AN ESSAY IN UNIVERSAL HISTORY

From an Orthodox Christian Point of View

PART 3. THE AGE OF REVOLUTION (1789 TO 1861)

Volume 2: from 1830 to 1861

Vladimir Moss

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A state without a Monarch is like an Orchestra without a Conductor [Kapellemeister].

Alexander Pushkin.

The human I, wishing to depend only on itself, not recognizing and not accepting any other law besides its own will - in a word, the human I, taking the place of God, - does not, of course, constitute something new among men. But such 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.

F.I. Tiutchev, Russia and the Revolution (1848).

Liberalism in religion is the doctrine that there is no positive truth in religion, but that one creed is as good as another, and this is the teaching which is gathering substance and force daily. It is inconsistent with any recognition of any religion, as true. It teaches that all are to be tolerated, for all are matters of opinion.

Cardinal Newman, Biglietto Speech.

Come to me, Lucifer, Satan, whoever you may be! Devil whom the faith of my fathers contrasted with God and the Church. I will act as spokesman for you and will demand nothing of you.

Proudhon, Idée générale de la révolution.

Some people by the word “freedom” understand the ability to do whatever one wants ... People who have the more allowed themselves to come into slavery to sins, passions, and defilements more often than others appear as zealots of external freedom, wanting to broaden the laws as much as possible. But such a man uses external freedom only to more severely burden himself with inner slavery. True freedom is the active ability of a man who is not enslaved to sin, who is not pricked by a condemning conscience, to choose the better in the light of God’s truth, and to bring it into actuality with the help of the gracious power of God. This is the freedom of which neither heaven nor earth are restrictors.

St. Philaret of Moscow, Sermon on the Birthday of Emperor Nicholas I, 1851.

In democracy there is a terrible power of destruction.

Alexander Herzen.

The root elements of our Russian life have been characterized long ago, and they are so powerfully and completely expressed by the familiar words: Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality. That is what we must preserve! When these principles become weaker or fail, the Russian people will cease to be Russian. It will then lose its sacred three-coloured flag.

St. Theophan the Recluse, Letters, VII, p. 289.
III. THE WEST: LIBERALISM, SOCIALISM, IMPERIALISM, NATIONALISM (1830-1861)
34. LIBERTY AND LIBERALISM

The Bourbon restoration in 1815 did not restore full absolutism. For if the Jacobin tyranny, and the Napoleonic one that followed it, were now discredited, there were few who wanted a return to the absolutism of the old regime. And so, while Louis XVIII's powers were declared to rest on a divine mandate, a bicameral legislature on the English model was established, and in 1821 the rights of citizens to freedom of religion and thought were reaffirmed. However, Louis's successor, Charles X, attempted to turn the clock back, and his coronation ceremony in Rheims in 1825 had all the ceremonial of the ancien regime, including the medieval practice of touching for scrofula. But he was not popular, and in 1830 he was overthrown.

The July Days introduced a constitutional monarchy headed by another Bourbon, Louis-Philippe, the Duke of Orléans. As Alistair Horne writes, “his acceptability to both sides in 1830 stemmed largely from the fact that his father had been the duplicitous regicide Philippe Egalité – though apostasy had not sufficed to save his neck during the Terror. Louis-Philippe had been nominated for the post of Lieutenant-General of the Kingdom by both Charles X and the Commune of Paris, and for the remainder of his eighteen-year rule between revolutions he would do his utmost to be all things to all sides. It was symbolic that the last King of France, the very antithesis of Louis XIV, accepted the crown not at Rheims but in the Palais Bourbon, as the politically elected ruler of ‘the people’. Shorn of all mystical or inherited droits, the People’s King had little more power than a British constitutional monarch…”

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2 Even allies of De Maistre, such as the ultra-royalist and ultramontane priest Felicité de Lamennais became disillusioned with Charles X. 'To Lamennais, the July 1830 revolution was providential; the world was to be given a new lease of life through freedom and freedom was to be given a new lease of life through God. With his friends Lacordaire, Montalembert, de Coux and Gerbet, on 15 October 1830 Lamennais founded a journal with the title L'Avenir (The Future), which carried at its masthead 'God and Freedom'. The journal was of interest to those who were fighting for independence: the Poles, the Irish. It proposed a renewal of the church and society based on freedom: freedom of conscience and worship without distinction, the separation of church and state, the freedom of the press and of association, decentralization, and so on. De Coux aroused his readers to the social question. The tone of the journal was sometimes over the top. The bishops, who thought that the idea of separation of church and state was unthinkable, showed their disapproval by applying indirect sanctions against the subscribers. L'Avenir ceased publication on 15 November 1831. Frowned on by the French bishops, Lamennais, Lacordaire and Montalembert decided to take their case to the pope, whom they had always supported. 'Pilgrims for God and Freedom', they arrived in Rome at the end of December 1831 at a rather inopportune time. The pilgrims waited three months before having a disappointing meeting with Gregory XVI, at which neither the question of L'Avenir nor future preoccupations were raised. The publication of the letter from the Pope to the Polish bishops in June 1832 infuriated Lamennais, who left Rome, which he called 'this gigantic tomb where there are only bones to be found'. A few weeks later, on 15 August 1832, the encyclical Mirari vos appeared which, without naming Lamennais, condemned all his ideas and those of L'Avenir. (Jean Comby, How to Read Church History, London: SCM Press, 1989, vol. 1, pp. 129-130).
The difference between the revolutions of 1789 and 1830 consisted in the latter's concentration on broadening electoral suffrage and in its more openly commercial flavour, in keeping with the new spirit of commercial enterprise. “The July revolution,” wrote Alexis de Tocqueville, “was carried out by the people, but the middle class which had touched it off and led it, was the chief beneficiary”.4 “Master of everything, as no aristocracy had ever been or perhaps will never be, the middle class, which one has to call the governing class, having entrenched itself in power and soon afterwards in its self-interest, seemed like a private industry. Each of its members scarcely gave a thought to public affairs except to make them function to profit his own private business, and had no difficulty in forgetting the lower orders in his little cocoon of affluence. Posterity will possibly never realize how far the government of the day had in the end taken on the appearance of an industrial company, where all operations are carried out with a view to the benefit the shareholders can draw from them.”5

