AUTOCRACY, DESPOTISM AND DEMOCRACY

An Historical Approach to the Relationship between Orthodoxy and Politics

Vladimir Moss
PART II. RUSSIA (TO 1856)

I was established as king by Him, upon Sion His holy mountain, Proclaiming the commandment of the Lord.

Psalm 2.6.
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The 600-year history of Russia from her baptism under St. Vladimir in 988 until the official proclamation of the Russian Empire as the Orthodox Empire by the Ecumenical Patriarchs Joachim (in 1561) and Jeremiah II (in 1588) presents a very striking and instructive illustration of the Lord's words: "the last shall be first" (Matthew 20.16). For most of this period Russia was the most populous and flourishing nation in Orthodoxy. The beauty of her churches and the piety of her people amazed all comers. The monastic missionary movement inspired by St. Sergius of Radonezh in the fourteenth century came to be called "the Northern Thebaid" because of the resemblance of its piety to that of the Egyptian Thebaid. And yet during the whole of this period the Russian Church remained no more than a junior metropolitan district of the Ecumenical patriarchate! Unlike the much smaller Serbian and Bulgarian Churches, the Russian Church never sought autocephaly, and even when the Byzantine empire had contracted to a very small area around the capital city, the Russian Grand-Princes looked up to the emperors in Constantinople as to their fathers or elder brothers.¹

This voluntary self-limitation and national humility on the part of the princes and people brought many blessings to Russia. First and foremost, it implanted Orthodoxy in all its purity into the hearts of the people with no admixture of heterodoxy.² Secondly, the fact that the metropolitan of the Russian Church was appointed by Constantinople gave him the ability to arbitrate in the frequent quarrels between the Russian princes in the Kievan period, thus preserving the spiritual unity of the Russian nation that had been achieved under St. Vladimir. And thirdly, it ensured the survival and resurrection of Russia as a single Orthodox nation even after the Mongols had destroyed Kiev and subdued most of Russia in the 1240s.

The de jure supremacy of Byzantium in both Church and State was recognized also by the first metropolitan of Russian blood, Hilarion. As G. Podskalsky writes: “Although Hilarion compared Vladimir with Constantine the Great and recognised his sovereignty over Kievan Rus’, he ascribed the title of ‘Emperor’ neither to him nor to his successor. The collector (or editor)¹

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² The Russians were not even exposed to the classical pagan authors; for, as Meyendorff (op. cit., pp. 119-120) writes, because of “the availability of Scriptures and other literature in translation”, “there was no compelling need to study a ‘classical’ language, classical civilisation was not assimilated in Russia together with Christianity, as was the case in the West. Indeed a Latin medieval scholar who knew Latin would not read only Christian scriptures, but also Cicero, Augustine, and eventually Aristotle. Instead, a Russian knizhnik would only have at his disposal works translated from the Greek and channelled through the Church, i.e., liturgical, hagiographic, canonical, and some historical materials.”
Thus the Emperor became the sponsor at the baptisms of Tsar Boris-Michael of Bulgaria and Princess Olga of Kiev. Such sponsorship, according to Richard Fletcher, “indicated secular lordship as well. The experience of baptism could thus become a token of submission. Exported to the west we can see the idea at work in the baptismal sponsorship of Widukind by Charlemagne in 785, or of Harald Klak by Louis the Pious in 826, or of the Viking leader Guthrum by Alfred of Wessex in 878.”

The inferiority of the other Orthodox rulers to the Byzantine Emperor was indicated in various ways: by differences in titles (the Russian princes were called архонти), and by the fact that only the emperors were anointed at their enthronement. As Fr. Timothy Alferov write: “The Russian Great Princes and the Serbian, Georgian and Bulgarian rulers were defenders of the Church only in their territories. They were also raised to the princedom with the blessing of the Church, but by a different rite (о езhe благословити князя), which included the crowning of the prince, but contained no anointing.” If the Frankish and Bulgarian rulers had been accorded the title of базилеus, this was only under compulsion and was withdrawn as soon as politically expedient. And even much later, in 1561, when the pre-eminence of Russia in the Orthodox world could not be denied, the Ecumenical Patriarch Joasaph II accorded the Ivan the Terrible the title Basileus only because he was thought to descend from a Byzantine princess – Anna, the wife of St. Vladimir. So tenacious was the idea among the Greeks that there could be no Third Rome after the Second…

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1 Podskalsky, *Christianstvo i Bogoslovskaia literatura v Kievsoj Rusi* (988-1237 гг.) (Christianity and Theological Literature in Kievan Rus’ (988-1037), St. Petersburg, 1996, p. 68.


3 Alferov and Alferov, *O Tserkvi, pravoslavnom Tsarstve i poslednem vremeni* (On the Church, the Orthodox Kingdom and the Last Time), Moscow: “Russkaia Idea”, p. 18.

4 Alferov, “Teokratia ili Ierokratia”. However, not everyone agreed with this point of view. According to Podalsky, a Greek Metropolitan of Kiev in the early twelfth century, Nicephorus I, “without hesitation called both the emperor and the prince equally likenesses of the Divine archetype. This meant that he rejected the Byzantine idea of the single and undivided imperial power, which was inherent only in the Basileus of the Romans and which in this capacity reflected the Divine order of the world. The conception of the emperor as ‘the image of God’ (имаго Dei, εικων θεου) became well-known in Kiev thanks to the Mirror of Princes composed in 527 by Deacon Agapetus for Justinian. Extracts from it, in which the discussion was about the duty of subjects to submit to the visible deputy (prince) of the
Church and State were exceptionally close in Kievan Rus’. This was the result, in part, of the fact that in Russia it was the Great Princes who introduced the Church into Russia, whereas in Byzantium St. Constantine came to power when the Church was already three hundred years old and well-established. The Great Princes evinced a paternal care for the Russian Church and would not allow anyone to encroach on her rights. Thus St. Vladimir threatened those who threatened this order as follows: “If anyone breaks my rule, whether he be my son or a servant, or anyone of my race or one of the boyars, and interferes in the ecclesiastical affairs of the metropolitan, which I gave into the hands of the metropolitan, and of the Church, and of the bishops in all the cities in accordance with the canons, he will be judged and punished. If anyone tries to seize the judgement of the Church, he will be deprived of the name of Christian, and may all such be cursed by the Holy Fathers.”

St. Vladimir’s son, Yaroslav the Wise, strengthened this tendency in The Church Statute of Kiev. “In this document, we observe the symphony already developing between the Russian princes and the Church: ‘I, Grand Prince Yaroslav, son of Vladimir, in accordance with the wish of my father, have conferred with Metropolitan Illarion and have prepared [this] Church Statute because I believe that there are matters that belong neither to [the exclusive] jurisdiction of the prince nor to that of the boyars. I have granted this jurisdiction, as embodied in the present rules of the Church Church Statute, to the metropolitan and the bishops.’... The State both acknowledged and deferred to the Church from the beginning of Russian history. This relationship between the Prince and (in this case) the Metropolitan was one of mutual respect and cooperation. The State had its older traditions but incorporated a Christian worldview into its legal system and invited the Church to take part in the judicial side of Russian life when it deemed it appropriate.”

The relationship between Church and State in Kievan Rus’ is described by Podskalsky as follows: “The princes... gradually gave the Church juridical privileges, steady income and possessions in land... Crimes in the sphere of family relations, which were subject to punishment from the point of view of Christian morality, entered into the administration of the Church already in invisible ruler of the world (God), were included in the Izbornik of 1076 (Podskalsky, op. cit., pp. 67-68). “Yet it was a quite exceptional case,” writes G.P. Fedotov, “when the author of the panegyric of Prince Andrew of Vladimir dared to apply to him the famous definition of Chrysostom-Agapit, so popular in later Moscow: ‘Caesar by his earthly nature is similar to any man, but by the power of his dignity he is similar to God alone” (The Russian Religious Mind, Harvard University Press, 1966, vol. I, p. 398).

7 St. Vladimir, quoted in Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev), Russkaia Ideologa (The Russian Ideology), St. Petersburg, 1992, pp. 83-84.
the 11th century. The jurisdiction of the prince’s power was limited by the immunity of the clergy and the members of their families, and also of the "people", that is, people under the special protection of the Church (the poor, the sick, strangers, etc.). However, sometimes representatives of the clergy were still brought before the prince’s court...

“Just as the princes took part in the administration of Church affairs, so the episcopate strove to influence the princes’ politics. Such cooperation between Church and State reached its zenith during the rule of Vladimir Monomakh [1113-1125]. But, according to the words of Hilarion, already Vladimir I had taken part in councils, discussing with the Church leadership ways and means of strengthening faith amidst the newly converted. In the future such cooperation gradually broadened in proportion as the place of the Greek hierarchs was taken by bishops of Russian extraction, while the princes thereby received the possibility of exerting greater influence on the choice of candidates and their consecration. The chronicler tells us of a whole series of bishops who recommended themselves by carrying out complicated diplomatic missions. The triumphant conclusion of treaties by the princes was accompanied by oaths and kissing of the cross. The monks of the Kiev Caves monastery more than once took up a critical position in relation to the prince. Thus, for example, in 1073 Abbot Theodosius refused to join the princely civil war on the side of Svyatoslav, who had then seized the princely throne, and did not even fear sharply to point out to the prince the lawlessness of his actions, and of his exiling his brother Izyaslav. Only the lofty authority of the monastery leader and the pleas of the brethren saved him from persecution, and after the laying of the foundations of a new monastery church complete reconciliation was achieved. If the monks thereby kept an inner distance in relation to politics, the episcopate was forced sometimes to enter into it, although it did not take an immediate part in the counsels of the princes...

“In general, in the course of the civil wars of the 11th-12th centuries, the Church acquired a new moral authority in the eyes both of the princes and the people, while the State, for its part, received from the Church a confirmation of its divine purpose for the sake of the common good. From the Slavonic translation of the Nomocanon in 14 chapters Kievan Rus’ drew the ideal formula for the relations between the secular and ecclesiastical authorities going back to Justinian’s Sixth Novella…. The emperor was bound to concern himself with the teaching of the faith, with respect for the clergy and with the observation of the canons. It was precisely this postulate that was laid by Metropolitan Hilarion at the base of his reasonings on agreement between the Church and the State...

“…In spite of, or even thanks to the fact that not one of these two powers was able to boast of complete independence from the other, the sphere of
Kievan Rus' represented a rare balance of freedom and obedience in State life. Thus Fedotov writes: “Kievan chroniclers are very outspoken about the vices and flaws of their princes; they obviously felt no restraint imposed by princely dignity upon the freedom of their judgement. All they can afford to do, in order to alleviate the guilt of a prince, is to attribute his deficiency to the influence of bad counselors. Bad counselors, mostly ‘young ones’ (compare Isaiah 3.1-4), are the root of all political evils. The youth of the prince himself is often considered as a great misfortune and a sign of God’s wrath against the country.

“Good and bad princes alike are sent by God as a reward or punishment to the people. ‘If a country is right before God, He ordains in it a just Caesar or prince, loving law and justice, and he installs governors and judges administering justice.’ But ‘woe to the city where the prince is young, and likes to drink wine at the sound of the gusli with young counselors… Such are given by God for our sins’ (Lavr. 1015).

“If a bad prince is sent by God and his tyranny has a penitential significance this seems to exclude revolt against the tyrant as a legitimate political action. This conclusion would be quite correct in the spirit of the Byzantine and even early Christian ethics; it was indeed the doctrine of Anastasius Sinaitas in the seventh century and it was repeated by some Russian moralists as well. And yet the import of this doctrine of obedience was greatly exaggerated by the modern historians who often viewed the early Russian ways of life from the viewpoint of Muscovy. The Kievan chronicler may consider a revolt of the citizens against their prince as the act of God’s will, punishing the prince in his turn (Lavr. 1068).... The chastising providence of God, in the political sphere, is double-faced; occasionally, it can use to its own ends even a popular revolution.

“There was, however, one thing before which ancient Russia, unlike Byzantium, stopped with horror: the murder of a prince. Regicide in Byzantium was so common that it seems a part of the political system, a necessary corrective to autocracy. In Russia,... a revolt, although it was sometimes justified if it ended in the overthrow of a prince, was never pardoned if it resulted in his murder…”

And yet the very first saints canonized in Kievan Rus’ were Princes Boris and Gleb, the sons of St. Vladimir, who were killed by their evil brother Sviatopolk. And it was the fratricide of the Kievan princes that was to destroy the State...

10 Fedotov, op. cit., pp. 398-400.
Nevertheless, it remains true that a far greater proportion of rulers died peacefully in their beds in Russia than in Byzantium.
The unity of Kievan Rus’ under St. Vladimir and his immediate successors was an extraordinary achievement in view of the country’s lack of natural frontiers, constant invasions of barbarians and multinational character. However, as Podskalsky writes, on the death of Yaroslav the Wise in 1054, according to his will, “the rule of the Kievan princes was replaced by a federation of independent princedoms linked between themselves only by the hierarchy of princely thrones and the constant redistribution of princedoms within the princely clan (according to the principle of seniority) that flowed from that. These new traits of State construction were fraught with constant political tension, and forced the Church to step forward in a new for her role of preserver and defender of State unity”.  

From the beginning of the twelfth century the State began to weaken from both within and without. The basic reason was the internecine warfare of the princes who, though belonging to the same family, fought each other for princedoms. For the Russian custom – introduced, according to Solonevich, from feudal Hungary, Poland and, in part, Germany – was that the Great Prince of Kiev would divide up his realm into principalities and give each of his sons one part. This opened the gates to fratricidal strife. It was not until the fourteenth century that Muscovite Russia, under the influence of St. Sergius of Radonezh, introduced the law of primogeniture…

However, Ivan Solonevich considers there were other causes of the breakup of the Kievan State. “The most obvious reason for the failure of the pre-Muscovite rulers was the ‘civil wars’ in the Novgorodian or Kievan veche [assemblies or parliaments], independently of whether they were decided by the armed combat of princes on the field of battle or by the battle of parties. If we take the main lines of development of Novgorod and Kiev, Galich and Vilna, on the one hand, and Moscow, on the other, then it will become sufficiently obvious: both Novgorod and Kiev, and Galich and Vilna created a purely aristocratic order for themselves. And in Novgorod, and partly also in Kiev, the princes, that is, the representatives of the monarchical principle in the country, were simply hirelings, whom the veche sometimes invited and sometimes expelled as seemed fit to them. In Galich the princely power was completely eaten up by the boyars. In the Lithuanian-Russian State the aristocracy was just waiting for the moment to establish their freedoms before the face of the representative of one-man rule. They succeeded in this – at the price of the existence of the State. ‘In Kiev in the 11th century the administration of the city and district was concentrated in the hands of the military elders’ (Klyuchevsky). ‘The veches in Kiev and

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11 Podskalsky, op. cit., p. 62.
Novgorod, which appeared according to the chronicler already at the beginning of the 11th century, from the time of the struggle between Yaroslav and Svyatopol in 1015, began, from the end of the century, to make louder and louder noises, making themselves felt everywhere and interfering in the relations between the princes. The princes had to take account of this force, enter into deals with it, conclude political agreements with the cities. ‘The prince, sitting in Kiev, had to strengthen the senior throne under him by compacts with the Kievan veche. The princes were not fully empowered sovereigns of the land, but only their military-political rulers.’

“Not so long ago Russian social thought looked on Kievan Rus’, and in particular Novgorod, as, very unfortunately, unsuccessful attempts to establish a democratic order in Rus’. The coarse hand of eastern despotism crushed these attempts: ‘the veche is not to exist, the bell is not to exist, and Novgorod is to exist under the complete control of the Muscovite princes’...

Now opinions of this democracy have changed somewhat. Neither in Kiev nor in Novgorod was there any democracy. There was a feudal-mercantile aristocracy (in Vilna it was a feudal-landowning aristocracy). And it was this, and by no means ‘the people’, that tried by all means to limit and bind the princely power. And not, of course, in the name of ‘the people’, but in its own class interests. One can say: both in Galich, and in Novgorod, and in Vilna, and in Kiev the aristocracy – whether land-owning or mercantile – swallowed up the supreme power. But one can also put it another way: neither in Galich, nor in Novgorod, nor in Vilna, nor in Kiev did the popular masses succeed in creating their own power. And for that reason the lower classes attached themselves to that power which the Muscovite lower classes had succeeded in creating: ‘we want to be under the Muscovite Tsar, the Orthodox Tsar’."  

Protopriest Lev Lebedev is in essential agreement with this verdict: “What a misfortune is democracy, whether it be of the veche or of the boyars! And what madness! Never was the people (or even the best part of it) the source of power and law, nor can it be. In democracy everyone wants to ‘drag’ things in their direction, as a result of which they ‘break up’ the Russian Land, as the chronicler puts it... The fall of great Kiev was accomplished to a significant degree under the influence of the veche. Often it either summoned princes that it liked, driving out the lawful ones, or, on the contrary, invited the latter and drove out the others, thereby ‘helping’ the princes ‘to break up’ Great Kievan Rus’, which had been gathered together by the great labours of St. Vladimir, Yaroslav the Wise and Vladimir Monomakh.”

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14 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, p. 13.
The first major attempt by a Russian ruler to halt the decline of Kievan Rus’ by imposing a more disciplined, centralized and truly autocratic power began in 1155, when Prince Andrew, son of Great Prince George Dolgoruky of Kiev, left the small southern principality of Vyshgorod to settle in Rostov-Suzdal, one of the smaller principalities situated in the dense forests of the Volga-Oka triangle. Here, far from the fratricidal politics of southern Russia, as N.M. Karamzin writes, “the people had not yet exhibited a mutinous spirit, they did not judge and change their sovereigns, but fervently obeyed them and fought bravely for them”. It was therefore the perfect base for Andrew, who, “having not only a good heart, but also an excellent mind, clearly saw the reasons for the woes of the State and wanted to save at least his own land from them: that is, he removed the unfortunate system of appanages and ruled on his own, giving cities neither to his brothers nor to his sons”.16

“Here in the north,” writes M.V. Zyzykin, “the princes felt themselves to be the owners of the territory, which they could dispose of according to their discretion. And recognizing themselves to be creators and builders of that which was being formed more than was the case in the south, they could no longer be reconciled with the character of the temporary ownership of thrones that had brought them to unending transfers of their princedoms, and which gave the impression of some kind of queue, albeit a disordered queue. Now the prince does not leave his appanage, even if he obtains a great princedom. ‘This is mine, for it has been brought into being by me’ – that was the consciousness of the prince in the north. If earlier, in the south, there had still been some idea of a collective ownership by the Riurik family, now a more complete isolation of the princely lines took place… Together with the concept of property, that appeared in the north as a result of the personal activity and personal political creativity of the princes in the building up of society, there came to an end not only the transfer of princes from throne to throne, but also a change took place in the order of inheritance as the concept of private civil right was introduced into it. Earlier, in order that a prince should obtain the transfer of a throne in favour of the candidate he desired, he had to come to an agreement with the desired heir, with those relatives whom he was bypassing, with his boyars, and finally, with the vechе of the city, and,

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15 N.M. Karamzin, Predania Vekov (The Traditions of the Ages), Moscow, 1989, p. 207. Lebedev sees in this trait the influence of the Finnish element of the population. For the Finns, according to Tacitus, “did not fear people, and were not frightened of enemies, but attained that which is difficult to attain – they wanted nothing”! So when the Russians emigrated to these areas from the south and absorbed the Finnish population, they “also wanted nothing in their earthly life”. Only, since they were Orthodox Christians, these Russians “wanted life in the Heavenly Kingdom, which is why sedentary Rus’ strove to construct her earthly Fatherland in the image of the Heavenly, eternal Fatherland!” (op. cit., pp. 12, 15).
16 Karamzin, op. cit., p. 214.
not fulfilled after his death, even if the promise by kissing the cross. But now the prince, as the freedom and leave it in his will, according to his discretion, to his sons, his wife, his daughters and distant relatives - sometimes as their property, and sometimes for lifetime use. His private right as a property-owner became the basis for his rights as a ruler...”

This new political order introduced above all Prince Andrew received support from the heavenly realm, as Archpriest Lev explains: “In Vyshgorod at that time, in 1154-55, there was a holy icon of the Mother of God which had been brought not long before from Constantinople. This was a special holy thing! It was one of the icons created by the Evangelist Luke, which he painted having before his eyes the Most Holy Theotokos herself. He painted this icon on part of a plank from a table that had belonged to the Holy Family in Nazareth. Kiev, however, did not value this holy thing in a fitting manner. But meanwhile it worked miracles. It was often found in Vyshgorod, having departed from its place [in Kiev]. In 1155 it again moved, as it were showing that it did not want to remain there [in Kiev]. This time Prince Andrew was a witness of the event. He fell to his knees in prayer before the icon. And the Most Pure Mother of God told him what he should do. That night, secretly, without asking his father, Andrew of Bogoliubovo took the icon of our Lady and some priests of Vyshgorod and their families, and went away to the North... Again on the instructions of the All-Pure One he did not take it to Rostov, but left it in Vladimir. From that time this great icon began to be called the Vladimir icon. In accordance with God’s providence (for otherwise it is impossible to explain it), the father was not angry with his son. Prince Andrew remained in Vladimir, and built next to it the village of Bogoliubovo in which he constructed his palace. In 1157 Yury Dolgoruky [his father] died. His son did not go to live in Kiev. Moreover, he began to petition in Constantinople for the founding of a metropolitan see in Vladimir, that is, a see having the same ecclesiastical significance as that of Kiev. [However,] he was blessed to have only a bishopric. But then Bishop Theophanes of Vladimir was murdered in a bestial manner in Kiev at the command of the new Metropolitan, Constantine II, who had been despatched there from Constantinople. In reply to this evil act, and also because of the other injustices of the Kievans, Prince Andrew sent an army there, taking the Polovtsians as his allies. In 1169 Kiev was terribly burned down and looted. The churches were also looted.

“The Great Prince, who already bore the title ‘of Kiev’, moved the centre of Rus' to Vladimir, to the North. Here, in Vladimir-Suzdalian Rus’, he erected about 30 churches, among them the noted Dormition cathedral in Vladimir, and the first church in honour of the new feast of the Protecting Veil of the Theotokos – the wonderful ‘Pokrov on the Nerl’. The ‘Golden Gates’ of

17 Zyzykin, Tsarskaia Vlast’ (Royal Power), Sophia, 1924; http://www.russia-talk.org/cd-history/zyzykin.htm, pp. 11-12.
Thus, not accidentally, but consciously, a new capital of Rus’ was being constructed in the image of the former. Prince Andrew himself put his hand to the writing of a service to the feast of the Protecting Veil, which did not exist in the Greek Church, so that it became the first purely Russian national feast.\textsuperscript{18} It is also thought that he participated in the composition of the service to the All-Merciful Saviour and the All-Holy Theotokos on August 1/14 in commemoration of the victory of the Volga Bulgars, when the Vladimir icon and the icon of the Saviour gave out heavenly rays that were visible to all. The Byzantine Emperor Manuel had the same vision in the same year and day during his battle with the Saracens, as Andrew and Manuel learned from letters they wrote to each other. Prince Andrew also composed a prayer that was attached to the ‘Instruction’ of Vladimir Monomakh. Andrew loved God and people, and they loved him, not in vain giving him the nickname ‘God-loving’ [Bogoliubskij]. To the end of his days he had a special veneration for the passion-bearer Prince Boris, and always had his cap and sword by him.

“But, as in the life of a people, so in the earthly life of a man, not everything is unambiguous. Here they live partly according to Christ, but partly still according to the old Adam. Andrew, for all his love for God, could ‘become spiteful’, as was already said, against Kiev. He also ‘became spiteful’ in 1170 against wilful Novgorod. And he sent a powerful army there. But none other than the Mother of God Herself now began to become the Opponent of Prince Andrew, through her icon of the Sign defending the Novgorodians and bringing about a stinging defeat for the Suzdal’ian armies. However, Bogoliubsky nevertheless later brought Novgorod into obedience by ‘peaceful’ means – by cutting off the movement of bread to it from the Volga region and Ryazan.

“Having moved to the North, Prince Andrew himself hardly waged war at all. Here he was the builder of a state. And not everything was in order in the land. He was an opponent of paganism in everything, including such manifestations of it as the veneration of the military war-band and the ancient veche, which was especially strong in Rostov. He did not want to obey the old war-band nobles of his father. A plot was hatched among them. Prince Andrew wanted to be and become autonomous, an Autocrat, relying on the new Vladimir, and in general on the new people who were settling the new Rus’. For old Rostov was a stronghold of resistance not only to Prince Andrew personally. Here, as far back as the Baptism of Rus’, there had been strong opposition to the Christian faith, and there had been a rebellion of the sorcerers. Then they had expelled the bishops, not allowing them to preach, so that the holy Hierarch Leontius had had to begin teaching the people outside the city with teaching the children. Then, in the 12\textsuperscript{th} century, through the efforts of many saints, Orthodoxy shone out there also. But something

\textsuperscript{18} In spite of the fact that it commemorated the miraculous deliverance of Constantinople by the Mother of God from the then still pagan Russians in 862! (V.M.)
from paganism, and above all self-will and pride, still remained. And these are always the sources of every kind of disturbance. Therefore, while wanting to crush them, Prince Andrew of Bogolyubovo did not at all want to become a tyrant and disregard the rule of the Russian princes of ruling ‘together with the land’, having its voice as an advisor. That is how he ruled – but as an Autocrat, and not as a plaything in the hands of the powerful boyars, or of the people’s veche!...

“In 1174, in Bogolyubovo, Prince Andrew was killed in a terrible way by plotters. Before this one of them had stolen the sword of Prince Boris from his bedroom. Thus did the first Autocrat of Great Russia end his life in a martyrly fashion, and the commemoration of his death is celebrated on the very day, July 4/17, when the last Autocrat of Great Russia, his Majesty Nicholas Alexandrovich, was killed together with the whole of his Holy Family!”

Andrew’s achievement, according to V. Georgievsky, was to change “the principles on which ancient Kievan Rus’ had lived before him, proclaiming the idea of the autocracy as the basis of the political life of the Russian people. Orthodoxy and autocracy – these corner-stones of the great building of the Russian State – were first indicated to the Russian people by Andrew Bogolyubsky as the foundation for the attainment of State might and popular prosperity. Bogolyubsky’s later successors, the Great Princes of Moscow who founded the great Muscovite State which then grew into a mighty empire, only developed and realised Bogolyubsky’s ideas in their own political activity”.

Andrew’s achievements were consolidated by his brother, Vsevolod III, who was, as John Fennell writes, “one of the shrewdest and more farsighted of all the descendants of Vladimir I, [and] was widely acknowledged among his fellow-rulers. ‘All lands trembled at his name and his fame spread throughout the whole country,’ wrote his chronicler, who... probably represented the views of most of his contemporaries. All Suzdalia owed him allegiance of some kind or other; the great city-state of Novgorod with its vast subject lands to the west, north and north-east had, for the first eight years of the thirteenth century, only his sons as its rulers; Kiev’s eastern neighbour,

19 Lebedev, op. cit., pp. 17-18. There was another link between Andrew and the Tsar-Martyr: in both murders Jews took part. Thus Alexander Solzhenitsyn writes: “There was at least one Jew among the confidants of Andrew Bogoliubsky in Vladimir. ‘Among those close to Andrew was a certain Ephraim Moizich, whose patronymic, Moizich or Moiseevich, points to his Jewish origin’, and he, in the words of the chronicler, was among the plotters by whom Andrew was killed. But there is also a record that under Andrew Bogoliubsky ‘there came from the Volga provinces many Bulgars and Jews and accepted baptism’, and after the murder of Andrew his son George fled to Dagestan to the Jewish prince” (Dvesti let vnestë (Two Hundred Years Together), Moscow, 2001, p. 17).

20 Georgievsky, Svatoj Blagovernij Velikij Knyaz’ Andrej Bogolyubskij (Holy Right-Believing Great Prince Andrew of Bogoliubovo), St. Petersburg, 1900, Moscow: “Preobrazhenie”, 1999, p. 4.
firmly under his control; and the princes of the south were little more than his vassals.”

Then, in 1211, writes G.G. Litavrin, Vsevolod “obtained from a congress of the boyars, cities, villages, merchants, nobles, abbots, priests and ‘all the people’ a recognition of his son Yury’s hereditary rights to the Vladimir-Suzdal throne, which at that time held the seniority in Rus’. L.V. Cherepnin considers this date critical in the history of Old Russian Statehood: there began the change from the system of princedoms headed by a given Prince at a given moment, to a centralised, hereditary Monarchy. The bearer of the seniority, the Great Prince of Rus’, became the true Autocrat of the whole of the Russian land.”

Vsevolod’s rule, according to Kliuchevsky, “was in many respects the continuation of the external and internal activity of Andrew of Bogolyubovo. Like his elder brother, Vsevolod forced people to recognise him as Great Prince of the whole of the Russian land, and like him again, he did not go to Kiev to sit on the throne of his father and grandfather. He rules the south of Russia from the banks of the distant Klyazma. Vsevolod’s political pressure was felt in the most distant south-western borders of the Russian land. The Galician Prince Vladimir, the son of Yaroslav Osmomys, who won back his father’s throne with Polish help, hastened to strengthen his position on it, under the protection of his distant uncle, Vsevolod of Suzdal. He sent him the message: ‘Father and Lord, keep Galicia under me, and I, who belong to you and God, will always remain in your will together with the whole of Galicia.’

However, on the death of Vsevolod in 1212 disturbances again broke out between the princes of Russia. Novgorod separated from Vladimir, and the brothers and nephews of the Great Prince held sway in different cities of the land of Vladimir-Suzdal. As a result, “because of our sins”, as the chronicler put it, “God sent upon us the pagans”, that is the Tatars...

However, as Nicholas Riasanovsky points out, “the Mongol invasion and other wars and disasters of the time also contributed to the growth of princely authority, for they shattered the established economic and social order and left it to the prince to rebuild and reorganize devastated territory.”

So the survival of autocracy was assured...

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22 Litavrin, quoted in Fomin and Fomina, *op. cit.*, pp. 177-178.
The Fall of Constantinople in 1204 was an acid test of the depth of the filial feelings of the other Orthodox kingdoms towards New Rome. The Serbs and the Bulgarians passed the test, after a certain wavering between Rome and Constantinople, as did Georgia under St. Tamara. But soon after, Georgia was devastated by the Mongols.

A similar pattern is discernible in Russian history at this time: a rejection of pleas for union with the heretical West, followed by devastation at the hands of the pagan or Muslim East. On October 7, 1207, Pope Innocent called on the Russians to renounce Orthodoxy, since “the land of the Greeks and their Church has almost completely returned to the recognition of the Apostolic see”. The Russians, led by their metropolitan, a Nicaean Greek, rejected the papal demands.

Then, however, the Mongols invaded... In 1215, China, the greatest despotism that the world had seen, lost “the mandate of heaven” and fell to the Mongols under Chinghis Khan. In the following years until his death in 1227 Chinghis extended his conquests from Persia to Korea; and his successor Tamerlane even conquered India. When the Mongols advanced began again, they sacked Vladimir in 1237 and then completely destroyed Kiev in 1240, thereby establishing suzerainty over all the North Russian principalities except Novgorod. The Poles, the Teutonic Knights and the Hungarians were defeated but not occupied, sending shock waves throughout the West – and several missions to convert the Mongols to Christianity before they could convert the rest of the world to dust. Then the horde smashed the Turkish Seljuk Sultanate (in 1243) and the Arab Abbasid Caliphate (in 1258).

The cruelty of the Mongol invasion of Russia was illustrated by the destruction of Ryazan, where “the prince with his mother, wife and sons, the boyars and inhabitants, without regard to age or sex, were slaughtered with the savage cruelty of Mongol revenge... Priests were roasted alive, and nuns and maidens were ravished in the churches before their relatives. No eye remained open to weep for the dead…”

The only Russian principality not destroyed by the Mongols was Novgorod. This was because the Novgorodians’ ruler, Great-Prince Alexander Nevsky of Vladimir, decided to pay tribute to the Mongols in the East in order to concentrate all his forces in a successful war against what he considered to be the more dangerous enemies in the West - the papist Swedes.

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These orders played a critical part in the crusades in both the Mediterranean and the Baltic, and were answerable only to the Pope. Their wealth – and violence – was legendary. As the Knights said in 1309: “The sword is our pope.” But in 1240 St. Alexander defeated a Swedish army on the Neva. And on April 5, 1242, he crushed the “Knights of God” on the ice of Lake Chudov in present-day Estonia.

Having failed with the stick, the Pope now tried the carrot. In 1248 he sent “the two cleverest” of his cardinals to Alexander, in order that he might “forsake the false way of corruption which leads to the damnation of eternal death… and recognize the Roman church as mother and obey its pope.“ But Alexander refused, saying that Holy Tradition, the constant teaching of the Church from the beginning, had been passed down to the Orthodox alone. Then, in accordance with his principle: “Not in might, but in truth, is God”, he made the historic decision to submit to the Mongols, who might subdue the Russians politically but would not harm their Orthodox faith, rather than to the Pope, who would destroy both their statehood and their faith.

However, there was strong opposition to his policy. Thus one of his brothers, Andrew, having adopted the opposite course of standing up to the Tatars, was routed and had to flee to Catholic Sweden. And the other brother, Yaroslav, placed himself at the head of the anti-Alexander party in Novgorod, which led to an armed confrontation between the two sides in 1255. The tax imposed by the Tatars was very burdensome; and even in Vladimir-Suzdal there were uprisings. The Tatars responded harshly, forcing the Russians to fight in their armies...

Alexander’s last major act was to journey to the Khan to plead for mercy… He died on his return home, exhausted by his efforts, having taken the schema as Monk Alexis. “My children,” said Metropolitan Cyril, know that the sun of the land of Suzdal has now set! For nevermore shall such a prince be found in the land…”

The Church had strongly supported Alexander not simply because it believed that it was necessary to give to Caesar (the Tatars) what was Caesar’s: there were also substantial benefits for the Church itself. For under the Tatars, as Fennell writes, “its lands and possessions were secure and the clergy was immune from taxation and conscription. Religious toleration had been Mongol policy ever since the time of Chinghis Khan, and the khans of

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26 Quoted in Fletcher, op. cit., p. 502.
28 Metropolitan Cyril, in Cohen and Major, op. cit., p. 170.
the Golden Horde, whether pagan or Moslem, always showed consideration for the churches in the lands under their sway,” 29 considering that God would look favourably on them if they honoured His priests.

“For furthermore, as Aristides Papadakis writes, “the metropolitan of Kiev, a prelate appointed from Nicaea and later from Constantinople, was considered by the khans as a privileged representative of a friendly power, which throughout the thirteenth and the fourteenth century promoted commercial exchanges between the Far East and Western Europe. Before the conquest, the Greek metropolitan stood above local political struggles between the Russian princes. Respected as he was by the Tatars, he acquired additional and exclusive powers, since he headed the only administrative structure extending over the whole ‘land of the Rus’’, divided as it was now between territories controlled by the Tatars, the Lithuanians and the Poles.” 30

Indeed, Metropolitan Cyril II (1242-1281) went freely through all the Russian lands, from Galicia, where his former patron, Prince Daniel Romanovich, ruled to Vladimir, where St. Alexander ruled, being accepted as the leader of the Church by all. Therefore as the old Kievan State continued to disintegrate towards the end of the thirteenth century it was becoming clearer that only in and through the Church could Russia be reunited. Russia could not prosper without strong political authority; but only the Church could decide who and where that authority should be.

29 Fennell, op. cit., p. 121.
RISE OF MUSCOVY

A new phase in the history of Russia began in 1299, when Metropolitan Maximus of Kiev, whose title now included the phrase “of all Russia”, moved the seat of the Russian metropolitanate from the devastated ruins of Kiev in the South to Vladimir-Suzdal in the North. In this way the Church followed where the State, in the person of St. Andrew of Bogolyubovo, had led in the previous century. This indicated that the political leadership of Russia had to come from the north, from the area that we shall now call “Great Russia”, as opposed to “Little Russia” centred on Kiev or “White Russia”, which was increasingly coming under the dominion of the pagan rulers of Lithuania.

On the death of Maximus, Grand-Prince Yury of Galicia petitioned Patriarch Athanasius I to consecrate Abbot Peter as “metropolitan of Galicia”. This move was potentially very dangerous for the unity of the Russian lands; for once the Russian territories under Lithuanian rule had their own metropolitan, they might be tempted to break with Great Russia ecclesiastically as well as politically. And this in turn would certainly expose Little Russia to the danger of absorption into Roman Catholicism, which threatened from Poland and the Baltic German lands...

The patriarchate realized the danger, and when Metropolitan Maximus died Abbot Peter was appointed, not “metropolitan of Galicia”, but “metropolitan of Kiev and All Russia” instead... Beginning with St. Peter, the metropolitans firmly maintained their rights to rule over the whole of the Russian flock, having for this the support of the Tatars in the same way that the ecumenical patriarch would later have the support of the Turks. St. Peter moved the seat of Church government again, from Vladimir to Moscow – that is, to the town whose princes, more than any others, followed the “Alexandrian” pro-Tatar and anti-Catholic policy, and which was neither too far east to be under the shadow of the Tatars nor too far west to be under the shadow of the Lithuanians. And the Tatar Khan in a gramota of 1315 gave to the prince of Moscow the same

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31 That this was a real threat already in the fourteenth century, and even in some parts of Great Russia, is illustrated by an incident that took place in Novgorod, which was traditionally, because of its foreign merchant colony, less anti-Catholic than other parts of Great Russia. “On one occasion at the end of the fourteenth century, the city, in bargaining with the patriarch of Constantinople for privileges for its archbishop, threatened to go to Rome as a final argument. This threat was not serious and did not fail to elicit a severe rebuke from the patriarch, but, up to the time of the loss of their independence, the Novgorodians saw no objection against a political alliance with the Catholic kings of Lithuanian Poland” (Fedotov, op. cit., p. 336).
St. Peter advised Great Prince Ivan I Danilovich to build a stone church dedicated to the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God, which became the first church of Russia. “If, my son, you obey me, and build the church of the Most Pure Mother of God, and give me rest in your city, God will bless you and make you higher than all the other princes, and will extend this city more than all other cities. And your race will possess this place to the ages.”

In 1326 St. Peter moved his see to Moscow, and died in December of the same year. As he had prophesied, a process of political and economic centralisation around Moscow now began. The first step in this process consisted in the replacing of Tver by Moscow as the most favoured principality in the eyes of the Mongols.

Now the Mongols liked to appoint one of the Russian princes as their chief tax-collector for the Russian dominions. In exchange for providing the Horde with regular income, this prince was given the Great Princely title, was protected from Mongol raids and had the opportunity of making considerable gains for himself from the other tribute-paying princes. At the time of St. Peter’s death, the prince of Tver had the “yarlik” of tax-collector and Great Prince. Almost immediately, however, in 1327, the citizens of Tver rose up against the khan and killed a high-level deputation from the Mongol capital of Sarai sent to oversee the collection of tribute. After some hesitation, the prince of Tver sided with the rebels – which gave Prince Ivan of Moscow his chance. He set off for Sarai and returned at the head of a Mongol-Russian force which devastated Tver. In reward for this service, the khan bestowed the title of Grand Prince on Ivan together with the responsibility of farming all the taxes due to the khan from the whole of Russia.

In 1345 Great-Prince Olgerd ascended the throne of Lithuania. He was a pagan; but, as Papadakis writes, he “would extend his domains over Russian territories from the Baltic to the Black seas, including the prestigious city of Kiev. His avowed goal was to free Russia from the Mongol rule and assume the legacy of the ancient Kievan princes. To reach that goal he was ready to embrace Orthodox Christianity, which was already the religion of his two successive wives (who were Russian princesses), of all his numerous children, and of the vast majority of his subjects.

“In the circumstances, the Church was actually holding the trump card: the real center of the country had to be the metropolitan’s residence, since that prelate controlled the only administrative structure covering Moscow, 

33 St. John Maximovich, Proiskhozhdenie zakona o prestolonasledii v Rossii (The Origin of the Law of Succession in Russia), Podolsk, 1994, p. 9.
It was at about this time, in 1347, that three young Orthodox, Anthony, John and Eustathius, were martyred by Olgerd in Vilna for refusing to accept paganism. It then suddenly became clear to all those with eyes to see that the interests of Orthodoxy lay with Moscow rather than Lithuania. And at the same time the issue of the metropolitanate again became of political importance. In 1353, Metropolitan Theognostus of Kiev, a Greek, had personally arranged his succession in the person of a Russian, Alexis, whom he had consecrated as bishop of Vladimir (1352)... In 1352 the Lithuanian grand-prince strongly demanded from the patriarchate that the seat of the metropolitanate be returned to Kiev, and even sent his candidate, Theodoret, to Constantinople for consecration. Facing a rebuke, he took the unusual step of having Theodoret ordained by the Bulgarian patriarch of Trnovo. Understandably, Theodoret was labelled a schismatic in Constantinople and in Moscow. Upon the death of Theognostus, political confusion in Constantinople – and strong political and financial pressures from both Moscow and Vilna – led to the almost simultaneous (1354-5) consecration, in the Byzantine capital, of two metropolitans: Alexis (the candidate nominated by Theognostus) and Roman, pushed forward by Olgerd. Both claimed the see of Kiev as Theodoret was abandoned by his sponsor, Olgerd...

“Metropolitan Alexis, an experienced, respected and able prelate (1354-70), continued the policies of his predecessors Peter and Theognostus. His prestige at the Golden Horde was enhanced by a visit there, during which he healed the influential widow of khan Uzbek, Taidul, from her sickness (1357). His influence in Byzantium led to the unification of the metropolitanate, under his sole rule, following the death of Roman (1362).”

In 1369 Great Prince Demetrius Ivanovich of Moscow, having consolidated his position within Great Russia, sent an army against Lithuanian-controlled Smolensk and Briansk. “At the same time Metropolitan Alexis excommunicated from the Church those princes who had entered into union with the Lithuanian pagans against the Christian prince of Moscow.” Olgerd hit back by asking the Ecumenical Patriarch Philotheus to grant a second metropolitan for all the lands which he and his allies controlled. He was supported by a threat coming from King Casimir of Poland “forcibly to convert the Galicians to Roman Catholicism. Faced with an emergency situation, Philotheus reestablished a separate metropolitanate in Galicia (1371), and called on Alexis to exercise more even-handedness towards

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34 Papadakis, op. cit., p. 337.
Olgerd and his Orthodox subjects. In 1375, he also consecrated a man of his immediate entourage, the learned Bulgarian monk Cyprian, as metropolitan in Lithuania. However, that this consecration would not lead to a lasting division of the metropolitanate: Cyprian received the right to succeed Alexis. Upon his arrival in Kiev in 1376, he restored order and the prestige of the metropolitanate in territories controlled by Lithuania.\footnote{Papadakis, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 339}

At the same time, Great Prince Demetrius of Moscow was bringing Tver, which previously had been in the Lithuanian sphere of influence, in vassalage to himself, and Prince Sviatoslav of Smolensk broke with Olgerd and entered into union with Demetrius. With the change in political orientation in these lands, Metropolitan Alexis was able to appoint new bishops for Smolensk and Briansk. As Lithuania began to be threatened by the Catholic Teutonic knights from the Baltic, Prince Demetrius took the title “Great Prince of all Russia” when signing a treaty with Novgorod; and it looked as if the reunification of the Russian lands under Moscow was about to begin…. At about this time the Metropolitan of Lithuania Cyprian urged a union between Orthodox Muscovy and Lithuania against the Tatars. However, this policy was not favoured by the Muscovite Great-Prince; and so on the death of St. Alexis in 1378 he expelled Cyprian from Moscow, which led to a prolonged struggle to fill the vacant metropolitan’s throne.

It was at this time that one of the greatest of the saints, Sergius of Radonezh, assumed the spiritual leadership of the Russian Church… In 1380, Tatar usurper, Mamai, invaded Muscovy. St. Sergius blessed the Great-Prince to fight only when all other measures had failed: “You, my lord prince, must care and strongly stand for your subjects, and lay down your life for them, and shed your blood in the image of Christ Himself, Who shed His blood for us. But first, O lord, go to them with righteousness and obedience, as you are bound to submit to the khan of the Horde in accordance with your position. You know, Basil the Great tried to assuage the impious Julian with gifts, and the Lord looked on Basil’s humility and overthrew the impious Julian. And the Scripture teaches us that such enemies want glory and honour from us, we give it to them; and if they want silver and gold, we give it to them; but for the name of Christ, the Orthodox faith, we must lay down our lives and shed our blood. And you, lord, give them honour, and gold, and sliver, and God will not allow them to overcome us: seeing your humility, He will exalt you and thrust down their unending pride.”

“I have already done that,” replied the Great Prince: “but my enemy is exalted still more.”

“If so,” said the God-pleaser, “then final destruction awaits him, while you, Great Prince, can expect help, mercy and glory from the Lord.
Let us hope on the Lord and the Most Pure Mother of God, that They will not abandon you.

And he added: “You will conquer your enemies.”

Fortified by the blessing of the saint, Great-Prince Demetrius defeated the enemy at the great battle of Kulikovo Polje, at which over 100,000 Russian warriors gave their lives for the Orthodox faith and their Russian homeland. Some have seen in this, the first victory of the Russians over the Tatars, a sign that the Russians had changed the policy of submission to the Tartars that they had inherited from St. Alexander Nevsky, and that St. Sergius actively blessed a policy of rebellion against those whom previous princes and metropolitans had seen as their lawful sovereigns. However, as we have seen, the saint advised submission in the first place, and war only if the Tatar could not be bought off. Moreover, it needs to be borne in mind that Mamai was himself a rebel against the Horde, so that in resisting him the Russians were in no way rebelling against their lawful sovereigns. In any case, two years later the lawful khan came and sacked Moscow; so there was not, and could not be, any radical change in policy. It was not until a century later, in 1480, that the Muscovites refused to pay any further tribute to the khans. The real significance of Kulikovo Polje lies in the fact that a union of princes had defeated an external foe under the leadership of the Orthodox Church, thereby holding out the promise that the spiritual unity of the Russian lands, which had never been lost, could be complemented by that political unity which had been lost two hundred years before.

As it turned out, in spite of the pan-Russian vision of such leaders as Metropolitan Cyprian and St. Sergius, political union with Lithuania was not achieved: although, in 1383, the Lithuanian Great Prince Jagiello signed a treaty with Moscow and agreed to convert to Orthodoxy, he quickly changed his mind and instead, in 1386, converted to Catholicism, which led to the union of Lithuania with Catholic Poland and the increasing identification of Russian Orthodoxy and Russian Orthodox statehood with Muscovite Great Russia alone. Nevertheless, although only Great Russia remained faithful to the ecumenical vision of Orthodoxy, that vision, drawing strength from the Palamite renewal of monasticism taking place in Constantinople and the Balkan lands, helped produce that flowering of monasticism, iconography and missionary activity that makes the Age of St. Sergius such a glorious one in the annals of Russian history. The northern forests were covered with new

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38 Archimandrite Nikon, Zhitiie i Pobedy Prepodobnago i Bogonosnago Otsa Nashego Sergia, Igumen Radonezhskago (The Life and Victories of our Holy and God-bearing Father Sergius, Abbot of Radonezh), Sergiev Posad, 1898, p. 149.
Moreover, it was in this time that important steps were taken towards the unification of Great Russia. Under the influence of St. Sergius, Great-Prince Demetrius ordered his children to observe a new order of inheritance, whereby his eldest son was to inherit the Great Princedom, not allowing any quarrels or claims from the other children. Once again, St. Sergius was entrusted with guarding this most important decree, which served to strengthen the institution of one-man, autocratic rule in Russia.  

For, as St. John Maximovich writes, “under Demetrius Ivanovich the significance of the Great Prince grew mightily. The most powerful appanages of the Great Prince – Tver and Ryazan – were forced to conclude agreements with him in which they recognised themselves to be his younger brothers... Basil Demetrievich continued the work of his father. He joined some appanages to Moscow, and with the remaining appanage princes he concluded agreements to the effect that they had to submit to him and not seek the Great Princedom”.

The Russians’ defeat of the Mongols at Kulikovo Polje in 1380 and the Serbs’ defeat by the Ottomans at Kosovo Polje in 1389, represent the opposite poles of Orthodox fortunes in the Middle Ages. The first marked the beginning of the rise of the last of the Orthodox autocracies, while the second marked the beginning of the end of Orthodox autocracy in its original Mediterranean homeland.

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40 Archimandrite Nikon, op. cit., p. 169.
41 St. John Maximovich, op. cit., p. 12.
“It is interesting to note,” writes Alexander Dvorkin, “how long the peoples did not want to part with the myth of the Empire, to become the centre of which became the dream of practically every European state both in the East and in the West, from Bulgaria to Castilia. In the course of the 13th-14th centuries the canonists of many countries independently of each other developed the principle of the translatio imperii (translation of the empire). The process touched Russia a little later – in the 15th century, in the form of the theory of the Third Rome, which Moscow became...”

The idea of the universal empire survived into the modern period, not only because the peoples did not want to part with it, but also because it was necessary. In the middle of the fifteenth century, as compared with a thousand years earlier, or even five hundred years earlier, Orthodoxy was in much greater danger of fragmentation from centrifugal forces of a quasi-nationalist kind. Moreover, the quasi-universal empires of Islam in the East and the Papacy in the West were preparing to divide up the Orthodox lands between them. The Orthodox as a whole had to learn the lesson that the Serbian Prince Lazar had taught his people: Samo Slogo Srbina Spasava, “Only Unity Saves the Serbs”. And while that unity had to be religious and spiritual first of all, it also needed the support of political unity.

It was not only the political outlook that was threatening in 1453: if the empire was no more, what would become of the Church? Did not the prophecies link the fall of Rome with the coming of the Antichrist? But perhaps the empire was not yet dead... There were two possibilities here. One was that the Ottoman empire could be construed as a continuation of Rome. After all, there had been pagans and heretics and persecutors of the Church on the throne, so why not a Muslim? Or Rome was to be translated elsewhere, as St. Constantine had once translated the capital of his empire from Old Rome to the New Rome of Constantinople.

Unlikely as it may sound, some Greeks embraced the idea of Istanbul being Rome, and the Sultan – the Roman emperor. Thus in 1466 the Cretan historian George Trapezuntios said to the conqueror of Constantinople, Mehmet II: "Nobody doubts that you are the Roman emperor. He who is the lawful ruler in the capital of the empire and in Constantinople is the emperor, while Constantinople is the capital of the Roman empire. And he who remains as emperor of the Romans is also the emperor of the whole world.”

42 Dvorkin, Ocherki po istorii Vselenskoj Prawoslavnoj Tserkov (Sketches on the History of the Universal Orthodox Church), Nizhni-Novgorod, 2006, p. 716.
However, the Ottoman Sultans could not be compared even with the heretical Roman emperors, such as the iconoclasts Leo and Constantine Copronymus. The latter had at least claimed to be sons of the Church, they had claimed to confess the Orthodox faith and receive the sacraments of the Orthodox Church. But there could be no deception here: the Ottoman Sultans made no pretence at being Orthodox. Therefore at most they could be considered analogous in authority to the pagan emperors of Old Rome, legitimate authorities to whom obedience was due (as long as, and to the degree that, they did not compel Christians to commit impiety), but no more.

So had the clock been turned back? Had the Christian Roman Empire returned to its pre-Christian, pre-Constantinian origins? No, the clock of Christian history never goes back. The world could never be the same again after Constantine and the Christian empire of New Rome, which had so profoundly changed the consciousness of all the peoples of Europe.

So if the Antichrist had not yet come, there was only one alternative: the one, true empire had indeed been translated somewhere - but not unlawfully, to some heretical capital such as Aachen or Old Rome, but lawfully, to some Orthodox nation capable of bringing forth the fruits of the Kingdom.

What could that nation be? It had to be one that was independent of the Ottomans, or that could re-establish its independence. The last remaining Free Greeks showed little sign of being able to do this. The last Byzantine outpost of Morea in the Peloponnese fell in 1461, and in the same year the Comnenian “empire” of Trebizond on the south coast of the Black Sea also fell, after a siege of forty-two days. Georgia, Serbia and Bulgaria were also under the Muslim yoke.

Another possibility was the land we now call Romania, but which was then comprised of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia. Prince Vlad “the Impaler” of Wallachia conducted a courageous rearguard action north of the Danube. Stronger still was the resistance of the northern Romanian principality of Moldavia, under its great Prince Stephen (1457-1504).

On coming to the throne, Stephen had taken St. Daniel the Hesychast to be his counsellor. He “often visited his cell, confessed his sins, asked him for a profitable word, and did nothing without his prayer and blessing. The Saint encouraged him and exhorted him to defend the country and Christianity against the pagans. Saint Daniel assured him that if he would build a church to the glory of Christ after each battle, he would be victorious in all his wars.

“Stephen the Great obeyed him and defended the Church of Christ and the Moldavian land with great courage for nearly half a century after the fall of

He won forty-seven battles and built forty-eight churches. Thus, as shown to be a great defender of Romanian Orthodoxy and the spiritual founder of those monasteries that were built at his exhortation...

“After Stephen the Great lost the battle of Razboieni in the summer of 1476, he went to the cell of his good spiritual father, Saint Daniel the Hesychast, at Voroneț. Then, when ‘Stephen Voda knocked on the hesychast’s door for him to open it, the hesychast replied that Stephen Voda should wait outside until he had finished praying. And after the hesychast had finished praying, he called Stephen Voda into his cell. And Stephen Voda confessed to him. And Stephen Voda asked the hesychast what he should do now, since he was no longer able to fight the Turks. Should the country surrender to the Turks or not? And the hesychast told him not to surrender it, for he would win the war; but that after saving the country he should build a monastery there in the name of Saint George.’

“Believing Saint Daniel’s prophecy that he would defeat the Turks, the Prince of Moldavia took his prayer and blessing and immediately assembled the army and drove the Turks from the country. Thus the Saint helped deliver Moldavia and the Christian countries from enslavement to the infidels by his ardent prayers to God.”

But it was not Romania that was destined to be the Third Rome. In the following centuries the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia came under the power of the Turkish Sultans and the Greek Phanariots. The honour and cross of being the protector and restorer of the fortunes of the Orthodox Christians fell to a nation far to the north – Russia...

The idea that the Orthodox Empire could be translated to the forests of the north was a bold one. St. Constantine’s moving the capital of the empire from Old Rome to New Rome had also been bold - but that step, though radical and fraught with enormous consequences, had not involved going beyond the bounds of the existing empire, and had been undertaken by the legitimate emperor himself. The Serbs and Bulgarians had each in their time sought to capture New Rome and make it the capital of a Slavic-Greek kingdom – but this, again, had not involved moving the empire itself, as opposed to changing its dominant nation. The Frankish idea of the translatio imperii from New Rome to Aachen had involved both changing the dominant nation and taking the capital beyond the bounds of the existing empire – and had been rejected by the Greeks as heretical, largely on the grounds that it involved setting up a second, rival empire, where there could only be one true one.

the eschatological idea on which the idea of the
translatio imperii rested. According to this idea, Rome in its various
successions and reincarnations will exist to the end of the world – or at least,
to the time of the Antichrist. As Michael Nazarov writes: “This conviction is
often reflected in the patristic tradition (it was shared by Saints: Hippolytus of
Rome, John Chrysostom, Blessed Theodoret, Blessed Jerome, Cyril of
Jerusalem and others). On this basis Elder Philotheus wrote: ‘the Roman
[Romejskoe] kingdom is indestructible, for the Lord was enrolled into the
Roman [Rimskuui] power’ (that is, he was enrolled among the inhabitants at
the census in the time of the Emperor Augustus). Here Philotheus
distinguishes between the indestructible ‘Roman kingdom’, whose successor
was now Rus’, and Roman power, which had gone into the past.”47

In fact the only real candidate for the role of leadership in the Orthodox
world was Muscovite Russia. (Moscow was not the only Russian principality
in the middle of the fifteenth century, but after its conquest of Novgorod in
1487 it had no real rivals. But more on this below.) Only the Russians could be
that “third God-chosen people” of the prophecy. Only they were able to re-
express the Christian ideal of the symphony of powers on a stronger, more
popular base – as a symphony, in effect, of three powers – Church, State and
People - rather than two. For the Russians had the advantage over the
Romans and the Greeks that they were converted to the faith as a single
people, with their existing social organisation intact, and not, as in Rome, as
an amalgam of different peoples whose indigenous social structures had
already been smashed by the pagan imperial power. Thus whereas in Rome,
as Lev Tikhomirov writes, “the Christians did not constitute a social body”,
and “their only organisation was the Church”48, in the sense that it was not
whole peoples or classes but individuals from many different peoples and
classes that joined the Church, in Russia the whole of the richly layered and
variegated, but at the same time socially and politically coherent society came
to the Church at one time and was baptized together. Moreover, Russia
remained a nation-state with a predominantly Russian or Russian-Ukrainian-
Belorussian population throughout its extraordinary expansion from the core
principality of Muscovy, whose territory in 1462 was 24,000 square
kilometres, to the multi-national empire of Petersburg Russia, whose territory
in 1914 was 13.5 million square kilometres.49

As we have seen, the Russians retained their loyalty to the Byzantine
Church and Empire until the very last moment – that is, until both emperor
and patriarch betrayed the Orthodox faith at the Council of Florence in 1438-
39. Even after this betrayal, the Russians did not immediately break their
canonical dependence on the patriarch. And even after the election of St.

47 Nazarov, Taina Rossii (The Mystery of Russia), Moscow, 1999, p. 538.
48 Tikhomirov, Monarkhicheskaia Gosudarstvennost’ (Monarchical Statehood), St. Petersburg,
the Great Prince’s letter to the patriarch shows speaking only of a “disagreement” between the that St. Jonah had received the metropolitanate without asking the blessing of the patriarch, but in accordance with the canons, only out of extreme necessity. The patriarch’s blessing would again be asked once they were assured that he adhered to “the ancient piety”. 50

Since the Russian Great Prince was now the only independent Orthodox ruler51, and was supported by an independent Church, he had a better claim than any other to inherit the throne of the Roman Emperors and therefore call himself “Tsar” (from “Caesar”, the equivalent of the Greek “Basileus”).52 The title had been floated already before the fall of Constantinople: in 1447-48 Simeon of Suzdal had called Great Prince Basil Vasilyevich “faithful and Christ-loving and truly Orthodox… White Tsar”.53 And St. Jonah wrote to Prince Alexander of Kiev that Basil was imitating his “ancestors” – the holy Emperor Constantine and the Great-Prince Vladimir.54

The Russian Great Princes’ claim was further strengthened by the marriage of Great Prince Ivan III Vasilyevich to the last surviving heir of the Palaeologan line, Sophia, in 1472. It was on this basis that a letter of the Venetian Senate accorded Ivan the imperial title.55 Ivan himself indicated that in marrying Sophia he had united Muscovite Russia with Byzantium by uniting two coats of arms – the two-headed eagle of Byzantium with the image of St. George piercing the dragon with his spear. From now on the two-headed eagle became the Russian coat of arms with the image of St. George in the centre of it, as it were in its breast.56 In 1492 Metropolitan Zosimus of Moscow wrote: “The Emperor Constantine built a New Rome, Tsarigrad; but the sovereign and autocrat (samoderzhets) of All the Russias, Ivan Vassilievitch, the new Constantine, has laid the foundation for a new city of Constantine, Moscow.”

50 Nicholas Boyeikov, Tserkov’, Rus’ i Rim (The Church, Rus’ and Rome), Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1983.
51 With the exception of Georgia, which later entered the Russian empire. The metropolitan of Georgia had been among the very few, with St. Mark of Ephesus, who refused to sign the unia in Florence. Romania, as we have seen, was also independent for a time, but soon came under the suzerainty of the Ottomans.
52 “The primary sense of imperium is ‘rule’ and ‘dominion’, with no connotation of overseas territories, or oppressed indigenous peoples. Though ambitious monarchs, of course, aspired to as extensive an imperium as possible, the main point about being an emperor was that you did not have to take orders from anybody.” (Alan MacColl, “King Arthur and the Making of an English Britain”, History Today, volume 49 (3), March, 1999, p. 11).
53 Simeon of Suzdal, in Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., p. 242.
54 Meyendorff, “Was there an Encounter between East and West at Florence?”, Rome, Constantinople, Moscow, op. cit., p. 108.
56 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 44.
In 1498 Ivan had himself crowned by Metropolitan Simon as “Tsar, Grand Prince and Autocrat of All the Russias”. “In the coronation ceremony, which was a rough copy of the Byzantine, the metropolitan charged the Tsar ‘to care for all souls and for all Orthodox Christendom’. The title of Tsar had now become the official title and brought with it the implication that the Russian monarch was, before God, the head of the Orthodox, that is, of the true Christian world.”

A generation later, in the reign of Basil III, Elder Philotheus of Pskov expressed the idea of Moscow – the Third Rome in its full splendour: “I would like to say a few words about the existing Orthodox empire of our most illustrious, exalted ruler. He is the only emperor on all the earth over the Christians, the governor of the holy, divine throne of the holy, ecumenical, apostolic Church which in place of the Churches of Rome and Constantinople is in the city of Moscow, protected by God, in the holy and glorious Dormition church of the most pure Mother of God. It alone shines over the whole earth more radiantly than the sun. For know well, those who love Christ and those who love God, that all Christian empires will perish and give way to the one kingdom of our ruler, in accord with the books of the prophet [Daniel 7.14], which is the Russian empire. For two Romes have fallen, but the third stands, and there will never be a fourth…”

However, there were problems associated with the assumption of this title at this time. The first was the traditional respect of the Russians for their elder brothers in Byzantium. This respect would gradually wane as the Russians gradually became convinced that Byzantium had fallen because of its sins against the faith. Nevertheless, in the fifteenth century it was still strong. And there was no question that in the consciousness of the Russian people the blessing of the Ecumenical Patriarch was required for such a major step as the assumption of the role of Orthodox emperor by the Russian Great Prince.

Secondly, the status of the Russian metropolitan was problematic. In 1451 the uniate Patriarch Gregory Mammas of Constantinople had fled to Rome, where he consecrated Gregory Bolgarin, a former deacon of Isidore’s, as metropolitan of Kiev in opposition to St. Jonah. This was justified by the Latins not only on the grounds that there was no communion between themselves and the Orthodox of Muscovy, - the Pope had called St. Jonah “the schismatic monk Jonah, son of iniquity”, - but also because a large part of the Russian population was now living within the domain of King Casimir of Poland.

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forward by Zosimus, who was linked with the heretical movement [of the Judaizers] at the end of the 15th century; Zosimus boldly referred the New Testament prophecy, ‘the first shall be last, and the last first’ to the Greeks and the Russians…” (op. cit., p. 230).

58 Runciman, op. cit., pp. 323-324.
Poland - Lithuania, who was a Roman Catholic. Thus the fall of the Greek directly to a schism in the Orthodox Russian Church, which had the consequence that the Russian Great Prince could not count on the obedience even of all the Russian people - hardly a strong position from which to be proclaimed emperor of all the Orthodox Christians!

Moreover, even when both Gregory Bolgarin and the later Patriarchs of Constantinople beginning with Gennadius Scholarius returned to Orthodoxy, the schism continued in the Russian lands, with one metropolitan, that of Kiev, under the jurisdiction of Constantinople, and the other, that of Moscow, independent of Constantinople. The Greeks argued that, now that the unia had been renounced, the Russian Church of the independent Muscovite kingdom should return into obedience to the Ecumenical Patriarchate. But that would have meant the subjection of the free Russian Church living under a free and Orthodox sovereign to a metropolitan living under a hostile Roman Catholic king and a patriarch living under a hostile Muslim sultan!

Thirdly, before the Russian Great Prince could assume the title of Tsar, or Emperor, he had to reunite all the Russian lands under his dominion, and then, if possible, all the lands of the Orthodox East. This point can be better appreciated if it is remembered that when the Emperor Constantine transferred the capital of the empire from Old Rome to the New Rome of Constantinople, he was already the undisputed ruler of the whole of the Roman Empire, in which the great majority of Orthodox Christians lived. The Russian Great Prince, by contrast, ruled none of the traditional territories of the Roman empire, and not even “the mother of Russian cities”, Kiev.

Moreover, there were other Russian princes with claims to be “the new Constantine”, “the saviour of Orthodoxy” – “for instance, “the prince Boris of Tver, who had also sent a representative to the council [of Florence] and now, after rejecting the Latin faith, was said by one polemicist to deserve an imperial diadem. Furthermore, in Novgorod, under Archbishop Gennadius (1484-1509), there appeared a curious Russian variation on the Donation of Constantine, the Legend of the White Cowl. According to the Legend, the white cowl (klobuk; Gr. επικαλυμμακον) was donated by Constantine the Great to pope Sylvester following his baptism; the last Orthodox pope, foreseeing Rome’s fall into heresy, sent the cowl for safe-keeping to patriarch Philotheus of Constantinople, who eventually (also foreseeing the betrayal of Florence), sent the precious relic to the archbishop of Novgorod. Thus, not only Moscow, but also Tver and Novgorod, were somehow claiming to be the heirs of ‘Rome’, the center of the true Christian faith…”

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60 Meyendorf, “Was there an Encounter between East and West at Florence?”, op. cit., p. 109.
Fourthly, thus far Moscow was only an embryonic Rome: several tasks before the embryo could become a man. The first task was that of becoming truly independent rulers - independent, that is, of their Tatar overlords. This aim was more or less achieved by 1480, when Moscow first refused to give tribute to the Horde. Of course, the Tatars did not take this lying down, and they continued to be a threat to the Russian State well into the eighteenth century. But being under threat from a State is not the same as being in subjection to it. By the end of the fifteenth century Muscovy was a fully independent State for the first time in her history. For this reason alone the Great Princes had the right to call themselves “tsar”, that is, “autocrat”... The second task was the gathering of the Russian lands into a national kingdom uniting all the Russias, which involved at least three major stages: (i) the uniting of the free Russian princedoms under Moscow, (ii) the final liberation of the Eastern and Southern Russian lands from the Tatar-Mongol-Turkish yoke, and (iii) the liberation of the Western Russian lands from the Catholic yoke of Poland-Lithuania.

Steady progress towards the first end was made in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries until the “The Time of Troubles”, which shook the Russian State to its foundation. Progress was resumed after the enthronement of the first Romanov tsar in 1613... The second and third aims, that of the gathering of the Russian lands was finally accomplished in 1915, when Tsar Nicholas II reconquered Galicia from the Catholic Austrians... The final task was the gathering of the Orthodox lands, including the Greek and Semitic lands of the Eastern Mediterranean. The Muscovite State first turned its attention seriously to this aim under the Grecophile Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich and Patriarch Nicon. At this moment, however, the Muscovite autocracy suffered its most severe crisis and was transformed into the “Orthodox absolutism” of Peter the Great, whose ideal was rather the First Rome of the Caesars and Augusti. During the reign of Tsar Alexander II the idea of Moscow the Third Rome began to be revived, and Orthodox Christians again began to see this as the role that Divine Providence had entrusted to Russia.62 The wars waged by Russia for the liberation of Bulgaria in 1877-78 and Serbia in 1914-17 can be seen as prefiguring the full realization of that role. But then came the revolution, in which the Third International represented a grotesque parody of the noble ideal of the Third Rome. That ideal has yet to be realised...

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Russia had known no serious outbreak of heresy since her baptism by St. Vladimir. However, towards the end of the fourteenth century there appeared the heresy of the Judaizers, when "the whole Russian Church," as Nechvolodov writes, "had at her head a Judaizer, and the immediate entourage of the sovereign… were also Judaizers." 63

The roots of the heresy, writes a publication of the Moscow Patriarchate, "go deeper than is usually imagined. The part played by national elements in the heresy, which exploded like epidemics onto medieval Europe, has not yet been sufficiently clarified. The acts of the inquisition demonstrate that most of the sects were Judeo-Christian in character with a more or less pronounced Manichaean colouring. The flourishing of the Albigensian heresy in France has been directly linked by historians with the rise of Jewish influence in that country. The heresy of the Templars, 'the knights of the Temple', who were condemned in 1314, was linked with esoterical Judaism and blasphemy against Christ...

"Judaizers were also known in the Orthodox East. In Salonica in the first third of the 14th century 'there existed a heretical Judaizing society in the heart of the Greek population' which had an influence on 'the Bulgarian Judaizers of the 40s and 50s of the same century'. In 1354 a debate took place in Gallipoli between the famous theologian and hierarch of the Eastern Church Gregory Palamas, on the one hand, and the Turks and the Chionians, i.e. the Judaizers, on the other. In 1360 a council meeting in Trnovo, the then capital of the Bulgarian patriarchate, condemned both the opponents of Hesychasm (the Barlaamites) and those who philosophise from the Jewish heresies.

"The successes of the heresy in Russia could be attributed to the same cause as its success in France in the 14th century. Jews streamed into the young state of the Ottomans from the whole of Western Europe. Thereafter they were able to penetrate without hindrance into the Genoan colonies of the Crimea and the Azov sea, and into the region of what had been Khazaria, where the Jewish sect of the Karaites had a large influence; for they had many adherents in the Crimea and Lithuania and were closely linked with Palestine. As the inscriptions on the Jewish cemetery of Chuft-Kale show, colonies of Karaites existed in the Crimea from the 2nd to the 18th centuries. The Karaites were brought to Lithuania by Prince Vitovt, the hero of the battle of Grunwald (1410) and great-grandfather of Ivan III Vasilievich. From there they spread throughout Western Russia.

One has to admit that the beginning of the polemic between the Orthodox and the heretics was made, not in Byzantium, but in Russia. Besides, the polemic began... in the time of Metropolitan Peter (+1326), the founder of the Muscovite ecclesiastical centre. In the life of St. Peter it is mentioned among his other exploits for the good of the Russian Church that he 'overcame the heretic Seit in debate and anathematised him.' The hypothesis concerning the Karaite origin of the 'Judaizers' allows us to see in Seit a Karaite preacher.

"... The heresy did not disappear but smouldered under a facade of church life in certain circles of the Orthodox urban population, and the Russian church, under the leadership of her hierarchs, raised herself to an unceasing battle with the false teachings. The landmarks of this battle were: Metropolitan Peter's victory over Seit in debate (between 1312 and 1326), the unmasking and condemnation of the strigolniki in Novgorod in the time of Metropolitan Alexis (1370s), the overcoming of this heresy in the time of Metropolitan Photius (+1431), and of the heresy of the Judaizers - in the time of Archbishop Gennadius of Novgorod (+1505) and St. Joseph of Volotsk (+1515).

"From the time of the holy Prince Vladimir, the Baptizer of Rus', who rejected the solicitations of the Khazar Rabbis, wrote St. Joseph of Volotsk, 'the great Russian land has for 500 years remained in the Orthodox Faith, until the enemy of salvation, the devil, introduced the foul Jew to Great Novgorod. On St. Michael's day, 1470, there arrived from Kiev in the suite of Prince Michael Olelkovich, who had been invited by the veche [the Novgorodian parliament], 'the Jew Scharia' and 'Zachariah, prince of Taman. Later the Lithuanian Rabbis Joseph Smoilo Skaryavei and Moses Khanush also arrived.

"The heresy began to spread quickly. However, 'in the strict sense of the word this was not merely heresy, but complete apostasy from the Christian faith and the acceptance of the Jewish faith. Using the weaknesses of certain clerics, Scharia and his assistants began to instil distrust of the Church hierarchy into the faint-hearted, inclining them to rebellion against spiritual authority, tempting them with 'self-rule', the personal choice of each person in the spheres of faith and salvation, inciting the deceived to renounce their Mother-Church, blaspheme against the holy icons and reject veneration of the saints - the foundations of popular morality - and, finally, to a complete denial of the saving Sacraments and dogmas of Orthodoxy concerning the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation. So they went so far as to conduct a Jewish war against God and the substitution of Christ the Saviour by the false messiah and antichrist.

"The false teaching spread in secret. Archbishop Gennadius of Novgorod first heard about the heresy in 1487; four members of a secret society, while abusing each other in a drunken frenzy, revealed the existence of the heresy
The zealous archpastor quickly conducted an investigation and became convinced that not only Novgorod, but the very capital of Russian Orthodoxy, Moscow, was threatened. In September 1487 he sent Metropolitan Gerontius in Moscow the records of the whole investigation in the original. Igumen Joseph (Sanin) of the Dormition monastery of Volotsk, who had an unassailable reputation in Russian society at the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th centuries, also spoke out against the heresy.

"But the battle with the heresy turned out to be no simple matter, for the heretics had enlisted the support of powerful people in Moscow. Great Prince Ivan III, who had been deceived by the Judaizers, invited them to Moscow, and made the two leading heretics protopriests - one in the Dormition, and the other in the Archangels cathedrals in the Kremlin. Some of those close to the Tsar, such as Theodore Kurytsyn, who headed the government, and whose brother became the heretics' leader, were co-opted into the heresy. The Great Prince's bride, Helen Voloshanka, was converted to Judaism. In 1483 a correspondence between Ivan III and the heresiarch Scharia himself was established through diplomatic channels between Moscow and Bakhchisarai. Finally, the heretic Zosimus was raised to the see of the great hierarchs of Moscow Peter, Alexis and Jonah."64

Eventually, the Great Prince returned to the truth, and at Councils convened by him in 1503 and 1505 the heresy was crushed, although remnants of it continued to appear for some time...

The immediate result of the Judaizing heresy was a major increase in the Great Prince’s power and in the Church’s reliance on the State. For churchmen now saw in the monarchical power the major bulwark against heresy, more important even than the metropolitanate, which, for the second time in little more than fifty years (the first time was at the council of Florence) had betrayed Orthodoxy. 65 Thus Archbishop Gennadius of Novgorod wrote to Bishop Niphon of Suzdal: “You go to the Metropolitan and ask him to intercede with his majesty the Great Prince, that he cleanse the Church of God from heresy”. Again, St. Joseph of Volokolamsk, who had played the major part in crushing the heresy, wrote: “The Tsar is by nature like all men, but in power he is similar to the Supreme God. And just as God wishes to save all people, so the Tsar must preserve everything that is subject to his power from all harm, both spiritual and bodily”.66

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64 Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov' (The Russian Orthodox Church), Publication of the Moscow Patriarchate, 1988, pp. 25-26.
65 However, the tsar, too, had not been without blame. Once he summoned St. Joseph and said to him: Forgive me, Father. I knew about the Novgorodian heretics, but thought that they were mainly occupied in astrology.” “Is it for me to forgive you?” asked the saint. “No, father, please, forgive me!” said the tsar (Lebedev, op. cit., p. 50). (V.M.)
66 St. Joseph, Prosvetitel' (The Enlightener), Word 16.
According to St. Joseph, as M.V. Zyzykin interprets him, the defence of the truth is placed on the tsar alone, for in his eyes it is in the monarchical power revealed; he is God’s deputy. The tsar is not only the servant of God, chosen by God and placed by Him on his throne, but he is also the representative of God, immeasurably exalted above [ordinary] people: he is like them only in accordance with his human nature, but in his power he is like God. From the point of view of the aim, the manifestations of monarchical power are analogous to those of Divine power. Just as the All-Highest wishes that all men be saved, so the tsar must keep those entrusted to his care from spiritual and bodily harm. For his fulfilment and non-fulfilment of his duty the tsar is responsible only before God. His power cannot be placed beside any other power on earth. And Joseph applies the words of Chrysostom to the tsars: ‘Hear, O kings and princes, your dominion is given you from God, you are the servants of God; it is for this reason that He placed you as pastor and guard over His people to protect His flock unharmed from wolves…’ The tsar must revenge Christ on the heretics, otherwise he will have to give an account at the terrible judgement. He must send them to prison or tortures and submit them to death. Heretical agreements are for Joseph worse than robbery and theft, than murder or fornication or adultery. Those who pretended to repent of their Judaism after the Council of 1490 deceived many, and the tsar was responsible for that before God. The spread and fall of heresy is the cause of the fall and destruction of a great kingdom; it is analogous to state disturbances and coups. ‘The great kingdoms of the Armenians, Ethiopians and Romans, who fell away from the Catholic and Apostolic Church and from the Orthodox Christian faith perished evilly because of the negligence of the Orthodox kings and hierarchs of those times, and these kings and hierarchs will be condemned at the terrible judgement of Christ for this negligence.’ In 1511 Joseph persuaded Basil III to apply his power against the heretics in the same way that he had previously spoken with the father against the Novgorod Judaizers, so that they should not destroy the whole of Orthodox Christianity. It was on the soil of the struggle with heresy that the duty of the Russian Great Prince to defend the faith was revealed. If in Byzantium the kings’ encroachment on the teaching authority of the Church stands to the fore, in Rus’ we encounter first of all the striving to ascribe to the tsar Archpastoral rights in the realisation of Christianity in life.

“Joseph gave a very broad interpretation to the range of the tsar’s rights, extending them to all spheres of life, to everything ecclesiastical and monastic. He did not think twice about bringing Archbishop Serapion of Novgorod to trial before the tsar for banning him for leaving his jurisdiction, although the tsar had permitted it.”

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At the very moment that Joseph passed into eternal life, Serapion stood up and said to those around him: “Our brother Joseph has died. May God forgive him: such things happen even with righteous people” (Moskovskij Paterik (The Moscow Patericon), Moscow: “Stolitsa”, 1991, p. 46). (V.M.)
him the tsar was not only the head of the state, but also of the Church. He had, besides, a leadership role in relation to all ecclesiastical institutions; not one side of ecclesiastical life was exempt from it; the circle of his concerns included Church rites and Church discipline, and the whole ecclesiastical-juridical order. The tsar establishes the rules of ecclesiastical order and entrusts to bishops and nobles the task of seeing to their fulfilment, threatening the disobedient with hierarchical bans and punishments. One can have resort to the tsar’s court, according to Joseph, against all ecclesiastics and monastics. This theory would have been the exact restoration of ancient caesaropapism in Russian colours if Joseph had not limited the king in principle by the observance of the Church canons. In this exaltation of the tsar we see a reflection of the Byzantine theory of the 14th century, which, while recognising the priority of the canon over the law, nevertheless exalted the emperor to the first place even in Church affairs.”

St. Joseph was far from ascribing absolute power to the tsar, as is evident from the following: “The holy apostles speak as follows about kings and hierarchs who do not care for, and worry about, their subjects: a dishonourable king who does not care for his subjects is not a king, but a torturer; while an evil bishop who does not care for his flock is not a pastor, but a wolf.”

However, his theory of Church-State relations lays great responsibility on the tsar as the representative of God on earth, and less emphasis on the bishop’s duty to reprove an erring tsar.

An attempt to restore the balance was made at the Council of 1503, in which the debate on the Judaizers led naturally to the problem of the monasteries’ landed estates; for one of the reasons for the popularity of the heretics was the perceived justice of their criticisms of monasticism, and in particular of the wealth of the monasteries. St. Joseph defended this wealth, claiming that it was necessary in order to support the poor and the Great

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68 Zyzkin, Patriarkh Nikon (Patriarch Nicon), Warsaw, 1931, part I, pp. 153-154. Hieromonk Ioann (Kologrivov) writes: “Although Joseph considered the power of the Church to be higher than that of the sovereign in theory, in practice he extended the latter over the Church also. For him the Tsar was the head both of the State and of the Church – the supreme preserver and defender of the faith and the Church. The sovereign’s concern for the Church was revealed particularly in the fact that he was always “Christ’s avenger on the heretics. Lack of zeal for the good of the Church constituted, in the eyes of Joseph, one of the most serious crimes the sovereign could be guilty of, and it brought the wrath of God upon the whole country. In the single person of the sovereign Joseph thereby united both spiritual and secular power. He, and not Peter the Great, must be considered to be the founder of “State Orthodoxy” in Russia. A little later Ivan the Terrible, basing himself on the teaching of the abbot of Volokolamsk, acquired the opportunity to declare that the Tsar was “called to save the souls of his subjects”. (Ocherki po Istorii Russkoj Sviatosti (Sketches on the History of Russian Sanctity), Brussels, 1961, p. 204).

69 St. Joseph, Prosvetitel’ (The Enlightener), Word 16.
of Sora, preached the monastic ideal of non-possessiveness. The Josephites’ or “Possessors” views prevailed at the Council; but the argument has continued to this day…

“The Non-Possessors,” writes Runciman, “derived their tradition from Mount Athos, not from the Athos of rich monasteries with wide mainland estates and with splendid churches and refectories and well-stocked libraries, but from the sterner Athos of the ascetes and eremites, of the Hesychasts and Arsenites. Their spiritual ancestor was Gregory of Sinai, who had left the Holy Mountain because it was too sociable, preferring to live a life of greater solitude in the Balkan hills. Gregory’s leading pupil had been the Bulgarian Euthymius, an erudite scholar who had become the last Patriarch of Trnovo, but who had used his authority to enforce poverty and asceticism on the Bulgarian Church. After the Turks occupied Bulgaria many of his disciples migrated to Russia, bringing with them not only a knowledge of Greek mystical and hesychastic literature but also a close connection between the ascetic elements on Mount Athos and the Russian Church. The tradition that they introduced was akin to that of the Arsenites of Byzantium and the old tradition which had always opposed state control. Its first great exponent in Russia was Nil, Abbot of Sor…”

St. Nilus and his disciples wanted the dissolution of the vast land holdings not only because they contradicted the monastic vows, but also because this would liberate the clergy, as Zyzykin writes, “from dependence on the secular government and would raise the Hierarchy to the position of being the completely independent religious-moral power of the people, before which the despotic tendencies of the tsars would bow.” The debate between the Possessors and Non-Possessors was therefore also a debate about the relationship between the Church and the State; and insofar as the Non-Possessors favoured greater independence for the Church, they also argued that the Church, and not the State, should punish the Judaizer heretics – which would mean less severe sentences for them in accordance with the Orthodox tradition of non-violence in the treatment of heretics. They failed in their aim; but their stand was remembered in subsequent generations…

71 Zyzykin, op. cit., part I, p. 151.
72 Perhaps not coincidentally, the triumph of the Possessors coincided with a growth of violence against monks. Sergius Bolshakoff writes that “with the growth of monastic wealth, the attitude of the peasants towards the monks changes. The monks are now considered exploiters and hated as slave-owners. The appearance of a hermit often suggested the possible foundation of a new monastery with the reduction to serfdom of the neighboring peasants. St. Adrian of Andrushov was murdered in 1549 by peasants suspicious of his intentions. Likewise Adrian of Poshekhon was murdered in 1550, Agapetus Markushhevsky in 1572, Simon Volomsky in 1613 and Job Ushelsky in 1628, all of them for the same reason.
The non-possessors showed a quite different attitude to the tsar’s power. Conditions under which the tsar’s will in the administration of the kingdom could be considered as the expression of the will of God. They drew attention not only to the necessity of counsellors to make up the inevitable deficiencies of limited human nature, but also to the necessity of ‘spiritual correctness’. Thus Prince Bassian did not exalt the personality of the tsar like Joseph. He did not compare the tsar to God, he did not liken him to the Highest King, but dwelt on the faults inherent in the bearers of royal power which caused misfortunes to the State.”

The boldness of St. Nilus and Monk Bassian in relation to the secular powers was firmly in the tradition, not only of the fourth-century Fathers, but also of the early Trans-Volga monks, such as St. Cyril of Beloozersk. Thus in 1427 St. Cyril wrote to Prince Andrew of Mozhaisk that he “should abstain from drunkenness and give alms according to your means; for, my lord, you are unable to fast and are lax in praying, and thus, alms, in their place, will make up for your deficiency”. He even gave political advice to Grand Prince Basil I: “We have heard, my lord great prince, that there is trouble between you and your friends, the princes of Suzdal. You, my lord, insist on your right and they on theirs; for this reason great bloodshed in inflicted on Christians. But consider closely, my lord, what are their rightful claims against you, and then humbly make concessions; and insofar as you are right toward them for that stand firm, my lord, as justice says. And if they begin to ask pardon, my lord, you should, my lord, grant them what they deserve, for I have heard, my lord, that until today they have been oppressed by you and that is, my lord, why they went to war. And you, my lord, for God’s sake show your love and grace that they should not perish in error amid the Tatar realms and should not die there. For, my lord, no kingdom or principality, nor any other power can rescue us from God’s impartial judgement.”


Zyzykin, op. cit., part I, p. 158.

St Cyril, quoted in Fedotov, op. cit., volume II, 1966, pp. 168, 255.
After the death of St. Nilus in 1508, the tradition of the Non-Possessors was revived in Russia by an Athonite monk - St. Maximus the Greek.\textsuperscript{75} He was sent, writes Runciman, “by the Patriarch Theoleptus I to Russia in response to Vassily III’s request for a skilled librarian. Maximus, whose original name was Michael Trivolis, had been born in Epirus, at Arta, in 1480. During his travels through France and Italy in search of education he had arrived in Florence when it was under the influence of Savonarola, whom he greatly admired and in whose memory he joined the Dominican Order. But he was not happy in Renaissance Italy. After a short time he returned to Greece and settled on Athos, where he occupied himself principally with the libraries of the Holy Mountain. When he came to Russia the Tsar employed him not only to build up libraries for the Russian Church but also to translate Greek religious works into Slavonic.”\textsuperscript{76}

St. Maximus “complained that among the pastors of his time there was ‘no Samuel’, ‘a Priest of the Most High who stood up boldly in opposition to the criminal Saul’, that there were ‘no zealots like Elijah and Elisha who were not ashamed in the face of the most lawlessly violent kings of Samaria; there is no Ambrose the wonderful, the Hierarch of God, who did not fear the loftiness of the kingdom of Theodosius the Great; no Basil the Great, whose most wise teachings caused the persecutor Valens to fear; no Great John of the golden tongue, who reproached the money-loving usurer Empress Eudocia’. In accordance with Byzantine conceptions, Maximus the Greek looked on the priesthood and the kingdom as the two greatest gifts given by the most High Divine Goodness to man, as two powers on whose agreement in action depended the happiness of mankind. Among the duties laid upon the representatives of the Church, he mentioned that they must by their most wise advice and stratagems of every kind… always correct the royal sceptres for the better, so that they should be alien to any fawning before secular power and should exert a restraining, moderating influence upon it. Maximus spoke of the superiority of the spiritual power over the secular…”\textsuperscript{77}

St. Maximus was in favour as long as Metropolitan Barlaam, a follower of St. Nilus of Sora, was in power. But when Barlaam was uncanonically removed by the Great Prince Basil III and replaced by Metropolitan Daniel, a disciple of St. Joseph of Volotsk, his woes began… For a while the Great Prince continued to protect him, even when he rebuked the vices of the nobility, the clergy and the people and supported the position of the non-

\textsuperscript{75} One important difference between St. Maximus and the non-possessors should be mentioned: St. Maximus had been in favour of the execution of the Judaizing heretics, whereas St. Nilus and his disciples had been against it.

\textsuperscript{76} Runciman, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 327.

\textsuperscript{77} Zyzykin, \textit{op. cit.}, part I, p. 152.
However, his enemies found the excuse they were looking for when the Grand Prince, with the blessing of Metropolitan Daniel, put away his wife Solomonia for her barrenness and married Elena Glinskaya (Solomonia was forcibly tonsured in Suzdal and was later canonised under her monastic name of Sophia). St. Maximus immediately rebuked the Great Prince. He wrote him an extensive work: *Instructive chapters for right-believing rulers*, which began as follows: “O most devout Tsar, he is honoured as a true ruler who seeks to establish the life of his subjects in righteousness and justice, and endeavours always to overcome the lusts and dumb passions of his soul. For he who is overcome by them is not the living image of the Heavenly Master, but only an anthropomorphic likeness of dumb nature.”

The saint was to suffer many years in prison because of his boldness. But he had admirers and supporters both within and outside Russia. Thus Patriarch Mark of Jerusalem, wrote prophetically to the Great Prince: “If you do this wicked thing, you will have an evil son. Your estate will become prey to terrors and tears. Rivers of blood will flow; the heads of the mighty will fall; your cities will be devoured by flames.” The prophecy was fulfilled with exactitude in the reign of his son, Ivan IV, better known as “the Terrible”…

After his release from prison St. Maximus continued his bold preaching. Thus he refused to bless a pilgrimage of Tsar Ivan, saying that he should look after the widows and orphans of those killed at Kazan instead. And he threatened that if he did not, his newborn son Demetrius would die. Ivan ignored his advice, and Demetrius died…

Hieromonk Gregory (Lourié) dates the beginning of the fall of the Russian Church into “Sergianism”, that is, captivity to the State, to the time of Metropolitan Daniel and Great Prince Basil: “Still earlier they should have excommunicated – not even Ivan IV, but his father Basil III for his adulterous ‘marriage’, which gave Russia Ivan the Terrible. Then we wouldn’t have had Peter I. That’s what they did in such cases in Byzantium…”

However, it should be noted that St. Maximus never broke communion with Daniel, and was restored to favour under his successor, Metropolitan Macarius. Moreover, as we have seen and will see in more detail later, caesaropapism was by no means the rule in the Russian Church even in the

This episode must therefore be considered unfortunate, but not "the beginning of the end"…
A major step forward in Russia’s path towards becoming fully the Third Rome was made on January 16, 1547, when Ivan the Terrible was anointed and crowned with the Cap of Vladimir Monomakh by Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow. At first, the Ecumenical Patriarch Joasaph said that the act “has no validity, since not only does a Metropolitan not have the right to crown, but not even every Patriarch, but only the two Patriarchs: the Roman and Constantinopolitan”. However, he granted Ivan the right to call himself Tsar and suggested that he have the coronation repeated by Metropolitan Joasaph, the patriarchal exarch, who would bring a gramota to Moscow.

Ivan refused not only to be crowned again, but even to ask the blessing of Metropolitan Joasaph, saying that he had kissed the cross of the Lithuanian king on his way to Moscow. It was only in September, 1562 that Ivan received a gramota signed by all four patriarchs and thirty-two bishops 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. This was an important advance in Ivan’s status in the eyes of the Orthodox world.

In view of the fearsome reputation Ivan has acquired, not without reason, it is worth reminding ourselves of the great achievements of the first half of his reign. He vastly increased the territory of the Muscovite kingdom, neutralising the Tatar threat and bringing Kazan and the whole of the Volga under Orthodox control; he began the exploration and conquest of Siberia; he strengthened the army and local administration; he introduced the Zemskie Sobory, “Councils of the Land”, in which he sought the advice of different classes of the people; he subdued the boyars who had nearly destroyed the monarchy in his childhood; he rejected Jesuit attempts to bring Russia into communion with Rome; he convened Church Councils that condemned heresies (e.g. the Arianism of Bashkin) and removed many abuses in ecclesiastical and monastic life. Even the Tsar’s fiercest critic, Prince Andrew Kurbsky, had to admit that he had formerly been “radiant in Orthodoxy”.

“Ivan the Terrible also presented to the [Stoglav] Church council his new legal code, the Sudebnik of 1550, and the local government reform, and received its approval. Both measures became law. The institution of a novel scheme of local government deserves special attention as one of the more daring attempts in Russian history to resolve this perennially difficult problem. The new system aimed at the elimination of corruption and oppression on the part of centrally appointed officials by means of popular participation in local affairs. Various localities had already received permission to elect their own judicial authorities to deal, drastically if need be, with crime. Now, in areas whose population guaranteed a certain amount of dues to the treasury, other locally elected officials replaced the centrally
The only major mistake of this part of his reign was the decision of the famous Stoglav (‘Hundred Chapters’) Church Council of 1551 that, in all cases where Russian Church ritual differed from Greek, the Russian version was correct. ‘This unilateral decision shocked many of the Orthodox. The monks of Athos protested and the Russian monks there regarded the decisions of the synod as invalid.’^{82}

In retrospect, we can see that the nationalist attitude of the Stoglav council laid the foundations of the Old Ritualist schism in the next century…

Nevertheless, Ivan’s respect for the Church prevented him from becoming, in the first half of his reign, an absolutist ruler in the sense that he admitted no power higher than his own. This is illustrated by his behaviour in the Stoglav Council, which was conducted by the Tsar putting forward questions to which the hierarchy replied. The hierarchy was quite happy to support the tsar in extirpating certain abuses within the Church, but when the tsar raised the question of the sequestration of Church lands for the sake of the strengthening of the State, the hierarchs showed their independence and refused. The tsar sufficiently respected the independence of the hierarchy to yield to its will on this matter, and in general the sixteenth-century Councils were true images of sobornost’.

