April 12, 1917, a "Congress of the clergy and laymen of the Kievan diocese", which was for reasons that remain unclear transformed into "the Ukrainian congress of the clergy and laymen of the Kievan diocese".

Metropolitan Vladimir had a negative opinion of this congress. During it bishops were publicly insulted in a manner unheard of in the Orthodox Christian world; clerics in attendance branded them as "parasites". Metropolitan Vladimir likewise had a negative opinion of the resolutions which this congress passed, among which was the declaration that "the autonomous Ukraine must have a Ukrainian church which is independent of the Synod." He also opposed the formation by this congress of a so-called advisory committee to the Metropolitan of Kiev.

This is how the members of this committee characterized the metropolitan's attitude towards them in their account of a meeting which took place on July 1, 1917: "At this meeting, in the presence of three vicar bishops, the metropolitan expressed what can only be called a hostile attitude toward the Church Committee in such clear and candid terms that all of its members wished to leave the metropolitan's inhospitable chambers. One of the committee members (Archpriest E.A. Kapralov) suggested that they do so and that it be recorded in the minutes that the metropolitan's attitude precluded any possibility of cooperative and fruitful labour."

The metropolitan's feelings were best expressed in an "archpastoral address" which he published in early August, 1917, on the eve of the
convocation of an extraordinary congress of the Kievan diocese: "The great misfortune of our times is that people consider it to be a virtue to have a liberal attitude toward matters of faith and morality. Many consider it their duty to implant such a liberal attitude toward faith and morality in the souls of the Russian people... To justify themselves, they present arguments that seem to merit our attention. They say: every man can judge religious matters from his own point of view and freely express his convictions, whatever they may be, according to his conscience, and he must respect the religious convictions of others. No one will object to freedom of religion and of the conscience. One must not, however, forget that Christian faith is not a human invention, but rather the word of God, and it cannot be changed to suit people's concepts. If people's convictions stand in opposition to the Divine truth, is it reasonable to recognize these convictions, to consider them correct and to guide one's life by them? We must, of course, be tolerant of those who do not agree with us, and bear with even those who have clearly gone astray, but we must turn away from their errors, and prove that they are unfounded. The pastors of the Christian Church and all sincere followers of Christ's teachings should consider this their duty...

"Our local and rapidly growing sorrows add to the misfortune experienced by the whole of the Russian land. I am speaking about a tendency which has surfaced in southern Russia and which threatens to destroy the peace and unity of the Church. It is terrible for us even to hear people talk about separating the churches of southern Russia from the one Orthodox Church of Russia. After their long cooperation, can there be any grounds for such aims? What is their origin? Did not the preachers who spread Orthodoxy throughout Russia come from Kiev? Among the God-pleasing brethren of the Kiev-Caves Lavra do we not see men who came from all corners of Holy Russia? Is it not true that the Orthodox of southern Russia have laboured in all parts of Russia, serving the Church and as scholars in various fields? And conversely, is it not true that the Orthodox of northern Russia have laboured for salvation in various professions in southern Russia? Did they not erect the one great Russian Orthodox Church together? Could the Orthodox of southern Russia possibly reproach the Orthodox of northern Russia for falling away from the faith in some way or for distorting the teachings of faith and morality? Certainly not. Based on my personal experience I can testify that in all the dioceses where God has allowed me to serve, the Orthodox teachings of faith and morality are kept pure and unchanged, and there is everywhere unity in the Church's teachings and liturgical practices. Why should there be any separation? Where will it lead? Indeed, only the enemies both without and within will have cause to rejoice. Our love for our native soil should not suppress and stifle our love for the whole of Russia and for the one Russian Orthodox Church."

The metropolitan concluded by appealing to the clergy and laymen to "take every possible measure to promote unity among themselves and with
the whole of the Russian Orthodox Church," and to "devote serious thought and proper preparation to the upcoming congress, thoroughly to discuss the issues presented there, and pass resolutions which are correct, legal, beneficial and which merit implementation."

However, the congress, which took place on August 8 and 9, 1917, took an entirely different direction. On August 9, the metropolitan was so offended by the proceedings of the congress that he fell seriously ill and had to leave the meeting immediately. In a defiant public statement, the delegates interpreted the metropolitan's departure as escapism and an expression of his lack of respect for the meeting.

In October, the Provisional Government fell. The Ukrainian government wished to use the change to turn their autonomous status into one of full independence. And the same tendencies were strongly present in the Church. A special committee in charge of convening a Council of the Orthodox clergy and lay people of the Ukraine was organized in Kiev in mid-November of 1917 according to a resolution passed at the third Cossack military assembly. Archbishop Alexis Dorodnitsyn (formerly of Vladimir), who was in retirement in the Kiev Caves Lavra, stood at the head of this committee. This committee was joined by representatives from among the clergy of Kiev (Fathers Lipkovsky, Tarnavsky, Filipenko and others), who played active roles in the above-mentioned organizations, such as the Executive Committee, Church Advisory Council to the Metropolitan of Kiev, etc.

At a meeting on November 23, this committee "discussed the present position of the Orthodox Church in the Ukraine now that the Ukrainian government is being separated from the government of Russia, and took into account the pronouncement of the Russian Patriarch, who might extend his authority to include the Ukrainian Church as well". They passed a whole series of resolutions, which amounted to sweeping changes in the status and administration of the Church in the Ukraine. The organizational committee was renamed "the provisional Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council", and an executive committee established to convene a provisional Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council was proclaimed "the provisional government of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church".

It was also decided that this new ecclesiastical government should appoint commissars to all the dioceses of the Ukraine. The priest Fr. Pashchevsky was appointed commissar of the Kievan diocese. And the chairman of the Council, Archbishop Alexis, was forbidden to go to Moscow, where he had been summoned to become the abbot of a monastery by Patriarch Tikhon.

On November 24, a general meeting of the Orthodox parish councils of Kiev was convened at which these moves towards Ukrainian ecclesiastical
autocephaly were condemned and the fear was expressed that an autocephalous Church might join the uniates and come under the Pope.

A few days later the metropolitan arrived in Kiev. On December 4 a meeting convened by the Union of Orthodox Parish Councils was held under the presidency of the metropolitan and attended by Metropolitan Platon of Georgia. In the days that followed several attempts were made by the autocephalists to remove Metropolitan Vladimir and his vicar bishops from Kiev. At the end of the month another delegation came to the metropolitan and demanded that he leave Kiev. He replied with emotion: "I am not afraid of anyone or anything. I am at all times prepared to give my life for Christ's Church and for the Orthodox faith, to prevent its enemies from mocking it. I will suffer to the very end in order to preserve Orthodoxy in the very place where it first took root in Russia." And then, going up to one member of the delegation and pointing at his heart, he said: "Do you know that the first revolutionary was the devil, and you are making a revolution in the Church of Christ?" Then he wept bitterly.

The metropolitan considered the convening of an All-Ukrainian Council untimely in view of the Bolshevik seizure of power. Nevertheless, he was forced to prepare for the opening of a new Council, and opened its first session on January 7, 1918 with a moleben on Sophia square and a welcoming speech to the delegates. He was unanimously elected to the chairmanship of the Council, and attended every meeting until the civil war broke out in Kiev.

Artillery shells began to fall on the Lavra on January 15. However, the metropolitan continued with his religious duties, displaying great calm. On January 23, he celebrated his last Divine Liturgy with the brotherhood of the Lavra. That evening, after occupying Kiev, the Bolsheviks took control of the Lavra, and violence began. Armed people burst into the churches with hats on their heads and cigarettes between their teeth. With shouting and swearing they conducted searches even during Divine services, and mocked the holy things. They stripped old monks and took off their shoes outside. Then they mocked them and cut them with whips. Officers who were found in the Lavra were killed. In spite of all the commotion, the metropolitan served an akathist to the Dormition of the Mother of God in the great church of the Lavra, which proved to be his last service on earth. Then he and Bishop Theodore of Priluki moved to the altar of the lower church, which was dedicated to St. Michael, first metropolitan of Kiev. He was then martyred by the Bolsheviks, the first bishop-martyr of the revolution...

On hearing this news, the Moscow Council then in session appointed the day of Metropolitan Vladimir’s martyrdom, January 25 / February 7, as the day of the commemoration of all the New Martyrs of Russia.
In March, 1918, after the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Kiev surrendered to the Germans. But after the defeat of Germany in the world war in November, Petlyura captured Kiev, after which Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev, Archbishop Eulogius of Volhynia, Bishop Nicodemus of Chigirinsk, Archimandrite Vitaly (Maximenko) and others were arrested and handed over to the Poles. In August, 1919, Kiev was liberated by the Whites, and with the help of pressure from the Western powers, the prisoners were released by the Poles. As the Red Army regained the upper hand, Metropolitan Anthony set off for the Kuban, where he became honorary president of the Higher Church Authority that had been formed there. Later he emigrated and became first-hierarch of the Russian Church in Exile.

In 1920 an “Independent Union of Ukrainian Orthodox Parishes” was formed, which convoked the first council of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church in October, 1921. Metropolitan Michael (Ermakov) appeared at the Sophia cathedral and called on those present not to introduce a scandal into Church life, and pointed out that Patriarch Tikhon had “blessed Divine services in the Ukrainian language when that was desired by a majority of parishioners, including women, whom the Patriarch blessed to take part in Church work with full rights”. The metropolitan hoped that the delegates “will not transgress the Church canons or the will of his Holiness the Patriarch”. He did not give his blessing to the assembly, pointing out its anticanonicity, and suggested the participants to disperse to their homes.

When the metropolitan had departed, on October 23 the participants proceeded to a so-called “conciliar consecration”. That is, since no bishops had joined them, they were forced to create bishops for themselves in a manner that no other Orthodox Church recognized as canonical, earning for themselves the title of the “Lypkovsky samosvyaty” after the first “bishop” to be thus consecrated, Basil Lypkovsky. As Lypkovsky himself wrote: “30 priests and all the laymen – as many as could fit into the walls of the Sophia cathedral - took part in the consecration. At the moment of consecration a wave of enthusiasm ran through the crowd. The members of the council and all those present put their hands on each other’s shoulders until a chain of hands went up to the priests who surrounded me.” Then they took Lipkovsky to the relics of Great Martyr Mercurius and placed on his head the dead head of the saint. That is how Lypkovsky became a “bishop”. On October 24 and 30 several other bishops were consecrated. The Council also introduced a married episcopate and second marriages for priests.756

Later in the 1920s a second autocephalist movement was initiated by Bishop Theophilus (Buldovsky) of Lubensk, who received consecration in the Patriarchal Church at a time when the Lypkovsky schism was declining, but who later separated from the Church on the same basis of Ukrainian nationalism and united the remnants of the Lypkovsky schism to his own.

One of the most popular patriarchal priests in the Ukraine at this time was Fr. Basil (Zelentsov), a disciple of Archbishop Theophanes of Poltava. It was largely through his influence that Buldovsky’s schism was rejected by the people. In 1922 Fr. Basil was put on trial. In his speech at the end of the trial he said that he was loyal to Soviet power insofar as “it, like everything else, is sent to us from above... But where the matter touches the Faith of Christ, the churches of God and human souls, there I have fought, do now fight, and will continue to fight to my last breath with the representatives of this power. It would be shamefully sinful for me, as a warrior of Christ, who bear this cross on my breast, to defend myself personally at a time when the enemies have taken up arms and declared war against Christ Himself.” After his consecration to the episcopate in 1925, Bishop Basil continued to wage a spiritual war against the Bolsheviks, publicly calling them “apostates from God, violators, blasphemers of the Faith of Christ, murderers, a satanic power, blood-suckers, destroyers of freedom and justice, fiends from hell”. He constantly called on the people “to make them no allowances, to make no compromises with them, to fight and fight with the enemies of Christ, and not to fear tortures and death, for sufferings from Him are the highest happiness and joy”. In 1930 he suffered martyrdom in Moscow for his rejection of sergianist neo-renovationism.

Although the Ukrainian autocephalists were a clearly schismatic movement, they did not share the modernist ideology of the Muscovite renovationists, and entered into union with them only in the autumn of 1924, evidently with the aim of securing the recognition of their own autocephaly from Constantinople, with whom the renovationists were in communion. That is why it was not until January 5, 1924 that the patriarch extended his anti-renovationist anathema of 1923 to the autocephalists. Even then, the autocephalists showed little animosity towards the patriarch, and in the Second All-Ukrainian Council of 1925 the Synod issued an epistle calling for the review of Patriarch Tikhon’s defrocking by the renovationists. Although the Ukrainian autocephalists were now largely controlled by Soviet agents, in January, 1930 the authorities convened a council which dissolved the whole of their Church organisation...