A theory now had to be devised that would guard the triumphant middle classes against both the earlier and more recent forms of tyranny. Such a theory was liberalism…

“Liberalism,” writes Norman Davies, “developed along two parallel tracks, the political and the economic. Political liberalism focused on the essential concept of government by consent. It took its name from the liberales of Spain, who drew up their Constitution of 1812 in opposition to the arbitrary powers of the Spanish monarchy; but it had its roots much further back, in the political theories of the Enlightenment and beyond. Indeed, for much of its early history it was indistinguishable from the growth of limited government. Its first lasting success may be seen in the American Revolution, though it drew heavily on the experiences of British parliamentarianism and on the first, constitutional phase of the Revolution in France. In its most thoroughgoing form it embraced republicanism, though most liberals welcomed a popular, limited, and fair-minded monarch as a factor encouraging stability. Its advocates stressed above all the rule of law, individual liberty, constitutional procedures, religious toleration and the universal rights of man. They opposed the inbuilt prerogatives, wherever they survived, of Crown, Church, or aristocracy. Nineteenth-century liberals also gave great weight to property, which they saw as the principal source of responsible judgement and solid citizenship. As a result, whilst taking the lead in clipping the wings of absolutism and in laying the foundations of modern democracy, they were not prepared to envisage radical schemes for universal suffrage or for egalitarianism.

“Economic liberalism focused on the concept of free trade, and on the associated doctrine of laissez-faire, which opposed the habit of governments to regulate economic life through protectionist tariffs. It stressed the right of men of property to engage in commercial and industrial activities without undue restraint. Its energies were directed on the one hand to dismantling the economic

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5 De Tocqueville, in Cohen and Major, op. cit., p. 553.
barriers which had proliferated both within and between countries and on the other to battling against all forms of collectivist organization, from the ancient guild to the new trade unions.”

Liberalism was an individualist creed in that its aim, in line with the main stream of intellectual development since the Renaissance, was the maximum development and happiness of individual men. It was concerned to protect individual freedoms from the encroachment of all collectives, including the State. However, trends towards individualism have always gone hand in hand historically with trends in the opposite, collectivist direction; and the horrors caused by liberal individualism elicited the growth of socialist collectivism...

“The core beliefs of mid-nineteenth century liberalism,” writes John Darwin, “sprang from the contemplation of this fearful period of European history [the French revolution and the Napoleonic wars]. Escape from the cycle of war and revolution required political institutions that would defend the state equally against popular revolt and parvenu despotism. Rulers must be more ‘legitimate’. They needed the loyalty of a wider range of communities and interests. Their servants and officials must be kept in check, ideally by a representative body. That raised the question of who should represent whom. Most of all it raised the question of how far a government should regulate the social and economic life of its citizens. Liberalism’s answer to this was the key to its position, the fundamental premise of its political theory.

“It was brilliantly sketched by the Swiss-born Frenchman Benjamin Constant, whose political writings were a fierce rejection of revolutionary violence and Napoleonic tyranny. Constant argued that ordinary people were bound to resist interference in their private and social lives and that arbitrary acts by the state destroyed the mutual trust between individuals on which all social and commercial relations depended. He distinguished between the proper (and narrow) sphere of authority and the wider realm (what would now be called ‘civil society’) in which the self-regulation of private interests should prevail. Modern societies, he suggested, were too complex to be ruled politically after the fashion of an ancient city state – the model to which many earlier writers (including Rousseau) had appealed. Diversity, pluralism and localism were the secret of stability and freedom. Secondly, the legislators, to whom the executive should answer, should be drawn from those least likely to favour the extension of arbitrary power or to be seduced by a demagogue. Politics should be the preserve of the propertied, who would exert a wholesome (and educated) influence on the ‘labouring poor’. The propertied were the true guardians of the public interest. Thirdly, it was necessary for property rights and other civil freedoms to be protected by well-established rules – an idea that implied the codification of the law and its machinery.

“Constant advanced a further crucial justification for his liberal system: it alone was compatible with social progress. All forms of arbitrary government

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tended sooner or later to impose uniformity. Yet without freedom of thought all societies were condemned to stagnate, since the expression and exchange of ideas was the means of advance in every sphere. Indeed, without the free circulation of ideas, governments themselves would scarcely know what course to pursue. Neither Constant nor the liberal thinkers who followed him intended to promote an anarchy of ideas. Their real concern was with the intellectual freedom of the educated, enlightened and propertied. For (or so they assumed) it was these who were the real political nation, the defenders of freedom, the engineers of improvement. Under their tutelage, civil society would be freed, but also dynamic.

“Of course, a sea of arguments swirled around these beliefs. Could a hereditary monarch be trusted as head of state, or was a republic the only safe form of representative government? Could women be part of the political nation, or was their ‘physical faculty’ a decisive bar? Did commercial and industrial wealth confer political virtue on its possessors, or did this spring only from property in land? Was religion the enemy of freedom of thought or the vital prop of social morality? Should the laws embody the ‘custom of the country’ (and become the subject of historical inquiry) or (as the ‘utilitarian’ followers of Jeremy Bentham believed) emancipate society from the ‘dead hand’ of the past? Then there was the question that vexed liberalism more perhaps than any other: was the achievement of ‘nationality’ – a shared ethnic, linguistic and (sometimes) religious identity – the essential precondition for liberal institutions to function properly? And what if the pursuit of nationality conflicted with the central tenets of the liberal programme: freedom of thought and the strict limitation of government power? Was nationalism a forward-looking ideology or (except in a few and ‘progressive’ places) a creed of the backward and benighted?”

All of these contradictory tendencies were present in the original French revolution, which was at first liberal in character, but later developed a socialist and totalitarian character, and ended up in the nationalism of the Napoleonic empire. Which of these tendencies triumphed depended largely on the circumstances in which the struggle took place - that of oppressed individuals or classes within a sovereign nation or oppressed nations within a multi-ethnic empire. As yet the potential conflicts between the two - for the fact the liberation of the nation might mean putting off the liberation of the individual for the time being, and vice-versa - were only dimly perceived.