As Metropolitan Macarius (Bulgakov) writes: “At most of the Councils there were present, besides the hierarchs, the superiors of the monasteries – archimandrites, igumens, builders, also protopriests, priests, monks and the lower clergy generally. Often his Majesty himself was present, sometimes with his children, brothers and with all the boyars… It goes without saying that the right to vote at the Councils belonged first of all to the metropolitan and the other hierarchs… But it was offered to other clergy present at the Councils to express their opinions. Their voice could even have a dominant significance at the Council, as, for example, the voice of St. Joseph of Volokolamsk at the Councils of 1503-1504… The conciliar decisions and decrees, were signed only by the hierarchs, others – by lower clergy: archimandrites and igumens. And they were confirmed by the agreement of his Majesty…”^{83}

^{81} Riasanovsky, op. cit., p. 146.
^{82} Runciman, op. cit., p. 329.
^{83} Metropolitan Macarius, Istoria Russkoj Tserkvi (A History of the Russian Church), Moscow, 1996, vol. 4, part 2, pp. 91, 93.
All this went with an ideology worked out, in part, by the tsar himself, such as Ivan Semenovich Peresvetov, a minor nobleman from Lithuania who had served in the Ottoman empire. At the base of this programme there remained the concept of Moscow as the Third Rome. Thus in 1540 Elder Philotheus of Pskov wrote to the young tsar, who was not yet of age, that the “woman clothed with the sun” of Revelation 12 was the Church, which fled from the Old Rome to the New Rome of Constantinople, and thence, after the fall of Constantinople, to the third Rome “in the new, great Russia”. And the master of the third Rome was the tsar: “Alone on earth the Orthodox, great Russian tsar steers the Church of Christ as Noah in the ark was saved from the flood, and he establishes the Orthodox faith.”

The tsar started putting this programme into effect in the decade 1547-1556, when he convened his Zemskie Sobory. This was also the decade of his great victories over the Tatars of Kazan and Astrakhan, which constituted an important new stage in the history of Russia, when the State began to spread from Europe into Asia, and change from a racially fairly homogeneous nation-state into a multi-national empire, “the Third Rome”. The famous cathedral of St. Basil the Blessed – originally dedicated to the Protecting Veil of the Virgin – was built to celebrate the conquest of Kazan. Now, a century after the Fall of Constantinople, the Orthodox gained their first major victory over the Muslims – and it was Ivan that achieved it...

In 1909, Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) pointed out that “this event was great precisely because with it there began the gradual ascendency of Christianity over Islam, which had already subjected the Eastern Churches and before that time had not yet been subdued by the Muscovite kingdom. Having now destroyed the wasps’ nest of the Tatar God-fighting tribe, our forefathers understood that this event defined with all clarity the great calling of the Russian land gradually to unite at the foot of the Cross of Christ all the eastern peoples and all the eastern cultures under the leadership of the White Tsar. The great ascetics of piety Gurius, Barsonuphius and Herman were immediately sent to Kazan together with church valuables. There they built churches and monasteries and by the light of their inspired teaching and angelic holiness drew crowds upon crowds of various foreigners to holy baptism. The Russians understood that now – not in separate rivulets, but in a single broad wave – the life and faith of the Trans-Volgan region and Siberia would pour into the sea of the Church, and that the work of St. Stephen of Perm and the preachers of God in the first centuries that were like him would continue without hindrance. And then our ancestors decided, on the one hand, to cast off from themselves every shadow of exaltation in the glorious victory and conquest, and to ascribe all this to Divine Providence, and on the other hand to seal their radiant hope that Moscow, which was then ready to proclaim itself the Third and last Rome, would have to become the mediator...

84 For more details of Ivan’s ideology, see M.V. Zyzykin, Tsarskaia Vlast’ (Royal Power), Sophia, 1924; http://www.russia-talk.org/cd-history/zyzykin.htm, pp. 17-96.
of the coming universal and free union of people in the glorification of the
Divine Redeemer. The tsar and people carried out their decision by building a
cathedral on Red square, which has justly been recognized as the
eighth wonder of the world. The pious inspiration of the Russian masters
exceeded all expectation and amazed the beholders. Before them stands a
church building whose parts represent a complete diversity, from the ground
to the higher crosses, but which as a whole constitutes a wonderful unity – a
single elegant wreath – a wreath to the glory of Christ that shone forth in the
victory of the Russians over the Hagarenes. Many cupolas crown this church:
there is a Mauritanian cupola, an Indian cupola, there are Byzantine elements,
there are Chinese elements, while in the middle above them all there rises a
Russian cupola uniting the whole building.

“The thought behind this work of genius is clear: Holy Rus’ must unite all
the eastern peoples and be their leader to heaven. This thought is a task
recognized by our ancestors and given by God to our people; it has long
become a leading principle of their state administration, both inwardly and
outwardly: the reigns of the last Ruriks and the first Romanovs were marked
by the grace-filled enlightenment of the Muslims and pagans of the North and
East, the support of the ancient Christians of the East and South and the
defence of the Russian Christians of the West, oppressed by heretics. Rus’
expanded and became stronger and broader, like the wings of an eagle; in the
eyes of her sons the cross of the Russian head on Basil the Blessed shone ever
more brightly; her impious enemies in the South and West trembled; the
hands of the enslaved Christians – the Greeks, the Serbs and the Arabs - were
raised imploringly to her; at various times Moscow saw within her walls all
four eastern patriarchs and heard the liturgy in her churches in many
languages…”

However, things began to go wrong from 1558, when Ivan began a
campaign against the Livonian Knights that was to prove expensive and
unsuccessful. Then, in 1560, his beloved first wife, Anastasia, died
– killed, as he suspected and modern scientific research has confirmed
– by the boyars. Now Ivan turned vengefully against the boyars…

So what threat did the boyars really pose? Before answering this question,
it should be pointed out that in Russia, unlike most West European countries,
the Great Prince or Tsar was not seen as simply the most powerful member of
the noble class, but as standing above all the classes, including the nobility.
Therefore the lower classes as often as not looked to the Great Prince or Tsar

85 Khrapovitsky, in Archbishop Nicon (Rklitsky), Zhizneopisanie Blazhennymshago Antonia,
Metropolita Kievskago i Galitskago (Biography of his Beatitude Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev
86 In fact, modern science has established the astonishing fact that Tsar Ivan, his mother, Great
Princess Helena, his first wife Tsaritsa Anastasia, his daughter Maria, his son Ivan and his
other son Tsar Theodore were all poisoned. See V. Manyagin, Apologia Groznogo Tsaria (An
to protect them from the nobility, and often intervened to raise him to power or protect him from attempted coups by the nobility. There are many examples of this in Russian history, from Andrew of Bogolyubovo to the Time of Troubles to the Decembrist conspiracy in 1825. Thus Pokrovsky wrote of the failed Decembrist conspiracy: “The autocracy was saved by the Russian peasant in a guard’s uniform”. And in fact the tsars, when allowed to rule with truly autocratic authority, were much better for the peasants than the nobles, passing laws that surpassed contemporary European practice in their humaneness.

Thus Solonevich points out that according to Ivan’s Sudebnik of 1550, “the administration did not have the right to arrest a man without presenting him to the representatives of the local self-government..., otherwise the latter on the demand of the relatives could free the arrested man and exact from the representative of the administration a corresponding fine ‘for dishonour’. But guarantees of security for person and possessions were not restricted to the habeas corpus act. Klyuchevsky writes about ‘the old right of the ruled to complain to the highest authority against the lawless acts of the subject rulers’.”

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that sixteenth-century Russia was in many ways a less free State than in the 11th or 14th centuries. The reason lay in the task imposed by Divine Providence on Russia of defending the last independent outpost of Orthodoxy in the world, which required, in the context of the threat posed by Counter-Reformation Catholicism, an ever-increasing centralization and militarization of society, and therefore great sacrifices from all classes of the population.

“The particularity of Ivan the Terrible’s ideological position,” writes Ya. S. Lourié, “consisted in the fact that the idea of the new State incarnating the right faith, which had ‘collapsed’ in the whole of the rest of the world, was completely freed in him from all freethinking and social-reformatory traits and became the official ideology of the already-existing ‘true Orthodox Christian autocracy’. The main task, therefore, became not reforms in the State, but its defence against all the anti-state forces that were ‘corrupting’ the country ‘with disorders and civil disturbances’. Sharing Peresvetov’s hostility to the ‘nobles’, the tsar drew one important conclusion from it: the unsuitable and ‘treacherous’ had to be replaced by new people....”

Although some of the boyars were unfaithful to Ivan, it is not true that the boyar class as a whole wanted to abolish the autocracy. For, as Protopriest Lev Lebedev writes, “Russia without the Tsar was inconceivable to it; the Tsar was even necessary to it (otherwise the princes would simple have fought

87 Pokrovsky, quoted in Solonevich, op. cit., p. 331.
against each other, as in the time of the appanage wars). The boyar opposition attained a relative independence, as it were autonomy, and, of course, it was not against ruling the Tsars, but this could never be fully realised because of the inevitable and constant quarrels within the princely boyar or court opposition itself, which consisted of various grouping around the most powerful families, which were doomed to an absence of unity because of the love of power and avarice of each of them. One can say that the princely-courtly opposition from time immemorial tried to weaken (and did weaken, did shake!) the Autocracy, while at the same time unfailingly wanting to preserve it! A shaky and inconsistent position…”

The freest class was the servitors of the Church. As we have seen, Ivan respected the Church, and did not in general try to impose his will on her. And yet he liked to emphasise that the Church had no business interfering in affairs of State, constantly bringing the argument round to the quasi-absolute power of the tsar – and the insubordination of the boyars: “Remember, when God delivered the Jews from slavery, did he place above them a priest or many rulers? No, he placed above them a single tsar – Moses, while the affairs of the priesthood he ordered should be conducted, not by him, but by his brother Aaron, forbidding Aaron to be occupied with worldly matters. But when Aaron occupied himself with worldly affairs, he drew the people away from God. Do you see that it is not fitting for priests to do the work of tsars! Also, when Dathan and Abiron wanted to seize power, remember how they were punished for this by their destruction, to which destruction they led many sons of Israel? You, boyars, are worthy of the same!”

The lower classes – that is, the peasants, shopkeepers and artisans, who paid taxes and services to the tsar and his servitors - were increasingly chained to the land that they worked. For in the century 1550-1650, in order to prevent them from simply disappearing into the woods or fleeing to the steppes in the south, the tsars gradually enserfed them. They were not technically slaves (slaves at any rate have the privilege of not paying taxes); but a combination of political and economic factors (e.g. peasant indebtedness to landlords, landlords’ liability for collecting peasants’ taxes, the enormous demand for manpower as the state’s territory expanded) bonded them to the land; and the hereditary nature of social status in Muscovite Russia meant that they had little hope of rising up the social ladder.

However, it was the boyars who lost most from the increasing power of the tsar. In medieval Russia, they had been theoretically free to join other princes. But by the 1550s there were no independent Russian princes – Orthodox ones, at any rate – outside Moscow.

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90 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 392.
91 Ivan IV, Sochinenia (Works), St. Petersburg: Azbuka, 2000, p. 49.
92 One of the last to be absorbed by Moscow was Pskov, in 1509. The chronicler, mourning over his native city of Pskov, wrote that “the glory of the Pskovian land perished because of
Moreover, their lands, or votchiny, were now held on condition they if they failed to serve him, their lands were theoretically forfeit. The boyars traditionally served in the army or the administration. But the administration, being historically simply an extension of the prince’s private domain, was completely controlled by him. Moreover, his patrimony was greatly increased by his conquest of Novgorod in 1478, his appropriation of all the land of the local aristocratic and merchant elites, and, especially, by his conquest of the vast lands of the former Kazan and Astrakhan khanates in the 1550s and 1560s.

However, the boyars with their clannish rivalries and habits of freedom were still a potential problem. For Ivan, their independent power, which may have been a matter of course in the western kingdoms, was incompatible with his conception of the Russian autocracy. As he wrote to the rebellious boyar, Prince Kurbsky in 1564: “What can one say of the godless peoples? There, you know, the kings do not have control of their kingdoms, but rule as is indicated to them by their subjects. But from the beginning it is the Russian autocrats who have controlled their own state, and not their boyars and grandees!”

For Ivan was not in the least swayed by the ideology of democracy, being, as he wrote, “humble Ioann, Tsar and Great Prince of All Russia, by God’s will, and not by the tumultinuous will of man…” On another occasion he wrote to King Sigismund Augustus of Poland, whose power was severely limited by his nobles, that the autocratic power of the Russian tsars was “not like your pitiful kingdom; for nobody gives orders to the great Sovereigns, while your Pans [nobles] tell you what they want”.

Kurbsky defended the boyars on the grounds of their personal valour; they were “the best of the mighty ones of Israel”. In reply, Ivan pointed out that personal qualities do not help if there are no correct “structures”: “As a tree cannot flower if its roots dry up, so here: if there are no good structures in the kingdom, courage will not be revealed in war. But you, without paying attention to structures, are glorified only with courage.” The idea that there can be more than one power in the land is Manichaeism, according to Ivan; for the Manichaeans taught that “Christ possesses only the heavens, while the earth is ruled independently by men, and the nether regions by the devil. But I believe that Christ possesses all: the heavens, the earth and the nether regions, and everything in the heavens, on the earth and in the nether regions subsists by His will, the counsel of the Father and the consent of the Holy Spirit.” And since the tsar is anointed of God, he rules in God’s place, and can concede no part of what is in fact God’s power to anyone else.

their self-will and refusal to submit to each other, for their evil slanders and evil ways, for shouting at veches. They were not able to rule their own homes, but wanted to rule the city”. As Lebedev rightly remarks: “A good denunciation of democracy!” (op. cit., p. 61).

93 Ivan IV, op. cit., p. 40.
When, crazed by grief and suspicion at his wife’s death, Ivan resolved to do away with the boyars, he designated the boyars’ lands as oprichnina, that is, his personal realm, and ordered the oprichniki, that is, a kind of secret police body sworn to obey him alone, to enter the boyars’ lands and to kill, rape and pillage at will. They carried out unbridled terror and torture on thousands of people, and were rewarded with the expropriated lands of the men they had murdered. The climax of the slaughter came with the unparalleled pogrom of the citizens of Novgorod in 1570.

In recent years, supporters of the canonization of Ivan in Russia have tended to minimize the significance of this slaughter, and to justify it as a necessary measure to preserve the state against sedition. However, the foremost expert on the reign of Ivan, R.G. Skrynnikov, has cited data that decisively refutes this argument. His edition of the Synodicon of Those Disgraced by Ivan the Terrible revealed a list of thousands of names of those killed by Ivan that the tsar sent to the monasteries for commemoration. “The main part of the Synodicon includes detailed lists of disgraced persons executed from 1567 to 1570... All the lists of the period 1567-1570 are inextricably linked with each other, since the court ‘cases’ of this period were parts of a single political process, the ‘case’ of the betrayal of the Staritskys, which lasted for several years, from 1567 to 1570. The ‘case’ was begun in the autumn of 1567 after the return of the Tsar from the Latvian expedition. In the course of it the boyars Fyodorov (1568) and Staritsky (1569) were executed, Novgorod was devastated (1570) and the leaders of the land offices in Moscow were killed (1570). ‘The Staritsky Case’ was the most important political trial in the reign of the Terrible one. The materials of this trial were preserved in the tsarist archives until the time of the composition of the Synodicon in relatively good order. On the basis of these materials the main part of the tsarist Synodicon was composed. This part comprises nine tenths of the whole volume of the Synodicon. In it are written about 3200 people disgraced by the tsar out of a combined total of about 3300 people....

“Among the victims of the Novgorod devastation, about one fifth (455 people) were called by their names in the tsarist Synodicon. In the main these were representatives of the higher classes: landowners and officials (250-260 people) and the members of their families (140 people). The people indicated in the Synodicon without names (1725) were mainly from the lower classes.”

These figures indicate that Ivan’s terror was by no means exclusively directed against the boyars. Moreover, the fact that such large numbers could not have been given a fair trial in the period indicated, and the extraordinary cruelty of the methods of repression, show that this was not justified punishment of rebels, but the manifestation of a demonic psychopathology.

94 Skrynnikov, Tsarstvo Terrors (The Kingdom of Terror), St. Petersburg, 1992, pp. 17, 104.
By the end of his reign the boyars’ power had been in part destroyed, and a new class, the dvoriane, had taken their place. This term originally denoted men and slaves, who were employed by the appanage princes to administer their estates. Ivan now gave them titles previously reserved for the boyars, and lands in various parts of the country. However, these lands were pomestia, not votchiny – that is, they were not hereditary possessions and remained the legal property of the tsar, and could be taken back from the servitors if they failed to render satisfactory service.

Ivan justified his cruelties against the boyars with on scriptural grounds: “See and understand: he who resists the power resists God; and he who resists God is called an apostate, and that is the worst sin. You know, this is said of every power, even of a power acquired by blood and war. But remember what was said above, that we have not seized the throne from anyone. He who resists such a power resists God even more!” The tsar’s power does not come from the people, but from God, by succession from the first Christian autocrat of Russia, St. Vladimir. He is therefore answerable, not to the people, but to God alone. And the people, being “not godless”, recognizes this. Kurbsky, however, by his rebellion against the tsar has rebelled against God and so “destroyed his soul”. And so many, submitting humbly to the tsar’s unjust decrees, and to the apostolic command: “Servants be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward” (I Peter 2.18), received the crown of life in an innocent death. There was no organised mass movement against his power in the Russian land. Even when he expressed a desire to resign his power, the people – completely sincerely, it seems, - begged him to return.

For, in their understanding, Tsar Ivan may have been an evil man, but he was still a true authority. The people were well aware that many of his deeds were evil and inspired by the devil. But by obeying him in his capacity as the anointed of God, they believed that they ascended from the earthly kingdom to the Heavenly, while by patiently enduring his demonic assaults on them they believed that they received the forgiveness of their sins and thereby escaped the torments of hell, so far exceeding the worst torments that any earthly ruler could subject them to.

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95 Ivan IV, op. cit., p. 37.
97 In this way the victims of Ivan’s rule prefigure the Christian victims of Lenin and Stalin, while the oprichnina looks forward to Stalin’s Russia, the NKVD-KGB, dekulakisation and the great terror of the 1930s. There has been no shortage of historians who have seen in Stalin’s terror simply the application of Ivan the Terrible’s methods on a grander scale. This theory is supported by the fact that Stalin called Ivan “my teacher”, and commissioned Eisenstein’s film, Ivan the Terrible, instructing him to emphasise the moral that cruelty is sometimes necessary to protect the State from its internal enemies.
As Heidenstein said: “They consider all those who depart from them in matters of the faith to be barbarians... In accordance with the resolutions of faithfulness to the sovereign to be as obligatory as faithfulness to God. They exalt with praises those who have fulfilled their vow to their prince to their last breath, and say that their souls, on parting from their bodies, immediately go to heaven.”

For according to Orthodox teaching, even if a ruler is unjust or cruel, he must be obeyed as long as he provides that freedom from anarchy, that minimum of law and order, that is the definition of God-established political authority (Romans 13.1-6). Thus St. Irenaeus of Lyons writes: “Some rulers are given by God with a view to the improvement and benefit of their subjects and the preservation of justice; others are given with a view to producing fear, punishment and reproof; yet others are given with a view to displaying mockery, insult and pride – in each case in accordance with the deserts of the subjects. Thus... God’s judgement falls equally on all men.”98 Again, St. Isidore of Pelusium writes that the evil ruler “has been allowed to spew out this evil, like Pharaoh, and, in such an instance, to carry out extreme punishment or to chastise those for whom great cruelty is required, as when the king of Babylon chastised the Jews.”99

But there is line beyond which an evil ruler ceases to be a ruler and becomes an anti-ruler, and not to be obeyed. Thus the Jews were commanded by God through the Prophet Jeremiah to submit to the king of Babylon, evil though he was; whereas they were commanded through another prophet, Moses, to resist and flee from the Egyptian Pharaoh. For in the one case the authority, though evil, was still an authority, which it the people of God were bound to obey; whereas in the other case the authority was in fact an anti-authority, obedience to which would have taken the people further away from God.

Archbishop Nathaniel of Vienna writes: “If a Russian person of the 14th-16th centuries had been asked why he with complete forgetfulness of self served his Tsar and his State, and why he considered it his ineluctable duty to serve them in this way, then every Russian person, or in any case the overwhelming majority of them, would have replied that they served in this way in order to provide for themselves and for their children the possibility of living without hindrance in accordance with the rules of Christianity, that is, the Orthodox laws and customs, so as not to submit to a heterodox state power or one that was indifferent to good and evil. No extra-ecclesiastical, secular or lay aims, such as state glory, national pride, territorial size or a guaranteed life of freedom, etc., would have been placed as an aim of state life

“At the head of life, not in a political sense, but in their capacity as generally recognized spiritual leaders of society, stood the saints, and amongst them in particular Saints Sergius of Radonezh and Cyril of Belozersk, and the hierarchs Peter and Alexis, metropolitans of all Russia.

“It is in the unbroken unity with them of the whole of the Russian people of the 14th-16th centuries that we find the key to an understanding of the formula “Holy Rus”’. Rus’ was never holy in the sense that the whole or a significant part of its people were holy. But holiness was the only ideal for everyone. The Russian man of that time knew no other ideal. He did not know the ideals of culture, good education and heroism as ideals separate from holiness. All these separate ideals were included for him in the single, all-embracing ideal – holiness. But culture, heroism and the other virtues were valuable only when they were sanctified by holiness. Not being saints themselves, but often being very sinful, the Russian people of that time repented of their sins, felt compunction and, in confessing their unity with their contemporary and past saints, they recognised their infinite superiority over themselves, and asked for their prayers for themselves…”

It was this ideal of holiness that made Russia great and led so many of her children into the Heavenly Kingdom. And it was the undermining of this attitude, from the second half of the seventeenth century onwards, that led to the Russian revolution. Having said that, the Orthodox tradition of obedience to legitimate authorities goes together with the tradition of protest against unrighteousness. And in this respect there was truth in Prince Kurbsky’s lament over the state of Russia in Ivan’s reign: “The authority which comes from God devises unprecedented pains of death for the virtuous. The clergy – we will not judge them, far be that from us, but bewail their wretchedness – are ashamed to bear witness to God before the tsar; rather they endorse the sin. They do not make themselves advocates of widows and orphans, the poor, the oppressed and the prisoners, but grab villages and churches and riches for themselves. Where is Elijah, who was concerned for the blood of Naboth and confronted the king? Where are the host of prophets who gave the unjust kings proof of their guilt? Who speaks now without being embarrassed by the words of Holy Scripture and gives his soul as a ransom for his brothers? I do not know one. Who will extinguish the fire that is blazing in our land? No-one. Really, our hope is still only with God…”

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Moreover, while we have asserted that Ivan was a true ruler, it must be admitted that his theory of government contained absolutist elements which were closer to the theories of Protestant Reformers such as Luther and contemporary Protestant monarchs such as Elizabeth I of England than to Orthodoxy. In fact, the nineteenth-century Slavophile Ivan Kireyevsky went so far as to call him a heretic, and attributed to his heretical view of Church-State relations all the woes of the later part of his reign: “The terrible one acted in a restrictive manner because he was a heretic; this is proved... by his striving to place Byzantinism [i.e. the absolutist ideas of some Byzantines] in a position of equal dignity with Orthodoxy. From this there came the oprichnina as a striving towards state heresy and ecclesiastical power. And that this concept of the limits or, more correctly, the lack of limits of his power and of its lack of connection with the people was not Christian, but heretical is witnessed publicly to this day by the holy relics of Metropolitan Philip.”

St. Philip was the one man who, together with the fools-for-Christ Basil the Blessed and Nicholas Salos, did oppose the unrighteousness of the tsar. His ideas about the nature of tsarist power did not differ substantially from those of his predecessors, and especially St. Joseph of Volotsk. The tsar was complete master in his kingdom, and deserved the obedience of all, including churchmen, as long as he confessed the Orthodox faith. But he was bound by the ecclesiastical canons when acting in the ecclesiastical sphere.

However, it was not clear, according to this Josephite theory, to what extent the tsar was also bound in the personal, moral sphere and could rightly be rebuked by the metropolitan for personal sins. St. Philip was notable for his combination, as it were, of the theories of St. Joseph with the practice of Saints Nilus and Maximus, recognizing the supremacy of the tsar while rebuking him for his personal sins. For this boldness he was killed...

As a young man he was deeply struck on hearing the words of the Saviour: “No man can serve two masters”, and resolved to leave the world and become a monk. Later, as metropolitan, at the height of the terror, he would put those words into practice, saying to the Tsar: “Sovereign, I cannot obey your command more than that of God.” And again he said: “Ruling tsar, you have been vested by God with the highest rank, and for that reasons you should honour God above all. But the sceptre of earthly power was given to...
foster justice among men and rule over them lawfully. By
nature you are like
every man, as by power you are like God. It is fitting for
you, as a mortal, not to become arrogant, and as the image of God, not to
become angry, for only he can justly be called a ruler who has control over
himself and does not work for his shameful passions, but conquers them with
the aid of his mind. Was it ever heard that the pious emperors disturbed their
own dominion? Not only among your ancestors, but also among those of
other races, nothing of the sort has ever been heard.”

When the tsar angrily asked what business he had interfering in royal
affairs, Philip replied: “By the grace of God, the election of the Holy Synod
and your will, I am a pastor of the Church of Christ. You and I must care for
the piety and peace of the Orthodox Christian kingdom.” And when the tsar
ordered him to keep silence, Philip replied: “Silence is not fitting now; it
would increase sin and destruction. If we carry out the will of men, what
answer will we have on the day of Christ’s Coming? The Lord said: “Love one
another. Greater love hath no man than that a man should lay down his life
for his friends. If you abide in My love, you will be My disciples indeed.”

And again he said: “The Tatars have a law and justice, but we do not.
Throughout the world, transgressors who ask for clemency find it with the
authorities, but in Russia there is not even clemency for the innocent and the
righteous... Fear the judgement of God, your Majesty. How many innocent
people are suffering! We, sovereign, offer to God the bloodless sacrifice, while
behind the altar the innocent blood of Christians is flowing! Robberies and
murders are being carried out in the name of the Tsar.... What is our faith for?
I do not sorrow for those who, in shedding their innocent blood, have been
counted worthy of the lot of the saints; I suffer for your wretched soul:
although you are honoured as the image of God, nevertheless, you are a man
made of dust, and the Lord will require everything at your hands”.

However, even if the tsar had agreed that his victims were martyrs, he
would not have considered this a reason for not obeying him. As he wrote to
Kurbsky: “If you are just and pious, why do you not permit yourself to accept
suffering from me, your stubborn master, and so inherit the crown of
life?...”

Betrayed by his fellow-hierarchs, Philip was about to resign the
metropolitanate, and said to the tsar: “It is better to die as an innocent martyr
than to tolerate horrors and lawlessnesses silently in the rank of metropolitan.
I leave you my metropolitan’s staff and mantia. But you all, hierarchs and
servers of the altar, feed the flock of Christ faithfully; prepare to give your
reply and fear the Heavenly King more than the earthly...”

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107 Ivan IV, op. cit., p. 37.
The tsar refused to accept his resignation, and after being imprisoned and having escaped the appetite of a hungry bear that had been sent to devour him, on December 23, 1569 the holy metropolitan was suffocated to death by the tsar’s servant after his refusal to bless his expedition against Novgorod. Metropolitan Philip saved the honour of the Russian episcopate in Ivan’s reign as Metropolitan Arsenius of Rostov was to save it in the reign of Catherine the Great...

Michael Cherniavksy has pointed to the tension, and ultimate incompatibility, between two images of the kingship in the reign of Ivan the Terrible: that of the basileus and that of the khan – that is, of the Orthodox autocrat and of the pagan despot. “If the image of the basileus stood for the Orthodox and pious ruler, leading his Christian people towards salvation, then the image of the khan was perhaps preserved in the idea of the Russian ruler as the conqueror of Russia and of its people, responsible to no one. If the basileus signified the holy tsar, the ‘most gentle’ (tishaishii) tsar in spiritual union with his flock, then the khan, perhaps, stood for the absolutist secularised state, arbitrary through its separation from its subjects.”  

If there was indeed something of pagan absolutism as well as purely Orthodox autocracy in Ivan’s rule, then this would explain, not only the cruelties of his own reign, but also why, only a few years after his death, Russia descended into civil war and the Time of Troubles. For eastern absolutism, unlike Orthodox autocracy, is a system that can command the fear and obedience, but not the love of the people, and is therefore unstable in essence. Hence the need to resist to it – but not out of considerations of democracy or the rights of man, but simply out of considerations of Christian love and justice.

There is no authority higher than the Orthodox tsar in the secular sphere. And yet the Gospel is higher than everybody, and its words will judge everybody on the Day of Judgement. And in reminding Ivan of this both St. Philip and Kurbsky were doing both him and the State a true service...

Ivan rejected this service to his own detriment. For at the very end of his life, he destroyed even his reputation as a defender of Orthodoxy by encroaching on Church lands and delving into astrology.  


109 Lebedev has even suggested that that the half-military, half-monastic nature of Ivan’s oprichnina was modelled on the Templars, and that the terrible change in his appearance that took place after his return to Moscow from Alexandrov in 1564 was the result of “a terrible inner upheaval”, his initiation into a satanic, masonic-like sect (op. cit., p. 97).
It is difficult to avoid the conclusion, therefore, that Ivan the Terrible was indeed terrible in his impiety, and must be numbered among the evil tyrants and persecutors of the Church.

Indeed, Lebedev calls the latter part of his reign “not a struggle with rebellion, but the affirmation of his permission to do everything. So we are concerned here not with the affirmation of the Orthodox Autocracy of the Russian Tsars, but with a prefiguring of the authority of the Antichrist.”\textsuperscript{110}

\textsuperscript{110} Lebedev, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 90.
"After the horrors of the reign of Ivan IV," writes Lebedev, "a complete contrast is represented by the soft, kind rule of his son, Theodore Ivanovich. In Russia there suddenly came as it were complete silence... However, the silence of the reign of Theodore Ivanovich was external and deceptive; it could more accurately be called merely a lull before a new storm. For that which had taken place during the oprichnina could not simply disappear: it was bound to have the most terrible consequences."

But this lull contained some very important events. One was the crowning of Theodore according to the full Byzantine rite, followed by his communion in both kinds in the altar. This further established the Russian Tsars as the Emperors of the Third Rome, which status, as we shall see, was confirmed publicly by the Ecumenical Patriarch himself.

No less important was the raising of the metropolitanate of Moscow to patriarchal status with the blessing of the Eastern Patriarchs. There was good reason for such a step. As Dobroklonsky writes, "the Moscow metropolitan see stood very tall. Its riches and the riches of the Moscow State stimulated the Eastern Patriarchs – not excluding the Patriarch of Constantinople himself – to appeal to it for alms. The boundaries of the Moscow metropolitanate were broader than the restricted boundaries of any of the Eastern Patriarchates (if we exclude from the Constantinopolitan the Russian metropolitan see, which was part of it); the court of the Moscow metropolitan was just as great as that of the sovereign. The Moscow metropolitan was freer in the manifestation of his ecclesiastical rights than the Patriarchs of the East, who were restricted at every step. Under the protection of the Orthodox sovereigns the metropolitan see in Moscow stood more firmly and securely than the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate, which had become a plaything in the hands of the sultan or vizier. The power of the Moscow metropolitan was in reality not a whit less than that of the patriarchate: he ruled the bishops, called himself their ‘father, pastor, comforter and head, under the power and in the will of whom they are the Vladykas of the whole Russian land’. Already in the 15th century, with the agreement of the Constantinopolitan Patriarch, he had been elected in Rus’

111 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 105.
112 It appears that the first Russian patriarch received a second (or even third) Episcopal consecration when he became patriarch. Thus Igumen Gregory (Lourié) writes: “The case of the raising to the patriarchy of Job, who was already Metropolitan of Moscow by that time, was strangely dual. The first Episcopal consecration was carried out on Job already in 1581, when he became Bishop of Kolomna, and the second in 1587, when he was raised to the rank of Metropolitan of Moscow. Now, with his raising to the rank of Patriarch of Moscow, a third Episcopal ordination was carried out on him (Uspensky, 1998).” This uncanonical custom appears to have originated with Patriarch Philotheus of Constantinople, when he transferred St. Alexis from Vladimir to Moscow (http://hgr.livejournal.com/1099886.html, June 1, 2006).
the Russian metropolia had already ceased hierarchical relations with the patriarchal see. If there remained any dependence of the Moscow metropolitan on the patriarch, it was only nominal, since the Russian metropolia was still counted as belonging to the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate...

Not only was the Moscow metropolia a de facto patriarchate already: its exaltation would simultaneously raise the status of the Russian Autocracy, whose prosperity was vital for the survival, not only of Russian Orthodoxy, but of Greek, Balkan and Georgian Orthodoxy, too.

In 1586 talks began with Patriarch Joachim of Antioch, who had arrived in Moscow. He promised to discuss the question of the status of the Russian Church with his fellow patriarchs. Then, in 1588, the Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II (Trallas) came to Moscow on an alms-raising trip. Then he went on an important tour of the beleagured Orthodox in the Western Russian lands, ordaining bishops and blessing the lay brotherhoods.

It was the desperate situation of the Orthodox in Western Russia that made the exaltation of the Muscovite see particularly timely. In 1596 the Orthodox hierarchs in the region had signed the unia of Brest-Litovsk with the Roman Catholics. It was now obvious that Divine Providence had singled out the Church and State in Muscovy, rather than that in Poland-Lithuania, as the centre and stronghold of Russian Orthodoxy as a whole, and this needed to be emphasised in the eyes of all the Orthodox. Patriarch Jeremiah understood this. And in agreeing to the tsar’s request for a patriarchate of Moscow, he showed that he understood that in having a Patriarch at his side, the status of the Tsar, too, would be exalted: “In truth, pious tsar, the Holy Spirit dwells in you, and this thought is from God, and will be realised by you. For the Old Rome fell to the Apollinarian heresy, and the Second Rome, Constantinople, is in the possession of the grandsons of the Hagarenes, the godless Turks: but your great Russian kingdom, the Third Rome, has exceeded all in piety. And all the pious kingdoms have been gathered into your kingdom, and you alone under the heavens are named the Christian tsar throughout the inhabited earth for all Christians.”

115 Zyzkin, op. cit., part I, p. 156. This thought was echoed by the patriarch of Alexandria, who wrote to the “most Orthodox” tsar in 1592: “The four patriarchates of the Orthodox speak of your rule as that of another, new Constantine the Great... and say that if there were no help from your rule, then Orthodoxy would be in extreme danger.” (Quoted in van den Bercken, op. cit., p. 160).
The Patriarch's language here (if it is truly his) is very reminiscent of that of the famous prophecy of Elder Philotheus of Pskov in 1511. In particular, the Patriarch follows the elder in ascribing the fall of Old Rome to “the Apollinarian heresy”. Now the Apollinarian heresy rarely, if ever, figures in lists of the western heresies. And yet the patriarch here indicates that it is the heresy as a result of which the First Rome fell. Some have understood it to mean the Latin practice of using unleavened bread in the Eucharist.

However, to understand why the patriarch should have spoken of it as the heresy of the West, we need to look for some matching in form, if not in substance, between the Apollinarian and papist heresies. Now Apollinarius taught that in Christ only the body and the soul were human, but His mind was Divine. In other words, Christ did not have a human mind like ours, but this was replaced, according to the Apollinarian schema, by the Divine Logos.

A parallel with Papism immediately suggests itself: just as the Divine Logos replaces the human mind in the heretical Apollinarian Christology, so a quasi-Divine, infallible Pope replaces the fully human, and therefore at all times fallible episcopate in the heretical papist ecclesiology. The root heresy of the West therefore consists in the unlawful exaltation of the mind of the Pope over the other minds of the Church, both clerical and lay, and its quasi-deification to a level equal to that of Christ Himself. From this root heresy proceed all the heresies of the West.

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

And so on January 26, 1589 Patriarch Jeremiah raised Metropolitan Job to the rank of Patriarch of Moscow in the Dormition cathedral. The exaltation of the Russian Church and State to patriarchal and “Third Rome” status respectively shows that, not only in her own eyes, but in the eyes of the whole Orthodox world, Russia was now the chief bastion of the Truth of Christ against the heresies of the West. Russia had been born as a Christian state just as the West was falling away from grace into papism in the eleventh century. Now, in the sixteenth century, as Western papism received a bastard child in the Protestant Reformation, and a second wind in the Counter-Reformation, Russia was ready to take up leadership of the struggle against both heresies as a fully mature Orthodox nation.
However, at the Pan-Orthodox Council convened by Jeremiah on his return to Constantinople, the Eastern Patriarchs, while confirming the establishment of the Moscow Patriarchate, made it only the fifth in seniority, after the four Greek patriarchates. This was to prove a prudent reservation, for in the century that followed, the Poles briefly conquered Moscow during the “Time of Troubles”, necessitating the continued supervision of the Western and Southern Russian Orthodox by Constantinople. And by the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Russian patriarchate was abolished by Peter the Great and replaced – with the blessing of the Eastern Patriarchs – by a “Holy Governing Synod”.

Nevertheless, the elevation of the head of the Russian Church to the rank of patriarch was to prove beneficial now, in the early seventeenth century, when the Autocracy in Russia had been shaken to its foundations and the patriarchs had taken the place of the tsars as the leaders of the Russian nation. We witness a similar phenomenon in 1917, when the restoration of the Russian patriarchate to some degree compensated for the fall of the tsardom. In both cases, the patriarchate both filled the gap left by the fall of the state (up to a point), and kept alive the ideals of true Orthodox statehood, waiting for the time when it could restore political power into the hands of the anointed tsars.
ORTHODOXY UNDER THE TURKISH YOKE

After the Ottoman Conquest, a new, and in some ways more hopeful, situation arose for the Balkan Orthodox Christians. First, the temptation to betray the faith in order sustain the State was removed; this allowed the Church to renounce the unia and return to Orthodoxy very soon after the Conquest. Moreover, Ottoman rule continued to give the Christians of the Balkans some protection against the inroads of western, mainly Jesuit, missionaries.

Secondly, the main cause of the conflicts between the Balkan Orthodox nations, - the imperialist nationalism of the Byzantine State, on the one hand, and the anti-imperialist nationalism of the Slavic States, on the other - were also removed. No nation could now encroach on the sovereignty of any other nation, since they were all equally the miserable subjects of the Sultan. In theory, at any rate, this communion in suffering should have brought the Christians closer together.

But in one important respect the Sultan had preserved the status quo of Greek superiority, and in this way sown the seeds of future conflicts... “The Muslims,” writes Metropolitan Kallistos (Ware), “drew no distinction between religion and politics: from their point of view, if Christianity was to be recognized as an independent religious faith, it was necessary for Christians to be organized as an independent political unit, an Empire within the Empire. The ecclesiastical structure was taken over in toto as an instrument of secular administration. The bishops became government officials, the Patriarch was not only the spiritual head of the Greek Orthodox Church, but the civil head of the Greek nation – the ethnarch or millet-bashi.”

An outward symbol of this change in the status of the Patriarch was his wearing a crown in the Divine services. Hieromonk Elia writes: “Until Ottoman times, that is until the 14th century, bishops did not wear crowns, or anything else upon their heads in church. When there was no longer an Emperor, the Patriarch began to wear a crown, and the ‘sakkos’, an imperial garment, indicating that he was now head of the millet or nation.”

So the Serbs, Bulgars and Romanians were again under a Greek ruler who wore a crown, even if he in turn was ruled by the Sultan! And they knew that if the Sultan were removed, then the Greek Patriarch-Ethnarch would again be in charge, like the Byzantine Autocrats of old.

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The fact that the Orthodox of all nations were now one nation in law could have been seen as a message from God: “You – Greeks, Serbs, Bulgarians, Romanians – are all one nation in My eyes. Cease your quarrelling, therefore, and love each other.” But if that was the message, it was not heeded. After a pause the Greco-Slavic conflicts of the Byzantine period resumed...

Now the millet system had the consequence that “the Church’s higher administration became caught up in a degrading system of corruption and simony. Involved as they were in worldly affairs and matters political, the bishops fell a prey to ambition and financial greed. Each new Patriarch required a berat from the Sultan before he could assume office, and for this document he was obliged to pay heavily. The Patriarch recovered his expenses from the episcopate, by exacting a fee from each bishop before instituting him in his diocese; the bishops in turn taxed the parish clergy, and the clergy taxed their flocks. What was once said of the Papacy was certainly true of the Ecumenical Patriarchate under the Turks: everything was for sale. When there were several candidates for the Patriarchal throne, the Turks virtually sold it to the highest bidder; and they were quick to see that it was in their financial interests to change the Patriarch as frequently as possible, so as to multiply occasions for selling the berat. Patriarchs were removed and reinstated with kaleidoscopic rapidity.”

The only Christians who could pay these bribes were the Phanariots, wealthy merchants from the Phanar district in Constantinople, who enjoyed considerable privileges throughout European Turkey, especially in Romania. According to Runciman, they “needed the support of the Church in the pursuit of their ultimate political aim. It was no mean aim. The Megali Idea, the Great Idea of the Greeks, can be traced back to days before the Turkish Conquest. It was the idea of the Imperial destiny of the Greek people. Michael VIII Palaeologus expressed it in the speech that he made when he heard that his troops had recaptured Constantinople from the Latins; though he called the Greeks the Romaioi. In later Paleologan times the word Hellenic reappeared, but with the conscious intention of connecting Byzantine imperialism with the culture and traditions of ancient Greece. With the spread of the Renaissance a respect for the old Greek civilization had become general. It was natural that the Greeks, in the midst of their political disasters, should wish to benefit from it. They might be slaves now to the Turks, but they were of the great race that had civilized Europe. It must be their destiny to rise again. The Phanariots tried to combine the nationalistic force of Hellenism in a passionate if illogical alliance with the oecumenical traditions of Byzantium and the Orthodox Church. They worked for a restored Byzantium, a New Rome that should be Greek, a new centre of Greek civilization that should embrace the Orthodox world. The spirit behind the Great Idea was a mixture of neo-Byzantinism and an acute sense of race. But, with the trend of the modern world the nationalism began to dominate the oecumenicity. George

118 Ware, op. cit., pp. 89-90.
Scholarius Gennadius had, perhaps unconsciously, foreseen the danger when he answered a question about his nationality by saying that he would not call himself a Hellene though he had been born at Byzantium, but, rather, a Christian, that is, an Orthodox. For, if the Orthodox Church was to retain its spiritual force, it must remain oecumenical. It must not become a purely Greek Church.

“The price paid by the Orthodox Church for its subjection to its Phanariot benefactors was heavy. First, it meant that the Church was run more and more in the interests of the Greek people and not of Orthodoxy as a whole. The arrangement made between the Conquering Sultan and the Patriarch Gennadius had put all the Orthodox within the Ottoman Empire under the authority of the Patriarchate, which was inevitably controlled by Greeks. But the earlier Patriarchs after the conquest had been aware of their oecumenical duties. The autonomous Patriarchates of Serbia and Bulgaria had been suppressed when the two kingdoms were annexed by the Turks; but the two Churches had continued to enjoy a certain amount of autonomy under the Metropolitans of Pec and of Tirnovo or Ochrid. They retained their Slavonic liturgy and their native clergy and bishops. This did not suit the Phanariots. It was easy to deal with the Churches of Wallachia and Moldavia because of the infiltration of Greeks into the Principalities, where anyhow the medieval dominance of the Serbian Church had been resented. The Phanariot Princes had not interfered with the vernacular liturgy and had, indeed, encouraged the Roumanian language at the expense of the Slavonic. The upper clergy was Graecized; so they felt secure. The Bulgarians and the Serbs were more intransigent. They had no intention of becoming Graecized. They protested to some effect against the appointment of Greek metropolitans. For a while the Serbian Patriarchate of Pec was reconstituted, from 1557 to 1755. The Phanariots demanded tighter control. In 1766 the autonomous Metropolitanate of Pec was suppressed and in 1767 the Metropolitanate of Ochrid. The Serbian and Bulgarian Churches were each put under an exarch appointed by the Patriarch. This was the work of the Patriarch Samuel Hantcherli, a member of an upstart Phanariot family, whose brother Constantine was for a while Prince of Wallachia until his financial extortions alarmed not only the tax-payers but also his ministers, and he was deposed and executed by the Sultan’s orders. The exarchs did their best to impose Greek bishops on the Balkan Churches, to the growing anger of both Serbs and Bulgarians. The Serbs recovered their religious autonomy early in the nineteenth century when they won political autonomy from the Turks. The Bulgarian Church had to wait till 1870 before it could throw off the Greek yoke. The policy defeated its own ends. It caused so much resentment that when the time came neither the Serbs nor the Bulgarians would cooperate in any Greek-directed move towards independence; and even the Roumanians...
“Everywhere,” writes Schmemann, “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.

“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...”

119 Runciman, op. cit., pp. 377-380. Thus, as J. Frazee 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” (The Orthodox Church and Independent Greece, 1821-1853, Cambridge University Press, 1968, p. 7, note 1). Again, Noel Malcolm writes: “By 1760, according to a Catholic report, the Patriarch in Peć was paying 10,000 scudi per annum to the Greek Patriarch. In 1766, pleading the burden of the payments they had to make under this system, the bishops of many Serbian sees, including Skopje, Niš and Belgrade, together with the Greek-born Patriarch of Peć himself, sent a petition asking the Sultan to close down the Serbian Patriarchate and place the whole Church directly under Constantinople... The primary cause of this event was not the attitude of the Ottoman state (harsh though that was at times) but the financial oppression of the Greek hierarchy. In the Hapsburg domains, meanwhile, the Serbian Church based in Karlovci continued to operate, keeping up its de facto autonomy.” (Kosovo, London: Papermac, 1998, p. 171). Again, Stanoe Stanoевич writes: “The Patriarchate of Constantinople was aspiring to increase its power over all the Serbian lands in the hope that in this venture the Greek hierarchy and Greek priesthood would abundantly increase their parishes. The intrigues which were conducted for years because of this in Constantinople produced fruit. By a firman of the Sultan dated September 13, 1766, the Pec patriarchate was annulled, and all the Serbian lands in Turkey were subject to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Immediately after this the Greek hierarchy, which looked on the Serbian people only as an object for material exploitation, began a struggle against the Serbian priesthood and against the Serbian people” (Istoria Sprskogo Naroda (History of the Serbian People), Belgrade, 1910, p. 249 (in Serbian). Again, Mark Mazower writes: “A saying common among the Greek peasants,’ according to a British traveller, was that ‘the country labours under three curses, the priests, the 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.” (The Balkans, London: Phoenix, 2000, pp. 61-62)

In the eleventh century, when Emperor Basil II “the Bulgar-slayer” destroyed the First Bulgarian empire, and demoted the Bulgarian patriarchate to the status of a “holy archiepiscopate”, he did not destroy the autocephaly of the Bulgarian Church. Moreover, he appointed a Bulgarian as first archbishop of Ochrid in the new dispensation.121 And two centuries later, as we have seen, the Greeks were prepared to grant autocephaly to the Serbian Church. In the eighteenth century, however, the Greeks achieved through “peaceful” means – and through the agency of the godless Turks – what they had refused to carry out in the eleventh century: the complete suppression of Slavic ecclesiastical independence. Moreover, if, in the eleventh century they had had some excuse in that the Byzantine Empire was indeed the Empire of Christian Rome, and recognized as such throughout the Orthodox world, in the eighteenth century they were not even an independent nation-state, but slaves of the godless Turks...

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121 Dvorkin, op. cit., p. 678.
The Orthodox peasants of what is now Belorussia and Western Ukraine were being severely persecuted by their Polish-Lithuanian landlords and the Jesuits, who were vigorously trying to convert them to Roman Catholicism. The Society of Jesus was founded in 1540 with the aim of buttressing the Counter-Reformation papacy, and was soon waging war, not only against Protestantism, but also against Orthodoxy. The Jesuits' methods ranged from crude force in the West Russian lands to the subtler weapon of education further south: rich Greek families already liked to send their sons to Venice or Padua, and in 1577 the College of Saint Athanasius was founded in Rome for the higher education of Greek boys, which was followed by the setting up of Jesuit schools in the Ottoman lands, in Pera, Thessalonica, Smyrna, Athens and Chalcis.

These methods soon produced results: in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries several Constantinopolitan and Antiochian patriarchs apostasized to Rome. Nor did the Protestant reformers fail to make gains, especially in Romania. One of the most famous Constantinopolitan patriarchs, Cyril I Lucaris, was a Calvinist...

With the bishops so often wavering in faith or bound by political pressures, it was often left to the lower clergy or the laypeople to take up the banner of Orthodoxy. Thus the unia was fought by hieromonks, such as St. Job of Pochaev and St. Athanasius of Brest, who was tortured to death by the Jesuits, lay theologians such as the Chiot Eustratios Argenti, aristocratic landowners such as Prince Constantine Constantinovich Ostrozhsky, and lay brotherhoods defending Orthodoxy against the unia in Lvov and Vilnius.

“At the end of the 16th century,” writes Protopriest Peter Smirnov, “the so-called Lithuanian unia took place, or the union of the Orthodox Christians living in the south-western dioceses in separation from the Moscow Patriarchate, with the Roman Catholic Church.

“The reasons for this event, which was so sad for the Orthodox Church and so wretched for the whole of the south-western region were: the lack of stability in the position and administration of the separated dioceses; the intrigues on the part of the Latins and in particular the Jesuits; the betrayal of Orthodoxy by certain bishops who were at that time administering the south-western part of the Russian Church.

“With the separation of the south-western dioceses under the authority of a special metropolitan, the question arose: to whom were they to be

Against the will of the initiators of the separation, the south-western metropolia was subjected to the power of the Patriarch of Constantinople, and the patriarchs, in view of the dangers presented by the Latins, intensified their supervision over the separated dioceses."

The formerly Russian lands from Kiev westwards were largely deprived of political protection until a part of the Ukraine came under the dominion of Moscow in 1654 as a result of the victories of Bogdan Chmielnicki and his Cossack armies. Until then they were persecuted by the Poles and the Jews.

"In such a situation," continues Smirnov, "the Jesuits appeared in the south-western dioceses and with their usual skill and persistence used all the favourable circumstances to further their ends, that is, to spread the power of the Roman pope. They took into their hands control of the schools, and instilled in the children of the Russian boyars a disgust for the Orthodox clergy and the Russian faith, which they called 'kholop' (that is, the faith of the simple people). The fruits of this education were not slow to manifest themselves. The majority of the Russian boyars and princes went over to Latinism. To counter the influence of the Jesuits in many cities brotherhoods were founded. These received important rights from the Eastern Patriarchs. Thus, for example, the Lvov brotherhood had the right to rebuke the bishops themselves for incorrect thinking, and even expel them from the Church. New difficulties appeared, which were skilfully exploited by the Jesuits. They armed the bishops against the brotherhoods and against the patriarchs (the slaves of the Sultans), pointed out the excellent situation of the Catholic bishops, many of whom had seats in the senate, and honours and wealth and power. The Polish government helped the Jesuits in every way, and at their direction offered episcopal sees to such people as might later turn out to be their obedient instruments. Such in particular were Cyril Terletsky, Bishop of Lutsk, and Hypatius Potsey, Bishop of Vladimir-in-Volhynia....

"The immediate excuse for the unia was provided by the following circumstance. Patriarch Jeremiah of Constantinople, during his journey through the south of Russia to Moscow to establish the patriarch, defrocked the Kievan Metropolitan Onesiphorus for bigamy, and appointed in his place Michael Ragoza, and commanded him to convene a council, by his return, to discuss another bigamist who had been accused of many crimes, Cyril Terletsky. Michael Ragoza was a kind person, but weak in character, he did not convene a council which would have inflicted unnecessary delays and expenses on the patriarch. The Patriarch, summoned out of Russia by his own affairs, sent letters of attorney to Ragoza and Bishop Meletius of Vladimir (in Volhynia) for the trial of Teretksy. Both these letters were seized by Cyril, and the affair continued to be dragged out. Meanwhile, Meletius died, and Cyril Terletsky succeeded in presenting the Vladimir see to his friend, Hypatius

Potsey. Fearing the appointment of a new trial on himself from the patriarch, Cyril hastened to act in favour of the unia, and made an ally for himself in Hypatius, who was indebted to him.

“In 1593 they openly suggested the unia to the other south-western bishops in order to liberate themselves from the power of the patriarch and the interference of laymen in Church administration…”

Now the Russian bishops wanted to secure for themselves a certain degree of autonomy, and the retention of the eastern rite in the Divine services. Differences in rites had been allowed by the decrees of the council of Florence in 1439. “However,” as Igumen Gregory Lourië writes, “after the Council of Trent (1545-1563), the Roman Catholic church was not interested in giving anyone the right of administrative autonomy. Therefore we must call it a diplomatic victory for the Orthodox supporters of the unia that they succeeded in convincing the Roman curia of the necessity of establishing in Poland-Lithuania a parallel Catholic hierarchy of the Greek rite, which would be independent of the local Latin bishops. In 1595 the diplomatic efforts of the bishops were directed, on the one hand, to securing the future uniate organization at as high a degree of autonomy as possible, and one the other, to convincing the Orthodox aristocracy to accept the unia. Among the nobles the main opponent of the unia was Prince Constantine Ostrozhsky. By the summer of 1595 such a sharp conflict had been lit between the bishops and the laity that Patriarch Jeremiah Tranos of Constantinople turned directly to the laity, passing by the bishops. The patriarch sent to Jassy (Romania) his exarch Nicephorus, who convened a council of six bishops, including the metropolitans of Moldavia-Wallachia (Romania) and Ugro-Wallachia (Hungary). On August 17, 1595 this council issued a decree in which it addressed ‘the nobles and simple people’ who were ‘under the power of the Polish king’, telling them not to submit to their local bishops. But the latter were told immediately to present penitential acts to the patriarch, otherwise they would be stripped of their rank, while the laymen would receive the right to put forward their own candidates to the Episcopal sees that had become vacant (Welykyj, 1970, 120-121, document № 69). The bishops found themselves to be not only on the verge of being deprived of their rank, but also under threat of excommunication from the Church. It goes without saying that as private individuals they would not have been able to influence the decision of the question of the unia with Rome.

“The publication of this act could not be hidden from the Roman curia, and therefore the bishops found themselves in a situation in which their position at the negotiations with Rome was severely shaken. It was necessary to act without delay and agree now even to almost any conditions. And so two of the West Russian bishops set off for Rome as fully-empowered representatives of the whole of the episcopate of the Kievan metropolia. The

The upshot of their stay in Rome from November, 1595 to March, 1596 was the acceptance of the conditions of the future unia without any guarantees of equality between the Catholic churches of different rites – the Latin and Greek. The unia was established by the will of the Roman Pope, and not at all as the result of negotiations of the two sides. The Russian bishops were not even accepted as a ‘side’. The future uniate church had to accept not only the decrees of the council of Florence but also those of the council of Trent. Moreover, it had to be ready for any changes, including changes in rites, that the Pope might introduce. The only right that the bishops succeeded in preserving was the right of a local council to elect the Metropolitan of Kiev. However, this had to be followed by the confirmation of the Roman Pope.

“Prince Ostrozhsky, in his turn, actively opposed the unia. A significant part of the Orthodox nobility took his side. Prince Ostrozhsky and his supporters succeeded in creating a schism in the pro-uniate party: two bishops separated from the others, refusing to support the unia. Their renunciation of their former position is explained by the fact that they were in a state of significantly greater dependence on the local magnates than on the king. It is of note that Gedeon Balaban, Bishop of Lvov, who was the first to begin preparing his diocese for the unia, was one of these two bishops. Prince Ostrozhsky invited Exarch Nicephorus to Poland-Lithuania.

“In October, 1595 [recte: 1596] two councils were opened simultaneously in Brest. One of them took place with the participation of five bishops and proclaimed the unia with Rome. The other was presided over by Exarch Nicephorus. This council excommunicated the uniates, which became the beginning of the Orthodox resistance to the unia.

“Soon Nicephorus was accused of spying for Turkey and was put in prison under guard. He died in prison in 1598 or 1599. The role of the spiritual leader of the Orthodox resistance passed to Ivan of Vishna…”

Smirnov writes: “The whole affair was carried through, as was the custom of the Jesuits, with various forgeries and deceptions. Thus, for example, they took the signatures of the two bishops on white blanks, supposedly in case there would be unforeseen petitions before the king on behalf of the Orthodox, and meanwhile on these blanks they wrote a petition for the unia. Potsej and Terletsky made such concessions to the Pope in Rome as they had not been authorised to make even by the bishops who thought like them. Terletsky and Potsej had hardly returned from Rome before these forgeries were exposed, which elicited strong indignation against them on the part of some bishops (Gideon of Lvov and Michael of Peremysl) the Orthodox princes (Prince Ostrozhsky) and others…

From this time, there began persecutions against the Orthodox. The uniate priests and put uniates in their place. The Orthodox brotherhoods were declared to be mutinous assemblies, and those faithful to Orthodoxy were deprived of posts and oppressed in trade and crafts. The peasants were subjected to all kinds of indignities by their Catholic landlords. The Orthodox churches were forcibly turned into uniate ones or were leased out to Jews. The leaseholder had the keys to the church and extracted taxes for every service and need. Many of the Orthodox fled from these restrictions to the Cossacks in the steppes, who rose up in defence of the Orthodox faith under the leadership of Nalivaiki. But the Poles overcame them and Nalivaiki was burned to death in a brazen bull. Then a fresh rebellion broke out under Taras. But, happily for the Orthodox, their wrathful persecutor Sigismund III died. His successor, Vladislav IV, gave the Orthodox Church privileges, with the help of which she strengthened herself for the coming struggle with the uniates and Catholics...

“However, although Vladislav was well-disposed towards the Orthodox, the Poles did not obey him and continued to oppress them. The Cossacks several times took up arms, and when they fell into captivity to the Poles, the latter subjected them to terrible tortures. Some were stretched on the wheel, others had their arms and legs broken, others were pierced with spikes and placed on the rack. Children were burned on iron grills before the eyes of their fathers and mothers.”

Oleg Platonov writes: “All the persecutions against the Orthodox in the West Russian lands were carried out by the Jews and the Catholics together. Having given the Russian churches into the hands of the Jews who were close to them in spirit, the Polish aristocracy laughingly watched as the defilement of Christian holy things was carried out by the Jews. The Catholic priests and uniates even incited the Jews to do this, calculating in this way to turn the Russians away from Orthodoxy.

“As Archbishop Philaret recounts: ‘Those churches whose parishioners could by converted to the unia by no kind of violence were leased to the Jews: the keys of the churches and bell-towers passed into their hands. If it was necessary to carry out a Church need, then one had to go and trade with the Jew, for whom gold was an idol and the faith of Christ the object of spiteful mockery and profanation. One had to pay up to five talers for each liturgy, and the same for baptism and burial. The uniate received paschal bread wherever and however he wanted it, while the Orthodox could not bake it himself or buy it in any other way than from a Jew at Jewish rates. The Jews would make a mark with coal on the proshoras bought for commemorating the living or the dead. Only then could it be accepted for the altar.’”

especially notorious as a persecutor of the orthodox was the uniate bishop joasaph kuntsevich of polotsk. lev sapega, the head of the great principality of lithuania, wrote to kuntsevich on the polish king’s behalf: “i admit, that i, too, was concerned about the cause of the unia and that it would be imprudent to abandon it. but it had never occurred to me that your eminence would implement it using such violent measures… you say that you are ‘free to drown the infidels’ [i.e. the orthodox who rejected the unia], to chop their heads off’, etc. not so! the lord’s commandment expresses a strict prohibition to all, which concerns you also. when you violated human consciences, closed churches so that people should perish like infidels without divine services, without christian rites and sacraments; when you abused the king’s favours and privileges – you managed without us. but when there is a need to suppress seditions caused by your excesses you want us to cover up for you… as to the dangers that threaten your life, one may say that everyone is the cause of his own misfortune. stop making trouble, do not subject us to the general hatred of the people and you yourself to obvious danger and general criticism… everywhere one hears people grumbling that you do not have any worthy priests, but only blind ones… your ignorant priests are the bane of the people… but tell me, your eminence, whom did you win over, whom did you attract through your severity?… it will turn out that in polotsk itself you have lost even those who until now were obedient to you. you have turned sheep into goats, you have plunged the state into danger, and maybe all of us catholics – into ruin… it has been rumoured that they (the orthodox) would rather be under the infidel turk than endure such violence… you yourself are the cause of their rebellion. instead of joy, your notorious unia has brought us only troubles and discords and has become so loathsome that we would rather be without it!”

on may 22, 1620, local people gathered at the trinity monastery near polotsk to express their indignation at kuntsevich’s cruelty. “these people suffered a terrible fate: an armed crowd of uniates surrounded the monastery and set it on fire. as the fire was raging and destroying the monastery and burning alive everyone within its walls, joasaph kuntsevich was performing on a nearby hill a thanksgiving service accompanied by the cries of the victims of the fire…”

in 1623 kuntsevich was killed by the people of vitebsk. in 1867 pope pius ix “glorified” him, and in 1963 pope paul vi translated his relics to the vatican. pope john-paul ii lauded him as a “hieromartyr”…

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129 perepiolkina, op. cit., p. 228.
The Brest unia made the necessity of a strong autocracy in Moscow more essential than ever. Under Patriarch Job (1589-1605), the patriarchate had become an important player in State affairs. The bishops “together with the tsar and the boyars came together in a zemsky sobor in the dining room of the State palace and there reviewed the matters reported to them by the secretary. The patriarch began to play an especially important role after the death of Theodore Ivanovich (1598). The tsar died without children, and the throne was vacant. Naturally, the patriarch became head of the fatherland for a time and had to care for State affairs. In the election of the future tsar his choice rested on Boris Godunov, who had protected him, and he did much to aid his ascension on the throne…”

However, Boris Godunov had been a member of the dreaded oprichnina from his youth, and had married the daughter of the murderer of St. Philip of Moscow, Maliuta Skouratov. He therefore represented that part of Russian society that had profited from the cruelty and lawlessness of Ivan the Terrible. Moreover, although he was the first Russian tsar to be crowned and anointed by a full patriarch (on September 1, 1598), and there was no serious resistance to his ascending the throne, he acted from the beginning as if not quite sure of his position, or as if seeking some confirmation of his position from the lower ranks of society. This was perhaps because he was not a direct descendant of the Rurik dynasty (he was brother-in-law of Tsar Theodore), perhaps because (according to the Chronograph of 1617) the dying Tsar Theodore had pointed to his mother’s nephew, Theodore Nikitich Romanov, the future patriarch, as his successor, perhaps because he had some dark crime on his conscience…

In any case, Boris decided upon an unprecedented act. He interrupted the liturgy of the coronation, as Stephen Graham writes, “to proclaim the equality of man. It was a striking interruption of the ceremony. The Cathedral of the Assumption was packed with a mixed assembly such as never could have found place at the coronation of a tsar of the blood royal. There were many nobles there, but cheek by jowl with them merchants, shopkeepers, even beggars. Boris suddenly took the arm of the holy Patriarch in his and declaimed in a loud voice: ‘Oh, holy father Patriarch Job, I call God to witness that during my reign there shall be neither poor man nor beggar in my realm, but I will share all with my fellows, even to the last rag that I wear.’ And in sign he ran his fingers over the jewelled vestments that he wore. There was an unprecedented scene in the cathedral, almost a revolutionary tableau when the common people massed within the precincts broke the disciplined majesty of the scene to applaud the speaker.”

130 Dobroklonsky, op.cit., p. 312.
131 Lebedev, op.cit., p. 105.
How different was this democratism from the self-confidence of Ivan the Terrible: “I perform my kingly task and consider no man higher than myself.” And again: “The Russian autocrats have from the beginning had possession of all the kingdoms, and not the boyars and grandees.” And again, this time to the (elected) king of Poland: “We, humble Ivan, tsar and great prince of all Rus’, by the will of God, and not by the stormy will of man....”

In fact, Ivan the Terrible’s attitude to his own power, at any rate in the first part of his reign, was much closer to the attitude of the Russian people as a whole than was Boris Godunov’s. For, as St. John Maximovich writes, “the Russian sovereigns were never tsars by the will of the people, but always remained Autocrats by the Mercy of God. They were sovereigns in accordance with the dispensation of God, and not according to the ‘multimutinous’ will of man.”

Sensing that Tsar Boris was not sure of his legitimacy, the people paid more heed to the rumours that he had murdered the Tsarevich Demetrius, the Terrible’s youngest son, in 1591. But then came news that a young man claiming to be Demetrius Ivanovich was marching at the head of a Polish army into Russia. If this man was truly Demetrius, then Boris was, of course, innocent of his murder. But paradoxically this only made his position more insecure; for in the eyes of the people the hereditary principle was higher than any other – an illegitimate but living son of Ivan the Terrible was more legitimate for them than Boris, even though he was an intelligent and experienced ruler, the right-hand man of two previous tsars, and fully supported by the Patriarch, who anathematised the false Demetrius and all those who followed him. Support for Boris collapsed, and in 1605 he died, after which Demetrius, who had promised the Pope to convert Russia to Catholicism, swept to power in Moscow.

How was such sedition against their tsar possible in a people that had patiently put up with the terrible Ivan? Solonevich, points to the importance that the Russian people attached to the legitimacy of their tsars, in sharp contrast to the apparent lack of concern for legitimacy which he claims to find among the Byzantines. “Thus in Byzantium out of 109 reigning emperors 74 ascended onto the throne by means of regicide. This apparently disturbed no one. In Russia in the 14th century Prince Demetrius Shemyaka tried to act on the Byzantine model and overthrow Great Prince Basil Vasilyevich – and suffered a complete defeat. The Church cursed Shemyaka, the boyars turned away from him, the masses did not follow him: the Byzantine methods turned out to be unprofitable. Something of this sort took place with Boris Godunov.

133 Quoted in Archbishop Seraphim, Russkaia Ideologia, op. cit., p. 64.
134 Quoted in Archbishop Seraphim, op. cit., p. 65.
The dynasty of the Terrible had disappeared, and Boris Godunov turned out to be his nearest relative. Neither the lawfulness of his election to the throne, nor his exceptional abilities as a statesman, can be doubted... With Boris Godunov everything, in essence, was in order, except for one thing: the shade of Tsarevich Demetrius."

This is an exaggeration: there were many things wrong with the reign of Boris Godunov, especially his encouragement of western heretics, and his introduction of mutual spying and denunciation. However, there is no doubt that it was Boris’s murder of the Tsarevich Demetrius, the lawful heir to the throne, that especially excited the people to rebel. For “who in Byzantium would have worried about the fate of a child killed twenty years earlier? There might created right, and might washed away sin. In Rus’ right created might, and sin remained sin.” Although these words exaggerate the contrast between Byzantium and Rus’, the point concerning the importance of legitimacy in Muscovy is well taken. “As regards who had to be tsar,” writes St. John Maximovich, “a tsar could hold his own on the throne only if the principle of legitimacy was observed, that is, the elected person was the nearest heir of his predecessor. The legitimate Sovereign was the basis of the state’s prosperity and was demanded by the spirit of the Russian people.”

The people were never sure of the legitimacy of Boris Godunov, so they rebelled against him. However, even if these doubts could excuse their rebellion against Boris (which is doubtful, since he was an anointed Tsar recognized by the Church), it did not excuse cruel murder of his son, Tsar Theodore Borisovich, still less their recognition of a series of usurpers in the next decade. Moreover, the lawless character of these rebellions has been compared, not without justice, to the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. First they accepted a real imposter, the false Demetrius – in reality a defrocked monk called Grishka Otrepev. In May, 1606, Prince Basil Shuisky led a successful rebellion against Demetrius, executed him and expelled the false patriarch Ignatius. He then called on Patriarch Job to come out of his enforced retirement, but he refused by reason of his blindness and old age. Another Patriarch was required; the choice fell of Metropolitan Hermogen of Kazan, who anointed Tsar Basil to the kingdom.

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136 Solonevich, op. cit., p. 81.
137 The cellarer of the Holy Trinity Monastery, Abraham Palitsyn, said that he was “a good pander to the heresies of the Armenians and Latins” (in Lebedev, op. cit.).
138 Solonevich, op. cit., p. 82.
141 According to Protopriest Lev Lebedev, Patriarch Job’s blindness and expulsion from his see were his punishment for lying during the Council of 1598 that Ivan the Terrible had “ordered” that Boris Godunov be crowned in the case of the death of his son Theodore, and for lying again in covering up Boris’ guilt in the murder of the Tsarevich Demetrius (op. cit., p. 112).
Wondrous is the Providence of God,” writes Protopriest Lev Lebedev, “in bringing him to the summit of ecclesiastical power at this terrible Time of Troubles… In 1579 he had been ordained to the priesthood in the St. Nicholas Gostinodvordsky church in Kazan. And in the same year a great miracle had taken place, the discovery of the Kazan icon of the Most Holy Theotokos. This was linked with a great fall in the faith of Christ in the new land, the mocking of the Orthodox by the Muslims for failures in harvest, fires and other woes. A certain girl, the daughter of a rifleman, through a vision in sleep discovered on the place of their burned-down house an icon of the Mother of God. Nobody knew when or by whom it had been placed in the ground. The icon began to work wonders and manifest many signs of special grace. The whole of Kazan ran to it as to a source of salvation and intercession from woes. The priest Hermogen was a witness of all this. He immediately wrote down everything that had taken place in connection with the wonderworking icon and with great fervour composed a narrative about it. The glory of the Kazan icon quickly spread through Russia, many copies were made from it, and some of these also became wonderworking. The Theotokos was called “the fervent defender of the Christian race” in this icon of Kazan. It was precisely this icon and Hermogen who had come to love it that the Lord decreed should deliver Moscow and Russia from the chaos of the Time of Troubles and the hands of the enemies. By the Providence of the Theotokos Hermogen was in 1589 appointed Metropolitan of Kazan for his righteous life, and in 1606 he became Patriarch of all Rus’.

“As his first work it was necessary for him to correct the wavering of the people in relation to the false Demetrius and free them from the oath (curse) they had given. A special strict fast was declared, after which, on February 20, 1607, public repentance began in the Dormition cathedral of the Kremlin. Patriarch Job repented of having hidden from the people the fact that the Tsarevich Demetrius had been killed ‘by the plotting of Boris’ and called everyone to repentance. Nun Martha [the mother of the Tsarevich Demetrius] repented that out of fear she had recognized the Imposter to be her son. The Muscovites wept and repented of having sworn to Boris Godunov and Grisha Otrepev. Two Patriarchs – Job and Hermogen – absolved everyone with a special prayer-declaration, which was read aloud by the archdeacon.

“However, by this time it was already the question of another Imposter – false Demetrius the second. He was an obvious adventurer. And knowing about this, Rome and certain people in Poland again supported him! The legend was as follows: ‘Tsar’ Demetrius had not been killed in Moscow, but had managed to flee (‘he was miraculously saved’ for the second time!). And again Cossack detachments from Little Russia, the Don and Ukraine attached themselves to him. Again quite a few Russian people believed the lie, for they very much wanted to have a ‘real’, ‘born’ Tsar, as they put it at that time, who in the eyes of many could only be a direct descendant of Ivan IV. Marina
Mnishek [the wife of the first false Demetrius] ‘recognized’ her lawful husband in the second false Demetrius. However, her spiritual father, a Jesuit, considered it necessary to marry her to the new Imposter; the Jesuit knew that he was not the same who had been killed in Moscow, but another false Demetrius... Certain secret instructions from Rome to those close to the new Imposter have been preserved. Essentially they come down to ordering them gradually but steadily to bring about the unia of the Russian Church with the Roman Church, and her submission to the Pope. In 1608 the second false Demetrius entered Russia and soon came near to Moscow, encamping at Tushino. For that reason he was then called ‘the Tushino thief’. ‘Thief’ in those days mean a state criminal (those who steal things were then called robbers). Marinka gave birth to a son from the second false Demetrius. The people immediately called the little child ‘the thieflet’. Moscow closed its gates. Only very few troops still remained for the defence of the city. A great wavering of hearts and minds arose. Some princes and boyars ran from Moscow to the ‘thief’ in Tushino and back again. Not having the strength to wage a major war, Tsar Basil Shuisky asked the Swedish King Carl IX to help him. In this he made a great mistake... Carl of Sweden and Sigismund of Poland were at that time warring for the throne of Sweden. By calling on the Swedes for help, Shuisky was placing Russia in the position of a military opponent of Poland, which she used, seeing the Troubles in the Russian Land, to declare war on Russia. Now the Polish king’s army under a ‘lawful’ pretext entered the Muscovite Kingdom. The Imposter was not needed by the Poles and was discarded by them. Sigismund besieged Smolensk, while a powerful army under Zholevsky went up to Moscow. The boyars who were not contented with Shuisky removed him from the throne (forced him to abdicate) in July, 1610. But whom would they now place as Tsar? This depended to a large extent on the boyars.

“O Great Russian princes and boyars! How much you tried from early times to seize power in the State! Now there is no lawful Tsar, now, it would seem, you have received the fullness of power. Now is the time for you to show yourselves, to show what you are capable of! And you have shown it...

“A terrible difference of opinions began amidst the government, which consisted of seven boyars and was called the ‘semiboyarschina’. Patriarch Hermogen immediately suggested calling to the kingdom the 14-year-old ‘Misha Romanov’, as he called him. But they didn’t listen to the Patriarch. They discussed Poland’s suggestion of placing the son of King Sigismund, Vladislav, on the Muscovite Throne. The majority of boyars agreed. The gates of Moscow were opened to the Poles and they occupied Chinatown and the Kremlin with their garrison. But at the same time a huge Polish army besieged the monastery of St. Sergius, ‘the Abbot of the Russian Land’, the Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra, but after a 16-month siege they were not able to take

142 The Zemsky Sobor of 1613 called this act “a common sin of the land, committed out of the envy of the devil”. (Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., vol. I, p. 255). (V.M.)
Patriarch Germogen was ready to agree to having the crown-prince Vladislav, but under certain conditions. Vladislav would be immediately, near Smolensk, baptised into the Orthodox Faith. He would take for a wife only a virgin of the Orthodox Confession. The Poles would leave Russia, and all the Russia apostates who had become Catholic or uniates would be executed. There would never be any negotiations between Moscow and Rome about the faith. An embassy was sent from near Smolensk to Sigismund for negotiations about the succession to the Throne. The spiritual head of the embassy was Metropolitan Philaret Nikitich Romanov of Rostov, who had been taken out of exile and then consecrated to the episcopate under Tsar Basil Shuisky. But at the same time Patriarch Germogen did not cease to exhort the Tushintsy who were still with the thief near Moscow, calling on them to be converted, repent and cease destroying the Fatherland.

“However, it turned out that Sigismund himself wanted to be on the Throne of Moscow... But this was a secret. The majority of the boyars agreed to accept even that, referring to the fact that the Poles were already in Moscow, while the Russians had no army with which to defend the country from Poland. A declaration was composed in which it was said that the Muscovite government ‘would be given to the will of the king’. The members of the government signed it. It was necessary that Patriarch Germogen should also give his signature. At this point Prince Michael Saltykov came to him. The head of the Russian Church replied: ‘No! I will put my signature to a declaration that the king should give his son to the Muscovite state, and withdraw all the king’s men from Moscow, that Vladislav should abandon the Latin heresy, and accept the Greek faith... But neither I nor the other (ecclesiastical) authorities will write that we should all rely on the king’s will and that our ambassadors should be placed in the will of the king, and I order you not to do it. It is clear that with such a declaration we would have to kiss the cross to the king himself.’ Saltykov took hold of a knife and moved towards the Patriarch. He made the sign of the cross over Saltykov and said: ‘I do not fear your knife, I protect myself from it by the power of the Cross of Christ. But may you be cursed from our humility both in this age and in the age to come!’ Nevertheless, in December, 1611 the boyars brought the declaration to near Smolensk, to the Russian ambassadors who were there.”

The boyars nearly produced a Russian Magna Carta, as Geoffrey Hosking explains: “They presented King Sigismund with a set of conditions on which they were prepared to accept his son Wladyslaw as Tsar. The first was that the Orthodox faith should remain inviolate. Then came stipulations on the rights of individual estates, for example, not to be punished or to have property confiscated without trial before a properly constituted court, not to be demoted from a high chin [rank] without clear and demonstrable fault. The document implied a state structure in which supreme authority would be shared with a combined boyar assembly and zemskii sobor (duma boiar i

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143 Lebedev, op. cit., pp. 118-121.
with which questions of taxes, salaries of service trimonial and service estates would be decided. Such a document might have laid for the basis for a constitutional Muscovite monarchy in personal union with Poland.”

The Patriarch’s authority was enough to scupper the plans of the Poles and the Russian boyars. For when the latter brought the document to the Poles at Smolensk, where a Russian embassy led by Metropolitan Philaret of Rostov had been for some time, then, “on not seeing the signature of the Patriarch on the document, the ambassadors replied to our boyars that the declaration was unlawful. They objected: ‘The Patriarch must not interfere in affairs of the land’. The ambassadors said: ‘From the beginning affairs were conducted as follows in our Russian State: if great affairs of State or of the land are begun, then our majesties summoned a council of patriarchs, metropolitans, archbishops and conferred with them. Without their advice nothing was decreed. And our majesties revere the patriarchs with great honour... And before them were the metropolitans. Now we are without majesties, and the patriarch is our leader (that is – the main person in the absence of the Tsar). It is now unfitting to confer upon such a great matter without the patriarch... It is now impossible for us to act without patriarchal declarations, and only with those of the boyars...’

“The agreement with Sigismund and the transfer of the Muscovite Kingdom into his power did not take place... That is what such a mere ‘detail’ as a signature sometimes means – or rather, in the given case, the absence of a signature!

“This gave a spiritual and lawful basis (in prevision of fresh boyar betrayals) for the Russian cities to begin corresponding with each other with the aim of deciding how to save Moscow and the Fatherland. In this correspondence the name of Patriarch Hermogen was often mentioned, for he was ‘straight as a real pastor, who lays down his life for the Christian Faith’. The inhabitants of Yaroslavl wrote to the citizens of Kazan: ‘Hermogen has stood up for the Faith and Orthodoxy, and has ordered all of us to stand to the end. If he had not done this wondrous deed, everything would have perished.’ And truly Russia, which so recently had been on the point of taking Poland at the desire of the Poles, was now a hair’s-breadth away from becoming the dominion of Poland (and who knows for how long a time!). Meanwhile Patriarch Hermogen began himself to write to all the cities, calling on Russia to rise up to free herself. The letter-declarations stirred up the people, they had great power. The Poles demanded that he write to the cities and call on them not to go to Moscow to liberate it from those who had seized it. At this point Michael Saltykov again came to Hermogen. ‘I will write,’ replied the Patriarch, ‘... but only on condition that you and the traitors with you and the people of the king leave Moscow... I see the mocking of the true

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144 Hosking, op. cit., p. 60.
faith by heretics and by you traitors, and the destruction of the holy Churches near the Latin chanting in Moscow’. Hermogen was imprisoned in the Chudov monastery and they began to starve him to death. But the voice of the Church did not fall silent. The brothers of the Trinity-St. Sergius monastery headed by Archimandrite Dionysius also began to send their appeals to the cities to unite in defence of the Fatherland. The people’s levies moved towards Moscow. The first meeting turned out to be unstable. Quite a few predatory Cossacks took part in it, for example the cossacks of Ataman Zarutsky. Quarrels and disputes, sometimes bloody ones, took place between the levies. Lyapunov, the leader of the Ryazan forces, was killed. This levy looted the population more than it warred with the Poles. Everything changed when the second levy, created through the efforts of Nizhni-Novgorod merchant Cosmas Minin Sukhorukov and Prince Demetrius Pozharsky, moved towards the capital. As we know, Minin, when stirring up the people to make sacrifices for the levy, called on them, if necessary, to sell their wives and children and mortgage their properties, but to liberate the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of the Dormition of the All-Holy Theotokos, where there was the Vladimir icon and the relics of the great Russian Holy Hierarchs (that is, he was talking about the Dormition cathedral of the Kremlin!) That, it seems, was the precious thing that was dear to the inhabitants of Nizhni, Ryazan, Yaroslavl, Kazan and the other cities of Russia and for the sake of which they were ready to sell their wives and lay down their lives! That means that the Dormition cathedral was at that time that which we could call as it were the geographical centre of patriotism of Russia!

“On the advice of Patriarch Hermogen, the holy Kazan icon of the Mother of God was taken into the levy of Minin and Pozharsky.

“In the autumn of 1612 the second levy was already near Moscow. But it did not succeed in striking through to the capital. Their strength was ebbing away. Then the levies laid upon themselves a strict three-day fast and began earnestly to pray to the Heavenly Queen before her Kazan icon. At this time Bishop Arsenius, a Greek by birth, who was living in a monastery in the Kremlin, and who had come to us in 1588 with Patriarch Jeremiah, after fervent prayer saw in a subtle sleep St. Sergius. The abbot of the Russian Land told Arsenius that ‘by the prayers of the Theotokos judgement on our Fatherland has been turned to mercy, and that tomorrow Moscow will be in the hands of the levy and Russia will be saved!’ News of this vision of Arsenius was immediately passed to the army of Pozharsky, which enormously encouraged them. They advanced to a decisive attack and on October 22, 1612 took control of a part of Moscow and Chinatown. Street fighting in which the inhabitants took part began. In the fire and smoke it was difficult to distinguish friend from foe. On October 27 the smoke began to disperse. The Poles surrendered....
Patriarch Hermogen did not live to this radiant day. On February 17, 1612 he had died from hunger in the Chudov monastery. In 1912 he was numbered with the saints, and his relics reside to this day in the Dormition cathedral of the Kremlin.

“Thus at the end of 1612 the Time of Troubles came to an end. Although detachments of Poles, Swedes, robbers and Cossacks continued to wander around Russia. After the death of the second false Demetrius Marina Mnishek got together with Zarutsky, who still tried to fight, but was defeated. Marinka died in prison... But the decisive victory was won then, in 1612!”

In the Time of Troubles the best representatives of the Russian people, in the persons of the holy Patriarchs Job and Hermogen, stood courageously for those Tsars who had been lawfully anointed by the Church and remained loyal to the Orthodox faith, regardless of their personal virtues or vices. Conversely, they refused to recognise (even at the cost of their sees and their lives) the pretenders to the tsardom who did not satisfy these conditions – again, regardless of their personal qualities. Most of the Russian clergy accepted the first false Demetrius. But “in relation to the second false Demetrius,” writes Protopriest Lev Lebedev, “[they] conducted themselves more courageously. Bishops Galaction of Suzdal and Joseph of Kolomna suffered for their non-acceptance of the usurper. Archbishop Theoctistus of Tver received a martyrlic death in Tushino. Dressed only in a shirt, the bare-footed Metropolitan Philaret of Rostov, the future patriarch, was brought by the Poles into the camp of the usurper, where he remained in captivity. Seeing such terrible events, Bishop Gennadius of Pskov ‘died of sorrow…”

There were other champions of the faith: the monks of Holy Trinity – St. Sergius Lavra, who heroically resisted a long Polish siege, and the hermits St. Galaction of Vologda and Irinarchus of Rostov, who were both martyred by the Latins. Thus in the life of the latter we read: “Once there came into the elder’s cell a Polish noble, Pan Mikulinsky with other Pans. ‘In whom do you believe?’ he asked. ‘I believe in the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit!’ ‘And what earthly king do you have?’ The elder replied in a loud voice: ‘I have the Russian Tsar Basil Ioannovich [Shuisky]. I live in Russia, I have a Russian tsar – I have nobody else!’ One of the Pans said: ‘You, elder, are a traitor; you believe neither in our king, nor in [the second false] Demetrius!’ The elder replied: ‘I do not fear your sword, which is corruptible, and I will not betray my faith in the Russian Tsar. If you cut me off for that, then I will suffer it with joy. I have a little blood in me for you, but my Living God has a sword which will cut you off invisibly, without flesh or blood, and He will send your souls into eternal torment!’ And Pan Mikulinsky was amazed at the great faith of the elder…”

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145 Lebedev, op. cit., pp. 121-123.
147 The Life of St. Irinarchus, in Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., pp. 16-17.
18th centuries showed without a doubt which principle: Russian Orthodox Autocracy or Polish Elective Monarchy. Thus while Russia went from strength to strength, finally liberating all the Russian lands from the oppressive tyranny of the Poles, Poland grew weaker under its powerless elective monarchy. Finally, by the end of the eighteenth century it had ceased to exist as an independent State, being divided up three ways between Prussia, Austria and Russia...

At the beginning of February, 1613, a Zemsky Sobor was assembled in Moscow in order to elect a Tsar for the widowed Russian land. In accordance with pious tradition, it began with a three-day fast and prayer to invoke God’s blessing on the assembly. “At the first conciliar session,” writes Hieromartyr Nicon, Archbishop of Vologda, “it was unanimously decided: ‘not to elect anyone of other foreign faiths, but to elect our own native Russian’. They began to elect their own; some pointed to one boyar, others to another… A certain nobleman from Galich presented a written opinion that the closest of all to the previous tsars by blood was Mikhail Fyodorovich Romanov: he should be elected Tsar. They remembered that the reposed Patriarch had mentioned this name. An ataman from the Don gave the same opinion. And Mikhail Fyodorovich was proclaimed Tsar. But not all the elected delegates had yet arrived in Moscow, nor any of the most eminent boyars, and the matter was put off for another two weeks. Finally, they all assembled on February 21, on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, and by a common vote confirmed this choice. Then Archbishop Theodoritus of Ryazan, the cellarer Abraham Palitsyn of the Holy Trinity Monastery and the boyar Morozov came out onto the place of the skull and asked the people who were filling Red Square: ’Who do you want for Tsar?’ And the people unanimously exclaimed: ‘Mikhail Fyodorovich Romanov!’ And the Council appointed Archbishop Theodoritus, Abraham Palitsyn, three archimandrites and several notable boyars to go to the newly elected Tsar to ask him to please come to the capital city of Moscow to his Tsarist throne.”

It was with great difficulty that the delegation persuaded the adolescent boy and his mother, the nun Martha, to accept the responsibility. She at first refused, pointing to the fickleness of the Muscovites in relation to their tsars, the devastation of the kingdom, the youth of her son, the fact that his father was in captivity, her own fears of revenge… But in the end they succeeded. Then, in recognition of the fact that it was largely the nation’s betrayal of legitimate autocratic authority that had led to the Time of Troubles, the delegates at this Sobor swore eternal loyalty to Michael Romanov and his descendants, promising to sacrifice themselves body and soul in his service against external enemies, “Poles, Germans and the Crimeans”. Moreover,

momselves if they should ever break this oath. In
February, 1917 the people of Russia broke their oath to the House of Romanov
by their betrayal of Tsar Nicholas II. The curse duly fell upon them in
the form of the horrors of Soviet power...

“The outcome,” writes Lebedev, “suggested that Russians identified
themselves with strong authority, backed by the Orthodox Church and
unrestrained by any charter or covenant, such as might prove divisive and set
one social group against another... The zemlia had for the first time
constituted itself as a reality, based on elective local government institutions,
and had chosen a new master...”149 For, as Pozharsky said in 1612, “we know
that unless we possess a monarch we can neither fight our common enemies –
Poles, Lithuanians, Germans, nor our own brigands, who threaten the State
with further bloodshed. Without a monarch how can we maintain relations
with foreign states, or preserve the stability and strength of our country?”150

“The Time of Troubles,” writes Lebedev, “illuminated the profound basis
of the interrelationship of ecclesiastical and royal power. This problem was
reflected, as if in magnifying glass, in the above-mentioned quarrels of the
Russian ambassadors with regard to the absence of Patriarch Hermogen’s
signature on the document of the capitulation of Russia. It turns out that both
the Russian hierarchs and the best statesmen understood the relationship of
the tsar and the patriarch in a truly Christian, communal sense. In the one
great Orthodox society of Russia there are two leaders: a spiritual (the
patriarch) and a secular (the tsar). They are both responsible for all that takes
place in society, but each in his own way: the tsar first of all for civil affairs
(although he can also take a very active and honourable part in ecclesiastical
affairs when that is necessary), while the patriarch is first of all responsible for
ecclesiastical, spiritual affairs (although he can also, when necessary, take a
most active part in state affairs). The tsars take counsel with the patriarchs,
the patriarchs – with the tsars in all the most important questions. Traditionally the patriarch is an obligatory member of the boyars’ Duma
government). If there is no tsar, then the most important worldly affairs are
decided only with the blessing of the patriarch. If in the affair of the
establishment of the patriarchate in Russia it was the royal power that was
basically active, in the Time of Troubles the royal power itself and the whole
of Russia were saved by none other than the Russian patriarchs! Thus the
troubles very distinctly demonstrated that the Russian ecclesiastical
authorities were not, and did not think of themselves as being, a 'legally
obedient' arm of the State power, as some (A.V. Kartashev) would have it. It
can remain and did remain in agreement with the State power in those affairs
in which this was possible from an ecclesiastical point of view, and to the
extent that this was possible.

149 Lebedev, Moskva Patriarshaia, op. cit., pp. 63, 64.
150 Pozharsky, in Arsène de Goulévitch, Czarism and Revolution, Hawthorne, Ca.: Omni
Publications, 1962, p. 34.
In this question it was important that neither side should try to seize for itself the prerogatives of the other side, that is, should not be a usurper, for usurpation can be understood not only in the narrow sense, but also in the broad sense of the general striving to become that which you are not by law, to assume for yourself those functions which do not belong to you by right. It is amazing that in those days there was no precise juridical, written law (‘right’) concerning the competence and mutual relations of the royal and ecclesiastical powers. Relations were defined by the spiritual logic of things and age-old tradition…”

And so, with the enthronement of the first Romanov tsar, Muscovy was established on the twin pillars of the Orthodox Faith and the Dynastic Principle. The requirement of Orthodoxy had been passed down from the Byzantines. Hereditary Succession was not a requirement in Rome or Byzantium (which is one reason why so many Byzantine emperors were assassinated); but in Russia, as in some Western Orthodox autocracies (for example, the Anglo-Saxon), it had always been felt to be a necessity.

Both pillars had been shaken during the Time of Troubles, after the death of the last Ryurik tsar. But Orthodoxy had been restored above all by the holy Patriarchs Job and Hermogen refusing to recognise a Catholic tsar, and then by the national army of liberation that drove out the Poles. And the Hereditary Principle, already tacitly accepted if mistakenly applied by the people when they followed the false Demetrius, had been affirmed by all the estates of the nation at the Zemsky Sobor in 1613.

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151 Lebedev, Moskva Patriarshaia, op. cit., pp. 18-19.
Since the hereditary principle is commonly considered to be irrational as placing the government of the State “at the mercy of chance”, it will be worth pausing to consider its significance in Russian Orthodox statehood.