757 "Spravka o Priniatii v Obschenie Episkopa Seraphima (Lyade)" (Document on the Reception of Bishop Seraphim (Lyade) into Communion), Tserkovnaia Zhizn' (Church Life), № 12, 1937.
758 See Archbishop Leontius (Philippovich), "Ukrainskie shovinisty i samosvyaty" (Ukrainian Chauvinists and Self-Consecrators), Russkij Pastyr (Russian Pastor), II-III, 1995, pp. 154-187; J.-
2. Bessarabia. One of the consequences of the Russian revolution was that Russian Moldavia (Bessarabia), 60% of whose population was Romanian, was united to the Romanian State. Before the revolution, writes Jelavich, “Romanians as such did not face prejudice, and there were Romanian as well as Russian large landowners. The widespread discontent was economic and social more than national. The position of the peasants was regulated by the Russian emancipation laws of the 1860s and subsequent reform measures, but, as in other parts of Russia, these had not solved the basic agrarian problems. Since conditions were roughly the same in the Regat, independent Romania did not hold a great attraction for the peasant majority. The main demand of all peasants was a breakup of the large estates and a distribution of their lands…

“Because of these conditions, the Russian revolutions in March and November 1917 were bound to have a great effect. They influenced not only the disaffected peasants, but also the many soldiers in the province who had deserted the rapidly disintegrating Russian army… As early as July 1917 the peasants began to seize the land; by the end of the year they had appropriated about two-thirds.

“In October 1917 a provisional government for Bessarabia was organized, with its center at Kishinev… This government remained in control of the province from November 1917 to November 1918. In December 1917 it declared itself the Democratic Moldavian Republic and expressed the desire to join a Soviet federative republic…”

However, in view of the discussions that had begun between the Soviet and German governments, this decision disturbed the Allied Powers, and with the approval of France the Romanian army invaded the province. On March 27, the Moldavian parliament, surrounded by Romanian soldiers, voted for the union of Bessarabia with Romania, and the Kishinev diocese was handed over to the Romanian Church. It was suggested to Archbishop Anastasy (Gribanovsky) of Kishinev that he join the Romanian Church; but he refused. In May he left the province, and the Kishinev archiepiscopate fell under the jurisdiction of the Romanian Church. On June 14, the Holy Synod of the Romanian Church appointed Bishop Nicodemus (Muntianu) of Khush as deputy locum tenens of the see (he later became Patriarch of Romania). He began to “Romanize” the Bessarabian Church, introduced the Romanian language into the Kishinev seminary and in some monasteries replaced Russian and Ukrainian superiors with Romanian ones.


In October, 1918 Patriarch Tikhon wrote to Metropolitan Pimen of Moldavia and Suceava, the president of the Romanian Synod, protesting strongly at the anticanonical seizure of the Kishinev diocese by the Romanian Church, “which by her unilateral decision taken without the agreement of the Russian Church did not have the right to determine the destiny of the Kishinev diocese by submitting it to her power after Orthodox Bessarabia had constituted an indivisible part of the Russian ecclesiastical body for the last one hundred years. This way of acting on the part of the Romanian Holy Synod contradicts at the same time the spirit of Christian love, the age-old canonical decrees and the sacred customs of the Orthodox Church. Pointing to the supposed fact that political union always brings with it a union of the Churches cannot in the given case serve as a justification for the Romanian ecclesiastical authority, first, because it is not itself justified by history, and secondly, because such a point of view rests on a confusion of the nature of ecclesiastical and political life, which are different by their very essence... Moreover, the act of joining Bessarabia to the Romanian kingdom, as we said before, is far from generally recognised from the international point of view and can be subject to review at the final tally of the results of the world war... If the Romanian Church, in spite of the objections we have raised, tries by force to strengthen the position in its favour, we will be forced to break all fraternal and canonical communion with the Romanian Synod and bring the present matter before the judgement of the other Orthodox Churches.”

The Romanians paid no attention to this admonition, and in 1919 placed in the see of Kishinev Archimandrite Gurias (Grossu), a Russian priest of Moldavian extraction, and a graduate of the Kiev Academy...

And so, as K.V. Glazkov writes, “while with one hand the Romanian authorities mercilessly destroyed the communist opposition (for example, mass punitive operation were undertaken against Bolsheviks in the army, and Romanian units took part in the suppression of the red revolution in 1918 in Hungary), with the other hand they suppressed every kind of dissidence. A number of deputies of the Popular Assembly who were opponents of the union of Bessarabia and Romania were shot, after which the National Assembly itself was dissolved, while on the same day the pro-Romanian deputies triumphantly overthrew the monuments to Tsars Alexander I and Alexander II in the capital. In January, 1920, the White armies of General Bredov..., in whose carts were fugitives, women and children, were shot from Romanian machine-guns as they approached the Dniester. In this way the new authorities in Bessarabia spoiled for good their relations with the Russians.

“We should note that from the very beginning the Russian hierarchy and clergy, as if foreseeing the possibility of church-political disturbances, adopted quite a cold attitude to the inclusion of Bessarabia into Romania. This act was even condemned by Archbishop Anastasy (Gribanovsky) of Kishinev

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761 Gubonin, op. cit, p. 155; Monk Benjamin, op. cit, pp. 24-25.
762 Monk Benjamin, op. cit, p. 41.
and Khotyn (latter first-hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad). Hoping for the speedy victory of the White movement, the representatives of the Bessarabian Church together with the zemstvo took part in the creation of a Committee for the liberation of Bessarabia. Therefore the Romanian Synod began the canonical submission of the Bessarabian diocese by demanding that Vladykas Anastasy, Gabriel and Dionysius separate from the Russian Orthodox Church in spite of the protests of Patriarch Tikhon. When the hierarchs refused to do this, the Romanian military units arrested them and exiled them from the country. But the believers were told that the hierarchs had left their diocese voluntarily. In the place of Metropolitan Anastasy there arrived from Bucharest the Romanian Archbishop Nicodemus; he was met by the clergy and laity by no means in a friendly manner. The ecclesiastical authorities [of the Russian Church] Abroad did not recognise the lawfulness of the union of the Kishinev diocese to the Romanian Church. It was violence, deceit and transgression of the Church canons, and not at all the commandments of God, that were laid at the foundation of their actions on the territory of Bessarabia by the Romanian civil and ecclesiastical authorities. How could the coming events unfold except in conditions of further imposition of terror?

“In the Kishinev spiritual seminary and spiritual schools the Romanian authorities removed the teaching of Russian and Church Slavonic languages, clearly intending to create a situation in which in Bessarabia as a whole there would remain no priests able to serve in Church Slavonic. Also, Church Slavonic service books were removed from the churches, and the priests were banned from delivering sermons in Russian. Direct physical persecution began against the zealots for the language of Saints Cyril and Methodius. In the village of Rechul the nuns of the local monastery were beaten with birch-rods by Romanian gendarmes for taking part in services in Church Slavonic, while an old priest of the village of Goreshte who was suspected of sympathising with the opposition was tortured with wet lashes until he lost consciousness, after which he went mad. It may be that the whole guilt of the priest consisted in the fact that he, like many true patriots, did not want to commemorate the Romanian king, his family and the Synod at the liturgy.

“The majority of the zealots for Church Slavonic as the liturgical language were Russians, but many Moldavian priests and laypeople fought steadfastly against forcible Romanianization. ‘The Moldavians,’ reported the Romanian counter-intelligence of Beltsky uyezd, ‘are hostile to the Romanian administration, they avoid the Romanian clergy..., they threaten the priests when they commemorate the name of the king in church.’...

“In July, 1922 there was formed in Kishinev a multi-national ‘Union of Orthodox Christians’. Soon Bessarabian patriots came to lead the Union. They were closely linked with the Russian communion in Kishinev. According to certain information, Russian monarchists led by General E. Leontovich took
part in the organisation of the Union. In 1924 the re-registration of another organisation took place – the Orthodox Brotherhood of Alexander Nevsky, which was led by activists of Moldavian, Gagauz and Russian nationalities – Protopriest Michael Chakir, Priest Nicholas Lashku and K.K. Malanetsky, etc. All these were branded by the secret police as ‘ardent pan-Russists’, while the brotherhood was called the centre for the preservation and propaganda of Russian monarchist ideas…”

3. Transcaucasia. In Transcaucasia, writes Dov Kontorer, “everything was at first festal: in November, 1917 in Tbilisi a Transcaucasian commissariat was established representing a combined government of Georgian socialists, Armenian Dashnaks and Azerbaidzhani Musavatists. The power of this organ extended – theoretically, at least – over the whole territory of Transcaucasia, except for the region of Baku, where the Bolsheviks were in power. The Transcaucasian commissariat refused to recognize the results of the Brest peace, according to which Soviet Russia conceded to Turkey not only the territories conquered in the First World War, but also the districts of Kars, Ardagan and Batum. This led to the destruction of peaceful negotiations at a conference in Trabzon in March-April, 1918. Meanwhile the continuing collapse of State in Transcaucasia was combined with an excessively bold external politics. In the spring of 1918 the Turks were in quite a difficult situation. Nevertheless, at the cost of some short military actions, they succeeded in seizing Batumi, Ozurgeti, Akhaltsikhe and a series of other territories.

“It was against this background that an ‘independent federal democratic republic’ was proclaimed in Transcaucasia. It lasted for about a month. On May 26, 1918 the Georgian Mensheviks headed by N.S. Chkheidze, I.G. Tsereteli and N.N. Jordania, declared Georgia to be an independent republic... But the reality of Georgian ‘independence’ was such that the new government immediately had to summon German forces onto its territory ‘for defence against the Turks’, and at the same time to sign a peace agreement with Turkey according to which Georgia lost even more than it had according to the conditions of the Brest peace which it had rejected.”

Georgian ecclesiastical independence had been proclaimed even earlier than Georgian political independence. On March 12, 1917, an Assembly of the bishops, clergy and laity of Georgia proclaimed the re-establishment of the autocephaly of the Georgian Church, which led to a break in communion with the Russian Church. In the summer, however, “the Georgian Church sent a

763 Glazkov, “Istoricheskie prichiny nekotorykh sobitij v istorii Rumynskoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi do II Mirovoy vojny” (The Historical Reasons for some Events in the History of the Romanian Orthodox Church before the Second World War), Tserkovnaia Zhizn’ (Church Life), №№ 3-4, May-August, 2000, pp. 46-48.
special deputation to the Most Holy Russian Synod to inform the Most Holy Synod about the re-establishment of the autocephaly of the Georgian Church and greet it. The Russian Synod through the mouth of Archbishop Sergius of Finland confirmed ‘that Russian Church consciousness has never been foreign to the thought of the necessity of returning to the Georgian Church her former constitution… If this thought has not been realised up to now, for this there were special reasons’ not depending on Church actors, but ‘now, in the days of the general liberating spring, Russian Church consciousness is ready to welcome the fulfilment … of the long-time dream’ of the Orthodox Georgians, and the Russian hierarchs hope ‘that God will order all for the good, and that certain roughnesses in this matter will be smoothed over’ and that at the forthcoming Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church a fraternal meeting of representatives of the two Churches is bound to take place in order to find a path to mutual understanding’.”

In September, while the Local Council of the Russian Church was just getting under way, a General Council of the Georgian Church confirmed the Acts of the March Council. On October 1 Bishop Kirion Sadzaguelachvili was enthroned as Catholicos-Patriarch in Tbilisi by three vicar bishops over the protests of three Georgian hierarchs: Demetrius (Abashidze) of Simferopol, Antony of Gori and Nazarius (Lezhavy). On December 29 / January 11, 1918, Patriarch Tikhon also protested against the re-establishment of Georgian autocephaly, pointedly addressing Kirion as only a bishop.  

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765 Catholicos Leonid to Patriarch Tikhon, August 5, 1919; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 9.
766 Georgia, he wrote, had united with Russia more than a century before, and from that time the highest ecclesiastical authority in Georgia had belonged to the Holy Synod. However, when, in 1905, an attempt was made to restore the autocephaly of the Georgian Church, the Holy Synod in 1906 decreed that this question should be handed over for discussion at the All-Russian Council, the decisions of which the Georgian hierarchs were obliged to wait for. “According to canon law, the agreement and permission of the Mother [kiriarkhal’noj] Church to the autocephaly of the other Local Church which before was subject to her jurisdiction is required. Usually the Church which is seeking independence addresses the Mother Church with her request, and, on the basis of data of a political and ecclesiastical character, seeks her agreement to the reception of autocephaly. The request is directed in the name of both the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of the country, and also of the people; it must be a clearly expressed declaration concerning the general and unanimous desire to receive ecclesiastical independence. That is how it was in Greece, in Serbia and in Romania, but it was not like that in Bulgaria, where the well-known schism arose. And it was also not like that, unfortunately, in the Transcaucasia in 1917… In pointing out your errors and mistakes, we suggest to you, Most Reverend Bishops, that you submit to the demand of the ecclesiastical canons and, following the canonical order, appear at the All-Russian Sacred Council, and, recognising your errors, convey your desire concerning the autocephaly of the Georgian Church to the court of the whole All-Russian Council, so that you may not be subjected to the judgement of the canons and not fall into the great and terrible sin of alienation from the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church…” (Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 71-75; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 14)
However, the Provisional Government in Russia confirmed this election, as did the Georgian government. Kirion immediately seized the exarchal house (the exarch was away) and ordered the portraits of the Tsar and the previous exarchs to be removed. After his first and last liturgy as Catholicos, he fell ill – he had been poisoned (according to one source, he poisoned himself). He recovered, but not completely, and went for complete recovery to the monastery of St. Anthony, near Martkopi. There, in June, 1918, he committed suicide.