Still less clearly perceived was the fact that the revolution could not be used to make limited reforms, and then stopped in its tracks before it became "dangerous". The path that the first French revolution took after 1792 should have made that obvious. But many conservative liberals who took part in the second French revolution of 1830 deluded themselves into thinking that the further development of the revolutionary idea could now be arrested. They

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thought they could sow the wind without reaping the whirlwind, as if the genie could be let out of the bottle to do some "cleaning", and then put back again before the breeze became a hurricane. They failed to see that the revolution was not a rational human desire for limited, reasonable reform but an irrational, elemental, satanic force whose ultimate aim was simply total destruction.

The most typical of these conservative liberals was François Guizot, Prime Minister of France in the 1840s. In 1820, when Louis XVIII's Charter conceded legal equality, religious toleration and the necessity for parliamentary consent to new laws on taxation, he declared: "I consider the revolution of 1789 to be over. All its interests and legitimate wishes are guaranteed by the Charter. What France needs now is to do away with the revolutionary spirit which still torments her."8

Guizot wanted to believe that the "freedom" aimed at by the revolutionaries of 1789 and 1830 was quite different from the "freedom" aimed at by the revolutionaries of 1793. As he said in December, 1830: "the spirit of revolution, the spirit of insurrection, is a spirit radically opposed to liberty".9 Therefore according to Guizot the revolution could conveniently stop in 1830, when the middle classes were put back in the saddle after the period of reaction under Charles X, and not go on to anything really radical and unpleasant. But is there really such a radical opposition between the "freedom from" of the liberals and the "freedom to" of the sans-culottes? How can one and not the other be called "the spirit of insurrection" when both attained their ends by means of bloody insurrection against the established order?

Guizot's real ideal was not the French revolution, but the "Glorious" English one of 1688, a relatively bloodless affair that put the men of property firmly in power. He thought that "moderate" revolutions such as 1688 and 1789 could somehow avert "radical" ones such as 1793. That is why he supported the overthrow of Charles X in 1830, hoping that Louis Philippe could play the role of William of Orange to Charles X's James II: "We did not choose the king but negotiated with a prince [Orléans] we found next to the throne and who alone could by mounting it guarantee our public law and save us from revolutions... Our minds were guided by the English Revolution of 1688, by the fine and free government it founded, and the wonderful prosperity it brought to the British nation."10 And since the English Revolution had put the middle classes into power (although only after the Reform Act of 1832 did they really begin to acquire power at the ballot box), he wanted the same for France. "I want," he said, "to secure the political preponderance of the middle classes in France, the final and complete organization of the great victory that the middle classes have won over privilege and absolute power from 1789 to 1830."11

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9 Guizot, in Almond, op. cit., p. 95.
10 Guizot, in Almond, op. cit., p. 93.
11 Guizot, in Cohen and Major, op. cit., p. 552.
But Louis Philippe, though more liberal than his predecessor, was not liberal enough for the Zeitgeist. He sought to establish a "golden mean" between absolutism and Jacobinism. As he said in a speech from the throne in January, 1831: "We seek to hold to the juste milieu [golden mean] equally distant from the excesses of popular power and the abuses of royal authority".12

But such a "golden mean" was attained only by the English in the nineteenth century for any long period of time. Louis Philippe's reign was cut off by a more radical revolution, that of 1848, which was succeeded by the still more radical revolution of the Paris Commune in 1870. For why should the spirit of liberty favour only the men of property and not also the proletariat? Guizot and Louis Philippe are clear examples of the inconsistency and ultimate ineffectiveness of those who oppose revolution, not root and branch, but only in its more obviously unpleasant and radical manifestations.

The vanity of the liberal hope of "limited revolution" was demonstrated by Hieromonk Seraphim (Rose): "In the Christian order, "politics... was founded upon absolute truth... The principal providential form government took in union with Christian Truth was the Orthodox Christian Empire, wherein sovereignty was vested in a Monarch, and authority proceeded from him downwards through a hierarchical social structure... On the other hand... a politics that rejects Christian Truth must acknowledge 'the people' as sovereign and understand authority as proceeding from below upwards, in a formally 'egalitarian' society. It is clear that one is the perfect inversion of the other; for they are opposed in their conceptions both of the source and of the end of government. Orthodox Christian Monarchy is government divinely established, and directed, ultimately, to the other world, government with the teaching of Christian Truth and the salvation of souls as its profoundest purpose; Nihilist rule - whose most fitting name... is Anarchy - is government established by men, and directed solely to this world, government which has no higher aim than earthly happiness.

"The Liberal view of government, as one might suspect, is an attempt at compromise between these two irreconcilable ideas. In the 19th century this compromise took the form of 'constitutional monarchies', an attempt - again - to wed an old form to a new content; today the chief representatives of the Liberal idea are the 'republics' and 'democracies' of Western Europe and America, most of which preserve a rather precarious balance between the forces of authority and Revolution, while professing to believe in both.

"It is of course impossible to believe in both with equal sincerity and fervor, and in fact no one has ever done so. Constitutional monarchs like Louis Philippe thought to do so by professing to rule 'by the Grace of God and the will of the people' - a formula whose two terms annul each other, a fact as evident to the Anarchist [Bakunin] as to the Monarchist.

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12 Guizot, in Cohen and Major, op. cit., p. 552
"Now a government is secure insofar as it has God for its foundation and His Will for its guide; but this, surely, is not a description of Liberal government. It is, in the Liberal view, the people who rule, and not God; God Himself is a 'constitutional monarch' Whose authority has been totally delegated to the people, and Whose function is entirely ceremonial. The Liberal believes in God with the same rhetorical fervor with which he believes in Heaven. The government erected upon such a faith is very little different, in principle, from a government erected upon total disbelief; and whatever its present residue of stability, it is clearly pointed in the direction of Anarchy.