First, after electing the first Romanov tsar, the people retained no right to depose him or any of his successors. On the contrary, they elected a hereditary dynasty, and specifically bound themselves by an oath to be loyal to that dynasty forever. Secondly, while the Zemsky Sobor of 1613 was, of course, an election, it was by no means a democratic election in the modern sense, but rather a recognition of God’s election of a ruler on the model of the Israelites’ election of Jephtha (Judges 11.11). For, as Fr. Lev Lebedev writes: “Tsars are not elected! And a Council, even a Zemsky Sobor, cannot be the source of his power. The kingdom is a calling of God, the Council can determine who is the lawful Tsar and summon him.”

Again, as Solonevich writes, “when, after the Time of Troubles, the question was raised concerning the restoration of the monarchy, there was no hint of an ‘election to the kingdom’. There was a ‘search’ for people who had the greatest hereditary right to the throne. And not an ‘election’ of the more worthy. There were not, and could not be, any ‘merits’ in the young Michael Fyodorovich. But since only the hereditary principle affords the advantage of absolutely indisputability, it was on this that the ‘election’ was based.”

St. John Maximovich writes: “It was almost impossible to elect some person as tsar for his qualities; everyone evaluated the candidates from his own point of view. . . .

“What drew the hearts of all to Michael Romanov? He had neither experience of statecraft, nor had he done any service to the state. He was not distinguished by the state wisdom of Boris Godunov or by the eminence of his race, as was Basil Shuiisky. He was sixteen years old, and ‘Misha Romanov’, as he was generally known, had not yet managed to show his worth in anything. But why did the Russian people rest on him, and why with his crowning did all the quarrels and disturbances regarding the royal throne come to an end? The Russian people longed for a lawful, ‘native’ Sovereign, and was convinced that without him there could be no order or peace in Russia. When Boris Godunov and Prince Basil Shuiisky were elected, although they had, to a certain degree, rights to the throne through their kinship with the previous tsars, they were not elected by reason of their exclusive rights, but their personalities were taken into account. There was no strict lawful succession in their case. This explained the success of the

152 Lebedev, Velikorossia, op. cit., p. 126.
153 Solonevich, op. cit., pp. 82-83.
almost impossible to elect someone as tsar for his qualities. Everyone evaluated the candidates from their point of view. However, the absence of a definite law which would have provided an heir in the case of the cutting off of the line of the Great Princes and Tsars of Moscow made it necessary for the people itself to indicate who they wanted as tsar. The descendants of the appanage princes, although they came from the same race as that of the Moscow Tsars (and never forgot that), were in the eyes of the people simple noblemen, ‘serfs’ of the Moscow sovereigns; their distant kinship with the royal line had already lost its significance. Moreover, it was difficult to establish precisely which of the descendants of St. Vladimir on the male side had the most grounds for being recognised as the closest heir to the defunct royal line. In such circumstances all united in the suggestion that the extinct Royal branch should be continued by the closest relative of the last ‘native’, lawful Tsar. The closest relatives of Tsar Theodore Ioannovich were his cousins on his mother’s side: Theodore, in monasticism Philaret, and Ivan Nikitich Romanov, both of whom had sons. In that case the throne had to pass to Theodore, as the eldest, but his monasticism and the rank of Metropolitan of Rostov was an obstacle to this. His heir was his only son Michael. Thus the question was no longer about the election of a Tsar, but about the recognition that a definite person had the rights to the throne. The Russian people, tormented by the time of troubles and the lawlessness, welcomed this decision, since it saw that order could be restored only by a lawful ‘native’ Tsar. The people remembered the services of the Romanovs to their homeland, their sufferings for it, the meek Tsaritsa Anastasia Romanova, the firmness of Philaret Nikitich. All this still more strongly attracted the hearts of the people to the announced tsar. But these qualities were possessed also by some other statesmen and sorrowers for Rus’. And this was not the reason for the election of Tsar Michael Romanovich, but the fact that in him Rus’ saw their most lawful and native Sovereign.

“In the acts on the election to the kingdom of Michael Fyodorovich, the idea that he was ascending the throne by virtue of his election by the people was carefully avoided, and it was pointed out that the new Tsar was the elect of God, the direct descendant of the last lawful Sovereign.”

The hereditary tsar’s rule is inviolable. As Metropolitan Philaret writes: “A government that is not fenced about by an inviolability that is venerated religiously by the whole people cannot act with the whole fullness of power or that freedom of zeal that is necessary for the construction and preservation of the public good and security. How can it develop its whole strength in its most beneficial direction, when its power constantly finds itself in an insecure position, struggling with other powers that cut short its actions in as many different directions as are the opinions, prejudices and passions more or less dominant in society? How can it surrender itself to the full force of its zeal, when it must of necessity divide its attentions between care for the prosperity

Its own security? But if the government is so State is also lacking in firmness. Such a State is mountain: what significance does its hard earth have when under it is hidden a power that can at any minute turn everything into ruins? Subjects who do not recognise the inviolability of rulers are incited by the hope of licence to achieve licence and predominance, and between the horrors of anarchy and oppression they cannot establish in themselves that obedient freedom which is the focus and soul of public life.

In general, the hereditary autocrat is above the law so long as he does not transgress that unwritten law which defines the very essence of the Orthodox hereditary monarchy. For, as Solonevich writes: “The most fundamental idea of the Russian monarchy was most vividly and clearly expressed by A.S. Pushkin just before the end of his life: ‘There must be one person standing higher than everybody, higher even than the law.’ In this formulation, ‘one man’, Man is placed in very big letters above the law. This formulation is completely unacceptable for the Roman-European cast of mind, for which the law is everything: dura lex, sed lex. The Russian cast of mind places, man, mankind, the soul higher than the law, giving to the law only that place which it should occupy: the place occupied by traffic rules. Of course, with corresponding punishments for driving on the left side. Man is not for the sabbath, but the sabbath for man. It is not that man is for the fulfilment of the law, but the law is for the preservation of man...

“The whole history of humanity is filled with the struggle of tribes, people, nations, classes, estates, groups, parties, religions and whatever you like. It’s almost as Hobbes put it: ‘War by everyone against everyone’. How are we to find a neutral point of support in this struggle? An arbiter standing above the tribes, nations, peoples, classes, estates, etc.? Uniting the people, classes and religions into a common whole? Submitting the interests of the part to the interests of the whole? And placing moral principles above egoism, which is always characteristic of every group of people pushed forward the summit of public life?”

The idea that the tsar is higher than the law, while remaining subject to the law of God, is also defended by Metropolitan Philaret: “The tsar, rightly understood, is the head and soul of the kingdom. But, you object to me, the soul of the State must be the law. The law is necessary, it is worthy of honour, faithful; but the law in charters and books is a dead letter... The law, which is dead in books, comes to life in acts; and the supreme State actor and exciter and inspirer of the subject actors is the Tsar.”

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156 Solonevich, op. cit., pp. 84, 85.
But if the tsar is above the law, how can he not be a tyrant, insofar as, in the famous words of Lord Acton, “power corrupts, and absolute power absolutely corrupts”?

First, as we have seen, the tsar’s power is not absolute insofar as he is subject to the law of God and the fundamental laws of the kingdom, which the Church is called upon to defend. Secondly, it is not only tsars, but rulers of all kinds that are subject to the temptations of power. Indeed, these temptations may even be worse with democratic rulers; for whereas the tsar stands above all factional interests, an elected president necessarily represents the interests only of his party at the expense of the country as a whole. “Western thought,” writes Solonevich, “sways from the dictatorship of capitalism to the dictatorship of the proletariat, but no representative of this thought has even so much as thought of ‘the dictatorship of conscience’.”

“The distinguishing characteristic of Russian monarchy, which was given to it at its birth, consists in the fact that the Russian monarchy expressed the will not of the most powerful, but the will of the whole nation, religiously given shape by Orthodoxy and politically given shape by the Empire. The will of the nation, religiously given shape by Orthodoxy will be ‘the dictatorship of conscience’. Only in this way can we explain the possibility of the manifesto of February 19, 1861 [when Tsar Alexander II freed the peasants]: ‘the dictatorship of conscience’ was able overcome the terribly opposition of the ruling class, and the ruling class proved powerless. We must always have this distinction in mind: the Russian monarchy is the expression of the will, that is: the conscience, of the nation, not the will of the capitalists, which both French Napoleons expressed, or the will of the aristocracy, which all the other monarchies of Europe expressed: the Russian monarchy is the closes approximation to the ideal of monarchy in general. This ideal was never attained by the Russian monarchy – for the well-known reason that no ideal is realisable in our life. In the history of the Russian monarchy, as in the whole of our world, there were periods of decline, of deviation, of failure, but there were also periods of recovery such as world history has never known.”

Now State power, which, like power in the family or the tribe, always includes in itself an element of coercion, “is constructed in three ways: by inheritance, by election and by seizure: monarchy, republic, dictatorship. In practice all of these change places: the man who seizes power becomes a hereditary monarch (Napoleon I), the elected president becomes the same (Napoleon III), or tries to become it (Oliver Cromwell). The elected ‘chancellor’, Hitler, becomes a seizer of power. But in general these are nevertheless exceptions.

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158 Solonevich, op. cit., pp. 85-86.
159 Solonevich, op. cit., p. 86.
Both a republic and a dictatorship presuppose a struggle for power – and necessarily bloody in the second: Stalin - Hitler-Röhm. In a republic, as a rule, the struggle is unbloody. However, even an unbloody struggle is not completely without cost. Aristide Briand, who became French Prime Minister several times, admitted that 95% of his strength was spent on the struggle for power and only five percent on the work of power. And even this five percent was exceptionally short-lived.

“Election and seizure are, so to speak, rationalist methods. Hereditary power is, strictly speaking, the power of chance, indisputable if only because the chance of birth is completely indisputable. You can recognise or not recognise the principle of monarchy in general. But no one can deny the existence of the positive law presenting the right of inheriting the throne to the first son of the reigning monarch. Having recourse to a somewhat crude comparison, this is something like an ace in cards... An ace is an ace. No election, no merit, and consequently no quarrel. Power passes without quarrel and pain: the king is dead, long live the king!”

We may interrupt Solonevich’s argument here to qualify his use of the word “chance”. The fact that a man inherits the throne only because he is the firstborn of his father may be “by chance” from a human point of view. But from the Divine point of view it is election. For, as Bishop Ignatius Brianchaninov writes: “There is no blind chance! God rules the world, and everything that takes place in heaven and beneath the heavens takes place according to the judgement of the All-wise and All-powerful God.” Moreover, as Bishop Ignatius also writes, “in blessed Russia, according to the spirit of the pious people, the Tsar and the fatherland constitute one whole, as in a family the parents and their children constitute one whole.” This being so, it was only natural that the law of succession should be hereditary, from father to son.

Solonevich continues: “The human individual, born by chance as heir to the throne, is placed in circumstances which guarantee him the best possible professional preparation from a technical point of view. His Majesty Emperor Nicholas Alexandrovich was probably one of the most educated people of his time. The best professors of Russia taught him both law and strategy and history and literature. He spoke with complete freedom in three foreign languages. His knowledge was not one-sided... and was, if one can so express it, living knowledge...
The Russian tsar was in charge of everything and was obliged to know everything, as far as humanly possible. He was a specialist in that sphere which excludes all specialization. This was a specialism standing above all the specialisms of the world and embracing them all. That is, the general volume of erudition of the Russian monarch had in mind that which every philosophy has in mind: the concentration in one point of the whole sum of human knowledge. However, with this colossal qualification, that ‘the sum of knowledge’ of the Russian tsars grew in a seamless manner from the living practice of the past and was checked against the living practice of the present. True, that is how almost all philosophy is checked – for example, with Robespierre, Lenin and Hitler – but, fortunately for humanity, such checking takes place comparatively rarely.

“The heir to the Throne, later the possessor of the Throne, is placed in such conditions under which temptations are reduced… to a minimum. He is given everything he needs beforehand. At his birth he receives an order, which he, of course, did not manage to earn, and the temptation of vainglory is liquidated in embryo. He is absolutely provided for materially – the temptation of avarice is liquidated in embryo. He is the only one having the Right – and so competition falls away, together with everything linked with it. Everything is organised in such a way that the personal destiny of the individual should be welded together into one whole with the destiny of the nation. Everything that a person would want to have for himself is already given him. And the person automatically merges with the general good.

“One could say that all this is possessed also by a dictator of the type of Napoleon, Stalin or Hitler. But this would be less than half true: everything that the dictator has he conquered, and all this he must constantly defend – both against competitors and against the nation. The dictator is forced to prove every day that it is precisely he who is the most brilliant, great, greatest and inimitable, for if not he, but someone else, is not the most brilliant, then it is obvious that that other person has the right to power…

“We can, of course, quarrel over the very principle of ‘chance’. A banally rationalist, pitifully scientific point of view is usually formulated thus: the chance of birth may produce a defective man. But we, we will elect the best… Of course, ‘the chance of birth’ can produce a defective man. We have examples of this: Tsar Theodore Ivanovich. Nothing terrible happened. For the monarchy ‘is not the arbitrariness of a single man’, but ‘a system of institutions’, - a system can operate temporarily even without a ‘man’. But simple statistics show that the chances of such ‘chance’ events occurring are very small. And the chance of ‘a genius on the throne’ appearing is still smaller.

“I proceed from the axiom that a genius in politics is worse than the plague. For a genius is a person who thinks up something that is new in
something that is new in principle, he invades the old cripples it, as it was crippled by Napoleon,

“The power of the tsar is the power of the average, averagely clever man over two hundred million average, averagely clever people... V. Klyuchevsky said with some perplexity that the first Muscovite princes, the first gatherers of the Russian land, were completely average people: - and yet, look, they gathered the Russian land. This is quite simple: average people have acted in the interests of average people and the line of the nation has coincided with the line of power. So the average people of the Novgorodian army went over to the side of the average people of Moscow, while the average people of the USSR are running away in all directions from the genius of Stalin.”

Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow expressed the superiority of the hereditary over the elective principle as follows: “What conflict does election for public posts produce in other peoples! With what conflict, and sometimes also with what alarm do they attain the legalisation of the right of public election! Then there begins the struggle, sometimes dying down and sometimes rising up again, sometimes for the extension and sometimes for the restriction of this right. The incorrect extension of the right of social election is followed by its incorrect use. It would be difficult to believe it if we did not read in foreign newspapers that elective votes are sold; that sympathy or lack of sympathy for those seeking election is expressed not only by votes for and votes against, but also by sticks and stones, as if a man can be born from a beast, and rational business out of the fury of the passions; that ignorant people make the choice between those in whom wisdom of state is envisaged, lawless people participate in the election of future lawgivers, peasants and craftsmen discuss and vote, not about who could best keep order in the village or the society of craftsmen, but about who is capable of administering the State.

“Thanks be to God! It is not so in our fatherland. Autocratic power, established on the age-old law of heredity, which once, at a time of impoverished heredity, was renewed and strengthened on its former basis by a pure and rational election, stands in inviolable firmness and acts with calm majesty. Its subjects do not think of striving for the right of election to public posts in the assurance that the authorities care for the common good and know through whom and how to construct it.”

“God, in accordance with the image of His heavenly single rule, has established a tsar on earth; in accordance with the image of His almighty power, He has established an autocratic tsar; in accordance with the image of

His everlasting Kingdom, which continues from age to age, He has established a hereditary tsar.

We may now define more precisely why the hereditary principle was considered by the Russian people to be not simply superior to the elective principle, but as far superior to it as heaven is to the earth. For while an elected president is installed by the will of man, and can be said to be installed by the will of God only indirectly, by permission, but not actively; the determination of who will be born as the heir to the throne is completely beyond the power of man, and so entirely within the power of God. The hereditary principle therefore ensures that the tsar will indeed be elected – but by God, not by man.

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The first Romanov tsar, Michael Fyodorovich, had his own natural father, Philaret Nikitich, as his Patriarch. This unusual relationship, in which both took the title “Great Sovereign”, was profoundly significant in the context of the times. It was “unique,” according to Lebedev, “not only for Russian history, but also for the universal history of the Church, when a natural father and son become the two heads of a single Orthodox power!” And it was highly significant in that it showed what the relationship between the heads of the Church and the State should be – a filial one of mutual trust and love.

The sixteenth century had seen the power of the tsar, in the person of Ivan the Terrible, leaning dangerously towards caesaropapism in practice, if not in theory. However, the Time of Troubles had demonstrated how critically the Orthodox Autocracy depended on the legitimizing and sanctifying power of the Church. In disobedience to her, the people had broken their oath of allegiance to the legitimate tsar and plunged the country into anarchy; but in penitent obedience to her, they had succeeded in finally driving out the invaders. The election of the tsar’s father to the patriarchal see both implicitly acknowledged this debt of the Autocracy and People to the Church, and indicated that while the Autocracy was now re-established in all its former power and inviolability, the tsar being answerable to God alone for his actions in the political sphere, nevertheless he received his sanction and sanctification from the Church in the person of the Patriarch, who was as superior to him in his sphere, the sphere of the Spirit, as a father is to his son, and who, as the Zemsky Sobor of 1619 put it, “for this reason [i.e. because he was father of the tsar] is to be a helper and builder for the kingdom, a defender for widows and intercessor for the wronged.”

Patriarch Philaret’s firm hand was essential in holding the still deeply shaken State together. As Dobroklosky writes: “The Time of Troubles had shaken the structure of the State in Russia, weakening discipline and unleashing arbitrariness; the material situation of the country demanded improvements that could not be put off. On ascending the throne, Michael Fyodorovich was still too young, inexperienced and indecisive to correct the shattered State order. Having become accustomed to self-will, the boyars were not able to renounce it even now: ‘They took no account of the tsar, they did not fear him,’ says the chronicler, ‘as long as he was a child... They divided up the whole land in accordance with their will.’ In the census that took place after the devastation of Moscow many injustices had been permitted in taxing the people, so that it was difficult for some and easy for others. The boyars became ‘violators’, oppressing the weak; the Boyar Duma contained unworthy me, inclined to intrigues against each other rather than

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166 Lebedev, Moskva Patriarshaia, op. cit., p. 20.
167 Lebedev, Moskva Patriarshaia, op. cit., p. 20.
the opinion of some historians, the boyars even restricted the autocracy of the tsar, and the whole administration of the State depended on them. A powerful will and an experienced man was necessary to annihilate the evil. Such could be for the young sovereign his father, Patriarch Philaret, in whom circumstances had created a strong character, and to whom age and former participation in State affairs had given knowledge of the boyar set and the whole of Russian life and experience in administration. Finally, the woes of the fatherland had generated a burning patriotism in him. In reality, Philaret became the adviser and right hand of the Tsar. The Tsar himself, in his decree to voyevodas of July 3, 1619 informing them of the return of his father from Poland, put it as follows: ‘We, the great sovereign, having taken counsel with our father and intercessor with God, will learn how to care for the Muscovite State so as to correct everything in it in the best manner.’ The chroniclers call Philaret ‘the most statesmanlike patriarch’, noting that ‘he was in control of all the governmental and military affairs’ and that ‘the tsar and patriarch administered everything together’. Philaret was in fact as much a statesman as a churchman. This is indicated by the title he used: ‘the great sovereign and most holy Patriarch Philaret Nikitich’. All important State decrees and provisions were made with his blessing and counsel. When the tsar and patriarch were separated they corresponded with each other, taking counsel with each other in State affairs. Their names figured next to each other on decrees... Some decrees on State affairs were published by the patriarch alone; and he rescinded some of the resolutions made by his son. Subjects wrote their petitions not only to the tsar, but at the same time to the patriarch; the boyars often assembled in the corridors before his cross palace to discuss State affairs; they presented various reports to him as well as to the tsar. The patriarch usually took part in receptions of foreign ambassadors sitting on the right hand of the tsar; both were given gifts and special documents; if for some reason the patriarch was not present at this reception, the ambassadors would officially present themselves in the patriarchal palace and with the same ceremonies as to the tsar. The influence of the patriarch on the tsar was so complete and powerful that there was no place for any influence of the boyars who surrounded the throne.’

The Church’s recovery was reflected in the more frequent convening of Church Councils. If we exclude the false council of 1666-67 (of which more anon), these were genuinely free of interference from the State, and the tsar was sometimes forced to submit to them against his will. Thus a Church Council in 1621 decreed that the proposed Catholic bridegroom for the Tsar’s daughter would have to be baptized first in the Orthodox Church, and that in general all Catholics and uniates joining the Orthodox Church, and all Orthodox who had been baptized incorrectly, without full immersion, should be baptized.

nearly Russia not only displayed a rare symphony included in this symphony the People; for all part in the Zemskie Sobory. Again, this owed much to the experience of the Time of Troubles; for, as we have seen, the People played a large part at that time in the re-establishment of lawful autocratic rule. Thus in the reign of Tsar Michael Fyodorovich all the most important matters were decided by Councils, which, like the first Council of 1613, were Councils “of the whole land”. Such Councils continued to be convened until 1689.

The symphony between Tsar and People was particularly evident in judicial matters, where the people jealously guarded their ancient right to appeal directly to the Tsar for justice. Of course, as the State became larger it became impossible for the Tsar personally to judge all cases, and he appointed posadniki, namestniki and volosteli to administer justice in his name – and these sometimes abused their position. At the same time, the Tsars always appreciated the significance of a direct link with the people over the heads of the bureaucracy; and in 1550 Ivan the Terrible created a kind of personal office to deal with petitions called the Chelobitnij Prikaz, which lasted until Peter the Great. It was also Ivan who convened the first Zemskie Sobory.

The bond between Tsar and People was maintained throughout the administration. The central administrative institutions were: (a) the Prikazi, or Ministries, over each of which the Tsar appointed a boyar with a staff of secretaries (dyaki), (b) the Boyar Duma, an essentially aristocratic institution, which, however, was broadened into the more widely representative (c) Councils of the Land (Zemskie Sobory) for particularly important matters. This constituted a much wider consultative base than prevailed in contemporary Western European states.

To the local administration, writes Tikhomirov, “voyevodas were sent, but besides them there existed numerous publicly elected authorities. The voyevodas’ competence was complex and broad. The voyevoda, as representative of the tsar, had to look at absolutely everything: so that all the tsar’s affairs were intact, so that there should be guardians everywhere; to take great care that in the town and the uyezd there should be no fights, thievery, murder, fighting, burglary, bootlegging, debauchery; whoever was declared to have committed such crimes was to be taken and, after investigation, punished. The voyevoda was the judge also in all civil matters. The voyevoda was in charge generally of all branches of the tsar’s administration, but his power was not absolute, and he practised it together

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169 Thus Riasanovsky writes that these appointments were known as “kormlenia, that is, feedings”, and “were considered personal awards as well as public acts. The officials exercised virtually full powers and at the same time enriched themselves at the expense of the people” (op. cit., p. 192).
According to the tsar’s code of laws, none of the administrators appointed for the cities and volosts could judge any matter without society’s representatives...

“Finally, the whole people had the broadest right of appeal to his Majesty in all matters in general. ‘The government,’ notes Soloviev, ‘was not deaf to petitions. If some mir [village commune] asked for an elected official instead of the crown’s, the government willingly agreed. They petitioned that the city bailiff... should be retired and a new one elected by the mir: his Majesty ordered the election, etc. All in all, the system of the administrative authorities of Muscovy was distinguished by a multitude of technical imperfections, by the chance nature of the establishment of institutions, by their lack of specialisation, etc. But this system of administration possessed one valuable quality: the broad admittance of aristocratic and democratic elements, their use as communal forces under the supremacy of the tsar’s power, with the general right of petition to the tsar. This gave the supreme power a wide base of information and brought it closer to the life of all the estates, and there settled in all the Russias a deep conviction in the reality of a supreme power directing and managing everything.”

For "in what was this autocratic power of the Tsar strong?" asks Hieromartyr Andronicus, Archbishop of Perm. “In that fact that it was based on the conscience and on the Law of God, and was supported by its closeness to the land, by the council of the people. The princely entourage, the boyars’ Duma, the Zemsky Sobor - that is what preserved the power of the Tsars in its fullness, not allowing anyone to seize or divert it. The people of proven experience and honesty came from the regions filled with an identical care for the construction of the Russian land. They raised to the Tsar the voice and counsel of the people concerning how and what to build in the country. And it remained for the Tsar to learn from all the voices, to bring everything together for the benefit of all and to command the rigorous fulfilment for the common good of the people of that for which he would answer before the Omniscient God and his own conscience.”

171 Archbishop Andronicus, O Tserkvi Rossii (On the Church of Russia), Fryazino, 1997, pp. 132-133.
Just as the Russian State was beginning to recover its former strength after the Time of Troubles, it came into contact again with the Jews... Persecutions in Western Europe had gradually pushed the Ashkenazi Jews further and further east, until they arrived in Poland. Norman Cantor writes: “The Polish king and nobility held vast lands and ruled millions of newly enserfed [Russian] peasants and could make varied use of the Jews. Hence the Jews were welcomed into Poland in the sixteenth century from Germany and Western Europe. Even Jews exiled from Spain in 1492 and those tired of the ghettos of northern Italy under the oppressive eye of the papacy found their way to Poland. Its green, fruitful, and underpopulated land seemed wonderful to the Jews. “By the end of the sixteenth century Poland was being hailed as the new golden land of the Jews…”

Ivan the Terrible banned the entry of Jewish merchants into Moscow. This “Russian barrier to further eastern penetration”, writes Paul Johnson, “led to intensive Jewish settlement in Poland, Lithuania and the Ukraine... By 1575, while the total population [of Poland] had risen to seven million, the number of Jews had jumped to 150,000, and thereafter the rise was still more rapid. In 1503 the Polish monarchy appointed Rabbi Jacob Polak ‘Rabbi of Poland’, and the emergence of a chief rabbinate, backed by the crown, allowed the since the end of the exilarchate. From 1551 the chief rabbi was elected by the Jews themselves. This was, to be sure, oligarchic rather than democratic rule. The rabbinate had wide powers over law and finances, appointing judges and a great variety of other officials... The royal purpose in devolving power on the Jews was, of course, self-interested. There was a great deal of Polish hostility to the Jews. In Cracow, for instance, where the local merchant class was strong, Jews were usually kept out. The kings found out they could make money out of the Jews by selling to certain cities and towns, such as Warsaw, the privilege de non tolerandis Judaeis. But they could make even more by allowing Jewish communities to grow up, and milking them. The rabbinate and local Jewish councils were primarily tax-raising agencies. Only 30 per cent of what they raised went on welfare and official salaries; all the rest was handed over to the crown in return for protection.

“The association of the rabbinate with communal finance and so with the business affairs of those who had to provide it led the eastern or Ashkenazi Jews to go even further than the early-sixteenth-century Italians in giving halakhic approval to new methods of credit-finance. Polish Jews operating near the frontiers of civilization [...] had links with Jewish family firms in the Netherlands and Germany. A new kind of credit instrument, the mamram, emerged and got rabbinical approval. In 1607 Jewish communities in Poland

and Lithuania were also authorized to use heter iskah, an inter-Jewish borrowing system which allowed one Jew to finance another in return for a percentage. This rationalization of the law eventually led even conservative authorities, like the famous Rabbi Judah Loew, the Maharal of Prague, to sanction lending at interest.

“With easy access to credit, Jewish pioneer settlers played a leading part in developing eastern Poland, the interior of Lithuania, and the Ukraine, especially from the 1560s onwards. The population of Western Europe was expanding fast. It needed to import growing quantities of grain. Ambitious Polish landowners, anxious to meet the need, went into partnership with Jewish entrepreneurs to create new wheat-growing areas to supply the market, take the grain down-river to the Baltic ports, and then ship it west. The Polish magnates – Radziwills, Sovieskis, Zamojkis, Ostrogskis, Lubomirskis – owned or conquered the land. The ports were run by German Lutherans. The Dutch Calvinists owned most of the ships. But the Jews did the rest. They not only managed the estates but in some cases held the deeds as pledges in return for working capital. Sometimes they leased the estates themselves. They ran the tolls. They built and ran mills and distilleries. They owned the river boats, taking out the wheat and bringing back in return wine, cloth and luxury goods, which they sold in their shops. They were in soap, glazing, tanning and furs. They created entire villages and townships (shtetls), where they lived in the centre, while peasants (Catholics in Poland and Lithuania, Orthodox in the Ukraine) occupied the suburbs.

“Before 1569 [recte: 1596] when the Union of Brest-Litovsk made the Polish settlement of the Ukraine possible, there were only twenty-four Jewish settlements there with 4,000 inhabitants; by 1648 there were 115, with a numbered population of 51,325, the total being much greater.\(^{173}\) Most of these places were owned by Polish nobles, absentee-landlords, the Jews acting as middlemen and intermediaries with the peasants – a role fraught with future danger. Often Jews were effectively the magnates too. At the end of the sixteenth century Israel of Zloczew, for instance, leased an entire region of hundreds of square miles from a consortium of nobles to whom he paid the enormous sum of 4,500 zlotys. He sub-let tolls, taverns and mills to his poorer relatives. Jews from all over Europe arrived to take part in this colonizing process. In many settlements they constituted the majority of the inhabitants, so that for the first time outside Palestine they dominated the local culture. But there were important at every level of society and administration. They farmed the taxes and the customs. They advised government. And every

\(^{173}\) Yu. Hessen writes that under the first false Demetrius (1605-06) the Jews appeared in Moscow ‘in comparatively large numbers’, as did other foreigners. But after the end of the Time of Troubles it was declared that the second false Demetrius (‘the thief of Tushino’) was ‘Jewish by race’ (A.I. Solzhenitsyn, Dvesti Let Vmeste, op.cit., p. 23. (V.M.)
“In 1648-49, the Jews of south-eastern Poland and the Ukraine were struck by catastrophe. This episode was of great importance in Jewish history for several reasons… The Thirty Years War had put growing pressure on the food-exporting resources of Poland. It was because of their Polish networks that Jewish contractors to the various armies had been so successful in supplying them. But the chief beneficiaries had been the Polish landlords; and the chief losers had been the Polish and Ukrainian peasants, who had seen an ever-increasing proportion of the crops they raised marketed and sold at huge profit to the ravenous armies. Under the Arenda system, whereby the Polish nobility leased not only land but all fixed assets such as mills, breweries, distilleries, inns and tolls to Jews, in return for fixed payments, the Jews had flourished and their population had grown rapidly. But the system was inherently unstable and unjust. The landlords, absentee and often spendthrift, put continual pressure on the Jews by raising the price each time a lease was renewed; the Jews in turn put pressure on the peasants…

“The Ukrainian peasants finally rose in the late spring of 1648, led by a petty aristocrat called Bogdan Chmielnicki, with the help of Dnieper Cossack and Tartars from the Crimea. His rising was fundamentally aimed at Polish rule and the Catholic church, and many Polish nobles and clergy were among the victims. But the principal animus was directed against Jews, with whom peasants had the most contact, and when it came to the point the Poles always abandoned their Jewish allies to save themselves. Thousands of Jews from villages and shtetls scrambled for safety to the big fortified towns, which turned into death-traps for them. At Tulchin the Polish troops handed over the Jews to the Cossacks in exchange for their own lives; at Tarnopol, the garrison refused to let the Jews in at all. At Bar, the fortress fell and all the Jews were massacred. There was another fierce slaughter at Narol. At Nemirov, the Cossacks got into the fortress by dressing as Poles, ‘and they killed about 6,000 souls in the town’, according to the Jewish chronicle; ‘they drowned several hundreds in the water and by all kinds of cruel torments’. In the synagogue they used the ritual knives to kill Jews, then burned the building down, tore up the sacred books, and trampled them underfoot, and used the leather covers for sandals.”

Cantor writes that “the Ukrainians had a right to resent the Jews, if not to kill them. The Jews were the immediate instrument of the Ukrainians’

174 At Tulchin the Cossacks said to the Poles: “We will spare you as long as you pay a ransom, then we will leave. But we will not have mercy on the Jews for any money. They are our accursed enemies; they have insulted our faith, and we have sworn to destroy their tribe. Expel them from the city and be in agreement with us” (O. Platonov, Ternovij Venets Rossii (Russia’s Thorny Crown), Moscow, 1998, p. 228).
The Halakic rabbis never considered the Jewish role in oppression of the Ukrainian peasants in relation to the Hebrew prophets' ideas of social justice. Isaiah and Amos were dead texts from the past in rabbinical mentality.

“Or perhaps the Jews were so moved by racist contempt for the Ukrainian and Polish peasantry as to regard them as subhuman and unworthy of consideration under biblical categories of justice and humanity…”

In 1690 a six-year-old Orthodox child by the name of Gabriel, who lived in Grodno province, was kidnapped by a Jew and ritually slaughtered, “as was confirmed by a judicial investigation. St. Gabriel was crucified, his side was pierced and he was punctured by various instruments until all his blood came out and he died. The body of the child was cast into a field, but was soon discovered and given over to a Christian burial, while his tormentors received their due reward. 30 years later, in 1720, the relics of St. Gabriel were uncovered and found to be incorrupt.”

And so in at least one case the Orthodox Church has officially glorified the victim of a Jewish ritual killing...

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176 Cantor, op. cit., p. 184.
Unfortunately, this almost ideal relationship between Tsar and people did not survive for long into the second half of the seventeenth century. Under Tsar Michael’s son, Alexis Mikhailovich, there were many rebellions – his Ulozhenie or Law Code of 1649 had gone a significant step further in the process of tying the peasants to the land as serfs. However, the most serious, large-scale and long-term rebellion was that of the so-called Old Ritualists against both the State and the Orthodox Church, and more particularly against the Orthodox idea of the Universal Empire...

By the middle of the century, at a time when the principle of monarchical rule was being shaken to its foundations in the English revolution, the prestige of the Muscovite monarchy reached its height. Even the Greeks were looking to it to deliver them from the Turkish yoke and take over the throne of the Constantinopolitan Emperor. Thus in 1645, during the coronation of Tsar Alexis, Patriarch Joseph for the first time read the “Prayer of Philaret” on the enthronement of the Russian Tsar over the whole oikoumene. And in 1649 Patriarch Paisius of Jerusalem wrote to the tsar: “May the All-Holy Trinity multiply you more than all the tsars, and count you worthy to grasp the most lofty throne of the great King Constantine, your forefather, and liberate the peoples of the pious and Orthodox Christians from impious hands. May you be a new Moses, may you liberate us from captivity just as he liberated the sons of Israel from the hands of Pharaoh.”

As Hieromonk Gregory Lourié writes: “At that time hopes in Greece for a miraculous re-establishment of Constantinople before the end of the world [based on the prophecies of Leo the Wise and others], were somewhat strengthened, if not squeezed out, by hopes on Russia. Anastasius Gordius (1654-1729), the author of what later became an authoritative historical-eschatological interpretation of the Apocalypse (1717-23) called the Russian Empire the guardian of the faith to the very coming of the Messiah. The hopes of the Greeks for liberation from the Turks that were linked with Russia, which had become traditional already from the time of St. Maximus the Greek (1470-1555), also found their place in the interpretations of the Apocalypse. Until the middle of the 19th century itself – until the Greeks, on a wave of pan-European nationalism thought up their ‘Great Idea’ – Russia would take the place of Byzantium in their eschatological hopes, as being the last Christian Empire. They considered the Russian Empire to be their own, and the Russian Tsar Nicholas (not their Lutheran King Otto) as their own, to the great astonishment and annoyance of European travellers.”

Tragically, however, it was at precisely this time, when Russia seemed ready to take the place of the Christian Roman Empire in the eyes of all the Orthodox, that the Russian autocracy and Church suffered a simultaneous attack from two sides from which it never fully recovered. From the right came the attack of the “Old Ritualists” or “Old Believers”, as they came to be called, who expressed the schismatic and nationalist idea that the only true Orthodoxy was Russian Orthodoxy. From the left came the attack of the westernising Russian aristocracy and the Greek pseudo-hierarchs of the council of 1666-67, who succeeded in removing the champion of the traditional Orthodox symphony of powers, Patriarch Nicon of Moscow.

The beginnings of the tragedy lay in the arrival in Moscow of some educated monks from the south of Russia, which at that time was under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. They (and Greek hierarchs visiting Moscow) pointed to the existence of several differences between the Muscovite service books and those employed in the Greek Church. These differences concerned such matters as how the word “Jesus” was to be spelt, whether two or three “alleluias” should be chanted in the Divine services, whether the sign of the Cross should be made with two or three fingers, etc.

A group of leading Muscovite clergy led by Protopriests John Neronov and Avvakum rejected these criticisms. They said that the reforms contradicted the decrees of the famous Stogлав council of 1551, which had anathematized the three-fingered sign of the cross, and they suspected that the southerners were tainted with Latinism through their long subjection to Polish rule. Therefore they were unwilling to bow unquestioningly to their superior knowledge.

However, the Stogлав council, while important, was never as authoritative as the Ecumenical Councils, and certain of its provisions have never been accepted in their full force by the Russian Church - for example, its 40th chapter, which decreed that anyone who shaved his beard, and died in such a state (i.e. without repenting), should be denied a Christian burial and numbered among the unbelievers.

Moreover, in elevating ritual differences between the Greek and Russian Churches into an issue of dogmatic faith, the “zealots for piety” were undoubtedly displaying a Judaizing attachment to the letter of the law that quenches the Spirit. In the long run it led to their rejection of Greek Orthodoxy, and therefore of the need of any agreement with the Greeks whether on rites or anything else, a rejection that threatened the foundations of the Ecumenical Church.180

180 Thus “Protopriests Neronov, Habbakuk, Longinus and others considered that the faith of the Greeks ‘had become leprous from the Godless Turks’, and that it was impossible to trust the Greeks” (Lebedev, Velikorossia, p. 136).
In 1652 when the close friend of the tsar, Metropolitan Nicon of Novgorod, was elected patriarch. Knowing of the various inner divisions within Russian society caused by incipient westernism and secularism, on the one hand, and Old Ritualism, on the other, the new patriarch demanded, and obtained a solemn oath from the tsar and all the people that they should obey him in all Church matters. The tsar was very willing to give such an oath because he regarded Nicon as his “special friend” and father, giving him the same title of “Great Sovereign” that Tsar Michael had given to his father, Patriarch Philaret.

The “zealots of piety” were also happy to submit to Nicon because he had been a member of their circle and shared, as they thought, their views. “Not immediately,” writes Lebedev, “but after many years of thought (since 1646), and conversations with the tsar, Fr. Stefan [Bonifatiev], the Greek and Kievan scholars and Patriarch Paisius of Jerusalem, [Nicon] had come to the conviction that the criterion of the rightness of the correction of Russian books and rites consisted in their correspondence with that which from ages past had been accepted by the Eastern Greek Church and handed down by it to Rus’ and, consequently, must be preserved also in the ancient Russian customs and books, and that therefore for the correction of the Russian books and rites it was necessary to take the advice of contemporary Eastern authorities, although their opinion had to be approached with great caution and in a critical spirit. It was with these convictions that Nicon completed the work begun before him of the correction of the Church rites and books, finishing it completely in 1656. At that time he did not know that the correctors of the books had placed at the foundation of their work, not the ancient, but the contemporary Greek books, which had been published in the West, mainly in Venice (although in the most important cases they had nevertheless used both ancient Greek and Slavonic texts). The volume of work in the correction and publishing of books was so great that the patriarch was simply unable to check its technical side and was convinced that they were correcting them according to the ancient texts.

“However, the correction of the rites was carried out completely under his supervision and was accomplished in no other way than in consultation with the conciliar opinion in the Eastern Churches and with special councils of the Russian hierarchs and clergy. Instead of using two fingers in the sign of the cross, the doctrine of which had been introduced into a series of very important books under Patriarch Joseph under the influence of the party of Neronov and Avvakum, the three-fingered sign was confirmed, since it corresponded more to ancient Russian customs and the age-old practice of

\[\text{\textsuperscript{181}}\text{ But not to Russian practice since the Stoglav council of 1551, which had legislated in favour of the two-fingered sign because in some places the two-fingered sign was used, and in others the three-fingered (Lebedev, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 70).}\]
“As was to be expected, J. Neronov, Avvakum, Longinus, Lazarus, Daniel and some of those who thought like them rose up against the corrections made by his Holiness. Thus was laid the doctrinal basis of the Church schism, but the schism itself, as a broad movement among the people, began much later, without Nicon and independently of him. Patriarch Nicon took all the necessary measures that this should not happen. In particular, on condition of their obedience to the Church, he permitted those who wished it (J. Neronov) to serve according to the old books and rites, in this way allowing a variety of opinions and practices in Church matters that did not touch the essence of the faith. This gave the Church historian Metropolitan Macarius (Bulgakov) a basis on which to assert, with justice, that ‘if Nicon had not left his see and his administration had continued, there would have been no schism in the Russian Church.’”

This important point is confirmed by other authors, such as Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky). Again, Sergei Firsov writes: “At the end of his...

According to S.A. Zenkovsky, following the researches of Golubinsky, Kaptarev and others, the two-fingered sign of the cross came from the Constantinopolitan (Studite) typicon, whereas the three-fingered sign was from the Jerusalem typicon of St. Sabbas. “In the 12th-13th centuries in Byzantium, the Studite typicon was for various reasons squeezed out by the Jerusalemite and at almost the same time the two-fingered sign of the cross was replaced by the three-fingered in order to emphasise the importance of the dogma of the All-Holy Trinity. Difficult relations with Byzantium during the Mongol yoke did not allow the spread of the Jerusalemite typicon in Russian in the 13th-14th centuries. Only under Metropolitans Cyprian and Photius (end of the 14th, beginning of the 15th centuries) was the Jerusalemite typicon partly introduced into Rus’ (gradually, one detail after another), but, since, after the council of Florence in 1439 Rus’ had broken relations with uniate Constantinople, this reform was not carried out to the end. In the Russian typicon, therefore, a series of features of the Studite typicon – the two-fingered sign of the cross, processing in the direction of the sun, chanting alleluia twice and other features – were preserved.” (“Staroobriadchestvo, Tserkov’ i Gosudarstvo” (Old Ritualism, the Church and the State), Russkoe Vozrozhdenie (Russian Regeneration), 1987-I, p. 86 (in Russian). (V.M.)

This elicited the following comments by Epiphany Slavinetsky, one of the main correctors of the books: “Blind ignoramuses, hardly able to read one syllable at a time, having no understanding of grammar, not to mention rhetoric, philosophy, or theology, people who have not even lasted of study, dare to interpret divine writings, or, rather, to distort them, and slander and judge men well-versed in Slavonic and Greek languages. The ignoramuses cannot see that we did not correct the dogmas of faith, but only some expressions which had been altered through the carelessness and errors of uneducated scribes, or through the ignorance of correctors at the Printing Office”. And he compared the Old Ritualists to Korah and Abiram, who had rebelled against Moses (in Paul Meyendorff, op. cit., p. 113).

In this tolerance Nicon followed the advice of Patriarch Paisius of Constantinople. (V.M.)


See Archbishop Nicon (Rklitsky), Zhizneopisanie Blazhennogo Antonia, Metropolita Kievskogo i Galitskogo (Life of his Beatitude Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich), volume 3, New York, 1957, p. 161. Again, Paul Meyendorff writes, “to its credit, the Russian Church appears to have realized its tactical error and tried to repair the damage. As early as 1656,
Nicon said about the old and new (corrected) church-service. Both the ones and the others are good; it doesn’t matter, serve according to whichever books you want. In citing these words, V.O. Klyuchevsky noted: ‘This means that the matter was not one of rites, but of resistance to ecclesiastical authority’. The Old Believers’ refusal to submit was taken by the church hierarchy and the state authorities as a rebellion, and at the Council of 1666-1667 the disobedient were excommunicated from the Church and cursed ‘for their resistance to the canonical authority of the pastors of the Church’.”

All this is true, but fails to take into account the long-term effect produced by the actions of the Greek hierarchs, especially Patriarch Macarius of Antioch, in anathematizing the old books and practices... Early in 1656 this patriarch was asked by Patriarch Nicon to give his opinion on the question of the sign of the cross. On the Sunday of Orthodoxy, “during the anathemas, Makarios stood before the crowd, put the three large fingers of his hand together ‘in the image of the most holy and undivided Trinity, and said: ‘Every Orthodox Christian must make the sign of the Cross on his face with these three first fingers: and if anyone does it based on the writing of Theodoret and on false tradition, let him be anathema!’ The anathemas were then repeated by Gabriel and Gregory. Nikon further obtained written condemnations of the two-fingered sign of the Cross from all these foreign bishops.

“On April 23, a new council was called in Moscow. Its purpose was twofold: first, Nikon wanted to affirm the three-fingered sign of the Cross by conciliar decree; second, he wanted sanction for the publication of the Skrizhal’. Once again, the presence of foreign bishops in Moscow served his purpose. In his speech to the assembled council, Nikon explains the reasons for his request. The two-fingered sign of the Cross, he states, does not adequately express the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation...

“The significance of this council lies chiefly in its formal condemnation of those who rejected the three-fingered sign of the Cross – and, by extension, those who rejected the Greek model – as heretics. For those who make the sign of the Cross by folding their thumb together with their two small fingers ‘are demonstrating the inequality of the Holy Trinity, which is Arianism’, or

Nikon made peace with Neronov, one of the leading opponents of the reform, and permitted him to remain in Moscow and even to use the old books at the Cathedral of the Dormition. After Nikon left the patriarchal throne in 1658, Tsar Alexis made repeated attempts to pacify the future Old-Believers, insisting only that they cease condemning the new books, but willing to allow the continued use of the old. This was the only demand made of the Old-Believers at the 1666 Moscow Council. Only after all these attempts to restore peace had failed did the 1667 Council, with Greek bishops present, condemn the old books and revoke the 1551 ‘Stoglav (Hundred Chapters)’ Council.” (op. cit., p. 33)

Whether it made schism inevitable or not, it was certainly a serious mistake. And, together with the Old Ritualists’ blasphemous rejection of the sacraments of the Orthodox Church, on the one hand, and the over-strict police measures of the State against them, on the other, it probably contributed to the hardening of the schism. Paradoxically, however, this mistake was the same mistake as that made by the Old Ritualists. That is, like the Old Ritualists, Nicon was asserting that differences in rite, and in particular in the making of the sign of the cross, reflected differences in faith, dogmatical differences. But this was not the case, as had been pointed out to Nicon by Patriarch Paisius of Constantinople and his Synod the previous year. And while, as noted above, Nicon himself backed away from a practical implementation of the decisions of the 1656 council, and after retiring from the patriarchate seemed to lose all interest in the question, the fact is that the decisions of the 1656 council remained on the statute books. Moreover, they were confirmed – again with the active connivance of Greek hierarchs – at the council of 1667. Only later, with the yedinoverie of 1801, was it permitted to be a member of the Russian Church and serve on the old books.

The process of removing the curses on the old rites began at the Preconciliar Convention in 1906. The section on the Old Ritual, presided over by Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), decreed: “Bearing in mind the benefit to the Holy Church, the pacification of those praying with the two-fingered cross and the lightening of the difficulties encountered by missionaries in explaining the curses on those praying with the two-fingered cross pronounced by Patriarch Macarius of Antioch and a Council of Russian hierarchs in 1656, - to petition the All-Russian Council to remove the indicated curses, as imposed out of ‘not good understanding’ (cf. Canon 12 of the Sixth Ecumenical Council) by Patriarch Macarius of the meaning of our two-fingered cross, which misunderstanding arose in the patriarch as a consequence of getting to know an incorrect edition of the so-called ‘Theodorit’s Word’, which was printed in our books in the middle of the 17th century (Kirillov book; introduction to the Psalter), just as the Council of 1667 ‘destroyed’ the curse of the Stoglav Council laid on those not baptised with the two-fingered cross.”

The All-Russian Council did not get round to removing the curses in 1917-1918. But in 1974 the Russian Church Abroad did remove the anathemas on the Old Rite (as did the sergianist Moscow Patriarchate).

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187 Meyendorff, op. cit., pp. 61, 62.
188 Rklitsky, op. cit., p. 162.
189 Rklitsky, op. cit., p. 175.
However, writes Lebedev, the differences between the Orthodox and the Old Ritualists did not only come down to “differences of opinion with regard to the correction of books and rites. The point was the deep differences in perception of the ideas forming the basis of the conception of ‘the third Rome’, and in the contradictions of the Russian Church’s self-consciousness at the time.”

These differences and contradictions were particularly important at this time because the Russian State, after consolidating itself in the first half of the seventeenth century, was now ready to go on the offensive against Catholic Poland, and rescue the Orthodox Christians who were being persecuted by the Polish and uniate authorities. In 1654 Eastern Ukraine was wrested from Poland and came within the bounds of Russia again. But the Orthodox Church in the Ukraine had been under the jurisdiction of Constantinople and employed Greek practices, which, as we have seen, differed somewhat from those in the Great Russian Church. So if Moscow was to be the Third Rome in the sense of the protector of all Orthodox Christians, it was necessary that the faith and practice of the Moscow Patriarchate should be in harmony with the faith and practice of the Orthodox Church as a whole. That is why Nicon, supported by the Grecophile Tsar Alexis, encouraged the reform of the service-books to bring them into line with the practices of the Greek Church.

In pursuing this policy the Tsar and the Patriarch were continuing the work of St. Maximus the Greek, who had been invited to Russia to carry out translations from Greek into Russian and correct the Russian service books against the Greek originals. For this he was persecuted by Metropolitan Daniel. And yet “the mistakes in the Russian Divine service books were so great,” writes Professor N.N. Pokrovsky, “that the Russian Church finally had to agree with Maximus’ corrections – true, some 120 years after his trial, under Patriarch Nicon (for example, in the Symbol of the faith).”

Paradoxically, the Old Ritualists cited St. Maximus the Greek in their support because he made no objection to the two-fingered sign. However, Professor Pokrovsky has shown that he probably passed over this as being of secondary importance by comparison with his main task, which was to broaden the horizons of the Russian Church and State, making it more ecumenical in spirit – and more sympathetic to the pleas for help of the Orthodox Christians of the Balkans. On more important issues – for example, the text of the Symbol of faith, the canonical subjection of the Russian metropolitan to the Ecumenical Patriarch, and a more balanced relationship between Church and State – he made no concessions.

190 Lebedev, Moskva Patriarshaia, op. cit., p. 37.
191 Pokrovsky, Puteshestvia za redkimi knizami (Journeys for rare books), Moscow, 1988; http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page&pid=779. The mistake in the Creed consisted in adding the word “true” after “and in the Holy Spirit, the Lord”.

The Old Ritualists represented a serious threat to the achievement of the ideal of Ecumenical Orthodoxy. Like their opponents, they believed in the ideology of the Third Rome, but understood it differently. First, they resented the lead that the patriarch was taking in this affair. In their opinion, the initiative in such matters should come from the tsar insofar as it was the tsar, rather than the hierarchs, who defended the Church from heresies. Here they were thinking of the Russian Church’s struggle against the false council of Florence and the Judaizing heresy, when the great prince did indeed take a leading role in the defence of Orthodoxy while some of the hierarchs fell away from the truth. However, they ignored the no less frequent cases – most recently, in the Time of Troubles – when it had been the Orthodox hierarchs who had defended the Church against apostate tsars.

Secondly, whereas for the Grecophiles of the “Greco-Russian Church” Moscow the Third Rome was the continuation of Christian Rome, which in no wise implied any break with Greek Orthodoxy, for the Old Ritualists the influence of the Greeks, who had betrayed Orthodoxy at the council of Florence, could only be harmful. They believed that the Russian Church did not need help from, or agreement with, the Greeks; she was self-sufficient. Moreover, The Greeks could not be Orthodox, according to the Old Ritualists, not only because they had apostasized at the council of Florence, but also because they were “powerless”, that is, without an emperor. And when Russia, too, in their view, became “powerless” through the tsar’s “apostasy”, they prepared for the end of the world. For, as Fr. Gregory Lourié writes, “the Niconite reforms were perceived by Old Ritualism as apostasy from Orthodoxy, and consequently... as the end of the last (Roman) Empire, which was to come immediately before the end of the world.”

This anti-Greek attitude was exemplified particularly by Archpriest Avvakum, who wrote from his prison cell to Tsar Alexis: "Say in good Russian 'Lord have mercy on me'. Leave all those Kyrie Eleisons to the Greeks: that's their language, spit on them! You are Russian, Alexei, not Greek. Speak your mother tongue and be not ashamed of it, either in church or at home!" Again, Avvakum announced “that newborn babies knew more about God than all the scholars of the Greek church”. And in the trial of 1667, he told the Greek bishops: “You, ecumenical teachers! Rome has long since fallen, and lies on the ground, and the Poles have gone under with her, for to the present day they have been enemies of the Christians. But with you, too, Orthodoxy became a varied mixture under the violence of the Turkish Muhammed. Nor is that surprising: you have become powerless. From now on you must come to us to learn: through God’s grace we have the autocracy. Before the apostate Nicon the whole of Orthodoxy was pure and spotless in our Russia under the pious rulers and tsars, and the Church knew no

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along with the devil introduced the tradition with three fingers...”\textsuperscript{194}

It was this attempt to force the Russian Church into schism from the Greeks, and not their opposition to the liturgical reforms that was the real sin of the Old Ritualists and made them into what was in effect the first nationalist schism in Russian history.

It was against this narrow, nationalistic and state-centred conception of “Moscow – the Third Rome”, that Patriarch Nicon erected a more universalistic, Church-centred conception which stressed the unity of the Russian Church with the Churches of the East. “In the idea of ‘the Third Rome’,” writes Lebedev, “his Holiness saw first of all its ecclesiastical, spiritual content, which was also expressed in the still more ancient idea of ‘the Russian land – the New Jerusalem’. This idea was to a large degree synonymous with ‘the Third Rome’. To a large extent, but not completely! It placed the accent on the Christian striving of Holy Rus’ for the world on high.

“In calling Rus’ to this great idea, Patriarch Nicon successively created a series of architectural complexes in which was laid the idea of the pan-human, universal significance of Holy Rus’. These were the Valdai Iveron church, and the Kii Cross monastery, but especially – the Resurrection New-Jerusalem monastery, which was deliberately populated with an Orthodox, but multi-racial brotherhood (Russians, Ukrainians, Belorussians, Lithuanians, Germans, Jews, Poles and Greeks).

“This monastery, together with the complex of ‘Greater Muscovite Palestine’, was in the process of creation from 1656 to 1666, and was then completed after the death of the patriarch towards the end of the 17th century. As has been clarified only comparatively recently, this whole complex, including in itself Jordan, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Capernaum, Ramah, Bethany, Tabor, Hermon, the Mount of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemane, etc., was basically a monastery, and in it the Resurrection cathedral, built in the likeness of the church of the Sepulchre of the Lord in Jerusalem with Golgotha and the Sepulchre of the Saviour, was a double image – an icon of the historical ‘promised land’ of Palestine and at the same time an icon of the promised land of the Heavenly Kingdom, ‘the New Jerusalem’.

“In this way it turned out that the true union of the representatives of all the peoples (pan-human unity) in Christ on earth and in heaven can be realised only on the basis of Orthodoxy, and, moreover, by the will of God, in its Russian expression. This was a clear, almost demonstrative opposition of the union of mankind in the Church of Christ to its unity in the anti-church of ‘the great architect of nature’ with its aim of constructing the tower of Babylon. But it also turned out that ‘Greater Muscovite Palestine’ with its centre in the New Jerusalem became the spiritual focus of the whole of World Orthodoxy. At the same time that the tsar was only just beginning to dream of become the master of the East, Patriarch Nicon as the archimandrite of New Jerusalem had already become the central figure of the Universal Church.
This also began the disharmony between the tsar and the patriarch, between the ecclesiastical and state authorities in Russia. Alexis Mikhailovich, at first inwardly, but then also outwardly, was against Nicon’s plans for the New Jerusalem. He insisted that only his capital, Moscow, was the image of the heavenly city, and that the Russian tsar (and not the patriarch) was the head of the whole Orthodox world. From 1657 there began the quarrels between the tsar and the patriarch, in which the tsar revealed a clear striving to take into his hands the administration of Church affairs, for he made himself the chief person responsible for them.195

This intrusion of the tsar into the ecclesiastical administration, leading to the deposition of Patriarch Nicon, was the decisive factor allowing the Old Ritualist movement to gain credibility and momentum... On becoming patriarch in 1652, as we have seen, Nicon secured from the Tsar, his boyars and the bishops a solemn oath to the effect that they would keep the sacred laws of the Church and State “and promise... to obey us as your chief pastor and supreme father in all things which I shall announce to you out of the divine commandments and laws.” There followed a short, but remarkable period in which “the undivided, although unconfused, union of state and ecclesiastical powers constituted the natural basis of public life of Russia. The spiritual leadership in this belonged, of course, to the Church, but this leadership was precisely spiritual and was never turned into political leadership. In his turn the tsar... never used his political autocracy for arbitrariness in relation to the Church, since the final meaning of life for the whole of Russian society consisted in acquiring temporal and eternal union with God in and through the Church...”196

This relationship was characterized in a service book published in Moscow in 1653, as “the diarchy, complementary, God-chosen”...197

Although the patriarch had complete control of Church administration and services, and the appointment and judgement of clerics in ecclesiastical matters, “Church possessions and financial resources were considered a pan-national inheritance. In cases of special need (for example, war) the tsar could take as much of the resources of the Church as he needed without paying them back. The diocesan and monastic authorities could spend only strictly determined sums on their everyday needs. All unforeseen and major expenses were made only with the permission of the tsar. In all monastic and diocesan administrations state officials were constantly present; ecclesiastical properties and resources were under their watchful control. And they judged ecclesiastical peasants and other people in civil and criminal matters. A special Monastirskij Prikaz [or “Ministry of Monasticism”], established in

195 Lebedev, Moskva Patriarshaia, pp. 40-41.
196 Lebedev, Moskva Patriarshaia, p. 87.
Moscow in accordance with the Ulozhenie [legal code] of 1649, was in charge of the whole clergy, except the patriarch, in civil and criminal matters. Although with all the others had put his signature to the Ulozhenie, inwardly he was not in agreement with it, and on becoming patriarch declared this opinion openly. He was most of all disturbed by the fact that secular people – the boyars of the Monastirskij Prikaz – had the right to judge clergy in civil suits. He considered this situation radically uneclesiastical and unchristian. When Nicon had still been Metropolitan of Novgorod, the tsar, knowing his views, had given him a ‘document of exemption’ for the whole metropolia, in accordance with which all the affairs of people subject to the Church, except for affairs of ‘murder, robbery and theft’, were transferred from the administration of the Monastirskij Prikaz to the metropolitan’s court. On becoming patriarch, Nicon obtained a similar exemption from the Monastirskij Prikaz for his patriarchal diocese (at that time the patriarch, like all the ruling bishops, had his own special diocese consisting of Moscow and spacious lands adjacent to it). As if to counteract the Ulozhenie of 1649, Nicon published ‘The Rudder’, which contains the holy canons of the Church and various enactments concerning the Church of the ancient pious Greek emperors. As we shall see, until the end of his patriarchy Nicon did not cease to fight against the Monastirskij Prikaz. It should be pointed out that this was not a struggle for the complete ‘freedom’ of the Church from the State (which was impossible in Russia at that time), but only for the re-establishment of the canonical authority of the patriarch and the whole clergy in strictly spiritual matters, and also for such a broadening of the right of the ecclesiastical authorities over people subject to them in civil matters as was permitted by conditions in Russia.”

From May, 1654 to January, 1657, while the tsar was away from the capital fighting the Poles, the patriarch acted as regent, a duty he carried out with great distinction. Some later saw in this evidence of the political ambitions of the patriarch. However, he undertook this duty only at the request of the tsar, and was very glad to return the reins of political administration when the tsar returned. Nevertheless, from 1656, the boyars succeeded in undermining the tsar’s confidence in the patriarch, falsely insinuating that the tsar’s authority was being undermined by Nicon’s ambition. And they began to apply the Ulozhenie in Church affairs, even increasing the rights given by the Ulozhenie to the Monastirskij Prikaz. The Ulozhenie also decreed that the birthdays of the Tsar and Tsarina and their children should be celebrated alongside the Church feasts, which drew from the Patriarch the criticism that men were being likened to God, “and even preferred to God”. Another bone of contention was the tsar’s desire to appoint Silvester Kossov as Metropolitan of Kiev, which Nicon considered uncanonical in that the Kievan Metropolitan was in the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Constantinople at that time.

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198 Lebedev, Moskva Patriarshaia, pp. 88-89.
Since the tsar was clearly determined to have his way, and was snubbing the patriarch in many ways, on July 10, 1658 Nicon withdrew to his monastery of New Jerusalem, near Moscow. He compared this move to the flight of the Woman clothed with the sun into the wilderness in Revelation 12, and quoted the 17th Canon of Sardica and the words of the Gospel: “If they persecute you in one city, depart to another, shaking off the dust from your feet.” The whole state knows,” he said, “that in view of his anger against me the tsar does not go to the Holy Catholic Church, and I am leaving Moscow. I hope that the tsar will have more freedom without me.”

Some have regarded Nicon’s action as an elaborate bluff that failed. Whatever the truth about his personal motivation, which is known to God alone, there can be no doubt that the patriarch, unlike his opponents, correctly gauged the seriousness of the issue involved. For the quarrel between the tsar and the patriarch signified, in effect, the beginning of the schism of Church and State in Russia. In withdrawing from Moscow to New Jerusalem, the patriarch demonstrated that “in truth ‘the New Jerusalem’, ‘the Kingdom of God’, the beginning of the Heavenly Kingdom in Russia was the Church, its Orthodox spiritual piety, and not the material earthly capital, although it represented... ‘the Third Rome’.”

However, Nicon had appointed a vicar-metropolitan in Moscow, and had said: “I am not leaving completely; if the tsar’s majesty bends, becomes more merciful and puts away his wrath, I will return”. In other words, while resigning the active administration of the patriarchy, he had not resigned his rank – a situation to which there were many precedents in Church history. And to show that he had not finally resigned from Church affairs, he protested against moves made by his deputy on the patriarchal throne, and continued to criticise the Tsar for interfering in the Church’s affairs, especially in the reactivation of the Monastirskij Prikaz.

Not content with having forced his withdrawal from Moscow, the boyars resolved to have him defrocked, portraying him as a dangerous rebel against both Church and State - although, as Zyzykin points out, Patriarch Nicon interfered less in the affairs of Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich than St. Philip of

201 “If any Bishop who has suffered violence has been cast out unjustly, either on account of his science or on account of his confession of the Catholic Church, or on account of his insisting upon the truth, and fleeing from peril, when he is innocent and in danger, should come to another city, let him not be prevented from living there, until he can return or find relief from the insolent treatment he had received. For it is cruel and most burdensome for one who has had to suffer an unjust expulsion not to be accorded a welcome by us. For such a person ought to be shown great kindness and courtesy.”
204 Lebedev, Moskva Patriarshaia, p. 141. Italics mine (V.M.).
Moscow had done in the affairs of Ivan the Terrible. And so, in 1660, they appointed a patriarchal locum tenens, Metropolitan Pitirim, to administer the Church independently without seeking the advice of the patriarch and without commemorating his name. Nicon rejected this council, and cursed Pitirim…

But the State that encroaches on the Church is itself subject to destruction. Thus in 1661 Patriarch Nicon had a vision in which he saw the Moscow Dormition cathedral full of fire: “The hierarchs who had previously died were standing there. Peter the metropolitan rose from his tomb, went up to the altar and laid his hand on the Gospel. All the hierarchs did the same, and so did I. And Peter began to speak: ‘Brother Nicon! Speak to the Tsar: why has he offended the Holy Church, and fearlessly taken possession of the immovable things collected by us. This will not be to his benefit. Tell him to return what he has taken, for the great wrath of God has fallen upon him because of this: twice there have been pestilences, and so many people have died, and now he has nobody with whom to stand against his enemies.’ I replied: ‘He will not listen to me; it would be good if one of you appeared to him.’ Peter continued: ‘The judgements of God have not decreed this. You tell him; if he does not listen to you, then if one of us appeared to him, he would not listen to him. And look! Here is a sign for him.’ Following the movement of his hand I turned towards the west towards the royal palace and I saw: there was no church wall, the palace was completely visible, and the fire which was in the church came together and went towards the royal court and burned it up. ‘If he will not come to his senses, punishments greater than the first will be added,’ said Peter. Then another grey-haired man said: ‘Now the Tsar wants to take the court you bought for the churchmen and turn it into a bazaar for mammon’s sake. But he will not rejoice over his acquisition.’”

With Nicon’s departure, the tsar was left with the problem of replacing him at the head of the Church. S.A. Zenkovsky writes that he “was about to return Protopriest Avvakum, whom he personally respected and loved, from exile, but continued to keep the new typicon… In 1666-1667, in order to resolve the question of what to do with Nicon and to clarify the complications with the typicon, [the tsar] convened first a Russian council of bishops, and then almost an ecumenical one, with the participation of the patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch [who had been suspended by the Patriarch of Constantinople]. The patriarch of Constantinople (he wrote that small details in the typicon were not so important – what was important was the understanding of the commandments of Christ, the basic dogmas of the faith, and devotion to the Church) and the patriarch of Jerusalem did not come to this council, not wishing to get involved in Russian ecclesiastical quarrels.

206 Fomin, op. cit., volume I, pp. 24-25.
The first part of the council sessions, with the participation only of Russian bishops, went quite smoothly and moderately. Before it, individual discussions of each bishop with the tsar had prepared almost all the decisions. The council did not condemn the old typicon, and was very conciliatory towards its defenders, who, with the exception of Avakum, agreed to sign the decisions of the council and not break with the Church. The stubborn Avvakum refused, and was for that defrocked and excommunicated from the Church. The second part of the council sessions, with the eastern patriarchs, was completely under the influence of Metropolitan Paisius Ligarides of Gaza (in Palestine) [who had been defrocked by the Patriarch of Jerusalem and was in the pay of the Vatican]. He adopted the most radical position in relation to the old Russian ecclesiastical traditions. The old Russian rite was condemned and those who followed it were excommunicated from the Church (anathema). Also condemned at that time were such Russian writings as the Story of the White Klobuk (on Moscow as the Third Rome), the decrees of the Stoglav council, and other things.\textsuperscript{207}

The council then turned its attention to Patriarch Nicon. On December 12, 1666 he was reduced to the rank of a monk on the grounds that “he annoyed his great majesty [the tsar], interfering in matters which did not belong to the patriarchal rank and authority”.\textsuperscript{208} The truth was the exact opposite: that the tsar and his boyars had interfered in matters which did not belong to their rank and authority, breaking the oath they had made to the patriarch.\textsuperscript{209}

Another charge against the patriarch was that in 1654 he had defrocked and exiled the most senior of the opponents to his reforms, Bishop Paul of Kolomna, on his own authority, without convening a council of bishops.\textsuperscript{210} But, as Lebedev writes, “Nicon refuted this accusation, referring to the conciliar decree on this bishop, which at that time was still in the patriarchal court. Entering then [in 1654] on the path of an authoritative review of everything connected with the correction of the rites, Nicon of course could not on his own condemn a bishop, when earlier even complaints against prominent protopriests were reviewed by him at a Council of the clergy.”\textsuperscript{211}

The council also sinned in that the Tomos sent by the Eastern Patriarchs to Moscow in 1663 to justify the supposed lawfulness of Nicon’s deposition and

\textsuperscript{207} Zenkovsky, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 88-89.

\textsuperscript{208} Vladimir Rusak, \textit{Istoria Rossijskoj Tserkvi} (A History of the Russian Church), USA, 1993, p. 191.

\textsuperscript{209} Ironically, they also transgressed those articles of the Ulozhenie, chapter X, which envisaged various punishments for offending the clergy (Priest Alexis Nikolin, \textit{Tserkov’ i Gosudarstvo} (Church and State), Izdanie Sretenskogo monastyr’, 1997, p. 71).

\textsuperscript{210} Dobroklyonovsky, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 290; S.G. Burgaf and I.A. Ushakov, \textit{Starobriadichestvo} (Old Ritualism), Moscow, 1996, pp. 206-207. According to the Old Ritualists, Bishop Paul said that, in view of Nicon’s “violation” of Orthodoxy, his people should be received into communion with the Old Ritualists by the second rite, i.e. chrismation.

\textsuperscript{211} Lebedev, \textit{Moskva Patriarshchija}, p. 100.
in case of conflict with him. Patriarch Dionysius of Constantinople expressed this doctrine as follows in a letter to the tsar: “I inform your Majesty that in accordance with these chapters you have the power to have a patriarch and all your councillors established by you, for in one autocratic state there must not be two principles, but one must be the senior.” To which Lebedev justly rejoins: “It is only to be wondered at how the Greeks by the highest authority established and confirmed in the Russian kingdom that [caesaropapism] as a result of which they themselves had lost their monarchy! It was not Paisius Ligarides who undermined Alexis Mikhailovich: it was the ecumenical patriarchs who deliberately decided the matter in favour of the tsar.”

However, opposition was voiced by Metropolitans Paul of Krutitsa and Hilarion of Ryazan, who feared “that the Patriarchal Replies would put the hierarchs into the complete control of the royal power, and thereby of a Tsar who would not be as pious as Alexis Mikhailovich and could turn out to be dangerous for the Church”. They particularly objected to the following sentence in the report on the affair of the patriarch: “It is recognized that his Majesty the Tsar alone should be in charge of spiritual matters, and that the Patriarch should be obedient to him”, which they considered to be humiliating for ecclesiastical power and to offer a broad scope for the interference of the secular power in Church affairs.

So, as Zyzykin writes, “the Patriarchs were forced to write an explanatory note, in which they gave another interpretation to the second chapter of the patriarchal replies... The Council came to a unanimous conclusion: ‘Let it be recognized that the Tsar has the pre-eminence in civil affairs, and the Patriarch in ecclesiastical affairs, so that in this way the harmony of the ecclesiastical institution may be preserved whole and unshaken.’ This was the principled triumph of the Niconian idea, as was the resolution of the Council to close the Monastirskij Prikaz and the return to the Church of judgement over clergy in civil matters (the later remained in force until 1700).”

And yet it had been a close-run thing. During the 1666 Council Ligarides had given voice to an essentially pagan view of tsarist power: “[The tsar] will be called the new Constantine. He will be both tsar and hierarch, just as the great Constantine, who was so devoted to the faith of Christ, is praised among us at Great Vespers as priest and tsar. Yes, and both among the Romans and the Egyptians the tsar united in himself the power of the priesthood and of the kingship.” If this doctrine had triumphed at the Council, then Russia would indeed have entered the era of the Antichrist, as

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212 Lebedev, Moskva Patriarshaia, p. 132.
213 Dobrokloinsky, op. cit., p. 350.
And if the good sense of the Russian hierarchs finally averted a catastrophe, the unjust condemnation of Patriarch Nicon, the chief supporter of the Orthodox doctrine, cast a long shadow over the proceedings, and meant that within a generation the attempt to impose absolutism on Russia would begin again...215

Now Muscovite Russia in the seventeenth century was a stable, prosperous society. Nor was the prosperity confined only to the upper classes. As J. Krijanich, a Serb by birth, and a graduate of the Catholic College of Vienna, wrote in 1646, after he had spent five years in Russia: “The Russians lead a simpler life than other Europeans. The gulf between rich and poor is not as great as in the West, where some wallow in riches and others are sunk in the depths of misery. Everyone in Russia, rich and poor, eats to his heart’s content and lives in well-heated houses, whereas in the West the poor suffer from cold and hunger.... Thus life for the workman and peasant in Russia is better than in other countries.”216

But this material prosperity was based on spiritual piety – that is, on firm obedience to the Orthodox Church in spiritual matters and to the Orthodox Autocracy in secular matters. However, the rebellion of the Old Ritualists and the unlawful deposition of Patriarch Nicon in the middle years of the century opened a schism within the people, and between the secular and ecclesiastical authorities, that was never fully overcome. And so, the Lord allowed the State based on the Orthodox ideal of the symphony of powers of Muscovite Russia to be transformed into the State modelled on heretical Western ideas of statehood founded by Peter the Great.

What should be the relationship of an Orthodox King to the Orthodox Church within his dominions? “There is no question,” writes Lebedev, “that the Orthodox Sovereign cares for the Orthodox Church, defends her, protects her, takes part in all her most important affairs. But not he in the first place; and not he mainly. The Church has her own head on earth – the Patriarch. Relations between the head of the state and the head of the Church in Russia, beginning from the holy equal-to-the-apostles Great Prince Vladimir and continuing with Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich and Patriarch Nicon, were always formed in a spirit of symphony.

“Not without exceptions, but, as a rule, this symphony was not broken and constituted the basis of the inner spiritual strength of the whole of Rus’, the whole of the Russian state and society. The complexity of the symphony

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215 The tsar asked forgiveness of the patriarch just before his death. The patriarch replied to the messenger: “Imitating my teacher Christ, who commanded us to remit the sins of our neighbours, I say: may God forgive the deceased, but a written forgiveness I will not give, because during his life he did not free us from imprisonment” (quoted in Rusak, op. cit., p. 193).

216 Krijanich, in de Goulévitch, op. cit., p. 53.
Tsar and Patriarch were identically responsible in the people, in society, in the state. But at the same time the Tsar especially answered for worldly matters, matters of state, while the Patriarch especially answered for Church and spiritual affairs. In council they both decided literally everything. But in worldly affairs the last word lay with the Tsar; and in Church and spiritual affairs – with the Patriarch. The Patriarch unfailingly took part in the sessions of the State Duma, that is, of the government. The Tsar unfailingly took part in the Church Councils. In the State Duma the last word was with the Sovereign, and in the Church Councils – with the Patriarch. This common responsibility for everything and special responsibility for the state and the Church with the Tsar and the Patriarch was the principle of symphony or agreement.”

That Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich sincerely believed this teaching is clear from his letter to the Patriarch of Jerusalem: “The most important task of the Orthodox Tsar is care for the faith, the Church, and all the affairs of the Church.” However, it was he who introduced the Ulozhenie, the first serious breach in Church-State symphony. And it was he who deposed Patriarch Nicon…

Therefore while it is customary to date the breakdown of Church-State symphony or agreement in Russia to the time of Peter the Great, the foundations of Holy Russia had been undermined, already in the time of his father, Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich. As M.V. Zyzykin writes, “in Church-State questions, Nicon fought with the same corruption that had crept into Muscovite political ideas after the middle of the 15th century and emerged as political Old Ritualism, which defended the tendency towards caesaropapism that had established itself. The fact that the guardian of Orthodoxy, at the time of the falling away of the Constantinopolitan Emperor and Patriarch and Russian Metropolitan into the union, turned out to be the Muscovite Great Prince had too great an influence on the exaltation of his significance in the Church. And if we remember that at that time, shortly after the union, the Muscovite Great Prince took the place of the Byzantine Emperor, and that with the establishment of the de facto independence of the Russian Church from the Constantinopolitan Patriarch the Muscovite first-hierarchs lost a support for their ecclesiastical independence from the Great Princes, then it will become clear to us that the Muscovite Great Prince became de facto one of the chief factors in Church affairs, having the opportunity to impose his authority on the hierarchy.”

Patriarch Nicon corrected the caesaropapist bias of the Russian Church as expressed especially by the friend of the tsar, the defrocked metropolitan and crypto-papist Paisius Ligarides. He set down his thoughts in detail in his

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217 Lebedev, “Razmyshlenia vozle sten novogo Ierusalima” (“Thoughts next to the Walls of New Jerusalem”), Vozvrashchenie (Return), №№ 12-13, 1999, p. 60.
famous work Razzorenie ("Destruction"), in which he defined the rights and duties of the tsar as follows: "The tsar undoubtedly has power to give rights and honours, but within the limits set by God; he cannot give spiritual power to Bishops and archimandrites and other spiritual persons: spiritual things belong to the decision of God, and earthly things to the king" (I, 555).219

“The main duty of the tsar is to care for the Church, for the dominion of the tsar can never be firmly established and prosperous when his mother, the Church of God, is not strongly established, for the Church of God, most glorious tsar, is thy mother, and if thou art obliged to honour thy natural mother, who gave thee birth, then all the more art thou obliged to love thy spiritual mother, who gave birth to thee in Holy Baptism and anointed thee to the kingdom with the oil and chrism of gladness.”220

Indeed, “none of the kings won victory without the prayers of the priests” (I, 187).221 For “Bishops are the successors of the Apostles and the servants of God, so that the honour accorded to them is given to God Himself.”222 “It was when the evangelical faith began to shine that the Episcopate was venerated; but when the spite of pride spread, the honour of the Episcopate was betrayed.”

“A true hierarch of Christ is everything. For when kingdom falls on kingdom, that kingdom, and house, that is divided in itself will not stand.”223 “The tsar is entrusted with the bodies, but the priests with the souls of men. The tsar remits money debts, but the priests – sins. The one compels, the other comforts. The one wars with enemies, the other with the princes and rulers of the darkness of this world. Therefore the priesthood is much higher than the kingdom.”224

The superiority of the priesthood is proved by the fact that the tsar is anointed by the patriarch and not vice-versa. “The highest authority of the priesthood was not received from the tsars, but on the contrary the tsars are anointed to the kingdom through the priesthood... We know no other lawgiver than Christ, Who gave the power to bind and to loose. What power did the tsar give me? This one? No, but he himself seized it for himself... Know that even he who is distinguished by the diadem is subject to the power of the priest, and he who is bound by him will be bound also in the heavens.”225

219 Zyzykin, op. cit., part II, p. 15.
220 Zyzykin, op. cit., part II, p. 16.
221 Zyzykin, op. cit., part II, p. 41.
222 Zyzykin, op. cit., part II, p. 91.
223 Zyzykin, op. cit., part II, p. 86.
224 Zyzykin, op. cit., part II, p. 17.
225 Zyzykin, op. cit., part II, pp. 30, 32.
The patriarch explains why, on the one hand, the priesthood is higher than the kingdom, and on the other, the kingdom cannot be abolished by the priesthood:

"The kingdom is given by God to the world, but in wrath, and it is given through anointing from the priests with a material oil, but the priesthood is a direct anointing from the Holy Spirit, as also our Lord Jesus Christ was raised to the high-priesthood directly by the Holy Spirit, as were the Apostles. Therefore, at the consecration to the episcopate, the consecrator holds an open Gospel over the head of him who is being consecrated... There is no human judgement over the tsar, but there is a warning from the pastors of the Church and the judgement of God."  

However, the fact that the tsar cannot be judged by man shows that the kingdom is given him directly by God, and not by man. “For even if he was not crowned, he would still be king.” But he can only called an Orthodox, anointed king if he is crowned by the Bishop. Thus “he receives and retains his royal power by the sword de facto. But the name of king (that is, the name of a consecrated and Christian or Orthodox king) he receives from the Episcopal consecration, for which the Bishop is the accomplisher and source.” (I, 254).  

We see here how far Nicon is from the papocaesarism of a Pope Gregory VII, who claimed to be able to depose kings precisely “as kings”. And yet he received a reputation for papocaesarism (which prevented his recognition at least until the Russian Council of 1917-18) because of his fearless exposure of the caesaropapism of the Russian tsar: “Everyone should know his measure. Saul offered the sacrifice, but lost his kingdom; Uzziah, who burned incense in the temple, became a leper. Although thou art tsar, remain within thy limits. Wilt thou say that the heart of the king is in the hand of God? Yes, but the heart of the king is in the hand of God [only] when the king remains within the boundaries set for him by God.”  

In another passage Nicon combines the metaphor of the two swords with that of the sun and moon. The latter metaphor had been used by Pope Innocent III; but Nicon’s development of it is Orthodox and does not exalt the power of the priesthood any more than did the Fathers of the fourth century: “The all-powerful God, in creating the heaven and the earth, order the two great luminaries - the sun and the moon - to shine upon the earth in their course; by one of them - the sun - He prefigured the episcopal power, while by the other - the moon - He prefigured the tsarist power. For the sun is the greater luminary, it shines by day, like the Bishop who enlightens the soul. But the lesser luminary shines by night, by which we must understand the

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226 Zyzykin, op. cit. part II, p. 41. As Zyzykin says in another place, Nicon “not only does not call for human sanctions against the abuses of tsarist power, but definitely says that there is no human power [that can act] against them, but there is the wrath of God, as in the words of Samuel to Saul: ‘It is not I that turn away from thee, in that thou has rejected the Word of the Lord, but the Lord has rejected thee, that thou shouldst not be king over Israel’ (I Kings 15:26)” (op. cit., part II, p. 17).

227 Zyzykin, op. cit. part II, p. 55.

its light from the sun, and in proportion to its greater radiance, so the tsar derives his consecration, anointing and coronation (but not power) from the Bishop, and, having received it, has his own light, that it, his consecrated power and authority. The similarity between these two persons in every Christian society is exactly the same as that between the sun and the moon in the material world. For the episcopal power shines by day, that is, over souls; while the tsarist power shines in the things of this world. And this power, which is the tsarist sword, must be ready to act against the enemies of the Orthodox faith. The episcopate and all the clergy need this defence from all unrighteousness and violence. This is what the secular power is obliged to do. For secular people are in need of freedom for their souls, while spiritual people are in need of secular people for the defence of their bodies. And so in this neither of them is higher than the other, but each has power from God.”  

But Nicon insists that when the tsar encroaches on the Church he loses his power. For “there is in fact no man more powerless than he who attacks the Divine laws, and there is nothing more powerful than a man who fights for them. For he who commits sin is the slave of sin, even if he bears a thousand crowns on his head, but he who does righteous deeds is greater than the tsar himself, even if he is the last of all.” So a tsar who himself chooses patriarchs and metropolitans, breaking his oath to the patriarch “is unworthy even to enter the church, but he must spend his whole life in repentance, and only at the hour of death can he be admitted to communion… Chrysostom forbade every one who breaks his oath … from crossing the threshold of the church, even in he were the tsar himself.”

Nicon comes very close to identifying the caesaropapist tsar with the Antichrist. For, as Zyzykin points out, “Nicon looked on the apostasy of the State law from Church norms (i.e. their destruction) as the worship by the State of the Antichrist, ‘This antichrist is not satan, but a man, who will receive from satan the whole power of his energy. A man will be revealed who will be raised above God, and he will be the opponent of God and will destroy all gods and will order that people worship him instead of God, and he will sit, not in the temple of Jerusalem, but in the Churches, giving himself out as God. As the Median empire was destroyed by Babylon, and the Babylonian by the Persian, and the Persian by the Macedonian, and the Macedonian by the Roman, thus must the Roman empire be destroyed by the antichrist, and he - by Christ. This is revealed to us by the Prophet Daniel. The divine Apostle warned us about things to come, and they have come for us through you and your evil deeds (he is speaking to the author of the Ulozhenie, Prince Odoyevsky) Has not the apostasy from the Holy Gospel and the traditions of the Holy Apostles and holy fathers appeared? (Nicon has

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231 Zyzykin, op. cit., part II, pp. 63-64.
in mind the invasion by the secular authorities into the administration of the Church through the Ulozhenie. Has not the man of sin been discovered - the son of destruction, who will exalt himself about everything that is called God, or that is worshipped? And what can be more destructive than abandoning God and His commandments, as they have preferred the traditions of men, that is, their codex full of spite and cunning? But who is this? Satan? No. This is a man, who has received the work of Satan, who has united to himself many others like you, composer of lies, and your comrades. Sitting in the temple of God does not mean in the temple of Jerusalem, but everywhere in the Churches. And sitting not literally in all the Churches, but as exerting power over all the Churches. The Church is not stone walls, but the ecclesiastical laws and the pastors, against whom thou, apostate, hast arisen, in accordance with the work of satan, and in the Ulozhenie thou hast presented secular people with jurisdiction over the Patriarch, the Metropolitans, the Archbishops, the Bishops, and over all the clergy, without thinking about the work of God. As the Lord said on one occasion: ‘Depart from Me, satan, for thou thinkest not about what is pleasing to God, but about what is pleasing to men.’ ‘Ye are of your father the devil and you carry out his lusts.’ Concerning such Churches Christ said: ‘My house will be called a house of prayer, but you will make it a den of thieves’; as Jeremiah says (7.4): ‘Do not rely on deceiving words of those who say to you: here is the temple of the Lord.’ How can it be the temple of God if it is under the power of the tsar and his subjects, and they order whatever they want in it? Such a Church is no longer the temple of God, but the house of those who have power over it, for, if it were the temple of God, nobody, out of fear of God, would be capable of usurping power over it or taking anything away from it. But as far as the persecution of the Church is concerned, God has revealed about this to His beloved disciple and best theologian John (I, 403-408),... [who] witnesses, saying that the Antichrist is already in the world. But nobody has seen or heard him perceptibly, that is, the secular authorities will begin to rule over the Churches of God in transgression of the commandments of God.’ For the word ‘throne’ signifies having ecclesiastical authority, and not simply sitting... And he will command people to bow down to him not externally or perceptibly, but in the same way as now the Bishops, abandoning their priestly dignity and honour, bow down to the tsars as to their masters. And they ask them for everything and seek honours from them” (I, 193).”232 For “there is apostasy also in the fact that the Bishops, abandoning their dignity, bow down before the tsar as their master in spiritual matters, and seek honours from him.”233

The power of the Roman emperors, of which the Russian tsardom is the lawful successor, is “that which restraineth” the coming of the Antichrist. And yet “the mystery of iniquity is already being accomplished” in the shape

233 Zyzykin, op. cit., part II, p. 27.
who ascribed to themselves divine worship.\textsuperscript{234} which restrains the antichrist can be swiftly himself.

Even the present tsar could suffer such a transformation; for “what is more iniquitous than for a tsar to judge bishops, taking to himself a power which has not been given him by God?... This is apostasy from God.”\textsuperscript{235}

It was not only the Russian State that had sinned in Nicon’s deposition: both the Russian hierarchs and the Eastern Patriarchs had submitted to the pressure of tsar and boyars. (In 1676 Patriarch Joachim convened a council which hurled yet more accusations against him...\textsuperscript{236}) But judgement was deferred for a generation or two, while the Russian autocracy restored the Ukraine, “Little Russia”, to the Great Russian kingdom. With the weakening of Poland and the increase in strength of the generally pro-Muscovite Cossacks under Hetman Bogdan Khmelnitsky, large areas of Belorussia and the Ukraine, including Kiev, were freed from Latin control, which could only be joyful news for the native Orthodox population who had suffered so much from the Polish-Jesuit yoke. Moreover, the liberated areas were returned to the jurisdiction of the Russian Church in 1686.\textsuperscript{237} This meant that most of the Russian lands were now, for the first time for centuries, united under a single, independent Russian State and Church. The Russian national Church had been restored to almost its original dimensions. The final step would be accomplished by Tsar Nicholas II in 1915, just before the fall of the empire...

As if in acknowledgement of this, at the coronation of Tsar Theodore Alexeyevich certain additions were made to the rite that showed that the Russian Church now looked on the tsardom as a quasi-priestly rank. “These additions were: 1) the proclamation of the symbol of faith by the tsar before his crowning, as was always the case with ordinations, 2) the vesting of the tsar in royal garments signifying his putting on his rank, and 3) communion in the altar of the Body and Blood separately in accordance with the priestly order, which was permitted only for persons of the three hierarchical sacred ranks. These additions greatly exalted the royal rank, and Professor Pokrovsky explained their introduction by the fact that at the correction of the

\textsuperscript{234} Zyzykin, \textit{op. cit.}, part II, p. 48.
\textsuperscript{235} Quoted in Hackel, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{236} Rusak, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 193-194.
\textsuperscript{237} However, Constantinople’s agreement to the transfer was extracted under heavy pressure. Patriarch Dionysius signed the transfer of power under pressure from the Sultan, who wanted to ensure Moscow’s neutrality in his war with the Sacred League in Europe. Then, in 1687, Dionysius was removed for this act, and the transfer of Kiev to Moscow denounced as anti-canonical by the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Things were made worse when, in 1688, Moscow reneged on its promise to give Kiev the status of an autonomous metropolia and turned it into an ordinary diocese. This had consequences in the twentieth century, when Constantinople granted the Polish Church autocephaly in 1924, and then, from the beginning of the 1990s, began to lay claims to the Ukraine.
in the second half of the 17th century, the attention of people was drawn to the difference in the rites of the Byzantine and the additions were introduced under the influence of the Council of 1667, which wanted to exalt the royal rank.”

The pious tsar did not use his exalted position to humiliate the Church. On the contrary, he tried, as far as it was in his power, to correct the great wrong that had been done to the Church in his father’s reign. Thus when Patriarch Nicon died it was the tsar who ordered “that the body should be conveyed to New Jerusalem. The patriarch did not want to give the reposed hierarchical honours. [So] his Majesty persuaded Metropolitan Cornelius of Novgorod to carry out the burial. He himself carried the coffin with the remains.”

Again, it was the tsar rather than the patriarch who obtained a gramota from the Eastern Patriarchs in 1682 restoring Nicon to patriarchal status and “declaring that he could be forgiven in view of his redemption of his guilt by his humble patience in prison”.

This was hardly an adequate summary of the situation. But it did go some of the way to helping the Greeks redeem their guilt in the deposition of the most Grecophile of Russian patriarchs…

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238 Zyzykin, op. cit., part I, p. 165.
239 Rusak, op. cit., p. 194.
We have noted the opinion that if Patriarch Nicon had not been forced to leave his see, there would have been no Old Ritualist schism. Nor would there have been that weakening of the authority of the Church vis-à-vis the State that was to have such catastrophic consequences. And yet in the reign of Tsar Theodore Alexeyevich, Patriarch Nicon was posthumously restored to his see, the Old Ritualist schism was still of small proportions, and Church-State relations were still essentially “symphonic”. Even the Monastirskij Prikaz, which Nicon had fought so hard and unsuccessfully to remove, was in fact removed in 1675. What made the situation worse, and made the schism more or less permanent, was the stubborn fanaticism of the Old Ritualists and their turning a Church quarrel into a rebellion against the State.

Zenkovsky writes: “The struggle between the supporters of the old rite, on the one hand, and the state (the tsar) and the Church, on the other, was complicated by two important phenomena: the rebellion of the Solovki monastery (the monks were joined, at the beginning of the 1670s, by a part of the defeated rebels of Stepan Razin) and the burnings. The siege of Solovki, the very important monastery and fortress on the White Sea, lasted for ten years and ended with the deaths of almost all its defenders. This was no longer a conflict between the Church and the Old Ritualists, but between rebels and the state. More important in their consequences were the burnings – mass immolations of those Old Ritualists who considered that after the council of 1667 grace in the Church had dried up and that the Antichrist was already ruling on earth. The burnings had already begun in the middle of the 1660s under the influence of the ‘woodsman’, the fanatical and religiously completely pessimistic elder Capiton.

“The burnings lasted until the beginning of the 19th century, but at the end of the 17th, especially in the 1670s, they acquired a terrible character of a mass religio-psychological epidemic. In Poshekhonye (in the Trans-Volga region, near Kostroma) between 4000 and 5000 people perished in the burnings; in one of the northern burnings about 2500 people died at once. It is very difficult to estimate the general number of victims of the burning before the end of the 17th century, but in all probability their number was no less than 20,000, and perhaps even more…

“The uprising on Solovki, the burnings, the participation of the Old Ritualists in the Razin rebellion, and the formation of a Cossack Old Ritualist ‘republic’ that separated from the Russian State at the turn of the 17th-18th centuries, gave the government enough reasons to persecute all the supporters of the Old Russian faith [sic] without examination…”

241 Zenkovsky, op. cit., p. 89. Zenkovsky also notes that the priestless communities were not touched by the authorities, and that in general “the persecutions affected [only] those who
the death of Tsar Theodore in 1682. Lebedev writes: “He did not have a son and heir. Therefore power had to pass to the brother of the deceased, Ivan, the son of Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich from his first marriage with Maria Ilyinichna Miloslavskia. Behind Ivan Alexeyevich, there also stood his very active sister the Tsarevna Sophia. But we know that from the second marriage of Alexei Mikhailovich with Natalia Kirillovna Naryshkina there was another son, Peter Alexeyevich, who was born in 1672. In 1682 he was ten years old, while his half-brother Ivan was fifteen. The Naryshkins did not want to let their interests be overlooked, and wanted Peter to be made Tsar. A battle began between them and their supporters and the supporters of the Miloslavsky princes. The result was yet another schism, this time in the Royal Family itself… This of course elicited a time of troubles. Behind Sophia and the Miloslavskys there stood a part of the boyars, including Prince Basil Vasilyevich Golitsyn. Against them was Patriarch Joachim (at first not openly) and other supporters of the Naryshkins. A rumour was spread about them that they wanted to ‘remove’ (kill) Ivan Alexeyevich. The army of riflemen [streltsy] in Moscow rebelled. The riflemen more than once burst into the royal palace looking for plotters and evil-doers, and once right there, in the palace, before the eyes of the Royal Family, including Peter, they killed the boyars A. Matveev and I. Naryshkin. The country was on the edge of a new time of troubles and civil war. The wise Sophia was able to come to an agreement with the Naryshkins and in the same year both Tsareviches, Ivan and Peter, were proclaimed Tsars, while their ‘governess’, until they came of age, became the Tsarevna Sophia. The leader of the riflemen’s army, the very aged Prince Dolgorukov, was removed in time and Prince Ivan Andreevich Khovansky was appointed. He was able quickly to take the riflemen in hand and submit them to his will.