“In December, 1918,” continues Kontorer, “with the defeat of Germany in the First World War, the German soldiers in Transcaucasia were replaced by a British expeditionary force. They saw their task in guaranteeing the uninterrupted work of the oil industry and the Batumi-Baku railway, while keeping internal peace in the region interested them very little. As a lawful result of this, there began a series of embittered ethnic wars that accompanied a ‘parade of sovereignties’ in Transcaucasia.

“The best known was the Armenian-Azerbaidzhani war, which was accompanied on both sides by the massive slaughter of the peaceful population (in contemporary terminology: ‘ethnic cleansing’). In the autumn of 1920 there entered into the conflict, with the agreement of Georgia, the young Kemalist state of Turkey. Having attained a rapid and complete victory on the field of battle, it imposed significant territorial concessions on Armenia in negotiations in Alexandropol. These were partially reviewed later when the RSFSR and Turkey concluded an agreement in Moscow in 1921.

“But it was not only the major Transcaucasian nations who warred against each other at this time. The assertion of national identity in conditions of the collapse of the previous imperial statehood was accompanied almost everywhere by blood civil conflict. Thus in Georgia the Menshevik government of Noe Jordania conducted in relation to a whole series of national minorities a politics that would be described today as an attempt at genocide. In particular, at that time Georgia exterminated about 18,000 Osetians, which helped greatly to make the population of Northern Osetia to cling desperately to the possibility of remaining within Soviet Russia, while that part of the Osetian population which lived compactly to the south of the Great Caucasian Ridge was extremely grateful to Moscow for the creation within Georgia of the South Osetian autonomous republic.”

768 However, this fact was covered up, and on July 7 he was given a triumphant burial in the Zion cathedral (http://www.pstbi.ru/bin/code.exe/frames/m/ind_oem.html?/ans/; Archimandrite Seraphim, “Russkie sviaschennomucheniki i mucheniki v Gruzii”, Pravoslavniy Put’, 1965, pp. 23-32).
769 Kontorer, op. cit.
For in February, 1921 the Bolsheviks, at the initiative of the Georgians Stalin and Ordzhonikidze, had invaded Georgia, and after a short war of three weeks took control of the country. Soon the Church was deprived of juridical status, and churches and monasteries began to be closed...

"On February 7, 1922," writes Fr. Elijah Melia, "Catholicos Ambrose sent to the Interallied Conference at Genoa (the highest degree of international jurisdiction at that time) a letter of protest in which, recalling the moral obligations towards the nation of his charge, he protested in the name of the people of Georgia, deprived of their rights, against the foreign occupation and demanded the intervention of civilized humanity to oppose the iniquity committed against Georgia. He was arrested in February 1923 with Archbishop Nasaire and all the members of his Council. Their trial, which took place under conditions of semi-liberty, greatly stirred up the country.

"There were three accusations: 1) the 1922 letter to the Genoa Conference, 2) the concealment of the historic treasures of the Church in order to preserve them from passing into the hands of the State and 3) the prohibition imposed [by the] Governmental Commission for Religion against the redemption of precious objects in favour of the starving. Archbishop Nasaire was assassinated during the trial [on September 1, 1924], most probably in order to impress the others accused. All the members of his Council showed their solidarity with the Catholicos Ambrose, who conducted himself heroically, assuming the entire responsibility for his acts, which he declared to have been in conformity with his obligations and with the tradition of the Church of Georgia in similar cases. He was condemned to eight years imprisonment. Two members of his Council were given five and two years respectively. The Catholicos was liberated before the term of his imprisonment was over. He died on March 29, 1927.

"In August 1924, a general insurrection broke out, organized by all the active forces of the nation – the higher ranks of the army, the political parties, the university, the ecclesiastics, the population as a whole. But the uprising was doomed to fail, for the plot had been betrayed. The repression created thousands of victims. Groups of partisans still operated for some time..."

From War Communism to NEP

The Whites had effectively lost the Civil War by the winter of 1919-20, and in November, 1920, the last White forces under General Wrangel were evacuated from the Crimea to Constantinople. This was followed by a horrific pogrom of the inhabitants of the Crimea until May, 1921. The Reds were now

770 Melia, "The Orthodox Church of Georgia", A Sign of God: Orthodoxy 1964, Athens: Zoe, 1964, pp. 112-113. According to Slava Katamidze, the number of victims was “enormous”, but “the real figure has never been published” (Loyal Comrades, Ruthless Killers, Staplehurst: Spellmount, 2003, p. 39).
free to redirect their forces to the goal of world revolution, and invaded Poland. However, things did not go all their way, and they were forced: (1) to abandon the goal of world revolution in view of the Red Army’s defeat on the Vistula in Poland; (2) to abandon grain requisitioning and the militarization of labour in view of the continuation of major peasant rebellions in Western Siberia and Tambovschina, and a major rebellion of the sailors in Kronstadt; and (3) to clamp down hard on dissent within the Communist Party itself.

1. The Polish War. At a critical point in the Civil War in 1919, the Poles under General Pilsudski decided to enter into negotiations with the Reds. This, according to General Denikin, was the decisive event that guaranteed the defeat of the Whites. Be that as it may, the Poles made up for this in the next year by decisively defeating the Red Army on the banks of the Vistula.

The Bolsheviks’ defeat suggested to them, as Adam Zamoyski writes, “that the whole world was ranged against them, and that the masses in other countries could not be relied on to support them. This gave rise to a siege mentality, isolationism and the doctrine of ‘communism in one country’, expressed to the outside world in a sulky, defensive aggressiveness. Hurt pride is in evidence in the attitude of most of Russia’s leaders to the rest of the world, beginning with Lenin.

“The isolation in which Russia spent the 1920s and 1930s undoubtedly assisted Stalin in his seizure of power and his reign of terror, and it ultimately pushed her into the arms of the other regime born of humiliation and fired by a determination to overthrow the Versailles settlement – Nazi Germany. And when his troops marched into Poland in support of the Germans in 1939, Stalin showed that he had learned the lessons of 1919-20 [he served as political commissar in the Russo-Polish war]. There would be no attempt to win the Poles over to communism; his previous experience had taught him that they were not amenable. So he set about extirpating not only nobles, priests and landowners, but also doctors, nurses and veterinary surgeons, and in general anyone who might show the slightest sign of independent thought or even curiosity – the scores of charges which entailed immediate arrest and deportation included possessing a stamp collection. Over 1,500,000 people were caught up in this fine net. Army officers, for whom Stalin felt a particular hatred, were murdered in the forest of Katyn and elsewhere, other ranks and civilians were despatched to the Gulag, where a majority died. After 1945 he would do his best to extend the same principles to the rest of Poland.

“How differently things might have turned out in Russia had some kind of peace been negotiated back at the beginning of 1919, and the whole war avoided, it would be idle to speculate. It would be equally pointless, if fascinating, to try to extrapolate the consequences of a Russian victory at Warsaw in 1920: Poland and the Baltic states would have been turned into
Soviet republics, followed almost certainly by Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania, and very probably Germany, and the rest of Europe would have been profoundly affected; whether this would have led to world revolution or an international crusade leading to the destruction of Soviet Russia is anybody’s guess....”\(^{771}\)

Abandoning world revolution went right against one of the central tenets of Leninism. On arriving in Petrograd in April, 1917, Lenin had declared: “I am happy to greet in your persons the victorious Russian revolution, and greet you as the vanguard of the world-wide proletarian army”. The two went together: in fact, Lenin thought that revolution in Russia would fail if it was not transformed into world-wide revolution. Nor was it an impossible prospect in the early years after the Great War, when disillusion with western civilization was at its height. For here, as Brendon writes, “was the promise of an end to the capitalist system, which institutionalised greed and exploitation, whose by-products were unjust empires and cruel wars. Instead each would give according to his ability and receive according to his need. The Communist creed tapped the idealism of the generation which mourned the lost generation. Old Socialists like George Lansbury said that the Bolsheviks were ‘doing what Christians call the Lord’s work’ and that Lenin’s devotion to the cause of humanity made his whole life like ‘that of one of the saints of old’ [!]’. Communism also appealed to those who craved power. Soon Communist parties were springing up everywhere, encouraged by money and propaganda from Russia (in Britain, for example, the Soviet trade delegation sold tsarist diamonds to subsidise the *Daily Herald*). In 1919 Red revolution broke out in Germany and Hungary. In 1920 some 35 countries sent delegates to the second Congress of the Communist International (Comintern) at Petrograd. It predictably resolved that ‘The International Proletariat will not sheathe its sword until Soviet Russia become a link in the federation of Soviet republics of the whole world.’”\(^{772}\)

But the Soviet defeat on the Vistula put an end to those hopes – for the present. And with that defeat the mood of the masses changed, aided not a little by the foolish tactics of the Comintern in refusing to allow alliances with any more moderate socialist party. “The world rejected the revolutionary gospel of the Bolsheviks just as it had rejected that of the Jacobins and for much the same reasons... The German and Hungarian uprisings were suppressed. In America, where Secretary of State Lansing warned that Bolshevik forces ‘are menacing the present social order in nearly every European country and... may have to be reckoned with even in this country’, there was a Red Scare. In England the Labour party repudiated Communism, which was not surprising in view of Lenin’s offer to support their leaders as a rope supports a hanged man. In Japan the authorities passed a law against ‘thought crime’ and the ‘thought police’ (by no means a figment of George


\(^{772}\) Brendon, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-12.
Orwell’s imagination) devised new methods of reminding offenders of their loyalty to the Emperor. In France the Right branded Communism as a German aberration and the Left split over whether to embrace it. In Italy fear of Communism helped to bring Mussolini’s Fascists to power…”

2. The Peasant Rebellions. The peasants had never served the Bolsheviks with enthusiasm, and now, after the defeat of the Whites, they rose up against them. “Until March 1921,” writes Richard Pipes, “the Communists tried and in some measure succeeded in placing the national economy under state control. Later this policy came to be known as ‘War Communism’ – Lenin himself first used this term in April 1921 as he was abandoning it. It was a misnomer coined to justify the disastrous consequences of economic experimentation by the alleged exigencies of the Civil War and foreign intervention. Scrutiny of contemporary records, however, leaves no doubt that these policies were, in fact, not so much emergency responses to war conditions as an attempt as rapidly as possible to construct a Communist society. War Communism involved the nationalization of the means of production and most other economic assets, the abolition of private trade, the elimination of money, the subjection of the national economy to a comprehensive plan, and the introduction of forced labor.

“These experiments left Russia’s economy in shambles. In 1920-21, compared to 1913, large-scale industrial production fell by 82 percent, worker productivity by 74 percent, and the production of cereals by 40 percent. The cities emptied as their inhabitants fled to the countryside in search of food: Petrograd lost 70 percent of its population, Moscow over 50 percent; the other urban and industrial centers also suffered depletions. The non-agricultural labor force dropped to less than a half of what it had been when the Bolsheviks took power: from 3.6 to 1.5 million. Workers’ real wages declined to one-third of the level of 1913-14. A hydralike black market, ineradicable because indispensable, supplied the population with the bulk of consumer goods. Communist policies had succeeded in ruining the world’s fifth-largest economy and depleting the wealth accumulated over centuries of ‘feudalism’ and ‘capitalism’. A contemporary Communist economist called the economic collapse a calamity ‘unparalleled in the history of mankind’.

“The Civil War ended, for all practical purposes, in the winter of 1919-20, and if war needs had been the driving force behind these policies, now would have been the time to give them up. Instead, the year that followed the crushing of the White armies saw the wildest economic experiments, such as the ‘militarization’ of labor and the elimination of money. The government persevered with forcible confiscations of peasant food ‘surplus’. The peasants responded by hoarding, reducing the sown acreage, and selling produce on the black market in defiance of government prohibitions. Since the weather in 1920 happened to be unfavourable, the meagre supply of bread dwindled still

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773 Brendon, op. cit., p. 12.
further. It was now that the Russian countryside, until then relatively well off compared to the cities in terms of food supplies, began to experience the first symptoms of famine.