"A government must rule by the Grace of God or by the will of the people, it must believe in authority or in the Revolution; on these issues compromise is possible only in semblance, and only for a time. The Revolution, like the disbelief which has always accompanied it, cannot be stopped halfway; it is a force that, once awakened, will not rest until it ends in a totalitarian Kingdom of this world. The history of the last two centuries has proved nothing if not this. To appease the Revolution and offer it concessions, as Liberals have always done, thereby showing that they have no truth with which to oppose it, is perhaps to postpone, but not to prevent, the attainment of its end. And to oppose the radical Revolution with a Revolution of one's own, whether it be 'conservative', 'non-violent', or 'spiritual', is not merely to reveal ignorance of the full scope and nature of the Revolution of our time, but to concede as well the first principle of the Revolution: that the old truth is no longer true, and a new truth must take its place."¹³

The revolution in ideas went hand in hand with the industrial revolution. The origins of the industrial revolution are to be found in the English agrarian revolution of the eighteenth century. Its essential features were the "privatization" of the common land (in England, the pioneer in both the agrarian and industrial revolutions, through the Enclosure Acts of 1760 to 1830), its more efficient capitalist exploitation by a new breed of capitalist landowners, creating a new surplus in food and market in agricultural produce, and the destruction of the feudal bonds that bound the peasant to the land that he worked and the landowner for whom he worked. This led to the creation of a large number of landless agricultural labourers who, in the absence of work in the countryside, sought it in the new industrial enterprises that were being created in the towns to exploit a series of important technological innovations.

The most important of these innovations from a purely political point of view was in communications. "The most famous demonstration," writes Davies, "of the value of superior communication was staged on 19 June 1815, when Nathan Rothschild made a record killing on the London stock market, having used a special yacht to bring news of Waterloo many hours in advance of his rivals."¹⁴

But yachts were as nothing compared to the new, machine-produced means of communication, such as the electric telegraph (1835) and the modern newspapers.

The impact of the explosion in newspaper reading was so great that the Austrian Chancellor Metternich wondered "whether society can exist along with the liberty of the press." Indeed, his secretary Friedrich Gentz wrote in 1819 to Adam Mueller: "I continue to defend the proposition: 'In order that the press may not be abused, nothing whatever shall be printed in the next... years. Period.' If this principle were to be applied as a binding rule, a very few rare exceptions being authorized by a very clearly superior Tribunal, we should within a brief time find our way back to God and Truth."16

But the press could not be muzzled. And so in the 1848 revolution, "even the most arch-reactionary Prussian junkers discovered... that they required a newspaper capable of influencing 'public opinion' - in itself a concept linked with liberalism and incompatible with traditional hierarchy." As the poet Robert Southey wrote: "The steam engine and the spinning engines, the mail coach and the free publication of the debates in parliament... Hence follow in natural and necessary consequences increased activity, enterprise, wealth and power; but on the other hand, greediness of gain, looseness of principle, wretchedness, disaffection and political insecurity."18

The world as we know it today is largely the product of this dual revolution - the liberal revolution and the industrial revolution - that took place in the central decades of the nineteenth century. Its main workshop and demonstration hall was Britain, where both liberalism and industrialism had been born in the eighteenth century - not for nothing was it called the Victorian age after Britain’s queen. It was on the back of this dual revolution that a third would break out – the communist revolution...

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35. THE GEOPOLITICS OF SLAVERY

As the nineteenth century progressed, one issue threatened to divide the Great Powers between and within themselves: slavery. At the Vienna Congress in 1815, they had agreed “a common statement that the slave trade was repugnant to the principles of humanity and universal morality. For the moment this was mere aspiration, but the potentially huge international ramifications of the issue were already clear…”

These ramifications revolved around the fact that while the victors of 1815 had declared themselves against slavery, in the eyes of many liberals and revolutionaries the monarchical regimes of Russia, Prussia and Austria kept the peasants and subject nations of their empires in virtual slavery, or at any rate serfdom. This gave a propaganda advantage to the only victor nation that had – officially, if not yet de facto in all her dominions - abolished slavery and serfdom, Britain, and it allowed the British, while formally belonging to the monarchical, anti-revolutionary Holy Alliance, to interfere on the side of liberals and revolutionaries in such places as Spain and Italy. Of course, it may plausibly be argued that the condition of industrial workers in Britain, as of many millions of subjects in the British empire, was little short of slavery; but the propaganda advantage remained, and was used vigorously by the British.

Let us see how Britain played the slavery card by looking briefly at the development of the abolitionist movement...

In the early modern period, writes Henry Kissinger, “the West expanded with the familiar hallmarks of colonialism – avariciousness, cultural chauvinism, lust for glory. But it is also true that its better elements tried to lead a kind of global tutorial in an intellectual method that encouraged skepticism and a body of political and diplomatic practices including democracy. It all but ensured that, after long periods of subjugation, the colonized peoples would eventually demand – and achieve self-determination. Even during their most brutal deprivations, the expansionist powers put forth, especially in Britain, a vision that at some point conquered peoples would begin to participate in the fruits of a common global system…”

Since the anti-slavery movement was all about freedom and equality, one would have expected the revolutionary French to take the lead in it. But it was anti-revolutionary British who initiated this most liberal of causes rather than the revolutionary French. “Gradually in the 18th century an anti-slavery lobby built up in Europe, notably in Britain, the superpower of the seas. In 1772 Lord Mansfield, a judge, ruled that a runaway slave there could not be forced back by his master to the West Indies. The ruling was interpreted (questionably, but this was the effect) as confirming that there could be no slavery in Britain.”

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Then, “in later May 1787, a group of parliamentarians, doctors, clergymen and others met in London to form the ‘Committee of the Society for the purpose of effecting the abolition of the Slave Trade’. Its supporters were driven by an often religiously inspired sense of humanitarian outrage at the whole concept of slavery, and especially the horrors of the ‘middle passage’, the transportation across the Atlantic. In mid-April 1791, William Wilberforce’s parliamentary bill demanding the abolition of the slave trade failed, but put the issue firmly on the political agenda. The slaves, of course, were not passive recipients of western benevolence. In August 1791 a major counter-revolutionary revolt broke out in the French Caribbean colony of Saint-Domingue led by plantation slaves outraged not only by the Revolution’s continued toleration of slavery and its failure to extend the rights of man to *gens de couleur* but also by its treatment of the king and revealed religion. Their leaders regarded themselves as African tribal chiefs rather than representatives of the people. Left to their own devices the revolting slaves would probably have set up a political system similar to the traditional slave-owning African kingdoms from they had originally come; they regularly sold black captives to the Spanish and British. The revolt was a major headache for the European powers, especially Britain and Spain, who drew much of their revenue, and thus their European leverage, from slave plantations in the Caribbean, and the Americans, who feared that the example of Haiti would inflame the black population of the Southern states. The relationship between slavery and the international balance was thus very close…”

Thus James Walvin writes: “The emergence of the independent black republic of Haiti from the wreckage of plantation slavery in St. Domingue sent shock waves throughout the Americas. It also sent refugees (white and black) fleeing to other islands, especially to neighbouring Jamaica, and to North America, with terrifying tales of what had happened. Defenders of the slave trade (and slavery) felt vindicated. Here was living proof of all their warnings: if you tamper with the slave system, catastrophe would inevitably follow. It was a powerful blow against British abolition [the movement for which had been building up for over fifty years] and it was reinforced by subsequent military disasters.