“The Old Ritualists decided to make use of these disturbances. Protopriest Nikita Dobrynin, aptly nicknamed ‘Emptyholy’, together with similarly fanatical Old Ritualists, unleashed a powerful campaign amidst the riflemen and attained the agreement of the Royal Family and the Patriarch to the holding of a public debate on the faith with the ‘Niconians’, that is, first of all with the Patriarch himself. This debate took place on July 5, 1682 in the Granovita palace in the Kremlin in the presence of the Royal Family, the clergy and the Syncele. Nikita read aloud a petition from the Old Ritualists that the new books and rites should be removed, declaring that they constituted ‘the introduction of a new faith’. Against this spoke Patriarch Joachim, holding in his hands an icon of Metropolitan Alexis of Moscow. He was very emotional and wept. The Old Ritualists did not want even to listen tried to preach amidst the non-Old Ritualist population” (p. 92). Bishop Gregory Grabbe writes: “The Church Herself hardly participated in the persecution… The persecutions were from the State and for political reasons, insofar as (some of) the Old Believers considered the power of the State to be antichristian and did not want to submit to it.” (Pis’ma (Letters), Moscow, 1998, p. 24).
They began to interrupt the Patriarch and simply shout: ‘Make the sign of the cross in this way!’ raising their hands with the two-fingered sign of the cross. Then Archbishop Athanasius of Kholmogor (later Archangelsk), who had himself once been an Old Ritualist, with knowledge of the subject refuted ‘Emptyholy’s’ propositions, proving that the new rites were by no means ‘a new faith’, but only the correction of mistakes that had crept into the services. Protopriest Nikita was not able to object and in powerless fury hurled himself at Athanasius, striking him on the face. There was an uproar. The behaviour of the Old Ritualists was judged to be an insult not only to the Church, but also to the Royal Family, and they were expelled. Finding themselves on the street, the Old Ritualists shouted: ‘We beat them! We won!’ – and set off for the riflemen in the area on the other side of the Moscow river. As we see, in fact there was no ‘beating’, that is, they gained no victory in the debate. On the same night the riflemen captured the Old Ritualists and handed them over to the authorities. On July 11 on Red Square Nikita Dobrynin ‘Emptyholy’ was beheaded in front of all the people.

“Then, at a Church Council in 1682, it was decided to ask their Majesties to take the most severe measures against the Old Ritualists, to the extent of executing the most stubborn of them through burning. And so Protopriest Avvakum was burned in Pustozersk. This is perhaps the critical point beyond which the church schism began in full measure, no longer as the disagreement of a series of supporters of the old rites, but as a movement of a significant mass of people. Now the Old Ritualists began to abuse not only the ‘Niconian’ Church, but also the royal power, inciting people to rebel against it. Their movement acquired not only an ecclesiastical, but also a political direction. It was now that it was necessary to take very severe measures against them, and they were taken, which probably saved the State from civil war. Many Old Ritualists, having fled beyond the boundaries of Great Russia, then began to undertake armed raids on the Russian cities and villages. It is now considered fashionable in our ‘educated’ society to relate to the schismatical Old Ritualists with tender feeling, almost as if they were martyrs or innocent sufferers. To a significant degree all this is because they turned out to be on the losing, beaten side. And what if they had won? Protopriest Avvakum used to say that if he were given power he would hang ‘the accursed Niconians’ on trees (which there is no reason to doubt, judging from his biography). He said this when he had only been exiled by the ‘Niconians’, and not even defrocked. So if the Old Ritualists had won, the Fatherland would simply have been drowned in blood. Protopriest Avvakum is also particularly venerated as the author of his noted ‘Life’. It in fact displays the very vivid Russian language of the 17th century and in this sense, of course, it is valuable for all investigators of antiquity. But that is all! As regards the spirit and the sense of it, this is the work of a boundlessly self-deceived man. It is sufficient to remember that none of the Russian saints wrote a ‘Life’ praising himself…”242

242 Lebedev, Velikorossia, pp. 154-156.
Old Ritualism took its starting-point from the prophecy of Archimandrite Zachariah (Kopystensky) of the Kiev Caves Lavra, who in 1620 had foretold that the coming of the Antichrist would take place in 1666. And in a certain sense the Antichrist did indeed come in 1666. For as a result of the unlawful deposition of Patriarch Nicon, the symphony of powers between Church and State in Russia was fatally weakened, leading, in the long run, to the appearance of Soviet power, in 1917...

The Old Ritualists also saw apocalyptic signs in the Tsar’s acceptance of the Patriarch’s reforms. And yet the parallel here, paradoxically, is with the Protestants, who similarly believed that true Christianity ended when State and Church came to work together in the time of the Emperor Constantine. The Old Ritualists fled into the woods to escape the Antichrist and wait for the Second Coming of Christ in their democratic communes, accepting the authority of neither king nor priest. Similarly, the Czech Taborites and German Anabaptists and English Puritans and Independents and Quakers fled from existing states to build their millenial communities in which the only king and priest was God.

This was particularly so with the priestless Old Ritualists, called the Bespopovtsi (as opposed to the Popovtsi, who still had priests, and the Beglopopovtsi who used priests fleeing from the official Church). The Popovtsi, according to St. Ignatius Brianchaninov, “are different in certain rites which have no influence on the essence of Christianity, while the latter [Bespopovtsi] have no Bishop over themselves, contrary to the ecclesiastical canons. The formation of the former was aided in part by ignorance ascribing to certain rites and customs a greater importance than these rites have; while the formation of the latter was aided by the Protestant tendency of certain individual people.” 243 The communities of the priestless, like those on the River Vyg in the north, were almost democratic communes, having no priests and recognising no political authority - not unlike the contemporary Puritan communities of North America. And gradually, as in the writings of Semeon Denisov, one of the leaders of the Vyg community, they evolved a new conception of Holy Russia, according to which the real Russia resided, not in the Tsar and the Church, for they had both apostasised, but in the common people. As Sergius Zenkovsky writes, Denisov “transformed the old doctrine of an autocratic Christian state into a concept of a democratic Christian nation.” 244

From that time an apocalyptic rejection of the State became the keynote of Old Ritualism. As Fr. George Florovsky writes, “the keynote and secret of

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244 Zenkovsky, in Hosking, op. cit., p. 72.
Russia’s Schism was not ‘ritual’ but the Antichrist, and thus it may be termed a socio-apocalyptical utopia. The entire meaning and pathos of the first schismatic opposition lies in its underlying apocalyptical intuition (‘the time draws near’), rather than in any ‘blind’ attachment to specific rites or petty details of custom. The entire first generation of raskolouchitelei [‘schismatic teachers’] lived in this atmosphere of visions, signs, and premonitions, of miracles, prophecies, and illusions. These men were filled with ecstasy or possessed, rather than pedants... One has only to read the words of Avvakum, breathless with excitement: ‘What Christ is this? He is not near; only hosts of demons.’ Not only Avvakum felt that the ‘Nikon’ Church had become a den of thieves. Such a mood became universal in the Schism: ‘the censer is useless; the offering abominable.’

“The Schism, an outburst of a socio-political hostility and opposition, was a social movement, but one derived from religious self-consciousness. It is precisely this apocalyptical perception of what has taken place which explains the decisive or rapid estrangement among the Schismatics. ‘Fanaticism in panic’ is Kliuchevskii’s definition, but it was also panic in the face of ‘the last apostasy’...

“The Schism dreamed of an actual, earthly City: a theocratic utopia and chiliasm. It was hoped that the dream had already been fulfilled and that the ‘Kingdom of God’ had been realised as the Muscovite State. There may be four patriarchs in the East, but the one and only Orthodox tsar is in Moscow. But now even this expectation had been deceived and shattered. Nikon’s ‘apostasy’ did not disturb the Old Ritualists nearly as much as did the tsar’s apostasy, which in their opinion imparted a final apocalyptical hopelessness to the entire conflict.

“‘At this time there is no tsar. One Orthodox tsar had remained on earth, and whilst he was unaware, the western heretics, like dark clouds, extinguished this Christian sun. Does this not, beloved, clearly prove that the Antichrist’s deceit is showing its mask?’

“History was at an end. More precisely, sacred history had come to an end; it had ceased to be sacred and had become without Grace. Henceforth the world would seem empty, abandoned, forsaken by God, and it would remain so. One would be forced to withdraw from history into the wilderness. Evil had triumphed in history. Truth had retreated into the bright heavens, while the Holy Kingdom had become the tsardom of the Antichrist...”

In spite of this apocalypticism, some of the Old Ritualists came to accept the Russian State as the legitimate Orthodox empire. Thus an investigator of the Old Rite in the 1860s, V.I. Kel’siev asserted that “the people continue to believe today that Moscow is the Third Rome and that there will be no fourth.

So Russia is the new Israel, a chosen people, a prophetic land, in which shall be fulfilled all the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, and in which even the Antichrist will appear, as Christ appeared in the previous Holy Land. The representative of Orthodoxy, the Russian Tsar, is the most legitimate emperor on earth, for he occupies the throne of Constantinople…”

246 Hosking, op. cit., p. 73.
Although the Old Ritualists were truly schismatics, they were not wrong in discerning signs of serious decline in Muscovy towards the end of the seventeenth century. Under the influence of the West, such practices as smoking and drunkenness appeared. And concubinage also appeared in the highest places.

Archbishop Nathaniel of Vienna writes: “By the time of Peter Holy Rus’ was not an integral, full-blooded vital phenomenon, since it had been broken… The Moscow Rus’ of Tsars Alexis Mikhailovich and Theodore Alekseyevich and Tsarevna Sophia, with whom Peter had to deal, was already only externally Holy Rus’.

“There is evidence that Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich had an illegitimate son (who later became the boyar Ivan Musin-Pushkin). Concerning Tsaritsa Natalia Kirillovna Tikhon Streshnev said that he was not her only lover, and Tsarevna Sophia had a “dear friend” in Prince Basil Golitsyn. Such sinful disruptions had been seen earlier, being characteristic of the generally sensual Russian nature. But earlier these sins had always been clearly recognised as sins. People did not justify them, but repented of them, as Great Prince Ivan III repented to St. Joseph of Volotsk for his sin of sorcery and fortune-telling, as the fearsome Ivan the Terrible repented of his sins. But if the tsars did not repent of their sins, as, for example, Basil III did not repent of his divorce from St. Solomonia, these sins were rebuked by the representatives of the Church and burned and rooted out by long and painful processes. In the second half of the 17th century in Moscow we see neither repentance for sins committed, nor a pained attitude to them on the part of the sinners themselves and the surrounding society. There was only a striving to hide sins, to make them unnoticed, unknown, for ‘what is done in secret is judged in secret’. A very characteristic trait distinguishing Muscovite society of the second half of the 17th century from preceding epochs, a trait fraught with many consequences, was the unrestrained gravitation of the upper echelons of Muscovite society towards the West, to the sinful West, to the sinful free life there, which, as always with sin viewed from afar, seemed especially alluring and attractive against the background of the wearisome holy Russian way of life.

“Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich, and all the higher Moscow boyars after him, introduced theatres. Originally the theatrical troupes most frequently played ‘spiritual’ pieces. But that this was only an offering to hypocrisy is best demonstrated by the fact that the actors playing ‘sacred scenes’ gratifying unspoiled sensuality about Joseph and Potiphar’s wife, David and Bathsheba...
were profoundly despised by the tsar and other spectators, who considered them to be sinful, ‘scandal-mongering’ people. (It is known that Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich changed the date of a presentation fixed for December 18, for ‘tomorrow is the eve of the Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ’.) The real exponents of the really sacred scenes: The Action in the Cave and the Procession on the Donkey were considered by nobody to be sinful people, and their scenes were put on precisely on holy days. The tsar was followed by the boyars, and the boyars by the noblemen; everything that was active and leading in the people was drawn at this time to a timid, but lustful peeping at the West, at its free life, in which everything was allowed that was strictly forbidden in Holy Rus’, but which was so longed for by sin-loving human nature, against which by this time the leading echelons of Muscovite life no longer struggled, but indecisively pandered to. In this sinful gravitation towards the West there were gradations and peculiarities: some were drawn to Polish life, others to Latin, a third group to German life. Some to a greater degree and some to a lesser degree, but they all turned away from the Orthodox Old Russian way of life. Peter only decisively opened up this tendency, broke down the undermined partition between Rus’ and the West, beyond which the Muscovites timidly desired to look, and unrestrainedly threw himself into the desired sinful life, leading behind him his people and his state.

“Holy Rus’ was easily broken by Peter because much earlier it had already been betrayed by the leading echelons of Muscovite society.

“We can see the degree of the betrayal of the Holy Rus’ to a still greater degree than in the pandering to the desires of the flesh and the gravitation towards the free and sinful life, in the state acts of Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich, and principally in the creation of the so-called Monastirskij Prikaz, through which, in spite of the protests of Patriarch Nicon, the tsar cruelly took into his own hands the property of the Church ‘for its better utilisation’, and in the persecutions to which ‘the father and intercessor for the tsar’, his Holiness Patriarch Nicon, was subjected. Nicon understood more clearly than anyone where the above-listed inner processes in the Muscovite state were inclining, and unsuccessfully tried to fight them. For a genuinely Old Russian consciousness, it was horrific to think that the state could ‘better utilise’ the property of the Church than the Church. The state had been able earlier - and the more ancient the epoch, and the more complete its Old Russianness, the easier and the more often - to resort to Church property and spend it on its own urgent military and economic needs. After all, the Church took a natural interest in this. A son or daughter can freely take a mother’s money in a moment of necessity, and in the given case it is of secondary importance whether he returns it or not: it is a question of what is more convenient to the loving mother and her loving son. They do not offend each other. But in the
The removal of the monastery lands by Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich (although this was elicited by the needs of the war in the Ukraine, which the Church very much sympathised with), another spirit was clearly evident: the spirit of secularisation. This was no longer a more or less superficial sliding towards the longed-for sinful forms of western entertainment, it was not a temporary surrender to sin: it was already a far-reaching transfer into the inner sphere of the relations between Church and State — and what a state: Holy Rus’ (!), - of the secular ownership relations with a view to ‘better utilisation’ instead of the loving relations between mother and children characteristic of Orthodox morality. Better utilisation for what ends? For Church ends? But it would be strange to suppose that the state can use Church means for Church ends better than the Church. For state ends? But then the degree of the secularisation of consciousness is clear, since state ends are placed so much higher than Church ends, so that for their attainment Church property is removed. State ends are recognised as ‘better’ in relation to Church ends.

“Finally, the drying up of holiness in Rus’ in the second half of the 17th century is put in clearer relief by the fact that, after the period of the 14th-16th centuries, which gave a great host of saints of the Russian people, the 17th century turned out to be astonishingly poor in saints. There were far more of them later. In the century of the blasphemous Peter there were far more saints in Russia than in the century of the pious tsars Alexis Mikhailovich and Theodore Alexeyevich. In the second half of the 17th century there were almost no saints in Rus’. And the presence or absence of saints is the most reliable sign of the flourishing or, on the contrary, the fall of the spiritual level of society, the people or the state.

“And so it was not Peter who destroyed Holy Rus’. Before him it had been betrayed by the people and state nurtured by it. But Peter created Great Russia…”

The transition from Holy Rus’ to Great Russia can be seen in the last decade of the seventeenth century, in the career of the last Patriarch of Muscovite Russia, Adrian. At his enthronement in 1690 he expressed a traditional, very Niconian concept of the relationship between the Church and the State: “The kingdom has dominion only on earth, ... whereas the priesthood has power on earth as in heaven... I am established as archpastor and father and head of all, for the patriarch is the image of Christ. He who hears me hears Christ. For all Orthodox are the spiritual sons [of the patriarch] - tsars, princes, lords, honourable warriors, and ordinary people... right-believers of every age and station. They are my sheep, they know me and they heed my archpastoral voice…”

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249 Quoted by Hackel, op. cit., p. 10.
However, this boldness evaporated when the domineering personality of Peter the Great came to full power in the kingdom. Thus, as M.V. Zyzykin writes, “when Tsaritsa Natalia, who had supported Patriarch Adrian, a supporter of the old order of life, died in 1694, there began a reform of customs which showed itself already in the outward appearance of the Tsar [Peter]. The Tsar’s way of life did not accord with the sacred dignity of the Tsar and descended from this height to drinking bouts in the German suburb and the life of a simple workman. The Church with its striving for salvation retreated into the background, and, as a consequence of this, a whole series of changes in customs appeared. Earlier the First-hierarchs and other hierarchs had been drawn into the Tsar’s council even in civil matters; they had been drawn to participate in the Zemskie Sobory and the Boyar’s Duma; now Peter distanced the Church’s representatives from participation in state matters; he spoke about this even during the lifetime of his mother to the Patriarch and did not summon him to the council. The ceremony on Palm Sunday in which the Tsar had previously taken part only as the first son of the Church, and not as her chief master, was scrapped. This ceremony on the one hand exalted the rank of the Patriarch before the people, and on the other hand also aimed at strengthening the authority of his Majesty’s state power through his participation in front of the whole people in a religious ceremony in the capacity of the first son of the Church. Until the death of his mother Peter also took part in this ceremony, holding the reins of the ass on which Patriarch Adrian [representing Christ Himself] sat, but between 1694 and 1696 this rite was put aside as if it were humiliating for the tsar’s power. The people were not indifferent to this and in the persons of the riflemen who rebelled in 1698 they expressed their protest. After all, the motive for this rebellion was the putting aside of the procession on Palm Sunday, and also the cessation of the cross processions at Theophany and during Bright Week, and the riflemen wanted to destroy the German suburb and beat up the Germans because ‘piety had stagnated among them’. In essence this protest was a protest against the proclamation of the primacy of the State and earthly culture in place of the Church and religion. So as to introduce this view into the mass of the people, it had been necessary to downgrade the significance of the First Hierarch of the Church, the Patriarch. After all, he incarnated in himself the earthly image of Christ, and in his position in the State the idea of the churchification of the State, that lay at the foundation of the symphony of powers, was vividly expressed. Of course, Peter had to remove all the rights of the Patriarch that expressed this. We have seen that the Patriarch ceased to be the official advisor of the Tsar and was excluded from the Boyars’ Duma. But this was not enough: the Patriarch still had one right, which served as a channel for the idea of righteousness in the structure of the State. This was the right to make petitions before the Tsar, and its fall symbolized the fall in the authority of the Patriarch. Soloviev has described this scene of the last petitioning in connection with the riflemen’s rebellion. ‘The terrible preparations for the executions went ahead, the gallows were placed on Belij
and Zemlyanoj gorod, at the gates of the Novodevichi monastery and at the
insurgent regiments. The Patriarch remembered the "dialogue between the Tsar and the victims of his wrath,
and had petitioned for the disgraced ones, lessening the bloodshed. Adrian
raised the icon of the Mother of God and set off for Peter at Preobrazhenskoye. But the Tsar, on seeing the Patriarch, shouted at him:
‘What is this icon for? Is coming here really your business? Get away from
here and put the icon in its place. Perhaps I venerate God and His All-holy
Mother more than you. I am carrying out my duties and doing a God-
pleasing work when I defend the people and execute evil-doers who plot
against it.’ Historians rebuke Patriarch Adrian for not saying what the First
Priest was bound to say, but humbly yielded to the Tsar, leaving the place of
execution in shame without venturing on an act of heroic self-sacrifice. He did
not oppose moral force to physical force and did not defend the right of the
Church to be the guardian of the supreme righteousness. The petitioning itself
turned out to be, not the heroism of the Patriarch on his way to martyrdom,
but an empty rite. The Patriarch’s humiliation was put in the shade by Peter
in that he heeded the intercession of a foreigner, the adventurer Lefort.
‘Lefort, as Golikov informs us, firmly represented to Peter that his Majesty
should punish for evil-doing, but not lead the evil-doers into despair: the
former is the consequence of justice, while the latter is an act of cruelty.’ At
that very moment his Majesty ordered the stopping of the execution...

In February, 1696 Patriarch Adrian was paralyzed, and in October, 1700, he
died. Peter did not permit the election of a new patriarch, but only a locum
tenens. Later in his reign he abolished the patriarchate itself and introduced
what was in effect a Protestant form of Church-State relations...

Thus the seventeenth century ended with the effective fall of the
symphony of powers in Russia in the form of the shackling of one of its two
pillars – the patriarchate... That this would eventually lead to the fall of the
other pillar, the tsardom, had been demonstrated by events in contemporary
England. For there were uncanny parallels in the histories of the two
countries at this time. Thus 1649 saw both the enactment of the Ulozhenie, the
first official and legal expression of caesaropapism in Russia, and the
execution of the king in England - the first legalized regicide in European
history. And if by the 1690s both the patriarchate in Russia and the monarchy
in England appeared to have been restored to their former status, this was
only an illusion. Soon the doctrine of the social contract, which removed from
the monarchy its Divine right and gave supreme power to the people, would
triumph in both countries: in England in its liberal, Lockean form, and in
Russia in its absolutist, Hobbesean form...

250 Zyzykin, op. cit., part III, pp. 218-220.
The Serbs had always seen themselves as the western outpost of Orthodoxy. As such, they suffered not only from eastern invaders, such as the Turks, but also from western heretics, such as the Austrians and Hungarians.

The last remnants of Serbian independence against the Turks, centered on Smederovo, disappeared in 1459. And Bosnia fell in 1463...

“The devastation was terrible. According to early Turkish sources, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries there were ten to fourteen active places of Christian worship left in Kosovo and Metohija.”

Of particular significance in the history of Serbia under the Turkish yoke was the burning of the body of St. Sava, which had been placed in the monastery of Mileshevo. “Mileshevo was plundered and destroyed,” writes Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich, “but happily not destroyed. The sarcophagus with Sava’s incorruptible body was not removed or desecrated for one hundred and fifty years after the Turkish conquest. Ever since Sava’s body was laid in it, and for over two hundred years of Serbian freedom and independence, Mileshevo had been a place of pilgrimages, equal to Zhicha and Studenica. It had been endowed and adorned by the Bans of Bosnia, the Princes of Herzegovina, the Zhupans of the seacoast and kings and tsars of Serbia. The petty lords wanted to make themselves great, and the great would make themselves still greater if they had some connection with Sava’s tomb or Sava’s name. So Tvrtko I chose Mileshevo in which to be crowned King of Bosnia at the tomb of St. Sava in 1277, although he was a protector of the Bogomils. Prince Stjepan Kossacha, an open Bogomil, adopted the title ‘Duke...

251 According to Dr. Miodrag M. Petrović, there was no independent Bosnian Church, although there were Orthodox Christians served by clergy of the Serbian Church. The so-called “Bosnian Church” was not an organization with an ecclesiastical territory and jurisdiction, but a completely secular institution, a diplomatic, advisory, arbitration and intermediary body at the courts of Bosnian rulers. (“Kudugers-Bogomils in Byzantine and Serbian sources and the ‘Bosnian Church’”, Belgrade, 1998, pp. 90-97)

252 “Orthodox Kosovo”, Saint Herman Calendar 2009, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood. At this time the future scourges of the Serbs, the Albanians, were fighting on the Christian side under their famous ruler Skanderbeg. Jason Tomes writes: “Born Gjergj Kastrioti around 1405, the legendary patriot was taken as a tribute child to be reared as a Muslim and trained for the Ottoman army. He covered himself with glory fighting for the Turks, and to his Islamic name Iskandar was added the honorific title bey (or beg). The Sultan appointed him Governor of Kruja, but in 1443 he mutinied, reverted to Catholicism, and declared himself ruler of Albania. Allied with Hungarians and Venetians, Skanderbeg resisted the Turks for twenty-five years, and his victories against tremendous odds won him an enduring place in European history. But, as so often with a military genius, his legacy proved unsustainable. Skanderbeg died of fever in 1468, and independence was lost within a decade, despite the efforts of his heirs…” (King Zog: Self-Made Monarch of Albania, Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2007, p. 10).
Orthodox rulers competed even more eagerly with remarkable for that sanctuary in which the sacred bright days of freedom, Mileshevo was a true center of lofty piety, education and educational activity. For Sava’s spirit ruled there and gave an example of strenuous labor and many accomplishments.

“In the dark days of Turkish tyranny, however, Mileshevo became to the Christian people a place of retreat, of deep repentance and of heavenly consolation. It was at the mercy of the Muslims and yet, strange as it may seem, it was for a long time protected by the Muslims themselves and the Serbs who were converted by force to Islam. The Muslims also witnessed innumerable miracles at the tomb of Saint Sava. A large village of Muslim converts, Hissarjik, close to the monastery, surpassed all others in their devotion to and protection of Mileshevo. Some of the daring European travellers who came to Serbia under the Osmanlis saw in Mileshevo the sarcophagus of Saint Sava ‘heaped with the gifts given by the Muslims’. Some of them mentioned that even Roman Catholics from Dalmatia and Jews made pilgrimages to the tomb of the saint.

“This situation lasted until the end of the sixteenth century. But in that century the Osmanli Turks became exasperated because of the ceaseless revolts and insurrections of the Serbs. The Serbs had never reconciled themselves to their cruel fate under the Turkish yoke, Guerillas from forests inside the country on the one hand, and refugees from Srem, Slavonia and Banat, on the other, constantly disturbed the Ottoman government. The Turks thought the trouble makers and revolutionaries had been inspired by the ancient Serbian monasteries. The cult and veneration of Saint Sava was then as great as ever before, and even greater on account of increasingly accumulated wonders.

“Facing the growing danger of frequent insurrection, the Turkish sultans of that time were imprudent enough to use means contrary to wisdom. Instead of dousing fire by water, they intensified it by wood and straw. They sent more and more petty tyrants to suppress the revolts by torture, destruction and bloodshed.

“At the beginning of the year 1595, a change took place on the throne in Istanbul. The new sultan, Mohammed III, son of a weak father, cruelly ordered Sinan Pasha to quell the Serbian revolts forever by any means. This ruthless pasha was informed that the Serbian monasteries were inspirational centers for the revolts against the Turks. He was informed that Mileshevo was a place of pilgrimage, a new Kaba, even for Muslims, and that many of them had been convert to the Christian faith because of the healing of their sick relations, and other wonders at the tomb of Saint Sava. Sinan Pasha at once ordered that Sava’s body be taken to Belgrade and burnt.
A certain Ahmed beg Ochuse was assigned the commission to carry out the pasha’s order. This brutal servant of the brutal lord, true to his nature, did it in a brutal way. He first placed a military cordon around the monastery of Mileshevo. Then he forced the monks to take the wooden coffin with the body of the saint out of the sarcophagus. The coffin was put on horses which were led by the monks themselves, because the Turks were afraid to touch it. And so the melancholy procession started. On the way the sobbing and crying monks were beaten and every Serbian man or woman met on the way was killed or taken along, lest they should inform the outlaws in the forests. So in this way the procession swelled considerably by the time it reached Belgrade.

“In the outskirts of the city of Belgrade, at a place called Vrachar, a pyre was made. On that pyre the wooden coffin containing the sacred boy was laid. On April 27, 1595, Saint Sava’s body was burnt to ashes. An unusually big flame soared heavenward, illuminated the city in the night and was seen from over the Danube River. And while the Turks were celebrating with satisfaction, and the enslaved Serbs in Belgrade were weeping and praying, the free Serbs beyond the Danube and the guerrillas on the mountains presented their swords in homage to their saint.

“So Sinan Pasha destroyed the body of Saint Sava, but increased his glory and influence. The triumph was only passing because it destroyed a cage from which the dove had fled long ago. The joy of the Turks was of short duration, for as the flame subsided, a sudden fear seized them, and they ran to their homes and shut the doors behind them. In Vrachar a few monks on their knees watched the fire from afar, waiting to take a handful of sacred ashes back to Mileshevo…”

In the seventeenth century, the persecution against the Serbian Orthodox intensified. Such great pillars of Orthodoxy as St. Basil of Ostrog (+1671) had to struggle both against the Jesuits and against the Turks. Meanwhile, the Serbs of Kosovo and Metohija had a further scourge in the shape of the Albanians, who gradually came down from the mountains and settled in the plain, and were then given significant positions of power because of their conversion to Islam.

Mark Mazower writes: “Albania was perhaps a special case from the point of view of religion. ‘We Albanians have quite peculiar ideas,’ one notable told Edith Durham. ‘We will profess any form of religion which leaves us free to carry a gun. Therefore the majority of us are Moslems.’”

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Wealth and material position were important factors affecting the decision of conquered peoples to convert to Islam. This contributed to the new stratification of the society under Ottoman rule, and a new power balance among national groups. The balance was shifting, and as far as the Albanians and Serbs were concerned, it was shifting drastically in favour of the Albanians, to the detriment of good relations between them. The emergence of a significant number of Islamized Albanians holding high Ottoman posts was reflected in Kosovo and Metohija. Albanians started appearing as officials and tax collectors in local administration, replacing Turks as the pillar of Ottoman authority. Local Serbs, who remained Christians, and Albanians, who were eager to convert, being divided by language and culture, and subsequently by religion, gradually became members of two fundamentally opposed social and political groups.

“The Albanians’ readiness to come to terms with the conquerors gave them the upper hand. This was the beginning of a tragic division, of separate roads. The former became the rulers and the latter the ruled.

“The latent Serbian-Albanian conflict came into the open during the Holy League’s war against the Ottoman Empire (1683-1690). Many Serbs joined the Habsburg troops as a separate Christian militia. The Albanians – with the exception of the gallant Roman Catholic Klimenti (Kelmendi) tribe – reacted in accordance with their recently acquired Islamic identity and took the side of the sultan’s army against the Christians.”

The Austrians advanced as far east as Kosovo, but then retreated, leaving the Serbs who had taken their side at the mercy of the vengeful Turks. Under the leadership of Patriarch Arsenius III Čarnojević of Pec, the Serbs “abandoned their farms and villages to trek north, then crossed the Danube with the retreating Austrians into Habsburg-ruled Hungary. In what was thereafter called Vojvodina, from the Slavonic for ‘duchy’, the emperor gave the Serbs [in 1690] a charter to establish their own community. The Habsburgs used these exiles as the first line of defence against Ottoman incursions.”

According to Noel Malcolm, the document that the Austrian Emperor Leopold I issued to Patriarch Arsenije was not in fact “inviting the Patriarch to bring his people to Hungary; on the contrary, it was urging him and his people to rise up against the Ottomans, so that Austrian rule could be extended all the way to ‘Albania’. For that purpose, it guaranteed (as Marsigli had suggested) that Habsburg dominion over their territory would not infringe their religious freedom or their right to elect their own vojvods. The

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document was endorsed: ‘An exhortation to the Patriarch of the Rascians, to rouse his people to rebel against the Turks’; and a key passage in the text said: ‘Do not desert your hearths, or the cultivation of your fields.’ Some nineteenth-century historians of a romantic Serbian persuasion dealt with this passage in a wonderfully economical way: instead of printing the correct text, which says non deserite (do not desert), they simply omitted the ‘non’.

“In the summer of 1690, however, all such plans for reconquest were abandoned. The Ottomans, under their competent Grand Vizier, had built up their forces, and the military tide had definitely turned. A massive Ottoman army advanced on Niš and besieged it; it surrendered on 6 September. The Imperial garrison was allowed to leave, but a large number of ‘Rascian’ soldiers (400 in one account, 4000 in another) were taken out and killed. In the last week of September, Belgrade was under siege; it held out for just twelve days, before an Ottoman shell hit the fort’s main powder-store on the night of 8 October, blowing the whole citadel to smithereens.

“By September Belgrade had become the natural destination of a large number of refugees. One modern historian estimates that there were 40,000 there; many of these would have come from the Niš region, and the region between Niš and Belgrade – areas which had been under Austrian administration for a whole year. But among them also would have been some of the people who had fled from the Prishtina-Trepça-Vučitërn area of Kosovo. Their Patriarch had reached Belgrade much earlier in the year. In June he had gathered a large assembly of Serbian religious and secular leaders there, to discuss further negotiations with the Emperor over the question of religious autonomy in the areas still under Austrian control…

“How – and exactly when – the Serb refugees escaped into Hungary is not clear… The conditions most of them had to live in, as they camped out in the central Hungarian region in the winter, were atrocious. Before the end of the year Patriarch Arsenije sent a petition to the Emperor Leopold begging for assistance for these people; he also gave an explicit estimate of their numbers.’ There have come to Esztergom, Komárom and Buda men with their wives and children, completely destitute and bare, coming to a total of more than 30,000 souls.’ Much later, in 1706, Arsenije made another estimate in a letter to Leopold’s successor: he said he had come to Hungary with ‘more than 40,000 souls’."

Arsenije created a metropolitanate at Karlovtsy, while a new Patriarch was appointed at Peć. There were now three Serbian Churches: the Patriarchate at Peć under the Turks, the metropolitanate at Karlovtsy under the Austrians, and a small independent Church in Montenegro which escaped the dominion of both great powers…

Let us now turn to the situation of the Orthodox under the Austrians…

It was hard to know which was the more difficult master – the Turks or the Austrians. The Turks kept their Christian subjects in poverty and ignorance, but did not, in general, compel them to renounce their religion. The Austrians were more “enlightened”, but at the same time a greater threat to the faith of their subjects. St. Paisius Velichkovsky moved his main Romanian monastery eastwards because he considered the Austrian threat to Orthodoxy greater than that of the Turks. And the Corfiot Eugene Voulgaris preached as far as the court of the Russian Empress Catherine II on the dangers of Catholicism to the Orthodoxy of the Balkans.

There were many Romanian Orthodox living in the lands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. During the reign of Empress Maria Theresa (1741-1780), the Orthodox of Transylvania and the Banat suffered great persecution from the Hungarian Catholics. Among those martyred for the faith then were SS. Bessarion, Sophronius and Oprea, and the Priests Moses and John.258 Others took avoiding action. Thus, fearing papist influence, the great monastic founder Paisius Velichkovsky moved his monks further west, into Turkish-controlled Moldavia.

This persecution coincided with a Catholic onslaught in other parts of the Orthodox world. Thus Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia writes: “In 1724 a large part of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch submitted to Rome; after this the Orthodox authorities, fearing that the same thing might happen elsewhere in the Turkish Empire, were far stricter in their dealings with Roman Catholics. The climax in anti-Roman feeling came in 1755, when the Patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, and Jerusalem declared Latin baptism to be entirely invalid and demanded that all converts to Orthodoxy be baptized anew. ‘The baptisms of heretics are to be rejected and abhorred,’ the decree stated; they are ‘waters which cannot profit… nor give any sanctification to such as receive them, nor avail at all to the washing away of sins’.”259

However, towards the end of the century the Austrian Emperor Joseph II introduced a certain measure of religious freedom, including for the Orthodox Christians. However, other measures introduced by him caused great harm to the Orthodox. Thus in the life of the Serbian Martyr Theodore Sladich we read: “In the late eighteenth century, many confused Serbs who had grown weary under the Turkish yoke and who wanted nothing of the Roman heresy, decided to turn to the ‘new’ ideas of the Enlightenment which came first to Voyvodina from Western Europe via Vienna, Bratislava,


259 Metropolitan Kallistos (Timothy Ware), The Orthodox Church, London: Penguin, 1964, p. 98.
in university centers. One of these ideas was the reduction of the number of holy days celebrated, in order to facilitate new economic plans. Some one hundred holy days were to be erased from the liturgical calendar. Also, under the Turkish system, Serbian clerical education was rather limited. Emperor Joseph II (1780-1790), 'the enlightened despot' in Vienna, with the blessing of Metropolitan Moses Putnik (1781-1790) in Srenski Karlovci (Lower Karlovac), advocated the closing of a number of monasteries in order to generate revenue to build various educational institutions. One supporter of this idea was the famous Serbian man of the Age of Reason, Dositheus Obradovich (1739-1811). Beginning as a monk in the Monastery of New Hopovo, he then left for Western Europe, returning to Vojvodina and later to Serbia as a humanist philosopher, a fierce critic of Church practices, and as Serbia’s first Minister of Education! In the end, this opting for the rationalism of the so-called Western European Enlightenment created within the pious Serbian peasantry a tremendous distrust of Church leadership, an abiding disdain for Church life and practices, and a many-faceted regression which was to last well into the nineteenth century.

“With all this in mind, it can now be easily ascertained why pious Serbs everywhere especially venerate St. Theodore Sladich. Quite often in his lifetime he was approached by both propagandists of the Latin Unia and by Serbian converts to Western rationalism who wanted him to leave the Church and embrace ‘modernistic’ ways of thought and living. Theodore was an ardent Orthodox and, due to his love for liturgical ritual and the vision of the doctrines of the Church, he became an outspoken proponent against the Latin Unia and the rationalistic innovations of Western Europe... In regard to rationalism and so-called ‘modern’ education, Theodore responded by explaining that the source of every true knowledge flowed from the Church – that all worldly knowledge can never replace that which a true Christian receives in church, God Himself educates the believer wholly: by acting upon his sight, hearing, smelling, feeling, taste, imagination, mind, and will, by the splendor of the images and of the building in general, by the fragrance of the incense, by the veneration of the Gospels, Cross and icons, by the singing and by the reading of the Scriptures. And most importantly, as Theodore once said: ‘In no way can secular education bring about the greatest mystery offered by the Church: the cleansing from sins’.”

In the eighteenth century the Russian autocracy gradually developed in the direction of western absolutist monarchy or despotism. The difference between autocracy and despotism was well characterized by Nicholas Berdiaev as follows: “[In the Orthodox autocracy] there are no rights to power, but only obligations of power. The power of the tsar is by no means absolute, unrestricted power. It is autocratic because its source is not the will of the people and it is not restricted by the people. But it is restricted by the Church and by Christian righteousness; it is spiritually subject to the Church; it serves not its own will, but the will of God. The tsar must not have his own will, but he must serve the will of God. The tsar and the people are bound together by one and the same faith, by one and the same subjection to the Church and the righteousness of God. Autocracy presupposes a wide national social basis living its own self-sufficient life; it does not signify the suppression of the people’s life. Autocracy is justified only if the people has beliefs which sanction the power of the tsar. It cannot be an external violence inflicted on the people. The tsar is autocratic only if he is a truly Orthodox tsar. The defective Orthodoxy of Peter the Great and his inclination towards Protestantism made him an absolute, and not an autocratic monarch. Absolute monarchy is a child of humanism... In absolutism the tsar is not a servant of the Church. A sign of absolute monarchy is the subjection of the Church to the State. That is what happened to the Catholic Church under Louis XIV. Absolutism always develops a bureaucracy and suppresses the social life of the people.”

The westernization of official Russia was accomplished by a revolution from above, by Tsar Peter I and his successors, especially Catherine II. However, state power would have been insufficient to carry out such a radical change if it had not been supported and propelled by the spread of Masonic ideas among the aristocracy, in whose hands the real power rested after the death of Peter. So before examining Peter’s reforms, it will be useful to examine the beginnings of Masonry in Russia. There is some evidence that Peter himself became a Mason in the West, but it is not conclusive. Russians joined the lodges, according to Hosking, because they “became a channel by which young men aspiring to high office or good social standing could find

262 V.F. Ivanov, 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, pp. 95-96.
There were deeper reasons, however. “Freemasonry,” as Walicki points out, “had a dual function: on the one hand, it could draw people away from the official Church and, by rationalizing religious experience, could contribute to the gradual secularisation of their world view; on the other hand, it could attract people back to religion and draw them away from the secular and rationalistic philosophy of the Enlightenment. The first function was fulfilled most effectively by the rationalistic and deistic wing of the movement, which set the authority of reason against that of the Church and stood for tolerance and the freedom of the individual. The deistic variety of Freemasonry flourished above all in England, where it had links with the liberal movement, and in France, where it was often in alliance with the encyclopedists. The second function was most often fulfilled by the mystical trend, although this too could represent a modernization of religious faith, since the model of belief it put forward was fundamentally anti-ecclesiastical and postulated a far-reaching internalisation of faith founded on the soul’s immediate contact with God.”

Russians, though not uninfluenced by the rationalist side of Masonry, were especially drawn by its mystical side. For while their faith in Orthodoxy was weak, they were by no means prepared to live without religion altogether. “Finding myself at the crossroads between Voltairianism and religion”, wrote Novikov, “I had no basis on which to work, no cornerstone on which to build spiritual tranquillity, and therefore I fell into the society.”

Peter’s return from his first journey to the West, writes B.A. Uspensky, “was immediately marked by a whole range of cultural innovations. Already in the next year there began the forcible shaving of beards; the destruction of beards was marked for the New Year, 1699. It was then that there also began the struggle against Russian national dress and a range of other reforms of the same kind.”

Peter learned many useful things on this journey to the West, especially as related to warfare. But in religion, as we shall see, the influences were harmful. And many, and not only the Old Ritualists, were prepared to condemn his undermining of the foundations of Russian society. Thus in 1699 or 1700, on a visit to Voronezh, he ordered the bishop of the city, St. Metrophanes, to visit him at the palace he had erected on an island in the

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263 Hosking, op. cit., pp. 164-165.
266 Quoted in Fomin & Fomina, Rossia pered vtorym prishestvien (Russia before the Second Coming), Sergiev Posad, 1998, volume I, p. 268.
Without delay the holy hierarch set out on foot to go to the tsar. But when he entered the courtyard which led to the palace, he saw that gods and goddesses had been set up there on the tsar’s order, to serve as architectural adornment. The holy one immediately returned to his residence. The sovereign was apprised of this, but, not knowing the reason why the holy Metrophanes had turned back, he sent another messenger to him with orders that he attend upon the sovereign in the palace. But the saintly bishop replied: ‘Until the sovereign commandeth that the idols, which scandalise all the people, be taken away, I cannot set foot in the palace!’ Enraged by the holy hierarch’s reply, the tsar sent him the following message: ‘If he will not come, he shall incur the death sentence for disobedience to the powers that be.’ To this threat the saint replied: ‘The sovereign hath authority over my life, but it is not seemly for a Christian ruler to set up heathen idols and thus lead the hearts of the simple into temptation.’ Towards evening, the tsar suddenly heard the great bell of the cathedral toll, summoning the faithful to church. Since there was no particular feast being celebrated the following day, he sent to ask the bishop why the bell was being rung. ‘Because His Majesty has condemned me to be executed, I, as a sinful man, must bring the Lord God repentance before my death and ask forgiveness of my sins at a general service of prayer, and for this cause I have ordered an all-night vigil to be served.’ When he learned of this, the tsar laughed and straightway commanded that the holy hierarch be told that his sovereign forgave him, and that he cease to alarm the people with the extraordinary tolling. And afterwards, Tsar Peter ordered the statues removed. One should understand that Peter never gave up his innovations, and if in this respect he yielded, it merely demonstrates the great respect he cherished for the bishop of Voronezh…”267

It was not only the Church that suffered from Peter’s drive to westernize and modernize the country. The nobility were chained to public service in the bureaucracy or the army; the peasants - to the land.268 And the whole country

268 “Under Peter I a beginning was laid to that serfdom which for a long time became the shame and illness of Russia. Before Peter from time immemorial not only state peasants, but also those of the landowners were not deprived of rights, they were under the protection of the laws, that is, they could never be serfs or slaves, the property of their lords! We have already seen that there were measures to limit and, finally, to ban the free departure of peasants, or their transfer from one lord to another. And there were measures to tie the Russian peasants to the land (but not to the lords!) with the aim of preserving the cultivation of the land in the central lands of Great Russia, keeping in them the cultivators themselves, the peasants that were capable of working. But Russian landowners always had bond-slaves, people who had fallen into complete dependence on the lords, mortgaging themselves for debts, or runaways, or others who were hiding from persecution. Gradually (not immediately) the landowners began to provide these bond-slaves, too, with their own (not common) land, forcing them to work on it to increase the lords’ profits, which at that time consisted mainly in the products of the cultivation of the land. Peter I, in introducing a new form of taxation, a poll-tax (on the person), and not on the plot of land and not on the ‘yard’
was subjected, by force at times, to the cultural, scientific and educational influence of the West. This transformation was symbolized especially by the building, at great cost in human lives, of a new capital at St. Petersburg. Situated at the extreme western end of the vast empire as Peter’s ‘window to the West’, this extraordinary city was largely built by Italian architects on the model of Amsterdam, peopled by shaven and pomaded courtiers who spoke more French than Russian, and ruled, from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards, by monarchs of German origin.

In building St. Petersburg, Peter was also trying to replace the traditional idea of Russia as the Third Rome by the western idea of the secular empire on the model of the First Rome, the Rome of the pagan Caesars and Augusti. As Wil van den Bercken writes: “Rome remains an ideological point of reference in the notion of the Russian state. However, it is no longer the second Rome but the first Rome to which reference is made, or ancient Rome takes the place of Orthodox Constantinople. Peter takes over Latin symbols: he replaces the title tsar by the Latin imperator, designates his state imperia, calls his advisory council senate, and makes the Latin Rossija the official name of his land in place of the Slavic Rus’…

“Although the primary orientation is on imperial Rome, there are also all kinds of references to the Christian Rome. The name of the city, St. Petersburg, was not just chosen because Peter was the patron saint of the tsar, but also to associate the apostle Peter with the new Russian capital. That was both a diminution of the religious significance of Moscow and a religious claim over papal Rome. The adoption of the religious significance of Rome is also evident from the cult of the second apostle of Rome, Paul, which is expressed in the name for the cathedral of the new capital, the St. Peter and Paul Cathedral. This name was a break with the pious Russian tradition, which does not regard the two Roman apostles but Andrew as the patron of Russian Christianity. Thus St. Petersburg is meant to be the new Rome, directly following on the old Rome, and passing over the second and third Romes…” 269

And yet the ideal of Russia as precisely the Third Rome remained in the consciousness of the people. “The service of ‘him that restraineth’, although undermined, was preserved by Russian monarchical power even after Peter – and it is necessary to emphasize this. It was preserved because neither the people nor the Church renounced the very ideal of the Orthodox kingdom,
and, as even V. Klyuchevsky noted, continued to consider as law that which corresponded to this ideal, and not Peter’s decrees.”

But if Russia was still the Third Rome, it was highly doubtful, in the people’s view, that Peter was her true Autocrat. For how could one who undermined the foundations of the Third Rome be her true ruler? The real Autocrat of Russia, the rumour went, was sealed up in a column in Stockholm, and Peter was a German who had been substituted for him…

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Perhaps the most important and dangerous influence that Peter had received on his journey to the West was that of the Anglican Bishop Gilbert Burnet. The Tsar and the famous preacher had many long talks, and according to Burnet what interested the Tsar most was his exposition of the “authority that the Christian Emperors assumed in matters of religion and the supremacy of our Kings”. Burnet told the Tsar that “the great and comprehensive rule of all is, that a king should consider himself as exalted by Almighty God into that high dignity as into a capacity of doing much good and of being a great blessing to mankind, and in some sort a god on earth”.271

Peter certainly came to believe a similar teaching concerning his role as tsar. “By God’s dispensation,” he said, “it has fallen to me to correct both the state and the clergy; I am to them both sovereign and patriarch; they have forgotten that in [pagan] antiquity these [roles] were combined.”272 And he now set out gradually to enslave the Church to the power of the State. From 1701 to 1718 he acted through a series of piecemeal measures, but was to some extent inhibited by the intermittent resistance of the locum tenens, Metropolitan Stefan Yavorsky of Ryazan, and of his own son, the Tsarevich Alexis. However, after the execution of the Tsarevich and the effective replacement of Yavorsky by a man more after his reforming heart, Metropolitan Theophanes Prokopovich of Pskov, Peter set about a systematic codification and consolidation of his reforms in his Ecclesiastical Regulation, published in 1721.

On January 24, 1701 Peter ordered the re-opening of the Monastirskij Prikaz which Patriarch Nicon had so struggled against. The Prikaz was authorized to collect all state taxes and peasant dues from the estates of the church, as well as purely ecclesiastical emoluments. A large proportion of this sum was then given to the state to help the war-effort against Sweden. In other words, while the Church was not formally dispossessed, the State took complete control over her revenues. St. Demetrius of Rostov protested: “You want to steal the things of the Church? Ask Heliodorus, Seleucus’ treasurer, who wanted to go to Jerusalem to steal the things of the Church. He was beaten by the hands of an angel.”273

272 It had not always been so. Thus early in his reign, in 1701, he replied to some Catholic Saxons who proposed a union between the Orthodox and Catholic churches: “Sovereigns have rights only over the bodies of their people. Christ is the sovereign of their souls. For such a union, a general consent of the people is necessary and that is in the power of God alone….” (Robert Massie, Peter the Great, London: Phoenix, 2001, p. 345).
The Church also lost her judicial independence, her ability to judge her own people in her own courts. The State demanded that clergy be defrocked for transgressing certain state laws. It put limits on the numbers of clergy, and of new church buildings. Monks were confined to their monasteries, no new monasteries could be founded, and the old ones were turned into hospitals and rest-homes for retired soldiers.

“Under Peter”, writes Andrew Bessmertny, “a fine for the giving of alms (from 5 to 10 rubles) was introduced, together with corporal punishments followed by cutting out of the nostrils and exile to the galleys ‘for the proclamation of visions and miracles’. In 1723 a decree forbidding the tonsuring of monks was issued, with the result that by 1740 Russian monasticism consisted of doddery old men, while the founder of eldership, St. Paisius Velichkovsky, was forced to emigrate to Moldavia. Moreover, in the monasteries they introduced a ban on paper and ink - so as to deprive the traditional centres of book-learning and scholarship of their significance. Processions through the streets with icons and holy water were also banned (almost until the legislation of 1729)! At the same time, there appeared... the government ban on Orthodox transferring to other confessions of faith.”

If Peter was a tyrant, he was nevertheless not a conventional tyrant, but one who genuinely wanted the best for his country. And in spite of the drunken orgies in which he mocked her institutions and rites, he did not want to destroy the Church, but only “reform” her in directions which he thought would make her more efficient and “useful”. Some of the “reforms” were harmful, like his allowing mixed marriages (the Holy Synod decreed the next year that the children of these marriages should be Orthodox, which mitigated, but did not remove the harmfulness of the decree). Others were beneficial. Thus the decree that the lower age limit for ordination to the diaconate should be twenty-five, and for the priesthood – thirty, although motivated by a desire to limit the number of persons claiming exemption from military service, especially “ignorant and lazy clergy”, nevertheless corresponded to the canonical ages for ordination. Again, his measures ensuring regular attendance at church by laypeople, if heavy-handed, at least demonstrated his genuine zeal for the flourishing of Church life. Moreover, he encouraged missionary work, especially in Siberia, where the sees of Tobolsk and Irkutsk were founded and such luminaries as St. John of Tobolsk and St. Innocent of Irkutsk flourished during his reign. And in spite of his own Protestant tendencies, he blessed the publication of some, if not all, books defending the principles of the Orthodox faith against Protestantism.


Dobroklonsky, op. cit., p. 717.)
The measure that most shockingly revealed the extent of the State’s invasion of the Church’s life was the demand that priests break the seal of confession and report on any parishioners who confessed anti-government sentiments. Thus did Peter create a “police state” in which the priests were among the policemen. Now “a ‘police state’,” writes Fr. Georges Florovsky, “is not only, or even largely, an outward reality, but more an inner reality: it is less a structure than a style of life; not only a political theory, but also a religious condition. ‘Policism’ represents the urge to build and ‘regularize’ a country and a people’s entire life – the entire life of each individual inhabitant – for the sake of his own and the ‘general welfare’ or ‘common good’. ‘Police’ pathos, the pathos of order and paternalism, proposes to institute nothing less than universal welfare and well-being, or, quite simply, universal ‘happiness’. [But] guardianship all too quickly becomes transformed into surveillance. Through its own paternalist inspiration, the ‘police state’ inescapably turns against the church. It also usurps the church’s proper function and confers them upon itself. It takes on the undivided care for the people’s religious and spiritual welfare.”

Before Peter could complete his reforms, he had to crush the opposition to them. This meant, in the first place, his son, the Tsarevich Alexis. For the Tsarevich, whose mother Peter had cast away in favour of the German Anna Mons and then the Balt Catherine, represented a focus around which all those who loved the old traditions of Holy Rus’ gathered, on whom they placed their hopes for a restoration of Patriarchal Orthodoxy. In killing him, therefore, Peter was striking a blow at the whole Orthodox way of life, and declaring, as it were, that there was no going back to the old ways. Exactly two centuries later, in 1918, the Bolsheviks would do the same, and for the same reasons, to Tsar Nicholas II...

Lebedev writes: “Peter I’s persecution of his own son, ending with the secret killing of the latter, was in essence the persecution of immemorial Great Russia, which did not want to change its nature, to be reborn according to the will of the monarch into something complete opposite to it. It was not by chance that the characteristics of the personality of the Tsarevich Alexis Petrovich mirrored so well the characteristics of the personality of the major part of Russia. In this major part the Tsar continued to be venerated, in spite of everything, as ‘the Anointed of God’, whom it was necessary to obey in everything except in matters of the faith, if he began to break or destroy its root foundations. Peter could not directly and openly war against this Great Russia (that is, with the majority of his people). Therefore he went on the path of slander (that his actions were opposed, supposedly, only by sluggards or traitors) and the hidden, as it were secret suffocation of everything whose root and core was Holy Rus’, Orthodox Rus’. On this path Peter was ineluctably forced to resort to one very terrible means: to cover his deliberately anti-God,

criminal actions with pious words, using the names, excerpts from the Holy Scriptures and or in other words, to act under the mask of Orthodox piety. Such had happened in earlier history and especially, as we remember, in the form of the actions of the ‘Judaizing’ heretics, Ivan IV and Boris Godunov. But from Peter I it becomes as it were a certain norm, a kind of rule for rulers that did not require explanation…”

Now that the Tsarevich was dead, Peter could proceed to the completion of his subjection of the Church to the State. But for that he needed a new first-hierarch. He found him in Metropolitan Theophanes (Prokopovich) of Pskov.

Prokopovich was distinguished by an extreme pro-westernism that naturally endeared him to Peter’s heart. Thus he called Germany the mother of all countries and openly expressed his sympathy with the German Lutheran theologians. This attachment to Lutheranism, especially as regards Church-State relations, is evident in his sermons. Thus in his sermon on Palm Sunday, 1718, he said: “Do we not see here [in the story of Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem] what honour is paid to the King? Does this not require us not to remain silent about the duty of subjects to esteem the supreme authority, and about the great resistance to this duty that has been exposed in our country at the present time? For we see that not a small part of the people abide in such ignorance that they do not know the Christian doctrine concerning the secular authorities. Nay more, they do not know that the supreme authority is established and armed with the sword by God, and that to oppose it is a sin against God Himself, a sin to be punished by death not temporal but eternal…

“Christians have to be subject even to perverse and unbelieving rulers. How much more must they be utterly devoted to an Orthodox and just sovereign? For the former are masters, but the latter are also fathers. What am I saying? That our autocrat [Peter], and all autocrats, are fathers. And where else will you find this duty of ours, to honour the authorities sincerely and conscientiously, if not in the commandment: ‘Honour thy father!’ All the wise teachers affirm this; thus Moses the lawgiver himself instructs us. Moreover the authority of the state is the primary and ultimate degree of fatherhood, for on it depends not a single individual, not one household, but the life, the integrity, and the welfare of the whole great nation.”

Already in a school book published in 1702 Prokopovich had referred to the emperor as “the rock Peter on whom Christ has built His Church” And in another sermon dating from 1718 he “relates Peter, ‘the first of the Russian tsars’, to his patron saint Peter, ‘the first of the apostles’. Like the latter, tsar

277 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 194.
279 Van den Brecken, op. cit., p. 176.
In July, 1721 Prokopovich published an essay “expressing the view that since Constantine’s time the Christian emperors had exercised the powers of a bishop, ‘in the sense that they appointed the bishops, who ruled the clergy’. This was, in short, a justification of Peter’s assumption of complete jurisdiction over the government of the church; for a ‘Christian sovereign’, Prokopovich concluded in a celebrated definition of the term, is empowered to nominate not only bishops, ‘but the bishop of bishops, because the Sovereign is the supreme authority, the perfect, ultimate, and authentic supervisor; that is, he holds supreme judicial and executive power over all the ranks and authorities subject to him, whether secular or ecclesiastical’. ‘Patriarchalism [patriarshestvo]’ – the belief that a patriarch should rule the autocephalous Russian church – Prokopovich equated with ‘papalism’, and dismissed it accordingly.”

The notion that not the Patriarch, but only the Tsar, was the father of the people was developed by Prokopovich in his Primer, which consisted of an exposition of the Ten Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer and the Beatitudes: “Question. What is ordained by God in the fifth commandment [‘Honour thy father and thy mother’]? Answer: To honour all those who are as fathers and mothers to us. But it is not only parents who are referred to here, but others who exercise paternal authority over us. Question: Who are such persons? Answer: The first order of such persons are the supreme authorities instituted by God to rule the people, of whom the highest authority is the Tsar. It is the duty of kings to protect their subjects and to seek what is best for them, whether in religious matters or in the things of this world; and therefore they must watch over all the ecclesiastical, military, and civil authorities subject to them and conscientiously see that they discharge their respective duties. That is, under God, the highest paternal dignity; and subjects, like good sons, must honour the Tsar. [The second order of persons enjoying paternal authority are] the supreme rulers of the people who are subordinate to the Tsar, namely: the ecclesiastical pastors, the senators, the judges, and all other civil and military authorities.”

As Cracraft justly observes, “the things of God, the people were being taught by Prokopovich, were the things of Caesar, and vice-versa: the two could not be distinguished.”

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281 Cracraft, op. cit., p. 60.
282 Cracraft, op. cit., p. 284.
With Prokopovich as his main assistant, Peter now proceeded to the crown legislation, his Ecclesiastical Regulation of 1721, which established an “Ecclesiastical College” in parallel with nine secular Colleges, or Ministries, to replace the old patriarchal system.

Peter did not hide the fact that he had abolished the patriarchate because he did not want rivals to his single and undivided dominion over Russia. In this he followed the teaching of the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes in his Leviathan: “Temporal and spiritual are two words brought into the world to make men see double, and mistake their lawful sovereign... A man cannot obey two masters...” “The fatherland,” intoned the Regulation, “need not fear from an administrative council [the Ecclesiastical College] the sedition and disorders that proceed from the personal rule of a single church ruler. For the common fold do not perceive how different is the ecclesiastical power from that of the Autocrat, but dazzled by the great honour and glory of the Supreme Pastor [the patriarch], they think him a kind of second Sovereign, equal to or even greater than the Autocrat himself, and imagine that the ecclesiastical order is another and better state.

“Thus the people are accustomed to reason among themselves, a situation in which the tares of the seditious talk of ambitious clerics multiply and act as sparks which set dry twigs ablaze. Simple hearts are perverted by these ideas, so that in some matters they look not so much to their Autocrat as to the Supreme Pastor. And when they hear of a dispute between the two, they blindly and stupidly take sides with the ecclesiastical ruler, rather than with the secular ruler, and dare to conspire and rebel against the latter. The accursed ones deceive themselves into thinking that they are fighting for God Himself, that they do not defile but hallow their hands even when they resort to bloodshed. Criminal and dishonest persons are pleased to discover such ideas among the people: when they learn of a quarrel between their Sovereign and the Pastor, because of their animosity towards the former they seize on the chance to make good their malice, and under pretence of religious zeal do not hesitate to take up arms against the Lord’s Anointed; and to this iniquity they incite the common folk as if to the work of God. And what if the Pastor himself, inflated by such lofty opinions of his office, will not keep quiet? It is difficult to relate how great are the calamities that thereby ensue.

“These are not our inventions: would to God that they were. But in fact this has more than once occurred in many states. Let us investigate the history of Constantinople since Justinian’s time, and we shall discover much of this. Indeed the Pope by this very means achieved so great a pre-eminence, and not only completely disrupted the Roman Empire, while usurping a great part of it for himself, but more than once has profoundly shaken other states and almost completely destroyed them. Let us not recall similar threats which have occurred among us.
In an ecclesiastical administrative council there is no room for such mischief. For here the president himself enjoys neither the great glory which amazes the people, nor excessive lustre; there can be no lofty opinion of him; nor can flatterers exalt him with inordinate praises, because what is done well by such an administrative council cannot possible be ascribed to the president alone... Moreover, when the people see that this administrative council has been established by decree of the Monarch with the concurrence of the Senate, they will remain meek, and put away any hope of receiving aid in their rebellions from the ecclesiastical order.”

Thus the purely imaginary threat of a papist revolution in Russia was invoked to effect a revolution in Church-State relations along Protestant lines. The Catholic threat was already receding in Peter’s time, although the Jesuits continued to make strenuous efforts to bring Russia into the Catholic fold. The real threat came from the Protestant monarchies, where caesaropapism was an article of faith.

Sweden and Prussia were the main models by the time of the *Ecclesiastical Regulation*. But the original ideas had come during Peter’s earlier visit to England and Holland. Thus, according to A. Dobroklonsky, “they say that in Holland William of Orange [who was also king of England] advised him to make himself ‘head of religion’, so as to become the complete master in his state.”

The full extent of the Peter’s Protestantization and secularization of the Church administration was revealed by the oath that the clerics appointed to the Ecclesiastical College were required to swear: “I acknowledge on oath that the Supreme Judge [Krainij Sud’ia] of this Ecclesiastical College is the Monarch of All Russia himself, our Most Gracious Sovereign”. And they promised “to defend unsparingly all the powers, rights, and prerogatives belonging to the High Autocracy of His Majesty” and his “august and lawful successors”. The Church historian, Igor Smolitsch, called it the capitulation document of the Russian Church. Certainly, no Christian can recognize any mortal man as his supreme judge in the literal sense.

Hobbes wrote in his *Leviathan*: “He who is chief ruler in any Christian state is also chief pastor, and the rest of the pastors are created by his authority”. Similarly, according to Peter and Prokopovich, the chief ruler was empowered to nominate not only bishops, “but the bishop of bishops [i.e. the patriarch], because the Sovereign is the supreme authority, the perfect, ultimate, and authentic supervisor; that is, he holds supreme judicial and executive power over all the ranks and authorities subject to him, whether

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Tsar henceforth took the place of the Patriarch – consulted with his bishops much less even than a his bishops. Thus, as Uspensky relates, “the bishops on entering the Emperor’s palace had to leave behind their hierarchical staffs… The significance of this fact becomes comprehensible if it is borne in mind that according to a decree of the Council of 1675 hierarchs left their staffs behind when concelebrating with the Patriarch… Leaving behind the staff clearly signified hierarchical dependence…”

As Bishop Nicodemus of Yeniseisk (+1874) put it: “The Synod, according to Peter’s idea, is a political-ecclesiastical institution parallel to every other State institution and for that reason under the complete supreme commanding supervision of his Majesty. The idea is from the Reformation, and is inapplicable to Orthodoxy; it is false. The Church is her own Queen. Her Head is Christ our God. Her law is the Gospel…” Bishop Nicodemus went on to say that in worldly matters the Tsar was the supreme power, but “in spiritual matters his Majesty is a son of the Church” and therefore subject to the authority of the Church.

Zyzykin writes: “Basing the unlimitedness of his power in Pravda Voli Monarshej on Hobbes’ theory, and removing the bounds placed on this power by the Church, he changed the basis of the power, placing it on the human base of a contract and thereby subjecting it to all those waverings to which every human establishment is subject; following Hobbes, he arbitrarily appropriated ecclesiastical power to himself; through the ‘de-enchurchment’ of the institution of royal power the latter lost its stability and the inviolability which is proper to an ecclesiastical institution. It is only by this de-enchurchment that one can explain the possibility of the demand for the abdication of the Tsar from his throne without the participation of the Church in 1917. The beginning of this ideological undermining of royal power was laid through the basing of the unlimitedness of royal power in Pravda Voli Monarshej in accordance with Hobbes, who in the last analysis confirmed it on the basis, not of the Divine call, but of the sovereignty of the people…”

The paradox that Petrine absolutism was based on democracy is confirmed by L.A. Tikhomirov, who writes: “This Pravda affirms that Russian subjects first had to conclude a contract amongst themselves, and then the people ‘by its own will abdicated and gave it [power] to the monarch.’ At this point it is explained that the sovereign can by law command his people to do not only anything that is to his benefit, but also simply anything that he wants. This interpretation of Russian monarchical power entered, alas, as an official act into the complete collection of laws, where it figures under No. 4888 in volume VII.

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290 Zyzykin, op. cit., part III, p. 239.
... In the Ecclesiastical Regulation it is explained that ‘conciliar government is the most perfect and better than one-man rule’ since, on the one hand, ‘truth is more certainly sought out by a conciliar association than by one man’, and on the other hand, ‘a conciliar sentence more strongly inclines towards assurance and obedience than one man’s command’... Of course, Theophanes forced Peter to say all this to his subjects in order to destroy the patriarchate, but these positions are advanced as a general principle. If we were to believe these declarations, then the people need only ask itself: why do I have to ‘renounce my own will’ if ‘conciliar government is better than one-man rule and if ‘a conciliar sentence’ elicits greater trust and obedience than one man’s command? 

“It is evident that nothing of the sort could have been written if there had been even the smallest clarity of monarchical consciousness. Peter’s era in this respect constitutes a huge regression by comparison with the Muscovite monarchy.”

Thus did Peter the Great destroy the traditional symphonic pattern of Church-State relations that had characterized Russian history since the time of St. Vladimir. Not until the reign of Nicholas II did the Church regain something like her former freedom, (It was Nicholas who, in 1901, removed the phrase “Supreme Judge”.)

As Karamzin put it, under Peter “we became citizens of the world, but ceased to be, in some cases, citizens of Russia. Peter was to blame.”

If we compare Peter I with another great and terrible tsar, Ivan IV, we see striking similarities. Both tsars were completely legitimate, anointed rulers. Both suffered much from relatives in their childhood; both killed their own sons and showed streaks of pathological cruelty and blasphemy. Both were great warriors who defeated Russia’s enemies and expanded the bounds of the kingdom. Both began by honouring the Church; both ended by attempting to bend the Church completely to their will...

There is one very important difference, however. While Ivan never attempted to impose a caesaropapist constitution on the Church (although he did kill her leader!), Peter did just that. The result was that Ivan’s caesaropapism disappeared after his death, whereas Peter’s lasted for another 200 years...

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291 Tikhomirov, Monarkhiceskaia Gosudarstvennost’ (Monarchical Statehood), St. Petersburg, 1992, pp. 302-303.
292 Karamzin, in Ivanov, op. cit., p. 137.
In September, 1721 Peter wrote to the Ecumenical Patriarch asking for his formal recognition of the new form of ecclesiastical administration in Russia – now more traditionally called a “Spiritual Synod” rather than “Ecclesiastical College”, and endowed “with equal to patriarchal power”. The reply came on September 23, 1723 in the form of “two nearly identical letters, one from Patriarch Jeremiah of Constantinople, written on behalf of himself and the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Alexandria, and the other from Patriarch Athanasius of Antioch. Both letters ‘confirmed, ratified, and declared’ that the Synod established by Peter ‘is, and shall be called, our holy brother in Christ’; and the patriarchs enjoined all Orthodox clergy and people to submit to the Synod ‘as to the four Apostolic thrones’.”

If the submission of Russia to the new order can be understood in view of Peter’s iron grip on the country, the Eastern Patriarchs’ agreement to the abolition of the patriarchate they themselves had established needs more explaining. Undoubtedly influential in their decision was the assurance they received from Peter that he had instructed the Synod to rule the Russian Church “in accordance with the unalterable dogmas of the faith of the Holy Orthodox Catholic Greek Church”. Of course, if they had known all the Protestantizing tendencies of Peter’s rule, and in particular his reduction of the Church to a department of the State, they might not have felt so assured…

Also relevant was the fact that the Russian tsar was the last independent Orthodox ruler and the main financial support of the Churches of the East. This made it difficult for the Patriarchs to resist the Tsar in this, as in other requests. Thus in 1716 Patriarch Jeremiah III acceded to Peter’s request to allow his soldiers to eat meat during all fasts while they were on campaign; and a little later he permitted the request of the Russian consul in Constantinople that Lutherans and Calvinists should not be baptized on joining the Orthodox Church.

But a still more likely explanation is the fact that the Eastern Patriarchs were themselves in an uncanonical (simonia) situation in relation to their

293 Vladimir Rusak, Istoria Rossiskoj Tserkvi (A History of the Russian Church), USA, 1993, p. 266.
294 Cracraft, op. cit., p. 223.
295 However, “Christopher Hermann von Manstein found that during the Ochakov campaign in the 1730s ‘though the synod grants them a dispensation for eating flesh during the actual campaign, there are few that choose to take the benefit of it, preferring death to the sin of breaking their rule” (in Hartley, op. cit., p. 242).
296 Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., part I, p. 294. At the Moscow council of 1666-67, it had been decreed, under pressure from Ligarides, that papists should be received, not by baptism, but by chrismation.
Thus in the 18th century we have the tragic spectacle of the Orthodox Church almost everywhere in an uncanonical position vis-à-vis the secular powers: in Russia, deprived of its lawful head and ruled by a secular, albeit formally Orthodox ruler; in the Greek lands, under a lawful head, the Ecumenical Patriarch, who nevertheless unlawfully combined political and religious roles and was chosen, at least in part, by a Muslim ruler; in the Balkans, deprived of their lawful heads (the Serbian and Bulgarian patriarchs) and ruled in both political and religious matters by the Ecumenical Patriarch while being under the supreme dominion of the same Muslim ruler, or, as in Montenegro, ruled (from 1782) by prince-bishops of the Petrovic-Njegos family. Only little Georgia retained something like the traditional symphony of powers. But even the Georgians were forced, towards the end of the eighteenth century, to seek the suzerainty of Orthodox Russia in the face of the Muslim threat: better an Orthodox absolutism than a Muslim one.

The problem for the smaller Orthodox nations was that there was no clear way out of this situation. Rebellion on a mass scale was out of the question. So it was natural to look in hope to the north, where Peter, in spite of his “state heresy” (Glubokovsky’s phrase), was an anointed sovereign who greatly strengthened Russia militarily and signed all the confessions of the faith of the Orthodox Church. And their hopes were not unfounded: by the end of the century the Ottomans had been defeated several times by the Russian armies, who now controlled the northern littoral of the Black Sea. And the threat posed by the Russian navy to Constantinople itself translated into real influence with the Sultan, which the Russian emperors and empresses used frequently in order to help their co-religionists in the Balkans.

Military defeat undermined the authority of the Ottomans. As Philip Mansel points out, they “owed their authority to military success. Unlike other Muslim dynasties such as the Sherifs, the senior descendants of the Prophet who had ruled in Mecca and Medina since the tenth century, they could not claim long-established right or the blood of the Qureish, the Prophet’s tribe. This ‘legitimacy deficit’ created conflict, even in the mind of a sixteenth-century Grand Vizier like Lutfi Pasha. Could the Ottoman Sultan be, as he frequently proclaimed, [the] ‘Shadow of God’?297

All these factors persuaded the Eastern Patriarchs to employ “economy” and bless the absolutist form of government in Russia. Nevertheless, every transgression of the sacred canons is regrettable. And the transgression in this case was to have serious long-term consequences...

Can we count Peter as an Orthodox Tsar? There are some, even among conservative historians, who believe that Petrine absolutism was not an unmitigated evil, but even worked in some ways for the good of the Orthodox Christian People, in accordance with the principle that “all things work together for good for those who love God” (Romans 8.28). Certainly, even an evil Tsar has at least this advantage, that he humbles the people, reminding them how far they have fallen, not being counted worthy of a merciful Tsar…

But some have even seen some of his aims as good in themselves. Thus the monarchist L.A. Tikhomirov wrote: “It would be superfluous to repeat that in his fundamental task Peter the Great was without question right and was a great Russian man. He understood that as a monarch, as the bearer of the duties of the tsar, he was obliged dauntlessly to take upon his shoulders a heavy task: that of leading Russia as quickly as possible to as a complete as possible a mastery of all the means of European culture. For Russia this was a ‘to be or not be’ question. It is terrible even to think what would have been the case if we had not caught up with Europe before the end of the 18th century. Under the Petrine reforms we fell into a slavery to foreigners which has lasted to the present day, but without this reform, of course, we would have lost our national existence if we had lived in our barbaric powerlessness until the time of Fredrick the Great, the French Revolution and the era of Europe’s economic conquest of the whole world. With an iron hand Peter forced Russia to learn and work – he was, of course, the saviour of the whole future of the nation.

“Peter was also right in his coercive measures. In general Russia had for a long time been striving for science, but with insufficient ardour. Moreover, she was so backward, such terrible labour was set before her in order to catch up with Europe, that the whole nation could not have done it voluntarily. Peter was undoubtedly right, and deserved the eternal gratitude of the fatherland for using the whole of his royal authority and power to create the cruelest dictatorship and move the country forward by force, enslaving the whole nation, because of the weakness of her resources, to serve the aims of the state. There was no other way to save Russia [!]

“But Peter was right only for himself, for his time and for his work. But when this system of enslaving the people to the state is elevated into a principle, it becomes murderous for the nation, it destroys all the sources of the people’s independent life. But Peter indicated no limits to the general enserfment to the state, he undertook no measures to ensure that a temporary system should not become permanent, he even took no measures to ensure
However, Protopriest Lev Lebedev, even while admitting the useful things that Peter accomplished, comes to a different and much darker conclusion: “We are familiar with the words that Peter ‘broke through a window into Europe’. But no! He ‘broke through a window’ into Russia for Europe, or rather, opened the gates of the fortress of the soul of Great Russia for the invasion into it of the hostile spiritual forces of ‘the dark West’. Many actions of this reformer, for example, the building of the fleet, the building of St. Petersburg, of the first factories, were accompanied by unjustified cruelties and merciless dealing with his own people. The historians who praise Peter either do not mention this, or speak only obliquely about it, and with justification, so as not to deprive their idol of the aura of ‘the Father of the Fatherland’ and the title ‘Great’. For the Fatherland Peter I was the same kind of ‘father’ as he was for his own son the Tsarevich Alexis, whom he ordered to be killed – in essence, only because Alexis did not agree with his father’s destructive reforms for the Fatherland. That means that Peter I did not at all love Russia and did not care for her glory. He loved his own idea of the transformation of Russia and the glory of the successes precisely of this idea, and not of the Homeland, not of the people as it then was, especially in its best and highest state – the state of Holy Rus’.

“Peter was possessed by ideas that were destructive for the Great Russian soul and life. It is impossible to explain this only by his delectation for all things European. Here we may see the influence of his initiation into the teaching of evil [Masonry] that he voluntarily accepted in the West. Only a person who had become in spirit not Russian could so hate the most valuable and important thing in Great Russia – the Orthodox spiritual foundations of her many-centuried life. Therefore if we noted earlier that under Peter the monarchy ceased to be Orthodox and Autocratic, now we must say that in many ways it ceased to be Russian or Great Russian. Then we shall see how the revolutionary Bolshevik and bloody tyrant Stalin venerated Peter I and Ivan IV. Only these two Autocrats were venerated in Soviet times by the communists – the fighters against autocracy... Now we can understand why they were venerated – for the antichristian and antirussian essence of their actions and transformations!

“Investigators both for and against Peter I are nevertheless unanimous in one thing: those transformations in the army, fleet, state administration, industry, etc. that were useful to Russia could not have been introduced (even with the use of western models) without breaking the root spiritual foundations of the life of Great Russia as they had been formed up to Peter. Therefore when they say that the actions of Peter can be divided into ‘harmful’ and ‘useful’, we must object: that which was useful in them was

Certainly, there were many in Peter’s reign who were prepared to pay with their lives for their confession that he was, if not the Antichrist, at any rate a forerunner of the Antichrist…

And yet the consensus of the Church was that Peter was not the Antichrist. Archbishop Nathaniel of Vienna poses the question: “Why, in the course of two centuries, have we all, both those who are positively disposed and those who are negatively disposed towards Peter, not considered him as the Antichrist? Why, next to the pious rebukers of Peter, could there be pious, very pious venerated of him? Why could St. Metrophanes of Voronezh, who fearlessly rebuked Peter’s comparatively innocent attraction to Greek-Roman statues in imitation of the Europeans, nevertheless sincerely and touchingly love the blasphemer-tsar and enjoy his love and respect in return? Why could Saints Demetrius of Rostov and Innocent of Irkutsk love him (the latter, as ‘over-hieromonk’ of the fleet, had close relations with him)? Why did the most ardent and conscious contemporary opponent of Peter’s reforms, the locum tenens of the Patriarchal Throne, Metropolitan Stefan Yavorsky, who struggled with Peter’s anti-ecclesiastical reforms and was persecuted and constrained by him for that, nevertheless not only not recognize Peter as the Antichrist, but also wrote a book refuting such an opinion? Why in general did the Church, which has always put forward from its midst holy fighters against all antichristian phenomena contemporary to it, however much these phenomena may have been supported by the bearers of supreme power, the Church which later, under Catherine II, put forward against her far more restrained, veiled and far less far-reaching anti-ecclesiastical reforms such uncompromising fighters as Metropolitans Arsenius (Matseyevich) and Paul (Konyuskevich) – why, under the Emperor Peter, did the Church not put forward against him one holy man, recognized as such, not one rebuker authorized by Her? Why did our best Church thinker, who understood the tragedy of the fall of Holy Rus’ with the greatest clarity and fullness, A.S. Khomiakov, confess that that in Peter’s reforms, “sensing in them the fruit of pride, the intoxication of earthly wisdom, we have renounced all our holy things that our native to the heart’, why could he nevertheless calmly and in a spirit of sober goodwill say of Peter: ‘Many mistakes darken the glory of the Transformer of Russia, but to him remains the glory of pushing her forward to strength and a consciousness of her strength’?

“And finally, the most important question: why is not only Russia, but the whole of the rest of the world, in which by that time the terrible process of apostasy from God had already been taking place for centuries, obliged precisely to Peter for the fact that this process was stopped by the mighty hand of Russia for more than 200 years? After all, when we rightly and with

299 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 175.
The Apostle Paul: ‘The mystery of lawlessness is already working, only it will not be completed until he who now restrains is removed from the midst’. [St. Petersburg] emperors, and not of the Muscovite tsars? These comparatively weak, exotic rulers, to whom the world outside their immediate dominions related in approximately the way that, in later times, they related to the Neguses and Negestas of Abyssinia, could not be the restrainers of the world. Consequently Peter was simultaneously both the Antichrist and the Restrainer from the Antichrist. But if that is the case, then the whole exceptional nature of Peter’s spiritual standing disappears, because Christ and Antichrist, God and the devil fight with each other in every human soul, for every human soul, and in this case Peter turned out to be only more gifted than the ordinary man, a historical personality who was both good and evil, but always powerful, elementally strong. Both the enemies and the friends of Peter will agree with this characterization…”

So Peter, according to this view, was at the same time both persecutor and protector of the Church, both a forerunner of the Antichrist and the Restrainer against the Antichrist. He did great harm to the Church, but he also effectively defended her against her external enemies, and supported her missionary work in Siberia and the East. And he sincerely believed himself to be, as he once wrote to the Eastern patriarchs, ‘a devoted son of our Most Beloved Mother the Orthodox Church’.

Did Peter repent of his anti-Church acts? It is impossible to say. All we know is that “from January 23 to 28 he confessed and received communion three times; while receiving holy unction, he displayed great compunction of soul and several times repeated: ‘I believe, I hope!’…” This gives us, too, reason to hope and believe in his salvation. For from that eternal world his old friend and foe, St. Metrophanes, once appeared to one of his venerated and said: “If you want to be pleasing to me, pray for the peace of the soul of the Emperor Peter the Great…”

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300 The assertion that in the presence of the Orthodox Kingdom – the Russian Empire – that terrible universal outpouring of evil which we observe today could not be completed, is not an arbitrary claim. This is witnessed to by one of the founders of the bloodiest forms of contemporary anti-theism, Soviet communism – Friedrich Engels, who wrote: “Not one revolution in Europe and in the whole world can attain final victory while the present Russian state exists” (‘Karl Marx and the revolutionary movement in Russia’). (V.M.)


303 Ivanov, op. cit., p. 140. See also “Smert’ Imperatora Petra I kak obrazets khristianskoj konchiny” (“The Death of Peter I as a Model of Christian Death”), Svecha Pokaiania (The Candle of Repentance), № 1, March, 1999, pp. 6-7.

Before his death Peter had instituted a new method of determining the succession to the throne. Abolishing primogeniture, which he called “a bad custom”, he decreed “that it should always be in the will of the ruling sovereign to give the inheritance to whomever he wishes”. The result was a woman on the throne, his (unlawful) wife Catherine I. “That,” writes Lebedev, “had never happened before in Great Russia. Moreover, she was not of the royal family, which nobody in Russia could ever have imagined up to that time.”

This retrograde step led to a situation in which, in sharp contrast to the relative stability of succession under the Muscovite tsars, every single change of monarch from the death of Peter I in 1725 to the assassination of Paul I in 1801 was a violent coup d’état involving the intervention of the Guards regiments and their aristocratic protégés. The result was perhaps the lowest nadir of Russian statehood, when the state was governed by children or women under the control of a Masonic aristocratic elite whose own support came, not from the people but from the army. This showed that the tsars, far from strengthening their power-base by the suppression of the Church, had actually weakened it.

Moreover, not only was the nationality of the Sovereigns mainly German, but the whole culture of their court was predominantly Franco-German, and most education in ecclesiastical schools was conducted in Latin.

And not only was a foreign culture imposed on the native one: for a short time the Russian Autocracy could even be said to have been abolished. For when Anna Ioannovna came to the throne in 1730, it was under certain conditions, which obliged her “in everything to follow the decisions of the Supreme Secret Council, not to marry, not to appoint an Heir, and in general to decide practically nothing on her own. In essence the ‘superiors’ thereby abolished the Autocracy!”

No sooner was Peter dead than thoughts about the restoration of the patriarchate re-surfaced. “The very fact of his premature death,” writes Zyzykin, “was seen as the punishment of God for his assumption of ecclesiastical power. ‘There you are,’ said Archbishop Theodosius of Novgorod in the Synod, ‘he had only to touch spiritual matters and

305 Tikhomirov, op. cit., p. 300.
307 “In the course of thirty-seven years Russia had, sardonic commentators remark, six autocrats: three women, a boy of twelve, an infant, and a mental weakling” (Riasanovsky, op. cit., p. 242).
308 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 206.
possessions and God took him. From the incautious words of Archbishop Theodosius, Theophanes [Prokopovich] made a case for his having created a rebellion, and he was arrested on April 27 [1725], condemned on September 11, 1725 and died in 1726. Archbishop Theophylactus of Tver was also imprisoned in 1736 on a charge of wanting to become Patriarch. On December 31, 1740 he again received the insignia of hierarchical rank and died on May 6, 1741. For propagandizing the idea of the patriarchate Archimandrite Marcellus Rodyshevsky was imprisoned in 1732, was later forgiven, and died as a Bishop in 1742. Also among the opponents of Peter’s Church reform was Bishop George Dashkov of Rostov, who was put forward in the time of Peter I as a candidate for Patriarch… After the death of Peter, in 1726, he was made the third hierarch in the Synod by Catherine I. On July 21, 1730, by a decree of the Empress Anna, he, together with Theophylactus, was removed from the Synod, and on November 19 of the same year, by an order of the Empress Anna he was imprisoned, and in February, 1731 took the schema. He was imprisoned in the Spasokamenny monastery on an island in Kubensk lake, and in 1734 was sent to Nerchinsk monastery – it was forbidden to receive any declaration whatsoever from him… Thus concerning the time of the Empress Anna a historian writes what is easy for us to imagine since Soviet power, but was difficult for a historian living in the 19th century: ‘Even from a distance of one and a half centuries, it is terrible to imagine that awful, black and heavy time with its interrogations and confrontations, with their iron chains and tortures. A man has committed no crime, but suddenly he is seized, shackled and taken to St. Petersburg or Moscow - he knows not where, or what for. A year or two before he had spoken with some suspicious person. What they were talking about – that was the reason for all those alarms, horrors and tortures. Without the least exaggeration we can say about that time that on lying down to sleep at night you could not vouch for yourself that by the morning that you would not be in chains, and that from the morning to the night you would not land up in a fortress, although you would not be conscious of any guilt. The guilt of all these clergy consisted only in their desire to restore the canonical form of administration of the Russian Church and their non-approval of Peter’s Church reform, which did not correspond to the views of the people brought up in Orthodoxy.’

“But even under Anna the thought of the patriarchate did not go away, and its supporters put forward Archimandrite Barlaam, the empress’ spiritual father, for the position of Patriarch. We shall not name the many others who

309 He tried to explain that “the patriarchate is not only the oldest but also the only lawful form of government (understanding by the patriarchate the leadership of the Church by one of her bishops)” (Zyzykin, op. cit., part III, p. 263). (V.M.)
310 Tikhomirov writes: “In the first decade after the establishment of the Synod most of the Russian bishops were in prison, were defrocked, beaten with whips, etc. I checked this from the lists of bishops in the indicated work of Dobroklonsky. In the history of the Constantinopolitan Church after the Turkish conquest we do not find a single period when there was such devastation wrought among the bishops and such lack of ceremony in relation to Church property” (op. cit., p. 300). (V.M.)
suffered from the lower ranks; we shall only say that the main persecutions dated to the time of the Empress Anna, when the impulse given by Peter to its natural result, the direct persecution of Orthodoxy. But after the death of Theophanes in 1736 Bishop Ambrose Yushkevich of Vologda, a defender of the patriarchate and of the views of Marcellus Rodyshevsky, became the first member of the Synod. With the enthronement of Elizabeth he greeted Russia on her deliverance from her internal hidden enemies who were destroying Orthodoxy.

“Chistovich writes: ‘The Synod remembered its sufferers under Elizabeth; a true resurrection from the dead took place. Hundreds, thousands of people who had disappeared without trace and had been taken for dead came to life again. After the death of the Empress Anna the released sufferers dragged themselves back to their homeland, or the places of their former service, from all the distant corners of Siberia – some with torn out nostrils, others with their tongue cut out, others with legs worn through by chains, others with broken spines or arms disfigured from tortures.’ The Church preachers under Elizabeth attributed this to the hatred for the Russian faith and the Russian people of Biron, Osterman, Minikh, Levenvold and other Lutheran Germans who tried to destroy the very root of eastern piety. They were of this opinion because most of all there suffered the clergy – hierarchs, priests and monks…”

"In Biron's time," writes Bessmertny, “hundreds of clergy were tonsured, whipped and exiled, and they did the same with protesting bishops - and there were quite a few of those. 6557 priests were forced into military service, as a consequence of which in only four northern dioceses 182 churches remained without clergy or readers." 312

“This is what happened in Russia,” writes Zyzykin, “when the State secularisation which had begun under Alexis Mikhailovich led to the dominion of the State over the Church, while the authority in the State itself was in the hands of genuine Protestants, who did not occupy secondary posts, as under Peter, but were in leading posts, as under the Empress Anna. The ideology of royal power laid down under Peter remained throughout the period of the Emperors; the position of the Church in the State changed in various reigns, but always under the influence of those ideas which the secular power itself accepted; it was not defined by the always unchanging teaching of the Orthodox Church” 313 - the symphony of powers.

How did the hierarchs themselves remember Biron’s time? Bishop Ambrose of Vologda wrote: “They attacked our Orthodox piety and faith, but in such a way and under such a pretext that they seemed to be rooting out

312 Bessmertny, op. cit., p. 136.
313 Zyzykin, op. cit., part III, p. 263.
...and harmful superstition in Christianity. O how many clerics and an even greater number of learned monks were defrocked, tortured and exterminated under that pretense! Why? No answer is heard except: he is a superstitious person, a bigot, a hypocrite, a person unfit for anything. These things were done cunningly and purposefully, so as to extirpate the Orthodox priesthood and replace it with a newly conceived priestlessness [bezpopovshchina]...

“Our domestic enemies devised a strategem to undermine the Orthodox faith; they consigned to oblivion religious books already prepared for publication; and they forbade others to be written under penalty of death. They seized not only the teachers, but also their lessons and books, fettered them, and locked them in prison. Things reached such a point that in this Orthodox state to open one’s mouth about religion was dangerous: one could depend on immediate trouble and persecution.”

Biron’s was a time, recalled Metropolitan Demetrius (Sechenov) of Novgorod, “when our enemies so raised their heads that they dared to defile the dogma of the holy faith, the Christian dogmas, on which eternal salvation depends. They did not call on the aid of the intercessor of our salvation, nor beseech her defence; they did not venerate the saints of God; they did not bow to the holy icons; they mocked the sign of the holy cross; they rejected the traditions of the apostles and holy fathers; they cast out good works, which attract eternal reward; they ate eat during the holy fasts, and did not want even to hear about mortifying the flesh; they laughed at the commemoration of the reposed; they did not believe in the existence of gehenna.”

Hardly coincidentally, the humiliation of the Russians was accompanied by the first real resurgence of Jewish influence since the heresy of the Judaizers in the fifteenth century.

Thus Solzhenitsyn writes, citing Jewish sources: “In 1728, under Peter II, ‘the admission of Jews into Little Russia was permitted, as being people who were useful for trade in the region’, first as a ‘temporary visit’, but ‘of course, the temporary visit was turned into a constant presence’. Reasons were found. Under Anna this right was extended in 1731 to the Smolensk province, and in 1734 – to Slobodskaya Ukraine (to the north-east of Poltava). At the same time the Jews were allowed to rent property from land-owners, and to take part in the wine trade. And in 1736 the Jews were permitted to transport vodka also to the state taverns of Great Russia.

“Mention should be made of the figure of the financier Levi Lipmann from the Baltic area. When the future Empress Anna Ioannovna was still living in Courland, she had great need of money, ‘and it is possible that already at that

314 Bishop Ambrose, in Florovsky, op. cit., pp. 128-129.
315 Metropolitan Demetrius, in Ivanov, op. cit., p. 155.
be useful to her’. Already under Peter he had moved to Petersburg. Under Peter II he ‘became a financial agent or jeweller at the Russian court. During the reign of Anna Ioannovna he received ‘major connections at the court’ and the rank of Ober-Gofkommissar. ‘Having direct relations with the empress, Lipmann was in particularly close touch with her favourite, Biron… Contemporaries asserted that… Biron turned to him for advice on questions of Russian state life. One of the consuls at the Prussian court wrote… that “it is Lipmann who is ruling Russia”’. Later, these estimates of contemporaries were subjected to a certain re-evaluation downwards. However, Biron ‘transferred to him [Lipmann] almost the whole administration of the finances and various trade monopolies’. (‘Lipmann continued to carry out his functions at the court even when Anna Leopoldovna… exiled Biron’).”\(^{316}\)

\(^{316}\) Solzhenitsyn, *Dvesti Let Vmeste* (Two Hundred Years Together), Moscow, 2001, pp. 26-27.
By the mercy of God, the Empress Anna died, and although Biron was appointed regent the next day, the Germans fell out amongst themselves. So in 1741, after the brief reign of Ivan VI, Elizabeth, a daughter of Peter the Great, who was both Russian and truly Orthodox, came to the throne.