“The repercussions of such mismanagement were not only economic but also social: they eroded still further the thin base of Bolshevik support, turning followers into enemies and enemies into rebels. The ‘masses’, whom Bolshevik propaganda had been telling that the hardships they had endured in 1918-19 were the fault of the ‘White Guards’ and their foreign backers, expected the end of hostilities to bring back normal conditions. The Civil War had to some extent shielded the Communists from the unpopularity of their policies by making it possible to justify them as militarily necessary. This explanation could no longer be invoked once the Civil War was over…

“It now began to dawn even on those willing to give the Bolsheviks the benefit of the doubt, that they had been had, that the true objective of the new regime was not improving their lot but holding on to power, and that to this end it was prepared to sacrifice their well-being and even their very lives. This realization produced a national rebellion unprecedented in its dimensions and ferocity. The end of one Civil War led immediately to the outbreak of another: having defeated the White armies, the Red Army now had to battle partisan bands, popularly known as ‘Greens’ but labelled by the authorities ‘bandits’, made up of peasants, deserters, and demobilized soldiers.

“In 1920 and 1921, the Russian countryside from the Black Sea to the Pacific was the scene of uprisings that in numbers involved and territory affected greatly eclipsed the famous peasant rebellions of Stenka Razin and Pugachev under tsarism. Its true dimensions cannot even now be established, because the relevant materials have not yet been properly studied. The Communist authorities have assiduously minimized its scope: thus, according to the Cheka, in February, 1921, there occurred 118 peasant risings. In fact, there were hundreds of such uprisings, involving hundreds of thousands of partisans. Lenin was in receipt of regular reports from this front of the Civil War, which included detailed maps covering the entire country, indicating that vast territories were in rebellion. Occasionally, Communist historians give us a glimpse of the dimensions of this other Civil War, conceding that some ‘bands’ of ‘kulaks’ numbered 50,000 and more rebels. An idea of the extent and savagery of the fighting can be obtained from official figures of the losses suffered by the Red Army units engaged against the rebels. According to recent information, the number of Red Army casualties in the campaign of 1921-22, which were waged almost exclusively against peasants and other

774 One indication of the scale of the suffering is the fact that in Western Siberia, the scene of one of the largest peasant rebellions, more priests were killed in 1921 than in any other year—a pattern not found in any other region. Nearly one hundred priests were shot in the Tobolsk area alone. (V.M.)
domestic rebels, came to 237,908. The losses among the rebels were almost
certainly as high and probably much higher.”\footnote{Pipes, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 371-373.}

The Peasant Civil War finally failed because the rebels were scattered and
disunited, and the Reds were able to destroy each rising separately. Moreover,
with the exception of the rebellion led in the Tambov region by Antonov, they
“aimed not to march on Moscow so much as to cut themselves off from its

But terrible as the peasant rebellions were, they were not such a direct
threat to the regime as the strikes of workers in Petrograd and the mutiny of
the sailors in Kronstadt. For these constituted the primary support of the
Bolsheviks, whose interests they were supposed to defend above all others.
And so on March 7, Trotsky ordered Tukhachevsky, who had commanded
the defeated Red Army in Poland, to attack the sailors across the ice.

The next day the Provisional Revolutionary Committee of Kronstadt
published a statement that condemned the revolution in no uncertain terms:
“In carrying out the October Revolution, the working class hoped to achieve
its liberation. The outcome has been even greater enslavement of human
beings. Power has passed from a monarchy based on the police and
gendarmerie into the hands of usurpers – Communists – who have given the
toilers not freedom but the daily dread of ending up in the torture chambers
of the Cheka, the horrors of which exceed many times the rule of tsarism’s
gendarmerie. The bayonets, the bullets, the coarse shouts of the \textit{oprichniki}
from the Cheka – this is the fruit of the long struggles and sufferings of Soviet
Russia’s toilers. The glorious emblem of the toilers’ state – the hammer and
sickle – Communist authority has in truth replaced with the bayonet and the
iron bar, created to protect the tranquil and careless life of the new
bureaucracy, the Communist commissars and functionaries. But basest and
most criminal of all is the moral slavery introduced by the Communists: they
have also laid their hands on the inner world of the working people,
compelling them to think only as they do. By means of state-run trade unions,
the workers have been chained to their machines, so that labor is not a source
of joy but a new serfdom. To the protests of peasants, expressed in
spontaneous uprisings, and those of the workers, whom the very conditions
of life compel to strike, they have responded with mass executions and an
appetite for blood that by far exceeds that of tsarist generals. Toiling Russia,
the first to raise the red banner of the liberation of labor, is thoroughly
drenched with the blood of the victims of Communist rule. In this sea of
blood, the Communists drown all the great and bright pledges and slogans of
the toilers’ revolution. It has become ever more clear, and by now is self-
evident, that the Russian Communist Party is not the protector of the working
people that it claims to be, that the interests of the working people are foreign to it, and that, having gained power, its only fear is of losing it, and hence that all means [to that end] are permissible: slander, violence, deception, murder, revenge on the families of those who have revolted... The current revolt finally offers the toilers a chance to have their freely elected, functioning soviets, free of violent party pressures, to refashion the state-run trade unions into free associations of workers, peasants, and the working intelligentsia. At last, the police baton of Communist autocracy is smashed..."

Sadly, it was the Kronstadt sailors, not the “Communist autocracy”, that were smashed; but their smashing, coinciding with the crushing of a peasant rebellion in Western Siberia that interrupted vital food shipments for two weeks, marked a critical turning-point. “On March 15, as the Red Army stood poised to launch the final assault on the naval base, Lenin announced what was to become the linchpin of the New Economic Policy, the abandonment of arbitrary food confiscation known as prodrazverstka in favor of a tax in kind. Prodrazverstka had been the most universally despised feature of ‘War Communism’ — despised by peasants, whom it robbed of their produce, but also by the urban population, whom in deprived of food.

“Requisitioning had been enforced in an appallingly arbitrary manner. The Commissariat of Supply determined the quantity of foodstuffs it required — a quantity determined by what was needed to feed the consumers in the cities and the armed forces, without regard to what the producers could provide. This figure it broke down, on the basis of inadequate and often outdated information, into quotas for each province, district, and village. The system was as inefficient as it was brutal: in 1920, for example, Moscow set the prodrazverska at 583 million puds (9.5 million tons) but managed to collect only half that amount.

“Collectors acted on the premise that peasants lied when they claimed that the grain they were forced to surrender was not surplus but essential to provide food for their families and seed, and that they could compensate for the loss by digging up their hoard. This the peasants may have been able to do in 1918 and 1919. But by 1920 they had little if anything left to hoard: as a result,... in the case of Tambov province, prodrazverstka, even if incompletely realized, left them with next to nothing. Nor was this all. Zealous collectors impounded not only ‘surplus’ and food needed for sustenance, but grain set aside for the next season’s sowing: one high Communist official admitted that in many areas the authorities appropriated one hundred percent of the harvest. Refusal to pay resulted in the confiscation of livestock and beatings. In addition, collecting agents and local officials, empowered to label resistance to their demands as ‘kulak’-inspired, or ‘counterrevolutionary’, felt at liberty to appropriate food, cattle, even clothing for their personal use. The

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peasants resisted fiercely: in the Ukraine alone, they were reported to have killed 1,700 requisition officials.

“A more self-defeating policy would be hard to conceived. The system operated on the absurd principle that the more the peasant produced the more would be taken from him; from which it followed with inexorable logic that he would produce little if anything beyond his own needs. The richer a region, the more it was subjected to government plunder, and the more prone it was to curtail production: between 1916-17 and 1920-21, the decline in the sown acreage in the center of the country, an area of grain deficits, was 18 percent, whereas in the main region of grain surpluses it was 33 percent. And since yields per acre declined from shortage of fertilizer and draft animals as well, grain production, which in 1913 had been 80.1 million tons, dropped in 1920 to 46.1 million tons. If in 1918 and 1919 it has still been possible to extract a ‘surplus’, by 1920 the peasant had learned his lesson and made sure there was nothing to surrender. It apparently never occurred to him that the regime would take what it wanted even if it meant that he went breadless and seedless.

“Prodrazverstka had to be abandoned for both economic and political reasons. There was nothing left to take from the peasant, who faced starvation; and it fuelled nationwide rebellions. The Politburo finally decided to drop prodrazverstka on March 15. The new policy was made public on March 23. Henceforth, the peasants were required to turn over to government agencies a fixed amount of grain; arbitrary confiscations of ‘surplus’ were terminated…

“While the economic benefits of the new agrarian policy were not immediately apparent, the political rewards were reaped at once. The abandonment of food requisitioning took the wind out of the sails of rebellion. The following year, Lenin could boast that peasant uprisings, which previously had ‘determined the general picture of Russia’, had virtually ceased…”

At the same time, Moscow introduced “The New Economic Policy” (NEP), a humiliating retreat from Communist ideals allowing the return of some small-scale private trade. It worked. “The benefits appeared first and foremost in agriculture. In 1922, thanks to donations and purchases of seed grain abroad as well as favourable weather, Russia enjoyed a bumper crop. Encouraged by the new tax policy to increase the cultivated acreage, peasants expanded production: the acreage sown in 1925 equalled that of 1913. Yields, however, remained lower than before the Revolution, and the harvest proportionately smaller: as late as 1928, on the eve of collectivization, it was 10 percent below the 1913 figure…”

779 Pipes, op. cit., p. 395.
4. The Tenth Party Congress. The year that climaxed in the crushing of the peasants’ and Kronstadt sailors’ rebellions had revealed that the popularity of the Communist Party was at an all-time low. So Lenin acted to crush dissent within the party; in the same fateful month of March, 1921, the Tenth Party Congress tightened the screws on political dissent at just the moment when a degree of economic liberalization was being introduced through NEP. Thereby it destroyed the last bastion of free speech in the country – within the Party itself.

It did so by crushing a movement called “the Workers’ Opposition” that was led by Alexander Shliapnikov and his mistress, Alexandra Kollontai. For “the emergence of the Workers’ Opposition,” writes Pipes, “brought into the open a smoldering antagonism that went back to the late nineteenth century, between a minority of politically active workers and the intellectuals who claimed to represent them and speak in their behalf. Radical workers, usually more inclined to syndicalism that Marxism, cooperated with the socialist intelligentsia and allowed themselves to be guided by them because they knew they were short of political experience. But they never ceased to be aware of a gulf between themselves and their partners: and once a ‘workers’ state’ had come into being, they saw no reason for submitting to the authority of the ‘white hands’.

“The concerns expressed by the Workers’ Opposition stood at the center of the deliberations of the Tenth Party Congress in March 1921. Shortly before it convened, Kollontai released for internal party use a brochure in which she assailed the regime’s bureaucratization. (Party rules prohibited venting party disputes in public.) The Workers’ Opposition, she argued, made up exclusively of labouring men and women, felt that the Party’s leadership had lost touch with labor: the higher up the ladder of authority one ascended, the less support there was for the Workers’ Opposition. This happened because the Soviet apparatus had been taken over by class enemies who despised Communism: the petty bourgeoisie had seized control of the bureaucracy, while the ‘grand bourgeoisie’, in the guise of ‘specialists’, had taken over industrial management and the military command.

“The Workers’ Opposition submitted to the Tenth Congress two resolutions, one dealing with party organization, the other with the role of trade unions. It was the last time that independent resolutions – that is, resolutions not originating with the Central Committee – would be discussed at a party congress. The first document spoke of a crisis in the party caused by the perpetuation of habits of military command acquired during the Civil War, and the alienation of the leadership from the labouring masses. Party affairs were conducted without either glasnost’ or democracy, in a bureaucratic style, by elements mistrustful of workers, causing them to lose confidence in the party and to leave it in droves. To remedy this situation, the party should carry out a thorough purge to rid itself of opportunistic elements
and increase worker involvement. Every Communist should be required to spend at least three months a year doing physical labor. All functionaries should be elected by and accountable to their members: appointments from the Center should be made only in exceptional cases. The personnel of the central organs should be regularly turned over: the majority of the posts should be reserved for workers. The focus of party work should shift from the Center to the cells.