“St. Domingue was a temptation to the British. It was a fruitful colony whose sugar and coffee threatened to displace British Caribbean produce on world markets. For William Pitt, the opportunity to seize St. Domingue, and to add it to Britain’s necklace of Caribbean possessions, proved too good to resist. But Pitt’s plans took little notice of Haitian leader and former slave Toussaint L’Ouverture’s rebellious slaves on the island or of tropical disease, and the British invading force was soon overwhelmed. The loss of life was horrendous and the whole endeavour proved a military debacle whose significance was camouflaged by being so distant from the metropolis. Pitt’s aims of augmenting Britain’s slave possessions ended in the deaths of more than 40,000 men…”

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In 1799, the French under Napoleon tried to take back the colony. According to Claude Ribbe, more than 100,000 slaves died in many barbarous ways. In 1802 Napoleon was proclaiming: “Never will the French Nation give chains to men whom it has once recognized as free.” And yet in the same year his forces tried to reintroduce slavery, only to be defeated by black soldiers singing the Marseillaise... “In 1804,” writes Joanna Bourke, “Haitians waged the first successful anti-colonial revolution, to found the first black republic. Their armed struggle won them a nation to call their own at colossal cost. The fury of the entire Western world turned against the new nation, ostracizing them and even insisting that former slaves pay compensation to their owners. Well into the twentieth century, the poorest country in the Western hemisphere was paying this financial debt to one of the world’s strongest economies, France.”

In 1807 the British parliament banned the slave trade, although slavery itself was not banned in the British Empire until 1833, and did not end in the British Caribbean until 1838. “The United States followed suit that same year, in accordance with the constitutional agreement of 1787 to end the trade after twenty years, and banned the carriage of slaves under its own flag. This marked the beginning of a subversive new abolitionist geopolitics, based on the coercive power of the Royal Navy...”

The hub of the geopolitical confrontation after 1815 was between Britain and Russia. The British saw themselves, somewhat pompously and hypocritically, as the champions of liberty everywhere, and did not care much if their interventions on behalf of what they considered to be liberty, whether in Spain, Italy, Poland or outside Europe, offended their monarchical allies, Russia, Prussia and Austria. “The Russians, for their part,” writes Simms, “saw Austria and Prussia as a counter-revolutionary dam or breakwater which would halt, or at least slow down, subversive currents before they reached Poland, and ultimately Russia itself. It was with this in mind that the tsar exerted pressure on Berlin to disavow ministers who wanted to cooperate with liberal nationalism. He got his way after the death of Motz and the replacement of Bernstorff by the conservative Friedrich Ancillon as foreign minister in the early 1830s. In 1833, the three eastern powers came together at Münchengrätz, to agree a joint policy of stability on conservative principles in central Europe and the Ottoman Empire. Two years later, Berlin and St. Petersburg advertised their solidarity by holding joint manoeuvres in Poland. The counter-revolution was closing ranks across Europe.

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24 Ian Sparks, “How Napoleon’s massacre of 100,000 blacks inspired Hitler”, Daily Mail, November 30, 2005, p. 35.
27 Bourke, What it Means to be Human, London: Virago, 2011, p. 128. By a profound irony, “according to one estimate, Haiti has more slaves [today] than any other country outside Asia.” (op. cit., p. 152)
“In the west, liberal and constitutionalist powers were quick to pick up the gauntlet. British foreign policy, in particular, manifested an emancipatory and at times almost messianic streak. This reflected a strong sense that European peace and Britain’s own security depended, as the Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, put it, on the ‘maintenance of the liberties and independence of all other nations’. On his reading, the survival of freedom in Britain required its defence throughout Europe: constitutional states were thus her ‘natural allies’. There was also a broader feeling that Britain should, as Palmerston argued in August 1832, ‘interfere by friendly counsel and advice’, in order to ‘maintain the liberties and independence of all other nations’ and thus to ‘throw her moral weight into the scale of any people who are spontaneously striving for… rational government, and to extend as far and as fast as possible civilization all over the world’. In other words, Britain would not ‘interfere’ in the internal affairs of other countries, or impose her values on unwilling populations, but she pledged her support to those who were willing to take the initiative – who were ‘spontaneously striving’ – to claim their liberal birthright.

“Globally, the main battlefront was the international slave trade, and, increasingly, the institution of slavery itself. In 1833, slavery was finally abolished throughout the British Empire, which led a year later to the establishment of a French abolitionist society. A cross-Channel Franco-British agitation against the slave trade now began, and a joint governmental programme for its eradication became a real possibility. This cleared the way for a more robust policy against the international slave trade, which the Royal Navy had been battling with varying success since 1807. The newly independent Central and South American states had just abolished slavery, while Britain forced Madrid to give up the legal importation of slaves in 1820, and was increasing the pressure on Spain to abolish slavery altogether in her only remaining large colony of Cuba. In 1835, London and Madrid concluded a treaty to limit the slave trade; for the moment this agreement was honoured on the Spanish side, but it was a further step in the international de-legitimation of the trade. The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society was founded in 1838, and two years later the World Anti-Slavery Convention took place in London. Tensions with Portugal, whose ships still carried the lucrative human cargo to Brazil, rose.