Under Elizabeth, the Orthodox bishops returned from prison and exile, and the country breathed a sigh of relief. Soon she had restored to the Church some of her former privileges. Thus in 1742, writes Rusak, “the initial judgement on clergy was presented to the Synod, even with regard to political matters. The Synod was re-established in its former dignity, as the highest ecclesiastical institution with the title ‘Ruling’.

“The members of the Synod (Archbishop Ambrose Yushkevich of Novgorod, Metropolitan Arsenius Matseyevich of Rostov, both Ukrainians) gave a report to the empress in which they wrote that if it was not pleasing to her to restore the patriarchate, then let her at least give the Synod a president and body composed only of hierarchs. In addition, they petitioned for the removal of the post of over-procurator. The empress did not go to the lengths of such serious reforms, but she did agree to return to the clergy its property and submit the College of Economics to the Synod.”317

However, writes Nikolin, “there was a significant rise in the significance of the over-procurator, whose post was re-established (during the reign of Anna Ivanovna it had been suspended). Prince Ya.P. Shakhovskoj, who was appointed to the post, was given the right to give daily personal reports to the empress, who entrusted him personally with receiving from her all the ukazes and oral directives for the Synodal administration. Thereby, however, there arose a very ambiguous state of affairs. On the one hand, the Synod’s affairs were being reported directly to the supreme power, but on the other the idea of the State’s interest, and its priority over the ecclesiastical interest, was being constantly emphasized. The strengthening of the over-procurator’s power was aided by an ukaz of the empress introducing a new system of Church administration in the dioceses – the consistories. In these institutions a leading role was acquired by the secretaries, who were appointed by the over-procurator, controlled by him and accountable to him. However, the noticeable tendency evident in these years towards a strengthening of the over-procurator’s executive power in the Church was restrained by the personal goodwill of the empress towards the clergy.”318

One of the first things she did, in December, 1742, was to forbid residence for the Jews throughout the Empire, since “from such haters of the name of

317 Rusak, op. cit., p. 273.
318 Nikolin, op. cit., p. 96.
Christ the Saviour great harm for our subjects must be expected”. 140 Jews were expelled from the Ukraine. But then the wax trade reported to the Senate that bringing in merchandise will bring with it a diminution of state income”. The Senate itself added its voice to this complaint, telling the empress that her decree had caused great harm to trade in the Ukraine and the Baltic, with a corresponding loss in customs receipts. But the empress replied: “I do not want any profit from the enemies of Christ”… However, it seems likely that the empress’ decree, like similar earlier decrees, remained a dead letter…³¹⁹

“On Elizabeth’s accession to the throne,” writes Ivanov, “a popular movement appeared, directed against foreigners, which established itself in the two following reigns. The lower classes were waiting for the expulsion of the foreigners from Russia. But nothing, except some street brawls with foreigners, took place.

“A reaction began against the domination of the foreigners who despised everything Russia, together with a weak turn towards a national regime…

“During the 20 years of Elizabeth’s reign Russia relaxed after her former oppression, and the Russian Church came to know peaceful days…

“The persecution of the Orthodox Church begun under Peter I and continued under Anna Ivanovna began to weaken somewhat, and the clergy raised their voices…

“Under Elizabeth there began the elevation to the hierarchical rank of Great Russian monks, while earlier the hierarchs had been mainly appointed from the Little Russians…

“Under Elizabeth the Protestants who remained at court did not begin to speak against Orthodoxy, whereas in the reign of Anna Ivanovna they had openly persecuted it. Nevertheless, Protestantism as a weapon of the Masons in their struggle with Orthodoxy had acquired a sufficiently strong position in the previous reigns. The soil had been prepared, the minds of society were inclined to accept the Freemasons.

“‘In the reign of Elizabeth German influence began to be replaced by French,’ an investigator of this question tells us. ‘At this time the West European intelligentsia was beginning to be interested in so-called French philosophy; even governments were beginning to be ruled by its ideas… In Russia, as in Western Europe, a fashion for this philosophy appeared. In the reign of Elizabeth Petrovna a whole generation of its venerators was already being reared. They included such highly placed people as Count M. Vorontsov and Shuvalov, Princess Dashkova and the wife of the heir to the

³¹⁹ Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 28, 29.
But neither Elizabeth nor Peter III sympathized

“Individual Masons from Peter’s time were organizing themselves. Masonry was developing strongly…”\(^ {320}\)

Nevertheless, “in society people began to be suspicious of Masonry. Masons in society acquired the reputation of being heretics and apostates… Most of Elizabethan society considered Masonry to be an atheistic and criminal matter…

“The Orthodox clergy had also been hostile to Masonry for a long time already. Preachers at the court began to reprove ‘animal-like and godless atheists’ and people ‘of Epicurean and Freemasonic morals and mentality’ in their sermons. The sermons of Gideon Antonsky, Cyril Florinsky, Arsenius Matseyevich, Cyril Lyashevetsky, Gideon Krinovsky and others reflected the struggle that was taking place between the defenders of Orthodoxy and their enemies, the Masons.”\(^ {321}\)

It was in Elizabeth’s reign that the Secret Chancellery made an inquiry into the nature and membership of the Masonic lodges. The inquiry found that Masonry was defined by its members as “nothing else than the key of friendship and eternal brotherhood”. It was found not to be dangerous and was allowed to continue, “although under police protection”\(^ {322}\).

Masonry was particularly strong in the university and among the cadets. “The cadet corps was the laboratory of the future revolution. From the cadet corps there came the representatives of Russian progressive literature, which was penetrated with Masonic ideals…

“Towards the end of the reign of Elizabeth Petrovna Masonry openly revealed its real nature. At this time a bitter struggle was developing in the West between Austria and Prussia for the Austrian succession. In 1756 there began the Seven-Year war, in which Russia took an active part.

“The Mason Frederick II was again striving to subject Russia to his influence.

“This aim was to be attained completely by means of the defeat of the Russian army and her capitulation before the ‘genius’ commander.

“And one has to say that everything promised victory for Frederick II over the Russian army.

\(^ {320}\) Ivanov, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 160, 161, 162-163.

\(^ {321}\) Ivanov, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 165, 166.

\(^ {322}\) Rhoda, “Russian Freemasonry: A New Dawn”.
He had a very well trained, armed and provisioned army with talented officers.

“Frederick was undoubtedly helped by the Masons – Germans who had taken high administrative and military posts in Russia.

“The noted James Cate, the great provincial master for the whole of Russia, was a field-marshal of the Russian army, but in fact carried out the role of Frederick’s spy; in 1747 he fled [Russia] to serve him and was killed in battle for his adored and lofty brother.

“In general the Russian army was teeming with Prussian spies and Russian Mason-traitors.

“The Russian army was deliberately not prepared…

“And at the head of the Russian army the Masons placed Apraxin, who gave no orders, displayed an unforgivable slowness and finally entered upon the path of open betrayal.

“The victory at Gross-Egersford was won exclusively thanks to the courage and bravery of the Russian soldiers, and was not used as it should have been by the Russian commander-in-chief. Apraxin had every opportunity to cross conquered Prussia, extend a hand to the Swedes in Pomerania and appear before the walls of Berlin. But instead of moving forward he stopped at Tilsit and refused to use the position that was favourable for the Russian army… Apraxin was only fulfilling his duty of a Mason, which obliged him to deliver his lofty brother, Frederick II, from his woes…

“But this was not the only help extended to Prussia by the Russian Masons. In 1758, instead of Apraxin, who was placed on trial, Fermor was appointed as commander-in-chief. He was an active Mason and a supporter of Frederick II. Fermor acted just like Apraxin. He displayed stunning inactivity and slowness. At the battle of Tsorndof the commander-in-chief Fermor hid from the field of battle. Deserted and betrayed by their commander-in-chief the Russian army did not panic…

“But with the greatest equanimity the soldiers did not think of fleeing or surrendering…

“Frederick II had everything on his side: complete gun crews, discipline, superior weapons, the treachery of the Russian commander-in-chief. But he did not have enough faith and honour, which constituted the strength and glory of the Christ-loving Russian Army.
The help of the dark powers was again required: and the Russian Masons for the third time gave help to Frederick II.

“At first it was suggested that Fermor be replaced by Buturlin, whom Esterhazy quite justly called ‘an idiot’, but when this did not happen, they appointed Peter Saltykov to the post of commander-in-chief. The soldiers called him ‘moor-hen’ and openly accused him of treachery. At Könnersdorf the Russian commanders displayed complete incompetence. The left wing of the Russian army under the command of Golitsyn was crushed. At two o’clock Frederick was the master of Mulberg, one of the three heights where Saltykov had dug in. By three o’clock the victory was Frederick’s. And once again the situation was saved by the Russian soldiers. The king led his army onto the attack three times, and three times he retreated, ravaged by the Russian batteries. ‘Scoundrels’, ‘swine’, ‘rascals’ was what Frederick called his soldiers, unable to conquer the Russian soldiers who died kissing their weapons.

“One can overcome all of them (the Russian soldiers) to the last man, but not conquer them,’ Frederick II had to admit after his defeat.

“The victory remained with the Russian soldiers, strong in the Orthodox faith and devotion to the autocracy….

“The unexpected death of Elizabeth Petrovna on December 24, 1761 at the height of her powers and health saved Frederick II from inevitable ruin.”

Frederick was saved because Elizabeth was succeeded by Peter III, a grandson of Peter the Great who nevertheless preferred the Germany he had been brought up in to Russia. As Nicholas Riasanovsky writes: “Having lost his mother in infancy and his father when a boy, Peter was brought up first with the view of succeeding to the Swedish throne, for his father was a son of Charles XII’s sister. After Elizabeth’s decision, he was educated to succeed to the throne of the Romanovs. Although he lived in Russia from the age of fourteen, Peter III never adjusted to the new country. Extremely limited mentally, as well as crude and violent in his behaviour, he continued to fear and despise Russia and the Russians while he held up Prussia and in particular Frederick II as his ideal. His reign of several months, best remembered in the long run for the law abolishing the compulsory state service of the gentry, impressed many of his contemporaries as a violent attack on everything Russia and a deliberate sacrifice of Russian interests to those of Prussia. While not given to political persecution and in fact willing to sign a law abolishing the security police, the new emperor threatened to disband the guards, and even demanded that icons be withdrawn from the churches and that Russian priests dress like Lutheran pastors, both of which orders the Holy Synod did not dare execute. In foreign policy Peter III’s

323 Ivanov, op. cit., pp. 169, 170, 171-172.
admiration for Frederick the Great led to the withdrawal of Russia from the Seven Years’ War, an act which probably saved Prussia from a crushing defeat and deprived Russia of great potential gains. Indeed, the Russian emperor refused to accept even what Frederick the Great was willing to give him for withdrawing and proceeded to make an alliance with the Prussian king.”

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Although Peter’s manifesto giving freedom from obligatory state service to the nobility was, not unnaturally, applauded by the nobles, within a few months, on June 28, 1762, they staged a coup which led to the death of the Tsar, who, although he was also probably a Mason, was only “superficially” so according to Ivanov.325 His wife, Catherine, a German, appears to have cooperated with the coup that brought her to the throne, a coup that was organized by the Masons Panin and Gregory Orlov…326

Catherine’s accession to the throne was doubly illegal. Not only in that it took place over the dead body of her husband, but also in that the legitimate successor was her son, the future Tsar Paul I. What we have called the German persecution of Orthodoxy resumed…

Catherine’s first act was to reward her co-conspirators handsomely with money and serfs. This pattern became the rule during her reign as the number of those who needed to be rewarded (mainly her lovers) increased, as well as the numbers of serfs “on the market” through the conquest of new territories and the expropriation of church lands. Thus she took away about a million peasants from the Church, while giving about a million previously free (state) peasants into the personal possession of the nobility.327

Thus in the course of the eighteenth century, and especially during Catherine’s reign, the nobility recovered the dominant position they had lost under the Ivan the Terrible and the seventeenth-century Tsars. With this dominance of the nobility came the dominance of westernism in all its forms. As Pipes writes: “It has been said that under Peter [I] Russia learned western techniques, under Elizabeth western manners, and under Catherine western morals. Westernization certainly made giant progress in the eighteenth century; what had begun as mere aping of the west by the court and its élite developed into close identification with the very spirit of western culture. With the advance of westernization it became embarrassing for the state and the dvorianstvo [nobility and civil servants] to maintain the old service structure. The dvorianstvo wished to emulate the western aristocracy, to enjoy its status and rights; and the Russian monarchy, eager to find itself in the forefront of European enlightenment, was, up to a point, cooperative.

“In the course of the eighteenth century a consensus developed between the crown and the dvorianstvo that the old system had outlived itself. It is in

325 Ivanov, op. cit., p. 173.
326 According to Lebedev, the famous French Mason Count Saint-Germain, who was in Russia in 1762, also took part (op. cit., p. 215).
327 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 217.
this atmosphere that the social, economic and ideological props of the
patrimonial regime were removed...

“Dvoriane serving in the military were the first to benefit from the general
weakening of the monarchy that occurred after Peter’s death. In 1730,
provincial dvoriane frustrated a move by several boyar families to impose
constitutional limitations on the newly elected Empress Anne. In
appreciation, Anne steadily eased the conditions of service which Peter had
imposed on the dvorianstvo...

“These measures culminated in the Manifesto ‘Concerning the Granting of
Freedom and Liberty to the Entire Russian Dvorianstvo’, issued in 1762 by
Peter III, which ‘for ever, for all future generations’ exempted Russian
dvoriane from state service in all its forms. The Manifesto further granted
them the right to obtain passports for travel abroad, even if their purpose was
to enroll in the service of foreign rulers – an unexpected restoration of the
ancient boyar right of ‘free departure’ abolished by Ivan III. Under Catherine
II, the Senate on at least three occasions confirmed this Manifesto,
currently extending to the dvorianstvo other rights and privileges (e.g. the
right, given in 1783, to maintain private printing presses). In 1785 Catherine
issued a Charter of the Dvorianstvo which reconfirmed all the liberties
acquired by this estate since Peter’s death, and added some new ones. The
land which the dvoriane held was now recognized as their legal property.
They were exempt from corporal punishment. These rights made them – on
paper, at any rate – the equals of the upper classes in the most advanced
countries of the west.”

“The nobles,” writes Sir Geoffrey Hosking, “thus possessed certain secure
rights, including that of private property in land. This was an unprecedented
situation in Russian society, and, in the absence of a similar charter for
peasants, it consolidated in practice their right to buy and sell the serfs who
occupied that land as if they too were private property.

“Catherine’s reforms thus took the first step towards creating a civil society
in Russia, but at the cost of deepening yet further the already considerable
juridical, political and cultural gap between the nobles and the serfs among
whom they lived. Serfs became mere chattels in the eyes of their masters,
objects which could be moved around or disposed of at will, as part of a
gambling debt, a marriage settlement or an economic improvement scheme.
In practice, they could normally be sold as commodities, without the land to

Lebedev writes that “nobility itself was now also transferred by heredity insofar as the nobles
had been completely freed from the obligation to serve anywhere. They could send their serfs
to forced labour without trial, apply physical punishments to them, by and sell them
(exchange them for wolfhounds’…) Catherine II forbade only the sale of families of peasants
one by one: but (this became usual) ordered them to be sold in families. But in practice this
ruling was violated pretty often.” (op. cit., p. 227).
which they were theoretically attached, and without members of their own

“Lords had judicial and police powers over their serfs, as well as economic ones, which meant that they could punish serfs in any way they saw fit: they could flog them, send them to the army or exile them to Siberia. Theoretically, they were not permitted to kill a serf, but if a harsh flogging or other ill-treatment caused a serf’s death, there was very little his fellow peasants could do about it. Not that the great majority of lords were remotely so brutal or careless. But the mentality induced by this impunity nevertheless blunted the lord’s sense of responsibility for the consequences of his own actions.”

Catherine also gave the nobles the right to trade and the right to organize local associations that would elect local government officials. All this would seem to indicate the influence on Catherine of her reading of Montesquieu and Diderot.

Thus Montesquieu had argued for the creation of aristocratic “intermediate institutions” between the king and the people – institutions such as the parlements and Estates General in France; he believed that “no monarch, no nobility, no nobility, no monarch.” However, Montesquieu’s aim had been that these institutions and the nobility should check the power of the king. Catherine, on the other hand, was attempting to buttress her power by buying the support of the nobles.

But if the sovereign and the nobility were coming closer together, this only emphasized the gulf between this westernized élite and the masses of the Russian people. Even their concept of Russianness was different. As Hosking writes, “the nobles’ Russianness was very different from that of the peasants, and for that matter of the great majority of merchants and clergy. It was definitely an imperial Russianness, centred on elite school, Guards regiment and imperial court. Even their landed estates were islands of European culture in what they themselves often regarded as an ocean of semi-barbarism. The Russianness of the village was important to them, especially

329 Hosking, op. cit., p. 158. “Only extreme cruelty in relation to serfs (and that in the rarest cases!), sadistic torture and murder was punished, insofar as all this sickened the ‘moral feelings’ of the nobles, who considered themselves an ‘enlightened’ class. They paid no attention at all to ‘ordinary’ cruelty, it was in the nature of things. The serfs no longer vowed allegiance to the Tsars, and their testimonies were not admitted in court and they themselves could not take anybody to court. Their whole life, destiny, land and property were the personal property of the landowners. By forbidding the transfer of peasants from their lords in Little Russia, Catherine II began to spread serfdom into the Ukraine.” (Lebedev, op. cit., p. 227).


331 Hosking, op. cit., p. 102.
since it was bathed in childhood memories, but they knew it was something different.

Above all, the Russianness of the nobles was different from that of the peasants because the latter was based on Orthodoxy. But the nobles had different ideals, those of the French Enlightenment. Even the sovereign, the incarnation of Holy Russia, was becoming a bearer of the French ideals rather than those of the mass of his people. Moreover, with the growth in the power of the bureaucracy he was becoming increasingly isolated from ordinary people and unable to hear their voice.

The Muscovite tsars had created a Chelobitnij Prikaz that enabled the ordinary people to bring their complaints directly to the tsar. Even Peter, who, as we have seen, created the beginnings of a powerful bureaucracy, had retained sufficient control over the bureaucrats to ensure that he was not cut off from the people and remained the real ruler of the country. “But after his death, as Tikhomirov explained, “the supreme power was cut off from the people, and at the same time was penetrated by a European spirit of absolutism. This latter circumstance was aided by the fact that the bearers of supreme power were themselves not of Russian origin during this period, and the education of everyone in general was not Russian. [This] imitation of administrative creativity continued throughout the eighteenth century.”

Catherine went even further than Peter I in expropriating ecclesiastical and monastic lands. Already between 1762 and 1764 the number of monasteries was reduced from 1072 to 452, and of monastics – from 12,444 to 5105!

It goes without saying, therefore, that Catherine was no supporter of the traditionally Orthodox “symphonic” model of Church-State relations. “[The Archbishop of Novgorod],” she wrote to Voltaire, “is neither a persecutor nor a fanatic. He abhors the idea of the two powers”. And in her correspondence with the Austrian Emperor Joseph II she called herself head of the Greek Church.

Under Peter, the election of bishops had been as follows: the Synod presented two candidates for the episcopacy of a vacant see to the monarch, and he chose one of them. The newly elected bishop then had to swear an oath that included recognizing the monarch as “supreme Judge” of the Church. Catherine did not change this arrangement; and she restricted the power of the bishops still further in that out of fear of “fanaticism”, as Rusak

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332 Hosking, op. cit., p. 159.
333 Tikhomirov, op. cit., p. 341.
335 She once said to Countess Dashkova: “Also strike out ‘as a beneficent Deity’ - this apotheosis does not agree with the Christian religion, and, I fear, I have no right to sanctity insofar as I have laid certain restrictions on the Church’s property” (Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., vol. I, p. 299).
religious blasphemies, the violation of order in Divine services, and superstition were removed from the competence of the spiritual court...”

Catherine’s choice of over-procurators further fettered the expression of a truly Orthodox spirit in the Church.

“The first over-procurator in the reign of Catherine II,” writes Rusak, “was Prince A. Kozlovsky, who was not particularly distinguished in anything, but under whom the secularization of the Church lands took place.

“His two successors, according to the definition of Kartashev, were ‘bearers of the most modern, anti-clerical, enlightenment ideology’. In 1765 there followed the appointment of I. Melissino as over-procurator. His worldview was very vividly reflected in his ‘Points’ – a project for an order to the Synod. Among others were the following points:

“3)… to weaken and shorten the fasts...

“5)… to purify the Church from superstitions and ‘artificial’ miracles and superstitions concerning relics and icons: for the study of this problem, to appoint a special commission from various unblended-by-prejudices people;

“7) to remove something from the long Church rites; so as to avoid pagan much speaking in prayer, to remove the multitude of verses, canons, troparia, etc., that have been composed in recent times, to remove many unnecessary feast days, and to appoint short prayer-services with useful instructions to the people instead of Vespers and All-Night Vigils...

“10) to allow the clergy to wear more fitting clothing;

“11) would it not be more rational completely to remove the habit of commemorating the dead (such a habit only provides the clergy with an extra excuse for various kinds of extortions)...

“In other points married bishops, making divorces easier, etc., were suggested.

“As successor to Melessino there was appointed Chebyshev, a Mason, who openly proclaimed his atheism. He forbade the printing of works in which the existence of God was demonstrated. ‘There is no God!’ he said aloud more than once. Besides, he was suspected, and not without reason, of spending large sums of Synodal money.

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In 1774 he was sacked. In his place there was appointed the pious S. Akchuri, then A. Naumov. Both of them established good relations with the last over-procurator in the reign of Catherine II was the active Count A. Musin-Pushkin, the well-known archaeologist, a member of the Academy of Sciences, who later revealed the “Word on Igor’s Regiment”. He took into his hands the whole of the Synodal Chancellery. Being a Church person, he did not hinder the members of the Synod from making personal reports to the empress and receiving orders directly from her.” 337

The best hierarchs of the time were inhibited from attending Synodal sessions by the impiety of most of the over-procurators. Thus Metropolitan Platon of Moscow protested “on seeing that the over-procurators in the Synod (Melessino and Chebyshev) were penetrated with the spirit of freethinking, and that the opinions of the members of the Synod were paralyzed by the influence of the then all-powerful in church matters spiritual father of the empress, Protopriest Ioann Pamphilov”. 338

With the hierarchs in paralysis, it is not surprising that in the eighteenth century the lower clergy were in a still more humiliating condition, and were even subjected to physical violence by governors and landowners.

“Under Catherine II,” writes Lebedev, “the age-old Russian home and church schools for children were forbidden as not being scientific and aiding superstition. The local authorities were ordered ‘from the highest levels’ to introduce ‘correct’ schools with good teaching. But at that time for a series of reason they were not able to do this, while the schools of the old ‘amateur’ type disappeared both in the cities and in the countryside. And it turned out that ‘the enlightened age of Catherine’ laid a beginning to the wide spreading of illiteracy and ignorance in the masses of the Great Russian people, both in the lower classes of the city population and even more in the country. In the cities… schools and gymnasia were built mainly for the higher classes. It was at that time that lycea for men and the women’s Smolny institute appeared… There they studied the secular sciences thoroughly, but it was necessary to teach something spiritual there as well! The imperial power understood that it was impossible not to teach religion. On the contrary, in the interests of the authorities the Orthodox Faith and Church and Orthodox education were used as a means to educating the ‘new breed’ of noble (above all noble) fathers and mothers in the spirit of devotion to the authorities, a definite ‘morality’ and the honourable fulfilment of duty. But in ‘society’ at that time the Law of God was considered to be a purely ‘priestly’ subject. It was ordered that ‘children should not be infected with superstition and fanaticism’, that is, they were not to speak to them about the Old Testament punishments of God or about miracles and the Terrible Judgement (!), but

338 Dobroklonsky, op. cit., p. 549.
they were to instil in them primarily ‘the rules of morality’, ‘natural (?!)
religion and the importance of religious tolerance’. We shall see later what
type of people were the product of this kind of ‘Law of
God’…”

PUGACHEV’S REBELLION

Few were those who, in this nadir of Russian statehood and spirituality,
had the courage to expose the vices of Russian society while proposing
solutions in the spirit of a truly Orthodox piety. One of the few, as we have
seen, was St. Tikhon, Bishop of Zadonsk. He both rebuked tsars and nobles
for their profligate lives and injustice to their serfs; and criticized the western
education they were giving their children: “God will not ask you whether you
taught your children French, German or Italian or the politics of society life –
but you will not escape Divine reprobation for not having instilled goodness
into them. I speak plainly but I tell the truth: if your children are bad, your
grandchildren will be worse… and the evil will thus increase… and the root
of all this is our thoroughly bad education…”

Another righteous one was Metropolitan Arsenius (Matseyevich) of
Rostov, who rejected Catherine’s expropriation of the monasteries in 1763-
1764, saying that the decline of monasticism in Russia might in the end lead
“to atheism”. He also refused to swear an oath of allegiance to her as head of
the Church. For this he was defrocked and exiled to the Therapotov
monastery (where Patriarch Nicon had once been kept). But since he
continued to write letters against secularization, he was deprived of
monasticism and under the name of “Andrew the Liar” was incarcerated for
life in the prison of the castle in Revel (Tallinn). There he died in 1772, after
accurately prophesying the fates of those bishops who had acquiesced in his
unjust sentence.

Neither Saint Tikhon nor Metropolitan Arsenius counselled armed
rebellion against the State. However, some of the people, seeing the increasing
alienation of their sovereigns from traditional Orthodoxy, took action to
liberate, as they saw it, the Russian tsardom from foreign and heterodox
influence.

Thus the rebellion of Pugachev in 1774, while superficially a rebellion for
the sake of freedom, and the rights of Cossacks and other minorities, was the
very opposite of a democratic rebellion in the western style. For Pugachev did
not seek to destroy the institution of the tsardom: on the contrary, he
proclaimed himself to be Tsar Peter III, the husband of the Empress

341 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 221. Metropolitan Arsenius has recently been canonized by the
Moscow Patriarchate.
Catherine. He was claiming to be the real Tsar, who would restore the real Orthodoxy in pre-Petrine Russia – by which he meant Old Ritualism.

As we have seen, a false legitimism, as opposed to liberalism, was also characteristic of the popular rebellions in the Time of Troubles. K.N. Leontiev considered it to be characteristic also of Stenka Razin’s rebellion in 1671, and saw this legitimism as another proof of how deeply the Great Russian people was penetrated by the Byzantine spirit: “Almost all of our major rebellions have never had a Protestant or liberal-democratic character, but have borne upon themselves the idiosyncratic seal of false-legitimism, that is, of that native and religious monarchist principle, which created the whole greatness of our State.

“The rebellion of Stenka Razin failed immediately people became convinced that the tsar did not agree with their ataman. Moreover, Razin constantly tried to show that he was fighting, not against royal blood, but only against the boyars and the clergy who agreed with them.

“Pugachev was cleverer in fighting against the government of Catherine, whose strength was incomparably greater than the strength of pre-Petrine Rus’. He deceived the people, he used that legitimism of the Great Russian people of which I have been speaking.”

“The slogan of Pugachev’s movement,” writes Ivanov, “was The Freedom of the Orthodox Faith. In his manifestos Pugachev bestowed ‘the cross and the beard’ on the Old Believers. He promised that in his new kingdom, after Petersburg had been destroyed, everyone would ‘hold the old faith, the shaving of beards will be strictly forbidden, as well as the wearing of German clothes.’ The present churches, went the rumour, would be razed, seven-domed ones would be built, the sign of the cross would be made, not with three fingers, but with two. In Pugachev the people saw the longed-for lawful tsar. It was in this that the power of Pugachev’s movement consisted. There is no doubt that economic reasons played a significant role in this movement. The dominance of foreigners and Russian rubbish under Peter I and of the Masonic oligarchy under his successors had created fertile soil for popular discontent. The Masonic oligarchy acted in its own egoistic interests, despising the needs and interests of the people.”

However, the Church and the great mass of the people still recognized Catherine as the lawful anointed sovereign, and the hierarchs of the Church publicly called on the people to reject the pretender. As a result, “it is not surprising that Pugachev dealt cruelly with the clergy. From their midst he

343 Ivanov, op. cit., pp. 182-183.
There were weighty reasons for this loyalty. The eighteenth-century sovereigns of Russia, while being despotic in their administration and non-Russian in their culture, never formally renounced the Orthodox faith, and even defended it at times. Thus “Peter I,” writes Dobroklonsky, “who allowed himself a relaxed attitude towards the institutions of the Church, and even clowning parodies of sacred actions, nevertheless considered it necessary to restrain others. There was a case when he beat Tatischev with a rod for having permitted himself some liberty in relation to church traditions, adding: ‘Don’t lead believing souls astray, don’t introduce free-thinking, which is harmful for the public well-being; I did not teach you to be an enemy of society and the Church.’ On another occasion he subjected Prince Khovansky and some young princes and courtiers to cruel physical punishments for having performed a blasphemous rite of burial on a guest who was drunk to the point of unconsciousness and mocked church vessels. While breaking the fast himself, Peter I, so as not to lead others astray, asked for a dispensation for himself from the patriarch. Anna Ioannovna, the former duchess of Courland, who was surrounded by Germans, nevertheless paid her dues of veneration for the institutions of the Orthodox Church; every day she attended Divine services, zealously built and adorned churches, and even went on pilgrimages. Elizabeth Petrovna was a model of sincere pity: she gave generous alms for the upkeep of churches, the adornment of icons and shrines both with money and with the work of her own hand: in her beloved Alexandrovsk sloboda she was present at Divine services every day, rode or went on foot on pilgrimages to monasteries, observed the fast in strict abstinence and withdrawal, even renouncing official audiences. There is a tradition that before her death she had the intention of becoming tonsured as a nun. Even Catherine II, in spite of the fact that she was a fan of the fashionable French philosophy, considered it necessary to carry out the demands of piety: on feastdays she was without fail present at Divine services; she venerated the clergy and kissed the hands of priests…”

Moreover, the eighteenth-century sovereigns undoubtedly served the ends of Divine Providence in other important ways. Thus it was under Peter I, and with his active support, that the Russian Spiritual Mission in Beijing was established. Again, it was towards the end of the eighteenth century that the Russian mission to Alaska began. Moreover, it was under Catherine especially that the age-old persecutor of Russian Orthodoxy, Poland, was humbled, literally disappearing from the map of Europe, while Ottoman Turkey was driven from the north shore of the Black Sea, thus enabling the

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344 Dobroklonsky, op. cit., p. 579.
Russia to be colonized and exploited. These military triumphs, which were essential for the survival of the Orthodox Empire into the next century (although they created their own problems, as we shall see), would have been impossible, given Russia’s lack of economic development, without a very authoritarian power at the helm. Moreover, it must be remembered that at this low point in Russia’s spiritual progress, a rigid straitjacket may well have been necessary.

Thus with regard to religion, as the historian Mikhail Pogodin once commented, “if the ban on apostasy had been lifted, half the Russian peasants would have joined the raskol [Old Ritualists], while half the aristocrats would have converted to Catholicism.”

Although this is clearly an exaggeration, it nevertheless contains this kernel of truth: that the greater initiative and responsibility given to the Church and people in a true Orthodox autocracy would have been too great a burden for the Russian Church and people to sustain at this time. They were simply not prepared for it.

Sometimes the body needs to regain its strength before the soul can begin the process of regeneration. A broken limb needs to be strapped in a rigid encasement of plaster of Paris until the break has healed, the plaster can be removed and the restored limb is strong enough to step out without any support. In the same say, the straitjacket of "Orthodox absolutism", contrary to the Orthodox ideal though it was, was perhaps necessary until the double fracture in Russian society caused by westernism and the Old Ritualist schism could be healed…

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There were two major consequences of the three partitions of Poland in 1772, 1793 and 1795: one very good and one very bad.

The good consequence was the liberation of millions of Orthodox peasants from their Polish and Jewish persecutors, and the return of millions of uniates to the Orthodox Church.

As A.P. Dobroklonsky writes: “With the union of Belorussia and the south-western regions to Russia there finally came to an end the age-old sufferings of the Orthodox there. At the same time there came the right opportunity for the uniates to throw off the fetters of the unia that had been forcibly imposed upon them. The Belorussian Archbishop George Konissky received many declarations from uniate parishes wishing to return to Orthodoxy. Although the Russian government did not allow him to do anything about these declarations without special permission, and itself did not give permission for about 8 years, the striving of the uniates for Orthodoxy did not wane. When, finally, permission was given, up to 130,000 uniates went over to Orthodoxy. In the south-western region an energetic assistant of George Konissky in the work of uniting the uniates was Victor Sadkovsky, who had been released from prison and raised to the see of Minsk (1793). With the permission of the government, he published an appeal to the uniates of his diocese urging them to return to Orthodoxy. Soon, on the orders of the government, the same was done in the Belorussian region. Moreover, the government told local authorities to remove all obstacles that might appear in the unification of the uniates on the part of the Roman Catholic clergy and landowners, and threatened the guilty with responsibility before the law, while at the same time forbidding their forcible union. The appeals had an extraordinary success. In less than a year (from the middle of 1794 to the beginning of 1795), more than one-and-a-half million uniates had joined the Orthodox Church; the numbers of those united by the end of the reign of Catherine II came to no less than two million.”

This was a great triumph. And yet we may agree with Lebedev that “from the point of view of the interests of Great Russia, it was necessary to pacify Poland, but not seize the age-old Polish and purely Lithuanian lands. This wrong attitude of Russia to the neighbouring peoples then became a ‘mine’ which later more than once exploded with bad consequences for Russia…”

However, the bad consequence of the victory over Poland was that the Russian empire acquired a vast new influx of Jews - as many as a million

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349 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 232.
According to one estimate, 1.36 million according to another. Administering territory with its mixed population of Russians, Poles and Jews would have been a major problem for any State. As the worried Catherine II wrote: “what seemed a child’s game is becoming a most serious matter. The Russian state has bumped into the most numerous Jewish masses in Europe”.

The problem was made much worse by the fact the Jewish population constituted a “State within the State”, being governed by its rabbis and kahals according to the Talmud and its viciously anti-Russian and anti-Christian world-view. The authorities had a responsibility both to that majority of Jews who suffered from the despotism of their rabbis, and to the Belorussian peasants who were exploited by the Jews economically. Nevertheless, Catherine, - influenced, no doubt, by her Masonic courtiers and by the Toleranzpatent (1782) of her fellow “enlightened despot”, Joseph II of Austria - tried giving full rights to the Jews...

Solzhenitsyn writes: “When the Jews passed under the authority of the Russian State, the whole of this internal system in which the kahal hierarchy was interested was preserved. And, as Yu. I. Hessen presupposes with that irritation that by the middle of the 19th century had grown among enlightened Jews against the ossified Talmudist tradition, ‘the representatives of Jewry’s ruling class did all they could to convince the [Russian] government of the necessity of keeping the age-old institution in being, since it corresponded to the interests both of the Russian authorities and of the Jewish ruling class’; ‘the kahal together with the rabbinate possessed the fullness of power, and not infrequently abused this power, stealing public resources, trampling on the rights of poor people, incorrectly imposing taxes and taking revenge on personal enemies’. At the end of the 18th century one of the governors of the region joined to Russia wrote in a report: ‘the rabbi, the spiritual court and the kahal, “yoked together by close bonds, and having in their power and disposing even of the very conscience of the Jews, lords it over them on their own, without any reference to the civil authorities”.

“And when, in the 18th century, there developed in Jewry the powerful religious movement of the Hassidim, on the one hand, and on the other, there began the enlightenment movement of Moses Mendelsohn towards secular education, the kahals energetically suppressed both the one and the other. In 1781 the Vilnius rabbinate declared kherem [anathema] on the Hassidim, and in 1784 a congress of rabbis in Mogilev declared the Hassidim to be ‘outside the law’ and their property ‘escheated’. After this the common people in some

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350 Martin Gilbert, *The Dent Atlas of Russian History*, London: Dent, 1993, p. 42; Dobroklonsky, *op. cit.* However, Vital (*op. cit.*, p. 89) gives 400,000, while Hartley (*op. cit.*, p. 15) gives “anything between 155,000 and 900,000 persons, but probably closer to the lower figure”.
of the Hassidim, that is, they caused an intra-
Jewish pogrom. The Hassidim were persecuted in the most cruel and
dishonourable way, they were not even spared false political denunciations
against them to the Russian authorities. However, in 1799, on the
denunciation of the Hassidim, the authorities arrested the members of the
Vilnius kahal for expropriating taxes they had collected. Hassidism continued
to spread, in some provinces with particular success. The rabbinate delivered
the books of the Hassidim to public burning, while the Hassidim spoke out as
defenders of the people against the abuses of the kahals. ‘At that time the
religious struggle put into the shade, as it would seem, the other questions of
Jewish life.’

“The part of Belorussia united to Russia in 1772 was constituted by the
Polotsk (later the Vitebsk) and Mogilev provinces. It was declared to them in
the name of Catherine that the inhabitants of this region ‘whatever race or
calling they might be’ would from now on [retain] the right publicly to
practise their faith and possess private property’. Moreover, they would be
given ‘all those rights, freedoms and privileges that her subjects enjoyed of
old’. Thus the Jews were made equal in rights with the Christians – they
had been deprived of this in Poland. Moreover, a special addition was made
concerning the Jews, that their communities ‘would be left and preserved
with all those freedoms that they now... enjoy’ – that is, nothing would be
taken from what they enjoyed in Poland. True, the power of the kahals was
thereby preserved, and the Jews through their kahal organization still
remained cut off from the rest of the population, and did not yet enter directly
into that mercantile-industrial estate that corresponded to their main
occupations.

“At first Catherine was wary both of the hostile reaction of the Polish
nobility, which had lost power, and of the unpleasant impression [her decree]
produced on her Orthodox subjects…” As Lebedev writes, she “was convinced that it was impossible to forbid the entrance of the Jews into
Russia, it was necessary to let them in. But she considered it dangerous to do
this at the very beginning of her reign, since she understood that she had to
deal with the Russian people, ‘a religious people’, who saw in her ‘the
defender of the Orthodox Faith’, and that the clergy were extremely upset by
Peter III’s order on the expropriation of the Church’s land-holdings.
Moreover, she had been shown the resolution of Elizabeth Petrovna on the
entrance of the Jews: ‘I wish to derive no profit from the enemies of Christ’.
The matter was put off, but only for a time…”

352 David Vital writes: “Her Imperial Majesty’s love of her fellow men [chelovekolyubie]’ did
not permit her to exclude the Jews from the valour with which she treated all her subjects,
provided they, for their part, were loyal, obedient, and engaged in occupations that were
appropriate to their status (zvanie)” (A People Apart: The Jews in Europe, 1789-1939, Oxford
University Press, 1999, p. 84).
353 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 35-42.
354 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 217.
But, continues Solzhenitsyn, “being sympathetic towards the Jews and expecting from them economic benefit for the country, Catherine was preparing for them still greater rights. Already in 1778 there was extended to the Belorussian region the recent measure that applied to the whole of Russia: those who possessed capital up to 500 roubles from now on constituted the estate of the town-dwellers [meschane], and those who had more – the estate of the merchants [kuptsy], the three guilds, in accordance with their wealth, and were freed from poll tax, and would pay 1% from the capital that they had ‘declared in accordance with conscience’.

“This decree had a special, great significance: it destroyed the national isolation of the Jews that had prevailed to that time (Catherine wanted to destroy it). It also undermined the traditional Polish view of the Jews as a non-State element. It also undermined the kahal structure, and the coercive power of the kahal. ‘From this moment there begins the process of the introduction of the Jews into the Russian State organism... The Jews widely used the right of registering among the merchants’ – so that, for example, in Mogilev province 10% of the Jewish population were declared to be merchants (and of the Christians – only 5.5%). The Jewish merchants were now freed from paying taxes to the kahal and were no longer obliged, in particular, to seek permission from the kahal for every trip, as before: they now had to deal only with the common magistrate, on common terms. (In 1780 the Jews of Mogilev and Shklov met Catherine with odes.)

“With the departure of the Jewish merchants the State rubric ‘Jew’ also ceased to exist. All the rest of the Jews now had to be categorized in some estate, and it was evident that they could be categorized only as town-dwellers. But at first there were few who wanted to transfer, because the annual poll tax from town-dwellers at that time was 60 kopecks, while from the Jews it was 50 kopecks. However, no other path remained to them. And from 1783 the Jewish town-dwellers, like the Jewish merchants, had to pay their taxes, not to the kahal, but to the magistrate, on common terms, and receive a passport for a journey from him, too.

“This movement was strengthened by a general municipal decree of 1785, which envisaged only estates, and by no means nations. According to this decree, all the town-dwellers (and therefore all the Jews) received the right to participate in local administration according to estates and to take up public posts. ‘According to the conditions of that time, this meant that the Jews became citizens with equal rights... Entering the merchant and town-dweller classes in the capacity of members with equal rights was an event of major social significance’, and was meant to turn the Jews into ‘a social force of which it was impossible not to take account, thereby raising their moral self-esteem’. This also alleviated the practical task of defending their vital interests. ‘At that time the mercantile-industrial class, as also the municipal
societies, enjoyed broad self-rule. Thus into the hands of the Jews, on an equal basis with the Christians, was handed considerable administrative and judicial power, thanks to which the Jewish population acquired strength and significance in social-state life. There were now burgomeisters and ratmans and judges from the Jews. At first in the major towns a limitation was applied: that there should be no more Jews than Christians in elected posts. However, in 1786 ‘Catherine sent the Belorussian governor-general an order signed in his own hand: that equal rights for the Jews in municipal-estate self-rule... should “unfailingly and without any delay be brought into effect’, while non-fulfillers of the decree “would be punished by law’.

355 “In 1785 and again in 1795 (on the occasion of the Third Partition),” writes Vital, “the principle that Jewish town-dwellers and merchants were entitled to treatment on an equal footing with all other town-dwellers and merchants was authoritatively restated. Allowance was made for Jews of the appropriate class to serve as electors to municipal office and to be elected themselves. But precisely what social class or classes Jews should be permitted to belong to was (and would remain) a vexed question. Clearly, they were not peasants (krestyaniny). They were certainly not serfs (krepostnye). They were not of the gentry (dvoryanstvo). They might be merchants (kuptsy), but membership of the guilds of merchants, especially the higher guilds, was a costly affair and few Jews were of the requisite wealth and standing to join them; and, in any event, such membership entailed rights to which the ‘native’ or ‘indigenous’ people (korennoye naseleniye), namely the ethnic Russian (and of course the Polish) merchants, objected. That left the class of town-dwellers (meshchansvo); but the fact was that the great majority of the Jews of Russia and Poland at this time were not town-dwellers...’ (Vital, op. cit., pp. 84-85). (V.M.)
“It is natural that the civil gift received by the Jews could not fail to bring with it a reverse threat: it was evident that the Jews had to submit to the common rule, stop the wine trade in the villages and leave them. In 1783 it was published that “a direct rule obliges each citizen to determine his trade and craft, a decent wage, and not wine distilling, as being an industry not appropriate for him”, and if a landowner permits the distilling of vodka in the village “to a merchant, a town-dweller or Jew”, then he will be considered a breaker of the law’. And then: ‘they began to thrust the Jews out of the villages and into the towns, so as to distract them from their age-old pursuits… the leasing of wine distilleries and taverns’.

“It goes without saying that for the Jews the threat of being thrown out of the villages looked, not like a State tidying-up measure, but like a special measure against their national-confessional group. In being clearly deprived of such a profitable industry in the villages, and being moved to the town, the Jewish town-dwellers fell into a thick net of intra-municipal and intra-Jewish competition. The Jews became very upset, and in 1784 a deputation from the kahals to St. Petersburg to lobby for the rescinding of this measure. (At the same time the kahals calculated: with the help of the government they would get back the fullness of the power over the Jewish population that they had lost.) But the reply in the name of the empress was: ‘Since the people of the Jewish confession have already entered into a condition equal with others, it behoves them in all cases to observe the rule established by Her Majesty that everyone in accordance with his calling and condition should enjoy the benefits and rights without distinction of confession or nation.’

“However, she had to take account of the concentrated strength of the highly involved Polish landowners. Although in 1783 the administration of the Belorussian region had forbidden them from farming out or leasing the wine distilleries ‘to people who do not have the right to it, “especially the Jews”,… the landowners continued to farm out the wine distilleries to the Jews. This was their right’, the well-established heritage of age-old Polish customs.

“And the Senate did not dare to compel the landowners. And in 1786 it rescinded the transfer of the Jews to the towns. For this the following compromise was worked out: let the Jews be considered as having been moved to the towns, but retain their right to temporary absence in the countryside. That is, let them remain in the village, wherever they lived. The Senate’s decree of 1786 allowed the Jews to live in the villages, and ‘the landowners were allowed to farm out the production and sale of spirits to the Jews, while the Christian merchants and town-dwellers did not receive these rights.’
Moreover, the lobbying of the kahal delegation to St. Petersburg did not remain completely without success. It did not obtain what it asked for, the establishment of separate Jewish courts for all law-suits between Jews, but (1786) the kahals were given back a significant part of the administrative rights and oversight over the Jewish town-dwellers, that is, the majority of the Jewish population: the apportionment not only of public duties, but also the collection of the poll-tax, and once again the regulation of the right of absence from the community. That meant that the government saw its own practical interest in not weakening the power of the kahal.

“In general throughout Russia the whole of the mercantile-industrial estate (merchants and town-dwellers) did not enjoy freedom of movement and was tied to the place of its registration (so that by their departure they not lower the capacity of pay of their municipal societies). But for Belorussia in 1782 the Senate made an exception: the merchants could go from town to town ‘in accordance with the convenience of their commerce’. This rule again gave the advantage to the Jewish merchants.

“However, they began to use this right more broadly than it had been defined: ‘the Jewish merchants began to be registered in Moscow and Smolensk’. ‘The Jews began to settle in Moscow soon after the reunion of the Belorussian region in 1772... At the end of the 18th century there was a significant number of Jews in Moscow... Some Jews, having registered among the local merchants, started to trade on a large scale... But other Jews sold foreign goods in their flats or coaching inns, and also by delivering to houses, which at that time was completely forbidden.’

“And in 1790 ‘the Moscow society of merchants made a judgement’ that ‘in Moscow there had appeared from abroad and from Belorussia ‘a very large number of Jews’, some of whom had registered straight into the Moscow merchants and were using forbidden methods of trading, by which they were causing that trade ‘very significant harm and disturbance’, while the cheapness of their goods indicated that they were contraband. Moreover, ‘the Jews, as is well-known, clip coins; it is possible that they will do this also in Moscow’. And in response to ‘their cunning schemes’ the Moscow merchants demanded the removal of the Jewish merchants from Moscow. But the Jewish merchants in their turn presented ‘a complaint... that they were no longer being received among the Moscow and Smolensk merchants’.

“The ‘Council of the Empress’ reviewed the complaints. In accordance with the unified Russian law it found that the Jews did not have the right ‘to be registered into the Russian mercantile towns and ports’, but only in Belorussia. They said that “no benefit is foreseen” from allowing the Jews into Moscow’. And in December, 1791 an imperial decree was issued ‘on not allowing the Jews to be registered in the inner provinces’, while they could go
The Jews could enjoy the rights of the merchants and town-dwellers in Belorussia. But Catherine added: ‘They were given the right to live and be registered as town-dwellers also in newly-acquired New Russia – in the governor-generalship of Yekaterinoslav and in the province of Tauris (soon this would be the Yekaterinoslav, Tauris and Kherson provinces). That is, she opened to the Jews new and extensive provinces into which Christian merchants and town-dwellers, in accordance with the general rule, were not allowed to settle from the inner provinces…

“The pre-revolutionary Jewish encyclopaedia writes: by the decree of 1791 ‘a beginning was made to the Pale of Settlement, although unintentionally. Under the conditions of the general structure of society and the State at that time, and of Jewish life in particular, the government could not have had in mind to create for the Jews a special oppressive situation, or of introducing exclusive laws for them, in the sense of limiting their rights of residence. According to the circumstances of that time, this decree did not contain in itself anything that could put the Jews in this respect in a less favourable position by comparison with the Christians… The decree of 1791 did not introduce any limitation in the rights of the Jews in respect of residence, it did not create a special ‘pale’, and even ‘before the Jews were opened new provinces into which according to the general rule it was not allowed to move’; ‘the centre of gravity of the decree of 1791 did not lie in the fact that they were Jews, but in the fact that they were trading people; the question was viewed not from a national or religious point of view, but only from the point of view of usefulness’.

“And so this decree of 1791, which was even advantageous for Jewish by comparison with Christian merchants, with the years was turned into the basis of the future ‘Pale of Settlement’, which lay like a dark shadow on the existence of the Jews in Russia almost to the revolution itself…”356

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356 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit.
Catherine not only tried to emancipate the Jews: she also allowed the Masons to reach the peak of their influence in Russia. In her reign there were about 2500 Masons in about 100 lodges in St. Petersburg, Moscow and some provincial towns. By the middle of the 1780s,” writes Dobroklonsky, “it had even penetrated as far as Tobolsk and Irkutsk; Masonic lodges existed in all the more or less important towns. Many of those who were not satisfied by the fashionable scepticism of French philosophy or, after being drawn by it, became disillusioned by it, sought satisfaction for their heart and mind in Masonry”.

Florovsky writes: “The freemasons of Catherine’s reign maintained an ambivalent relationship with the Church. In any event, the formal piety of freemasonry was not openly disruptive. Many freemasons fulfilled all church ‘obligations’ and rituals. Others emphatically insisted on the complete immutability and sacredness of the rites and orders ‘particularly of the Greek religion’. However, the Orthodox service, with its wealth and plasticity of images and symbols, greatly attracted them. Freemasons highly valued Orthodox’s tradition of symbols whose roots reach back deeply into classical antiquity. But every symbol was for them only a transparent sign or guidepost. One must ascend to that which is being signified, that is, from the visible to the invisible, from ‘historical’ Christianity to spiritual or ‘true’ Christianity, from the outer church to the ‘inner’ church. The freemasons considered their Order to be the ‘inner’ church, containing its own rites and ‘sacraments’. This is once again the Alexandrian [Gnostic] dream of an esoteric circle of chosen ones who are dedicated to preserving sacred traditions: a truth revealed only to a few chosen for extraordinary illumination.”

“Who became freemasons? The Russian historian Vernadsky estimated that in 1777 4 of the 11-member Council of State, 11 of the 31 gentlemen of the bedchamber, 2 of the 5 senators of the first department of the Senate, 2 of the 5 members of the College of Foreign Affairs and the vice-president of the Admiralty College were masons (there were none known at this date in the War College). A large number of the noble deputies in the Legislative Commission were masons. Members of the high aristocracy and prominent figures at court were attracted to freemasonry, including the Repnins, Trubetskois, Vorontsovs and Panins. Special lodges attracted army officers (like the Mars lodge, founded at Iasi in Bessarabia in 1774) and naval officers (like the Neptune lodge, founded in 1781 in Kronstadt). There were masons amongst the governors of provinces established after 1775 (including A.P.

357 Riasanovsky, *op. cit.*
and J.E. Sievers in Tver’), and amongst senior officials in central and provincial institutions. Almost all Russian poets, academics were masons. Other lodges had a predominantly foreign membership, which included academics, members of professions, bankers and merchants.

“Catherine II had little sympathy for the mystical elements of freemasonry and their educational work and feared that lodges could become venues for conspiracies against the throne. In the 1790s, at a time of international tension following the French Revolution, Catherine became more suspicious of freemasonry, following rumours that Grand Duke Paul... was being induced to join a Moscow lodge. In 1792 (shortly after the assassination of Gustavus III of Sweden), Novikov’s house was searched and Masonic books were found which had been banned as harmful in 1786. Novikov was arrested and sentenced, without any formal trial, to fifteen years imprisonment, though he was freed when Paul came to the throne in 1796. In 1794, Catherine ordered the closure of all lodges.”

Catherine was not wrong in her suspicion that the Masons were aiming at the Russian throne. Already in 1781, at their convention in Frankfurt, the Illuminati “had decided to create in Russia two capitularies ‘of the theoretical degree’ under the general direction of Schwartz. One of the capitularies was ruled by Tatischev, and the other by Prince Trubetskoj. At a convention of the Mason-Illuminati in 1782 Russia was declared to be ‘the Eighth Province of the Strict Observance’. It was here that the Masons swore to murder Louis XVI and his wife and the Swedish King Gustavus III, which sentences were later carried out. In those 80s of the 18th century Masonry had decreed that it should strive to destroy the monarchy and the Church, beginning with France and continuing with Russia. But openly, ‘for the public’, and those accepted into the lower degrees, the Masons said that they were striving to end enmity between people and nations because of religious and national quarrels, that they believed in God, that they carried out charitable work and wanted to educate humanity in the principles of morality and goodness, that they were the faithful citizens of their countries and kings...”

However, Russia did not follow the path of France at this time because eighteenth-century Russian Masonry, unlike its contemporary French counterpart, was not very radical in its politics.

Thus Novikov, according to Pipes, must be classified as “a political conservative because of his determination to work ‘within the system’, as one would put it today. A freemason and a follower of Saint-Martin, he thought all evil stemmed from man’s corruption, not from institutions under which he

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361 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 243.
lived. He mercilessly exposed ‘vice’ and promoted with such enthusiasm the conviction that only improving man could never questioned the autocratic form of government or even serfdom. This stress on man rather than the environment became a hallmark of Russian conservatism."

Another Mason who was conservative in his political thought was Prince Michael Shcherbatov, who represented the extreme right wing of the aristocratic opposition to Catherine. He was a monarchist who believed in the close alliance of tsar and aristocrats, and opposed all concessions to the peasantry or the merchants. He believed that Russia’s traditional autocracy had been replaced by despotism under Peter, who treated the aristocrats brutally and opened the way for widespread “voluptuousness” in Russian life.

If Shcherbatov represented a nobleman pining nostalgically for the non-despotic orderliness of pre-Petrine Russia, Count Nikita Panin and Alexander Radishchev represented a more radical, forward-looking element in the aristocracy. Panin and his brother had already, as we have seen, taken part in the coup against Peter III which brought Catherine to the throne. But when Catherine refused to adopt Nikita’s plan for a reduction in the powers of the autocrat and an extension of the powers of the aristocratic Senate, they plotted to overthrow her, too. Their plot was discovered; but Catherine pardoned them.

Nothing daunted, Nikita wrote a Discourse on the Disappearance in Russia of All Forms of Government, intended for his pupil, Crown Prince Paul, in which he declared: “Where the arbitrary rule of one man is the highest law, there can be no lasting or unifying bonds; there is a state, but no fatherland; there are subjects, but no citizens; there is no body politic whose members are linked to each other by a network of duties and privileges.”

With Alexander Radishchev, we come to the first true Enlightenment figure in Russian history. His Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow (1790), writes Pipes, “exposed the seamier sides of Russian provincial life...[He] drank deeply at the source of the French Enlightenment, showing a marked preference for its more extreme materialist wing (Helvétius and d’Holbach).”

Thus if Voltaire, Rousseau and the other philosophes introduced English social contract theory into France, thereby providing the philosophical justification for the French revolution, it was Radishchev, whose favourite

362 Pipes, op. cit., p. 258.
363 Walicki, op. cit., p. 33.
364 Pipes, op. cit., p. 258.
countries were England and the United States, who introduced the theory into Russia, thereby laying the foundation for the Russian revolution.

The first truly modern, westernised Russian. The ideas of duty, of self-sacrifice, of God and immortality play no part in his thought. Rightly, therefore, has the journey been called “the first trial balloon of revolutionary propaganda in Russia”. For everything in it is based on the idea of individual advantage, self-interest pure and simple. Nothing of the sacred, of the veneration due to that which is established by God, remains. Only: “The sovereign is the first citizen of the people’s commonwealth.” “Wherever being a citizen is not to his advantage, he is not a citizen.”

Such ideas lead logically to the self-annihilation of society. In his personal case, they led to suicide... “There are grounds for assuming,” writes Walicki, “that this act was not the result of a temporary fit of depression. Suicide had never been far from his thoughts. In the Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow he wrote: ‘If outrageous fortune hurl upon you all its slings and arrows, if there is no refuge left on earth for your virtue, if, driven to extremes, you find no sanctuary from oppression, then remember this: you are a man, call to mind your greatness and seize the crown of bliss which they are trying to take from you. Die.’

Radischev clearly exemplifies the bitter fruits of the westernizing reforms of Peter the Great and his successors. It was this mad, proud striving for mastery of one’s life, without acknowledgement of the Master, God, that was to lead much of Europe to a kind of collective suicide in the next age. And its appearance in Orthodox Russia was the result, in large part, of the “reforms” of Peter I and Catherine II...

And yet, as so often in history, we see that the seeds of revival were being sown in this, the nadir of Russian spiritual history. For it was in the reign of Catherine that St. Paisius Velichkovsky was laying the foundation for the revival of Russian monasticism in the nineteenth century that would produce such beautiful fruits as the elders of Optina. And it was in her reign that a young man called Seraphim entered the monastery of Sarov and from there began his ascent to the summit of spiritual excellence. For history remains the domain, not only of psychological, sociological, political and economic laws, which are in principle predictable, but also of the free will of man and the grace of God, which no man can predict...

And so, on the one hand, the results of the transformation of the Russian State from an autocracy into an absolutist state were spiritually disastrous (even if they had some good results in the secular realm). And on the other hand, while groaning beneath this western yoke, the people retained its

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366 Walicki, op. cit., p. 38.
able the slow but steady, if incomplete return of
Russian traditions from the reign of the Emperor Paul
the nineteenth century represented the deepest nadir yet
in Russian statehood, Russia still remained recognizably Russia, the chief
bearer and defender of Orthodoxy in the world.

We return, finally, to the thought that the eighteenth-century rulers of
Russia were both forerunners of the Antichrist, insofar as they undermined
the traditional Orthodox way of life in Russia, and restrainers of the
Antichrist, in that they built up a mighty state that was able to defend what
was left of the Orthodox way of life in the next century. They made possible
both the glorious victory of 1812 over the French Antichrist, and the
catastrophic surrender of 1917 to the Soviet Antichrist. And so it was in the
eighteenth century that Russia finally emerged on the world stage as the
universalist empire of the Third Rome, the heir of the Second, New Rome of
Byzantium – only to fall, finally, to the pagan spirit of the First Rome that
these same eighteenth-century rulers had re-planted in her...
TSAR PAUL I

Tsar Paul I has in general had a bad press from historians. Nevertheless, it was he who began the slow process whereby the absolutist Russian empire of the eighteenth century was transformed into the less absolutist, more truly autocratic empire of the nineteenth, by restoring the links of the monarchy with the people’s faith, Orthodoxy.

St. John Maximovich writes that the Tsarevich Paul, “was very different in his character and convictions from the Empress Catherine. Catherine II preferred to remove her son from the inheritance and make her eldest grandson, Alexander Pavlovich, her heir... At the end of 1796 Catherine II finally decided to appoint Alexander as her heir, passing Paul by, but she suddenly and unexpectedly died. The heir, Tsarevich Paul Petrovich, ascended the throne…”

Tsar Paul, who had been educated by Metropolitan Platon of Moscow, and shared his teacher’s devotion to pre-Petrine Russia, witnessed to the terrible condition to which his predecessors had brought Russia: “On ascending the throne of All-Russia, and entering in accordance with duty into various parts of the state administration, at the very beginning of the inspection We saw that the state economy, in spite of the changes in income made at various times, had been subjected to extreme discomforts from the continuation over many years of unceasing warfare and other circumstances. Expenses exceeded income. The deficit was increasing from year to year, multiplying the internal and external debts; in order to make up a part of this deficit, large sums were borrowed, which brought great harm and disorder with them.”

Tsar Paul’s coronation took place in the Dormition Cathedral in Moscow on April 5, 1797, the first day of Holy Pascha. The rite moved a significant step away from the symbolism of the First Rome, which had been the model of the eighteenth-century Tsars, and back to the symbolism of the New Rome of Constantinople, the Mother-State of Holy Rus’. For before putting on the purple, Paul ordered that he be vested in the dalmatic, one of the royal vestments of the Byzantine emperors...

Then, writes Lebedev, “he himself read out a new law [Uchrezhdenie] on the Imperial Family which he had composed together with [the Tsaritsa] Maria Fyodorovna. By this law he abolished Peter I’s decree of 1722 on the right of the Russian Autocrat to appoint the Heir to the Throne according to

368 Tsar Paul, in Ivanov, op. cit., p. 211.
Act of 1613. From now on and forever (!) a strict order of succession was established according to which the eldest son became his father’s heir, and in the case of childlessness – his elder brother. The law also foresaw various other cases, determining the principles of the succession to the Throne in accordance with the ancient, pre-Petrine (!) Russian customs and certain important new rules (for example, a Member of the Imperial Family wanting to preserve his rights to the succession must enter only into an equal by blood marriage with a member of a royal or ruling house, that is, who is not lower than himself by blood). Paul I’s new law once and for all cut off the danger in Russia of those ‘revolution’-coup which had taken place in the eighteenth century. And it meant that the power of the nobility over the Russian Tsars was ending; now they could be independent of the nobility’s desires and sympathies. The autocracy was restored in Russia! Deeply wounded and ‘offended’, the nobility immediately, from the moment of the proclamation of the law ‘On the Imperial Family’, entered into opposition to Paul I. The Tsar had to suffer the first and most powerful blow of the opposition. This battle between the Autocrat and the nobility was decisive, it determined the future destiny of the whole state. It also revealed who was who in Great Russia. All the historians who hate Paul I are not able to diminish the significance of the Law of 1797, they recognise that it was exceptionally important and correct, but they remark that it was the only outstanding act of this Emperor (there were no others supposedly). But such an act would have been more than sufficient for the whole reign! For this act signified a radical counter-coup – or, following the expression of the time, counter-revolution - to that which Catherine II had accomplished.

“However, the haters lie here, as in everything else! The law was not the only important act of his Majesty. On the same day of 1797 Paul I proclaimed a manifesto in which for the first time the serf-peasants were obliged to make an oath of allegiance to the Tsars and were called, not ‘slaves’, but ‘beloved subjects’, that is, they were recognised as citizens of the State! There is more! Paul I issued a decree forbidding landowners to force serfs to work corvée for more than three days in the week: the other three days the peasants were to work for themselves, and on Sundays – rest and celebrate ‘the day of the Lord’, like all Christians. Under the threat of severe penalties it was confirmed that masters were forbidden to sell families of peasants one by one. It was forbidden to subject serfs older than seventy to physical punishments. (And at the same time it was permitted to apply physical punishments to noblemen who had been condemned for criminal acts.) All this was nothing other than the beginning of the liberation of the Russian peasants from...
In noble circles of the time it was called a ‘revolution from above’, and for the first time they said of about their Emperor: ‘He is mad!’ Let us recall that this word was used in relation to the ‘peasant’ politics of Paul I. He even received a special ‘Note’ from one assembly of nobles, in which it was said that ‘the Russian people has not matured sufficiently for the removal of physical punishments’.

“We know of a case when the Tsar came to the defence of some peasants whose landowner was about to sell them severally, without their families and land, so as to make use of the peasants’ property. The peasants refused to obey, and the landowner informed the governor of the rebellion. But the governor did not fail to carry out his duty and quickly worked out what was happening. On receiving news about what was happening, Tsar Paul declared the deal invalid, ordered that the peasants be left in their places, and that the landowner be severely censured in his name. The landowner’s conscience began to speak to him: he gathered the village commune and asked the peasants for forgiveness. Later he set off for St. Petersburg and asked for an audience with his Majesty. ‘Well, what did you sort out with your peasants, my lord? What did they say?’ inquired the Emperor of the guilty man. ‘They said to me, your Majesty: God will forgive…’ ‘Well, since God and they have forgiven you, I also forgive you. But remember from now on that they are not your slaves, but my subjects just as you are. You have just been entrusted with looking after them, and you are responsible for them before me, as I am for Russia before God…’ concluded the Sovereign.”

The Tsar also acted to humble the pride of the Guards regiments which, together with the nobility, had acted in the role of king-makers in the eighteenth century. “He forbade the assigning of noblemen’s children, babies, into the guards (which had been done before him to increase ‘the number of years served’). The officers of the guards were forbidden to drive in four- or six-horse carriages, to hide their hands in winter in fur muff, or to wear civilian clothing in public. No exception was made for them by comparison with other army officers. At lectures and inspections the Guards were asked about rules and codes with all strictness. How much, then and later, did they speak (and they still write now!) about the ‘cane discipline’ and the amazing cruelties in the army under Paul I, the nightmarish punishments which were simply means of mocking the military…. Even among the historians who hate Paul I we find the admission that the strictnesses of the Emperor related only to the officers (from the nobility), while with regard to the soldiers he was most concerned about their food and upkeep, manifesting a truly paternal attentiveness. By that time the ordinary members of the Guards had long been not nobles, but peasants. And the soldierly mass of the Guards of Paul I very much loved him and were devoted to him. Officers were severely punished for excessive cruelty to soldiers… On the fateful night of the murder of Paul I

370 Lebedev, op. cit., pp. 239-240.
The Guards soldiers rushed to support him. The Preobrazhensky regiment refused to shout 'hurrah!' to Alexander Pavlovich as to the new Emperor, whether his Majesty Paul I was truly dead. Two soldiers of the regiment demanded that their commanders give them exact proof of the death of the former Emperor. These soldiers were not only not punished, but were sent as an ‘embassy’ of the Preobrazhensky to the grave of Paul I. On their return the regiment gave the oath of allegiance to Alexander I. That was the real situation of the Russian soldier of Paul’s times, and not their fictitious ‘rightlessness!’

“The Emperor Paul’s love for justice and care for the simple people was expressed also in the accessibility with which he made his subjects happy, establishing the famous box in the Winter palace whose key was possessed by him personally and into which the first courtier and the last member of the simple people could cast their letters with petitions for the Tsar’s immediate defence or mercy. The Tsar himself emptied the box every day and read the petitions, leaving not a single one of them unanswered.

“There was probably no sphere in the State which did not feel the influence of the industrious Monarch. Thus he ordered the minting of silver rubles to struggle against the deflation in the value of money. The Sovereign himself sacrificed a part of the court’s silver on this important work. He said that he himself would eat on tin ‘until the ruble recovers its rate’. And the regulation on medical institutions worked out by the Emperor Paul could be used in Russia even in our day.”

“Paul I gave hierarchs in the Synod the right themselves to choose a candidate for the post of over-procurator, took great care for the material situation of the clergy, and the widows and orphans of priests, and forbade physical punishments for priests before they had been defrocked.”

He also increased the lands of hierarchical houses and the pay of the parish clergy, and freed the clergy from being pressed into army service. The power of bishops was extended to all Church institutions and to all diocesan

373 “Svyatoj Tsar-Muchenik Pavel”, op. cit.
374 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 242. A.P. Dobroklonsky writes: “At the beginning of the [19th] century the over-procurator Yakovlev planned to place [the consistories] in a position more independent of the bishops and presented to the sovereign a report about establishing in them a special post of procurator subject only to the over-procurator; but the realisation of this report was hindered by Metropolitan Ambrose Podobedov of St. Petersburg, who presented a report on his part that in such a case the canonical authority of the bishops would be shaken and they would become dependent on secular officials” (op. cit., p. 534).
In general, as K.A. Papmehl writes, “Paul proved to be much more generous and responsive to the Church’s financial needs than his mother. Although this may to some – perhaps considerable – extent be attributed to his general tendency to reverse her policies, it was probably due, in at least equal measure, to his different attitude toward the Church based, as it undoubtedly was, on sincere Christian belief. One symptom of this different attitude was that, unlike his predecessor – or, indeed, successor, Paul dealt with the Synod not through the Ober-Prokurator, but through the senior ecclesiastical member: first Gavriil and later Amvrosii.”

“One of the Tsar’s contemporaries, N.A. Sablukov, who had the good fortune, thanks to his service at the Royal Court, to know the Emperor personally, remembered the Emperor Paul in his memoirs as ‘a deeply religious man, filled with a true piety and the fear of God…. He was a magnanimous man, ready to forgive offences and recognise his mistakes. He highly prized righteousness, hated lies and deceit, cared for justice and was merciless in his persecution of all kinds of abuses, in particular usury and bribery.’

“The well-known researcher of Paul, Shabelsky-Bork, writes: ‘While he was Tsarevich and Heir, Paul would often spend the whole night in prayer. A little carpet is preserved in Gatchina; on it he used to pray, and it is worn through by his knees.’ The above-mentioned N.A. Sablukov recounts, in agreement with this: ‘Right to the present day they show the places on which Paul was accustomed to kneel, immersed in prayer and often drenched in tears. The parquet is worn through in these places. The room of the officer sentry in which I used to sit during my service in Gatchina was next to Paul’s private study, and I often heard the Emperor’s sighs when he was standing at prayer.’

“The historical records of those years have preserved a description of the following event: ‘A watchman had a strange and wonderful vision when he was standing outside the summer palace… The Archangel Michael stood before the watchman suddenly, in the light of heavenly glory, and the watchman was stupefied and in trembling from this vision… And the Archangel ordered that a cathedral should be raised in his honour there and that this command should be passed on to the Emperor Paul immediately. The special event went up the chain of command, of course, and Paul

\[375\] Fr. Alexis Nikolin, *Tserkov’ i Gosudarstvo (The Church and the State)*, Moscow, 1997, p. 106.


Petrovich was told about everything. But Paul Petrovich replied: “I already knew beforehand, and the appearance to the watchman was a kind of repetition...” From this story we can draw the conclusion that Tsar Paul was counted worthy also of revelations from the heavenly world...“378

We should also not forget here the salutary influence of Tsar Paul’s wife, Empress Maria Fyodorovna, who was very popular among the people. A.V. Buganov writes: “While it was the inveterate desire of the enserfed peasants throughout Russia to be liberated, in the villages of Maria Fyodorovna the complete opposite was observed: tradesmen and free men generally were assigned to the number of her peasants. The empress took care that they had enough, and founded village charitable-educational institutions. She often put on feasts for her peasants in her park, where in her presence the young people sang songs and had round dances. The summit of Maria Fyodorovna’s activity and the crown of her charitable work was her educational system, which was known as ‘the institutions of Empress Maria’. These included shelters and children’s homes and educational institutions, especially for women.”379

378 “Svyatoj Tsar-Muchenik Pavel”, op. cit. And after his death he himself appeared to people from the other world. See http://lib.rus.ec/b/30838/read.
379 Buganov, “Lichnosti i sobytia istorii v pamiati russkikh krestian XIX – nachala XX veka” (Personalities and historical events in the memory of the Russian peasants of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries), Voprosy Istori (Questions of History), December, 2005, p. 120.
Tsar Paul’s love for the Church found expression in two important events in the year 1800: the annexation of Georgia and the reunion of some of the Old Ritualists with the Orthodox Church on a “One Faith” (Yedinoverie) basis. The former strengthened the security of the Orthodox world against the external foe, and the latter - its internal unity.

The Georgians had first appealed for Russian protection in 1587. Since then, they had suffered almost continual invasions from the Persians and the Turks, leading to many martyrdoms, of which the most famous was that of Queen Ketevan in 1624. The Russians, preoccupied as they were with their own foreign oppressors, were not able to help the Georgians significantly in this period; and one Georgian king, Rostom, even adopted Islam and persecuted Orthodoxy. In fact, from 1634 until the crowning of King Wakhtang in 1701, all the sovereigns of Georgia were Mohammedan. The eighteenth century saw only a small improvement, and in 1762 King Teimuraz II travelled to Russian for help. In 1783, in the treaty of Georgievsk, protection was formally offered to King Heraclius II of Kartli-Kakhetia by Catherine II.

“The last, most heavy trial for the Church of Iberia,” writes P. Ioseliani, “was the irruption of Mahomed-Khan into the weakened state of Georgia, in the year 1795. In the month of September of that year the Persian army took the city of Tiflis, seized almost all the valuable property of the royal house, and reduced the palace and the whole of the city into a heap of ashes and of ruins. The whole of Georgia, thus left at the mercy of the ruthless enemies of the name of Christ, witnessed the profanation of everything holy, and the most abominable deeds and practices carried on in the temples of God. Neither youth nor old age could bring those cruel persecutors to pity; the churches were filled with troops of murderers and children were killed at their mothers’ breasts. They took the Archbishop of Tiflis, Dositheus, who had not come out of the Synod of Sion, made him kneel down before an image of [the most holy Mother of God], and, without mercy on his old age, threw him from a balcony into the river Kur; then they plundered his house, and set fire to it. The pastors of the Church, unable to hide the treasures and other valuable property of the Church, fell a sacrifice to the ferocity of their foes. Many images of saints renowned in those days perished for ever; as, for instance, among others, the image of [the most holy Mother of God] of the Church of Metekh, and that of the Synod of Sion. The enemy, having rifled churches, destroyed images, and profaned the tombs of saints, revelled in the blood of Christians; and the inhuman Mahomed-Khan put an end to these horrors only when there remained not a living soul in Tiflis.
King George XIII, who ascended the throne of Georgia (A.D. 1797-1800) only to see his subjects overwhelmed and rendered powerless by their struggles with unavoidable dangers from enemies of the faith and of the people, found the resources of the kingdom exhausted by the constant armaments necessary for its own protection; before his eyes lay the ruins of the city, villages plundered and laid waste, churches, monasteries, and hermitages demolished, troubles within the family, and without it the sword, fire, and inevitable ruin, not only of the Church, but also of the people, yea, even of the very name of the people. In the fear of God, and trusting to His providence, he made over Orthodox Georgia in a decided manner to the Tsar of Russia, his co-religionist; and thus obtained for her peace and quiet. It pleased God, through this king, to heal the deep wounds of an Orthodox kingdom.

“Feeling that his end was drawing near, he, with the consent of all ranks and of the people, requested the Emperor Paul I to take Georgia into his subjection for ever (A.D. 1800). The Emperor Alexander I, when he mounted the throne, promised to protect the Georgian people of the same faith with himself, which had thus given itself over unreservedly and frankly to the protection of Russia. In his manifesto to the people of Georgia (A.D. 1801) he proclaimed the following:- ‘One and the same dignity, one and the same honour, and humanity laid upon us the sacred duty, after hearing the prayers of sufferers, to grant them justice and equity in exchange for their affliction, security for their persons and for their property, and to give to all alike the protection of the law.’”

What we have called “Georgia” was in fact the kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti in Eastern Georgia. But there was another independent Georgian kingdom in the West, Imeretia. After the annexation of the eastern kingdom, “the Russian government,” as we read in the Life of Hieroschemamonk Hilarion the Georgian of Mount Athos, “initiated correspondence with the Imeretian king concerning the uniting of his nation with Russia. King Solomon II sought the counsel of his country’s foremost nobles, and in 1804, due to pressure from Russia, he was left with little choice but to set forth the following: since the king did not have an heir to the throne, Imeretia would retain her independence until his death, remaining in brotherly relations with Russia as between two realms of the same faith. The Russian army had free passage across Imeretian territory to the Turkish border, and the Imeretian army was required to render them aid. The relations of the two countries were to be upheld in those sacred terms which are proper to God’s anointed rulers and Christian peoples united in an indivisible union of soul - eternally and unwaveringly. But after the king’s death the legislation of the Russian Empire would be introduced. The resolution was then sent to the Governor-General of the Caucasus in Tbilisi for forwarding to Tsar Alexander I.

Despite the general approval of the resolution by the king’s subjects, one nobleman, Prince Zurab Tsereteli, began plotting how he could seize the Imeretian throne for himself. He first attempted to erode the friendly relations between the two monarchs by slandering each to the other. Unable to sow discord, he began a communication with the Russian governor-general of the Caucasus, Alexander Tormasov. Depicting the royal suite in the darkest colors to the governor-general, after repeated intrigues he finally succeeded in his designs. Eventually, the report reached the tsar. He, believing the slander, ordered Tormasov to lure Solomon II to Tbilisi and escort him to Russia, where he would remain a virtual prisoner.

“Not able to believe that others could be so base, treacherous and ignoble, the king fell into the trap set by Tormasov and Prince Zurab. Fr. Ise [the future Hieroschemamonk Hilarion] had initially warned the king of Prince Zurab’s disloyalty. However, upon learning of his wife’s reposed he returned to Kutaisi and was unable to further counsel the king.

“King Solomon II and his entire retinue were eventually coaxed all the way to Tbilisi. There they were put under house arrest; the plan being to send the king to live out his days in a palace in St. Petersburg. Preferring exile to imprisonment, the king and his noblemen conceived a plan of escape and fled across the border to Turkey. There, with Fr. Ise and his retinue, he lived out the remainder of his life. After great deprivations and aborted attempts to reclaim the Imeretian Kingdom from Russia, King Solomon II reposed at Trebizond on February 19, 1815, in his forty-first year...

“After the king’s death, Fr. Ise intended to set out for Imeretia (then annexed to Russia) no matter what the consequences. He informed all the courtiers, who numbered about six hundred men, and suggested that they follow his example. Many of them accepted his decision joyfully, but fear of the tsar’s wrath hampered this plan. Fr. Ise reassured everyone, promising to take upon himself the task of mediating before the tsar. He immediately wrote out a petition in the name of all the princes and other members of the retinue, and sent it to the tsar. The sovereign graciously received their petition, restored them to their former ranks, and returned their estates…”

Although union with Russia protected Georgia from the incursions of the Muslims, it had the unfortunate effect of destroying the autocephaly of the Georgian Church and weakening its culture. Archpriest Zakaria Machitadze writes: “The foreign officials sent to rule in Georgia began to interfere considerably in the affairs of the Church, and it soon became clear that the Russian government [contrary to eighth paragraph of the treaty of 1783] intended to abolish the autocephaly of the Georgian Church and subordinate it to the Russian Synod.

On June 10, 1811, Tsar Alexander summoned Anton II, Patriarch of All Georgia, to his court and from there sent him into exile. For ten years Georgia had neither a king nor a spiritual leader, and the people began to lose their sense of political and spiritual independence.

“There ensued a period of great difficulty in the life of the Georgian Church. The Church was subordinated to the Russian Synod through an exarch, or representative, of the synod. From 1811 to 1817 the Georgian nobleman Varlaam served as exarch, but after his term all the subsequent exarchs were Russian by descent. The foreign exarchs’ ignorance of the Georgian language, traditions, local saints, and feast gave rise to many conflicts between the foreign clergy and the Georgian Orthodox believers. The most contemptible exarchs stole valuable pieces of jewelry and masterpieces of the Georgian enamel arts and sent them to Russia. Many cathedrals were left to fall into ruin, and the number of diocese in Georgia dropped dramatically from twenty-four to five. Divine services in the Georgian language and ancient polyphonic chants were replaced by services in Slavonic and the music of the post-Petrine Russian Church.

“Russian domination of the Church aroused considerable vexation and indignation in the Georgian people, and evidence of the exarchs’ anti-Georgian activities exacerbated their discontent. Despite the wise admonitions of many Russian elders to respect the portion assigned by lot to the Theotokos and converted by the holy Apostles themselves, appalling crimes continued to be committed against the Georgian Church and nation. Frescoes in churches were whitewashed, and the Khakuli Icon of the Theotokos along with other icons and objects adorned with precious gold and silver were stolen…”

In spite of these deviations, the annexation of Georgia marked an important step forward in Russia’s progress to becoming the Third Rome. In the eighteenth century “the gathering of the Russian lands” was on its way to completion, and the more or less continuous wars with Turkey demonstrated Russia’s determination to liberate the Orthodox of the Balkans and the Middle East. Georgia was the first non-Russian Orthodox nation to enter the empire of the Third Rome on a voluntary basis...

In 1901 Fr. John Vostorgov meditated on this union of two peoples: “In voluntarily uniting herself voluntarily with Russia, Georgia gained much. But we must not forget that she also lost: she lost her independent existence as a separate state, that which served and serves as the object of ardent desires and bloody struggles up to now in many peoples, and which Georgia herself

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defended for a long series of centuries as an inestimable treasure with as lofty a heroism as can be attributed to any people in history.

"Whether we recognize or not the providential significance of peoples in history, we must in any case agree that historical and geographical conditions at least place this or that people this or that world task. Only from this point of view do the ardent enthusiasms of patriotism, and the fervent desire and care to bring greatness and power to one's homeland, acquire a meaning and higher justification: her greatness and power are not an end, but the means to serve the universal, pan-human good. But what was the destiny of Russia on the universal-historical plane? It would not be an exaggeration, nor an artificial invention to point to the fact that she, as standing on the borders of the East and the West, is destined to mediate between them, and to work out in her own history a higher synthesis of the principles of life of the East and the West, which are often contradictory and hostile to one another, pushing them onto the path of bitter struggle, reconciling them in the unity of a higher, unifying cultural type. This task – a great, colossal, unique task – was bequeathed to Russia by deceased Byzantium, which in her turn inherited it from ancient Greece with her eastern-Persian armies, her powerful Hellenism, which was victoriously borne even in the time of Alexander the Great into the very heart of the East.

“But much earlier than Russia this great task was recognized and accepted by Georgia…

“In the days of the ancient struggle between Greece and Persia, the West was characterized, spiritually speaking, by the religions of anthropomorphism, and the East – by Parsism. Georgia, like Armenia, stood at that time completely on the side of the latter. The Persians placed a seal on the clothing, morals and customs of the Georgians, and on their royal dynasties, language and religion, that is perceptible to this day, because in deep antiquity the native paganism of the Georgians was supplanted by the worship of Armazd, in whose name we can undoubtedly hear the name of the Persian Ormuzd. A new, powerful influence entered into the world when the West accepted Christianity and placed it on the banner of her historical existence. And before the appearance of Christianity, under Caesar and Pompey, we see in Georgia the beginnings of an attraction towards the West. But she finally understood her own mission in the world only in the light of Christianity: under the emperor Hadrian, this was still expressed in an indecisive manner and bore the character of a certain compulsion, but under Constantine the Great this was finally and irreversibly recognized.

“It is not in vain that the year of the victory of Constantine the Great near Adrianople (323), and the declaration that Christianity was not only permitted (as it had been in 312 and 313) but the dominant religion of the Roman empire, coincides with the year of the baptism of the Georgians in
Mskhet

A remarkable coincidence! King Mirian, who was by birth from a

family links with Persia, he decided to make this

step, which irreversibly defined the destiny of Georgia. Soon the East, in its
turn, exchanged Parsism for Islam, and there began the great duel of two
worlds. Western Europe responded, and responded powerfully, to this duel
with its crusades. But we can say that the life and history of Georgia was one
long crusade, one long heroic and martyrlic feat! The arena of the great
struggle was continually being widened in the direction of the north: from
ancient Greece to Byzantium, to Georgia, to the south-western Slavic peoples.
But when Byzantium began to decline, from the tenth century, still further to
the north, the young Russian people was called into the arena, bearing upon
herself the seal of great powers and a great destiny. But until she grew up and
thrust aside a multitude of paths that bound her childhood and youth, until
she had passed through the educational suffering of her struggle with the
wild hordes, with the infidels, in the crucible of the Tatar yoke, and in
domestic upheavals, Georgia remained alone. It is difficult to represent and
describe her boundless sufferings, her faithfulness to the Cross, her heroism
worthy of eternal memory, her merits before the Christian world.

“Soon the Tatar yoke became synonymous with Islam; Russia, casting
aside that yoke, moved further and further into the Muslim world, became
stronger and stronger, and finally the hour of the will of God sounded: she
gave the hand of help and complete union to exhausted Iberia, which had
reached the final limits of exhaustion in her unequal struggle. Peoples having
a single world task naturally merged into one on the level of the state also...

“But this is not all: the situation of the struggle between Islam and
Christianity, between the East and the West, immediately changed. Russia,
having established herself in Transcaucasia, immediately became a threat to
Persia and Turkey; with unprecedented rapidity and might she cast the
banner of Islam far from the bounds of tormented Georgia. Only one century
has passed since the time of the union of Russia and Georgia, and in the
meantime what a huge, hitherto unseen growth has taken place in Christian
Russia, and, by contrast, fall in Muslim Turkey and Persia! This demonstrates
to all how much good the executed decision of the two peoples to merge into
one on the basis of the communality of their world tasks brought to the
history of the world one hundred years ago.

“But did both peoples understand these tasks, and do they understand
them now?

“Even if they had not understood them clearly, they would have striven
towards them semi-consciously: if a people is an organism, then in it there
must be instincts which subconsciously direct its life purposefully and
infallibly, having before it, not death, but life. But there is a force which gave
people an understanding of their world tasks, and the means of their fulfilment. This force is Orthodoxy. It alone includes in itself the principles of true Catholicity, and does not suppress nationalities, but presents to each one spiritual freedom without tying its spiritual life to a person, a place or an external discipline, while at the same time it stands higher than all nationalities. By means of undying tradition it preserves a man from confusing freedom with licence, from destructive spiritual anarchy, and makes possible in him constant vitality and growth, as of a spiritual organism. Not being tied to a place or time, and including in itself the principles of true democracy and good, healthy cosmopolitanism (in the Orthodox understanding of the Church), Orthodoxy – and only Orthodoxy – serves as a religion having an eternal and global significance, uniting mankind inwardly, and not outwardly. Without suppressing nationalities, it can at the same time become a pan-popular religion in the full sense of the word. And truly it has become the fundamental strength and popular religion both for the Russians and for the Georgians. Outside Orthodoxy both Russians and Georgians cease to be themselves. But in it they find the true guarantee of the preservation of their spiritual personalities under any hostile attacks. For that reason it has become infinitely dear to the hearts of both peoples; for that reason it has so quickly and firmly united both peoples in an unbroken union hitherto unknown in history of state and Church, in spite of the absence of tribal kinship, for kinship according to faith is higher that kinship according to blood, union in the spirit is higher than union in race, and stronger than unions created for the avaricious aims of states. This is a union in life and death, for the present and the future, since it rests on spiritual, age-old foundations. And the eternal and the spiritual give sense to the temporal and make it truly fertile…”

Tsar Paul’s support for the Orthodox Church, and in 1801 he was murdered by Freemasons organized by the English consul, Sir Charles Whitford. “And so,” writes Lebedev, “the plot of the Russian nobles against the Emperor they did not like succeeded. Paul I was killed with the clear connivance of his sons. The eldest of them, Alexander, became the Tsar of Russia. In the first hours and days nobody yet suspected how all this would influence the destiny of the country in the future and the personal destiny and consciousness of Alexander I himself. All the plotters had an evil end. Some were removed by Alexander I, others were punished by the Lord Himself. The main regicide Pahlen was quickly removed from all affairs and sent into exile on his estate. There he for a long time went mad, becoming completely irresponsible. Nicholas Zubov and Bennigsen also went mad (Zubov began to eat his own excreta). Having falsely accused Paul I of being mentally ill, they themselves became truly mentally ill! God is not mocked. ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay’, He said. The joy of the Russian nobility was not especially long-lived. Alexander I and then Nicholas I were nevertheless sons of their father! Both they and the Emperors who followed them no longer allowed the nobility to rule them. Immediately the Russian nobility understood this, that is, that they no longer had any power over the Autocracy, they began to strive for the annihilation of the Autocracy in Russia altogether, which they succeeded in doing, finally, in February, 1917 – true, to their own destruction!... Such was the zig-zag of Russian history, beginning with Catherine I and ending with Nicholas II.

“The reign of Emperor Paul Petrovich predetermined the following reigns in the most important thing. As we have seen, this Tsar ‘turned his face’ towards the Russian Orthodox Church, strengthened the foundations of the Autocracy and tried to make it truly of the people. Personally this cost him his life. But thereby the later foundations were laid for the State life of Russia in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries: ‘Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality!’ Or, in its military expression - ‘For the Faith, the Tsar and the Fatherland!’”384

“The prophecy of the clairvoyant monk Abel was completely fulfilled. He personally foretold to the Emperor Paul: ‘Your reign will be short, and I, the sinner, see your savage end. On the feast of St. Sophronius of Jerusalem you will receive a martyric death from unfaithful servants. But the Russian people with their sensitive soul will understand and esteem you, and they will bring their sorrows to your grave, asking for your intercession and the softening of the hearts of the unrighteous and cruel.’ This part of Abel’s prophecy was also fulfilled...”385

384 Lebedev, Velikorossia, pp. 245-249.
Monk Abel prophesied the following about Paul’s son and successor, Tsar Alexander I:

"Under him the French will burn down Moscow, but he will take Paris from them and will be called the Blessed. But his tsar’s crown will be heavy for him, and he will change the exploit of service as tsar for the exploit of fasting and prayer, and he will be righteous in God’s eyes."

The reign of Tsar Alexander can be divided into three phases: a first phase until 1812, when he was strongly influenced by the ideas of the eighteenth-century French Enlightenment; a second phase from 1812 to about 1822, when the main influence on him was a kind of romantic mysticism; and a third phase until his death, when he returned to True Orthodoxy. Tsar Alexander faced, in a particularly acute form, the problems faced by all the “enlightened despots” of the eighteenth century – that is, how to relieve the burdens of his people without destroying the autocratic system that held the whole country together. Like his fellow despots, Alexander was strongly influenced by the ideals of the French revolution and by the Masonic ferment that had penetrated the nobility of Russia no less than the élites of Western Europe. So it is not surprising that he should have wavered between the strictly autocratic views of his mother the Dowager Empress Maria Fyodorovna, the Holy Synod and the court historian Nicholas Karamzin, on the one hand, and the liberalism of the Masons that surrounded him, on the other.

Karamzin was one of the first intelligenty, together with the poet Pushkin and the hierarch Philaret of Moscow, who called for a return to Russian traditions in public life, and in particular to the Russian language, after the century of forced westernization since Peter the Great. Karamzin believed that Russia had nothing to be ashamed of by comparison with the West. Nor did he accept the western vogue for republicanism. “Russia was founded through victories and one-man-rule; she perished [at the end of the Kievan period] because of a variety of rulers; and it was saved by the wise autocracy [of the Muscovite tsars].”

And yet the autocrat of all the Russias had his doubts about autocracy. Only ten days after the death of his father, Alexander returned to the Winter Palace one night to find an anonymous letter on his desk, full of liberal, anti-autocratic sentiments of the kind that Alexander had espoused in his youth.

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386 Shabelsky-Bork, in Fomin S., Rossiia pered Vtorym Prishhestviem (Russia before the Second Coming), Sergiev Posad, 1993, p. 121.
387 Karamzin, “Zapiska o novoj i drevnej Rossii i ee politicheskom i grazhdanskom otnoshenakh” (Note on the new and ancient Russia and her political and civil relations), 1811; in N.G. Fyodorovsky, V poiskakh svoego puti: Rossia mezhdu Evropoi i Aziej (In Search of her own path: Russia between Europe and Asia), Moscow, 1997, p. 27.
388 Alexander had once said to his tutor [La Harpe, a Swiss republican]: “Once… my turn comes, then it will be necessary to work, gradually of course, to create a representative assembly of the nation which, thus directed, will establish a free constitution, after which my authority will cease absolutely” (in Hosking, op. cit., p. 123).
Is it possible, it asked, to set aside the hope of nations in favour of the sheer delight of self-rule? No! He will at last open the book of fate which Catherine merely perceived. He will give us immutable laws. He will establish them for ever by an oath binding him to all his subjects. To Russia he will say, ‘Here lie the bounds to my autocratic power and to the power of those who will follow me, unalterable and everlasting.”