“The resolution on trade unions was no less radical. It protested the degradation of unions, to the point where their status was reduced to ‘virtual zero’. The rehabilitation of the country’s economy required the maximum involvement of the masses: ‘The systems and methods of construction based on a cumbersome bureaucratic machine stifle all creative initiative and independence’ of the producers. The party must demonstrate trust in the workers and their organizations. The national economy ought to be reorganized from the bottom up by the producers themselves. In time, transferred to a new body, an All-Russian Congress of Producers, not appointed by the Communist Party, but elected by the trade unions and ‘productive’ associations. (In the discussion of this resolution, Shliapnikov denied that the terms ‘producers’ included peasants.) Under this arrangement, the Party would confine itself to politics, leaving the direction of the economy to labor.

“These proposals by veteran Communists from labor ranks revealed a remarkable ignorance of Bolshevik theory and practice. Lenin, in his opening address, minced no words in denouncing them as representing a ‘clear syndicalist deviation’. Such a deviation, he went on, would not be dangerous were it not for the economic crisis and the prevalence in the country of armed banditry (by which he meant peasant rebellions). The perils of ‘petty bourgeois spontaneity’ exceeded even those posed by the Whites: they required greater party unity than ever. As for Kollontai, he dismissed her personal relations with the leader of the Workers’ Opposition (‘Thank God, we know well that Comrade Kollontai and Comrade Shliapnikov are “bound by class ties [and] class consciousness”’).

“Worker defections confronted Lenin and his associates with a problem: how to govern in the name of the ‘proletariat’ when the ‘proletariat’ turned its back on them. One solution was to denigrate Russia’s working class. It was now often heard that the ‘true’ workers had given their lives in the Civil War and that their place had been taken by social dregs. Bukharin claimed that Soviet Russia’s working class had been ‘peasantified’ and that, ‘objectively speaking’, the Workers’ Opposition was a Peasant Opposition, while a Chekist told the Menshevik Dan that the Petrograd workers were ‘scum’ (svoloch) left over after all the true proletarians had gone to the front. Lenin, at the Eleventh Party Congress, denied that Soviet Russia even had a ‘proletariat’ in Marx’s sense, since the ranks of industrial labor had been filled
with malingerers and ‘all kinds of casual elements’. Rebutting such charges, Shliapnikov noted that 16 of the 41 delegates of the Tenth Congress supportive of the Workers’ Opposition had joined the Bolshevik party before 1905 and all had done so before 1914…

“… Trotsky criticized Shliapnikov for making a ‘fetish of democracy’: ‘The principle of elections within the labor movement is, as it were, placed above the Party, as if the Party did not have the right to assert its dictatorship even in the event that this dictatorship temporarily clashed with the transient mood within the worker democracy.’ It was not possible to entrust the management of the economy to workers, if only because there were hardly any Communists among them: in this connection, Trotsky cited Zinoviev to the effect that in Petrograd, the country’s largest industrial center, 99 percent of the workers either had no party preference, or, to the extent that they did, sympathized with the Mensheviks or even the Black Hundreds. In other words, one could have either Communism (‘the dictatorship of the proletariat’) or worker rule, but not both: democracy spelled the doom of Communism…

“The Workers’ Opposition suffered a decisive defeat and was ordered to dissolve. It was doomed from the outset not only because it challenged powerful vested interests of the central apparatus, but because it accepted the undemocratic premises of Communism, including the idea of a one-party state. It championed democratic procedures in a party that was by its ideology and, increasingly, by its structure committed to ignoring the popular will…

“To make impossible further dissent in the party, Lenin had the Tenth Congress adopt a new and fateful rule that outlawed the formation of ‘factions’: these were defined as organized groupings with their own platforms. The key, concluding article of the resolution ‘On the unity of the party’, kept secret at the time, provided severe penalties for violators: ‘In order to maintain strict discipline within the party and in all soviet activities, [in order] to attain the greatest unity by eliminating all factionalism, the Congress authorizes the Central Committee in instances of violations of discipline, or the revival or tolerance of factionalism, to apply all measures of party accounting up to exclusion from the party.’

“Although Lenin and the majority that voted for his resolution seem to have been unaware of its potential implications, it was destined to have the gravest consequences: Leonard Schapiro regards it as the decisive event in the history of the Communist Party. Simply put, in Trotsky’s words, the ruling transferred ‘the political regime prevailing in the state to the inner life of the ruling party’. Henceforth, the party, too, was to be run as a dictatorship…”

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780 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 451-453, 454, 455.
The Russian Church in Exile

Out of the chaos of the Russian Civil War there was formed the Russian Orthodox Church in Exile, later known as the Russian Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR). A.F. Traskovsky writes: “The part of the Russian Orthodox Church which was abroad already had quite a long history before the formation of ROCOR. In Western Europe Russian Orthodox churches had been built beginning from the eighteenth century at Russian embassies and holy places that were often visited by Russians on trips abroad. In the East, thanks to the missionary activities of the Russian Orthodox Church missions were founded in China and Japan that later became dioceses, as well as a mission in Jerusalem. The spread of Orthodoxy in Alaska and North America also led to the creation of a diocese. In the “Statute concerning the convening of an Emigration Assembly of the Russian Churches”, mention was made that in 1921 there were 15 emigration regions which had Russian bishops and 14 districts where there were Russian Orthodox parishes but no bishops. The regions included: North America, Japan, China, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, France, Italy, Serbia, Bulgaria, Turkey and the Far East. The districts included: Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, England, Switzerland, Czechia, Hungary, Austria, Romania, Palestine, Greece and the city of Bizert in Tunisia. All the emigration missions, parishes and dioceses were in canonical submission to the higher ecclesiastical authorities in Russia – the Holy Ruling Synod until the restoration of the patriarchate in 1917, and his Holiness the Patriarch after 1917. But then after the revolution there began the Civil War and anarchy. The Bolsheviks began to persecute the Church. The majority of emigration missions and dioceses found themselves either deprived of the possibility of normal relations with the higher ecclesiastical authorities of Russia, or such relations were exceptionally difficult. Moreover, in Russia itself many dioceses were cut off by the front from his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon (Bellavin)’s leadership. After the defeat of the White army, a huge flood of émigrés flooded abroad, amongst whom were not a few representatives of the clergy, including bishops and metropolitanans. On the shoulders of the clerics who were abroad and the clergy who had emigrated lay the burden of care for the spiritual nourishment of the huge Russian diaspora. That was the situation in which the part of the Russian Church that was abroad found itself on the eve of the formation of the Church Abroad.

“What was the prehistory of the Russian Church Abroad? Her beginnings went back to 1919, in Russia. In Stavropol in May, 1919 there took place the South Russian Church Council headed by the oldest hierarch in the South of Russia, Archbishop Agathodorus of Stavropol. There took part in the Council all the bishops who were on the territory of the Voluntary army, the members of the All-Russian Ecclesiastical Council and four people from each diocesan council. At the Council there was formed the Higher Church Administration of the South of Russia (HCA of the South of Russia), which consisted of:
President – Archbishop Metrophanes of Novocherkassk, Assistant to the President – Archbishop Demetrius of Tauris, Protopresbyter G. Shavelsky, Protopriest A.P. Rozhdestvensky, Count V.V. Musin-Pushkin and Professor of theology P.V. Verkhovsky. In November, 1919 the Higher Church Administration was headed by Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev and Galich, who had arrived from Kiev.  

“The aim of the creation of the HCA was the organization of the leadership of church life on the territory of the Volunteer army in view of the difficulties Patriarch Tikhon was experiencing in administering the dioceses on the other side of the front line. A little earlier, in November, 1918, an analogous Temporary Higher Church Administration had been created in Siberia headed by Archbishop Sylvester of Omsk. Later, a part of the clergy that submitted to this HCA emigrated after the defeat of Kolchak’s army and entered the composition of the Chinese dioceses of the Russian Orthodox Church. The HCA of the South of Russia, like the Siberian HCA, was, in spite of its self-government, nevertheless in canonical submission to his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, and in this way Church unity was maintained.

“After the defeat of the armies of Denikin, in the spring of 1920 the head of the HCA of the South of Russia, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), was evacuated from Novorossiysk to Constantinople, and was then for a time in a monastery on Mount Athos. However, in September, 1920, at the invitation of General Wrangel, he returned to Russia, to the Crimea, where he continued his work. The final evacuation of the HCA of the South of Russia took place in November, 1920, together with the remains of Wrangel’s army. On the steamer ‘Alexander Mikhailovich’ there set out from the Crimea to Constantinople the leaders of the HCA and a large number of simple priests.

“On arriving in Constantinople, as Archbishop Nicon (Rklitsky) indicates in his Biography of Metropolitan Anthony, Metropolitan Anthony ‘first considered that from now on all the activities of the Russian Higher Church Administration should be brought to an end and all the care for the spiritual welfare of the Russian Orthodox people should be taken upon herself by the Church of Constantinople and the Local Orthodox Churches in whose bounds

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781 For more details on this Council, see Andrej Alexandrovich Kostriukov, “Stavropol’skij Sobor 1919 g. i nachalo nezavisimoj tserkovnoj organizatsii na iuge Rossii” (The Stavropol Council of 1919 and the beginning of independent church organization in the south of Russia), Ural’skij istoricheskij vestnik, 2008, N 4 (21), pp. 71-75; Pravoslavnaja Zhizn’, N 5 (685), May, 2009, pp. 1-11. (V.M.)

782 Before being evacuated, while still in Yekaterinodar, Metropolitan Anthony came out of the cathedral, accompanied by all the clergy, and addressed the thousands of faithful, asking them – for one knows, he said, that “the voice of the people is the voice of God” - whether they should leave with the White Army or stay in Russia and suffer for the faith. The crowd replied that they should leave (Monk Anthony (Chernov), Archêveque Theophane de Poltava (Archbishop Theophan of Poltava), Lavardac: Monastère de St. Michael, 1988, p. 73 (in French)) (V.M.).
the Russian Orthodox people found themselves. However, as soon became clear, the realization of this variant became extremely problematic in view of the fact that huge masses of Russian refugees did not know the language and customs of those countries to which they had come, and the nourishment of such a large flock by priests speaking other languages (for example Greeks) presented very many problems. Moreover, the numerous émigré Russian clergy, who were fully able to deal with these problems, would not be involved. Therefore it was decided to continue the activities of the Higher Church Administration.

"In order to work out a plan of further action, the first session of the HCA outside the borders of Russia took place on November 19, 1920... Metropolitan Dorotheus [the locum tenens of the patriarchal throne of Constantinople] gave his agreement [to the HCA’s decisions] and the HCA of the South of Russia was transformed into the Higher Church Administration Abroad.

"Literally the day after the above-mentioned session, on November 20, 1920, an event took place in Moscow that had an exceptional significance for the Russian Church Abroad – his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon passed decree № 362 concerning the self-governance of church dioceses in the case of a break of communications between this or that diocese and his Holiness the Patriarch for external reasons over which they had no control (what they had in mind was war or repression by the authorities). This is the decree’s main content:

"’1. With the blessing of his Holiness the Patriarch, the Holy Synod and the Higher Church Council, in a joint session, judged concerning the necessity of... giving the diocesan Hierarch... instructions in case of a disconnection with the higher church administration or the cessation of the activity of the latter...

"’2. If dioceses, as a result of the movement of the front, changes of state boundaries, etc., find themselves unable to communicate with the higher church administration or the higher church administration itself together with his Holiness the Patriarch for some reason ceases its activity, the diocesan hierarch will immediately enter into relations with the hierarchs of neighbouring dioceses in order to organize a higher instance of church authority for several dioceses in the same conditions (in the form of a

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783 On that day more than 125 ships arrived in Constantinople with about 150,000 people on board (Zhukov, op. cit., p. 67). The session of the HCA took place on board the steamer Great Prince Alexander Mikhailovich. In it took part Metropolitan Anthony of Kiev, Metropolitan Plato of Odessa, Archbishop Theophan of Poltava and Bishop Benjamin of Sebastopol. It was decided to continue the prerogatives of the members of the HCA, discussing all aspects of the Church life of the refugees and soldiers in all states having relations with the Ecumenical Patriarch (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 47-48). (V.M.)

At the second session, on November 22, it was decided to include Archbishop Anastasy of Kishinev, who was already living in Constantinople, in the HCA (Zhukov, op. cit., p. 69)
temporary higher church government or metropolitan region, or something similar).

“‘3. The care for the organization of the higher church authority for the whole group who are in the situation indicated in point 2 is the obligatory duty of the eldest ranked hierarch in the indicated group…’

“This wise decree of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, which was passed in conditions of anti-church terror, was given to the foreign bishops a year after its passing with the help of Bishop Meletius of Nercensk. It served as the canonical basis for the formation of the Russian Church Abroad, since the émigré clergy were in the situation indicated in points 2 and 3.