“In the United States, on the other hand, the issue of slavery became increasingly contentious in domestic and foreign policy, at the very moment when the new cotton economy was taking off in the South. In January 1820, the Missouri Compromise determined that – with the exception of the state of Missouri itself – there should be no slavery north of the 36°30’ parallel, but this agreement was under attack from both sides of the divide. William Lloyd Garrison founded his abolitionist newspaper, The Liberator, in 1831. Public opinion in the Northern states became more and more radical in opposition if not to slavery in the South, then at least to its extension to the west. Southerners, for their part, eyed not only the domestic but also the international scene with misgivings. Further west, French influence in Mexico was on the rise, reflected in their temporary occupation of Veracruz, ostensibly in order to enforce the payment of Mexico’s international debt; they were also active in California. It
was clear that if the United States did not move into the vacuum to her west and south, another power would. And yet, so long as slavery divided North and South, no domestic consensus on expansion was possible. The inexorable westwards march of the United States therefore ground to a twenty-year halt.

“The main focus of the new geopolitics, however, was Europe. With liberal – but not radical – governments in Paris after 1830, and in London from 1832, France and Britain were now ideologically aligned. In 1834, both powers responded to Münchgrätz by coming together with liberal-constitutionalist Spain and Portugal to form the Quadruple Alliance. ‘The Triple League of despotic governments,’ Palmerston exulted, ‘will now be counter-balanced by a Quadruple Alliance in the west.’ The continent was now split into two ideologically divided camps. Once hopeful of Alexander’s intentions, liberal opinion saw the Tsarist Empire of Nicholas I as the bulwark of reaction across Europe. The British writer Robert Bremner noted at the end of the decade that the European press was teeming with books painting Russia as the ‘most boundless, irresistible… most formidable, and best consolidated [power] that every threatened the liberties and rights of man’. ”

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30 Simms, op. cit., pp. 198-201.
36. SLAVERY IN AMERICA

The main justification for the American Civil War of 1861-65 from the North's point of view was, of course, the existence of slavery in the South. "Most Northerners," writes Reynolds, "were not passionate to abolish slavery itself, but there was widespread opposition to slavery's extension into the western lands because that would undercut free labour and increase the South's influence in Washington." Not even Abraham Lincoln was an abolitionist at first. In his inaugural address in March, 1861 he declared: "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists." And again he said: "If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that." However, the proclamation of emancipation on New Year's Day 1863 - designed mainly to attract blacks into the Northern Armies - changed the nature of the war, in Yankee eyes, from one of unification (of North and South) into one of liberation (of the black slaves).

"Today," writes John Keegan, "Lincoln would be unable to deliver the speeches on which he won the nomination in 1860. Lincoln, as he expressly made clear, did not believe in the personal equality of black and white. He held the black man to be the white's inferior and irredeemably so. He also, however, held the black man to be the white's legal equal, with an equality recognised by the founding laws of the United States, a recognition requiring legal empowerment. Blacks must have the same access to the law as whites, and exercise the same political rights.

"Most Southerners held an exactly contrary view and believed that unless the inequality of blacks was legally enforced, their own way of life would be overthrown. Some Southern ideologues argued fervently that slavery was a guarantee of freedom, not only the freedom of the whites to live as they did and to organise the Southern states as they were organised but the freedom of the blacks also, since slavery protected the blacks from the economic harshness suffered by the labouring poor in the Northern factory system. Books were written to argue and demonstrate the case, and Southern polemists advocated unashamedly with their Northern opponents. There is no doubt that it was believed also, since the spectacle of happy blacks living under paternal care on well-run plantations did seem to support the idea of slavery as a sort of welfare system."

As an example of this kind of argumentation, we may take the words of Senator James Hammond of South Carolina, who said that the "difference between us is that our slaves are hired for life and well compensated, there is no starvation, no begging, no want of employment among our people, and not too

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31 Reynolds, op. cit., p. 155.
much employment either. Yours are hired by the day, not cared for, and scantily compensated, which may be proved in the most painful manner, at any hour in any street in any of your large towns. Why you meet more beggars in one day, on any single street of the city of New York, than you would meet in a lifetime in the whole South." 

Hammond had a point, and other observers favourably compared the situation of black slaves in America to that of English workers of the time. Thus Robert Owen noted: "Bad and unwise as American slavery is and must continue to be, the white slavery in the manufactories of England was at this unrestricted period far worse than the house slaves which I afterwards saw in the West Indies and in the United States, and in many respects, especially as regards health, food and clothing, the latter were much better provided for than were those oppressed and degraded children and work-people in the home manufactories of Great Britain."

Nevertheless, there were real abuses in the South - for example, the very liberal use of the whip by slave-owners, their sexual abuse of black slave women, and the fact that they had the power to break up slave families by selling the breadwinner alone and keeping his family (this was the theme of the famous novel of the time, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*).

At the root of these abuses lay the fact that very many Europeans and Americans did not regard slaves as fully human. As Joanna Bourke writes, "this construction of slaves as inhuman monsters or ‘things’ allowed significant degrees of violence to be directed against them. In the supposedly idyllic New World, brutality was covertly legitimate in law – often by permitting ‘necessary’ or ‘ordinary’ cruelty. For instance, John Haywood’s *A Manual for the Laws of North-Carolina* (1808) allowed masters to kill slaves if the slaves resisted them or when slaves died ‘under moderate correction’. Similarly, the *Black Code of Georgia* (1732-1809) only outlawed ‘unnecessary and excessive whipping’ and ‘cruelly and unnecessarily biting and tearing with dogs’. In other words, whipping and ‘tearing with dogs’ was legitimate, so long as it was not done cruelly, excessively and unnecessarily. To quote the distinguished Caribbean scholar Colin Dayan, ‘This commitment to protection thus becomes a guarantee of tyranny, and the attempt to set limits to brutality, to curb tortures, not only allowed masters to hide behind the law but also ensured that the guise of care would remain a “humane” fiction.’ So were slaves in the American South nothing more than ‘property’, like animals? It certainly seemed that way to the slaves. Ex-slave Charles Moses from Brookhaven, Mississippi, recalled that slaves were ‘worked to death’. His master would ‘beat, knock, kick, kill. He done ever’thing he could ‘cept eat us’. He insisted that God Almighty never meant for human beings to be like animals. Us Niggers has a soul an’ a heart an’ a min’. We ain’t like a dog or a horse.’