The author turned out to be a member of the chancery staff, Karazin. “There followed,” writes Alan Palmer, “an episode which anywhere except Russia would have seemed fantastic. When summoned to the Tsar’s presence, Karazin feared a severe rebuke for his presumption. But Alexander was effusively magnanimous. He embraced Karazin warmly and commended his sense of patriotic duty. Karazin, for his part, knelt in tears at Alexander’s feet, pledging his personal loyalty. Then the two men talked at length about the problems facing the Empire, of the need to safeguard the people from acts of arbitrary tyranny and to educate them so that they could assume in time the responsibilities of government…”

Alexander was further hindered in breaking with his liberal past by the guilt he felt at not stopping his father’s murder, and by the fact that he was still surrounded by many of those Masons who had murdered his father. The result was a continual increase in the power of Masonry, which was not without its effect on the conduct of government. Thus within a few weeks of ascending the throne Alexander formed a neglassny komitet (secret committee) composed of three or four people of liberal views who with the emperor plotted the transformation of Russia on liberal lines.

“On June 24, 1801,” writes V.F. Ivanov, “the secret committee opened its proceedings. Alexander called it, on the model of the revolution of 1789, ‘the Committee of public safety’, and its opponents from the conservative camp – ‘the Jacobin gang’.

“There began criticism of the existing order and of the whole government system, which was recognised to be ‘ugly’. The firm and definite conclusion was reached that ‘only a constitution can muzzle the despotic government’”.

However, Alexander’s coronation in September, 1801, in Moscow, the heart of Old Russia with its autocratic traditions, pulled him in the opposite direction to the liberal ideas of St. Petersburg. “After being anointed with Holy Oil by the Metropolitan, Alexander swore a solemn oath to preserve the integrity of the Russian lands and the sacred concept of autocracy; and he was then permitted, as one blessed by God, to pass through the Royal Doors into

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390 Ivanov, Russkata Intelligentsia i Masonstvo: ot Petra I do nashikh dnei (The Russian Intelligentsia and Masonry: from Peter I to our Days), Harbin, 1934, Moscow, 1997, p. 246 (in Russian).
the Sanctuary where the Tsars had, on this one occasion in their lives, the privilege of administering to themselves the Holy Sacrament. But Alexander felt unworthy to exercise the priestly office in this way; and, as [Metropolitan] Platon offered him the chalice, he knelt to receive communion as a member of the laity. Although only the higher clergy and their acolytes witnessed this gesture of humility, it was soon known in the city at large and created a deep impression of the new Tsar’s sense of spiritual discipline.”

“The movement was encouraged,” writes Hartley, “by the rumours, which cannot be substantiated, that Alexander I became a mason (he certainly visited lodges in Russia and Germany); his younger brother Constantine certainly was a mason. Regional lodges continued to flourish and young army officers who accompanied Russian forces through Europe in 1813 and 1814 also attended, and were influenced by, lodges in the territory through which they passed. The constitutions of secret societies which were formed by army officers in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars, like the Order of the Russian Knights and the Union of Salvation and Welfare, copied some of their rules and hierarchical organization from masonic lodges. In 1815, the higher orders of masonry in Russia were subordinated to the Astrea grand lodge.”

In January, 1800 A.F. Labzin opened the “Dying Sphinx” lodge in Petersburg. The members of the order were sworn to sacrifice themselves and all they had to the aims of the lodge, whose existence remained a closely guarded secret. In 1806 Labzin founded The Messenger of Zion as the vehicle of his ideas. Suppressed at first by the Church hierarchy, it was allowed to appear by Prince Golitsyn in 1817. “The Messenger of Zion,” writes Walicki, “preached the notion of ‘inner Christianity’ and the need for a moral awakening. It promised its readers that once they were morally reborn and vitalized by faith, they would gain suprarational powers of cognition and be able to penetrate the mysteries of nature, finding in them a key to a superior revelation beyond the reach of the Church.

“Labzin’s religion was thus a nondenominational and antiecclesiastical Christianity. Men’s hearts, he maintained, had been imbued with belief in Christ on the first day of creation; primitive pagan peoples were therefore closer to true Christianity than nations that had been baptized but were blinded by the false values of civilization. The official Church was only an assembly of lower-category Christians, and the Bible a ‘silent mentor who gives symbolic indications to the living teacher residing in the heart’. All

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392 The Masonic historian Richard Rhoda writes: “The tradition exists that Alexander became a Mason in 1803 and there is evidence that he was the member of a lodge in Warsaw” (“Russian Freemasonry: A New Dawn”, paper read at Orient Lodge № 15 on June 29, 1996, http://members.aol.com/houltonme/ru.htm). (V.M.) But, as we shall see, he later repented and banned Masonry. (V.M.)
were merely human inventions: Jesus had not only to act justly. His words ‘Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden’ showed that he did not mean to set up any intermediate hierarchy between the believers and God.”

In 1802 A.A. Zherebtsov opened the “United Friends” lodge in Petersburg. Its aim was “to remove between men the distinctions of races, classes, beliefs and views, and to destroy fanaticism and superstition, and annihilate hatred and war, uniting the whole of humanity through the bonds of love and knowledge.”

Then there was the society of Count Grabianka, “The People of God”. “The aim of the society was ‘to announce at the command of God the imminent Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and his glorious reign upon earth’ and to prepare the humble and faithful souls for the approaching Kingdom of God. ‘As in the Rosecrucian lodges,’ writes Sokolskaia, ‘in the lodge of Count Grabianka people indulged, besides theosophy, in alchemy and magic. But while asserting that the brothers of the “Golden Rose Cross” had as their object of study ‘white, Divine magic’, the leaders of the Rosecrucians accused the followers of Count Grabianka of indulging in reading books of black magic and consorting with evil spirits. In sorrow at the lack of firmness of these brothers, who had become enmeshed in a new teaching, the leaders wrote: ‘Those who are known to us are wavering on their path and do not know what to join. And – God have mercy on them! – they are falling into the hands of evil magicians or Illuminati…”

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395 Ivanov, op. cit., p. 247.
396 Ivanov, op. cit., p. 249.
St. Petersburg and Moscow, liberalism and autocracy, the false “inner church” of Masonry and the True Church of Orthodoxy, divided Alexander’s heart between them, making his reign a crossroads in Russian history. Finally he was forced to choose Orthodoxy by the appearance in Russia of that supreme representative of the despotic essence of the revolution – Napoleon.

Tsar Paul had been murdered with the connivance of the British. Knowing this, Alexander “did not trust the British..., and much that Consul Bonaparte was achieving in France appealed to his own political instincts. Provided Napoleon had no territorial ambitions in the Balkans or the eastern Mediterranean, Alexander could see no reason for a clash of interests between France and Russia. The Emperor’s ‘young friends’ on the Secret Committee agreed in general with him rather than with [the Anglophile] Panin, and when Alexander discussed foreign affairs with them during the late summer of 1801, they received the impression that he favoured settling differences with France as a preliminary to a policy of passive isolation. As St. Helens wrote to Hawkesbury shortly before Alexander’s departure for Moscow, ‘The members of the Emperor’s Council, with whom he is particularly connected... been... zealous in promoting the intended peace with France, it being their professed System to endeavour to disengage the Emperor from all foreign Concerns... and induce him to direct his principal attention to the affairs of the Interior.’”

However, the influence of Napoleon on Alexander began to wane after the Russian Emperor’s meeting with the Prussian king Frederick William and his consort Queen Louise in June, 1802. The closeness of the two monarchs threatened to undermine the Tsar’s policy of splendid isolation from the affairs of Europe, and alarmed his foreign minister Kochubey, as well as annoying the French. But isolation was no longer a practical policy as Napoleon continued to encroach on the rights of the German principalities, and so Alexander replaced his foreign minister and, in May, 1803, summoned General Arakcheev to strengthen the Russian army in preparation for possible conflicts in the future...

In 1804 the Duc d’Enghien was kidnapped by French agents, tried and executed as a traitor. “Alexander was enraged by the crime. The Duc d’Enghien was a member of the French royal house. By conniving at his kidnapping and execution the First Consul became, in Alexander’s eyes, a regicide. Nor was this the only cause of the Tsar’s indignation. He regarded the abduction of the Duke from Baden as a particular insult to Russia, for Napoleon had been repeatedly reminded that Alexander expected the French

397 Palmer, op. cit., pp. 63-64.
authorities to respect the lands of his wife’s family. His response was swift. The Council of State was convened in mid-April at
only one dissentient voice, to break off all
diplomatic contact with France. The Russian Court went into official
mourning and a solemn note of protest was despatched to Paris.

“But the French paid little regard to Russian susceptibilities. Napoleon
interpreted Alexander’s complaint as unjustified interference with the
domestic affairs and internal security of France. He entrusted the reply to
Talleyrand, his Minister of Foreign Affairs, and a bland statement appeared in
the official Moniteur: ‘If, when England prepared the assassination of Paul I,
the Russian Government had discovered that the organizers of the plot were
no more than a league away from the frontier, would it not have seized them
at once?’ No allusion could have been better calculated to wound the Tsar
than this deliberate reference to the circumstances of his own accession. It was
a rhetorical question which he found hard to forgive or forget. A month later
news came from Paris that the First Consul had accepted from the French
Senate the title of Emperor. Now, to all his other transgressions, Napoleon
had added contempt for the dynastic principle. Resolutely the successor of
Peter the Great refused to acknowledge the newest of empires.”

Alexander now formed a defensive alliance with Austria and Prussia
against France (there were extensive negotiations with Britain, too, but no
final agreement was reached). The Tsar and his new foreign minister, the
Polish Mason Adam Czartoryski, added an interesting ideological element to
the alliance. “No attempt would be made to impose discredited regimes from
the past on lands liberated from French military rule. The French themselves
were to be told that the Coalition was fighting, not against their natural rights,
but against a government which was ‘no less a tyranny for France than the
rest of Europe’. The new map of the continent must rest on principles of
justice: frontiers would be so drawn that they coincided with natural
geographical boundaries, provided outlets for industries, and associated in
one political unit ‘homogeneous peoples able to agree among themselves’.”

Appealing to peoples over the heads of their rulers, and declaring that
states should be made up of homogeneous ethnic units were, of course,
innovative steps, derived from the French revolution, which presented
considerable dangers for multi-ethnic empires such as the Russian and the
Austrian. Similarly new and dangerous was the idea that the nation was
defined by blood alone. None of these ideological innovations appealed to the
other nations, and the Coalition (including Britain) that was eventually
patched up in the summer of 1805 was motivated more by Napoleon’s further
advances in Italy than by a common ideology.

398 Palmer, op. cit., pp. 81-82.
399 Palmer, op. cit., p. 84.
However, although the British defeated Napoleon at sea at Trafalgar, it was a different story on land. At Austerlitz the Allies lost between 25,000 and 30,000 killed, wounded or captured. And this was only the beginning. In 1806 Napoleon routed the Prussians at Jena and Auerstadt, and in 1807, after an indecisive conflict at Eylau, he defeated the Russians at Friedstadt. Almost the whole of Europe up to the borders of the Russian empire was in French hands...

Two religious events of the year 1806 gave a deeper and darker hue to the political and military conflict. In France Napoleon re-established the Jewish Sanhedrin, which then proclaimed him the Messiah. Partly in response to this, the Holy Synod of the Russian Church called Napoleon the antichrist, declaring that he was threatening “to shake the Orthodox Greco-Russian Church, and is trying by a diabolic invasion to draw the Orthodox into temptation and destruction”. It said that during the revolution Napoleon had bowed down to idols and to human creatures. Finally, ‘to the greater disgrace of the Church of Christ he has thought up the idea of restoring the Sanhedrin, declaring himself the Messiah, gathering together the Jews and leading them to the final uprooting of all Christian faith”.  

In view of this unprecedented anathema, and the solemn pledges he had made to the King of Prussia, it would seem to have been unthinkable for Alexander to enter into alliance with Napoleon at this time. And yet this is precisely what he did at the famous treaty of Tilsit, on the river Niemen, in July, 1807. It came as a terrible shock to many that he should invite Napoleon to the meeting, saying: “Alliance between France and Russia has always been a particular wish of mine and I am convinced that this alone can guarantee the welfare and peace of the world”. Queen Louise of Prussia, who was very close to Alexander, wrote to him: “You have cruelly deceived me”. And it is hard not to agree with her since, with Alexander’s acquiescence, Napoleon took most of the Prussian lands and imposed a heavy indemnity on the Prussians, while Alexander took a part of what had been Prussian territory in Poland, the province of Bialystok. The only concession Alexander was able to wring from the Corsican was that King Frederick should be restored to the heart of his greatly reduced kingdom “from consideration of the wishes of His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias”.

“As the days went by with no clear news from Tilsit,” writes Palmer, “the cities of the Empire were again filled with alarming rumours, as they had been after Austerlitz: was Holy Russia to be sold to the Antichrist? For, whatever the fashion on the Niemen, in St. Petersburg and Moscow the Church still thundered on Sundays against Bonaparte, that ‘worshipper of idols and whores’.” Metropolitan Platon of Moscow wrote to the Tsar

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Of course, in view of his crushing military defeats, Alexander was in a weak position at Tilsit. Nevertheless, if he could not defeat his enemy, he did not have to enter into alliance with him or legitimise his conquests, especially since Napoleon did not (at that time) plan to invade Russia. To explain Alexander’s behaviour, which went against the Church, his Allies and most of public opinion at home, it is not sufficient to point to the liberal ideas of his youth, although those undoubtedly played a part. It is necessary to point also to a personal factor, the romantically seductive powers of that truly antichristian figure, Napoleon Bonaparte. As we have seen in the last chapter, Napoleon had seduced a whole generation of young people in Europe and America; so it is hardly surprising that the Tsar should also have come under his spell.

As Tsaritsa Elizabeth wrote to her mother: “You know, Mamma, this man seems to me like an irresistible seducer who by temptation or force succeeds in stealing the hearts of his victims. Russia, the most virtuous of them, has defended herself for a long time; but she has ended up no better than the others. And, in the person of her Emperor, she has yielded as much to charm as to force. He feels a secret attraction to his enticer which is apparent in all he does. I should indeed like to know what magic it is that he [Napoleon] employs to change people’s opinions so suddenly and so completely…”

In any case, “the peace of Tilsit,” writes Ivanov, “did not bring pacification. A year after Tilsit a meeting took place at Erfurt between Napoleon and Alexander, to which Alexander brought Speransky. At this last meeting Napoleon made a huge impression and convinced him of the need of reforming Russia on the model of France.

“The historian Professor Shiman in his work, Alexander I, writes:

“'And so he (Alexander) took with him to Erfurt the most capable of his officials, the privy councillor Michael Mikhailovich Speransky, and put him in direct contact with Napoleon, who did not miss the opportunity to discuss with him in detailed conversations various questions of administration. The result of these conversations was a whole series of outstanding projects of reform, of which the most important was the project of a constitution for Russia.’"
Alexander returned to Petersburg enchanted with Napoleon, while his State-Secretary Speransky was enchanted both with Napoleon and with everything French.

“The plan for a transformation of the State was created by Speransky with amazing speed, and in October, 1809 the whole plan was on Alexander’s desk. This plan reflected the dominant ideas of the time, which were close to what is usually called ‘the principles of 1789’.

1) The source of power is the State, the country.

2) Only that phenomenon which expresses the will of the people can be considered lawful.

3) If the government ceases to carry out the conditions on which it was summoned to power, its acts lose legality. The centralised administration of Napoleon’s empire influenced Alexander’s ideas about how he should reform his own administration.

4) So as to protect the country from arbitrariness, and put a bound to absolute power, it is necessary that it and its organs – the government institutions – should be led in their acts by basic laws, unalterable decrees, which exactly define the desires and needs of the people.

5) As a conclusion from what has been said: the basic laws must be the work and creation of the nation itself.

“Proceeding from Montesquieu’s proposition that ‘three powers move and rule the state: the legislative power, the executive power and the judicial power’, Speransky constructed the whole of his plan on the principle of the division of powers – the legislative, the executive and the judicial. Another masonic truth was introduced, that the executive power in the hands of the ministers must be subject to the legislative, which was concentrated in the State Duma.

“The plot proceeded, led by Speransky, who was supported by Napoleon.

“Karamzin [the historian] in his notes and conversations tried to convince Alexander to stop the carrying out of Speransky’s reforms, which were useless and would bring only harm to the motherland.

“Joseph de Maistre saw in the person of Speransky a most harmful revolutionary, who was undermining the foundations of all state principles and was striving by all means to discredit the power of the Tsar.
For two years his Majesty refused to believe these rumours and warnings. Towards the beginning of 1812 the enemies of Speransky in the persons of Arakcheev, Shishkov, Armfeldt and Great Princess Catherine Pavlovna convinced his Majesty of the correctness of the general conviction of Speransky’s treachery.

“The following accusations were brought against Speransky: the incitement of the masses of the people through taxes, the destruction of the finances and unfavourable comments about the government.

“A whole plot to keep Napoleon informed was also uncovered. Speransky had been entrusted with conducting a correspondence with Nesselrode, in which the main French actors were indicated under pseudonyms. But Speransky did not limit himself to giving this information: on his own, without authorisation from above, he demanded that all secret papers and reports from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should be handed over to him. Several officials were found who without objections carried out his desire....

“Then from many honourable people there came warnings about the traitrous activities of Speransky.

“At the beginning of 1812 the Swedish hereditary prince Bernadotte, who was in opposition to Napoleon, informed Petersburg that ‘the sacred person of the Emperor is in danger’ and that Napoleon was ready with the help of a big bribe to establish his influence in Russia again.

“A letter was intercepted in which Speransky told a friend about the departure of his Majesty with the aim of inspecting the fortifications that had been raised on the western border, and he used the expression ‘our Boban’. ‘Our Boban’ was a humorous nickname inspired by Voltaire’s story, ‘White Bull’.

“Speransky was completely justly accused of belonging to the most harmful sect of Masonry, the Illuminati. Moreover, it was pointed out that Speransky was not only a member of it, but was ‘the regent of the Illuminati’. 406

406 In 1810 an Illuminati lodge, “Polar Star”, was opened by the German Lutheran and pantheist mystic Professor I.A. Fessler, whom Speransky had summoned from Germany. Speransky joined this lodge, and Professor Shiman writes that Speransky “was a Freemason who accepted the strange thought of using the organization of the lodge for the reform of the Russian clergy, which was dear to his heart. His plan consisted in founding a masonic lodge that would have branch-lodges throughout the Russian State and would accept the most capable clergy as brothers.

“Speransky openly hated Orthodoxy. With the help of Fessler he wanted to begin a war against the Orthodox Church. The Austrian chargé d’affaires Saint-Julien, wrote in a report to his government on the fall of Speransky that the higher clergy, shocked by the protection he gave to Fessler, whom he had sent for from Germany, and who had the rashness to express
the Martinists and Illuminati were reported by ‘Note on the Martinists’, presented in 1811 to Great Princess Catherine Pavlovna, said that ‘they (the Martinists) were all more or less devoted to Speransky, who, without belonging in his heart to any sect, or perhaps any religion, was using their services to direct affairs and keep them dependent on himself.’

“Finally, in the note of Colonel Polev, found in Alexander I’s study after his death, the names of Speransky, Fessler, Magnitsky, Zlobin and others were mentioned as being members of the Illuminati lodge…

“At last, on March 11, 1812 Sangley was summoned to his Majesty, who informed him that Speransky ‘had the boldness to describe all Napoleon’s military talents and advised him to convene the State Duma and ask it to conduct the war while he absented himself’. ‘Who am I then? Nothing?’, continued his Majesty. ‘From this I see that he is undermining the autocracy, which I am obliged to transfer whole to my heirs.’

“At last, on March 16 Professor Parrot of Derpt university was summoned to the Winter Palace. ‘The Emperor,’ he wrote in a later letter to Emperor Nicholas I, ‘angrily described to me the ingratitude of Speransky, whom I had never seen, expressing himself with feeling that drew tears from him. Having expounded the proof of his treachery that had been presented to him, he said to me: ‘I have decided to shoot him tomorrow, and have invited you here because I wish to know your opinion on this.’

“Unfortunately, his Majesty did not carry out his decision: Speransky had too many friends and protectors. They saved him, but for his betrayal he was exiled to Nizhni Novgorod, and then – in view of the fact that the Nizhni Novgorod nobility were stirred up against him – to Perm. At a patriotic banquet in the house of the Provincial Governor Prince Gruzinsky in Nizhni Novgorod, the nobles’ patriotism almost cost Speransky his life. ‘Hang him, execute him, burn Speransky on the pyre’ suggested the Nizhni Novgorod nobles.

“Through the efforts of his friends, Speransky was returned from exile and continued his treachery against his kind Tsar. He took part in the organization of the uprising of the Decembrists, who after the coup appointed him first candidate for the provisional government.”

Deist, antichristian views, were strongly instrumental in his fall (letter of April 1, 1812). However, our ‘liberators’ were in raptures with Speransky’s activities…” (in Ivanov, op. cit. p. 255) (V.M.)

Ivanov, op. cit., pp. 255-258. After the attempted coup, Tsar Nicholas used him, but told one of his officials to keep an eye on him…
NAPOLÉON’S INVASION OF RUSSIA

However, it was Napoleon’s invasion rather than any internal factors that swung the scales in favour of the status quo, thereby paradoxically saving Russia from revolution. Napoleon decided on this fatal step after a gradual cooling in relations between the two countries that ended with Alexander’s withdrawal, in 1810, from the economically disastrous Continental System that Napoleon had established against England. By May, 1811, Tsar Alexander was showing a much firmer, more realistic, attitude to the political and military situation: “Should the Emperor Napoleon make war on me, it is possible, even probable, that we shall be defeated. But this will not give him peace... We shall enter into no compromise agreements; we have plenty of open spaces in our rear, and we shall preserve a well-organized army... I shall not be the first to draw my sword, but I shall be the last to sheathe it... I should sooner retire to Kamchatka than yield provinces or put my signature to a treaty in my conquered capital which was no more than a truce...”

The invasion also probably saved Russia from a union with Catholicism, which by now had made its Concordat with Napoleon and was acting, very probably, on Napoleon’s orders. For in 1810 Metropolitan Platon of Moscow, as K.A. Papmehl writes, “became the recipient of ecumenical overtures by the French senator Grégoire (formerly Bishop of Blois), presumably on Napoleon’s initiative. In a letter dated in Paris in May of that year, Grégoire referred to the discussions held in 1717, at the Sorbonne, between Peter I and some French bishops, with a view of exploring the prospects of re-unification. Peter apparently passed the matter on to the synod of Russian bishops who, in their turn, indicated that they could not commit themselves on a matter of such importance without consulting the Eastern Patriarchs. Nothing had been heard from the Russian side since then. Grégoire nevertheless assumed that the consultation must have taken place and asked for copies of the Patriarchs’ written opinions. He concluded his letter by assuring Platon that he was hoping and praying for reunification of the Churches...

“Platon passed the letter to the Synod in St. Petersburg. In 1811 [it] replied to Grégoire, with Emperor Alexander’s approval, to the effect that a search of Russian archives failed to reveal any of the relevant documents. The idea of a union, Platon added, was, in any case ‘contrary to the mood of the Russian people’ who were deeply attached to their faith and concerned with its preservation in a pure and unadulterated form.”

Only a few years before, at Tilsit in 1807, the Tsar had said to Napoleon: “In Russia I am both Emperor and Pope – it’s much more convenient.” But

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408 Palmer, op. cit., p. 203.
409 Papmehl, op. cit., p. 85.
And the restraint on Alexander’s power constituted by what remained of that symphony of powers evidently led him to think again about imitating the West too closely, whether politically or ecclesiastically.

That the symphony of powers was still intact was witnessed at the consecration of the Kazan cathedral in St. Petersburg on September 27, 1811, the tenth anniversary of Alexander’s coronation. “There was an ‘immense crowd’ of worshippers and onlookers. Not for many years had the people of St. Petersburg witnessed so solemn a ceremony symbolizing the interdependence of Church and State, for this essential bond of Tsardom was customarily emphasized in Moscow rather than in the newer capital. To some it seemed, both at the time and later, that the act of consecration served Alexander as a moment of re-dedication and renewal, linking the pledges he had given at his crowning in Moscow with the mounting challenge from across the frontier. For the rest of the century, the Kazan Cathedral remained associated in people’s minds with the high drama of its early years, so that it became in time a shrine for the heroes of the Napoleonic wars.”

It was from the Kazan Cathedral that Alexander set out at the start of the campaign, on April 21, 1812. As Tsaritsa Elizabeth wrote to her mother in Baden: “The Emperor left yesterday at two o’clock, to the accompaniment of cheers and blessings from an immense crowd of people who were tightly packed from the Kazan Church to the gate of the city. As these folk had not been hustled into position by the police and as the cheering was not led by planted agents, he was – quite rightly – moved deeply by such signs of affection from our splendid people!... ‘For God and their Sovereign’ – that was the cry! They make no distinction between them in their hearts and scarcely at all in their worship. Woe to him who profanes the one or the other. These old-world attitudes are certainly not found more intensively anywhere than at the extremes of Europe. Forgive me, dear Mamma, for regaling you with commonplace familiar to everyone who has a true knowledge of Russia, but one is carried away when speaking of something you love; and you know my passionate devotion to this country.”

And so Napoleon’s invasion of Russia acquired a significance that the other Napoleonic wars in continental Europe did not have: it became a struggle, not simply between two not-so-different political systems, but between two radically opposed faiths: the faith in the Revolution and the faith in Orthodoxy. 1812 produced an explosion of Russian patriotism and

412 Palmer, op. cit., p. 215. A century later, at the beginning of a still greater war against a western enemy, another German-born Tsaritsa would express almost exactly similar sentiments on seeing her husband and Tsar go to war...
of the heroic Russian armies, at the "Reigning" icon of the Mother of God, reanimated a fervent pride and belief in Holy Russia. As K.N. Leontiev writes: “It was ecclesiastical feeling and obedience to the authorities (the Byzantine influence) that saved us in 1812. It is well-known that many of our peasants (not all, of course, but those who were taken unawares by the invasion) found little purely national feeling in themselves in the first minute. They robbed the landowners’ estates, rebelled against the nobility, and took money from the French. The clergy, the nobility and the merchants behaved differently. But immediately they saw that the French were stealing the icons and putting horses in our churches, the people became harder and everything took a different turn…”

Of particular significance was the fact that it had been Moscow, the old capital associated with Orthodoxy and the Muscovite tsars, rather than the new and westernized capital of St. Petersburg, which had borne the brunt of the suffering. For it was not so much the indecisive battle of Borodino, a contest in which, according to Napoleon, “the French showed themselves worthy of victory and the Russians of being invincible“, as the burning of Moscow, which destroyed 80% of dwellings in the city, and Alexander’s refusal to surrender even after that, which proved the decisive turning-point, convincing Napoleon that he could not win...

The leadership on both sides made serious mistakes. But it was the French who suffered most from their mistakes. In this, as in many other ways, especially the weather, God was clearly on the side of the Orthodox. Thus early in the campaign terrible rain storms killed thousands of horses that were desperately needed by Napoleon. Then terrible heat killed many soldiers. The late onset of winter tempted Napoleon to stay too long in Moscow. But then, when the winter did come, it was savage...

The terrible sufferings of the French on their return march are well-known. There was even cannibalism, - a sure sign of apocalyptic times, - as the soldiers of the Great Army began to put their fellow-soldiers in the stew pots. Out of the vast army - nearly 600,000 men - that set out for Russia, only 120,000 returned, 35,000 of them French. The Russians lost 400,000, but they had saved their homeland...

413 That same icon which was to reappear miraculously on March 2, 1917, at another time of mortal danger for the State.
415 70,000 men fell in one day, the largest death-toll in a single day’s warfare until the first day of the Battle of the Somme in 1916.
However, the Russian victory was almost foiled by the intrigues of the commander-in-chief of the army Kutuzov, who, according to Sokolskaia, was initiated into Masonry at the “Three Keys” lodge in Regensburg, and was later received into lodges in Frankfurt, Berlin, Petersburg and Moscow, penetrating into the secrets of the higher degrees.417

The Tsar was against Kutuzov’s appointment, but said: “The public wanted his appointment, I appointed him: as regards myself personally, I wash my hands of him.” He was soon proved right in his premonition. The Russian position at the battle of Borodino was poorly prepared by Kutuzov, and he himself took little part in it. The previous commander-in-chief, Barclay, took the lead and acted heroically, but gained little credit for it.

In Moscow, the patriotic Count Rastopchin, well aware of the pro-Napoleonic, potentially seditious sentiments of the nobility, had them evacuated from the city with their families while Kutuzov slept. As the Martinist Runich said: “Rastopchin, acting through fear, threw the nobility, the merchants and the non-gentry intellectuals out of Moscow in order that they should not give in to the enticements and influence of Napoleon’s tactics. He stirred up the hatred of the people by the horrors that he ascribed to the foreigners [although he had started it], whom he mocked at the same time. He saved Russia from the yoke of Napoleon.”418

“The fire of Moscow started the people’s war. Napoleon’s situation deteriorated from day to day. His army was demoralised. The hungry French soldiers wandered round the outskirts of Moscow searching for bread and provisions. Lootings and murders began. Discipline in the army declined sharply. Napoleon was faced with a threatening dilemma: either peace, or destruction.

“Peace negotiations began. On September 23 at Tarutino camp Kutuzov met Napoleon’s truce-envoy Lauriston. Kutuzov willingly accepted this suggestion and decided to keep the meeting a complete secret. He told Lauriston to meet him outside the camp, beyond the line of our advance posts, on the road to Moscow. Everything was to be done in private and the project for a truce was to be put forward very quickly. This plan for a secret agreement between Napoleon and the Masonic commander-in-chief fell through. Some Russian generals and especially the English agent attached to the Russian army, [General] Wilson, protested against the unofficial secret negotiations with Napoleon. On September 23 Wilson made a scene in front of Kutuzov; he came to him as the representative of the general staff and

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417 Ivanov, op. cit., p. 261.
418 Ivanov, op. cit., pp. 264-265. However, Alexander Solzhenitsyn writes that as a result of the fire of Moscow 15,000 Russian soldiers who were recovering from wounds suffered at Borodino in the military hospitals of the city were burned alive (La ‘problème russe’ à la fin du xxe siècle (The ‘Russian Problem’ at the End of the 20th Century), Paris: Fayard, 1994, pp. 52-53).
that the army would refuse to obey him. Wilson of Wurtemburg, the Emperor’s uncle, his son-in-law Prince Volkonsky, general-adjutant, who had arrived not long before with a report from Petersburg. Kutuzov gave way, and the meeting with Lauriston took place in the camp headquarters.

“Kutuzov’s failure in securing peace did not stop him from giving fraternal help to Napoleon in the future.

“After insistent urgings from those close to him and at the insistence of his Majesty, Kutuzov agreed to attack near Tarutino.

“The battle of Tarutino revealed the open betrayal of the commander-in-chief.

“‘When in the end the third and fourth corps came out of the wood and the cavalry of the main army was drawn up for the attack, the French began a general retreat. When the French retreat was already an accomplished fact and the French columns were already beyond Chernishina, Bennigsen moved his armies forward.

“The main forces at the moment of the French retreat had been drawn up for battle. In spite of this, and the persuasions of Yermolov and Miloradovich, Kutuzov decisively refused to move the armies forward, and only a part of the light cavalry was set aside for pursuing the enemy, the rest of the army returned to the Tarutino camp.

“Bennigsen was so enraged by the actions of the field-marshal that after the battle he did not even consider it necessary to display military etiquette in front of him and, on receiving his congratulations on the victory, did not even get off his horse.

“In private conversations he accused Kutuzov not only of not supporting him with the main army for personal reasons, but also of deliberately holding back Osterman’s corps.

“For many this story will seem monstrous; but from the Masonic point of view it was necessary: the Mason Kutuzov was only carrying out his obligations in relation to his brother (Murat), who had been beaten and fallen into misfortune.

“In pursuing the retreating army of Napoleon Kutuzov did not have enough strength or decisiveness to finish once and for all with the disordered French army. During the retreat Kutuzov clearly displayed criminal slowness.
The behaviour of the field-marshal drives me mad,’ wrote the English agent General Wilson about this.

For “the Masonic oath was always held to be higher than the military oath.”419

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419 Ivanov, op. cit., pp. 269-270, 272.
Napoleon never conquered two of his enemies: Britain and Russia; and it is tempting to see in these nations two principles that the revolution failed to subordinate to itself in the way that it had (at least temporarily) subordinated Catholicism to itself. These were, first: the love of freedom - not the ecstatic, collectivist, Rousseauist “freedom to” that the revolution represented, but the more sober, individualist, Lockean “freedom from” that was ingrained especially in the stubborn spirit of the island race. The revolution had made considerable inroads into English life, but never completely destroyed the restraining individualism of the English character. The second, and far greater, principle was the love of God in Orthodoxy, which inspired Russia to drive the Grande Armée all the way from burning Moscow to the streets of Paris. Throughout the nineteenth century Russia remained the main bulwark of civilization against the revolution, finally succumbing to it only in the catastrophe of 1917...

Orlando Figes writes: “As readers of War and Peace will know, the war of 1812 was a vital watershed in the culture of the Russian aristocracy. It was a war of national liberation from the intellectual empire of the French - a moment when noblemen like the Rostovs and the Bolkonskys struggled to break free from the foreign conventions of their society and began new lives on Russian principles. This was no straightforward metamorphosis (and it happened much more slowly than in Tolstoy’s novel, where the nobles rediscover their forgotten national ways almost overnight). Though anti-French voices had grown to quite a chorus in the first decade of the nineteenth century, the aristocracy was still immersed in the culture of the country against which they were at war. The salons of St. Petersburg were filled with young admirers of Bonaparte, such as Pierre Bezukhov in War and Peace. The most fashionable set was that of Counts Rumiantsev and Caulaincourt, the French ambassador in Petersburg, the circle in which Tolstoy’s Hélène moved. ‘How can we fight the French?’ asks Count Rostopchin, the Governor of Moscow, in War and Peace. ‘Can we arm ourselves against our teachers and divinities? Look at our youths! Look at our ladies! The French are our Gods. Paris is our Kingdom of Heaven.’ Yet even in these circles there was horror at Napoleon’s invasion, and their reaction against all things French formed the basis of a Russian renaissance in life and art.”

This Russian renaissance took many forms. At its simplest it meant that the noble army officers evinced a greater appreciation of the Russian peasants with whom they had marched all the way from Moscow to Paris. In the eighteenth century the only contact the nobility had had with the Russian

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peasants, their speech and their values, was through their peasant nannies. As a result of 1812, this subconscious stream came more to the fore.

One of the consequences of this was the birth of a specifically Russian-language literature in the works of such “children of 1812” as the great poet Pushkin. It was Pushkin who started the trend of looking back to childhood, when the influence of his peasant nanny had been dominant.

And so, writes Figes, “compared with their parents, the Russian nobles who grew up after 1812 put a higher valuation on childhood. It took a long time for such attitudes to change, but already by the middle decades of the nineteenth century one can discern a new veneration of childhood on the part of those memoirists and writers who recalled their upbringing after 1812. This nostalgia for the age of childhood merged with a new reverence for the Russian customs which they had known as children through their father’s household serfs.”

Again, the new focus on the Russian language, customs and childhood influences merged with a new focus on history – beginning with the events of 1812 itself, but going much further back into the childhood of the nation. “Oh please, Nurse, tell me again how the French came to Moscow.’ Thus Herzen starts his sublime memoir My Past and Thoughts, one of the greatest works of Russian literature. Born in 1812, Herzen had a special fondness for his nanny’s stories of that year. His family had been forced to flee the flames that engulfed Moscow, the young Herzen carried out in his mother’s arms, and it was only through a safe conduct from Napoleon himself that they managed to escape to their Yaroslav estate. Herzen felt great ‘pride and pleasure at [having] taken part in the Great War’. The story of his childhood merged with the national drama he so loved to hear: ‘Tales of the fire of Moscow, of the battle of Borodino, of the Berezina, of the taking of Paris were my cradle songs, my nursery stories, my Iliad and my Odyssey.’ For Herzen’s generation, the myths of 1812 were intimately linked with their childhood memories. Even in the 1850s children were still brought up on the legends of that year. History, myth and memory were intertwined.

“For the historian Nikolai Karamzin, 1812 was a tragic year. While his Moscow neighbours moved to their estates, he refused to ‘believe that the ancient holy city could be lost’ and, as he wrote on 20 August, he chose to ‘die on Moscow’s walls’. Karamzin’s house burned down in the fires and, since he had not thought to evacuate his library, he lost his precious books to the flames as well. But Karamzin saved one book – a bulging notebook that contained the draft of his celebrated History of the Russian State (1818-1826). Karamzin’s masterpiece was the first truly national history – not just in the

421 Figes, op. cit., p. 119.
sense that it was the first by a Russian, but also in the sense that it rendered Russia’s past as a national narrative. Previous histories of Russia had been chronicles of monasteries and saints, patriotic propaganda, or heavy tomes of documents compiled by German scholars, unread and unreadable. But Karamzin’s History had a literary quality that made its twelve large volumes a nationwide success. It combined careful scholarship with the narrative techniques of a novelist. Karamzin stressed the psychological motivations of his historical protagonists – even to the point of inventing them – so that his account became more compelling to a readership brought up on the literary conventions of Romantic texts. Medieval tsars like Ivan the Terrible or Boris Godunov became tragic figures in Karamzin’s History – subjects for a modern psychological drama; and from its pages they walked on to the stage in operas by Mussorgsky and Rimsky Korsakov.

“The first eight volumes of Karamzin’s History were published in 1818. ‘Three thousand copies were sold within a month – something unprecedented in our country. Everyone, even high-born ladies, began to read the history of their country,’ wrote Pushkin. ‘It was a revelation. You could say that Karamzin discovered ancient Russia as Columbus discovered America.’ The victory of 1812 had encouraged a new interest and pride in Russia’s past. People who had been raised on the old conviction that there was no history before the reign of Peter the Great began to look back to the distant past for the sources of their country’s unexpected strengths. After 1812 history books appeared at a furious pace. Chairs were established in the universities (Gogol held one for a term at St. Petersburg). Historical associations were set up, many in the provinces, and huge efforts were suddenly devoted to the rescuing of Russia’s past. History became the arena for all those troubling questions about Russia’s nature and its destiny. As Belinsky wrote in 1846, ‘we interrogate our past for an explanation of our present and a hint of our future’.”

Both of the major intellectual movements of the mid-century – the Slavophiles and the Westerners – may be said to have originated in this passion for Russian history, which began after 1812. The Slavophiles believed that the real Russia was to be found in the Orthodox medieval state that existed before Peter the Great, while the Westerners believed that Russian history only really began with Peter and his westernizing reforms.

However, both movements represented a turning away from the “pure” westernism of the eighteenth century. For both were speaking in Russian about Russia – and not merely about the upper classes, but about the whole people.

1812 elicited more than patriotic feelings. The victory over Napoleon also elicited an explosion of specifically religious feeling, not least in the Tsar.

himself, who said: “The burning of Moscow enlightened my soul, and the judgements of God on the icy fields filled my heart with a warmth of faith such as I had not felt before. Then I came to know God as He is depicted in the Holy Scriptures. I am obliged to the redemption of Europe from destruction for my own redemption”. All the crosses and medallions minted in memory of 1812, he said, were to bear the inscription: “Not to us, not to us, but to Thy name give the glory”.423

God was teaching the Russians a most important lesson: that those western influences which had so inundated Russia in the century up to 1812, were evil and threatened to destroy Russia. As Bishop Theophan the Recluse wrote some generations later: “We are attracted by enlightened Europe… Yes, there for the first time the pagan abominations that had been driven out of the world were restored; then they passed and are passing to us, too. Inhaling into ourselves these poisonous fumes, we whirl around like madmen, not remembering who we are. But let us recall 1812: Why did the French come to us? God sent them to exterminate that evil which we had taken over from them. Russia repented at that time, and God had mercy on her.”424

Tragically, however, that lesson was only superficially learned. Although the Masonic plans to overthrow both Church and State had been foiled, both Masonry and other unhealthy religious influences continued to flourish. And discontent with the existing order was evident in both the upper and the lower classes. Thus the question arose of the emancipation of the peasants, who had played such a great part in the victory, voluntarily destroying their own homes and crops in order to deny them to the French. They hoped for more in return than they actually received.

“There was great bitterness,” writes Hosking, “among peasants who returned from their militia service to find that there was no emancipation. Alexander, in his manifesto of 30 August 1814, thanking and rewarding all his subjects for their heroic deeds, said of the peasants simply that they would ‘receive their reward from God’…. Some nobles tried to persuade the authorities not to allow them back, but to leave them in the regular army as ordinary soldiers. The poet Gavriil Derzhavin was informed by his returnees that they had been ‘temporarily released’ and were now state peasants and not obliged to serve him. Rumours circulated that Alexander had intended to free them all, but had been invited to a special meeting of indignant nobles at night in the Senate, from which he had allegedly been rescued, pleading for his life, by his brother Grand Duke Konstantin Pavlovich…”425

Here we have the familiar theme of the people laying the blame for their woes, not on the tsar, but on the nobles. Some peasants may have wanted

423 Dobroklonsky, op. cit., p. 666.
424 Bishop Theophan, Mysli na kazhdij den’ (Thoughts for every day), p. 461.
425 Hosking, op. cit., p. 137.
emancipation and a share in the nobles’ wealth. But they wanted it with the
expression of some egalitarian and anti-monarchist ideology. The French revolution in this, its imperialist,
expansionist phase, overthrew many kingdoms and laid the seeds for the
overthrow of still more. But it broke against the rock of the Russian people’s
faith in their God and their Tsar…

However, if the masses of the people were still Orthodox and loyal to the
Tsar, this could not be said of the nobility. We have seen the extent to which
Masonry penetrated the bureaucracy in the early part of Alexander’s reign. Unfortunately, the triumphant progress of the Russian army into the heart of
Masonry, Paris, did not destroy this influence, but only served to strengthen
it.

For, as Zamoyski writes, “if nobles at home wanted to keep their serfs, the
nobles who served as officers in the armies that occupied Paris were exposed
to other, liberal influences. They had been brought up speaking French and
reading the same literature as educated people in other countries. They could
converse effortlessly with German and English allies as well as with French
prisoners and civilians. Ostensibly, they were just like any of the Frenchmen,
Britons and Germans they met, yet at every step they were made aware of
profound differences. The experience left them with a sense of being
somehow outside, almost unfit for participation in European civilisation. And
that feeling would have dire consequences…”

All kinds of false mysticism flooded into Russia from the West, “a veritable
inundation of ‘mystical’ and pseudo-Christian ideas,” writes N. Elagin,
“together with the ‘enlightened’ philosophy that had produced the French
Revolution. Masonic lodges and other secret societies abounded; books
containing the Gnostic and millenarian fantasies of Jacob Boehme, Jung-
Stilling, Eckhartsthausen and other Western ‘mystics’ were freely translated
into Russian and printed for distribution in all the major cities of the realm;
‘ecumenical’ salons spread a vague teaching of an ‘inner Christianity’ to the
highest levels of Russian society; the press censorship was under the direction
of the powerful Minister of Spiritual Affairs, Count Golitsyn, who patronized
every ‘mystical’ current and stifled the voice of traditional Orthodoxy by his
dominance of the Holy Synod as Procurator; the Tsar Alexander himself, fresh
from his victory over Napoleon and the formation of a vaguely religious
‘Holy Alliance’ of Western powers, favored the new religious currents and
consulted with ‘prophetesses’ and other religious enthusiasts; and the bishops
and other clergy who saw what was going on were reduced to helpless
silence in the face of the prevailing current of the times and the Government’s
support of it, which promised exile and disgrace for anyone who opposed it.
Many even of those who regarded themselves as sincere Orthodox Christians

426 Zamoyski, Holy Madness: Romantics, Patriots and Revolutionaries, 1776-1871, London:
...en ‘enthusiasm’ of the times, and, trusting their religious feelings more than the Church’s authority and tradition, were developing a new spirituality, foreign to Orthodoxy, in the midst of the Church itself. Thus, one lady of high birth, Ekaterina P. Tatarinova, claimed to have received the gift of ‘prophecy’ on the very day she was received into the Orthodox Church (from Protestantism), and subsequently she occupied the position of a ‘charismatic’ leader of religious meetings which included the singing of Masonic and sectarian hymns (while holding hands in a circle), a peculiar kind of dancing and spinning when the ‘Holy Spirit’ would come upon them, and actual ‘prophecy’ – sometimes for hours at a time. The members of such groups fancied that they drew closer to the traditions of Orthodoxy by such meetings, which they regarded as a kind of restoration of the New Testament Church for ‘inward’ believers, the ‘Brotherhood in Christ’, as opposed to the ‘outward’ Christians who were satisfied with the Divine services of the Orthodox Church... The revival of the perennial ‘charismatic’ temptation in the Church, together with a vague ‘revolutionary’ spirit imported from the West, presented a danger not merely to the preservation of true Christianity in Russia, but to the very survival of the whole order of Church and State...”

V.N. Zhmakin writes: “From 1812 there began with us in Russia a time of the domination of extreme mysticism and pietism... The Emperor Alexander became a devotee of many people simultaneously, from whatever quarter they declared their religious enthusiasm... He protected the preachers of western mysticism, the Catholic paters... Among the first of his friends and counsellors was Prince A.N. Golitsyn, who was ober-procurator of the Synod from 1803... Prince Golitsyn was the complete master of the Russian Orthodox Church in the reign of Alexander I... Having received no serious religious education, like the majority of aristocrats of that time, he was a complete babe in religious matters and almost an ignoramus in Orthodoxy... Golitsyn, who understood Orthodoxy poorly, took his understanding of it only from its external manifestations... His mystical imagination inclined in favour of secrecy, fancifulness, originality... He became simultaneously the devotee of all the representatives of contemporary mysticism, such as Mrs. Krunder, the society of Quakers, Jung Schtilling, the pastors... etc. Moreover, he became the pitiful plaything of all the contemporary sectarians, all the religious utopians, the representatives of all the religious theories, beginning with the Masons and ending with the ... eunuch Selivanov and the half-mad Tatarinova. In truth, Prince Golitsyn at the same time protected the mystics and the pietists, and gave access into Russia to the English missionaries, and presented a broad field of activity to the Jesuits, who, thanks to the protection of the Minister of Religious Affairs, sowed a large part of Russia with their missions... He himself personally took part in the prayer-meetings of the Quakers and waited, together with them, for the overshadowing of the Holy

the religious gatherings of Tatarinova, which resembled the Shamans and khlysts.... Thanks to Prince Golitsyn, mystical literature received all rights of citizenship in Russia - works shot through with mystical ravings were distributed en masse... By the direct order of Prince Golitsyn all the more significant mystical works and translations were distributed to all the dioceses to the diocesan bishops. In some dioceses two thousand copies of one and the same work were sent to some dioceses... Prince Golitsyn... acted... in the name of the Holy Synod... and in this way contradicted himself;... the Synod as it were in its own name distributed works which actually went right against Orthodoxy.... He strictly persecuted the appearance of such works as were negatively oriented towards mysticism... Many of the simple people, on reading the mystical works that came into their hands, ... were confused and perplexed.”

Something of the atmosphere of St. Petersburg at that time can be gathered from the recollections of the future Metropolitan Philaret (Drozdov), when he went there for service in the newly reformed ecclesiastical schools in 1809. “The Synod greeted him with the advice to read ‘Swedenborg’s Miracles’ and learn French. He was taken to court to view the fireworks and attend a masquerade party in order to meet Prince Golitsyn..., quite literally ‘amidst the noise of a ball’... This was Philaret’s first masquerade ball, and he had never before seen a domino. ‘At the time I was an object of amusement in the Synod,’ Philaret recalled, ‘and I have remained a fool’.”

As Alexander pursued the remnants of Napoleon’s Great Army into Poland in the bitterly cold winter of 1812-13, he was “in a state bordering on religious ecstasy. More and more he turned to the eleventh chapter of the Book of Daniel with the apocalyptic vision of how the all-conquering King of the South is cast down by the King of the North. It seemed to him as if the prophecies, which had sustained him during the dark days of autumn and early winter, were now to be fulfilled: Easter this year would come with a new spiritual significance of hope for all Europe. ‘Placing myself firmly in the hands of God I submit blindly to His will,’ he informed his friend Golitsyn from Radzonow, on the Wrkra. ‘My faith is sincere and warm with passion. Every day it grows firmer and I experience joys I had never known before... It is difficult to express in words the benefits I gain from reading the Scriptures, which previously I knew only superficially... All my glory I dedicate to the advancement of the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ’... At Kalisch (Kalisz) on the border of the Grand-Duchy of Warsaw and Prussia the Tsar concluded a convention with Frederick William: the agreement provided for a close military alliance between Russia and Prussia, stipulating the size of their respective contingents and promising Prussia territory as extensive as in 1806; but the final clauses went beyond the normal language of diplomacy to echo

Alexander's religious inspiration. ‘Let all Germany join us in our mission of liberation,’ the Kalisch Treaty said. ‘The hour has come for obligations to be observed with that religious faith, that sacred inviolability which holds together the power and permanence of nations.’

But should Russia go further west into Germany and liberate the whole of Western Europe? Kutuzov and most of the senior officers were against it. “Even the most ardent Russian patriots, such as his Minister of the Interior Admiral Shishkov and the Archimandrite Filaret, were against Alexander’s proposed liberation of Europe. The consensus was that Russia should help herself to East Prussia and much of Poland, providing herself with some territorial gain and a defensible western border, and leave it at that. But Alexander ignored them.”\footnote{Adam Zamoyski, \textit{Rites of Peace: The Fall of Napoleon \& the Congress of Vienna}, London: Harper Perennial, 2008, p. 27.}

Many have criticized Alexander’s subsequent behaviour in the years 1813-1815. And there was indeed much to criticize. He was an indifferent general and diplomat, and at the Congress of Vienna in 1814-1815 the lack of congruence between his proclaimed principles and his actual behaviour squandered for him much of the goodwill that the great sufferings of the Russian people in 1812 had won.

Nevertheless, on the critical question whether he should have stopped at the Vistula or continued all the way to Paris, in hindsight we must conclude that Alexander was right and his critics were wrong. Napoleon’s power was by no means broken in 1813; and if Alexander’s troops had not taken part in the great battle that did finally break it, at Leipzig in October, 1813, it is likely that the ogre would have retaken the whole of Germany and Poland up to the Vistula. True, the ever-chivalrous Alexander was unwise in giving him the island of Elba, very close to the mainland, from which he escaped in 1815, only to be finally defeated with great difficulty at Waterloo in June. However, the Tsar showed great tenacity of purpose, in contrast to his weakness at Tilsit, in pushing all the way to Paris and the complete overthrow of the antichrist-emperor, and must take the main credit for finally seeing the restoration of legitimate monarchy in France and throughout Continental Europe.

Perhaps the best measure of his victory was the Orthodox Divine Liturgy celebrated on Alexander’s namesday, September 12, 1815, on seven altars on the Plaine de Vertus, eighty miles east of Paris, in the presence of the Russian army and all the leading political and military leaders of Europe. Neither before nor since in the modern history of Europe has there been such a universal witness, by all the leaders of the Great Powers, to the true King of kings and Lord of lords. And if this was just a diplomatic concession on the part of the non-Orthodox powers, it was much more than that for Alexander. His Orthodox spirit, so puzzling to the other leaders of Europe, was manifested in a letter he wrote that same evening: “This day has been the
My heart was filled with love for my enemies. In 1815, I prayed with fervour that France might be

A few days later Alexander presented his fellow sovereigns with a treaty designed to bind them in a union in faith and virtue, requiring them “to take as their sole guide the precepts of the Christian religion”. The Tsar insisted on proclaiming the treaty dedicated “to the Holy and Indivisible Trinity” in Paris because it was the most irreligious of all Europe’s capital cities. Only the King of Prussia welcomed the idea. The Emperor of Austria was embarrassed; and in private agreed with his chancellor, Metternich, that Alexander was mad. On the British side, the Duke of Wellington confessed that he could hardly keep a straight face; he and Castlereagh mocked it in private.

Alexander’s own supporters joined in the spirit of the enterprise in spite of its ecumenist overtones. Thus Golitsyn wrote about the Alliance in positively chiliastic terms: “This act cannot be recognized as anything other than a preparation for that promised kingdom of the Lord which will be upon the earth as in the heavens.” And the future Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow wrote: “Finally the kingdoms of this world have begun to belong to our Lord and His Christ”.

The more cynical attitude of the foreign statesmen was not unexpected. After all, religion had long ceased to be seen as the basis of political life in the West. True, the monarchs protected religion as a foundation of their own monarchical power; but in the post-1815 settlement the Catholic Church

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432 Palmer, op. cit., p. 333.
433 Palmer, op. cit., p. 335.
434 Zamoyski, Rites of Peace, pp. 520-522.
435 Another ecumenist act performed at the command of the Tsar was the pannikhida at the tomb of King Louis XVI.
437 Quoted in Metropolitan Ioann (Snychev), Zhizn’ i deiatel’nost’ mitropolita Filareta (The Life and Activity of Metropolitan Philaret), Tula, 1994, p. 121. Philaret appears to have been influenced by the ecumenism of his sovereign at this time. For in 1815 he wrote in his Conversations between one testing and one convinced of the Orthodoxy of the Greco-Russian Church: “Insofar as the one [the Eastern Church] and the other [the Western Church] confess Jesus Christ as having come in the flesh, in this respect they have a common Spirit, which ‘is of God’... Know that, holding to the above-quoted words of Holy Scripture, I do not dare to call any Church which believes ‘that Jesus is the Christ’ false” (Snychev, op. cit., pp. 402, 408 (in Russian)). However, in defence of the holy metropolitan, it should be pointed out that in the above-quoted work he rejected the heresies of papism, and that he never served with heterodox hierarchs or sought union with the heterodox churches. And he reversed his mentor, Metropolitan Platon of Moscow, who during his journey to Kiev and other Russian cities in 1804 reproached “the Russian authorities for following ‘that new-fangled mode of thinking which is called tolerance’ in their relations with the Jesuits, and blamed the Jews for the impoverishment of the Christian population in the areas in which they are numerous” (Papmehl, op. cit., p. 81).
back, which showed their true attitude to it. Nevertheless, Tsar Alexander was now the most powerful man in Europe, and the others could not afford to reject his religio-political project out of hand. So, led by Metternich, they set about discreetly editing the treaty of its more mystical elements until it was signed by the monarchs of Russia, Austria and Prussia (the British and the Turks opted out, as did the Pope of Rome) on September 26.\textsuperscript{438}

“Conformably to the word of the Holy Scriptures,” declared the signatories, “the three contracting Monarchs will remain united by the bonds of a true and indissoluble fraternity, and considering each other as fellow countrymen, they will on all occasions, and in all places led each other aid and assistance; and regarding themselves towards their subjects and armies as fathers of families, they will lead them, in the same fraternity with which they are animated to protect religion, peace and justice.”\textsuperscript{439}

This was not only the beginning of a new, multilateral approach to politics: it was also the beginning of a kind of United Nations, with the great monarchical powers as the security council who pledged themselves not to take major decisions on the international stage without consulting each other. Moreover, it was a consciously Christian United Nations; for the powers declared themselves to be “members of a single Christian nation” – a remarkable idea in view of the fact that of the three members of the Alliance, one, Russia, was Orthodox, another, Austria, was Catholic, and the third, Prussia, was Protestant.

The most important achievement of the Holy Alliance was the re-establishment of the monarchical principle, and in particular of hereditary monarchy. We have seen that even Napoleon’s regime had acquired monarchical trappings; but he had failed to make it truly hereditary. Thus when an obscure general called Malet had announced Napoleon’s death in Russia in October, 1812, the Emperor had been startled by how close the mutiny came to success.

\textsuperscript{438} Palmer, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 333-334. The mocking attitude of the British to the Holy Alliance is revealed by the fact that, as Norman Davies writes, “in each of the subsequent Congresses held at Troppau (1820), Laibach (1821), and Verona (1822), the British held strong reservations about the successive expeditions for crushing revolution in Naples, Greece, and Spain. On the critical issue of the revolt of Spain’s South American colonies, the British Foreign Secretary, George Canning, joined the US President, James Monroe, in forbidding any sort of European intervention in the Americas. ‘I called the New World into existence,’ he told the House of Commons in 1826, ‘to redress the Balance of the Old.’ In effect, he killed the Congress System stone dead. ‘Things are getting back to a wholesome state,’ he remarked shortly before his death. ‘Every nation for itself, and God for us all’” (\textit{Europe: A History}, London: Pimlico, 1997, p. 763).

What touched a particularly raw nerve in him, writes Zamoyski, “was that the news of his death in Russia, announced by Malet, had led those who believed it to consider a change of regime, instead of making them proclaim the succession of his son, the King of Rome. ‘Our forefathers rallied to the cry: ‘The King is dead, long live the King!’’ he reminded them, adding that ‘These few words encompass the principal advantages of monarchy.’ That they had not been uttered on the night of 23 October revealed to him that for all its trappings, the monarchy he had created lacked consistency, and he was still just a general who had seized power, a parvenu with no title to rule beyond his ability to hold on to it. He felt this setback personally, and the sense of insecurity it induced would have a profound effect on how he behaved over the next two years, making him more aggressive and less amenable, and leading inexorably to his downfall…”

A hereditary monarch may not be an admirable person, and may suffer many defeats in the field; but he is the king, and in a society that still believes in kingship, this gives his regime solidity and strength. And if he fails or dies, his son will succeed him, and command the same reverence and loyalty. But once Napoleon had been defeated, and the magical aura of invincibility surrounding him began to fade, it was the end both for him and for his upstart dynasty – as he himself recognized after Waterloo.

However, while the Congress of Vienna and the Quadruple Alliance succeeded in re-establishing the principle of hereditary monarchism as the only true principle of political legitimacy, in practice hereditary monarchs by no means always recovered their thrones and territories. The great powers, as was to be expected, did not restore the map of Europe to what it had been before 1792. They increased their own power, and many hundreds of smaller rulers were partially or wholly dispossessed in the complex negotiations and horse-trading that took place between them in Vienna and Paris. Moreover, millions of ordinary people, especially in Germany and Italy, now found themselves under new rulers. This created almost as much disruption and discontent as had the Napoleonic invasions, which in turn created a kind of nostalgia for the Napoleonic times in some.

In addition to this, in spite of the defeat of the French revolution, there was a continuing increase in the influence of the idea of nationalism that the revolution had spawned. This was the idea that not only the rulers, but also the nations over which they ruled, had rights and privileges, and that a nation represented an organic and even moral unity that could not be simply cut up and parcelled out as, for example, Poland was. The settlement of 1815, and the congresses of the great powers that took place thereafter, have been much criticized for not taking sufficient account of these new developments, and of vainly trying to resist an unstoppable development by crude police methods and repression.

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Zamoyski, Rites of Peace, p. 5.
An eloquent exponent of this point of view is Adam Zamoyski, who writes: “The Vienna settlement imposed an orthodoxy which not only denied political existence to many nations; it enshrined a particularly stultified form of monarchical government; institutionalised social hierarchies as rigid as any that had existed under the ancient regime; and preserved archaic disabilities – serfdom was not abolished in Russia until half a century after the congress. By excluding whole classes and nations from a share in its benefits, this system nurtured envy and resentment, which flourished into socialism and aggressive nationalism. And when, after the ‘Concert of Europe’ had fought itself to extinction in the Great War, those forces were at last unleashed, they visited on Europe events more horrific than the worst fears Metternich or any of his colleagues could have entertained.

“It would be idle to propose that the arrangements made in 1815 caused the terrible cataclysms of the twentieth century. But anyone who attempted to argue that what happened in Russia after 1917, in Italy and Germany in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s, and in many other parts of central and southern Europe at various other moments of the last century had no connection with them would be exposing themselves to ridicule…”

And yet, as Zamoyski admits, the peacemakers of 1815 “did face a formidable task, one that defied any ideal solution. Just because certain arrangements they made turned out to have evil consequences, it does not follow that the opposite course would have yielded more benign results.”

Indeed, the opposite course of giving in to the propaganda of the French revolution might well have brought the cataclysm of 1914-45 forward by several decades. The kernel of truth in Zamoyski’s argument is that the great powers did not cure the disease of Europe, but only arrested or repressed it by crude measures that were often counter-productive. But the only real cure for the disease was for the peoples of Europe to accept the true faith from their liberator, Russia – a near-impossible task, since the attitude of the Europeans to Russia was one of supercilious condescension and non-comprehension, while Russia was herself struggling to contain the disease within herself. In this context, the attempt of Tsar Alexander to save Europe by preaching the faith to his fellow monarchs acquires an extra poignancy. He failed, not only because his fellow monarchs were not interested in the faith, but also because his own faith was mixed with Masonic and heterodox elements. But his failure was less his loss than that of Europe as a whole. For the only hope for a real resurrection of Christian and monarchical Europe lay in accepting the lead of Russia in both the spiritual and the political spheres…

441 Zamoyski, Rites of Peace, p. 569.
442 Zamoyski, Rites of Peace, p. 566.
In the final analysis, the defeat of Napoleon and the re-establishment of monarchical order in Europe after his defeat, proved the viability of traditional kingship in the face of the most powerful and determined attempt to overthrow it yet seen in European history. It established an order that, in spite of many upheavals and changes, remained essentially in place until 1914, when the anti-monarchical movements of revolutionary socialism and nationalism finally destroyed the old order. That the old order survived for as long as it did was owing to no small degree to that former-freethinker-turned-Orthodox-monarchist, Tsar Alexander the Blessed…
One of the most important issues faced by the Great Powers in 1815 was the settlement of Poland. As was to be expected, the Poles welcomed Napoleon after he defeated the Prussians at Jena in 1806, although they knew that he was no true champion of liberty, equality and fraternity - Polish soldiers had helped the French tyrant’s attempts to crush Dominican independence. But Napoleon was the instrument, they felt, for the attainment of their own independence. They were doomed to disappointment, however. In 1807 Napoleon created the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, and by 1812 controlled almost all the lands of the former Republic – but did not restore it to full independence. And then the Russian armies came back… Nevertheless, Polish soldiers faithfully followed Napoleon both to Elba and to St. Helena, and the cult of Napoleon remained alive in Polish hearts for a long time. Thus the poet Mickiewicz signed himself “Adam Napoleon Mickiewicz”.

But in 1818 Tsar Alexander offered the Poles more than Napoleon had ever given them – one of the most liberal constitutions in Europe, and more rights than even the Russians possessed! As Lebedev writes: “Great was the joy of Emperor Alexander I in connection with the fact that in 1815 he succeeded in creating a Polish Kingdom that was free both from Prussia and from Austria and almost completely – from Russia! For he gave this Kingdom a Constitution! An unparalleled situation was created. While remaining a part of the Russian Empire, Poland was at the same time a state within a state, and distinct from Russia precisely because it had rights and freedoms which did

443 Madame de Staël claimed that “the Poles are the only Europeans who can serve under the banners of Napoleon without blushing” (Zamoyski, Holy Madness, p. 199).
444 Zamoyski, op. cit., p. 201.
445 As Palmer writes, the Constitutional Charter drawn up by his Polish minister Czartoryski “was a liberal instrument of government. The Polish nation was promised ‘for all time to come’ a bi-cameral Diet (Sejm), which would share legislative power with the Tsar-King, and a separate executive State Council of five ministers and a number of royal nominees. The Charter guaranteed to the Poles freedom of worship for the ‘Christian faiths’, freedom of the press, and freedom from arbitrary arrest; and it also provided for an independent judiciary… The Upper House, the Senate, was a nominated body, with preference given to the older aristocracy and the Catholic episcopate; and the right to elect to the Lower House (in which there were nominated representatives as well as deputies) was limited to the gentry in the countryside and to property-owners in the towns. Moreover the Diet met for only one month in every two years and possessed no right to initiate legislation, being permitted only to discuss laws laid before it. Nevertheless these provisions did at least give the Poles the opportunity of internal self-government with a system of tariffs and taxation of their own, and the terms of the Charter were accepted by Alexander with perfect sincerity. Whatever others at St. Petersburg might feel, the Tsar himself consciously separated in his mind the ‘Kingdom of Poland’ from the Empire as a whole. On more than one occasion in the following seven years he gave his advisers the impression that he was using Poland as a field for constitutional experiments which might be implemented on a larger scale in Russian proper…” (op. cit., pp. 340-341). Moreover, he offered the hope of adding the other Polish lands to the Kingdom.
A complicating factor in the Polish question was Freemasonry. The Masonic historian Jasper Ridley writes: “Alexander I’s attitude to Freemasonry in Russia was affected by the position in Poland. The first Freemasons’ lodge in Poland was formed in 1735; but the Freemasons were immediately attacked by the Jesuits and the Roman Catholic Church, which was influential in Poland, and in 1738 King Augustus II issued a decree suppressing them. His successor, King Stanislaus Augustus Poniatovsky, was sympathetic to the Freemasons. He allowed the first Polish Grand Lodge to be formed in 1767, and ten years later he himself became a Freemason.

“The partition of Poland between Catherine the Great, Frederick the Great and Maria Theresa in 1772, was followed by the further partitions of 1793 and 1796, which eliminated Poland as a country. It was a black day for the Polish Freemasons. Only Frederick the Great and his successors in Prussia tolerated them; they were suppressed in Austrian Poland in 1795 and in Russian Poland in 1797. Some of the leaders of the Polish resistance... were Freemasons; but the most famous of all the heroes of Polish independence, Tadeusz Kosciuszko, was not a Freemason, though he was a personal friend of La Fayette.”

“When Napoleon defeated the Russians at Eylau and Friedland, and established the Grand Duchy of Warsaw under French protection in 1807, he permitted and encouraged the Freemasons, and in March 1810 the Grand Orient of Poland was established. After the defeat of Napoleon, Alexander I did not ban the Freemasons in that part of Poland which again came under Russia. When he visited Warsaw in November 1815 he was entertained at a banquet by the Polish Freemasons, and was made a member of the Polish Grand Orient. In 1816 General Alexander Rojnezyky became Deputy Grand Master of the Polish Grand Orient, and he drafted a new constitution for the Freemasons which brought the organization to a considerable extent under the control of the Russian government. This aroused the resentment of patriotic Poles who did not like the Russians. In 1819 Major Victor Lukacinsky

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446 Lebedev, Velikorossia, p. 287.
447 He was also respected by Alexander. When the Tsar visited Kosciuszko near Paris, “Kosciuszko appealed to Alexander to create a free kingdom of Poland with an English-style constitution and himself as King, and offered his services. ‘Your most cherished hopes will be realised,’ Alexander replied” (Zamoyski, Rites of Peace, p. 196). (V.M.)
formed a rival masonic organization. It was free from Russian control and

“The development in Poland was probably one of the factors which persuaded Tsar Alexander to change his attitude towards Freemasonry [and the Polish Kingdom]; though another was his general shift towards a reactionary [sic] policy which followed the formation of the Holy Alliance against revolution between Russia, Austria and Prussia. He asked Lieutenant General Egor Alexandrovich Kushlevev, who was a senator and himself a prominent Freemason, to report to him on the masonic lodges in Russia.

“Kushlevev’s report, in June 1821, stated that although true Freemasons were loyal subjects and their ideals and activities were praiseworthy, masonic lodges could be used as a cover for revolutionary activities, as they had been in the Kingdom of Naples; and the same was happening in Russia, especially in three of the St. Petersburg lodges.

“This is the state, Most Gracious Sovereign, in which Masonic lodges now exist in Petersburg. Instead of the Spirit of Christian mildness and of true Masonic rules and meekness, the spirit of self-will, turbulence and real anarchy acts through them.’

“Within a month of receiving Kushlevev’s report, Alexander I banned the publication of Masonic songs and all other Masonic documents. On 1 August 1822 he issued a decree suppressing the Freemasons throughout Russia. In November he issued a similar decree banning the Freemasons and all other secret societies in Russian Poland. These decrees were re-enacted by his more reactionary brother, Tsar Nicholas I, when Nicholas succeeded Alexander.”

Alexander’s attempt to combine the Russian autocracy with a Polish liberal constitution failed, as it had to fail. For monarchism and masonry do not mix. The Golden Age of Masonry was over – or so it seemed…

If the Polish problem was difficult to solve, the Jewish problem was even more intractable. The two nations had much in common: both were nations without states, distrustful of each other but united in their craving for national autonomy, both fiercely anti-Orthodox and both subjects of the same people, the Russians, whom they had both exploited in the not-so-distant past. The future of Europe, and Christian civilization in general, would to a large extent depend on how well Orthodox Russia would succeed in assimilating and neutralising this breeding-ground of the Revolution...

The Jews had always been forbidden to settle in Russia. From the beginning of the Muscovite kingdom, however, Jews had begun to infiltrate into Russia from Poland-Lithuania, where, as we have seen, the Polish landowners had given them considerable privileges, employing them to collect very heavy taxes, fees, tolls and produce from the Russian serfs. In some cases the Poles even handed over churches and monasteries to the Jews, who would extort fees for the celebration of sacraments.449 “In the 16th century,” writes Solzhenitsyn, quoting Yury Hessen, “the spiritual leadership of the Jewish world came to be concentrated in German-Polish Jewry... So as to prevent the possibility of the Jewish people being dissolved amidst the surrounding population, the spiritual leaders had from ages past introduced stipulations whose purpose was to isolate the people from close contact with their neighbours. Using the authority of the Talmud,... the Rabbis wrapped round the public and private life of the Jew with a complex web of prescriptions of a religio-social nature, which... prevented them getting close to people of other faiths. Real and spiritual needs ‘were brought in sacrifice to outdated forms of popular life’, ‘blind fulfilment of ritual was transformed for the people into the goal, as it were, of the existence of Jewry... Rabbinism, ossified in lifeless forms, continued to keep both the mind and the will of the people in fetters.’”450

In 1648, the Ukrainian Cossacks and peasants rose up against their Polish and Jewish oppressors and appealed to the Tsar for help. The Tsarist armies triumphed, and by the treaty of Andrusovo in 1667 Eastern Ukraine was ceded – together with its Jewish population – to Russia.451 For the next hundred years, writes Hartley, these Jews of the Russian empire “lived mostly in the Ukraine although a small Jewish community became established in

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450 Solzhenitsyn, *Dvesti Let Vmeste (Two Hundred Years Together)*, Moscow, 2001, vol. 1, p. 34.
451 1667 was the very year in which Patriarch Nicon was unjustly deposed; so the first major influx of Jews into Russia coincided with the first serious undermining of Russian Church-State relations. (L.A. Tikhomirov, “Yevrei i Rossia” (“The Jews and Russia”), *Kritika Demokratii (A Critique of Democracy)*, Moscow, 1997, p. 487).
Moscow. The government legislated to contain and control the Jewish population within the empire’s borders. Both Catherine I (1725-27) and to ban Jews from Russia; one estimate is that 35,000 Jews were banished in 1741.”

From the second half of the eighteenth century, however, the universalism and cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment, together with the principles of human and national rights of the French revolution, led to the emancipation of the Jews, first in France, and then in most of the countries of Europe. This process was slow and accompanied by many reverses and difficulties, but inexorable. The only great power which firmly resisted it was Russia.…

Contrary to popular myth, the myth of its being “the prison of the peoples”, the record of the Russian empire in its treatment of various subject populations was in general good. We only have to look at the large number of Baltic German names among the senior officials of the empire, the very large measure of autonomy given to the Finns (and to the Poles before they rebelled), and the way in which Tatar khans and Georgian princes were fully assimilated (or rather: assimilated to the degree that they wanted). In fact, Russia was probably more liberal, and certainly less racist, in its treatment of its subject peoples than its contemporary rival, the supposedly “liberal” empire of Great Britain.

But the Jews presented certain intractable problems not found in the other peoples of the empire. The first problem was the sheer number of Jews who suddenly found themselves within its boundaries. Thus Hartley writes: “The empire acquired a further c. 250,000 Jews after the establishment of the Congress Kingdom of Poland in 1815. There was a substantial Jewish population in Bessarabia (11.3 per cent in 1863). In 1854, the Jewish population of the whole empire was estimated as 1,062,132.” These numbers grew rapidly in the second half of the nineteenth century. And by the beginning of the twentieth century, according to Lebedev, about half the number of the Jews in the whole world were to be found in the Russian empire.

More fundamental, however, than the administrative problem presented by these large numbers was the fact that, as David Vital writes, “there were differences… between Russia and the other European states… in respect of the place of religion generally and what were taken to be the teachings of religion on what were unquestionably the state’s affairs. It was not merely that in principle Russia continued to be held by its Autocrat and its minions to be a Christian state with a particular duty to uphold its own Orthodox Church. It was that, far from the matter of the state’s specifically Christian duty slowly wasting away, as in the west, it continued actively to exercise the minds of Russia’s rulers as one of the central criteria by which questions of

452 Hartley, op. cit., p. 15.
453 Hartley, op. cit., p. 15.
The continuous search for an effective definition of the role, quality, and ultimate purposes of the Autocracy itself was an enterprise which, considering the energy and seriousness with which it was pursued, sufficed in itself to distinguish Russia from its contemporaries. The programmes to which the state was committed and all its structures were under obligation to promote varied somewhat over time. But in no instance was there serious deviation from the rule that Russian Orthodoxy was and needed to remain a central and indispensable component of the ruling ethos. Nineteenth-century imperial Russia was therefore an ideological state in a manner and to a degree that had become so rare as to be virtually unknown in Europe and would not be familiar again for at least a century..."\(^{454}\)

Moreover, if Russia was the last ideological state in Europe, the large numbers of Ashkenazi Jews that came within the Russian empire between 1772 and 1815 constituted an ideological “state within the state” whose anti-Christian books, rabbinic leaders and kahal institutions caused them to be bitterly hostile to everything that Russia stood for. To put it bluntly: if the Russians worshipped Christ, the Jews hated Him. And no amount of state intervention, whether in a liberal or illiberal, emancipatory or anti-emancipatory direction, could resolve this basic contradiction or defuse the hostile sentiments it aroused on both sides. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that, unlike the Orthodox Christians, who are taught to recognise and obey secular authorities even if they are not Orthodox, and not only out of fear but for conscience’s sake (Romans 13.1-4), the Jews ultimately recognised no authorities beside their own, rabbinical ones. And if they did obey the Gentile powers, it was only because they had been taught that resistance was counter-productive, not because these powers had any moral authority over them.

This led the Jew, writes Vital, “to be deeply sceptical of civil authority of all kinds... The lasting effect of such scepticism was to leave him peculiarly independent in mind and social outlook. “Having no earthly masters to whom he thought he owed unquestioning political obedience (the special case of the Hasidic rebe or zaddik and his devotees aside), “[the European Jew’s] was... a spirit that, for his times, was remarkably free. Permitted no land, he had no territorial lord. Admitted to no guild, he was free of the authority of established master-craftsmen. Not being a Christian, he had neither bishop nor priest to direct him. And while he could be charged or punished for insubordination to state or sovereign, he could not properly be charged with disloyalty. Betrayal only entered into the life of the Jews in regard to their own community or, more broadly, to Jewry as a whole. It was to their own nation alone that they accepted that they owed undeviating loyalty.”\(^{455}\)

\(^{454}\) Vital, op. cit., pp. 86-87
\(^{455}\) Vital, op. cit., pp. 18-19.
We have seen how important and harmful the internal Jewish authority of the kahals was considered to be by the enlightened Polish Jew Hourwitz. The Tsar’s servants were soon to make this discovery for themselves. Tsar Paul I appointed the poet and state official Gavriil Romanovich Derzhavin to investigate why Belorussia had been afflicted by such a severe famine. After visiting Belorussia twice in 1799 and 1800, Derzhavin came to the conclusion that the main cause of the famine was the desperate poverty into which the Jewish tavern-keepers and money-lenders, in connivance with the Polish landowners, had reduced the Belorussian peasants.\footnote{Solzhenitsyn writes, quoting Derzhavin, that “some landowners, giving the sale of wine on franchise to the Jews in their villages, are making agreements with them that their peasants should buy nothing that they needed from anyone else, and should take loans from nobody except these tax-farmers [three times more expensive], and should sell none of their products to anyone except these same Jewish tax-farmers... cheaper than the true price” (op. cit., p. 47).}

But more importantly, writes Platonov, Derzhavin “noted the ominous role of the kahals – the organs of Jewish self-rule on the basis of the bigoted laws of the Talmud, which ‘a well-constructed political body must not tolerate’, as being a state within the state. Derzhavin discovered that the Jews, who considered themselves oppressed, established in the Pale of Settlement a secret Israelite kingdom divided into kahal districts with kahal administrations endowed with despotic power over the Jews which inhumanly exploited the Christians and their property on the basis of the Talmud...”\footnote{In 1800, I.G. Friesel, governor of Vilna, reported: “Having established their own administrative institution, called Synagogues, Kahals, or associations, the Jews completely separated themselves from the people and government of the land. As a result, they were exempt from the operation of the statutes which governed the peoples of the several estates, and even if special laws were enacted, these remained unenforced and valueless, because the ecclesiastical and temporal leaders of the Jews invariably resisted them and were clever enough to find means to evade them.” (Isaac Levitats, The Jewish Community in Russia, 1772-1844, New York, 1970, p. 29; quoted in Hartley, op. cit., pp. 98-99). (V.M.)}

“Derzhavin also uncovered the concept of ‘herem’ – a curse which the kahal issued against all those who did not submit to the laws of the Talmud. This, according to the just evaluation of the Russian poet, was ‘an impenetrable sacrilegious cover for the most terrible crimes’.

“In his note Derzhavin ‘was the first to delineate a harmonious, integral programme for the resolution of the Jewish question in the spirit of Russian statehood, having in mind the unification of all Russian subjects on common ground’.

“Paul I, after reading the note, agreed with many of its positions and decorated the author. However, the tragic death of the Tsar as the result of an international Masonic conspiracy destroyed the possibility of resolving the Jewish question in a spirit favourable for the Russian people. The new
Emperor, Alexander I, being under the influence of a Masonic environment, in 1802 he created a special Committee for the improvement of the Jews, whose soul was the Mason Speransky, who was closely linked with the Jewish world through the well-known tax-farmer Perets, whom he considered his friend and with whom he lived.

“Another member of the committee was G.R. Derzhavin. As general-governor, he prepared a note ‘On the removal of the deficit of bread in Belorussia, the collaring of the avaricious plans of the Jews, on their transformation, and other things’. Derzhavin’s new note, in the opinion of specialists, was ‘in the highest degree a remarkable document, not only as the work of an honourable, penetrating statesman, but also as a faithful exposition of all the essential sides of Jewish life, which hinder the merging of this race with the rest of the population.’

“In the report of the official commission on the Jewish question which worked in the 1870s in the Ministry of the Interior, it was noted that at the beginning of the reign of Alexander I the government ‘stood already on the ground of the detailed study of Jewry and the preparation that had begun had already at that time exposed such sides of the public institutions of this nationality which would hardly be tolerable in any state structure. But however often reforms were undertaken in the higher administrative spheres, every time some magical brake held up the completion of the matter.’ This magical brake stopped Derzhavin’s proposed reform of Jewry, which suggested the annihilation of the kahals in all the provinces populated by Jews, the removal of all kahal collections and the limitation of the influx of Jews to a certain percentage in relation to the Christian population, while the remaining masses were to be given lands in Astrakhan and New Russia provinces, assigning the poorest to re-settlement. Finally, he proposed allowing the Jews who did not want to submit to these restrictions freedom to go abroad. However, these measures were not confirmed by the government.

“Derzhavin’s note and the formation of the committee elicited great fear in the Jewish world. From the published kahal documents of the Minsk Jewish society it becomes clear that the kahals and the ‘leaders of the cities’ gathered in an extraordinary meeting three days later and decided to sent a deputation to St. Petersburg with the aim of petitioning Alexander I to make no innovations in Jewish everyday life. But since this matter ‘required great resources’, a very significant sum was laid upon the whole Jewish population as a tax, refusal from which brought with it ‘excommunication from the people’ (herem). From a private note given to Derzhavin by one Belorussian landowner, it became known that the Jews imposed their herem also on the general procurator, uniting with it a curse through all the kahals ‘as on a persecutor’. Besides, they collected ‘as gifts’ for this matter, the huge sum for that time of a million rubles and sent it to Petersburg, asking that ‘efforts be
Not surprisingly, Tsar Alexander’s Statute for the Jews of December 9, 1804 turned out to be fairly liberal – much more liberal than the laws of Frederick Augustus in Napoleon’s Duchy of Warsaw. Its strictest provisions related to a ban on Jews’ participation in the distilling and retailing of spirits. Also, “there was to be no relaxation of the ancient rule that Jews (negligible exceptions apart) were to be prevented from penetrating into ‘inner Russia’. Provision was made for an eventual, but determined, attack on the rabbinate’s ancient – but in the government’s view presumptuous and unacceptable – practice of adjudicating cases that went beyond the strict limits of the religious (as opposed to the civil and criminal domain), but also on rabbinical independence and authority generally…”

“But the Jews themselves could take some comfort in it being expressly stated that there was to be no question of forcible conversion to Christianity; that they were not to be oppressed or harassed in the observance of their faith and in their general social activities; that the private property of the Jews remained inviolable; and that Jews were not to be exploited or enserfed. They were, on the contrary, to enjoy the same, presumably full protection of the law that was accorded other subjects of the realm. They were not to be subject to the legal jurisdiction of the landowners on whose estates they might happen to be resident. And they were encouraged in every way the Committee could imagine – by fiscal and other economic incentives, for example, by the grant of land and loans to develop it, by permission to move to the New Russian Territories in the south – to undergo decisive and (so it was presumed) irreversible change in the two central respects which both Friezel and Derzhavin had indeed, and perfectly reasonably, regarded as vital: education and employment. In this they were to be encouraged very strongly; but they were not to be forced…”

However, the liberal Statute of 1804 was never fully implemented, and was succeeded by stricter measures towards the end of Alexander’s reign and in the reign of his successor, Nicholas I. There were many reasons for this. Among them, of course, was Napoleon’s invasion of Russia in 1812, which, if it had been successful, would have united the Western Sephardic Jews with the Eastern Ashkenazi Jews in a single State, free, emancipated, and under their own legally convened Sanhedrin. But not only did Napoleon not succeed: the invasion of Russia was the graveyard of his empire. In 1813, and again in 1815, the Russian armies entered Paris. From now on, the chief target of the Jews’ hatred in both East and West would be the Russian Empire…

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459 In fact they were not negligible at all. The Pale of Settlement was exceedingly porous!
460 The kahal was abolished in 1821 in Poland and in 1844 in the rest of the Russian empire.
The tightening of Russian policy was “the Jews’ abhorrence of Christianity, the intensely negative light in which non-Jewish society had always been regarded, and the deeply ingrained suspicion and fear in which all forms of non-Jewish authority were commonly held.” 462 As a result, in the whole of the 19th century only 69,400 Jews converted to Orthodoxy. 463 If the French delegates who emancipated French Jewry could ignore this fact, the Russian Tsars could not. 464

The Tsars’ gradual tightening of policy had little or no effect on the basic problem of religious and social antagonism. As Platonov writes: “The statute of the Jews worked out in 1804, which took practically no account of Derzhavin’s suggestion, continued to develop the isolation of the Jewish communities on Russian soil, that is, it strengthened the kahals together with their fiscal, judicial, police and educational independence. However, the thought of re-settling the Jews out of the western region continued to occupy the government after the issuing of the statute in 1804. A consequence of this was the building in the New Russian area (from 1808) of Jewish colonies in which the government vainly hoped to ‘re-educate’ the Jews, and, having taught them to carry out productive agricultural labour, to change in this way the whole structure of their life. Nevertheless, even in these model colonies the kahal-rabbinic administration retained its former significance and new settlements isolated themselves from the Christian communities; they did not intend to merge with them either in a national or in a cultural sense. The government not only did not resist the isolation of the Jews, but even founded for them the so-called Israelite Christians (that is, Talmudists who had converted to Orthodoxy). A special committee existed from 1817 to 1833.” 465

463 Vladimir Gubanov (ed.), Nikolai II-i i novie mucheniki (Nicholas II and the New Martyrs), St. Petersburg, 2000, p. 698. Gubanov took this figure from the Jewish Encyclopaedia.
464 Nor did the Jews receive emancipation from the great powers at the Congress of Vienna, although their situation had made it onto the agenda (Zamoyski, Rites of Peace, p. 568).
465 Platonov, op. cit., p. 245.
Church-State relations were greatly strained in Alexander’s reign by the Bible Society. “Founded in 1804 in England by Methodists and Masons, the Bible Society extended its wide activity also in Russia. The Society had large financial resources. In 1810 the monetary contributions of the Bible Society attained 150,000 rubles, and at the end of 1823 there were already 300 such societies in Russia. Under the mask of love for one’s neighbour and the spreading of the word of God, the bible societies began to conduct oral propaganda and publish books directed against [the Orthodox Christian] religion and the State order. These books were published under the management of the censor, which was attached to the Ministry of Spiritual Affairs and Popular Enlightenment, which was headed by the Emperor Alexander’s close friend, Prince A.N. Golitsyn. The main leaders of the Bible societies were members of the Masonic lodges, who preached the rejection of Orthodoxy, the Church and the rites of the Church. In 1819 there was published Stankevich’s book, ‘A conversation in the coffin of a child’, which was hostile to the institution of the Orthodox Church. Then Yastrebov published a work entitled ‘An appeal to men to follow the inner promptings of the Spirit of Christ’. This work was recognised to be a sermon ‘of seditious elements against the Christian religion’ and the good order of the State. In 1824 there appeared ‘a blasphemous interpretation of the Gospel’ published by the director of the Russian Bible Society. This work openly pursued the aim of stirring up people against the Church and the Throne. Besides the publication of books directed against Orthodoxy, foreign religious propaganda was conducted. Two Catholic priests from Southern Germany, Gosner and Lindl, preached Protestantism, a sect beloved by the Masons. The Methodists and other sectarianists sowed their tares and introduced heresies amidst the Orthodox. At the invitation of the Mason Speransky, the very pope of Masonry, Fessler, came and took charge of the work of destroying the Orthodox Church.

“The Orthodox clergy were silent. They could not speak against the evil that was being poured out everywhere. All the powerful men of the world were obedient instruments of Masonry. The Tsar, who was falsely informed about the aims and tasks of the Bible Society by Prince Golitsyn, gave the latter his protection from on high.”

“Golitsyn,” writes Oleg Platonov, “invited to the leadership of the Bible Society only certain hierarchs of the Russian Church that were close to him. He de facto removed the Holy Synod from participation in this matter. At the same time he introduced into it secular and clerical persons of other confessions, as if underlining that ‘the aim of the Society is higher than the

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466 Ivanov, op. cit., p. 278.
As the investigator of the Bible Society I.A. Chistovich wrote in 1873 [Istoria perevoda Biblii na russij iazyk (A History of the Translation of the Bible into Russian), St. Petersburg, pp. 50-55], ‘this indifferent cosmopolitanism in relation to the Church, however pure its preachers might be in their ideal simplicity of heart, was, however, an absurdity at that, as at any other time. Orthodoxy is, factually speaking, the existing form of the Christian faith of the Greco-Russian Church, and is completely in accord with the teaching and statutes of the Ancient Universal Church. Therefore Christianity in its correct ecclesiastical form only exists in the Orthodox Church and cannot have over or above it any other idea... But the Bible Society was directed precisely against such an ideal, and they sought it out or presupposed it.’

“In an official document of the Bible Society the ideas of Masonic ecumenism were openly declared. ‘The heavenly union of faith and love,’ it says in a report of the Russian Bible Society in 1818, ‘founded by means of Bible Societies in the great Christian family, reveal the beautiful dawn of the wedding day of Christians and that time when there will be one pastor and one flock, that is, when there will be one Divine Christian religion in all the various formations of Christian confessions.’

“The well-known Russian public figure, the academic A.S. Shishkov wrote on this score: ‘Let us look at the acts of the Bible Societies, let us see what they consist of. It consists in the intention to construct out of the whole human race one general republic or other and one religion – a dreamy and undiscriminating opinion, born in the minds either of deceivers or of the vainly wise... If the Bible Societies are trying only to spread piety, as they say, then why do they not unite with our Church, but deliberately act separate from her and not in agreement with her? If their intention consists in teaching Christian doctrines, does not our Church teach them to us? Can it be that we were not Christians before the appearance of the Bible Societies? And just how do they teach us this? They recruit heterodox teachers and publish books contrary to Christianity!... Is it not strange – even, dare I say it, funny – to see our metropolitans and hierarchs in the Bible Societies sitting, contrary to the apostolic rules, together with Lutherans, Catholics, Calvinists and Quakers – in a word, with all the heterodox? They with their grey hairs, and in their cassocks and klobuks, sit with laymen of all nations, and a man in a frock suit preaches to them the Word of God (of God as they call it, but not in fact)! Where is the decency, where the dignity of the church server? Where is the Church? They gather in homes where there often hang on the walls pictures of pagan gods or lascivious depictions of lovers, and these gatherings of theirs – which are without any Divine services, with the reading of prayers or the Gospel, sitting as it were in the theatre, without the least reverence – are
At this critical moment for Russian Orthodoxy, God raised up righteous defenders of the faith, such as Metropolitan Michael (Desnitsky) and Archimandrite Innocent (Smirnov). Metropolitan Michael protested at Golitsyn’s removal of the censorship of spiritual books from the Holy Synod, which meant giving free expression to the pseudo-mystical sects. There were stormy scenes between the prince and the metropolitan even in the Synod. “As a Member of the Synod, the hierarch Philaret [at that time archbishop of Yaroslavl], was witness to the heated speeches of Metropolitan Michael in defence of the Church and undoubtedly approved of his actions. In his eyes the first-ranking hierarch was rightly considered to be a pillar of the Orthodox Church, restraining the onslaught of false mysticism. And when this pillar collapsed, and the storms did not die down, Philaret, like many others, was seized by fear for the destiny of the Church. Under the influence of a vision seen by someone concerning Metropolitan Michael, a sorrowful picture of Church life, full of misery and darkness, was revealed. He believed that in such a situation only a person possessing the spirit and power of the Prophet Elijah could work with benefit for the Church. However, the holy hierarch was profoundly convinced that the Church was supported, not by people, but by the Lord. And since he saw that it was impossible to save the Church only by human efforts, without the help of God, he decided that it was better for him to withdraw himself from everything as far as he could. Evidently, Philaret preferred a different method of warfare with various kinds of heterodox preachers and sectarian societies from that employed by Metropolitan Michael. And these methods were: a correct organization of the spiritual schools throughout Russia and the spiritual enlightenment of the Russian people through the distribution of Orthodox spiritual literature…”

However, while Philaret withdrew to concentrate on spiritual education, Archimandrite Photius (Spassky) began an open defence of Orthodoxy in 1817. “Bureaucratic and military Petersburg were angry with the bold reprover. His first speech was unsuccessful. Photius’ struggle... against the apostates from Orthodoxy, the followers of the so-called inner Church, ended with his expulsion from Petersburg.

“After the expulsion of Photius the Masons celebrated their victory. But the joy of the conquerors turned out to be short-lived. The exile was found to...”