“Meanwhile the HCA in Constantinople continued to work out a plan for further action. At the sessions of April 19-21, 1921, it was decided to convene a ‘Congress of the representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad to unite, regulate and revive church activity abroad’, which was later renamed the ‘Russian Church Council Abroad’, also known in the literature as the Karlovtsy Council. Soon, at the invitation of Patriarch Demetrius of Serbia, the HCA led by Metropolitan Anthony moved to Sremskie Karlovtsy in Serbia – a fraternal country which in the course of many years proved to be a safe haven for the leadership of the Church Abroad.” 784

Sremskie Karlovtsy was a significant centre for the Russian Church in Exile because in 1691 37,000 Serbian families had fled there from Turkish-ruled Serbia with the blessing of Patriarch Arsenius III, forming an autonomous metropolitanate in 1712. Just as the Serbs fled there from the Turks, so the Russians now fled there from the Bolsheviks.

ROCOR found greater sympathy among the Serbs than among the Greeks. “Serbia repaid mercy [Russia’s defence of Serbia in 1914] with mercy. Alexander I never identified Russia with her new communist government. Being a deeply believing Orthodox man, King Alexander could not contemplate the destiny of Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church without pain... During the Civil war, by command of the Monarch of Yugoslavia, a Serbian corps of volunteers was formed in the South of Russia to fight against the Bolsheviks. When the civil war was lost and the remains of the Volunteer Army, thanks to the efforts of General Wrangel, were saved and left their homeland, Alexander I magnanimously stretched out his hand of help and received those who were without a homeland, the Russian refugees who were needed by nobody, and gave them the opportunity to set themselves up, work and live in this country. The young Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes needed cultural and intellectual forces. It well understood this, but it

did not give refuge to Russian people out of avaricious motives – it strove to repay good with good, to repay the joyful hospitality it received from Russia when it was a political émigré, and for help in the war.”

Meanwhile, at the end of 1920, 200,000 Russian refugees with the retreating remnants of the White armies in Siberia crossed from Siberia into China. Among them were six bishops and many priests. This large colony of Russians recognized the authority of the HCA in Serbia.

The canonical status of ROCOR was unique in the history of the Orthodox Church. She always called herself a part of the Local Russian Church - that part which was situated outside Russia and had jurisdiction exclusively outside Russia (point 1 of the Polozhenie or Statute of ROCOR). And yet she had dioceses and parishes on all six continents of Europe, North and South America, Asia, Africa and Australia, and was in canonical submission to none of the Local Orthodox Churches already existing in those places. Moreover, at the beginning of the 1990s, when she returned to Russia, she claimed jurisdiction in Russia as well! And so ROCOR was, in effect, a world-wide jurisdiction claiming to have jurisdiction in every part of the globe, but which claimed to be only a part of one Local Church, the Russian!

This clearly anomalous situation was seen as being justified on a temporary basis, - until the fall of communism in Russia, according to the Polozhenie - not only by ROCOR herself, but also by what came to be called the Catacomb Church in Russia and, at least for a time, such established Local Churches as Serbia and Jerusalem. The situation was seen as justified on the grounds, first, of the extraordinarily difficult situation of the three million or so Russian Orthodox scattered around the world, whose spiritual and physical needs had to be met by Russian-speaking pastors. And secondly, on the grounds of the critical situation in the Orthodox Church as a whole, when even the leaders of Orthodoxy were falling into heresy.

The First All-Emigration Council opened in Sremskie Karlovtsy on November 21, 1921. Eleven Russian and two Serbian bishops took part; twenty-four Russian bishops who could not attend the Council sent telegrams recognizing its authority. Clergy, monastics and laity also took part in the Council – 163 people in all. Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) was the president of the Council, and Patriarch Demetrius of Serbia its honorary president. However, when the Bulgarian Metropolitan Stefan of Sophia arrived, bringing a greeting from the Bulgarian Holy Synod, this upset the Patriarch of Serbia, whose relations with the Bulgarians were not good. So he did not come, while Metropolitan Stefan immediately returned to Bulgaria.

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785 Victor Salni and Svetlana Avlasovich, “Net bol’she toj liubvi, kak esli kto polozhit dushu svoiu za drugi svoia” (There is no greater love than that a man should lay down his life for his friend), http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page&pid=966.

786 Monk Benjamin, op.cit., p. 51.
Bishop Seraphim (Sobolev), who was in charge of the Russian communities in Bulgaria, reported to the Council about the great difficulty of their position in Bulgaria because of the Bulgarian schism and the impossibility of concelebrating with the Bulgarian clergy. The hierarchs discussed this matter from all sides and declared that they would like to restore communion with the Bulgarian Church, but could not exceed their canonical prerogatives without the participation of the other Local Churches, and in particular of the Church of Constantinople. In spite of that, continuing the practice of the Russian Church and basing themselves on the canons (71, 81, 88 and 122 of Carthage), the delegates allowed the Russian priests and deacons to serve all kinds of Divine services and sacraments with the bishops and clergy of the Bulgarian Church, and they also allowed the Russian bishops to serve with the Bulgarian clergy. Between bishops only joint serving of molebens, pannikhidas, etc. was allowed, but “in no way the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and other holy sacraments of the Orthodox Church”.

The Council called on the Genoa conference to refuse recognition to the Bolshevik regime and help the Russian people to overthrow it. And it declared: “May [God] return to the All-Russian throne his Anointed One, strong in the love of the people, a lawful tsar from the House of the Romanovs”. However, Archbishop Eulogius and Anastasy voted against the Epistle (Anastasy was not anti-monarchist, but did not want the Romanovs to be mentioned). The hierarchs were split in two, two-thirds of the clergy abstained, and the Epistle was issued only thanks to the votes of the laity.

The strongly monarchist tone of the Karlovtsy Council (as of the Vladivostok Council of 1922) marks an important step in the spiritual recovery of the Russian Church. As we have seen, the Holy Synod in February, 1917 had done little, if anything, to protect the monarchy. And the Councils that took place during the Civil War shied clear of any commitment to monarchism. As A.A. Kostriukov writes: “Both the Stavropol Council and the HTCA created by it tried to adopt a restrained political position. While speaking out against the Bolshevik dictatorship, the leadership of the Church in the south of Russia distanced itself from the monarchy and tried to stand on democratic principles. So as not to destroy the fragile peace between the representatives of various parties represented in the White armies. Recalling this period, Protopriest Vladimir Vostokov wrote in 1922: ‘In May, 1919 the South Russian Council in Stavropol under the presidency of Archbishop Metrophanes, and through the exceptional participation of Protopriest [George] Shavelsky, who at that time was working in agreement with the chief of staff General Romanovsky, did not allow those members to speak

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787 Иван Снегаров, Отношения между Българската църква и другите православни църкви след провъзгласяването на схизматата (Relations between the Bulgarian Church and other Orthodox Churches following the declaration of the schism) (in Bulgarian); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 61.
who tried to express themselves definitively in relation to ‘socialism’ and ‘the internationalist executioners’. And the word ‘Tsar’ was feared at the Council like fire.’

“According to the witness of Protopriest Vladimir Vostokov, even the open condemnation of regicide and the appeal to the people to repent of this sin dates to the period when the HTCA of the South-East of Russia was already in the Crimea. However, ‘not even the Crimean Church administration resolved on appealing’ for the reestablishment of the monarchy’.  

However, final defeat in the Civil War and the experience of exile gave the Karlovtsy Council the spiritual freedom to speak openly for the restoration of the monarchy. And the Russian Church in Exile continued to preserve the traditions of monarchism until the very end of its existence. This position was, however, intensely feared by the Bolsheviks, for whom the threat of the restoration of the monarchy remained real for many years. And so, under pressure from the Bolsheviks, Patriarch Tikhon resolved: “To close the Council [it was already closed], and to recognise the resolutions of the Karlovtsy Council as having no canonical significance in view of its invasion into the political sphere which does not belong to it. To demand the materials of the Council abroad, so as to judge on the degree of guilt of the participants in the Council.” The Holy Synod added: “To enter into discussion of the activity of those responsible for the Council, and to give them over to ecclesiastical trial after the establishment of the normal life of the Russian Synod.”

In defence of the Karlovtsy Council’s position, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) said: “If by politics one understands all that touches upon the life of the people, beginning with the rightful position of the Church within the realm, then the ecclesiastical authorities and Church councils must participate in political life, and from this point of view definite demands are made upon it. Thus, the holy hierarch Hermogenes laid his life on the line by first demanding that the people be loyal to Tsar Basil Shuisky, and when the Poles imprisoned him he demanded the election of Tsar Michael Romanov. At the present time, the paths of the political life of the people are diverging in various directions in a far more definite way: some, in a positive sense, for the Faith and the Church, others in an inimical sense; some in support of the army and against socialism and communism, others exactly the opposite. Thus the Karlovtsy Council not only had the right, but was obliged to bless the army for the struggle against the Bolsheviks, and also, following the Great Council of Moscow of 1917-1918, to condemn socialism and communism.”

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788 Kostriukov, op. cit., pp. 9-10.
790 Archbishop Nikon (Rklitsky), Zhizneopisanie Blazhennejshago Antonia, Mitropolita Kievskago i Galitskago (A Life of his Beatitude Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich), New York, 1960, vol. VI, p. 36.
The position of the Karlovtsy Council was supported, as we have seen, by the Zemsky Sobor which took place in Vladivostok from July 23 to August 10, 1922. As Anton Ter-Grigorian writes, “it recognized the cause of the revolution to be the sins of the Russian people and called for repentance, proclaiming the only path of salvation for Russia to be the restoration of a lawful Orthodox monarchy. The Council resolved that ‘the right to establish Supreme power in Russia belongs to the dynasty of the House of Romanov’. That is, the Council recognized the Romanov Dynasty to be still reigning in spite of the troubles, and for a short time re-established the Fundamental laws of the Russian empire in the Amur district (until the final conquest of the region by the Reds).

“Accordingly it was decided that the Amur State formation free from the Bolsheviks should be headed by a representative of the Dynasty. For the transitional period General Michael Konstantinovich Diterichs was elected as Ruler. Patriarch Tikhon, who was in Moscow, was unanimously elected as the honourable president of the Council. The widowed Empress Maria Fyodorovna wrote a welcoming telegram to the Sobor in reply.

“In order no. 1 dated August 8, 1922 Lieutenant-General Diterichs wrote: ‘For our sins against the Anointed of God, Emperor Nicholas II, who was martyred with the whole of his Family by Soviet power, a terrible time of troubles has struck the Russian people and Holy Rus’ has been subjected to the greatest destruction, pillaging, torment and slavery by atheist Russians and thieves and robbers of other races, led by infidels of Jewish race who have even renounced their own Jewish faith…

“‘Here, at the edge of the Russian land, in the Amur region, the Lord has placed a single thought and faith into the hearts and minds of everyone gathered at the Zemsky Sobor: there can be no Great Russia without a Sovereign, without an Anointed of God of inherited succession. And here in the Amur region, as we, the last people of the Russian land, are gathered in a small body, but one strong in faith and national spirit, we are set the task and the duty and the good intention of directing all our service to preparing the way for him – our future God-seer.’

“And here are the words of the last order of General Diterichs of October 17, 1922 before his departure from Russia under the pressure of the Reds: ‘I believe that Russia will return to the Russia of Christ, the Russia of the Anointed of God, but I believe that we were unworthy of this mercy from the Supreme Creator…”

CONCLUSION: BEYOND NIHILISM

When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth? Revelation 6.9-10.

By 1922 the Russian Empire had been destroyed, but the Russian Revolution was not yet complete. Although in that year the official name of the country was changed from “Russia” to “The Soviet Union”, there were still many institutions, such as the Orthodox Church, which were not yet Sovietized, and whole swathes of the population, including most of the peasantry, that remained Russian at heart. The task of Sovietizing Russia fell to Stalin, who, after the death of Lenin in 1924, quickly gained complete control of the party and the country.

There followed the greatest, most thorough and most violent transformation of one country into another that the world has yet seen. By 1928 the official Orthodox Church, the Moscow Patriarchate, had been transformed into an obedient mouthpiece of Soviet propaganda - although its senior leadership and hundreds of thousands of believers fled into the catacombs to form the True Orthodox Church of Russia, which survives to this day. Then came the collectivization of the countryside and a break-neck programme of industrialization. All this was at the cost of millions of lives and a terrible destruction of the spiritual and material heritage of the land. Even the Communist Party and the Red Army did not escape, being decimated during Stalin’s purges in 1937-38.

In 1941 began the titanic civil war between International Socialism under Stalin and Nationalist Socialism under Hitler. Stalin’s triumph in 1945 sealed the fate, not only of Russia, but also of Eastern Europe and large parts of Asia, for generations to come. And while Soviet communism officially died in 1991, it is now clear that under Putin it is being resurrected in a new, more modernized and nationalist form.