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33 Reynolds, op. cit., p. 175.
“In 1850 Frederick Douglass also claimed that masters had unlimited power over the bodies of slaves. Slaves’ names were ‘impiously inserted in a master’s leger with horses, sheep and swine’ and that master could ‘work him, flog him, hire him out, sell him, and in certain circumstances kill him, with perfect impunity. The slave is a human being, divested of all rights – reduced to the level of a brute – a mere “chattel!” in the eyes of the law – placed beyond the circle of human brotherhood [sic].’ This was not strictly accurate. Slaves were not simply ‘things’ in law. Rather, they were carefully constructed quasi-legal persons. Because they were ‘property’, they could be harshly punished by their masters. But they were categorized as ‘persons’ when it came to serious crimes. They could not be murdered (‘unnecessarily’) and they could be indicted and punished for murder. Thus, in Cresswell’s Executor v. Walker (1861), slaves were held to have ‘no legal mind, no will which the law can recognize’ so far as civil acts were concerned. As soon as they committed a crime, however, they were ascribed personhood. A similar point was intriguingly argued in 1857, the first time a slave stood as a defendant in a US court. This was the federal prosecution of ‘Amy’, who had been convicted for stealing a letter from the post office in violation of federal law. Her defence attorney argued that she was not a legal person. Because she was a slave, she could not be indicted under an Act of Congress that forbade ‘any person’ to steal a letter from the United States mail. The prosecutor’s response to this ingenious defence was blunt: ‘I cannot prove more plainly that the prisoner is a person, a natural person,’ he exclaimed, ‘than to ask your honors to look at her. There she is.’

“Of course, personhood was not straightforwardly located in an identifiably ‘human’ face and figure. For one thing, both were highly racialized. Indeed, the prosecutor could just as easily have gestured towards Amy to illustrated the point that she was not a ‘natural person’. This was exactly was racists did, on a routine basis. Pro-slavery arguments often introduced the idea of polygeny, or the view that Africans and Europeans had evolved from two entirely different species. As physician Josiah Nott put it in a lecture given in 1844, the ‘Caucasian and Negro differ in their Anatomical and Physiological character’ and these differences ‘could not be produced by climate and other physical causes’. There were, he insisted, ‘several species of the human race’; these ‘species differ in perfection of their moral and intellectual endowments’; and ‘a law of nature’ was ‘opposed to the mingling of white and black races’. He ended his lecture by quoting Alexander Pope’s Essay on Man: ‘One truth is clear: WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT’. In other words, slavery was ‘natural’: the ‘black races’ were ‘naturally’ property, like many other species. Or, as William Harper put it in the mid-nineteenth century, just as it was right and proper for humans to ‘exercise dominion over the beasts of the field’, so too, it was ‘as much in the order of nature, that men should enslave each other.’”

Economic liberalism is based on egoism in theory and practice. Thus in 1776 Adam Smith wrote: “It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love… [The individual] is in this as in any other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention… I have never known much good done by those who affected to trade for the public good. It is an affectation, indeed, not very common among merchants, and very few words need to be employed in dissuading them from it.”

It is a paradoxical theory, to say the least: that the public interest is best served by everyone pursuing his self-interest as freely as possible! But it found confirmation in the work of a Jewish London banker called David Ricardo in the 1820s. “It was Ricardian economic theory,” writes Norman Cantor, “that became and remains the theoretical foundation of that market capitalism in which so many nineteenth-century Jews [most famously, the Rothschilds] made their fortune and general fame, or at least found the means for a satisfying private family life. Ricardo was the Moses of Jewish capitalism, who brought down the tables of truth to show to the chosen people and the admiring Gentiles as well.

“The main point of Ricardian economics is identical with that of Reform Judaism’s Haskalah-Kantian theology. Just as God in the latter is a creator whose majesty is humanly unapproachable, so the market is a universal, rationalizing structure that cannot be modified by human will or sentiment, such as by paying wages beyond the minimum with which the market can operate, or by state interference with the business cycle or capital accumulation. Leave God and the market alone and attend to your personal, family, and communal lives and business interests…”

There is indeed nothing mystical about the Jews’ acquisition of enormous wealth. In the present as in the past – for example, in the Hungarian Jew George Soros’ vastly successful gamble on Britain leaving the European Exchange Rate Mechanism in 1990, or in the Jewish bank Goldman Sachs’ ability to profit even from the drastic culling of the American banks in 2007 – we see the same prosaic formula for success, consisting of the following in order of importance: (i) The exceptionally close solidarity of the members of the tribe to each other on the basis of their common Jewish faith or – which comes to the same thing – Jewish nationality; (ii) their vast capital base, which enables them to ride out storms and disasters that would sink less well capitalized organizations; and (iii) their vast intelligence network combined with great speed and security of communication, which enables them always to be “ahead of the game” in what may be called “institutionalized insider dealing.”

All three elements were important in the rise of the most famous Jewish family of the nineteenth century, the Rothschilds...

Niall Ferguson writes: “‘Master of unbounded wealth, he boasts that he is the arbiter of peace and war, and that the credit of nations depends upon his nod; his correspondents are innumerable; his couriers outrun those of sovereign princes, and absolute sovereigns; ministers of state are in his pay. Paramount in the cabinets of continental Europe, he aspires to the domination of our own.’

“Those words were spoken in 1828 by the Radical MP Thomas Dunscombe. The man he was referring to was Nathan Myer Rothschild, founder of the London branch of what was, for most of the nineteenth century, the biggest bank in the world. It was the bond market that made the Rothschild family rich – rich enough to build forty-one stately homes all over Europe...

“… His brothers called Nathan ‘the general in chief’. ‘All you ever write,’ complained Salomon wearily in 1815, ‘is pay this, pay that, send this, send that.’ It was this phenomenal drive, allied to innate financial genius, that propelled Nathan from the obscurity of the Frankfurt Judengasse to mastery of the London bond market. Once again, however, the opportunity for financial innovations was provided by war.