468 Two weeks before he died, in March, 1821, he wrote to the Emperor: “Your Majesty, when this epistle reaches you, I will no longer be in this world. I have communicated nothing except the truth to people, especially now, when in my actions I am preparing to give an account to the Supreme Judge” (Snychev, op. cit., p. 147). (V.M.)
469 Snychev, op. cit., pp. 148-149.
have special support at a difficult time of his life from the great righteous woman, Countess Anna Alexeeva Orlova-Chesmenskaia, who presented a model of piety. She not only protected him, but chose him as her leader and confessor. The firmness and courage with which Photius fought against the enemies of Orthodoxy attracted the mind and heart of Countess Orlova, a woman of Christian humility and virtue. After the death of her instructor, Countess Orlova explained why it was Photius whom she chose as her spiritual director. ‘He attracted my attention,’ wrote Countess Orlova, ‘by the boldness and fearlessness with which he, being a teacher of the law of God at the cadet corps and a young monk, began to attack the dominant errors in faith. Everybody was against him, beginning with the Court. He did not fear this. I wanted to get to know him and entered into correspondence with him. His letters seemed to me to be some kind of apostolic epistles. After getting to know him better, I became convinced that he personally sought nothing for himself.’

However, the struggle against Masonry was helped by other events. As we have seen, Kushelev reported to the Tsar on the revolutionary activity in the Polish and Russian lodges. And then there was the Congress of the Sacred Alliance in Verona in 1822.

Lebedev writes that at this Congress “Metternich unexpectedly, on the basis of Masonic documents that had unexpectedly fallen into his possession, demonstrated that the secret societies of all countries, being in constant communication with each other, constituted one common plot, which was subject only to the secret leaders, and only for form’s sake accepted different programmes in different countries, depending on circumstances and conditions. He was supported by the Prussian minister, Count Haugwitz, who himself had formerly been a Mason. He made a detailed report in which he showed that the ‘enmity’ of various unions of Masonry was only for show, to divert attention. In actual fact Masonry in its depths was one and its aim was the subjection of the world, and in the first place the subjection of the monarchs, so that they become weapons in the hands of the Masons. Haugwitz added that since 1777 he had personally ruled not only a part of the Prussian lodges, but also Masonry in Poland and Russia! We can imagine how shocked his Majesty Alexander I was as he sat in the hall. He had been born in the same year of 1777 and had entered Masonry in 1803. Everybody was stunned. The Austrian Emperor Frantz and the Russian Emperor Alexander I decided to attack this great evil. In 1822 Masonry was forbidden in Russia by a decree of the Tsar. The lodges were disbanded, the ‘brothers’ correspondence with abroad was strictly forbidden. At the same time this was the third powerful blow that shook the soul of Alexander I with the collapse of his faith in the nobility of the Masonic ideas and strivings. Strict censorship was introduced, especially in the publication of books of a spiritual nature. Now his Majesty began to pay attention to the rebukes of Masonry and mysticism.

470 Ivanov, op. cit., p. 280.
issuing from Archimandrite Innocent, who had suffered earlier for this, of the metropolitan of the capital Michael, Metropolitan Seraphim who succeeded him, and also of the zealous defender of Orthodoxy Archimandrite Photius (Spassky)… Seraphim and Photius, joining forces, were able to show Alexander the danger for Orthodoxy of ‘fashionable’ tendencies in thought, the harmfulness of the activity of Prince Golitsyn, and return the heart of the Tsar to Holy Orthodoxy. A visit to Valaam monastery, conversations with Vladyka Seraphim, with Elder Alexis of the Alexander Nevsky Lavra made a great impression on Alexander and showed him that what his exalted soul had sought throughout his life was contained in the experience, rules and methods of Orthodox asceticism, which was just then experiencing an unusual ascent, being armed with such books as The Philokalia and others, especially on the doing of the Jesus prayer (‘Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner!’). This was Alexander’s fourth powerful spiritual shock. It had two kinds of consequences. When, in April, 1824, after many fruitless exhortations, Archimandrite Photius publicly (in a private house) pronounced ‘anathema’ on Prince Golitsyn and the latter retired, his Majesty accepted his retirement.”

Archimandrite Photius wrote: “the Masonic faith is of Antichrist, and its whole teaching and writings are of the devil”472, and “in the spring of 1824 [he] wrote two epistles to his Majesty. In one of them he said that ‘in our time many books, and many societies and private people are talking about some kind of new religion, which is supposedly pre-established for the last times. This new religion, which is preached in various forms, sometimes under the form of a new world..., sometimes of a new teaching, sometimes of the coming of Christ in the Spirit, sometimes of the union of the churches, sometimes under the form of some renewal and of Christ’s supposed thousand-year reign, sometimes insinuated under the form of a so-called new religion – is apostasy from the faith of God, the faith of the apostles and the fathers. It is faith in the coming Antichrist, it is propelling the revolution, it is thirsting for blood, it is filled with the spirit of Satan. Its false-prophets and apostles are Jung-Stilling, Eckartshausen, Thion, Bohme, Labzin, Fessler and the Methodists…”

“His Majesty was favourably disposed to the epistle of Archimandrite Photius in spite of the fact that it contained criticism of all his recent friends and of the people who had enjoyed his protection. Almost at the same time there appeared the book of Gosner, about whose harmful line Archimandrite Photius had reported to his Majesty on April 17, 1824.

“On April 20, 1824, Emperor Alexander received Photius, who was ordered: ‘Come by the secret entrance and staircase into his Majesty’s study so that nobody should know about this’. Their conversation lasted for three

471 Lebedev, Velikorossia, op. cit., p. 289.
Photius sent his second epistle with the title: 'Thoroughly correct the work of God. The plan for the revolution published secretly, or the secret iniquities practised by secret society in Russia and everywhere.'

"On April 29 Photius gave his Majesty another note: ‘To your question how to stop the revolution, we are praying to the Lord God, and look what has been revealed. Only act immediately. The way of destroying the whole plan quietly and successfully is as follows: 1) to abolish the Ministry of Spiritual Affairs and remove two others from a well-known person; 2) to abolish the Bible Society under the pretext that there are already many printed Bibles, and they are now not needed; 3) the Synod is, as before, to supervise education, to see if there is anything against the authorities and the faith anywhere; 4) to remove Koshelev, exile Gosner, exile Fessler and exile the Methodists, albeit the leading ones. The Providence of God is now to do nothing more openly.’

“This flaming defence of Orthodoxy [by Photius] together with Metropolitan Seraphim was crowned with success: on May 15, 1824 the Ministry of Spiritual Affairs was abolished." 473

The Synod was now freer; it had a new over-procurator in the place of Golitsyn, and was purged of those members that had been linked with him. The Tsar had paid heed to Photius’ appeal, and so had become a spiritual as well as a physical conqueror. “God conquered the visible Napoleon who invaded Russia,” he said to him. “May He conquer the spiritual Napoleon through you!”

However, not everyone saw only good in the struggle against the Bible Society and the false mystics. Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, who had been Archimandrite Photius’ early sponsor, had declined to enter into open warfare with them, partly because of his personal friendship with Golitsyn 474, and partly because he had another approach to the mystical ferment in Russia. “Under the cover of the mystical temptations,” writes Florovsky, “Philaret was able to recognize a living religious need, a thirst for religious instruction and enlightenment. He recognized the need in Russian society for the living enchurchment of the whole of life, whatever distorted and corrupt forms it sometimes assumed. And he considered that what was necessary was not rebuke, but pastoral admonishment, penetrated by the spirit of love and completed by positive teaching.” 475

474 This, however, did not stop him from firmly refusing Golitsyn’s request to distribute a work published by the Tatarinova group. See Snychev, op. cit., p. 144.
As for Golitsyn, writes Snychev, “the Muscovite archpastor saw in him much that was positive and recognized him to be one of the zealots of the ecclesiastical organism. One way or the other, with the support of Prince Golitsyn it had been possible to publish many useful ecclesiastical books of a mystical character, but in an Orthodox spirit. Of course, Philaret was Orthodox in his views on mysticism. He clearly understood that in mysticism the most important question is its relation to the Church and the institutions of the Church. Every form of isolation could bring only harm, not good. Philaret recognized the usefulness of mystical teaching in the spirit of Orthodoxy and was far from sympathizing with a superficial approach to the latter. In the actions of the opponents of mysticism he found excesses, while the very method of the struggle against the latter he considered to be open to criticism and of little use. What, for example, did the party of Arakcheev and Photius gain by their victory? Absolutely nothing…. First of all, mystical literature was subjected to terrible attacks, and that which was formerly considered useful was now recognized to be harmful, demonic and heretical. All books of a mystical character were ordered to be removed from the libraries of educational institutions and a veto placed on them. Terrible difficulties were placed in the way of the publication of patristic literature. Publishers were frightened, as it were, to publish, for example, the writings of St. Macarius, they were frightened to appear thereby to be supporters of mysticism. The opponents of the Bible Society did great harm also to the translation of the Holy Scriptures into Russian…”

Philaret had been taking an active part in this translation because he saw in it the best means of diverting the often misdirected religious aspirations of Russian society in the direction of Orthodoxy. “‘Let the bread not be taken away from the child’… - Metropolitan Philaret firmly believed in the renovatory power of the Word of God. He uninterruptedly bound his destiny with the work on the Bible, with the translation of the Holy Scriptures. And it is difficult properly to value his Biblical exploit. For him personally it was bound up with great trials and sorrow.”

For the work of translation was vigorously opposed by Metropolitan Seraphim, Archimandrite Photius and Admiral Shishkov, the new minister of education. Thus Shishkov “denied the very existence of the Russian language – ‘as if he saw in it only baseness and meanness’, ‘the simple people’s’ dialect of the single Slavic-Russian language. He saw in [Philaret’s] determination to translate the Word of God an ill-intentioned undertaking, ‘a weapon of revolutionary plots’, ‘how can one dare to change the words which are venerated as having come from the mouth of God?’… And translate it into what? Who would read these translations, would they not pile up everywhere in torn-up copies?… From the translation of the Bible Shishkov turned to the Catechism of Philaret and to his Notes on the Book of Genesis, where the Biblical

and New Testament texts were translated in a Russian ‘reworking’. He was particularly disturbed by the fact that the Catechism was printed in a large print-run (18,000!) – he saw in this the clear manifestation of some criminal intention. Archimandrite Photius, on his part, reproached the ‘unhealthy and harmful’ work of the Biblical translation – ‘the power of the translation was such that it clearly overthrew the dogmas of Church teaching or cast doubt on the truth of the Church’s teaching and traditions’. And Photius directly attacked Philaret, who, in his words, ‘was struggling on behalf of a God-fighting assembly’ and was supposedly ‘influencing the translation of the Bible in order rather to give a new appearance to the Word of God, thereby assisting faithlessness, innovation and all kinds of ecclesiastical temptations’. He directly called Philaret’s Catechism ‘gutter water’. As Philaret was told by his disciple Gregory, who was then rector of the Petersburg Academy and many years later Metropolitan of Novgorod and Petersburg, they were saying about the Bible Society that ‘it was founded in order to introduce a reformation’. They feared the translation of the Old Testament, and in particular the five books of Moses, lest it somehow seduced people to return to the Old Testament ritual law, or fall into Molokanism and Judaism (this thought was Magnitsky’s). They began ‘to say unpleasant things’ about Philaret in Petersburg, and it was suggested that he be removed to the Caucasus as arch of Georgia... In these years Philaret was in Moscow and took no notice of the Petersburg rumours and ‘Alexandrine politics’. As before, he directly and openly defended the work on the Bible and attempted to show that ‘the very desire to read the Holy Scriptures is already an earnest of moral improvement’. To the question, what was the purpose of this new undertaking in a subject so ancient and not subject to change as Christianity and the Bible, Philaret replied: ‘What is the purpose of this new undertaking? But what is new here? Dogmas? Rules of life? But the Bible Society preaches none of these things, and gives into the hands of those who desire it the book from which the Orthodox dogmas and pure rules of life were always drawn by the true Church in the past and to the present day. A new society? But it introduces no novelty into Christianity, and produces not the slightest change in the Church’... They asked: ‘Why is this undertaking of foreign origin?’ But, replied Philaret, so much with us ‘is not only of foreign origin, but also completely foreign’...

“The supposed zealots succeeded in obtaining the banning of Philaret’s Catechism on the excuse that there were ‘prayers’ in it – the Symbol of faith and the Commandments – in Russian. The Russian translation of the New Testament was not banned, but the translation of the Bible was stopped. And as Metropolitan Philaret of Kiev remembered later ‘with great sorrow and horror’, from fear of conversions to Judaism, ‘they found it necessary to commit to the flames of brick factories several thousand copies of the five books of the Prophet Moses translated into Russian in the St. Petersburg Theological Academy and printed by the Bible Society’. M. Philaret reacted sharply and sorrowfully to these actions, which were carried out bypassing
the Holy Synod. [He wrote to Metropolitan Seraphim]: ‘I cannot understand by whom and how and why doubt can be cast on a work as pure and approved by all, as sacred as anything on earth. It would be no small matter if the doubt threatened only the one man who was the instrument of this work; but does it not threaten the Hierarchy? Does it not threaten the Church? If the Orthodoxy of a Catechism that was triumphantly approved by the Most Holy Synod is in doubt, then will not the Orthodoxy of the Most Holy Synod itself not be in doubt? Will not allowing this shake the Hierarchy to its foundations, will it not disturb the peace of the Church? Will it not produce a serious temptation for the Church?’ Metropolitan Seraphim calmed Philaret, saying that Orthodoxy was not in question here, that everything came down to the language, but he refused ‘to reply in a satisfactory manner’ ‘why the Russian language must have no place in the Catechism, which was, moreover, short, and intended for small children who had no knowledge whatsoever of the Slavonic language, and for that reason were not able to understand the truths of the faith which were expounded to them in that language’… The ban on the Catechism (1828) was removed only when all the texts had been put into Slavonic and the Russian translation of the Symbol, the Lord’s Prayer and the Commandments had been left out. M. Philaret was deeply shaken by these events. ‘Smoke is eating into their eyes’, he wrote to his vicar, ‘and they are saying: how corrosive is the light of the sun! They can hardly breathe from the smoke and with difficulty decree: how harmful is the water from the source of life! Blessed is he who can not only raise his eyes to the mountains, but run there for the clean air, the living water!… Blessed is he who can sit in his corner and weep for his sins and pray for the Sovereign and the Church, and has no need to take part in public affairs, becoming tainted with the sins of others and multiplying his own sins!’ Above all Philaret was alarmed by the un-thought-through hastiness and interference of secular people, ‘people who have been called neither by God, nor by their superiors’, and who rise up in bold self-opinionated fashion against the appointed teachers.”

The destruction of the Holy Scriptures simply because they were in a Russian translation, and of the official Catechism simply because it quoted them in Russian rather than Slavonic, would, in another age, have led to a schism. But Philaret refrained from open protest precisely because he did not want to create a schism. However, with heresy overwhelming so many

478 Florovsky, “Philaret, mitropolit Moskovskij”, pp. 273-275. And yet his main enemies, sadly, were the zealots of Church piety. Thus Fr. Photius, on reading Philaret’s letter to Seraphim, wrote: “From the letters of Philaret it is not evident that he valued the faith, the Church and Orthodoxy, but only his own personality and honour” (in A.I. Yakovlev, “Sviatitel’ Filaret (Drozdov) in gosudarstvennaia zhizni Rossii v 1821-1831 godakh” (The Hierarch Philaret (Drozdov) and State life in Russia from 1821 to 1831), in Vladimir Tsurikov (ed.), Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow 1782-1867, Jordanville: Variable Press, 2003, p. 138.
479 Metropolitan Seraphim of St. Petersburg had threatened to retire if Philaret insisted on continuing his translation. (Snychev, op. cit., p. 181)
from the left, and blind prejudice parading as traditionalism from the right, the Russian Church was in a precarious position...480

GREEK REVOLUTION

Greek nationalism under the Turkish yoke was nourished and sustained from three sources. One, the purest, was the Orthodox faith: since the Gospel and most of the patristic writings were written in Greek, a good knowledge of Orthodoxy required a good knowledge of Greek and Byzantine history; Hellenism in its purest form was linked inseparably with the Orthodox faith. This kind of Orthodox Greek nationalism was to be found especially among the monks of Mount Athos.

Another source was a natural desire to be liberated from the Ottoman yoke. The situation of the Greeks under the Turks was very difficult; persecution of the faith was increasing. “The rights of the patriarch,” writes Schmemann, “were gradually reduced to nothing; all that was left to him was the ‘right’ of being responsible for the Christians. In the course of seventy-three years in the eighteenth century, the patriarch was replaced forty-eight times! Some were deposed and reinstalled as many as five times; many were put to torture. The rebellions of the Janissaries were accompanied by terrible bloodshed. Churches were defiled, relics cut to pieces, and the Holy Gifts profaned. Christian pogroms became more and more frequent. In the nineteenth century Turkey was simply rotting away, but the ‘sick man of Europe’ was supported at all points by other nations in opposition to Russia.”481

The Patriarch was bound by his oath of allegiance to the Sultan not to encourage protest against the Turks. However, as Runciman writes, “the Greek in the provinces could not understand the subtle politics of the Patriarchate. He could not appreciate the delicacy that the Patriarch and his advisers had to show in their dealings with the Sublime Porte. He looked to his village priest or to the local abbot or the bishop to protect him against the Turkish governmental authorities, and he gave his support to anyone who would champion him against the government. In the great days of the Ottoman Empire, when the administration had been efficient and on the whole just, Greek nationalism could be kept underground. But by the eighteenth century the administrative machinery was beginning to run down. Provincial Turkish governors began to revolt against the Sultan and could usually count on the support of the local Greeks. A growing number of outlaws took to the mountains. In Slav districts they were known by the Turkish name of haidouks; in Greece they were called the Klephts. They lived

480 The Russian Bible Society was forced to close down its operations in 1826 by Tsar Nicholas I, and its property, worth some two million roubles, was transferred to the Holy Synod. The Society re-established itself in Russia in 1990. The project for the translation of the Holy Scriptures into Russian was resumed in the reign of Alexander II...

481 Schmemann, op. cit., p. 274.
by banditry, directed mainly against the Turkish landowners; but they were quite ready to rob Christian merchants or travellers of any nationality. They could count on the support of the local Christian villagers, to whom they were latter-day Robin Hoods; they could almost always find refuge from the Turkish police in some local monastery…”482

The first and second sources of Greek nationalism combined: it was because the faith was being trampled on that the Greek revolution of 1821 had widespread support in the Church and was understood as a struggle “for faith and fatherland” in response to the insults cast at both by the Turks.

A third, less pure source of Greek nationalism was the teaching of the French revolution on freedom, which brought back to Greece by the sons of the Phanariots. As Mark Mazower writes, “it was the French Revolution which first suggested that emancipation might come through the action of the masses themselves [as opposed to a foreign king, such as the Russian Tsar]. The toppling of the French monarchy, the rise of Bonaparte and above all, his invasion of Ottoman Egypt in 1798, radicalised the political thought of Balkan Christian intellectuals.”483

By the end of the eighteenth century most educated Greeks were deeply tainted by westernism. There were other, political and economic factors exciting the dreams of the Phanariots: the conquest of the Ionian islands by Napoleon and then by the British; the rebellion of the Mohammedan warlord Ali Pasha against the Sultan in 1820; the inexorable gradual southward expansion of the Russian Empire (although the Phanariots were not great lovers of the Russians, as we shall see); and the restrictions on the accumulation of capital in the Ottoman empire, which contrasted unfavourably with the more business-friendly regimes they had encountered in the West. However, the most important influences were undoubtedly ideological – the influence of western ideas made available by the explosion in the provision of educational opportunities for young Greeks that the Phanariots created in the last quarter of the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth.

Such an emphasis on education had been made by Hieromartyr Cosmas of Aitolia (+1779). He built over two hundred schools. But he emphasised education in Orthodoxy in order to escape the snares of western culture.484

482 Runciman, op. cit., p. 391.
483 Mazower, op. cit., p. 81.
484 “It is better,” he said, “my brother, for you to have a Greek school in your village rather than fountains and rivers, for when your child becomes educated, then he becomes a human being. The school opens churches; the school opens monasteries.” And to the people of Parga he said: “Take care to establish without fail a Greek school in which your children will learn all that you are ignorant of [because] our faith wasn’t established by ignorant saints, but by wise and educated saints who interpreted the Holy Scriptures accurately and who enlightened us sufficiently by inspired teachings” (Nomikos Michael Vaporis, Witnesses for
These merchants, however, sent young Greeks to the universities of Western Europe, especially Germany, where they learned all about the glories of Classical, pagan Greece. For under the Turkish yoke, writes Richard Clogg, “knowledge of the ancient Greek world had all but died out, but, under the stimulus of western classical scholarship, the budding intelligentsia developed an awareness that they were the heirs to an heritage that was universally revered throughout the civilised world. By the eve of the war in independence this progonoplexia (ancestor obsession) and arkhaiolatreia (worship of antiquity), to use the expressive Greek terms, had reached almost obsessive proportions. It was precisely during the first decade of the nineteenth century that nationalists, much to the consternation of the Church authorities, began to baptise their children with the names of (and to call their ships after) the worthies of ancient Greece rather than the Christian saints....”

Such nationalistic worship of Greek pagan antiquity could be combined with contempt for the real glory of Greece – the Orthodox Church. A case in point was Adamantios Korais. Runciman writes: “He was born at Smyrna in 1748 and went as a young man to Paris, which he made his headquarters for the rest of his life. There he made contact with the French Encyclopédistes and their successors. From them he learnt a dislike for clericalism and for tradition. From reading Gibbon he came to believe that Christianity had ushered in a dark age for European civilization. His friend Karl Schlegel taught him to identify nationality with language. ‘Language is the nation.’ He wrote; ‘for where one says la langue de France one means the French nation.’ The Greeks of his time were therefore of the same race as the ancient Greeks. But to make the identification closer he sought to reform the language so that it would be nearer to the Classical form. He was, in fact, primarily responsible for the introduction of katharevousa... For the Byzantine past of Greece and for the Orthodox Church he had no use at all. His writings were eagerly read by the young intellectuals at the Phanar and by men of education all over Greece.”

One of the few defences that the Church was able to muster against this rampant westernism was a work entitled The Paternal Exhortation and published in 1798. “The author’s name was given as Anthimus, Patriarch of Jerusalem. Anthimus was a sick man at the time and not expected to survive; but when he surprised his doctors by making a recovery he indignantly repudiated the authorship. The true identity of the author is unknown, but there is reason to believe that it was the Patriarch Gregory V, then entering on his first spell at the Patriarchate. Gregory, or whoever the author was, clearly knew that the book would arouse angry criticism and hoped that the critics

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486 Runciman, op. cit., pp. 392-393.
The victory of the Turks and the tolerance that they showed to their Christian subjects were the means for preserving Orthodoxy. Good Christians should therefore be content to remain under Turkish rule. Even the Ottoman restriction on the building of churches, which the author realized might be hard to explain as beneficial, is excused by the remark that Christians should not indulge in the vainglorious pastime of erecting fine buildings; for the true Church is not made by hands, and there will be splendour enough in Heaven. After denouncing the illusory attractions of political freedom, ‘an enticement of the Devil and a murderous poison destined to push the people into disorder and destruction’, the author ends with a poem bidding the faithful to pay respect to the Sultan, whom God had set in authority over them...

“It was a document that found little sympathy with its Greek readers. Korais hastened to reply in a tract called the Fraternal Exhortation, in which he declared that the Paternal Exhortation in no way represented the feeling of the Greek people but was the ridiculous raving of a hierarch ‘who is either a fool or has been transformed from a shepherd into a wolf’…”

The ideology that inspired the French revolution was Freemasonry, and Masonic lodges were beginning to appear in Greece. The Greek Orthodox Church officially condemned Masonry in 1744, and the future hieromartyr Archbishop Cyprian of Cyprus anathematized it in 1815. However, Masonic writers, both Greek and Russian, have tended to see the Greek revolution as the work almost exclusively of Masons; and one writer has called the Filiki Hetairia, which organized the revolution from Odessa in 1821, a Masonic Lodge.

This is almost certainly a wild exaggeration. Although the Hetairia recalled Masonry in its four grades, in its oaths of secrecy and absolute obedience to unknown leaders, and in the fact that two of its three founders were in fact Freemasons, it was Orthodox in its ideology. Thus its catechism for new members was purely patriotic in tone, the organization was dedicated to the Holy Trinity and the Orthodox Christian Faith, and its leader, Alexander Ypsilantis, proclaimed the revolution in Iasy in Roman with the title: “Fight

490 Runciman, op. cit., p. 398.
Nevertheless, the revolutionary ethos of French Masonry bears a close relationship to the thinking of many of the leaders of the Greek revolution. Freemasonry was dangerous not only because it preached political revolution. It also preached religious ecumenism – that is, the idea that all religions have a part of the truth, that none of them is perfect, and that there is no one perfect revealed truth. Patriarch Gregory opposed ecumenism as part of westernism: “Let us neither say nor think that [they who teach erroneous doctrines] also believe in one Lord, have one Baptism, and confess the one Faith. If their opinions are correct, then by necessity our own must be incorrect. But if our own doctrines are upheld and believed and given creedence and confessed by all as being good, true, correct, and unadulterated, manifestly then, the so-called sacraments of all heretics are evil, bereft of divine grace, abominable, and loathsome, and the grace of ordination and the priesthood by which these sacraments are performed has vanished and departed from them. And when there is no priesthood, all the rest are dead and bereft of spiritual grace. We say these things, beloved, lest anyone – either man or woman – be misled by the heterodox regarding their apparent sacraments and their so-called Christianity. Rather, let each one stand firmly in the blameless and true Faith of Christ, especially that we may draw to ourselves those who have been led astray and, as though they were own members, unite them to the one Head, Christ, to Whom be glory and dominion unto the ages of ages. Amen.”

Unfortunately, the Church’s reaction against westernism and Masonry was often combined, especially among the monks, with a less healthy reaction against education as such, which was thought to be the root cause of Phanariot impiety. The consequent fall in intellectual standards in turn encouraged the assumption that Greek Orthodoxy was necessarily superior to other national forms of Orthodoxy, and that in consequence the other nations had to be led by Greeks. “Even on Athos,” writes Runciman, “nationalism reared its head. The Greek monasteries began to show hostility to the Serbian

492 Bishop Photius of Marathon, personal communication. Nevertheless, the Orthodoxy was mixed with themes from Classical Greece: “‘Let us recollect, brave and generous Greeks, the liberty of the classic land of Greece; the battles of Marathon and Thermopylae, let us combat upon the tombs of our ancestors who, to leave us free, fought and died,’ Ypsilantis wrote in his declaration of 24 February 1821. ‘The blood of our tyrants is dear to the shades of the Theban Epaminondas, and of the Athenian Thrasybulus who conquered and destroyed the thirty tyrants’ – and so on.” (Adam Zamoyski, Holy Madness: Romantics, Patriots and Revolutionaries, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999, p. 235).

493 St. Gregory, An Explanation of the Apostolic Lections. The movement to reject the sacraments of the Latin and Protestant heretics had been initiated by Patriarch Cyril V in his famous synodal decree of 1756, which ruled that all western heretics coming to Orthodoxy must be baptized. It was supported by the monk Auxentios and the Chian doctor Eustratios Argenti, and opposed by Patriarchs Paisios and Callinicus IV, who exiled Cyril V to Rhodes.
And so the Greek revolution was motivated by a mixture of pure patriotism, “for faith and fatherland”, and an unrighteous, fallen nationalism influenced by the ideas of the French revolution and ready at times to put the narrow interests of the Greek nation – or rather, of the nation’s ruling elite – above those of the other oppressed Orthodox under the Turkish yoke.

Such was the nationalist bombast of, for example, Benjamin of Lesbos, who wrote: “Nature has set limits to the aspirations of other men, but not to those of the Greeks. The Greeks were not in the past and are not now subject to the laws of nature.”

This mixed character of the Greek revolution, symbolised by the use of three different flags, determined its mixed outcome, and the fact that, in the course of the nineteenth century, Orthodox Eastern Europe was liberated, not through a single, united Orthodox movement of liberation, but by separate nationalist movements – Greek, Bulgarian, Serb, Romanian – which ended up, in 1912-1913, fighting each other rather than the common enemy…

“One of the first to develop plans for a co-ordinated revolt,” writes Clogg, “was Rigas Velestinlis, a Hellenised Vlach from Thessaly. After acquiring his early political experience in the service of the Phanariot hospodars of the Danubian principalities, he had been powerfully influenced by the French Revolution during a sojourn in Vienna in the 1790s. The political tracts, and in particular his Declaration of the Rights of Man, which he had printed in Vienna and with which he aspired to revolutionise the Balkans, are redolent of the French example. Potentially the most significant was the New Political Constitution of the Inhabitants of Rumeli, Asia Minor, the Islands of the Aegean and the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. This envisaged the establishment of a revived Byzantine Empire but with the substitution of republican institutions on the French model for the autocracy of Byzantium. Although it was intended to embrace all the inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire, Greeks, whether by birth or by culture, were to predominate. Rigas’ carefully articulated schemes were without result for he was betrayed (by a fellow

494 Runciman, op. cit., p. 391.
495 Benjamin, Stoikhia tis Metafyzikis (The Elements of Metaphysics), 1820; in Clogg, op. cit., p. 33.
496 Alexander Pushkin, who was in nearby Kishinev at the time of the revolution, wrote that the Greeks “published proclamations which quickly spread everywhere – in them it is said that the Phoenix of Greece will arise from its own ashes, that the hour of Turkey’s downfall has come, and that a great power approves of the great-souled feat! The Greeks have begun to throng together in crowds under three banners; of these one is tricoloured [the revolutionary flag], on another streams a cross wreathed with laurels, with the text ‘By this sign conquer’ [the religious flag, derived from God’s promise to St. Constantine], on a third is depicted the Phoenix arising from its ashes [the patriotic flag]” (in Mazower, op. cit., p. 91).
Greek) in Trieste as he was about to leave the Hapsburg territory to preach the gospel of revolution in the Balkans. With a handful of fellow conspirators he was put to death by the Ottomans in Belgrade in May 1798.\(^{497}\)

However, the revolutionaries were opposed not only by the Turks, but also by the Patriarchate. Runciman writes: “A test came early in the nineteenth century when Sultan Selim made a serious effort to suppress brigandage. The Klephts in Greece, thanks to the spirit of revolt and to the hymns of Rhigas, had become popular heroes. It was a patriotic duty for a Greek to give them shelter against the police; and the village priest and the monks of the country monasteries were eager to help them. But they were a menace to orderly rule; and when the Sultan demanded of the Patriarch that he should issue a stern decree threatening with excommunication any priest or monk who would not aid the authorities in their suppression, the Patriarch could not well refuse. The decree was published in the Peloponnese; and though most of the higher clergy sullenly obeyed it, the villages and the poorer monasteries were outraged; and even at the Phanar there was open disapproval. It became clear that when the moment for revolt arrived the Patriarch would not be at its head.

“In spite of the Patriarch the plots continued. At the end of the eighteenth century there were even several secret societies in existence, with names such as the Athena, which hoped to liberate Greece with French help and which counted Korais among its members, or the Phoenix, which pinned its hopes on Russia. In 1814 three Greek merchants at Odessa in Russia, Nicholas Emmanuel Xanthos and Athanasius Tsakalof, the first a member of the Phoenix and the latter two freemasons, founded a society which they called the Hetaireia ton Filikon, the Society of Friends. Thanks chiefly to the energy of Skouphas, who unfortunately died in 1817, it soon superseded all the previous societies and became the rallying point of the rebellion. Skouphas was determined to include in the society patriots of every description; and soon it had amongst its members Phanariots such as Prince Constantine Ypsilanti and his hot-headed sons, Alexander and Nicholas, all now living in exile in Russia, and members of the Mavrocordato and Caradja families, or high ecclesiastics such as Ignatius, Metropolitan of Arta and later of Wallachia, and Germanus, Metropolitan of Patras\(^{498}\), intellectuals such as Anthimus Ghazis, and brigand leaders such as the armatolos George Olympios and Kolokotronis. It was organized partly on Masonic lines and partly on what the founders believed to have been the early Christian organization. It had four grades. The lowest was that of Blood-brothers, which was confined to illiterates. Next were the Recommended, who swore an oath to obey their superiors but were not permitted to know more than the general

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\(^{497}\) Clogg, op. cit., pp. 29, 31.

\(^{498}\) He came from the same village of Dhimitsana in the Peloponnese as Patriarch Gregory V. The attitudes of these two hierarchs came to symbolise a fundamental division in Greek society that was to continue for decades… (V.M.)
and were kept in ignorance of the names of the Priests, who could initiate Blood-brothers and Recommended and who, after solemn oaths, were allowed to know the detailed aims of the society. Above them again were the Pastors, who supervised the Pastors, who supervised the Priests and saw that they only initiated suitable candidates; a suitable Recommended could become a Pastor without passing through the grade of Priest. From the Pastors were chosen the supreme authorities of the society, the Arche. The names of the Arche were unknown except to each other, and their meetings were held in absolute secrecy. This was thought necessary not only security against external powers but also for the prestige of the society. Had the names of its directors been known, there might have been opposition to several of them, particularly among such a faction-loving people as the Greeks; whereas the mystery surrounding the Arche enabled hints to be dropped that it included such weighty figures as the Tsar himself. All grades had to swear unconditional obedience to the Arche, which itself operated through twelve Apostles, whose business it was to win recruits and to organize branches in different provinces and countries. They were appointed just before the death of Skouphas; and their names are known. It was first decided to fix the headquarters of the society on Mount Pelion, but later, after the initiation of the Maniot chieftain, Peter Mavromichalis, it was moved to the Mani, in the south-east of the Peloponnese, a district into which the Turks had never ventured to penetrate.

“There were however two distinguished Greeks who refused to join the Society. One was the ex-Patriarch Gregory V. He had been deposed for the second time in 1808, and was living on Mount Athos, where the Apostle John Pharmakis visited him. Gregory pointed out that it was impossible for him to swear an oath of unconditional obedience to the unknown leaders of a secret society and that anyhow he was bound by oath to respect the authority of the Sultan. The reigning Patriarch, Cyril VI, was not approached. Still more disappointing was the refusal of the Tsar’s foreign minister, John Capodistrias, to countenance the Hetairia.  

499 Adam Zamoyski writes that “its ultimate aim was the liberation of Greece and the restoration of a Greek Empire. More immediately it was concerned with the ‘purification’ of the Greek nation…. By 1821 the Hetairia had a total of 911 members.” (op. cit., p. 234) (V.M.)  
500 Frazee, op. cit., p. 24. Moreover, these “highest authorities” (anotati arkhi) were called “Great Priests of the Eleusinian Mysteries” (Clogg, op. cit., p. 35). Almost certainly, no real connection with the pagan mysteries was meant. Nevertheless, it is understandable that the first priest in Orthodoxy could not be involved in such things! (V.M.)  
501 The Hetairia sent an envoy to Capodistrias in St. Petersburg. He was appalled, and advised them that “if they [the conspirators] do not want to perish themselves and destroy together with themselves their innocent and unfortunate Race, they should abandon their revolutionary plots and live as before under the Governments they find themselves, until Providence decides otherwise.” (Archimandrite Ambrose, op. cit., p. 77). Again, when the revolution broke out, he said: “So, a premature revolution for Greece that is going to destroy all my efforts for a happy future” (Frazee, op. cit., p. 17). However, he did not betray the plan.
John Antony, Count Capodistrias, had been born in Corfu in 1770, and as a young man had worked for the Ionian government there, before going to Russia at the time of the second French occupation of the Ionian islands in 1807. He was given a post in the Russian diplomatic service and was attached to the Russian Embassy at Vienna in 1811, and next year was one of the Russian delegates at the treaty negotiations at Bucharest. His remarkable abilities impressed Tsar Alexander, who in 1815 nominated him Secretary of State and Assistant Foreign Minister. In his youth Capodistrias had made contacts with many of the Greek revolutionary thinkers, and he was well known to be a Greek patriot. In the past many Greeks had looked to France to deliver them from the Turks; but after Napoleon’s collapse the whole Greek world turned to Russia, and Capodistrias’s accession to power gave them confidence. The Russian sovereign was the great patron of Orthodoxy. The Greeks forgot how little they had gained from Catherine the Great, the imperialistic German free-thinker, who had incited them to revolt in 1770 and then had abandoned them. But at the Treaty of Kučuk Kainarci in 1774 Russia had acquired the right to intervene in Turkish internal affairs in the interests of the Orthodox. Catherine’s son, … Paul, was clearly unwilling to help the Greek cause; but when Alexander I succeeded his murdered father in 1801 hopes rose. Alexander was known to have liberal views and mystical Orthodox sympathies. Belief in his aid had encouraged the Princes of Moldavia and Wallachia to plot against the Sultan in 1806; and, when they were deposed by the Sultan, the Tsar cited his rights under the Treaty of Kučuk Kainarci and declared war on Turkey. The only outcome of the war had been the annexation by Russia of the Moldavian province of Bessarabia. But the Greeks were not discouraged. Now, with a Greek as the Tsar’s Secretary of State, the time had surely come for the War of Liberation. The plotters refused to realize that Capodistrias was the Tsar’s servant and a practical man of the world; and they did not know that the Tsar himself was becoming more reactionary and less willing to countenance rebellion against established authority.”}

Alexis Troubestkoy writes: “Under normal circumstances, there would have been no doubt about the tsar’s reaction: as champion of the Orthodox world, he could hardly have rejected such a plea. The circumstances at the time, however, were anything but normal. Central Europe was captive to the views of Austrian Chancellor Metternich, to whom any hint of insidious liberalism – revolutionary movements in particular – was anathema. The Holy Alliance, of which Russia was an enthusiastic signatory, was to assure this. Despite his personal sympathy for the Greeks, and antipathy to the Turks, there was no way the Tsar could let down the established order. It was of the plotters, and when the revolution began he resigned his post as minister and went to Geneva, where he worked quietly to help the insurgents. (V.M.)

502 Runciman, op. cit., p. 401.
fully resolved be disavowing and censuring Ypsilantis.

“The planners of Greek independence could not count on the open support of the Patriarchate. They should have realized that they also could not count on the support of Russia. And the nationalist ecclesiastical policy of the Church during the last century deprived them of the friendship of the other peoples of the Balkans. The leaders of the Hetairia were aware of this. They made earnest attempts to enrol Serbian, Bulgarian and Roumanian members. When Karageorge revolted against the Turks in Serbia Greek armatoles and klephts came to join him. Even the Phanariot princes had offered support; but they were rebuffed. ‘The Greek Princes of the Phanar,’ Karageorge wrote, ‘can never make common cause with people who do not wish to be treated like animals.’ Karageorge’s revolt was put down by the Turks in 1813. Two years later the Serbs revolted again, under Miloš Obrenović, a far subtler diplomat, who secured Austrian support and eventually induced the Sultan to accept him as a reliable vassal-prince. Miloš had no contact with the Greeks. The Hetairia therefore pinned its faith on Karageorge, who was persuaded to become a member in 1817. As Karageorge was greatly admired by the Bulgarians it was hoped that numbers of them would now join the movement. Karageorge was then sent back to Serbia. But the Serbs, who were satisfied with Miloš’s achievements, offered him no support; and Miloš regarded him as a rival to be eliminated. He was assassinated in June 1817. With his death any hope of interesting the Serbs in the coming Greek rebellion faded out; and there was no one capable of rallying the Bulgars to the cause. Karageorge alone could have given the Hetairia the air of not being exclusively Greek.

“The Hetairia had higher hopes of the Roumanians. There a peasant leader, Tudor Vladimirescu, who had led a band to help the Serbs, was defying the Turkish police in the Carpathian mountains and had gathered together a considerable company. He was in close touch with two leading hetaerists, George Olympus and Phokianos Savvas, and he himself joined the society, promising to co-ordinate his movements with the Greeks’. But he was an unreliable ally; for he was bitterly opposed to the Phanariot princes, who, he considered, had brought ruin to his country…”

504 Runciman, op. cit., pp. 398-402. That the Romanians should have placed their hopes of freedom from the Turks on the Russian tsar rather than on a Greek phanariot was hardly surprising. Moldavia had been closely linked to Russia for many centuries, and in November, 1806, when the Russo-Turkish war began, Metropolitan Benjamin (Kostake) in his pastoral epistle wrote: “The true happiness of these lands lies in their union with Russia”. And when Bessarabia, that is, the part of Moldavia east of the Prut, was united to Russia in 1812, there was great rejoicing among the people, and in five years the population of Bessarabia almost doubled through an influx from the lands west of the Prut. (Vladimir Bukarsky, “Moskovskij Patriarkhat pod udarom: na ocheredi – Moldavia”, Prawoslavnaia Rus’, N 23 (1836), December 1/14, 2007, p. 4).
There is no need to go into the military history of the revolution. Suffice it to say that Ypsilanti’s uprising in Romania failed, while that under Metropolitan Germanus in the Peloponnese had a limited success.

Ypsilanti failed, first of all, because, though an officer in the Russian army, he had acted against the will of the Tsar – and so, of course, received no help from the Tsar. Metropolitan Germanus was more successful, although, of course, it was against the canons of the Orthodox Church that a hierarch should take up arms... However, the cost in terms of civilians killed on both sides was high. Within a few months, shouting “Kill all the Turks in the Morea”, the Greeks had killed 20,000 men, women and children. At Tripolitsa, the Scottish Philhellenes Thomas Gordon watched as the Greeks, “mad with vindictive rage, spared neither age nor sex – the streets and houses were inundated with blood, and obstructed with heaps of dead bodies. Some Mohammedans fought bravely and sold their lives dearly, but the majority were slaughtered without resistance...” 2000 women and children were massacred in a defile of Mount Maenalion. The Turks responded in kind. The most famous massacre took place in May, 1822 in Chios, where, in response to the arrival of a small party of Greek revolutionaries from Samos, 30,000 Muslims invaded from Asia Minor, killed 25,000 Greeks and took 45,000 into slavery.

The war placed Patriarch Gregory V in Constantinople in an impossible position. The Sultan was convinced that he was at least in part to blame for the insurrection. So Gregory, writes Frazee, “called a meeting of the Greek leaders and people to discuss their common peril that same day after he had met with the sultan. Mahmud had demanded that the patriarch and Synod excommunicate those responsible for the uprising and those who had killed innocent Turks. At the patriarchate, therefore, the patriarch of Jerusalem, Polykarpos, four synodal archbishops, Karolos Kallimachi, Hospodar of Wallachia, the Dragoman of the Porte, Konstantinos Mourousi, and the Grand Logothete, Stephanos Mavroyeni, gathered to decide on their next step. A number of other Greeks were also in attendance ‘of every class and condition’. Gregorios and Mouroussi presided. The assembled Greeks were all exhorted


Capodistrias himself wrote to a friend: “The emperor has highly disapproved of these [means] which Prince Ipsilanti appears to wish to employ to deliver Greece. At a time when Europe is menaced everywhere by revolutionary explosions, how can one not recognise in that which has broken out in the two principalities [Wallachia and Moldavia] the identical effect of the same subversive principles, the same intrigues which attract the calamities of war... the most dreadful plague of demagogic despotism.” (in Mazower, op. cit., pp. 91-92 (V.M.)
move or action contrary to their allegiance and fidelity to their Sovereign. A letter was drafted which incorporated the sultan’s suggestion and was sent off to be printed at the patriarchal press. The patriarch then urged that the Greeks prepare to leave the city quickly, promising that he would stay: ‘As for me, I believe that my end is approaching, but I must stay at my post to die, and if I remain, then the Turks will not be given a plausible pretext to massacre the Christians of the capital.’

“The letter of excommunication against the revolutionaries appeared on Palm Sunday, 4 April, in all the Greek churches of the capital signed by the patriarch, Polykarpou of Jerusalem, and twenty-one other prelates. In part, the document stated: ‘Gratitude to our benefactors is the first of virtues and ingratitude is severely condemned by the Holy Scriptures and declared unpardonable by Jesus Christ; Judas the ungrateful traitor offers a terrible example of it; but it is most strongly evidenced by those who rise against their common protector and lawful sovereign, and against Christ, who has said that there is no rule or power but comes from God. It was against this principle that Michael Soutzos and Alexandros Ypsilantis, son of a fugitive, sinned with an audacity beyond example, and have sent emissaries to seduce others, and to conduct them to the abyss of perdition; many have been so tempted to join an unlawful hetairia and thought themselves bound by their oath to continue [as] members, but an oath to commit a sin was itself a sin, and not binding – like that of Herod, who, that he might not break a wicked obligation committed a great wickedness by the death of John the Baptist.’ The text ended by solemnly condemning and excommunicating Soutzos and Ypsilantis, having been signed on the altar itself. The patriarchal letter was the final blow to strike Ypsilantis’ fading expedition in the Principalities.”

Some have argued that the patriarch secretly repudiated this anathema; which is why the Turks, suspecting him of treachery, hanged him on the Sunday of Pascha. Gregory’s biographer, Kandiloros writes: “As the representative of Christ it cannot be believed that the patriarch signed such a letter. But as the head of a threatened people, he had to take measures, as well as he could, to save his powerless and hard-pressed population from being massacred.” In any case,” writes Fr. Anthony Gavalas, “the anathema was ignored, as were all the other letters unfavourable to the plans of the revolutionaries, as having been issued under duress. There is an opinion that the patriarch knew that the anathema would be so considered and issued it, hoping to placate the Turks on the one hand, and on the other, to gain time for the revolution to gain strength.”

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506 Frazee, op. cit., pp. 28-29.
507 Kandiloros, in Frazee, op. cit., p. 29.
In the opinion of the present writer, while the patriarch was undoubtedly a patriot who longed for the freedom of his country, his righteousness of character precludes the possibility that he could have been plotting against a government to which he had sworn allegiance and for which he prayed in the Divine Liturgy, or that he could have been hypocritical in such an important church act. After all, as we have seen, he had always refused to join the Philiki Hetairia. In this connection it is significant that the patriarch’s body was picked up by a Russian ship and taken to Odessa, mutely pointing to the place where the organization that had indirectly caused his death was centred...

The Tsar, writes John Julius Norwich, “did not mince his words” when condemning the Turks for killing the Patriarch. “In an ultimatum drafted by Capodistrias, he declared that: ‘the Ottoman government has placed itself in a state of open hostility against the Christian world. It has legitimised the defence of the Greeks, who will henceforth be fighting solely to save themselves from inevitable destruction. In view of the nature of that struggle, Russia will find herself strictly obliged to offer them help, because they are persecuted; protection, because they need it; and assistance, jointly with the whole of Christendom, because she cannot surrender her brothers in religion to the mercy of blind fanaticism.’ This was presented to the Turkish government on 18 July. On the 25th, having received no reply, the Russian ambassador, Count Stroganoff, broke off diplomatic relations with the Porte and closed the embassy…”

But, as Alexis Troubetskoy writes, “there was to be no Russian help for the Greeks. Massacres followed slaughters – particularly in the Peloponnesus – and for the following nine years Greece was embroiled in war. Alexander never forgave himself for having failed his coreligionists…”

Nevertheless, it was Alexander’s successor, Tsar Nicholas I, who, suppressing his distaste for “Greek demagoguery”, finally rescued the Greeks from the near-collapse of their revolution. In 1829-31 his armies advanced against the Turks and drove them as far as Adrianople. The Phanariots had wanted to liberate themselves in pursuit of their “great idea” of the restoration of the Byzantine Empire: but in the end it had been the Third Rome of Russia that had come to the rescue of the Second Rome of Constantinople...

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510 Troubetskoy, op. cit., p. 113.
The Greeks after the revolution were desperately poor and even more desperately divided. The new patriarch, Eugenius, again anathematized the insurgents. In response, twenty-eight bishops and almost a thousand priests in free Greece anathematized the patriarch, calling him a Judas and a wolf in sheep's clothing. The Free Greeks now commemorated “all Orthodox bishops” at the Liturgy instead of the patriarch. Not surprisingly, in 1824 the patriarchate refused a request from the Greek Church for Holy Chrism.

At the same time, in 1822 the Free Greeks entered into negotiations with the Pope for help against the Turks. Very soon the Faith was being betrayed for the sake of the political struggle, as it had been at the council of Florence. President Mavrokordatos wrote to the Papal Secretary of State: “The cries of a Christian nation threatened by complete extermination have the right to receive the compassion of the head of Christendom.” Greek delegates to the meeting of the Great Powers in Verona wrote to Pope Pius VII that the Greek revolution was not like the revolutions of other nations raised against altar and throne. Instead, it was being fought in the name of religion and “... asks to be placed under the protection of a Christian dynasty with wise and permanent laws”. In another letter the delegates addressed the pope as “the common father of the faithful and head of the Christian religion”, and said that the Greeks were worthy of the pope’s “protection and apostolic blessing”. Metropolitan Germanus was even empowered to speak concerning the possibility of a reunion of the Churches. However, it was the Pope who drew back at this point, pressurized by the other western States which considered the sultan to be a legitimate monarch.

How soon had a struggle fought “for faith and fatherland” betrayed the faith while only partially winning the fatherland! For real political independence had not been achieved. The Turks had been driven out, only for the British and the French and later the Germans came to take their place.

The election of Capodistrias as “governor of Greece” in 1827 brought a limited degree of order. But he made many enemies by his contempt for the élites of Greek society. Thus “he dismissed the primates as ‘Christian Turks’, the military chieftains as ‘robbers’, the intelligentsia as ‘fools’ and the Phanariots as ‘children of Satan’”. And so on October 9, 1831 he was assassinated as he entered a church in Nauplion...

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511 Frazee, op. cit., p. 44.
512 Frazee, op. cit., p. 62.
513 Frazee, op. cit., p. 54.
514 Frazee, op. cit., pp. 54-57.
515 Clogg, op. cit., p. 46.
On May 7, 1832, Britain, France, Russia and Bavaria signed a treaty in London which guaranteed Greece’s independence and named Otto, son of King Ludwig I of Bavaria, as king. And yet this independence was purely nominal. When Byron was dying in Greece in 1824, the Duc d’Orléans had commented “that he was dying so that one day people would be able to eat sauerkraut at the foot of the Acropolis”. He was not far from the truth; for Greece was now under a German Catholic king ruling through German ministers and maintained in power by German troops. Zamoyski comments sardonically: “Sauerkraut indeed…”

Until King Otto came of age, three regents were appointed by the Great Powers to rule Greece in his name: Colonel Heideck, a Philhellene and the only choice of the Tsar, but a liberal Protestant; Count Joseph von Armansperg, a Catholic but also a Freemason: Georg von Maurer, a liberal Protestant. Von Armansperg and von Maurer worked to make Greece as independent of Russia and the patriarchate in Constantinople as possible. Russian demands that the king (or at any rate his children) become Orthodox, and that the link with the patriarchate be preserved, were ignored...

It was Maurer who was entrusted with working out a new constitution for the Church. He “found an illustrious collaborator, in the person of a Greek priest, Theocletus Pharmacides. This Pharmacides had received his education in Europe and his thought was exceedingly Protestant in nature; he was the obstinate enemy of the Ecumenical Patriarch and of Russia.” Helped by Pharmacides, Mauer proceeded to work out a constitution that proposed autocephaly for the Church under a Synod of bishops, and the subordination of the Synod to the State on the model of the Bavarian and Russian constitutions, to the extent that “no decision of the Synod could be published or carried into execution without the permission of the government having been obtained”. As Frazee comments: “If ever a church was legally stripped of authority and reduced to complete dependence on the state, Maurer’s constitution did it to the church of Greece.”

In spite of the protests of the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Tsar, and the walk-out of the archbishops of Rethymnon and Adrianople, this constitution was ratified by thirty-six bishops on July 26, 1833. The conservative opponent of Pharmacides in the government was Protopresbyter Constantine Oikonomos. He said that the constitution was “from an ecclesiastical point of view invalid and non-existent and deposed by the holy Canons. For this reason, during the seventeen years of its existence it was unacceptable to all the Churches of the Orthodox, and no Synod was in communion with it.”

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The Greek Church therefore exchanged the uncanonical position of the patriarchate of Constantinople under Turkish rule for the even less canonical position of a Synod unauthorized by the patriarch and under the control of a Catholic king and a Protestant constitution! In addition to this, all monasteries with fewer than six monks were dissolved (425 out of 500), and heavy taxes imposed on the remaining monasteries. And very little money was given to a Church which had lost six to seven thousand clergy in the war, and whose remaining clergy had an abysmally low standard of education.

Among the westernising reforms envisaged at this time was the introduction of the new, Gregorian calendar. Thus Cosmas Flammiatos wrote: “First of all they are trying in many ways to introduce into the Orthodox States the so-called new calendar of the West, according to which they will jump ahead 12 days [now 13], so that when we have the first of the month they will be counting 13 [now 14]. Through this innovation they hope to confuse and overthrow the feastdays and introduce other innovations.”

And again: “The purpose of this seminary in Halki of Constantinople which has recently been established with cunning effort, is, among other things, to taint all the future Patriarchs and, in general, all the hierarchy of the East in accordance with the spirit of corruption and error, through the proselytism of the English, so that one day, by a resolution of an ‘ecumenical council’ the abolition of Orthodoxy and the introduction of the Luther-Calvinist heresy may be decreed; at the same time all the other schools train thousands and myriads of likeminded individuals and confederates among the clergy, the teachers and lay people from among the Orthodox youth.”

For his defence of Orthodoxy, Cosmas was imprisoned together with 150 monks of the Mega Spilaion monastery. The monks were released, but Cosmas died in prison through poisoning.

In 1852 the schism between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Free Greek Church was healed. But there was no sign that the Greeks (on either side) had fully understood the cause of the schism – the doctrine of revolutionary nationalism. To this day, March 25 is a national holiday in Greece, those who died in the revolution are “ethnomartyrs” (a term unknown to the Holy Fathers), and the “great idea”, while watered down to correspond to the realities of modern Greece’s small-power status, remains a potent psychological force in the modern Greek Church...

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519 Flammiatos, cited in Monk Augustine, “To imerologiakon shisma apo istorikis kai kanonikis apopseos exetazomenou” (The calendar schism from an historical and canonical point of view), Agios Agathangelos Esfigmenties, 129, January-February, 1992, p. 12.
The nineteenth century was the age of nationalism par excellence; and it is generally considered that the nationalist liberation movements of that age were influenced above all by the ideology of the French revolution, which saw in the nation the source of all legitimacy and power. This is in general true; but there is at least one exception to this rule: the first of the nineteenth-century revolutions, and the only one that achieved its end without foreign support - that of Serbia. And the reason for this is that the Serbian revolution was inspired, not by the ideology of the revolution (unlike Greece, Serbia had very few western-educated intellectuals infected by this ideology), but by the Orthodox Church.

There were two Serbian Orthodox Churches: the Serbian metropolitanate of Karlovtsy in Slavonia, founded in 1713, which by the end of the nineteenth century had six dioceses with about a million faithful\footnote{Adrian Fortescue, *The Orthodox Eastern Church*, London: Catholic Truth Society, 1920, p. 308. Originally, the Karlovtsy metropolitanate had jurisdiction over the Romanians of Hungarian Transylvania. However, in 1864 the authorities allowed the creation of a separate Romanian Church in Hungary, the metropolitanate of Hermannstadt (Nagy-Šzeben) (Fortescue, *op. cit.*, p. 316). From 1873 there was also a metropolitanate of Černovtsy with jurisdiction over all the Orthodox (mainly Serbs and Romanians) in the Austrian lands (Fortescue, *op. cit.*, pp. 323-325). Significantly, when the Russian Church in Exile sought refuge in Serbia in the 1920s, their administration was set up in the former capital of the Serbian Church’s exile, Karlovtsy.}, and the Peč patriarchate, which was abolished by the Ecumenical Patriarch Samuel in 1766.\footnote{The Serbian Peč Patriarchate was founded as an autocephalous archiepiscopate by St. Savva in 1218-19, raised to the rank of a patriarchate with its see in Peč in 1375, and abolished in 1766. It should not be confused with the Bulgarian Ochrid archiepiscopate, which was founded by Emperor John Tsimiskes in Preslava in 971, moved to Sophia, Voden, Prespa and finally Ochrid, and was abolished on January 16, 1767.} In spite of this administrative division, and foreign oppression, the Serbian Church preserved the fire of faith in the people. “For the Cross and Golden Freedom” was the battle-cry. But the Serbian revolution was hindered by the rivalry of its two main leaders, Karadjordje and Obrenović.

Karadjordje had started the first uprising, but had been forced to flee, after which Obrenovic took over the leadership. “In 1817, writes Tim Judah, “Karadjordje slipped back into Serbia. Sensing danger for both himself and his plans, Obrenović sent his agents who murdered Karadjordje with an axe. His skinned head was stuffed and sent to the sultan. This act was to spark off a feud between the families which was periodically to convulse Serbian politics until 1903…”

“Miloš Obrenović was as rapacious as any Turk had been in collecting taxes. As his rule became ever more oppressive, there were seven rebellions
The early history of the Serbian principedom was not inspiring. Karadjordje had killed his stepfather before being killed by his godfather, and the pattern of violence continued. When his son Alexander replaced Miloš’s son Milan in 1842, he purged the Obrenović faction. But in 1858 the Obrenovićs returned to power. Then in 1868 Prince Michael and his family were murdered...

Serbian history from now on was dominated by two contrasting ideologies: the westernizing tradition deriving from the Enlightenment, and a nationalist tradition that sought to revive the glory of medieval Serbia in a “Greater Serbia” that would include all the Serbs under Ottoman or Habsburg rule. In 1844 Ilij Garašanin, an adviser to Prince Alexander, published his Nacertanije, or “Blueprint”, which was in effect a blueprint for a Greater Serbia that would also include the Croats, since they were considered to be Catholicized Serbs. Garašanin looked to Russia as a likely patron and protector of Greater Serbia; but Russian diplomacy in the form of Nicholas I’s foreign minister Nesselrode had little respect for Serbia at this time...

The Serbian nationalist tradition, as represented by, for example, the Montenegrin bishop-prince Petar Petrović Njegoš (d. 1851)\textsuperscript{524}, could sound very bloodthirsty...

Now Montenegro united Church and State in the only completely independent Orthodox land in the Balkans. Fortescue writes: “In 1516, Prince George, fearing lest quarrels should weaken his people (it was an elective princedom), made them swear always to elect the bishop as their civil ruler as well. These prince-bishops were called Vladikas... In the 18\textsuperscript{th} century the Vladika Daniel I (1697-1737) succeeded in securing the succession for his own family. As Orthodox bishops have to be celibate, the line passed (by an election whose conclusion was foregone) from uncle to nephew, or from cousin to cousin. At last, in 1852, Danilo, who succeeded his uncle as Vladika, wanted to marry, so he refused to be ordained bishop and turned the prince-bishopric into an ordinary secular princedom.”\textsuperscript{525}

In view of the Serbian wars of the 1990s, it is important to note the long-term influence of the Montenegrin Prince-Bishop Njegoš’ poem, The Mountain Wreath, which glorifies the mass slaughter of Mohammedans who refuse to convert to Christianity. The principal character, Vladyka Danilo, says:

\textsuperscript{524} Not to be confused with St. Peter of Cetinije, Metropolitan-Prince of Montenegro, who died on October 18, 1830. He became a monk at the age of twelve, and in 1782, at the age of 23, succeeded Metropolitan Sabas. He brought peace to the land, defeated Napoleon’s forces at the battle of Boka in Dalmatia, but always lived in a narrow monastic cell. His incorrupt relics and many healings are a witness to his sanctity.
\textsuperscript{525} Fortescue, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 309.
And in another poem Njegoš writes that “God’s dearest sacrifice is a boiling
stream of tyrant’s blood.” 526 An armed struggle against the infidel for the sake
of Christ could indeed have served as the subject of a truly Christian
glorification. But there is little that is Christian here. Even Bishop Nikolai
Velimirović, an admirer of Njegoš, had to admit: “Njegoš’s Christology is
almost rudimentary. No Christian priest has ever said less about Christ than
this metropolitan from Cetinje.” 527

This bloodthirsty, nationalist and only superficially Christian tradition was
continued by such figures as the poet Vuk Karadžić, who called the Serbs “the
greatest people on the planet” and boosted the nation’s self-esteem “by
describing a culture 5,000 years old and claiming that Jesus Christ and His
apostles had been Serbs.” 528 This tradition was to have profound effects on the
future of Serbia. But it must be remembered that the truly Christian tradition
of St. Savva also continued to exist in Serbia…

In the last analysis, the fruits of the nationalist revolutions in both Greece
and Serbia were depressingly similar. As Mazower writes: “The two new
states [of Serbia and Greece] were impoverished, rural countries. Serbia was,
in Lamartine’s words, ‘an ocean of forests’, with more pigs than humans.
Serbian intellectual life in the Habsburg lands was far more advanced than in
Belgrade. Perhaps 800,000 Greeks inhabited the new Greek Kingdom, while
more than 2 million still remained subjects of the Porte. No urban settlement
in Greece came close to matching the sophistication and wealth of Ottoman
cities such as Smyrna, Salonika and the capital itself. There were, to be sure,
impressive signs of revitalization for those who wished to look: the rapidly
expanding new towns built on modern grid patterns which replaced the old
Ottoman settlements in Athens, Patras, Tripolis and elsewhere, for example,
or the neo-classical mansions and public buildings commissioned by newly
independent government. ‘some barracks, a hospital, a prison built on the
model of our own,’ wrote Blanqui from Belgrade in 1841, ‘announce the
presence of an emergent civilisation.’ In fact, similar trends of town planning
and European architecture were transforming Ottoman cities as well.

526 Quotations in Anzulovic, Heavenly Serbia, London and New York: New York University
527 Velimirović, Religija Njegoševa (The Religion of Njegoš), p. 166, quoted in Anzulovic, op.
cit., p. 55.
528 Zamoyski, Holy Madness, p. 318.
The inhabitants of the new states were as viciously divided among themselves in peace as they had been in war. In Serbia adherents of the Karageorge and Obrenovic factions tussled for power, locals vied with the so-called ‘Germans’ (Serb immigrants from the Habsburg lands), Turcophiles fought Russophiles. In Greece there were similar struggles between regional factions, between supporters of the various Powers, who each sponsored parties of their own, and between ‘autochthones’ and ‘heterochthones’. These divisions embittered politics from the start…”  

529 Mazower, op. cit., p. 95.
Just before the Decembrist rebellion, a young officer-Decembrist came up to St. Seraphim of Sarov, “and, taking off his cap, asked for his blessing. The always meek and quiet elder Seraphim was suddenly filled with such anger as nobody had ever seen in him. He began to shout loudly at the officer and cursed him. The unfortunate one, struck as if by thunder, went away, swaying from the shock and forgetting to put on his cap... An involuntary witness of the event had been a young monk who had brought Elder Seraphim some food. ‘Did you see?’ the elder asked him. ‘I saw,’ replied the monk. The elder pointed at the source, which he had so carefully tended: ‘Look!’ The monk glanced and saw that the source of grace-filled water, which had healed many sick people, and which was always clean and transparent, this time had become completely disturbed. ‘That’s how these gentlemen want to disturb Russia,’ said St. Seraphim. Soon Russia learned of the plot and the attempt at rebellion of the ‘Decembrists’ (the officer was one of them)...”

In 1844 Nicholas Alexandrovich Motovilov, a nobleman of Simbirsk province and a close friend of the saint, made notes of his conversations with him: “… As a demonstration of true zeal for God Batyushka Seraphim cited the holy Prophet Elijah and Gideon, and for hours at a time he talked in an inspired manner about them. Every judgement that he made about them was concluded by its application to life, precisely our own life, and with an indication of how we... can draw soul-saving instructions from their lives. He often spoke to me about the holy King, Prophet and Ancestor of God David, at which point he went into an extraordinary spiritual rapture. How one had to see him during those unearthly minutes! His face, inspired by the grace of the Holy Spirit, shone like the sun, and I - I speak the truth - on looking at him felt in my eyes as if I was looking at the sun. I involuntarily recalled the face of Moses when he had just come down from Sinai. My soul, pacified, entered such a quiet, and was filled with such great joy, that my heart was ready to embrace within itself not only the whole human race, but also the whole creation of God, pouring out in love towards everything that is of God...

“‘So, your Godbelovedness, so,’ Batyushka used to say, leaping from joy (those who still remember this holy elder will relate how he would sometimes be seen leaping from joy), “‘I have chosen David my servant, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will’”...

“In explaining how good it was to serve the Tsar and how much his life should be held dear, he gave as an example Abishai, David’s war-commander.

530 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 295. Platonov (op. cit., p. 265) believes that the Decembrist was Pestel.
Once, said Batyushka Seraphim, to satisfy the thirst of David, he stole into a spring in view of the enemy camp and got water, and, in spite of a cloud of arrows released at him from the enemy camp, returned to him completely unharmed, bringing the water in his helmet. He had been saved from the cloud of arrows only because of his zeal towards the King. But when David gave an order, Abishai replied: “Only command, O King, and everything will be done in accordance with your will.” But when the King expressed the desire to take part himself in some bloody deed to encourage his warriors, Abishai besought him to preserve his health and, stopping him from participating in the battle, said: “There are many of us, your Majesty, but you are one among us. Even if all of us were killed, as long as you were alive, Israel would be whole and unconquered. But if you are gone, then what will become of Israel?” …

“Batyushka Fr. Seraphim loved to explain himself at length, praising the zeal and ardour of faithful subjects to the Tsar, and desiring to explain more clearly how these two Christian virtues are pleasing to God, he said:

“‘After Orthodoxy, these are our first Russian duty and the chief foundation of true Christian piety.’

“Often from David he changed the subject to our great Emperor [Nicholas I] and for hours at a time talked to me about him and about the Russian kingdom, bewailing those who plotted evil against his August Person. Clearly revealing to me what they wanted to do, he led me into a state of horror; while speaking about the punishment prepared for them from the Lord, and in confirmation of his words, he added:

“‘This will happen without fail: the Lord, seeing the impenitent spite of their hearts, will permit their undertakings to come to pass for a short period, but their illness will turn upon their heads, and the unrighteousness of their destructive plots will descend upon them. The Russian land will be reddened with streams of blood, and many noblemen will be killed for his great Majesty and the integrity of his Autocracy: but the Lord will not be wrath to the end, and will not allow the Russian land to be destroyed to the end, because in it alone will Orthodoxy and the remnants of Christian piety be especially preserved.

“Once,” as Motovilov continued in his notes, “I was in great sorrow, thinking what would happen in the future with our Orthodox Church if the evil contemporary to us would be multiplied more and more. And being convinced that our Church was in an extremely pitiful state both from the great amount of carnal debauchery and... from the spiritual impiety of godless opinions sown everywhere by the most recent false teachers, I very much wanted to know what Batyushka Seraphim would tell me about this.
Discussing the holy Prophet Elijah in detail, he said in reply to my question, among other things, the following:

“Elijah the Thesbite complained to the Lord about Israel as if it had wholly bowed the knee to Baal, and said in prayer that only he, Elijah, had remained faithful to Lord, but now they were seeking his soul, too, to take it… So what, batyushka, did the Lord reply to this? “I have left seven thousand men in Israel who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” So if in the kingdom of Israel, which had fallen away from the kingdom of Judah that was faithful to God, and had come to a state of complete corruption, there still remained seven thousand men faithful to the Lord, then what shall we say about Russia? I think that at that time there were no more than three million in the kingdom of Israel at that time. And how many do we have in Russia now, batyushka?’

“I replied: ‘About sixty million.’

“And he continued: ‘Twenty times more. Judge for yourself how many more of those faithful to God that brings!… So, batyushka, those whom He foreknew, He also predestined; and those whom He predestined, He also called; and those whom He called, He guards, and those He also glorifies… So what is there for us to be despondent about!… God is with us! He who hopes in the Lord is as Mount Sion, and the Lord is round about His people… The Lord will keep you, the Lord will protect you on your right hand, the Lord will preserve your coming in and your going out now and to the ages; by day the sun will not burn you, nor the moon by night.’

“And when I asked him what this meant, and to what end he was talking to me about it:

“‘To the end,’ replied Batyushka Fr. Seraphim, ‘that you should know that in this way the Lord guards His people as the apple of His eye, that is, the Orthodox Christians, who love Him and with all their heart, and all their mind, in word and deed, day and night serve Him. And such are those who completely observe all the commandments, dogmas and traditions of our Eastern Universal Church, and confess the piety handed down by it with their lips, and really, in all the circumstances of life, act according to the holy commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ.’

“In confirmation of the fact that there were still many in the Russian land who remained faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ, who lived in Orthodoxy and piety, batyushka Fr. Seraphim once said to one acquaintance of mine… that once, when he was in the Spirit, he saw the whole land of Russia, and it was
St. Seraphim prophesied: "More than half a century will pass. Then evildoers will raise their heads high. This will happen without fail: the Lord, seeing the impenitent evil of their hearts, will allow their enterprises for a short time. But their sickness will rebound upon their own heads, and the unrighteousness of their destructive plots will fall upon them. The Russian land will become red with rivers of blood... Before the birth of the Antichrist there will be a great, protracted war and a terrible revolution in Russia passing all bounds of human imagination, for the bloodletting will be most terrible: the rebellions of Ryazan, Pugachev and the French revolution will be nothing in comparison with what will take place in Russia. Many people who are faithful to the fatherland will perish, church property and the monasteries will be robbed; the Lord's churches will be desecrated; good rich people will be robbed and killed, rivers of Russian blood will flow..."\(^{532}\)

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532 St. Seraphim, quoted by Protopriest Victor Potapov, "God is betrayed by silence". See also \textit{Literaturnaya Ucheba}, January-February, 1991, pp. 131-134.
DECEMBRIST REBELLION

The wave of revolutionary violence spreading outward from France and only partially checked by the defeat of Napoleon by the Holy Alliance of monarchist states, reached Russia after the supposed death of Tsar Alexander I on November 19, 1825.\(^{533}\) During the interregnum, on December 14, a group of army officers attempted to seize power in St. Petersburg. Already in 1823 Alexander I had been given a list of the future “Decembrists”. But he refused to act against them. Archpriest Lev Lebedev explains why: “‘It is not for me to punish them,’ said his Majesty, and cast the paper into the fire. ‘I myself shared their views in my youth,’ he added. That means that now, in 1823, Alexander I evaluated these diversions of his youth as sin, which also had to receive their retribution. Neither he nor [Grand Duke] Constantine [his brother] had the spiritual, moral right to punish the plotters, insofar as both of them had been guilty of the plot against their own father! That was the essence of the matter! Only he had the right to punish who had in no way been involved in the parricide and the revolutionary delusions – that is, the younger brother Nicholas. It was to him that the reins of the government of Russia were handed.”\(^{534}\)

The Decembrist conspirators were divided into a Northern Society based in St. Petersburg and a Southern society based in Tulchin, headquarters of the Second Army in the Ukraine.

“In the ideology of the Northern Society especially,” writes Andrzej Walicki, “there were certain elements reminiscent of the views of the aristocratic opposition of the reign of Catherine II. Many of the members in this branch of the Decembrist movement were descendants of once powerful and now impoverished boyar families... Nikita Muraviev claimed that the movement was rooted in the traditions of Novgorod and Pskov, of the twelfth-century Boyar Duma, of the constitutional demands presented to Anne by the Moscow nobility in 1730, and of the eighteenth-century aristocratic opposition. The poet Kondraty Ryleev painted an idealized portrait of Prince Andrei Kurbsky (the leader of the boyar revolt against Ivan the ‘Terrible’) and even devoted one of his ‘elegies’ to him...In his evidence before the Investigating Commission after the suppression of the revolt, Petr Kakhovsky stated that the movement was primarily a response to the high-handedness of the bureaucracy, the lack of respect for ancient gentry freedom, and the favoritism shown to foreigners. Another Northern Decembrist, the writer and literary critic Aleksandr Bestuzhev... wrote that his aim was...


\(^{534}\) Lebedev, Velikorossia, St. Petersburg, 1997, p. 291.
monarchy tempered by aristocracy. These and similar facts explain the 1830’s, that the Decembrist revolt had been prompted by a struggle between autocracy and boyars...

“The Decembrists used the term ‘republic’ loosely, without appearing to be fully aware that there were essential differences between, for instance, the Roman republic, the Polish gentry republic, the old Russian city states, and modern bourgeois republics... Muraviev modelled his plan for a political system on the United States... The theorists of the Northern Society made no distinction between criticism of absolutism from the standpoint of the gentry and similar criticism from a bourgeois point of view. Hence they saw no difficulty in reconciling liberal notions taken largely from the works of Bentham, Benjamin Constant and Adam Smith with an idealization of former feudal liberties and a belief in the role of the aristocracy as a ‘curb on despotism’. The theoretical premise here was the ‘juridical world view’ of the Enlightenment, according to which legal and political forms determined the revolution of society.”535

The Northern Decembrists were in favour of the emancipation of the serfs. However, they insisted that the land should remain with the gentry, thereby ensuring the continued dependence of the serfs on the gentry. “The conviction that the peasants ought to be overjoyed merely at the abolition of serfdom was shared by many Decembrists. Yakushkin, for instance, could not conceal his exasperation at his peasants’ demand for land when he offered to free them. When they were told that the land would remain the property of the landlord, their answer was: ‘Then things had better stay as they were. We belong to the master, but the land belongs to us.’”536

The Northern Decembrists worked out a new interpretation of Russian history conceived “as an antithesis to Karamzin’s theory of the beneficial role of autocracy”. “An innate Russian characteristic, the Decembrists maintained – one that later developments had blunted but not destroyed – was a deep-rooted love of liberty. Autocracy had been unknown in Kievan Russia: the powers of the princes had been strictly circumscribed there and decisions on important affairs of state were taken by the popular assemblies. The Decembrists were especially ardent admirers of the republican city-states of Novgorod and Pskov. This enthusiasm was of practical significance, since they were convinced that the ‘spirit of liberty’ that had once imbued their forebears was still alive; let us but strike the bell, and the people of Novgorod, who have remained unchanged throughout the centuries, will assemble by the bell tower, Ryleev declared. Kakhovsky described the peasant communes with their self-governing mir as ‘tiny republics’, a living survival of Russian liberty. In keeping with this conception, the Decembrists thought of

535 Walicki, op. cit., pp. 58, 59, 60.
536 Walicki, op. cit., p. 61.
This reinterpretation of Russian history was false. Russia was imbued from the beginning with the spirit of Orthodox autocracy and patriarchy: the “republics” of Pskov and Novgorod were exceptions to the historical rule. And if Kievan autocracy was less powerful than the Muscovite or Petersburg autocracies, this was not necessarily to its advantage. Russia succumbed to the Mongols because the dividedness of her princes precluded a united defence. And there can be little doubt that she would not have survived into the nineteenth century as an independent Orthodox nation if she had not been an autocracy.

The leader of the Southern Society, Colonel Pavel Pestel, had more radical ideas in his draft for a constitution, *Russian Justice*, which was based on two assumptions: “that every man has a natural right to exist and thus to a piece of land large enough to allow him to make a basic living; and that only those who create surplus wealth have a right to enjoy it. After the overthrow of tsarism, therefore, Pestel proposed to divide land into two equal sectors: the first would be public property (or, more accurately, the property of the communes); the second would be in private hands. The first would be used to ensure everyone a minimum living, whereas the second would be used to create surplus wealth. Every citizen was entitled to ask his commune for an allotment large enough to support a family; if the commune had more land available, he would even be able to demand several such allotments. The other sector would remain in private hands. Pestel felt that his program ensured every individual a form of social welfare in the shape of a communal land allotment but also left scope for unlimited initiative and the opportunity of making a fortune in the private sector.

“Pestel believed that his program had every chance of success since land ownership in Russia had traditionally been both communal and private. Here he obviously had in mind the Russian village commune; it should be emphasized, however, that Pestel’s commune differed essentially from the feudal *obshchina* in that it did not restrict its members’ movement or personal freedom and did not impose collective responsibility for individual members’ tax liabilities.”

579 people arrested and brought to trial. 40 were given the death sentence and the rest – hard labour. In the end only five were executed. The soldiers were flogged. In August, 1826 Tsar Nicholas confirmed the ban on Masonry.

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537 Walicki, op. cit., p. 67.
539 One of those executed was Sergius Ivanovich Muraviev-Apostol, a leader of the southern society. In his *Catechesis* we find a strong Christian element, but a tirade against the tsars for
And so for the first time in Russian history,” writes Lebedev, “a rebellion of the nobility had as its aim not the removal of one sovereign by another, but the annihilation of tsarist power altogether… It became clear that [the Decembrists’] links in ‘society’ were so significant and deep, and the sympathy for them so broad, that one could speak of a betrayal of the Throne and Church – or, at any rate, of the unreliability – of the noble class as a whole.”

V.F. Ivanov writes: “As an eyewitness put it, the rebellion in Petersburg shocked the general mass of the population of Russia profoundly. In his words, ‘the attempt to limit the Tsar’s power and change the form of government seemed to us not only sacrilege, but an historical anomaly; while the people, seeing that the plotters belonged exclusively to the upper class, considered the nobility to be traitors, and this added one more sharp feature to that secret hatred which it nourished towards the landowners. Only the progressives and the intelligentsia of the capital sympathised with the unfortunate madmen’ (Schilder).

“The best people turned away from the affair in disgust and branded the work of the Mason-Decembrists that of Cain. In the words of Karamzin: ‘Look at the stupid story of our mad liberals! Pray God that not so many real rogues are found among them. The soldiers were only victims of a deception. Sometimes a fine day begins with a storm: may it be thus in the new reign… God saved us from a great disaster on December 14…’” 541 And in 1826 Karamzin wrote: “Liberals! What do you want? The happiness of men? But is there happiness where there is death, illness, vices, passions?… For a moral being there is no good without freedom: but this freedom is given not by his Majesty, not by Parliament, but by each of us to ourselves, with the help of God. We must conquer freedom in our hearts by peace of conscience and trust in Providence!”

In the same year Metropolitan Philaret said: “It is becoming clearer and clearer from what horrors and iniquities God delivered us, when he strengthened His Majesty on December 14. Pray that this evil will be completely annihilated by righteousness and wisdom. But there are people having “seized the people’s freedom” and a confession that he wanted to kill the tsar (http://decemb.hobby.ru/index.shtml?archive/pokaz5).

540 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 318.
541 V.F. Ivanov, Russkaia Intelligentsia i Masonstvo ot Petra I do nashikh dnei (The Russian Intelligentsia and Masonry from Peter I to our days), Harbin, 1934, Moscow, 1997, pp. 307-308.
The Decembrist rebellion was important not only for what it represented in itself but also for the halo of martyrdom which its exiles acquired. They were romantic dreamers rather than hardened revolutionaries – one of their leaders, the poet Ryleev, mounted the scaffold with a volume of Byron in his hands, and another, Count Sergius Volkonsky, remained a monarchist to the end of his life, breaking down in tears on hearing of the death of Nicholas I. But of course they were not monarchists: as Alexis Khomyakov said, they “preferred the tyranny of an armed minority to one-man rule”. And their naivety did not diminish the evil effect of their words and deeds on succeeding generations. From now on, Russian liberals could appeal to the example of the “heroic” Decembrists in their struggle against the Orthodox autocracy…

543 Yakovlev, op. cit., p. 130.
545 Oliver Figes, Natasha’s Dance, London: Penguin, 2002, p. 143. He also petitioned to be serve as a private in the Crimean war, which he saw as a return to the spirit of 1812. Figes sees Volkonsky as the link between the Decembrists and the Populists of a later generation. He wrote to his son in 1857: “I gave my blessing when you went into the service of the Fatherland and the Tsar. But I always taught you to conduct yourself without lordly airs when dealing with your comrades from a different class (op. cit., pp. 143-143). For more on the Decembrists and their wives (from a pro-Decembrist perspective), see Christine Sutherland, The Princess of Siberia, London: Quartet Books, 2001.
Tsar Nicholas I

The destroyer of the Decembrist rebellion, Tsar Nicholas I, had never been swayed by liberal ideas. Having tasted something of the flavour of democratic life in France during the reign of his father, he said: “If, to our misfortune, this evil genius transferred all these clubs and meetings, which create more noise than substance, to us, then I would beseech God to repeat the miracle of the confusion of the tongues or, even better, deprive those who use their tongues in this way of the gift of speech.” A man of strict life and strict opinions, who was venerated by Saints Seraphim of Sarov and Theophilus of the Kiev Caves, his rule was made still stricter by the fact that he came to the throne in the midst of the Decembrist rebellion. Many have portrayed this strictness as unreasonable and despotic. However, Tsar Nicholas wanted to abolish serfdom, and took important preparatory measures towards that great act carried out by his son. Moreover, he had the ability to convert, and not simply crush, his opponents. Thus it was after a long, sincere conversation with Pushkin that he was able to say: “Gentlemen, I present to you a new Pushkin!” “And it was truly thus,” writes Lebedev. “Not out of fear before the authorities, not hypocritically, but sincerely and truly, Pushkin, the friend of the ‘Decembrists’, the worldly skiver, in life as in poetry, after 1826 renounced his free-thinking and Masonry and created his best and greatest works!”

“Having rejected a rotten support, the nobility,” writes Lebedev, Tsar Nicholas “made his supports the Orthodox Church, the system of state institutions (in which the class of bureaucrats, of officials, acquired great significance) and the Russian people which he loved! Having grasped this main direction of the Tsar’s politics, Count S. Uvarov, the minister of enlightenment expressed it [on March 21, 1833] in the remarkable formula: Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationhood…”

“This schema,” writes Sergius Firsov, “can be called a political reincarnation of the Byzantine theory of ‘the symphony of powers’ in the changed conditions of State realities in Russia.” It “was often misunderstood,” writes Fr. Alexis Nikolin, “as follows: the Russian people in the sphere of faith lives by Orthodoxy; in the sphere of statehood it is maintained by Autocracy, and in the sphere of everyday life is strong through its Nationhood.” But the three elements of the formula were closely linked, and this link had to be explained.

547 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 331.
548 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 319.
549 Firsov, Russkaita Tserkov’ nakanune peremen (konets, 1890-x – 1918 gg.) (The Russian Church on the eve of the changes (the end of the 1890s to 1918), Moscow, 2002, p. 51.
550 Nikolin, Tserkov’ i Gosudarstvo (Church and State), Moscow, 1997, p. 114.
Moreover, the priorities had to be understood: first Orthodoxy (as opposed to Catholicism and Protestantism), then Autocracy (as opposed to Absolutism and Democracy), and then Nationhood (as opposed to Internationalism and Nationalism). The supreme value was Orthodoxy, whose first line of defence was the Autocracy, and second - national feeling. Any attempt to invert this order – as, for example, to make Orthodoxy merely a support for Autocracy, or both as supports of Nationhood, would be equivalent to idolatry and lead to the downfall of Russia.

Some, such as D.S. Khomiakov, thought that an inversion of this order, placing Autocracy as the supreme value, did indeed take place. However,

551 “Orthodoxy as the everyday faith of the Russian people can be respected also by others, even by non-Christsians. This is, so to speak, the inner pledge of the life of the Russian people, and it is completely possible to respect it and even make up to it while remaining in the sphere of personal conscience a complete and irreconcilable opponent of ‘ecclesiastical-dogmatic Orthodoxy’. It is hardly likely that the government of the 30s of the 19th century reasoned like that; but it seems undoubted that unconsciously it understood the matter in this way. It truly represented Orthodoxy as an ecclesiastical-everyday institution founded a long time ago for the enlightenment of the people; and as such the people got used to it completely in the sense of a cult and especially as a ‘teaching on unquestioning obedience to the civil, God-given authorities’. In this form, truly, Orthodoxy closely touches the sphere of the State and fits in well into the general picture for the programme of state education. With Orthodoxy of such a kind, strictly speaking, anyone can get on, of whatever faith he may be – since he only recognises the main part of the programme, its root – Autocracy (absolutism, according to the official understanding, also). This part was obligatory for absolutely everybody; but the first and third were meant only to serve as a certain ethnographic colouring for the middle member [of the programme’s triad]: everyone was obliged to recognise that its essence was Autocracy. Of what kind? Russian. But the concept of what is Russian falls into two parts: the Orthodoxy-Russian and the ethnographic-Russian. Thus for a purely Russian youth the programme had its complete significance, that is, the first and last concepts were obligatory only as defining the sole completely essential concept in it, ‘Autocracy’ (absolutism). Of course, however diluted the concept of Orthodoxy may be so as to fit into the government’s programme of civil education, it was, to a large degree, inseparable from the Church’s teaching and dogma. But in the present case we have to firmly establish the position that, without in any way rejecting the absolute significance of Orthodoxy as the expression of the faith and the ethics that flows from that, we are dealing with it here in a somewhat different sense, as it is placed at the foundation of civil education, that is, in the sense of its application to civil and cultural life, which are expressed firstly by the term ‘Autocracy’ and secondly by the term ‘Nationhood’: and this is because (to repeat) Orthodoxy in the absolute sense can stand only ‘for itself’ and excludes the possibility of a union with any state task whatever, and even with any national task. Orthodoxy is universal, it is far higher than states and peoples; it denies neither statehood nor nationalities, but it is united with nothing...

“None of these questions were clarified officially; and the Orthodoxy of Nicholas Pavlovich and Count Uvarov remained the same diffuse concept as the liberté of the French revolution. It in fact remained at the level only of a negative concept, as did the concept ‘Nationhood’. Only ‘Autocracy’ received a positive meaning, because, firstly, this is in essence a more concrete concept than the other two; and then mainly because it was and is a term clearly understood by those who established the formula. Autocracy for them is, both theoretically and practically, absolutism. Nobody was mistaken in this meaning and there were no misunderstandings concerning it: the more so in that it indeed revealed itself graphically. But Orthodoxy was understood only as not Roman Catholicism – a very
Priest Lev Lebedev, who writes: “Beginning already with Paul I, the rapprochement of imperial power with the Church was raising to a qualitatively higher level. The All-Russian Autocrat from now on did not oppose himself to the Church and did not even consider himself ‘self-sufficient’ or ‘independent’ of her. On the contrary, he saw himself as a faithful son of the Orthodox Church, completely sharing the faith of his people and bound in all his politics to be guided by the commandments of God, proceeding precisely from the Orthodox world-view (and not from the demands of a certain non-existent ‘religion of nature’, as under Catherine II). This was a good, grace-filled radical change. It made itself immediately felt also in the relations of the two powers – the tsar’s and the Church’s. From now on the over-procurators of the Synod were people who enjoyed the respect and trust of the Russian hierarchs and considered themselves faithful children of the Church. Such were Admiral Shishkov and Count Protasov. There was not always unanimity between them and the members of the Synod. Metropolitan Philaret (Drozdov), for example, more than once ‘warred’ with Protasov. But these were quarrels about separate matters, where both sides were governed by the single desire to benefit Holy Orthodoxy (even if they understood this differently).”

This beneficial change in Church-State relations was reflected in the voluntary reunion of the uniates in the western territories with the Orthodox Church. Favourable conditions for this change had been created by the fall of Poland in 1815, the expulsion of the Jesuits from Russia in 1820 and the suppression of the Polish rebellion in 1830-1831. Then, in 1835, a secret committee on the uniate question was formed in St. Petersburg consisting of the uniate bishop Joseph Semashko, the real soul of the movement, Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, the over-procurator of the Holy Synod and the minister of the interior. By 1839 1,600,000 had converted to Orthodoxy.

However, in spite of these positive changes, there was no formal change in the Tsar’s relationship to the Church, which continued to fall short of true “symphony”. In fact, formally speaking, the power of the Tsar over the Church was increased. Thus in 1832 a new collection of the Fundamental Laws was published that included the words: “The Emperor as the Christian sovereign is the supreme defender and preserver of the dogmas of the dominant faith and the supervisor of right faith and every good order convenient faith from the state’s point of view; and not Protestantism, which unleashed the undesirable liberty, not only in the sphere of the faith alone (if you can criticise the faith, then all the more the rest, also); and not as sectarianism – also a teaching displeasing to the police. In the same way ‘Nationhood’ did not find a concrete expression of itself; and in the absence of this it settled on language: the spread of the Russian language was respected as the spread also of the Russian spirit – its nationality…” (Pravooslavie, Samoderzhavie, Narodnos’ (Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationhood), Minsk: Belaruskaia Gramata, 1997, pp. 13-15)

552 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 321.
administration of the Church, intoned articles 42 and 43, and the autocratic power acts by means of the Holy Governing Synod, which was founded by it.” In these formulae, writes Fr. Georges Florovsky, “there is clearly and faithfully conveyed the State’s consciousness of itself and self-definition: in them there is taken to its logical conclusion the thought of Peter, who considered himself to be ‘the supreme judge’ of the Spiritual College, and who openly derived its privileges from his own autocratic power – ‘when it was established by the Monarch and under his rule’.”

Such an overbearing attitude of the State towards the Church was bound to lead to friction. And yet when there were clashes between the Tsar and the hierarchs on matters of conscience, the Tsar showed himself ready to give way, which gives strength to Lebedev’s claim that a qualitatively higher level of Church-State relations had been attained. Thus once Metropolitan Philaret refused to bless a triumphal monument because it had some pagan hieroglyphs and representations of pagan gods. The Emperor, showing a good grasp of church history, said: “I understand, but tell him [Philaret] that I am not Peter the Great and he is not St. Metrophanes.” Still, he allowed Philaret not to take part in the ceremony. According to another account, on hearing of Philaret’s disinclination to serve, the Emperor said: “Prepare the horses; I’m leaving today”, so that the ceremony took place without either Tsar or metropolitan. Afterwards, on returning to the Trinity Lavra, Philaret said to his spiritual father, Archimandrite Anthony: “Did I act well? I annoyed the Tsar. I don’t have the merits of the hierarch Metrophanes.” “Don’t take them upon yourself,” replied Fr. Anthony, “but remember that you are a Christian bishop, a pastor of the Church of Christ, to whom only one thing is terrible: to depart from the will of Jesus Christ.” Then the hierarch revealed that the previous night St. Sergius had entered his locked room, come up to his bed, and said: “Don’t be disturbed, it will all pass…”

Again, in 1835 the Emperor wanted his son and heir, Tsarevich Alexander, to become a member of the Holy Synod. But Metropolitan Philaret, together with the other hierarchs, was against the idea, and on meeting the tsarevich, asked him when he had received clerical ordination.

554 Nicholas entrusted this work to the Mason Speransky, because his expertise in the subject was unrivalled. However, above him he placed his former teacher Balugiansky, saying: “See that he (Speransky) does not get up to the same pranks as in 1810. You will answer for that to me” (in Ivanov, op. cit., p. 317).
556 Metropolitan Ioann (Snychev), Zhizn’ i deiatel’nost’ mitropolita Philareta (The Life and Activity of Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow), Tula, 1994, p. 238.
Shamed, the tsarevich henceforth refrained from attending sessions of the

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Under the shock of the Decembrist rebellion, and of the resumption of the revolution’s march in Europe, it was necessary for Russia clearly to formulate the foundations of her national life, and her religio-moral-political differences from Europe. This process now began, in informal discussion circles in St. Petersburg and in elegant aristocratic salons in Moscow.

“It is completely natural,” writes L.A. Tikhomorov, “that the clarification of our political principle lagged behind the clarification of the principles of nationality and the faith. As long as our moral-religious ideal was wrapped in a kind of fog or was even, in our opinion, unsound, the monarchy could be represented to consciousness only as absolutism, that is, as a completely unlimited power. Monarchy… is limited by the content of its ideal: if the ideal is unclear, then the power is already in fact unlimited and becomes absolutist.

“And so the development of the monarchical principle, its self-consciousness, in this period could not fail to decline. It was preserved amongst us in accordance with the former voice of instinct, but it was not explained by reason. Therefore of all the aspects of scientific creativity, the state-legal remained throughout the new period the least developed among us, as well as being the most imitative, the most imbued by a simple copying of European ideas, and for that reason – in conformity with the state thought of Europe – assumed a constitutional character.

“The legitimists in Europe in their time were the channels of the monarchical idea. Our juridical thought was the channel of the anti-monarchical, democratic idea.

“When the question of limiting the autocracy or even of external manifestations of the power of the Monarch in international relations was raised, voices were found among us that pointed to some close bond between the Tsar and Russia, a bond that was a limitation for the Monarch. By this absolutism was denied, as was the teaching that the sovereign can order everything ‘as he likes’. The political thought of Russian State law was as it were raised to the level of consciousness.