Let us look back and summarize the fruits of the fall of the Russian Empire and its replacement by the Soviet Union…

“In October 1917,” writes Archpriest Lev Lebedev, “a satanic sect came to power in Russia that formed a secret conspiracy within the communist party (of the Bolsheviks). The threads leading to the centre of this sect’s administration went far beyond the ocean… At the base of this organization

792 Its present leader is Archbishop Tikhon of Omsk, and its official website is here: http://www.ripc.info/.
there lay the Masonic principle of many-levelled initiation. Thus ordinary communists knew absolutely nothing about the real aims of their leaders, while those, in their turn, did not know the aims of the ‘high-ups’... Thus the RCP(B)-CPSU was a party-werewolf from the beginning: it was one thing in its words, its slogans, its declarations and its official teaching of Marxism-Leninism, but in fact it was completely the opposite. This party created a state-werewolf in its image and likeness: according to the constitution, the law and its official decrees it was one thing, but in essence, in spirit and in its works it was something completely different!

“There has never been any such thing in the history of humanity! There have been cruel, unjust or lying rulers, whose works did not accord with their words. But never have there been rulers, or governments, which set as their aim the annihilation of a people and a people’s economy that came into their possession! But this is precisely what they began to do in Russia.

“There are now various estimates of the victims of the Bolshevik regime (higher and lower). It goes without saying that it is impossible to establish exact figures. We have tried to take a middle course. And according to such middling estimates, from 1917 to 1945 in one way or another (through shooting, camps and prisons, the two famines of the beginning of the 1920s and 1930s, the deliberately ‘Pyrrhic’ victories in the Second World War) up to 80 million Great Russians only were annihilated (not counting Ukrainians, Belorussians and other nationalities of the former Russian empire). In all, up to 100 million. From 1917 to 1926 20 million were simply shot. We must think that from 1927 to 1937 not less than 10 million. Under ‘collectivization’ 4 million were immediately shot. So that out of the 80 million who perished by 1945 about 30-40 million were simply executed. These figures could not have been made up of political enemies, representatives of the ‘former ones’ (landowners and capitalists), nor of ‘their own’, that is, those communists who for some reason or other became unsuitable. All these together constituted only a small percentage of those who perished. The main mass – tens of millions – were the ‘simple’ Russian People, that is, all the firmly believing Orthodox people who, even if they did not oppose the new power, could not be re-educated and re-persuaded… These were simple peasants and town-dwellers, who in spite of everything kept the Orthodox faith. And these were the overwhelming majority of the Russian People. Among them, of course, there perished the overwhelming majority of the clergy and monastics (by 1941 100,000 clergy and 205 bishops had been annihilated).

“At the same time, from 1917 to 1945, from the offspring of the off-scutings of the people, but also from unfortunate fellow-travellers for whom self-preservation was higher than all truths and principles, a new people grew up – the ‘Soviet’ people, or ‘Sovki’, as we now call ourselves. From 1918 children in schools no longer learned the Law of God, but learned atheist filthy thinking (and it is like that to the present day [1999]). After 1945 it was
mainly this new, ‘Soviet’ people that remained alive. Individual representatives of the former Russian, that is, Orthodox People who survived by chance constituted such a tiny number that one could ignore them, since they could no longer become the basis of the regeneration of the true, real Rus’.”

One can quarrel with some details of this analysis. Thus Lebedev’s figures for those killed count among the higher rather than the middling estimates. Official figures for those condemned for counter-revolution and other serious political crimes between 1921 and 1953 come to only a little more than four million, of whom only about 800,000 were shot. This, of course, excludes those killed in the Civil War and other armed uprisings, and in the great famines in Ukraine and elsewhere. Again, already in the 1920s and 1930s a larger proportion of the population was probably genuinely Soviet and anti-Orthodox than Lebedev admits, while more genuinely Russian and Orthodox people survived into the post-war period than he admits.

Nevertheless, his words have been quoted here because their main message about the Russian revolution is true. Too often commentators in both East and West have tried to push the Russian revolution into the frame of “ordinary” history, grossly underestimating the unprecedented scale of the tragedy and equally grossly overestimating the continuity of the Russian revolution with “the true, real Rus’” that preceded it. The fact is that the Russian revolution brought to an end the Christian period of history, characterized by mainly monarchical governments ruling – or, at any rate, claiming to rule – by Christian principles, and ushered in the Age of the Antichrist...

The terms “Antichrist” and “The Age of the Antichrist” need to be defined. St. John of Damascus writes: “Everyone who confesses not that the Son of God came in the flesh and is perfect God, and became perfect man after being God, is Antichrist (I John 2.18, 22; 4.3). But in a peculiar and special sense he who comes at the consummation of the age is called Antichrist. First, then, it is requisite that the Gospel should be preached among all nations, as the Lord said (Matthew 24.14), and then he will come to refute the impious Jews.”

Archimandrite Justin (Popovich) writes: “The Antichrist will be, as it were, an incarnation of the devil, for Christ is the incarnation of God. The Antichrist will be the personification of evil, hatred, lying, pride and unrighteousness, for Christ is the personification of goodness, love, truth, humility and righteousness. Such will be the chief Antichrist, who will appear before the

794 GARF, Kollektia dokumentov; Popov, V.P. Gosudarstvennij terror v sovietskoj Rossii. 1923-1953 gg.; istochniki i ikh interpretatsia, Otechestvennie arkhivy, 1992, № 2, p. 28. For commentaries on these figures, see http://mitr.livejournal.com/227089.html; http://community.livejournal.com/idu_shagayu/2052449.html.
Second Coming of the Lord Christ, and will stand in the place of God and proclaim himself to be God (whom He will destroy at His glorious Second Coming with the breath of His mouth (II Thessalonians 2.4)). But before him there will be forerunners, innumerable antichrists. For an antichrist is every one who wishes to take the place of Christ; an antichrist is every one who wishes, in place of the truth of Christ, to place his own truth, in place of the righteousness of Christ – his own righteousness, in place of the love of Christ – his own love, in place of the Goodness of Christ – his own goodness, in place of the Gospel of Christ – his own gospel...

“...In what does his main lie consist? In the rejection of the God-Man Christ, in the affirmation that Jesus is not God, not the Messiah=Christ, not the Saviour. Therefore this is the work of the Antichrist. The main deceiver in the world is the devil, and with him – the Antichrist. It goes without saying that a deceiver is every one who in anyway rejects that Jesus is God, the Messiah, the Saviour. This is the main lie in the world, and all the rest either proceeds from it, or is on the way to it.”

So anyone who rejects the Divinity of Christ is an antichrist, while the Antichrist, or the chief Antichrist, will appear as an evil world-ruler towards the end of the world. In the first sense, of course, there have been multitudes of antichrists long before 1917. As the Holy Apostle John said already in the first century: “Children, it is the last times, and as you have heard that the Antichrist will come, so even now there are many antichrists” (I John 2.18). As for the Antichrist, he has not appeared yet. So in what sense could the Antichrist be said to have appeared in the period surveyed in this book?

In order to answer this question we need to turn to a prophecy of the Holy Apostle Paul concerning the Antichrist: “You know what is restraining his appearance in his time. The mystery of iniquity is already at work: only he who restrains will continue to restrain until he is removed from the midst. And then the lawless one will be revealed” (II Thessalonians 2.6-8). Now the unanimous teaching of the Early Church, as of more recent commentators such as St. Theophan the Recluse, is that “he who restrains” is the Roman emperor, or, more generally, all legitimate State power on the Roman model. In the pre-revolutionary period this legitimate State power was incarnated especially in the Russian Tsar, the last Orthodox Christian Emperor, whose empire was known as “the Third Rome”. Thus his “removal from the midst” would be followed, according to the prophecy, by the appearance of the Antichrist.

Now in 1905 the Tsar’s October Manifesto, which significantly limited his autocratic power and therefore his ability to restrain “the mystery of iniquity”, or the revolution, was followed immediately by the appearance of the St. Petersburg Soviet led by Lev Trotsky. In 1917, when the Tsar abdicated, the

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796 Popovich, Interpretation of the Epistles of St. John the Theologian, Munich, 2000, pp. 36, 38.
Soviets again appeared, and in October won supreme power in the country. The Church had existed without a Christian Emperor in the first centuries of her existence, and she would continue to do so after 1917. Nevertheless, “from the day of his abdication,” as St. John Maximovich writes, “everything began to collapse. It could not have been otherwise. The one who united everything, who stood guard for the truth, was overthrown.”  

So if we expect the Antichrist to appear after the removal of “him who restrains”, the Orthodox emperor, then the significance of the appearance of Soviet power under the leadership of Lenin immediately after the removal of the tsar is obvious.

Of course, it is also obvious that neither Lenin not Stalin was the Antichrist for the simple reason that the Antichrist, according to all the prophecies, will be a Jewish king who claims to be the Messiah and God, whereas Lenin was not only not mainly Jewish (although most of his leading followers were Jewish), but also an atheist and an enemy of all religions, including the Jewish one. Moreover, the Soviet Antichrist was not the only Beast in this period. Whether in imitation of him, or in reaction to him, but using essentially the same methods, a number of Antichrist tyrants appeared around the world. This phenomenon has been called “totalitarianism”, a term that has received criticism but which seems to us to be a more or less accurate characterization. For what all these Antichrists had in common was a desire to possess the totality of man. For those living under one of the totalitarian dictators of the twentieth century there was no private space they could retreat to in order to get away from the pressure of public politics. Everything – politics, religion, science, art, even personal relationships – came under the scrutiny of the totalitarianism in question, and was subject to its extremely harsh judgement.

If we define totalitarianism as a form of political power that seeks to abolish (i) private property, (ii) the family and (iii) religion (except the cult of the god-king or vozhd or Führer himself), then Ancient Egypt and Babylon were totalitarian regimes, as Igor Shafarevich has demonstrated. But since the rise of Christianity with its characteristic distinction between the things of God and the things of Caesar, truly totalitarian regimes have been rare and short-lived. Perhaps the only significant exception is the Papacy – hence the link which Dostoyevsky traced between the Papacy and the revolution.

It is only with the triumph of Soviet power in 1917 that we find totalitarianism established for more or less lengthy periods over very large populations. The Second World War established this power over a vast territory from Berlin to Vladivostok; the Chinese revolution of 1949 brought the world’s most populous nation into the net; and the power of

totalitarianism continued to spread throughout the world for the next forty years. In all these lands, moreover, we find the characteristic traits of Soviet Communism: terror, atheism and mass murder.

It is sometimes argued that totalitarianism came to an end in 1991 with the triumph of democracy over Soviet Communism. However, totalitarian regimes still flourish in China, North Korea, Burma, Cuba and Zimbabwe. Moreover, the democracies of North America, the European Union and the neo-Soviet Russian Federation are steadily increasing their control over their citizens in a more subtle, less violent, but essentially no less totalitarian way.

The major powers that escaped totalitarianism in 1945, such as the United States, Britain and France, were both more tolerant of traditional religion and less inclined to mix religion with politics. But in the second half of the twentieth century the democracies have carried on the antichristian revolution with hardly less success than the anti-democratic totalitarian regimes of the first half, albeit in less violent ways. Thus the Nihilist dreams of Nechaev and Nietzsche, which became nightmarish reality in the era of Stalin and Hitler, have given way to more peaceful visions of life without God (at least in any form recognizable to traditional monotheism) but with education and clean water, human rights and computer games.

The aim of this continuation of the revolution by non-violent means – the "positive", "creative" phase of the revolution, as opposed to its "negative", "destructive" phase up to 1945 – is the same as before: to reconcile a renewed mankind to a completely this-worldly faith and hope. The first, violent, nihilist phase of the revolution was necessary in order to root out the old, other-worldly faith. In Lenin’s famous phrase, “you can’t make an omelette without breaking eggs.” But now mankind can proceed to a new age of universal prosperity and happiness from which all sorrow and pain will have fled away and in which, consequently, the “opium” of traditional religion will no longer be necessary, being replaced by more this-worldly (but still “spiritual”) opiates...

“The new age,” wrote Fr. Seraphim Rose in the 1960s, “which many call a ‘post-Christian’ age, is at the same time the age ‘beyond Nihilism’ – a phrase that expresses at once a fact and a hope. The fact this phrase expresses is that Nihilism, being negative in essence even if positive in aspiration, owing its whole energy to its passion to destroy Christian Truth, comes to the end of its program in the production of a mechanized ‘new earth’ and a dehumanized ‘new man’: Christian influence over man and over society having been effectively obliterated, Nihilism must retire and give way to another, more ‘constructive’ movement capable of acting from autonomous and positive motives. This movement... takes up the Revolution at the point where
Nihilism leaves off and attempts to bring the movement which Nihilism began to its logical conclusion.”

For two generations, until the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, the negative and positive, Nihilist and post-Nihilist, phases of the revolution coexisted in a state of cold war. Finally, the Homeland of the Revolution, defeated in the race for economic and military predominance, decided to accept that she was no longer in the vanguard of History, but a step behind. The Communists retired hurt, the Masons moved back into Russia, and Jewish oligarchs returned to control of the means of production from which Stalin had almost banished them…

To the architects of the new age, it looked as if the Soviet Union, so necessary in the first, violent phase of the revolution, but so cumbersome and obstructive now, was to be consigned to the dustbin of history. Russia was about to join “the international community” of free nations “capable of acting from autonomous and positive motives”…

The Yeltsin era (1991-2000) produced important gains. The most important of these was freedom of religion: open opposition to the Moscow Patriarchate was permitted, the Russian Church Abroad was permitted to open parishes in Russia, and the remnants of the Catacomb Christians poured into it. Also important was freedom of the press: the horrific scale of the crimes of the Stalin era became public knowledge, the MP hierarchs were exposed as KGB agents who had consciously obeyed the God-hating communist state for generations, and even the Communist Party was put on trial (but acquitted). However, repentance for the Soviet past was intermittent and superficial; the KGB, though humbled, was not destroyed; many of the worst aspects of Western Capitalism were allowed to develop unchecked; and the official church, after an initial fright, regained the initiative. “Sergianism” was

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799 Rose, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 2001, Nihilism, p. 88. Again, he wrote: “The Nihilism of Hitler was too pure, too unbalanced, to have more than a negative, preliminary role to play in the whole Nihilist program. Its role, like the role of the purely negative first phase of Bolshevism, is now finished, and the next stage belongs to a power possessing a more complete view of the whole Revolution, the Soviet power upon which Hitler bestowed, in effect, his inheritance in the words, ‘the future belongs solely to the stronger Eastern nation.’…” (p. 77)

800 It was as New Hieroconfessor Theodore (Rafanovsky, +1975) had prophesied: “The communists have been hurled at the Church like a crazy dog. Their Soviet emblem - the hammer and sickle - corresponds to their mission. With the hammer they beat people over the head, and with the sickle they mow down the churches. But then the Masons will remove the communists and take control of Russia.” In January, 1992 the first of several affiliates of the Grand Lodge Nationale Française was founded in Moscow (Richard Rhoda, “Russian Freemasonry: A New Dawn”, paper read at Orient Lodge No 15 on June 29, 1996, http://members.aol.com/houltonme/rus.htm). Boris Yeltsin became a Mason in 1992. Vladimir Putin became one in Germany.

801 Jews continued to occupy prominent positions in post-war Communist Eastern Europe, especially in Poland and Romania (see Michael Hoffman, “Pope John Paul II: The Judas Iscariot of Our Time”, The Hoffman Wire, April 4, 2005, revisionisthistory.org). However, their influence began to wane in the Soviet Union, and by the 1970s it was more strongly felt in the anti-Soviet dissident movement, which looked to the West.
justified as a “wise” move, and the most serious fruit of Sergianism – the MP’s participation in the heretical ecumenical movement – intensified.

As the liberal era of the 1990s came to an end, a kind of pseudo-Russian patriotism came to the fore. However, as Protopriest Lev Lebedev wrote, “fatherland”, “Russia”, “the State” had become idols, more important that the true Faith, without which they are worthless: “The ideological idol under the name of ‘fatherland’ (‘Russia’, ‘the state’) has been completely preserved. We have already many times noted that these concepts are, in essence, pagan ideological idols not because they are in themselves bad, but because they have been torn out from the trinitarian unity of co-subjected concepts: Faith, Tsar, Fatherland (Orthodoxy, Autocracy, People)…

“Everything that one might wish to be recognized and positive, even the regeneration of the faith, is done under the slogan of ‘the regeneration of the Fatherland (Russia)’! But nothing is being regenerated. Even among the monarchists the regeneration of the Orthodox Autocratic Monarchy is mainly represented as no more than the means for the regeneration of the Fatherland. We may note that if any of the constituent parts of the triad – Orthodoxy, Autocracy, People – is torn away from the others and becomes the only one, it loses its power. Only together and in the indicated hierarchical order did they constitute, and do they constitute now, the spiritual (and all the other) strength and significance of Great Russia. But for the time being it is the ideological idol ‘fatherland’ that holds sway…” 802

This spirit, which seeks to justify and even glorify the Soviet past, was illustrated by an article entitled “The Religion of Victory” in which a new Russian religio-political bloc, “For Victory!” presented its programme. The victory in question was that of the Soviet forces over Germany in 1945. Their blood was considered to have “a mystical, sacred meaning”, being “the main emblem of the Russian historical consciousness”. 803

Similarly, an article on an MP web-site produced this astonishing blasphemy: “The ‘atheist’ USSR, trampling down death by death, resurrected and saved the world. Only because ‘godly’ and ‘ungodly’ soldiers died in their millions do we live today and the whole population of the world, the whole of humanity, is alive. It would be no exaggeration to think that that terrible and great war and great Victory in that Great war caused the first sociologically large-scale micro-resurrection, a reproduction by the peoples of the USSR of the exploit of Christ. May 9, 1945 became the most convincing

802 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, p. 655.
witness of the fact that 2000 years ago Christ was resurrected. Therefore our
Great Victory is the feast of feasts, it is Pascha…"804

This extraordinary mixture of Orthodoxy, Nationalism and Communism –
or “Ecclesiastical Stalinism”, as it is known - was the most horrific sign of the
lack of repentance of the MP even now that it was free from Soviet oppression.
It was supported by, among others, the former idol of ROCOR’s liberals, Fr.
Demetrius Dudko. “Now the time has come,” he wrote, “to rehabilitate Stalin.
And yet not him himself, but the concept of statehood. Today we can see for
ourselves what a crime non-statehood is and what a blessing statehood is! No
matter how many cry that in Soviet times many perished in the camps – how
many are perishing now, without trials or investigations… If Stalin were here,
there would be no such collapse…. Stalin, an atheist from the external point of
view, was actually a believer, and this could be proved by facts if it were not
for the spatial limitations of this article. It is not without reason that in the
Russian Orthodox Church, when he died, ‘eternal memory’ was sung to
him… The main thing is that Stalin looked after people in a fatherly manner.
Stalin legitimately stands next to Suvorov!”805

According to a 2005 survey, 42% of the Russian people, and 60% of those
over sixty, wanted the return of “a leader like Stalin.”806 Their wish was
granted… On January 1, 2000 KGB Colonel Putin came to power… With
Putin the Russian revolution has entered what its culminating phase. His
regime, which claims to be the successor both of the RSFSR and the USSR,
may be described as neo-Soviet without Marxism but with “Orthodoxy” –
and all under the control of the KGB/FSB. It draws support from a heady
mixture of conflicting constituencies: nationalists and democrats and
monarchists, conservative Orthodox and pagan mystics and atheists,
westerners and capitalists and Slavophiles. Putin aims to find a place for all
the Russias of the last century. Only one condition is attached: that Putin’s
regime is accepted as the lawful successor of all previous Russian regimes...

Putin’s propagandist Yegor Khomlogorov has written: “Putin’s power was,
from the very beginning, non-electoral in origin, it was not a matter of being
‘appointed by Yeltsin’, but of what the Chinese call ‘the mandate of heaven’,
an unquestioned right to power… As a politician, Putin has already for a long
time been above politics…”807 Putin was indeed resembling a Chinese
emperor more than a democratic politician, not only in his political style, but
also in his fabulous personal wealth…808

805 Dudko, “Mysli sviaschennika” (The Thoughts of a Priest),
806 Orlando Figes, “Vlad the Great”, New Statesman, 3 December, 2007, p. 34.
807 Khomlogorov, “Kremlevskij Mechtatel’” (Kremlin Dreamer), Spetnaz Rossii (Russia’s Special
Forces), 2000/2.
808 See Luke Harding, “Putin, the Kremlin power struggle and the $40bn fortune”, The
“For those who claim,” writes Professor Olga Ackerly, “that the ‘CIS is different from the USSR’ and Putin is a ‘practising Orthodox Christian’, here are some sobering facts. The first days and months Putin’s presidency were highlighted by the reestablishment of a memorial plaque on Kutuzovsky Prospect where Andropov used to live. The plaque was a symbol of communist despotism missing since the 1991 putsch, bearing Andropov’s name – a former head of the KGB, especially known for his viciousness in the use of force and psychiatric clinics for dissidents. On May 9, 2000, Putin proposed a toast to the ‘genius commander’ Iosif Stalin and promoted many former KGB officers to the highest state positions…

“Important to note is that the Eurasian movement, with ties to occultism, ecumenism, etc. was recently revived by Putin, and a Congress entitled ‘The All-Russian Political Social Movement’, held in Moscow in April of 2001, was ‘created on the basis of the Eurasist ideology and inter-confessional [sic!] harmony in support of the reforms of President Vladimir Putin.’ The movement is led by Alexander Dugin, a sexual mystic, National Bolshevik Party member, son of a Cheka cadre, personally familiar with the so-called ‘Black International’, advisor to the State Duma, and participant in Putin’s ‘Unity’ movement.”

From 2003 Putin moved to reverse the main gains of the liberal 1990s – religious freedom, and a more open and honest attitude to the Soviet past. Churches were seized from True Orthodox Christians and their websites hacked; elections were rigged, independent journalists were killed, and independent businessmen imprisoned on trumped-up charges; and new history books justifying Stalinism were introduced into the classrooms. The red flag and hammer and sickle were restored to the armed services, as well as the melody (if not the words) of the Soviet national anthem. Youth organizations similar to the Hitler Youth were created. And in general Putin’s Russia began to resemble Nazi Germany in the 1930s.

Banking on the high price of Russian oil, Putin began to rebuild Russia’s economic and military might – but the corruption and imbalances within the Russian economy have hindered the diversification of the economy that he needs. State- and privately-organized crime has flourished under his patronage. The MP has shown complete loyalty to Putinism, and takes an enthusiastic part in the criminal economy, as is illustrated by the activities of the recently elected patriarch, Cyril Gundiaev, who imports tobacco and alcohol duty-free and is now one of the richest men in Russia.

811 “After the fall of the Soviet Union, the church received official privileges including the right to import duty-free alcohol and tobacco. In 1995, the Nikolo-Ugreshky Monastery, which is directly subordinated to the patriarchate, earned $350 million from the sale of
In 2007, Putin brokered a union between the majority of the Russian Church Abroad and the Moscow Patriarchate, which owed more than a little to the resurgent influence of the KGB/FSB. This is the most serious blow to the True Church and Holy Russia since the official Church under Metropolitan Sergius submitted to Stalin in 1927-28. Even in the darkest days of Stalinism the voice of the Russian Church Abroad told the truth about Russia; but now that voice is much weaker, surviving only in the Russian True Orthodox Church...

However, as the poet Fyodor Tiutchev said many years ago, you cannot measure Russia by a conventional yardstick. Great reversals, as took place in 1612, are possible in her as in no other nation. And many of the holy prophets and elders of Russia prophesied that the Russian people will repent, the revolution will be destroyed and Holy Russia resurrected through the prayers of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors.

In one of those prophecies, the Holy Nun-Martyr and Grand Duchess Elizabeth Fyodorovna declared: “If we look deep into the life of every human being, we discover that it is full of miracles. You will say, 'Of terror and death, as well.' Yes, that also. But we do not clearly see why the blood of these victims must flow. There, in the heavens, they understand everything and, no doubt, have found calm and the True Homeland - a Heavenly Homeland. We on this earth must look to that Heavenly Homeland with understanding and say with resignation, 'Thy will be done.' Great Russia is completely destroyed, but Holy Russia and the Orthodox Church, which ‘the gates of hell cannot overcome’, exists and exists more than ever. And those who believe and who do not doubt for one moment will see ‘the inner sun’ which enlightens the darkness during the thundering storm... I am only convinced that the Lord Who punishes is also the same Lord Who loves...

“Even though all the powers of hell may be set loose, Holy Russia and the Orthodox Church will remain unconquered. Some day, in this ghastly struggle, Virtue will triumph over Evil. Those who keep their faith will see the Powers of Light vanquish the powers of darkness. God both punishes and pardons...”

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alcohol. The patriarchate’s department of foreign church relations, which Kirill ran, earned $75 million from the sale of tobacco. But the patriarchate reported an annual budget in 1995-1996 of only $2 million. Kirill’s personal wealth was estimated in Moscow News in 2006 to be $4 billion. (http://news-nftu.blogspot.com, February, 2009).