“Thus at the moment when Emperor Alexander I, who had been brought up on republican ideas and considered the republic higher than the monarchy, was thinking about limiting his own autocratic power, he heard an eloquent protest from Karamzin.

“‘If Alexander,’ wrote Karamzin, ‘inspired by a magnanimous hatred for the abuses of autocracy, had taken a pen to prescribe for himself new laws besides those of God and conscience, then the true Russian citizen would have been so bold as to stop his hand and say: Your Majesty, you are
your power. Taught by long-term disasters, you pray to your forebear before the holy altar and demand that he rule her supremely and undividedly. This covenant is the foundation of your power: we have no other. You can do everything, but you cannot lawfully limit your power.’

“In his note, ‘The Opinion of a Russian Citizen’, given to the sovereign in 1819 with reference to plans for the restoration of Poland, Karamzin tried to prove again that the sovereign had no right to do this:

‘You think,’ writes Karamzin, ‘to restore the ancient kingdom of Poland, but is this restoration in accordance with the law of the State good of Russia? Is it in accordance with Your sacred duties, with Your love for Russia and justice itself?… Do the sovereigns not swear to preserve the integrity of their domains? These lands (that is, Belorussia, Lithuania, Volhynia and Podolia) were already Russia when Metropolitan Plato entrusted to you the crown of Monomakh, Peter and Catherine… Will they say that they unlawfully divided Poland? But You would be acting still more unlawfully if You thought to wipe out its injustice by dividing Russia herself. We took Poland by the sword: that is our right, to which all States are obliged for their existence, for all have been constituted from conquests. Catherine is responsible before God, and before history, for her act, but it is already done, and for You it is already holy: for You Poland is a lawful Russian dominion. There are no old deeds of purchase in politics: otherwise we would be bound to re-establish the Kazan and Astrakhan kingdoms, the Novgorod republic, the great Princedom of Ryazan, etc. Moreover, even according to the old deeds of purchase Belorussia, Volhynia and Podolia, together with Galicia, were once the indigenous heritage of Russia…

‘Until now,’ he continues, ‘our rule was: not a step towards an enemy, not a step towards a friend. Napoleon was able to conquer Russia, but You, although You are an Autocrat, were not able to cede to him a single Russian hut for free. That is our character and our State character… Your Majesty, I would vouch my life to You that an inevitable consequence of the wholesale restoration of Poland would be the loss, not only of our beautiful provinces, but also of our love for the Tsar; we would cool in soul in our feeling for the Fatherland, seeing it become the plaything of self-willed caprice…’

“In these interesting reasonings we catch the voice of feeling which Karamzin had in his heart and wanted to stir up in the heart of the Sovereign. But from the point of view of principle this is all very unclear and even questionable: Karamzin even refers to some pact between the tsar and the people when the dynasty was elected, although, of course, if that was the whole issue then the pact agreed upon by the parties could always be reviewed and changed. In his reasonings on Poland Karamzin bases everything on the obligation to preserve tradition… This, of course, is easily
Nevertheless a certain truth can be felt here, the rejection of absolute power and an indication of the bond between the Tsar and the nation, a bond that serves as the source of the Tsar’s obligations.

“Instinctual feelings surfaced in Russia sufficiently constantly, but there was very little consciousness, very little theory of Tsarist power and the mutual relations of Tsar and people.

“This consciousness became the more necessary in that bureaucratic practice inexorably brought to us the idea of absolutism, while the European influence, affirming that Tsarist power was nothing other than absolutism, rejected it. In the 19th century Russian thought was sharply divided into ‘westerners’ and ‘Slavophiles’, and the whole of the westernising part conducted propaganda against autocracy…

“Throughout the 19th century the whole current of educated westernising thought, which created the so-called ‘intelligentsia’, conducted propaganda against autocracy – in Russia as far as censorship allowed it, and with complete openness in its press abroad. The national part of educated society could not help trying to defend its historical Russian institution of monarchy. The schism in the educated part of Russia between the ‘westerners’ (under various names) and the national part of the educated class grew still wider after 1861. Moreover, in the ‘westernizing’ tendency there developed a terrible rejection of everything that was typically Russian, while its ideas gained great strength in all the middle educated classes and encompassed the whole people. This struggle, which embraced every aspect of life, was concentrated especially strongly on the autocracy, as a principle and as an institution.

“In this long historical period the monarchical idea was nevertheless clarified to a certain degree. The words of our great artists – Pushkin, Gogol, A. Majkov and others – sound like excellent expressions of the monarchical consciousness. But all these were expressions of feeling, manifestations of

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560 Nikolai Gogol indeed expressed a monarchical consciousness, but in rejecting the westerners’ arguments he went too far in an absolutist direction. Thus he wrote in 1847: “A State without an absolute monarch is an orchestra without its conductor... The more deeply one looks into the workings of our administration, the more one admires the wisdom of its founders; the more one feels that God Himself, unseen by us, built it through the hands of the sovereigns. Everything is perfect, everything is sufficient unto itself. I cannot conceive what use could be found for even one more official” (Selected Passages from My Correspondence with My Friends; in Cohen & Major, History in Quotations, London: Cassell, 2004, p. 552).

However, Gogol’s conversion to True Orthodoxy late in life was sincere and deep. As St. Barsanuphius of Optina said in 1909: “Our great writer Gogol was spiritually reborn under the influence of talks with Elder Macarius, which took place in this very cell, and a great turning point resulted in him. As a man of sound nature, not fragmented, he was not capable of compromise. Having understood that he could not live as he had done previously, he, without looking back, turned to Christ and strove towards the Heavenly Jerusalem. From Rome and the holy places which he visited, he wrote letters to his friends, and these letters
in the Russian personality generally that quite often even in the most extreme deniers, as, for example, Bakunin.

“But in the sense of consciousness, the monarchical idea was clarified mainly by means of public debates, in quarrels with opponents, not by a strictly scientific method. Scientific works, which remained basically imitative, in general gave almost nothing to clarify autocracy and most often served only to mix it up hopelessly with absolutism.

“In general, when our statist scholars went on to explain autocracy, then in the best case they repeated the publicists’ judgements. If the monarchical idea of power was in any way clarified amongst us, then it was not in science, not in the study or auditorium of the professor and academic, but on the pages of newspapers and journals, in the verbal disputes of the representatives of the parties and tendencies. Russian political thought, insofar as it had any success in the national spirit, was indebted in everything not to statist science, which instilled European ideas and concept – but to the publicists.

“Among its representatives especially much was done by the Slavophiles in general and by I.S. Aksakov in particular, and particularly by M.N. Katkov who stood behind them....”

A little more should be said about the Slavophiles, that intellectual movement that opposed westernizing trends in Russian thought and supported the official slogan of Tsar Nicholas’ reign, Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality.

Although consciously anti-western, the Slavophiles were nevertheless influenced by aspects of the dominant intellectual fashion coming from the West – Hegelianism. In particular, they were interested in the Hegelian concept of universal history. But they modified this Hegelian concept, removed the deterministic element in it and brought it much closer to a Christian understanding of universal history.

Thus the great novelist Nicholas Gogol wrote: “Universal history, in the true meaning of the term, is not a collection of particular histories of all the peoples and states without a common link, plan or aim, a bunch of events without order, in the lifeless and dry form in which it is often presented. Its subject is great: it must embrace at once and in a complete picture the whole

comprised an entire book, for which his contemporaries condemned him. Gogol had not yet begun to live in Christ – hardly had he begun to wish for this life – and the world, which is at enmity with Christ, raised a persecution against him and passed a harsh sentence on him, considering him half crazy” (Victor Afanasiev, Elder Barsanuphius of Optina, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 2000, p. 326). (V.M.)

561 Tikhomirov, Monarkhicheskaiia Gosudarstvennost’ (Monarchical Statehood), St. Petersburg, 1992, pp. 307-310.
of humanity, how from its original, poor childhood it developed and was perfected in various forms, and, finally, reached the present age. To show the whole of this great process, which the free spirit of man sustained through bloody labours, struggling from its very cradle with ignorance, with nature and with gigantic obstacles - that is the aim of universal history! It must gather into one all the peoples of the world scattered by time, chance, mountains and seas, and unite them into one harmonious whole; it must compose out of them one majestic, complete poem. The event having no influence on the world has not right to enter here. All the events of the world must be so tightly linked amongst themselves and joined one to another like the rings of a chain. If one ring were ripped out, the chain would collapse. This link must not be understood in a literal sense: it is not that visible, material link by which events are often forcibly joined, or the system created in the head independently of facts, and to which the events of the world are later arbitrarily attached. This link must be concluded in one common thought, in one unbroken history of mankind, before which both states and events are but temporary forms and images! The must be presented in the same colossal size as it is in fact, penetrated by the same mysterious paths of Providence that are so unattainably indicated in it. Interest must necessarily be elicited to the highest degree, in such a way that the listener is tormented by the desire to know more, so that either he cannot close the book, or, if it is impossible to do that, he starts his reading again, so that it is evident how one event gives birth to another and how without the original event the last event would not follow. Only in that way must history be created...”

However, it will be noted that there is no hint of Hegelian determinism in this picture: it is “the free spirit of man” that propels universal history forward. The determinism of Hegel did not attract the Slavophile thinkers; and characteristic of almost all of them was their emphasis on the importance of the individual and individual freedom. Those who inherited the Hegelians’ determinism later took the more radical road of atheism and Marxism...

Another difference between the Hegelian and the Slavophile interest in history was the greater concentration, among the Russians, on Hegel’s concept of “the historical nation”, and on Herder’s of the unique essence of every nation, which stimulated Russian thinkers to take a more historical and dialectical approach to the study of their own land.

Thus they asked such questions as: “What was the relationship between the old, pre-Petrine Russia and the new, post-Petrine Russia?” “Could these antithetical Russias be reconciled in a new synthesis of the future?” “Is it necessary decisively to choose the one and reject the other?”

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Hegel’s failure “to find room for the Slavs”, as G. Vernadsky put it, that provoked and intrigued the Slavophile intellectuals. For Hegel wrote: “[The Slavs] did indeed found kingdoms and sustain vigorous conflicts with the various nations that came across their path. Sometimes, as an advance guard – an intermediate nationality – they took part in the struggle between Christian Europe and unchristian Asia. The Poles even liberated beleaguered Vienna from the Turks; and Slavs have to some extent been drawn within the sphere of Occidental Reason. Yet this entire body of peoples remains excluded from our consideration because hitherto it has not appeared as an independent element in the series of phases that reason has assumed in the world.”

But was Russia no more than “an intermediate nationality”?, asked the Slavophiles. Had History really passed the Slavs by? Were they just a footnote to “the sphere of Occidental Reason”? Or did they have something original to contribute? In the next stage of the historical dialectic perhaps? After all, if Hegel thought that the Romano-French period of history had been overtaken by the German, why should not the German in its turn be overtaken by the Slav?

It can be seen from the above that the main emphasis of Slavophile thought was on “Nationality”, rather than “Orthodoxy” or “Autocracy”. This is not to say that they were against Orthodoxy or Autocracy: on the contrary, they supported them as essential elements of Russian life. But their main concern was national and patriotic in the best sense: to emphasize what was unique, true and good about Russia in answer to the slanders of the westernizers. As Lev Tikhomirov writes, “the greatest merit of the Slavophiles consisted not so much in their working out of a political teaching [on Autocracy], as in establishing the social and psychological bases of public life.”

They were not opposed to the autocracy; but the emphasis of their thought, especially Khomiakov’s, was on the people rather than on the autocracy.

“The whole pathos of Slavophilism,” writes Bishop Dionysius (Alferov), “lay in ‘sobornost’, ‘zemstvo’, in ‘the popular character of the monarchy, and not in its service as ‘he who restrains [the coming of the Antichrist]’. Byzantium, in which there were neither Zemskie Sobory nor self-government of the land, elicited only irritation in them and was used by them to put in the shade the free ‘Slavic element’. The Russian Tsar for the Slavophiles was first of all ‘the people’s Tsar’, and not the Tsar of the Third Rome. According to the witness of Konstantin Leontiev, Tsar Nicholas Pavlovich himself noticed that under the Slavophiles’ Russian caftan there stuck out the trousers of the most vulgar European democracy and liberalism (K. Leontiev, ‘Slavophilism in theory and Slavophilism in life’).

Having said that, there is much that is useful in the Slavophiles’ discussion of “the people’s Tsar”. Let us consider the following words of the first and best-known of the Slavophiles, Alexei Khomiakov: “The people transferred to the Emperor all the power with which it itself was endowed in all its forms. The sovereign became the head of the people in Church matters as well as in matters of State administration. The people could not transfer to its Emperor rights that it did not itself have. It had from the beginning a voice in the election of its bishops, and this voice it could transfer to its Sovereign. It had the right, or more precisely the obligation to watch that the decisions of its pastors and their councils were carried out – this right it could entrust to its chosen one and his successors. It had the right to defend its faith against every hostile attack upon it, - this right it could also transfer to its Sovereign. But the Church people did not have any power in questions of dogmatic teaching.

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565 Tikhomirov, op. cit., p. 310.
566 Khomiakov, Suschnost’ zapadnogo khristianstva (The Essence of Western Christianity), Montreal, 1974. Florovsky writes that the Slavophiles “opposed their ‘socialism’ to the statism of West European thought, both in its absolutist-monarchist and in its constitutional-democratic varieties” (“The Eternal and the Passing in the Teaching of the Russian Slavophiles”, Vera i Kul’tura, St. Petersburg, 2002, p. 95).
Here we see the myth, perhaps deriving from western philosophers of the social contract, of an early pact between the Tsar and the people. But the myth is used by Khomiak to state an important truth: that there is a sphere of life - that of the Church - which was not transferred by the people to the Sovereign, and therefore is not subject to his power. Thus Khomiakov defends the Orthodox teaching of the Symphony of Powers between Church and State by introducing a third element, the People, which, he believes, should never be left out of sight - not because he is in any way a democrat, but simply because the Orthodox ideal is that of Church, State and People forming a single harmonious whole.

Khomiakov was also concerned to emphasize that it was not the Tsar who ruled the Russian Orthodox Church, as the Fundamental Laws 42 and 43 of the Russian Empire might have suggested. “It is true,” he says, ‘the expression “the head of the local church” has been used in the Laws of the Empire, but in a totally different sense than it is interpreted in other countries’ (Collected Works, II, 351). The Russian Emperor has no rights of priesthood, he has no claims to infallibility or ‘to any authority in matters of faith or even of church discipline’. He signs the decisions of the Holy Synod, but this right of proclaiming laws and putting them into execution is not the same as the right to formulate ecclesiastical laws. The Tsar has influence with regard to the appointment of bishops and members of the Synod, but it should be observed that such dependence upon secular power is frequently met with in many Catholic countries as well. In some of the Protestant states it is even greater (II, 36-38, 208).”

Although the relationship between Church and State in Russia was far from ideal, particularly in the over-powerful role of the over-procurator, its faults were exaggerated. Thus when the Englishman William Palmer criticized the dominance of the State over the Church in Russia, Khomiakov replied: “That the Church is not quite independent of the state, I allow; but let us consider candidly and impartially how far that dependence affects, and whether it does indeed affect, the character of the Church. The question is so important, that it has been debated during this very year [1852] by serious men in Russia, and has been brought, I hope, to a satisfactory conclusion. A society may be dependent in fact and free in principle, or vice-versa. The first case is a mere historical accident; the second is the destruction of freedom, and has no other issue but rebellion and anarchy. The first is the weakness of man; the second the depravity of law. The first is certainly the case in Russia, but the principles have by no means been damaged. Whether freedom of opinion in civil and political questions is, or

is no business of ours as members of the Church, know that I am almost reduced to complete silence; but the state never interferes directly in the censorship of works written about religious questions. In this respect, I will confess again that the censorship is, in my opinion, most oppressive; but that does not depend upon the state, and is simply the fault of the over-cautious and timid prudence of the higher clergy. I am very far from approving of it, and I know that very useful thoughts and books are lost in the world, or at least to the present generation.

“But this error, which my reason condemns, has nothing to do with ecclesiastical liberty; and though very good tracts and explanations of the Word of God are oftentimes suppressed on the false supposition of their perusal being dangerous to unenlightened minds, I think that those who suppress the Word of God itself should be the last to condemn the excessive prudence of our ecclesiastical censors. Such a condemnation coming from the Latins would be absurdity itself. But is the action of the Church quite free in Russia? Certainly not; but this depends wholly on the weakness of her higher representatives, and upon their desire to get the protection of the state, not for themselves, generally speaking, but for the Church. There is certainly a moral error in that want of reliance upon God Himself; but it is an accidental error of persons, and not of the Church, and has nothing to do with our religious convictions. It would be a different case, if there was the smallest instance of a dogmatic error, or something near to it, admitted or suffered without protestation out of weakness; but I defy anybody to find anything like that...”

Of all the Slavophiles, the one who addressed the question of the Autocracy most directly was Ivan Kireyevsky, although, paradoxically, of all the Slavophiles he was the one who had the most problems with the Tsarist censor. At one point he was required to give an assurance to the minister of popular enlightenment that in his thinking he did not “separate the Tsar from Russia”. Offended by the very suggestion, Kireyevsky proceeded to give one of the earliest, and, with Metropolitan Philaret’s writings on the subject, one of the best justifications of the Autocracy in post-Petrine Russian history.

He began from the fact that “the Russian man loves his Tsar. This reality cannot be doubted, because everyone can see and feel it. But love for the Tsar, like every love, can be true and false, good and bad – I am not speaking about feigned love. False love is that which loves in the Tsar only one’s advantage; this love is base, harmful and, in dangerous moments, can turn to treachery. True love for the Tsar is united in one indivisible feeling with love for the Fatherland, for lawfulness and for the Holy Orthodox Church. Therefore this love can be magnanimous. And how can one separate in this matter love for the Tsar from the law, the Fatherland and the Church? The law is the will of the Tsar, proclaimed before the whole people; the Fatherland is the best love of his heart; the Holy Orthodox Church is his highest link with the people, it is the most essential basis of his power, the reason for the people’s trust in him, the combination of his conscience with the Fatherland, the living junction of the mutual sympathy of the Tsar and the people, the basis of their common prosperity, the source of the blessing of God on him and on the Fatherland.

“But to love the Tsar separately from Russia means to love an external force, a chance power, but not the Russian Tsar: that is how the Old Ritualist schismatics and Balts love him, who were ready to serve Napoleon with the same devotion when they considered him stronger than Alexander. To love the Tsar and not to venerate the laws, or to break the laws given or confirmed by him under the cover of his trust, under the protection of his power, is to be his enemy under the mask of zeal, it is to undermine his might at the root, to destroy the Fatherland’s love for him, to separate the people’s concept of him from their concept of justice, order and general well-being – in a word, it is to separate the Tsar in the heart of the people from the very reasons for which Russia wishes to have a Tsar, from those good things in the hope of which she so highly venerates him. Finally, to love him without any relation to the Holy Church as a powerful Tsar, but not as the Orthodox Tsar, is to think that his rule is not the service of God and His Holy Church, but only the rule of the State for secular aims; it is to think that the advantage of the State can be separated from the advantage of Orthodoxy, or even that the Orthodox Church is a means, and not the end of the people’s existence as a whole, that the Holy Church can be sometimes a hindrance and at other times a useful
The love of a slave, and not that of a faithful subject; it is Austrian love, not Russian; this love for the Tsar is treason before Russia, and for the Tsar himself it is profoundly harmful, even if sometimes seems convenient. Every counsel he receives from such a love bears within it a secret poison that eats away at the very living links that bind him with the Fatherland. For Orthodoxy is the soul of Russia, the root of the whole of her moral existence, the source of her might and strength, the standard gathering all the different kinds of feelings of her people into one stronghold, the earnest of all her hopes for the future, the treasury of the best memories of the past, her ruling object of worship, her heartfelt love. The people venerates the Tsar as the Church’s support; and is so boundlessly devoted to him because it does not separate the Church from the Fatherland. All its trust in the Tsar is based on feeling for the Church. It sees in him a faithful director in State affairs only because it knows that he is a brother in the Church, who together with it serves her as the sincere son of the same mother and therefore can be a reliable shield of her external prosperity and independence…

“He who has not despaired of the destiny of his Fatherland cannot separate love for it from sincere devotion to Orthodoxy. And he who is Orthodox in his convictions cannot not love Russia, as the God-chosen vessel of His Holy Church on earth. Faith in the Church of God and love for Orthodox Russia are neither divided nor distinguished in the soul of the true Russian. Therefore a man holding to another confession cannot love the Russian Tsar except with a love that is harmful for the Tsar and for Russia, a love whose influence of necessity must strive to destroy precisely that which constitutes the very first condition of the mutual love of the Tsar and Russia, the basis of his correct and beneficent rule and the condition of her correct and beneficent construction.

“Therefore to wish that the Russian government should cease to have the spirit and bear the character of an Orthodox government, but be completely indifferent to the confessions, accepting the spirit of so-called common Christianity, which does not belong to any particular Church and was thought up recently by some unbelieving philosophers and half-believing Protestants – to wish for this would signify for the present time the tearing up of all bonds of love and trust between the government and the people, and for the future, - that is, if the government were to hide its indifference to Orthodoxy until it educates the people in the same coldness to its Church, - it would produce the complete destruction of the whole fortress of Russia and the annihilation of the whole of her world significance. For for him who knows Russia and her Orthodox Faith, there can be no doubt that she grew up on it and became strong by it, since by it alone is she strong and prosperous.”

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570 Kireyevsky, “Ob otnoshenii k tsarskoj vlasti” (on the relationship to Tsarist power), in Razum na puti k istine, Moscow, 2002, pp. 51-53, 62.
In a critical review of an article by the Protestant Pastor Wiener, who was defending the principle of complete separation of Church and State and the most complete tolerance, Kireyevsky wrote: “The author says very justly that in most states where there is a dominant religion, the government uses it as a means for its own private ends and under the excuse of protecting it oppresses it. But this happens not because there is a dominant faith in the state, but, on the contrary, because the dominant faith of the people is not dominant in the state apparatus. This unfortunate relationship takes place when, as a consequence of some chance historical circumstances, the rift opens up between the convictions of the people and of the government. Then the faith of the people is used as a means, but not for long. One of three things must unfailingly happen: either the people wavers in its faith and then the whole state apparatus wavers, as we see in the West; or the government attains a correct self-knowledge and sincerely converts to the faith of the people, as we hope; or the people sees that it is being deceived, as we fear.

“But what are the normal, desirable relations between the Church and the State? The state must not agree with the Church so as to search out and persecute heretics and force them to believe (this is contrary to the spirit of Christianity and has a counter-productive effect, and harms the state itself almost as much as the Church); but it must agree with the Church so as to place as the main purpose of its existence to be penetrated constantly, more and more, with the spirit of the Church and not only not look on the Church as a means to its own most fitting existence, but, on the contrary, see in its own existence only a means for the fullest and most fitting installation of the Church of God on earth.

“The State is a construction of society having as its aim earthly, temporal life. The Church is a construction of the same society having as its aim heavenly, eternal life. If society understands its life in such a way that in it the temporal must serve the eternal, the state apparatus of this society must also serve the Church. But if society understands its life in such a way that in it earthly relationships carry on by themselves, and spiritual relations by themselves, then the state in such a society must be separated from the Church. But such a society will consist not of Christians, but of unbelievers, or, at any rate, of mixed faiths and convictions. Such a state cannot make claims to a harmonious, normal development. The whole of its dignity must be limited by a negative character. But there where the people is bound inwardly, by identical convictions of faith, there it has the right to wish and demand that both its external bonds – familial, social and state – should be in agreement with its religious inspirations, and that its government should be penetrated by the same spirit. To act in hostility to this spirit means to act in
even if these actions afford it some earthly

Another Russian supporter of Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality who is sometimes classified as a Slavophile was the poet and diplomat Fyodor Ivanovich Tiutchev. Already at the age of 19, in his poem, *On Pushkin’s Ode on Freedom*, he had rebuked his fellow-poet for disturbing the hearts of the citizens by his call to freedom. While sharing the world-view of the Slavophiles, he took their sympathies and antipathies to their logical conclusions.\(^572\)

Thus he posed the contrast between Russia and the West as a struggle between Christ and Antichrist. “The supreme power of the people,” he wrote, “is in essence an antichristian idea.” Popular power and Tsarist power mutually exclude each other. So it was not a question of two cultures living side by side with each other and complementing each other in some sense. No: it was a fight to the death between the Russian idea and the European idea, between the Rome of the Papacy and the political and social structures it evolved, and the Third Rome of the Orthodox Tsar...

Tiutchev believed in the *Empire*, whose soul was the Orthodox Church and whose body was the Slavic race. More particularly, he believed in “the Great Greco-Russian Eastern Empire”, whose destiny was to unite the two halves of Europe under the Russian Emperor, with some Austrian lands going to Russia. There would be an Orthodox Pope in Rome and an Orthodox Patriarch in Constantinople. The Empire was a principle, and so indivisible. Western history had been a struggle between the schismatic Roman papacy and the usurper-empire of Charlemagne and his successors. This struggle “ended for the one in the Reformation, i.e. the denial of the Church, and for the other in the Revolution, i.e. the denial of the Empire”. The struggle between Russia and Napoleon had been the struggle “between the lawful Empire and the crowned Revolution”.\(^573\)

As a diplomat Tiutchev knew much about the threat to the Orthodox autocracy posed by the 1848 revolution under the new Napoleon in Europe; and in April, 1848, just as this revolution was gathering pace, he wrote: “There have long been only two real powers in Europe – the revolution and Russia. These two powers are now opposed to each other, and perhaps tomorrow they will enter into conflict. Between them there can be no negotiations, no treaties; the existence of the one is equivalent to the death of the other! On the outcome of this struggle that has arisen between them, the greatest struggle that the world has ever seen, the whole political and religious future of mankind will depend for many centuries.

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\(^572\) As Demetrius Merezhkovsky expressed it, Tiutchev put bones into the soft body of Slavophilism, crossed its ‘t’s and dotted its ‘i’s (*Dve tajny russkoj poezii. Nekrasov i Tiutchev (Two Mysteries of Russian Poetry. Nekrasov and Tiutchev)*, St. Petersburg, 1915).

The fact of this rivalry is now being revealed everywhere. In spite of that, deadened by false wisdom, is such that the present generation, faced with a similar huge fact, is far from completely comprehending its true significance and has not evaluated its real causes.

“Up to now they have sought for its explanation in the purely political sphere; they have tried to interpret by a distinction of concepts on the exclusively human plane. In fact, the quarrel between the revolution and Russia depends on deeper causes. They can be defined in two words.

“Russia is first of all the Christian Empire; the Russian people is Christian not only by virtue of the Orthodoxy of its convictions, but also thanks to something more in the realm of feelings than convictions. It is Christian by virtue of that capacity for self-denial and self-sacrifice which constitutes as it were the basis of her moral nature. The revolution is first of all the enemy of Christianity! Antichristian feeling is the soul of the revolution: it is its special, distinguishing feature. Those changes in form to which it has been subjected, those slogans which it has adopted in turn, everything, even its violence and crimes have been secondary and accidental. But the one thing in it that is not accidental is precisely the antichristian feeling that inspires it, it is that (it is impossible not to be convinced of this) that has acquired for it this threatening dominance over the world. He who does not understand this is no more than a blind man present at a spectacle that the world presents to him.

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

“Since that time, in spite of all its permutations, the revolution has remained true to its nature, and perhaps never in the whole course of this development has it recognized itself as so of one piece, so sincerely antichristian as at the present moment, when it has ascribed to itself the banner of Christianity: ‘brotherhood’. In the name of this we can even suppose that it has attained its apogee. And truly, if we listen to those naively blasphemous big words which have become, so to speak, the official language of the present age, then will not everyone think that the new French republic was brought into the world only in order to fulfil the Gospel law? It was precisely this calling that the forces created by the revolution ascribed to themselves – with the exception, however, of that change which the revolution considered it necessary to produce, when it intended to replace the feeling of humility and self-denial, which constitutes the basis of Christianity, with the spirit of pride and haughtiness, free and voluntary good works with
instead of brotherhood preached and accepted to establish a brotherhood imposed by fear on exception of these differences, its dominance really promises to turn into the Kingdom of Christ!

“And nobody should be misled by this despicable good will which the new powers are showing to the Catholic Church and her servers. It is almost the most important sign of the real feeling of the revolution, and the surest proof of the position of complete power that it has attained. And truly, why should the revolution show itself as hostile to the clergy and Christian priests who not only submit to it, but accept and recognize it, who, in order to propitiate it, glorify all its excesses and, without knowing it themselves, become partakers in all its unrighteousness? If even similar behaviour were founded on calculation alone, this calculation would be apostasy; but if conviction is added to it, then this is already more than apostasy.

“However, we can foresee that there will be no lack of persecutions, too. On that day when concessions have reached their extreme extent, the catholic church will consider it necessary to display resistance, and it will turn out that she will be able to display resistance only by going back to martyrdom. We can fully rely on the revolution: it will remain in all respects faithful to itself and consistent to the end!

“The February explosion did the world a great service in overthrowing the pompous scaffolding of errors hiding reality. The less penetrating minds have probably now understood that the history of Europe in the course of the last thirty three years was nothing other than a continuous mystification. And indeed with what inexorably light has the whole of this past, so recent and already so distant from us, been lit up? Who, for example, will now not recognize what a laughable pretension was expressed in that wisdom of our age which naively imagined that it had succeeded in suppressing the revolution with constitutional incantations, muzzling its terrible energy by means of a formula of lawfulness? After all that has happened, who can still doubt that from the moment when the revolutionary principle penetrated into the blood of society, all these concessions, all these reconciling formulas are nothing other than drugs which can, perhaps, put to sleep the sick man for a time, but are not able to hinder the further development of the illness itself…”

In spite of his fervent support for the Autocracy, Tiutchev criticised the Tsarist imposition of censorship. In 1857 he wrote: “It is impossible to impose on minds an absolute and too prolonged restriction and yoke without substantial harm for the social organism.... Even the authorities themselves in the course of time are unable to avoid the disadvantages of such a system.

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“Why,” he wrote to his daughter Anna in 1872, “can we oppose to harmful theories and destructive tendencies nothing except material suppression? Into what has the true principle of conservatism been transformed with us? Why has our soul become so horribly stale? If the authorities because of an insufficiency of principles and moral convictions pass to measures of material oppression, it is thereby being turned into the most terrible helper of denial and revolutionary overthrow, but it will begin to understand this only when the evil is already incorrigible.”

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Tiutchev, “O tsenzure v Rossii” (On Censorship in Russia).
the Aksakov brothers, similarly combined a belief in the autocracy and the imperial mission of Russia with a belief in civil liberties. This sometimes brought them into conflict with Tsar Nicholas.

Thus in his memorandum, *The Eastern Question* (February, 1854), Constantine Aksakov hoped that the Tsar would promote “an alliance of all Slavs under the supreme patronage of the Russian Tsar… Galicia and the whole Slavonic world will breathe more easily under the patronage of Russia once she finally fulfils her Christian and fraternal duty.”

Konstantin’s brother Ivan was somewhat more cautious. He recognized that “The Catholicism of Bohemia and Poland constitutes a hostile and alien element” and in any case “the greater part of these Slavic peoples are already infected by the influence of Western liberalism which is contrary to the spirit of the Russian people and which can never be grafted onto it.” So Ivan was less “Pan-Slavist” than Constantine…

However, both brothers believed in the spiritual freedom of the individual within the autocratic state. Thus, as N. Lossky writes, “on the accession of Alexander II to the throne in 1855 [Constantine] Aksakov submitted to him, through Count Bludov, a report ‘On the Inner Condition of Russia’. In it he reproached the Government for suppressing the people’s moral freedom and following the path of despotism, which has led to the nation’s moral degradation. He pointed out that this might popularise the idea of political freedom and create a striving to attain it by revolutionary means. To avoid these dangers he advised the Tsars to allow freedom of thought and of speech and to re-establish the practice of calling Zemski Sobors.”

There was some truth in this. The government’s oppressive measures could be undiscerning, and its inability to develop a coherent philosophy to counteract the revolutionary propaganda limited its success in counteracting it. This was due in large part to the superficial Orthodoxy of the ruling circles, which Tiutchev expressed as follows:

*Not flesh, but spirit is today corrupt,*  
*And man just pines away despairingly.*  
*He strives for light, while sitting in the dark,*  
*And having found it, moans rebelliously.*  
*From lack of faith dried up, in fire tossed,*  
*The unendurable he suffers now.*  
*He knows right well his soul is lost, and thirsts*  
*For faith – but ask for it he knows not how.*  
*Ne’er will he say, with prayers and tears combined,*

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*Lossky, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.*
However deep before the closed door his grief:
"O let me in, my God, O hear my cry!
Lord, I believe! Help Thou mine unbelief."

By contrast, Tiutchev continued to believe in the Orthodoxy of the common people and in the unique destiny of Russia, poor in her exterior aspect but rich in inner faith and piety:

These poor villages which stand
Amidst a nature sparse, austere –
O beloved Russian land,
Long to pine and persevere!
The foreigner’s disdainful gaze
Will never understand or see
The light that shines in secret rays
Upon your humility.
Dear native land! While carrying
The Cross and struggling to pass through,
In slavish image Heaven’s King
Has walked across you, blessing you.

However, the successes of government measures are easily forgotten. We have already noted the conversion of Pushkin, Gogol and Dostoyevsky. Moreover, those who were urging the government to remove censorship were not supported by the leading churchmen of the age, and showed a dangerous naivety about the way in which the forces of evil could – and, in the reign of Alexander II, did – exploit this freedom.

This naivety manifested itself in a certain anti-statism, an attempt to bypass the state as being irrelevant to the deeper life of the people, the “ancient Russian freedom” that existed in the peasant communes and the Church.

We see this particularly clearly, as Walicki writes, “in the historical writings of Konstantin Aksakov. Republican liberty, he argued, was political freedom, which presupposed the people’s active participation in political affairs; ancient Russian freedom, on the other hand, meant freedom from politics – the right to live according to unwritten laws of faith and tradition, and the right to full realization in a moral sphere on which the state would not impinge.

“This theory rested on a distinction the Slavophiles made between two kinds of truth: the ‘inner’ and the ‘external’ truth. The inner truth is in the individual the voice of conscience, and in society the entire body of values.

577 Tiutchev, Nash Vek (Our Age).
578 Tiutchev, in Monk Damascene Christenson, Not of this World: The Life and Teaching of Fr. Seraphim Rose, Forestville, Ca.: Fr. Seraphim Rose Foundation, 1993.
enshrined in religion, tradition, and customs – in a word, all values that
provide force and help to forge social bonds based on
The external truth, on the other hand, is
represented by law and the state, which are essentially conventional, artificial,
and ‘external’ – all the negative qualities Kireyevsky and Khomiakov ascribed
to institutions and social bonds that had undergone a rationalizing and
formalizing process. Aksakov went even further than the other Slavophiles in
regarding all forms of legal and political relations as inherently evil; at their
opposite pole was the communal principle embodied in the village commune,
based (in Aksakov’s view) purely on truth and unanimity and not on any
legal guarantees or conditions and agreements characteristic of a rational
contract. For Aksakov the difference between Russia and the West was that in
Russia the state had not been raised to the ‘principle’ on which social
organization was largely founded. When the frailty of human nature and the
demands of defense appeared to make political organization necessary,
Russians ‘called’ their rulers from ‘beyond the sea’ in order to avoid doing
injury to the ‘inner truth’ by evolving their own statehood; Russian tsars were
given absolute powers so that the people might shun all contacts with the
‘external truth’ and all participation in affairs of state. Relations between
‘land’ (that is the common people who lived by the light of the inner truth)
and state rested upon the principle of mutual non-interference. Of its own free
will the state consulted the people, who presented their point of view at Land
Assemblies but left the final decision in the monarch’s hands. The people
could be sure of complete freedom to live and think as they pleased, while the
monarch had complete freedom of action in the political sphere. This
relationship depended entirely on moral convictions rather than legal
guarantees, and it was this that constituted Russia’s superiority to Western
Europe. ‘A guarantee is an evil,’ Aksakov wrote. ‘Where it is necessary, good
is absent; and life where good is absent had better disintegrate than continue
with the aid of evil.’ Aksakov conceded that there was often a wide gap
between ideal and reality, but ascribed this entirely to human imperfections.
He strongly condemned rulers who tried to interfere in the inner life of the
‘land’, but even in the case of Ivan the Terrible, whose excesses he condemned,
he would not allow that the ‘land’ had the right to resistance and he praised
its long-suffering loyalty.”

Although there is some truth in this account, it is exaggerated. Certainly,
the “inner truth” of Orthodoxy was more important than the “external truth”
of government and law; and it was true that the presence of this inner truth in
Russia had prevented statehood becoming the “primary principle” it had
become in the West, where “inner truth” had been lost. And yet the State had
always taken a very active and essential role in Russian life from the
beginning in protecting and fostering the internal freedom provided by the
Orthodox way of life, and was accepted as such with gratitude by the people.

579 Walicki, op. cit., pp. 96-97.
Moreover, it was inaccurate to represent the power of the Russian tsars as external to the true life of the people. For the tsars were themselves Orthodox Christians anointed for their role by the Church and guided in their decisions by the Church, the Holy Scriptures and the decrees of the Ecumenical Councils.

Paradoxically, Aksakov betrays the influence of precisely that western political tradition – in its English liberal variant – which he sincerely claimed to deplore. As Walicki writes, “he subconsciously adopted and applied to Russia’s past one of the chief assumptions of Western European liberal doctrine – the principle of the total separation of the political and social spheres. At the same time he rejected both liberal constitutionalism and the very content of the liberal idea of freedom. Aksakov’s interpretation of the freedom of the ‘land’ is not to be confused with the freedom of the individual, since in his interpretation freedom only applied to the ‘land’ as a whole; it was not the freedom of the individual in the community, but the community’s freedom from outside interference in matters of faith, traditions, or customs. This non-interference had nothing to do with the liberal doctrine of laissez-faire, since, according to Aksakov, the moral principles of the ‘land’ rendered economic individualism out of the question. Even his call for freedom of speech was not a truly liberal postulate since it did not envisage the acceptance of pluralistic beliefs or of minority oppositions within society. While demanding freedom in the non-political sphere, Aksakov wanted every individual to submit totally to his mir – a submission, moreover, that was to be ‘according to conscience’ and not only ‘according to law’. His ideal was a ‘free unity’ based on a total unanimity that would reduce external constraints to a minimum but at the same time exclude individual autonomy and any departure from communal tradition.”

580 Walicki, op. cit., pp. 97-98.
革命在欧洲，人们开始在俄罗斯斯拉夫主义者的内心萌生希望，认为这是实现俄罗斯成为第三罗马的时刻。提切夫有自己的异想天开的版本，他看到俄罗斯作为新的斯拉夫帝国，可以解放东方欧洲，包括捷克人和摩拉维亚人，脱离西欧的假帝国、教会和文明。据V. Tembursky说，提切夫呼吁尼古拉一世“在革命自我毁灭的西欧文明上，建立新的帝国‘诺亚方舟’，让欧洲的‘彼得世界’取代‘查尔斯世界’。提切夫认为，为了挽救罗马教廷，因为意大利革命将它置于孤立，他提出帮助罗马教廷回归正统的条件是，罗马教廷必须尊重正统的俄罗斯。”

然而，尼古拉并不分享这种愿景。作为欧洲各国中唯一一个相信欧洲现有制度合法性的统治者，除革命的法国外，还包括奥地利，其中许多斯拉夫人在生活。正如K.N.列昂季耶夫所写，他是“真正的和伟大的斯拉夫主义信徒”。他不喜欢甚至正统的俄皇“rayas”（奥斯曼帝国的民族）允许自己反对苏丹，合理地认为只有他自己有权利征服苏丹并把他置于服从，作为皇权。

“失败的和轻率的十二月党人的叛乱没有对他的皇室头脑造成深刻影响，但1830年代的事件使他明白。从那时起，沙皇成为所有解放、平等、混乱的反对者，无论是在俄罗斯还是其他国家……

“特别感兴趣的是，年轻的I.S.阿克萨科夫在1849年被第三部门要求答复的问题。有些段落被沙皇尼古拉彼得罗夫在答复中加粗，沙皇在自己的手中做出了反对的注释。反对阿克萨科夫写到‘斯拉夫主义的衷心同情者’对西方斯拉夫和一般对宗教和同族兄弟的状况，皇帝做了如下评论：‘以对斯拉夫部落的同情为借口，隐藏着反对邻国以及部分联盟国家的犯罪思想，他们期望通过上帝的意愿实现的统一’……

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By these 'states' we must understand, of course, first of all Austria, and Nicholas Pavlovich recognized himself to have the right in favour of his co-religionists, the right to war with him and even subject him to himself, but did not recognize the right of the subjects of the Sultan to carry out their own self-willed liberation....

“Nicholas Pavlovich understood at that time that liberationist politics beyond the bounds of one’s own state is something that, while useful at the beginning, is in essence extremely dangerous and can, with the slightest incaution, turn onto the head of the liberator.

“He understood half a century ago that of which it is impossible to convince many of us even now, in spite of all the crude evidence of events, in spite of the fact that everything is simply ‘bursting at the seams’ both in old Europe and in the Orthodox countries of the East!

“Emperor Nicholas was called by Divine Providence to hold back for a time the general disintegration which even now nobody knows how to stop...

“...Tsar Nicholas Pavlovich did not live to the end of the 19th century, when ‘reaction’ is beginning little by little to acquire for itself theoretical justifications and foundations. However, he felt by his political instinct not only that the West was on the path to a corruption which could be contagious for us, too, but also that our Russia herself under him had attained its cultural-state apogee, after which living state construction would come to an end and on which it was necessary to stop as far as possible and for as long as possible, not fearing even a certain stagnation. And all his major political actions and sympathies are explained by this conservative instinct of genius: his revulsion from the liberal monarchy of Louis Philippe; his defence of the ‘crafty’, but necessary for some time to come, perhaps, Austria; the Hungarian war; his helping of the Sultan against Mehmed Ali; his good disposition toward England, which was still at that time aristocratic and conservative; his desire that the Eastern Christians should not of their own will rise up against the lawful and autocratic Turkish government; and finally, his disillusionment in emancipated Greece, which was expressed in his words (legendary or historical, it doesn’t matter): ‘I will not give an inch of land to this demagogic people.’”

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582 Leontiev, “Plody natsional’nykh dvizhenij”, in Vostok, Rossia i Slavianstvo (The East, Russia and Slavidom), Moscow, 1996, pp. 542, 543-544, 545, 545-546.
THE CRIMEAN WAR

Tsar might consider most of European governments (except Napoleon III’s), this was not how they looked at him. The 1848 revolution, while in general unsuccessful, had changed the balance of forces in Europe. Gratitude to Russia for keeping the peace by defeating the Hungarian revolutionaries, never strong, had completely disappeared with the rise of a new generation of leaders, such as the rabidly anti-Russian Palmerston in England. In 1851 the exiled Hungarian revolutionary Kossuth denounced Russian “despotism” in front of a cheering crowd in London. Meanwhile, the new French Emperor Napoleon III was looking to challenge the Vienna settlement of 1815 and divide Austria and Russia.583

Nevertheless, it was a remarkable turn-around for these countries to ally themselves with the Ottoman empire against a Christian state, Russia, when they were in no way threatened by Russia…

One factor making for instability was the gradual weakening of the power of Turkey, “the sick man of Europe”, in the Tsar’s phrase. Clearly, if Turkey collapsed, its subject peoples of Orthodox Christian faith would look to Russia to liberate them. But the Western Powers were determined to prevent this, which would threaten their hegemony in the Eastern Mediterranean and greatly increase the power of their rival Russia.

There were also religious rivalries. The Tsar saw himself as the natural protector of the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman empire. But the Catholics, whose main political protector was France, were not prepared to allow him to play this role.

“The spark to the tinderbox,” writes Trevor Royle, “was the key to the main door of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. By tradition, history, and a common usage which had been built up over the centuries, the great key was in the possession of the monks of the eastern, or Greek Orthodox… Church; they were the guardians of the grotto in which lay the sacred manger where Christ himself was… born. That state of affairs was contested with equal fervour by their great rivals, the monks of the Roman Catholic, or Latin, church who had been palmed off with the keys to the lesser inner doors to the narthex (the vestibule between the porch and the nave). There was also the question of whether or not a silver star adorned with the arms of France should be permitted to stand in the Sanctuary of the Nativity, but in the spring of 1852 the rivals’ paramount thoughts were concentrated on the possession of the great key to the church’s main west door.…

“[Alexander] Kinglake wrote: ‘When the Emperor of Russia sought to … keep for his Church the holy shrines of Palestine, he spoke on behalf of fifty

millions of brave, pious, devoted subjects, of whom thousands for the sake of their lives. From the serf in his hut, even up to the great Tsar himself, the faith professed was the faith really glowing in his heart...” 584

“Nicolas I had both temporal and spiritual reasons for wanting to extend his protection of the Eastern Church within the Ottoman Empire. Napoleon III’s were rather different. Having dismissed the French parliament he needed all the support he could get, most especially from the Roman Catholics, before he could declare himself emperor. It suited him therefore to have France play a greater role in Palestine and ‘to put an end to these deplorable and too-frequent quarrels about the possession of the Holy Places’. To that end the Marquis de Lavalette, his ambassador to the Porte – or the Sublime Porte, the court or government of the Ottoman Empire – insisted that the Turks honour the agreement made in 1740 that confirmed that France had ‘sovereign authority’ in the Holy Land. Otherwise, hinted de Lavalette, force might have to be used.

On 9 February 1852 the Porte agreed the validity of the Latin claims but no sooner had the concession been made than the Turks were forced to bow once more, this time to Russian counter-claims. Basing his argument on an agreement, or firman, of 1757 which restored Greek rights in Palestine and on the Treaty of Kutchuk-Kainarji (1774) which gave Russia protection of the Christian religion within the Ottoman Empire, Nicholas’s ambassador succeeded in getting a new firman ratifying the privileges of the Greek Church. This revoked the agreement made to the French who responded by backing up their demands with a show of force.

Later that summer, much to Nicholas’s fury and to Britain’s irritation, Napoleon III ordered the 90-gun steam-powered battleship Charlemagne to sail through the Dardanelles. This was a clear violation of the London Convention of 1841 which kept the Straits closed to naval vessels, but it also provided a telling demonstration of French sea power. It was nothing less than gunboat diplomacy and it seemed to work. Impressed by the speed and strength of the French warship, and persuaded by French diplomacy and money, Sultan Abd-el-Medjid listened ever more intently to the French demands. At the beginning of December he gave orders that the keys to the Church of the Nativity were to be surrendered to the Latins and that the French-backed church was to have supreme authority over the Holy Places. On 22 December a new silver star was brought from Jaffa and as Kinglake wrote, in great state ‘the keys of the great door of the church, together with the keys of the sacred manger, were handed over to the Latins’.

“Napoleon III had scored a considerable diplomatic victory. His subjects were much gratified, but in so doing he had also prepared the ground for a

In October, 1852, the Tsar arrived in Kiev and confided to the metropolitan: “I do not want to shed the blood of the faithful sons of the fatherland, but our vainglorious enemies are forcing me to bare my sword. My plans are not yet made – no! But my heart feels that the time is nearing and they will soon be brought to fulfilment.”

Seeking advice on his political projects, the Tsar asked if there were any holy elders in Kiev. The Metropolitan mentioned the clairvoyant fool-for-Christ, Hieroschemamonk Theophilus. They set off there immediately. On the way, they saw Blessed Theophilus lying by the side of the road in the middle of an ant-hill, not moving. His arms were folded on his chest crosswise, as in death, and his eyes were completely closed. Ants swarmed in masses all over his body and face, but he, as if feeling nothing, pretended to be dead. Puzzled, the Tsar and the Metropolitan returned to Kiev…

Russian troops moved into the Romanian Principalities, and on July 2, 1853, Tsar Nicholas proclaimed: “By the occupation of the Principalities we desire such security as will ensure the restoration of our dues [in the Holy Land]. It is not conquest that we seek but satisfaction for a just right so clearly infringed.” As he told the British ambassador in St. Petersburg, Seymour: “You see what my position is. I am the Head of a People of the Greek religion, our co-religionists of Turkey look up to me as their natural protector, and these are claims which it is impossible for me to disregard. I have the conviction that good right is on my side, I should therefore begin a War, such as that which now impends, without compunction and should be prepared to carry it on, as I have before remarked to you, as long as there should be a rouble in the Treasury or a man in the country.”

Nevertheless, when the Powers drew up a compromise “Note”, Nicholas promptly accepted it.

However, the Turks rejected it, having been secretly assured of Franco-British support. On October 4, 1853 they delivered an ultimatum to the Russians to leave the Principalities within a fortnight. When the Tsar rejected the ultimatum, war broke out. On the same day A.F. Tuicheva noted in her diary: “A terrible struggle is being ignited, gigantic opposing forces are entering into conflict with each other: the East and the West, the Slavic world and the Latin world, the Orthodox Church in her struggle not only with Islam,

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585 Royle, op. cit., 19-20.
586 Royle, op. cit., p. 52.
The British, the French and later the Sardinians joined the Turks. Palmerston, in a letter to the British Prime Minister John Russell, made clear that his war aim was not the restoration of some supposed injustice, but the weakening of Russia and the giving of different parts of her territory to different western powers.

A.S. Khomiakov wrote: “Whatever political bases and excuses for the struggle there may be for the struggle that is convulsing Europe now, it is impossible not to notice, even at the most superficial observation, that on one of the warring sides stand exclusively peoples belonging to Orthodoxy, and on the other – Romans and Protestants, gathered around Islam.”

And Khomiakov quoted from an epistle of the Catholic Archbishop of Paris Sibur, who assured the French that the war with Russia “is not a political war, but a holy war; not a war of states or peoples, but solely a religious war”. All other reasons were “in essence no more than excuses”. The true reason was “the necessity to drive out the error of Photius; to subdue and crush it”. “That is the recognized aim of this new crusade, and such was the hidden aim of all the previous crusades, even if those who participated in them did not admit it.”

On February 18, 1855, the Tsar, worn out and intensely grieved by the losses in the war, died. (According to one version, he was poisoned by the medic Mandt on the orders of Napoleon III.)

Metropolitan Philaret of Kiev asked his valet whether he remembered the trip with the Tsar to Blessed Theophilus, and the fool-for-Christ’s strange behaviour. “Up to now I could not understand his strange behaviour. Now, the prophecy of the Starets is as clear as God’s day. The ants were the malicious enemies of our fatherland, trying to torment the great body of Russia. The arms folded on his chest and the closed eyes of Theophilus were the sudden, untimely death of our beloved Batiushka-Tsar....”

After the fall of Sebastopol, the new Tsar, Alexander II, signed the Treaty of Paris in 1856 and brought the Crimean war to an end. While the Russians had lost some battles and the major port of Sebastopol, they retained Kars,

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587 Tiutcheva, Pri Dvore Dvukh Imperatorov (At the Court of Two Emperors), Moscow, 1990, p. 52; in N.Yu. Selischev, “K 150-letiu nachala Krymskoj vojny” (Towards the 150th Anniversary of the Crimean War), Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Rus’), № 24 (1741), December 15/28, 2003, p. 11 (in Russian).
589 Ivanov, op. cit., p. 327.
... and conquered from the Turks with less than half their forces, both Russia and Turkey were forbidden to have fleets in the Black Sea (although Alexander II abrogated this clause in 1870), the Straits were closed for warships, and the Aland islands in the Baltic were demilitarised. On the other hand, as the Russian representative A.F. Orlov telegraphed to St. Petersburg: “The English claims on the independence of Mingrelia, the Trans-Caucasus and other demands have been completely rejected. The quarrels over Nikolaev stirred up by Lord Clarendon have been resolved by our replies.” 591 As Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow put it: “In spite of all this, in Europe we were unconquered, while in Asia we were conquerors. Glory to the Russian army!” 592


So in purely military terms, the Crimean war was not such a disaster for Russia; and if the war had continued, might well have ended with victory as superior Russian manpower began to tell. The situation had been much more perilous for Russia in 1812, and yet they had gone on to enter Paris in triumph.

As Tsar Alexander II had written to the Russian commander Gorchakov after the fall of Sebastopol: “Sebastopol is not Moscow, the Crimea is not Russia. Two years after we set fire to Moscow, our troops marched in the streets of Paris. We are still the same Russians and God is still 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. Moreover, Russia’s primary war-aim, the retention of her right to act as guardian of the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire, had not been achieved.

Still more serious was the dispiriting effect that the war had on public opinion. Observers had noted the enthusiasm of the simple people for the war, which they considered to be a holy war; 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. 593

However, examples of unbelief had been seen among the commanding officers at Sebastopol; some of the intelligentsy, such as B.N. Chicherin, openly scoffed 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 conclusion drawn by Constantine Aksakov (who, in spite of his anti-statism, ardently supported the war) was as follows: “From the very

591 Orlov, in Selischev, op. cit., p. 12.
592 Metropolitan Philaret, in Selischev, op. cit., p. 13.
Our failures has lain, not in the power, strength or skill of our enemies, but in us ourselves; we ourselves, of course, have been our most terrible adversaries. It is no wonder that we have been overcome when we ourselves give in and retreat...

Believe me, the danger for Russia is not in the Crimea, and not from the English, the French and the Turks, no, the danger, the real danger is within us, 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. We have protected ourselves! That is the source of our enslavement and, perhaps, of our endless woes. If we want God to be for us, it is necessary that we should be for God, and not for the Austrian or in general for the German union, for the sake of which we have abandoned God’s work. 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.”

Metropolitan Philaret was the outstanding churchman of his age, a great pastor who ruled the see of Moscow for nearly half a century, a great theologian and a great defender of the Church. But he was also a great defender of the State, as was demonstrated during his conduct during December, 1825, when his wise refusal to reveal the contents of Tsar Alexander’s will immediately helped to guarantee the transfer of power to his brother, Tsar Nicholas II.

Of particular interest, therefore, are his views on the relationship between the Church and the State...

According to Snychev, Metropolitan Philaret said that “it was necessary for there to be a close union between the ruler and the people – a union, moreover, that was based exclusively on righteousness. The external expression of the prosperity of a state was the complete submission of the people to the government. The government in a state had to enjoy the rights of complete inviolability on the part of the subjects. And if it was deprived of these rights, the state could not be firm, it was threatened with danger insofar as two opposing forces would appear: self-will on the part of the subjects and predominance on the part of the government. ‘If the government is not firm,’ taught Philaret, ‘then the state also is not firm. Such a state is like a city built on a volcanic mountain: what does its firmness signify when beneath it is concealed a force which can turn it into ruins at any minute? Subjects who do not recognize the sacred inviolability of the rulers are incited by hope of self-will to attain self-will; an authority which is not convinced of its inviolability is incited by worries about its security to attain predominance; in such a situation the state wavers between the extremes of self-will and predominance, between the horrors of anarchy and repression, and cannot affirm in itself obedient freedom, which is the focus and soul of social life.’

“The holy hierarch understood the rebellion [of the Decembrists] as being a rebellion against the State, against itself. ‘Subjects can themselves understand,’ said Philaret, ‘that in destroying the authorities they are destroying the constitution of society and consequently they are themselves destroying themselves.’”

Philaret “did not doubt that monarchical rule is ‘power from God’ (Romans 13.1) in its significance for Russian history and statehood, and more than once in his sermons expressed the most submissively loyal feelings with regard to all the representatives of the Royal Family. But he was one of the very few archpastors who had the courage to resist the tendency – very characteristic of Russian conditions – to reduce Orthodoxy to ‘glorification of

595 Metropolitan Ioann (Snychev), op. cit., p. 177.
Thus, contrary to many hierarchs, who from feelings of servility warmly accepted Nicholas I’s attempt to introduce the heir among the members of the Synod, he justly saw in this a manifestation of caesaropapism…, and in the application of attributes of the Heavenly King to the earthly king – a most dangerous deformation of religious consciousness…, and in such phenomena as the passing of a cross procession around statues of the emperor – a direct return to paganism.”

Metropolitan Philaret, as Fr. Georges Florovsky writes, “distinctly and firmly reminded people of the Church’s independence and freedom, reminded them of the limits of the state. And in this he sharply and irreconcilably parted with his epoch, with the whole of the State’s self-definition in the new, Petersburgian Russia. Philaret was very reserved and quiet when speaking. By his intense and courageous silence he with difficulty concealed and subdued his anxiety about what was happening. Through the vanity and confusion of events he saw and made out the threatening signs of the righteous wrath of God that was bound to come. Evil days, days of judgement were coming – ‘it seems that we are already living in the suburbs of Babylon, if not in Babylon itself,’ he feared… ‘My soul is sorrowful,’ admitted Metropolitan Philaret once. ‘It seems to me that the judgement which begins at the house of God is being more and more revealed… How thickly does the smoke come from the coldness of the abyss and how high does it mount’… And only in repentance did he see an exit, in universal repentance ‘for many things, especially in recent years’.

“Philaret had his own theory of the State, of the sacred kingdom. And in it there was not, and could not be, any place for the principles of state supremacy. It is precisely because the powers that be are from God, and the sovereigns rule by the mercy of God, that the Kingdom has a completely subject and auxiliary character. ‘The State as State is not subject to the Church’, and therefore the servants of the Church already in the apostolic canons are strictly forbidden ‘to take part in the administration of the people’. Not from outside, but from within must the Christian State be bound by the law of God and the ecclesiastical order. In the mind of Metropolitan Philaret, the State is a moral union, ‘a union of free moral beings’ and a union founded on mutual service and love – ‘a certain part of the general dominion of the Almighty, outwardly separate, but by an invisible power yoked into the unity of the whole’… And the foundation of power lies in the principle of service. In the Christian State Philaret saw the Anointed of God, and before this banner of God’s good will he with good grace inclined his head. ‘The Sovereign receives the whole of his lawfulness from the Church’s anointing’, that is, in the Church and through the Church. Here the Kingdom inclines its head before the

Priesthood and takes upon itself the vow of service to the Church, and its right to take part in ecclesiastical affairs. He possesses this not by virtue of his autocracy and authority, but precisely by virtue of his obedience and vow. And this right does not extend or pass to the organs of state administration, and between the Sovereign and the Church there cannot and must not be any dividing wall or mediation. The Sovereign is anointed, but not the State. The Sovereign enters into the Church, but the State as such remains outside the Church. And for that reason it has no rights and privileges in the Church. In her inner constitution the Church is completely independent, and has no need of the help or defence of the secular authorities – ‘the altar does not fear to fall even without this protection’. For the Church is ruled by Christ Himself, Who distributes and realizes ‘his own episcopacy of souls’ through the apostolic hierarchy, which ‘is not similar to any form of secular rule’.

“The Church has her own inviolable code of laws, her own strength and privileges, which exceed all earthly measures. ‘In His word Jesus Christ did not outline for her a detailed and uniform statute, so that His Kingdom should not seem to be of this world’… The Church has her own special form of action – in prayer, in the service of the sacraments, in exhortation and in pastoral care. And for real influence on public life, for her real enchurchment, according to Metropolitan Philaret’s thought, the interference of the hierarchy in secular affairs is quite unnecessary – ‘it is necessary not so much that a bishop should sit in the governmental assembly of grandees, as that the grandees and men of nobles birth should more frequently and ardently surround the altar of the Lord together with the bishop’… Metropolitan Philaret always with great definiteness drew a firm line between the state and ecclesiastical orders. Of course, he did not demand and did not desire the separation of the State from the Church, its departure from the Church into the arbitrariness of secular vanity. But at the same time he always sharply underlined the complete heterogeneity and particularity of the State and the Church. The Church cannot be in the State, and the State cannot be in the Church – ‘unity and harmony’ must be realized between them in the unity of the creative realization of God’s commandments.

“It is not difficult to understand how distant and foreign this way of thinking was for the State functionaries of the Nicolaitan spirit and time, and how demanding and childish it seemed to them. Philaret did not believe in the power of rebukes and reprimands. He did not attach great significance to the external forms of life – ‘it is not some kind of transformation that is needed, but a choice of men and supervision’, he used to say. And above all what was necessary was an inner creative uplift, a gathering and renewal of spiritual forces. What was needed was an intensification of creative activity, a strengthening and intensification of ecclesiastical and pastoral freedom. As a counterweight to the onslaught of the State, Metropolitan Philaret thought about the reestablishment of the living unity of the local episcopate, which would be realized in constant consultative communion of fellow pastors and
bishops, and strengthened at times by small congresses and councils, until a general local Council would become inwardly possible and achievable. Metropolitan Philaret always emphasized that ‘we live in the Church militant’… And with sadness he recognized that ‘the quantity of sins and carelessnesses which have mounted up in the course of more than one century almost exceeds the strength and means of correction’… Philaret was not a man of struggle, and was weighed down ‘by remaining in the chatter and cares of the city and works of men’. He lived in expectation ‘of that eternally secure city, from which it will not be necessary to flee into any desert’, He wanted to withdraw, to run away, and beyond the storm of affairs to pray for the mercy and longsuffering of God, for ‘defence from on high’.”

The State, wrote Philaret, is “a union of free moral beings, united amongst themselves with the sacrifice of part of their freedom for the preservation and confirmation by the common forces of the law of morality, which constitutes the necessity of their existence. The civil laws are nothing other than interpretations of this law in application to particular cases and guards placed against its violation.”

Philaret emphasised the rootedness of the State in the family, with the State deriving its essential properties and structure from the family: “The family is older than the State. Man, husband, wife, father, son, mother, daughter and the obligations and virtues inherent in these names existed before the family grew into the nation and the State was formed. That is why family life in relation to State life can be figuratively depicted as the root of the tree. In order that the tree should bear leaves and flowers and fruit, it is necessary that the root should be strong and bring pure juice to the tree. In order that State life should develop strongly and correctly, flourish with education, and bring forth the fruit of public prosperity, it is necessary that family life should be strong with the blessed love of the spouses, the sacred authority of the parents, and the reverence and obedience of the children, and that as a consequence of this, from the pure elements of family there should arise similarly pure principles of State life, so that with veneration for one’s father veneration for the tsar should be born and grow, and that the love of children for their mother should be a preparation of love for the fatherland, and the simple-hearted obedience of domestics should prepare and direct the way to

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597 “Already in the reign of Alexander I the hierarch used to submit the thought of the restoration of Local Councils and the division on the Russian Church into nine metropolitan areas. At the command of Emperor Alexander he had even composed a project and given it to the members of the Synod for examination. But the Synod rejected the project, declaring: ‘Why this project, and why have you not spoken to us about it?’ ‘I was ordered [to compose it]’ was all that the hierarch could reply, ‘and speaking about it is not forbidden’” (Snychev, op. cit., pp. 226). (V.M.)


If the foundation of the State is the family, and each family is both a miniature State and a miniature monarchy, it follows that the most natural form of Statehood is Monarchy – more specifically, a Monarchy that is in union with, as owing its origin to, the Heavenly Monarch, God. Despotic monarchies identify themselves, rather than unite themselves, with the Deity, so they cannot be said to correspond to the Divine order of things. In ancient times, the only monarchy that was in accordance with the order and the command of God was the Israelite autocracy.

In 1851, Metropolitan Philaret preached as follows: “As heaven is indisputably better than the earth, and the heavenly than the earthly, it is similarly indisputable that the best on earth must be recognised to be that which was built on it in the image of the heavenly, as was said to the God-seer Moses: ‘Look thou that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount’ (Exodus 25.40). In accordance with this, God established a king on earth in the image of His single rule in the heavens; He arranged for an autocratic king on earth in the image of His almighty power; and He placed an hereditary king on earth in the image of His imperishable Kingdom, which lasts from ages to ages.

“Oh if only all the kings of the earth paid sufficient attention to their heavenly dignity and to the traits of the image of the heavenly impressed upon them, and faithfully united the righteousness and goodness demanded of them, the heavenly unsleeping watchfulness, purity of thought and holiness of intention that is in God’s image! Oh if only all the peoples sufficiently understood the heavenly dignity of the king and the construction of the heavenly kingdom in the image of the heavenly, and constantly signed themselves with the traits of that same image – by reverence and love for the king, by humble obedience to his laws and commands, by mutual agreement and unanimity, and removed from themselves everything of which there is no image in the heavens – arrogance, disputes, self-will, greediness and every evil thought, intention and act! Everything would be blessed in accordance with the heavenly image if it were well constructed in accordance with the heavenly image. All earthly kingdoms would be worthy of being the ante-chamber of the Heavenly Kingdom.

“Russia! You participate in this good more than many kingdoms and peoples. ‘Hold on to that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown’ (Revelation 3.11). Keep and continue to adorn your radiant crown, ceaselessly struggling to fulfil more perfectly the crown-giving commandments: ‘Fear God, honour the king’ (I Peter 2.17).

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Turning from the well-known to that which has perhaps been less examined and understood in the apostle’s word, I direct our attention to that which the apostle, while teaching the fear of God, reverence for the king and obedience to the authorities, at the same time teaches about freedom: ‘Submit’, he says, ‘to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake; whether to the king, as being supreme, or to governors as being sent through him... as free’. Submit as free men. Submit, and remain free...

“But how are we more correctly to understand and define freedom? Philosophy teaches that freedom is the capacity without restrictions rationally to choose and do that which is best, and that it is by nature the heritage of every man. What, it would seem, could be more desirable? But this teaching has its light on the summit of the contemplation of human nature, human nature as it should be, while in descending to our experience and actions as they are in reality, it encounters darkness and obstacles.

“In the multiplicity of the race of men, are there many who have such an open and educated mind as faithfully to see and distinguish that which is best? And do those who see the best always have enough strength decisively to choose it and bring it to the level of action? Have we not heard complaints from the best of men: ‘For to will is present in me, but how to perform that which is good I find not’ (Romans 7.18)? What are we to say about the freedom of people who, although not in slavery to anybody, are nevertheless subject to sensuality, overcome by passion, possessed by evil habits? Is the avaricious man free? Is he not bound in golden chains? Is the indulger of his flesh free? Is he not bound, if not by cruel bonds, then by soft nets? Is the proud and vainglorious man free? Is he not chained, not by his hands, and not by his legs, but by his head and heart, to his own idol?

“Thus does not experience and consciousness, at least of some people in some cases, speak of that of which the Divine Scriptures speak generally: ‘He who does sin is the servant of sin’ (John 8. 34)?

“Observation of people and human societies shows that people who to a greater degree allow themselves to fall into this inner, moral slavery – slavery to sin, the passions and vices – are more often than others zealots for external freedom – freedom broadened as far as possible in human society before the law and the authorities. But will broadening external freedom help them to freedom from inner slavery? There is no reason to think that. With greater probability we must fear the opposite. He in whom sensuality, passion and vice has already acquired dominance, when the barriers put by the law and the authorities to his vicious actions have been removed, will of course give himself over to the satisfaction of his passions and lusts with even less restraint than before, and will use his external freedom only in order that he may immerse himself more deeply in inner slavery. Unhappy freedom which, as the Apostle explained, ‘they have as a cover for their envy’! Let us bless the
law and the authorities which, in decreeing and ordering and defending, as placed upon freedom of action, hinder as far as freedom and the spread of moral slavery, that is, slavery to sin, the passions and the vices.

“I said: as far as they can, because we can not only not expect from the law and the earthly authorities a complete cutting off of the abuse of freedom and the raising of those immersed in the slavery of sin to the true and perfect freedom: even the law of the Heavenly Lawgiver is not sufficient for that. The law warns about sin, rebukes the sinner and condemns him, but does not communicate to the slave of sin the power to break the bonds of this slavery, and does not provide the means of blotting out the iniquities committed, which lie on the conscience like a fiery seal of sinful slavery. And in this consists ‘the weakness of the law’ (Romans 8.3), to which the Apostle witnesses without a moment’s hesitation.

“Here the question again presents itself: what is true freedom, and who can give it, and – especially – return it to the person who has lost it through sin? True freedom is the active capacity of the man who has not been enslaved to sin and who is not weighed down by a condemning conscience, to choose the best in the light of the truth of God and to realize it with the help of the power of God’s grace.

“Only He Who gave this freedom to sinless man at his creation can give it back to the slave of sin. The Creator of freedom Himself declared this: ‘If the Son will set you free, then you will truly be free’ (John 8.36). ‘If you remain in My words, you will truly be My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free’ (John 31.32). Jesus Christ, the Son of God, having suffered and died for us in the nature He received from us, by His ‘Blood has cleansed our conscience from dead works’ (Hebrews 9.14), and, having torn apart the bonds of death by His resurrection, has torn apart also the bonds of sin and death that bind us, and, after His ascension to heaven, has sent down the Spirit of truth, giving us through faith the light of His truth to see what is best, and His grace-filled power to do it.

“This is freedom, which is restrained neither by heaven, nor by the earth, nor by hell, which has as its limit the will of God, and this not to its own diminution, because it also strives to fulfil the will of God, which has no need to shake the lawful decrees of men because it is able to see in these the truth that ‘the Kingdom is the Lord’s and He Himself is sovereign of the nations’ (Psalm 21.28), which in an unconstrained way venerates lawful human authority and its commands that are not contrary to God, insofar as it radiantly sees the truth that ‘there is no power that is not of God, the powers that be are ordained of God’ (Romans 13.1). And so this is freedom, which is in complete accord with obedience to the law and lawful authority, because it itself wishes for that which obedience demands.
about the freedom that is Christian and inner, spiritual and not carnal, which always does good and is never rebellious, which can live in a hut just as comfortably as in a noble’s house or a royal palace, which a subject, without ceasing to be a subject, can enjoy as much as a master, which is inviolable in bonds and prison, as we can see in the Christian martyrs. But it is already bring our sermon to an end.

“Love Christian freedom – freedom from sin, from passion, from vice, the freedom of willing obedience to the law and the authorities, and do good for the sake of the Lord, in accordance with your faith in and love for Him. And let nobody be seduced by the people from whom the Apostolic word warns us, who ‘promise freedom, being themselves the slaves of corruption’ (II Peter 2.19). Amen.”

Although ecclesiastical unity had been restored between the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire and the Greeks of Free Hellas in 1852, the fact that the Greek nation was still divided between two hostile States continued to create problems and contradictions.

Sir Steven Runciman writes: “Throughout the nineteenth century, after the close of the Greek War of Independence, the Greeks within the Ottoman Empire had been in an equivocal position. Right up to the end of the Balkan Wars in 1913 they were far more numerous than their fellow-Greeks living within the boundaries of the Kingdom of Greece, and on average more wealthy. Some of them still took service under the Sultan. Turkish government finances were still largely administered by Greeks. There were Greeks in the Turkish diplomatic service, such as Musurus Pasha, for many years Ottoman Ambassador to the Court of St. James. Such men served their master loyally; but they were always conscious of the free Greek state, whose interests often ran counter to his. Under the easygoing rule of Sultans Abdul Medjit and Abdul Azis, in the middle of the century, no great difficulties arose. But the Islamic reaction under Abdul Hamit led to renewed suspicion of the Greeks, which was enhanced by the Cretan question and the war, disastrous for Greece, of 1897. The Young Turks who dethroned Abdul Hamit shared his dislike of the Christians, which the Balkan War seemed to justify. Participation by Greeks in Turkish administrative affairs declined and eventually was ended.

“For the Orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople the position throughout the century was particularly difficult. He was a Greek but he was not a citizen of Greece. By the oath that he took on his appointment he undertook to be loyal to the Sultan, even though the Sultan might be at war with the Kingdom of Greece. His flock, envious of the freedom of the Greeks of the Kingdom, longed to be united with them; but he could not lawfully encourage their longing. The dilemma that faced Gregory V in the spring of 1821 was shared, though in a less acute form, by all his successors. He no longer had any authority over the Greeks of Greece. Hardly had the Kingdom been established before its Church insisted on complete autonomy [i.e. autocephaly] under the Archbishop of Athens. It was to Athens, to the King of Greece, that the Greeks in Turkey now looked for the fulfilment of their aspirations. Had the Christian Empire been restored at Constantinople the Patriarch would indeed have lost much of his administrative powers; but he would have lost them gladly; for the Emperor would have been at hand to advise and admonish, and he would have enjoyed the protection of a Christian government. But as it was, he was left to administer, in a worsening atmosphere and with decreasing authority, a community whose sentimental allegiance was given increasingly to a monarch who lived far away, with whom he could not publicly associate himself, and whose kingdom was too
in times of peril. In the past the Russian Tsar Greeks in the role of saviour. That had had its he was at least a powerful figure whom the Turks regarded with awe. Moreover he did not interfere with the Greeks’ allegiance to their Patriarch. Whatever Russian ambitions might be, the Greeks had no intention of ending as Russian subjects. As it was, the emergence of an independent Greece lessened Russian sympathy. Greek politicians ingeniously played off Britain and France against Russia, and against each other and Russia found it more profitable to give her patronage to Bulgaria: which was not to the liking of the Greeks.

“We may regret that the Patriarchate was not inspired to alter its role. It was, after all, the Oecumenical Patriarchate. Was it not its duty to emerge as leader of the Orthodox Oecumene? The Greeks were not alone in achieving independence in the nineteenth century. The Serbs, the Roumanians, and, later, the Bulgarians all threw off the Ottoman yoke. All of them were alive with nationalistic ardour. Could not the Patriarchate have become a rallying force for the Orthodox world, and so have checked the centrifugal tendencies of Balkan nationalism?

“The opportunity was lost. The Patriarchate remained Greek rather than oecumenical. We cannot blame the Patriarchs. They were Greeks, reared in the Hellene tradition of which the Orthodox Church was the guardian and from which it derived much of its strength. Moreover in the atmosphere of the nineteenth century internationalism was regarded as an instrument of tyranny and reaction. But the Patriarchate erred too far in the other direction. Its fierce and fruitless attempt to keep the Bulgarian Church in subjection to Greek hierarchs, in the 1860s, did it no good and only increased bitterness. On Mount Athos, whose communities owed much to the lavish, if not disinterested, gene of the Russian Tsars, the feuds between the Greek and Slav monasteries were far from edifying. This record of nationalism was to endanger the very existence of the Patriarchate in the dark days that followed 1922...“602

And yet it must be remembered that this nationalism did not come primarily from the Patriarchate itself but from the westernized Athenian Greeks. As the philhellene C.N. Leontiev wrote in the 1880s: “The movement of contemporary political nationalism is nothing other than the spread of cosmopolitan democratisation with the difference only in the methods...

“There has been no creativity; the new Hellenes have not been able to think up anything in the sphere of higher interests except a reverent imitation of progressive-democratic Europe. As soon as the privileged Turks, who represented something like a foreign aristocracy among the Greeks, had

was found except the most complete plutocratic
ism. When a people does not have its own
mobile classes, the richest and most educated of
the citizens must, of course, gain the superiority over the others. Therefore in
an egalitarian-liberal order a very mobile plutocracy and grammatocracy
having no traditions or heritage inevitably develop. At that time [1821-32] the
new Greece could not produce a king of their own blood, to such a degree did
her leaders, the heroes of national liberty, suffer from demagogic jealousy! It, this
new Greece, could not even produce a president of her native Greek blood,
Count Kapodistrias, without soon killing him.”

According to Leontiev, the Greek revolution, which continued throughout
the nineteenth century, represented a new kind of Orthodox nationalism, a
nationalism influenced by the ideas of the French revolution that did not, as
in earlier centuries, seek to strengthen national feeling for the sake of the faith,
but used religious feeling for the sake of the nation. This was the reason why, in
spite of the fact that the clergy played such a prominent role in the Greek
revolution, their influence fell sharply after the revolution in those areas
liberated from the Turks. “The Greek clergy complain that in Athens religion
is in decline (that is, the main factor insulating [the Greeks] from the West has
weakened), and makes itself felt much more in Constantinople than in Athens,
and in general more under the Turks than in pure Hellas.”

“The religious idea (Orthodoxy) was taken by the Greek movement only as
an aid. There were no systematic persecutions of Orthodoxy itself in Turkey; but
there did exist very powerful and crude civil offences and restrictions for
people not of the Mohammedan confession. It is understandable that in such a
situation it was easy not to separate faith from race. It was even natural to
expect that the freedom of the race would draw in after it the exaltation of the
Church and the strengthening of the clergy through the growth of faith in the
flock; for powerful faith in the flock always has as its consequence love for the
clergy, even if it is very inadequate. With a strong faith (it doesn’t matter of
what kind, whether unsophisticated and simple in heart or conscious and
highly developed) mystical feeling both precedes moral feeling and, so to
speak, crowns it. It, this mystical feeling, is considered the most important, and
for that reason a flock with living faith is always more condescending also to
the vices of its clergy than a flock that is indifferent. A strongly believing flock
is always ready with joy to increase the rights, privileges and power of the
clergy and willingly submits to it even in not purely ecclesiastical affairs.

“In those times, when the peoples being freed from a foreign yoke were led
by leaders who had not experienced the ‘winds’ of the eighteenth century, the
emancipation of nations did not bring with it a weakening of the influence of
the clergy and religion itself, but even had the opposite effect: it strengthened

603 Leontiev, “Natsional’naia politika kak orudie vsemirnoj revoliutsii” (National Politics as a
Russian history, for example, we see that from Donskoj and until Peter I the significance, even the political significance of the clergy was constantly growing, and Orthodoxy itself was becoming stronger and stronger, was spreading, and entering more and more deeply into the flesh and blood of the Russian nation. The liberation of the Russian nation from the Tatar yoke did not bring with it either the withdrawal of the clergy from the political sphere or a lessening of its weight and influence or religious indifference in the higher classes or cosmopolitanism in morals and customs. The demands of Russian national emancipation in the time of St. Sergius of Radonezh and Prince Ivan Vasilievich III were combined in the souls of the people’s leaders not with those ideals and ideas with which national patriotism has been yoked in the nineteenth century in the minds of contemporary leaders. Then what seemed important was the rights of the faith, the rights of religion, the rights of God; the rights of that which Vladimir Soloviev so successfully called God’s power.

“In the nineteenth century what was thought to be important first of all was the rights of man, the rights of the popular mob, the rights of the people’s power. That is the difference.”

Leontiev concludes: “Now (after the proclamation of ‘the rights of man’) every union, every expulsion, every purification of the race from outside admixtures gives only cosmopolitan results [by which he means ‘democratisation within and assimilation (with other countries) without’].

“Then, when nationalism had in mind not so much itself as the interests of religion, the aristocracy, the monarch, etc., then it involuntarily produced itself. And whole nations and separate people at that time became more varied, more original and more powerful.

“Now, when nationalism seeks to liberate and form itself, to group people not in the name of the various, but interrelated interests of religion, the monarchy and privileged classes, but in the name of the unity and freedom of the race itself, the result turns out everywhere to be more or less uniformly democratic. All nations and all people are becoming more and more similar and as a consequence more and more spiritually poor.

“In our time political, state nationalism is becoming the destroyer of cultural, life-style nationalism.”

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The Ecumenical Patriarch was divided in his political loyalties, not only between the Turkish Sultan, to whom he had sworn an oath of allegiance, and the Free Kingdom of Greece, but also between the Sultan and the Tsar of Russia, whom Patriarch Jeremiah II had called “the Christian tsar throughout the inhabited earth for all Christians,” and whose kingdom he had explicitly called “the Third Rome”. In the Age of Revolution, whose main characteristic was the defiance of the Christian teaching on authority under the influence of the French revolutionary ideology, it was necessary for the first hierarch in Orthodoxy to give a good example in the carrying out of the Christian teaching. So the question was: whom was the Patriarch bound to obey as his political sovereign?

The answer might seem self-evident: if the Patriarch had sworn an oath of allegiance to the Sultan, and even commemorated the Sultan at the Divine Liturgy, the Sultan was his political master. Certainly, this was the position of Patriarch Gregory V, as we have seen, and of other distinguished teachers of the Greek nation, such as the Chian, Athanasios Parios. Moreover, even the Tsars had recognized the Sultan as a lawful ruler, and as lawful ruler of his Christian subjects, even to the extent of refusing their help when the Greeks rose up against the Sultan in 1821 (but not eight years later).

Runciman argues that the Russians “let down” the Greeks in this way. But this is an unjust comment if we accept the thesis that the Sultan was sincerely recognized by the Tsar as the lawful ruler of the Ottoman Empire and of the Christian inhabitants of that Empire. Moreover, over the centuries the Russians had steadily, and at enormous cost to themselves, pushed the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire southward, thereby significantly aiding the eventual liberation of the Balkan Orthodox.

But the situation was complicated by the fact that, even if the Patriarch commemorated the Sultan at the Liturgy, almost nobody else did! Thus Protopriest Benjamin Zhukov writes: “In Mohammedan Turkey the Orthodox did not pray for the authorities during Divine services, which was witnessed by pilgrims to the Sepulchre of the Lord in Jerusalem. Skaballonovich in his Interpreted Typicon writes: ‘With the coming of Turkish dominion, the prayers for the kings began to be excluded from the augmented and great litanies and to be substituted by: “Again we pray for the pious and Orthodox Christians” (p. 152). In Austro-Hungary the Orthodox Serbs and Romanians did not pray for their emperor Franz-Joseph, who was not Orthodox. In exactly the same way the names of King George, a Lutheran, and King Ferdinand, a Catholic, were not commemorated in Orthodox Greece and Bulgaria. Instead their Orthodox heirs to the throne were commemorated. This attitude to the authorities sometimes led to conflict with them. Thus in 1888 the Bulgarian

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605 Runciman, op. cit., p. 409.
Synod was dismissed by Ferdinand of Coburg, and the members of the Synod from the capital because they refused to offer prayer in the churches for the Catholic prince, who had offended the Orthodox Church by many of his actions. After this the government did not allow the Synod to assemble for six years…“

But perhaps commemoration and obedience are different matters, so that commemoration of an authority may be refused while obedience is granted… And perhaps the Mohammedan Sultan and the Catholic King Ferdinand could not be commemorated by name because no heterodox can be commemorated at the Divine Liturgy, but could still be prayed for as the lawful authorities in accordance with the apostolic command… For St. Paul called on the Christians to pray “for all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty” (I Timothy 2.2), although the authorities at that time were pagans…

However, there was one important difference between the pagan authorities of St. Paul’s time and the heterodox authorities of the nineteenth century. In the former case, the pagan Roman empire was the only political authority of the Oecumene. But in the latter case, there was a more lawful authority than the heterodox authorities – the Orthodox Christian authority of the Tsar.

The critical question, therefore, was: if there was a war between the Mohammedan or Catholic authorities, on the one side, and the Orthodox Tsar, on the other, whom were the Orthodox Christians of the Balkans to pray for and support?

This situation arose during the Crimean War. And during that war the Athonite Elder Hilarion the Georgian (whom we have met before as Fr. Ise, confessor of the Imeretian King Solomon II) instructed his disciple, Hieromonk Sabbas, to celebrate the Divine Liturgy every day and to pray for the Russians during it, and to read the whole Psalter and make many prostrations for the aid of “our Russian brethren”…

“When some time had passed,” witnesses Hieromonk Sabbas, “the elder said to me: ‘Let’s go to the monastery, let’s ask the abbot what they know about the war, whether the Russians are winning or the enemies.’ When we arrived at the monastery, the abbot with the proestoses showed us a paper which the Patriarch and one other hierarch had sent from Constantinople, for distributing to the serving hieromonks in all the monasteries. The Patriarch wrote that they were beseeching God, at the Great Entrance in the Divine Liturgy, to give strength to the Turkish army to subdue the Russians under the feet of the Turks. To this was attached a special prayer which had to be

606 Zhukov, Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ na Rodine i za Rubezhom (The Russian Orthodox Church in the Homeland and Abroad), Paris, 2005, pp. 18-19.
Elder Eulogius, had read us this patriarchal epistle and said: ‘He is not a Christian,’ and with sorrow asked: ‘Have you read this in the monastery during the Liturgy, as he writes?’ But they replied: ‘No! May it not be!’ But in the decree the Patriarch was threatening any monastery that did not carry out this order that it would suffer a very severe punishment. The next day we went back to our cell. A week passed. A monk came from Grigoriou monastery for the revealing of thoughts, and my elder asked him: ‘Did you read this prayer which the Patriarch sent to the monasteries?’ He replied: ‘Yes, it was read last Sunday during the Liturgy.’ The elder said: ‘You have not acted well in reading it; you have deprived yourselves of the grace of Holy Baptism, you have deprived your monastery of the grace of God; condemnation has fallen on you!’ This monk returned to the monastery and told his elders and abbot that ‘we have deprived the monastery of the grace of God, the grace of Holy Baptism – that is what Papa Hilarion is saying.’ On the same day a flood swept away the mill, and the fathers began to grumble against the abbot: ‘You have destroyed the monastery!’ In great sorrow the abbot hurried to make three prostrations before the icon of the Saviour and said: ‘My Lord Jesus Christ, I’m going to my spiritual father Hilarion to confess what I have done, and whatever penance he gives me I will carry it out, so that I should not suffer a stroke from sorrow.’ Taking with him one hierodeacon and one monk, he set off for the cell of the Holy Apostle James, where we living at the time. When they arrived, my elder was outside the cell. The abbot with his companions, on seeing my elder, fell face downwards in prostrations to the earth and said: ‘Bless, holy spiritual father.’ Then they went up to kiss his hand. But my elder shouted at them: ‘Go away, away from me; I do not accept heretics!’ The abbot said: ‘I have sinned, I have come to ask you to give me a penance.’ But the elder said: ‘How did you, wretched one, dare to place Mohammed higher than Christ? God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ says to His Son: “Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet” (Psalm 109.1), but you ask Him to put His Son under the feet of His enemies! Get away from me, I will not accept you.’ With tears the abbot besought the elder to receive him in repentance and give him a penance. But my elder said: ‘I am not your spiritual father, go, find a spiritual father and he will give you a penance.’ And leaving them outside his cell weeping, the elder went into it and locked the door with a key. What could we do? We went into my cell and there served an all-night vigil, beseeching God to incline the elder to mercy and give a penance to the abbot. In the morning the elder went into the church for the Liturgy, not saying a word to those who had arrived, and after the dismissal of the Liturgy he quickly left for his cell. Those who had arrived with the abbot began to worry that he would suffer a heart attack; they asked me to go in to the elder and call him; perhaps he would listen to me. I went, fell at his feet and asked him: ‘Be merciful, give them a penance – the abbot may suffer a stroke in the heart attack with fatal consequences.’ Then the elder asked me: ‘What penance shall I give them?
What epitimia should I give them which would propitiate God?

When I said to my father: ‘Elder, since I read the whole Psalter of the Prophet King David every day, as you told me, there is one psalm there which fits this case – the 82nd: “O God, who shall be likened unto Thee? Be Thou not silent, neither be still, O God…” Command them to read this psalm tomorrow during the Liturgy, when the Cherubic hymn is being sung, at the Great Entrance; let the hieromonk who read the prayer of the Patriarch before stand under the great chandelier, and when all the fathers come together during the Great Entrance, the priest must come out of the altar holding the diskos and chalice in his hands, then let one monk bring a parchment with this psalm written on it in front, and let the hieromonk, who has been waiting under the chandelier, read the whole psalm loudly to the whole brotherhood, and while they are reading it from the second to the ninth verses let them all repeat many times: “Lord, have mercy”. And when the remaining verses are being read, let them all say: “Amen!” And then the grace of God will again return to their monastery.’ The elder accepted my advice and asked me to call them. When they joyfully entered the cell and made a prostration, the elder said to them: ‘Carry out this penance, and the mercy of God will return to you.’ Then they began to be disturbed that the exarch sent by the Patriarch, who was caring for the fulfilment of the patriarchal decree in Karyes, might learn about this and might bring great woes upon the monastery. They did not know what to do. The elder said: ‘Since you are so frightened, I will take my hieromonk and go to the monastery; and if the exarch or the Turks hear about it, tell them: only Monk Hilarion the Georgian ordered us to do this, and we did it, and and you will be without sorrow.’ Then the abbot said: ‘Spiritual father, we are also worried and sorrowful about you, because when the Turks will learn about this, they will come here, take you, tie you up in sacks and drown you both in the sea.’ My elder replied: ‘We are ready, my hieromonk and I, let them drown us.’ Then we all together set off in the boat for Grigoriou monastery. When the brothers of the monastery saw us, they rejoiced greatly. In the morning we arranged that the hieromonk who had read the prayer of the Patriarch should himself liturgize; they lit the chandelier during the Cherubic hymn, and when all the fathers were gathered together and the server had come out of the altar preceded by the candle and candle-holder and carrying the chalice and diskos on his head and in his hands, he declared: “May the Lord remember you all in His Kingdom”, and stopped under the great chandelier. Then one monk, having in his hand the parchment with the 82nd psalm written on it, stood in front of the priest and began to read: “O God, who shall be likened unto Thee? Be Thou not silent, neither be still, O God…” – to the end. Meanwhile the fathers called out: “Lord, have mercy” until the 10th verse, and then everyone said: “Amen” many times. And they all understood that the grace of God had again come down on the monastery, and the elders from joy embraced men, thanking me that I had done such a good thing for them; and everyone glorified and thanked God.’
All this took place under Patriarch Anthimus VI. At the end of the war he was again removed from his throne. After this he came to Athos and settled in the monastery of Esphigmenou, where he had been tonsured. Once, in 1856, on a certain feast-day, he wanted to visit the monastery of St. Panteleimon, where Fr. Hilarion was at that time. During the service the Patriarch was standing in the cathedral of the Protection on the hierarchical see. Father Hilarion passed by him with Fr. Sabbas; he didn’t even look at the venerable Patriarch, which the latter immediately noticed. The Patriarch was told about the incident with the prayer in Grigoriou monastery. At the end of the service, as usual, all the guests were invited to the guest-house. The Patriarch, wanting somehow to extract himself from his awkward situation in the eyes of the Russians and Fr. Hilarion, started a conversation on past events and tried to develop the thought that there are cases when a certain ‘economia’ is demanded, and the care of the Church sometimes requires submission also to some not very lawful demands of the government, if this serves for the good of the Church. ‘And so we prayed for the granting of help from on high to our Sultan, and in this way disposed him to mercifulness for our Church and her children, the Orthodox Christians.’ When Patriarch Anthimus, under whom the schism with the Bulgarians took place, arrived on Athos after his deposition, and just stepped foot on the shore, the whole of the Holy Mountain shuddered from an underground quake and shook several times. All this was ascribed by the Athonites to the guilt of the Patriarch, and the governing body sent an order throughout the Mountain that they should pray fervently to God that He not punish the inhabitants of the Holy Mountain with His righteous wrath, but that He have mercy according to His mercy.”

Thus there was a fine line to be drawn between submission to the Sultan as the lawful sovereign, and a too-comfortable adaptation to the conditions of this Babylonian captivity. The Tsar considered that the Orthodox peoples did not have the right to rebel against the Sultan of their own will, without the blessing of himself as the Emperor of the Third Rome. But the corollary of this view was that when the Tsar entered into war with the Sultan, it was the duty of the Orthodox subjects of the Sultan to pray for victory for the Tsar. For, as Fr. Hilarion said, echoing the words of St. Seraphim: “The other peoples’ kings often make themselves out to be something great, but not one of them is a king in reality, but they are only adorned and flatter themselves with a great name, but God is not favourably disposed towards them, and does not abide in them. They reign only in part by the condescension of God. Therefore he who does not love his God-established tsar is not worthy of being called a Christian.”

608 Hieromonk Anthony of the Holy Mountain, Ocherki Zhizni i Podvizov Startsa Ieroskhimonakha Ilariona Gruzina (Sketches of the Life and Struggles of Elder Hieroschemamonk Hilarion the Georgian), Jordanville, 1985, p. 95.