“On the morning of 18 June 1815, 67,000 British, Dutch and German troops under the Duke of Wellington’s command looked out across the fields of Waterloo, nor far from Brussels, towards an almost equal number of French troops commanded by the French Emperor, Napoleon Bonaparte. The Battle of Waterloo was the culmination of more than two decades of intermittent conflict between Britain and France. But it was more than a battle between two armies. It was also a contest between rival financial systems: one, the French, which under Napoleon had come to be based on plunder (the taxation of the conquered); the other, the British, based on debt.

“Never had so many bonds been issued to finance a military conflict. Between 1793 and 1815 the British national debt increased by a factor of three, to £745 million, more than double the annual output of the UK economy. But this increase in the supply of bonds had weighed heavily on the London market. Since February 1792, the price of a typical £100 3 per cent consol had fallen from £96 to below £60 on the eve of Waterloo, at one time (in 1797) sinking below £50...

“According to a long-standing legend, the Rothschild family owed the first millions of their fortune to Nathan’s successful speculation about the effect of the outcome of the battle on the price of British bonds. In some versions of the story, Nathan witnessed the battle himself, risked a Channel storm to reach London ahead of the official news of Wellington’s victory and, by buying bonds ahead of a huge surge in prices, pocketed between £20 and £135 million. It was a legend the Nazis later did their best to embroider. In 1940 Joseph Goebbels approved the release of Die Rothschilds, which depicts an oleaginous Nathan
bribing a French general to ensure the Duke of Wellington’s victory, and then deliberately misreporting the outcome in London in order to precipitate panic selling of British bonds, which he then snaps up at bargain-basement prices. Yet the reality was altogether different. Far from making money from Wellington’s victory, the Rothschilds were very nearly ruined by it. Their fortune was made not because of Waterloo, but despite it.

“After a series of miscued interventions, British troops had been fighting against Napoleon on the Continent since August 1808, when the future Duke of Wellington, then Lieutenant-General Sir Arthur Wellesley, led an expeditionary force to Portugal, invaded by the French the previous year. For the better part of the next six years, there would be a recurrent need to get men and _materiel_ to the Iberian Peninsula. Selling bonds to the public had certainly raised plenty of cash for the British government, but banknotes were of little use on distant battlefields. To provision the troops and pay Britain’s allies against France, Wellington needed a currency that was universally acceptable. The challenge was to transform the money raised on the bond market into gold coins, and to get them to where they were needed. Sending gold guineas from London to Lisbon was expensive and hazardous in time of war. But when the Portuguese merchants declined to accept the bills of exchange that Wellington proffered, there seemed little alternative but to ship cash.

“The son of a moderately successful Frankfurt antique dealer and bill broker, Nathan Rothschild had arrived in England only in 1799 and had spent most of the next ten years in the newly industrializing North of England, purchasing textiles and shipping them back to Germany. He did not go into the banking business in London until 1811. Why, then, did the British government turn to him in its hour of financial need? The answer is that Nathan had acquired valuable experience as a smuggler of gold to the Continent, in breach of the blockade that Napoleon had imposed on trade between England and Europe. (Admittedly, it was a breach the French authorities tended to wink at, in the simplistic mercantilist belief that outflows of gold from England must tend to weaken the British war effort.) In January 1814, the Chancellor of the Exchequer authorized the Commissary-in-Chief, John Charles Merries, to ‘employ that gentleman [Nathan] in most secret and confidential manner to collect in Germany, coins, not exceeding in value £600,000, which he may be able to procure within two months from the present time.’ These were then to be delivered to British vessels at the Dutch port of Helvoetsluys and sent on to Wellington, who had by now crossed the Pyrenees into France. It was an immense operation, which depended on the brothers’ ability to manage large-scale bullion transfers. They executed their commission so well that Wellington was soon writing to express his gratitude for the ‘ample… supplies of money’. As Harries put it: ‘Rothschild of this place has executed the various services entrusted to him in this line admirably well, and though a Jew [sic], we place a good deal of confidence in him.’ By May 1814 Nathan had advanced nearly £1.2 to the government, double the amount envisaged in his original instructions.

“Mobilizing such vast amounts of gold even at the tail end of a war was risky, no doubt. Yet from the Rothschilds’ point of view, the hefty commissions they
were able to charge more than justified the risks. What made them so well suited to the task was that the brothers had a ready-made banking network within the family – Nathan in London, Amschel in Frankfurt, James (the youngest) in Paris, Carl in Amsterdam and Salomon roving wherever Nathan saw fit. Spread throughout Europe, the five Rothschilds were uniquely positioned to exploit price and exchange rate differences between markets, the process known as arbitrage. If the price of gold was higher in, say, Paris than in London, James in Paris would sell gold for bills of exchange, then send these to London, where Nathan would use them to buy a larger quantity of gold. The fact that their own transactions on Herries’s behalf were big enough to affect such price differentials only added to the profitability of the business. In addition, the Rothschilds also handled some of the large subsidies paid to Britain’s continental allies. By June 1814, Herries calculated that they had effected payments of this sort to a value of 12.6 million francs. ‘Mr. Rothschild’, remarked the Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, had become ‘a very useful friend’. As he told the Foreign Secretary, Lord Castlereagh, ‘I do not know what we should have done without him…’ By now his brothers had taken to calling Nathan the master of the Stock Exchange.

“After his abdication in April 1814, Napoleon had been exiled to the small Italian island of Elba, which he proceeded to rule as an empire in miniature. It was too small to hold him. On 1 March 1815, to the consternation of the monarchs and ministers gathered to restore the old European order at the Congress of Vienna, he returned to France, determined to revive his Empire. Veterans of the grande armée rallied to his standard. Nathan Rothschild responded to this ‘unpleasant news’ by immediately resuming gold purchases, buying up all the bullion and coins he and his brothers could lay their hands on, and making it available to Herries for shipment to Wellington. In all, the Rothschilds provided gold coins worth more than £2 million – enough to fill 884 boxes and fifty-five casks. At the same time, Nathan offered to take care of a fresh round of subsidies to Britain’s continental allies, bringing the total of his transactions with Herries in 1815 to just under £9.8 million. With commissions on all this business ranging from 2 to 6 per cent, Napoleon’s return promised to make the Rothschilds rich men. Yet there was a risk that Nathan had underestimated. In furiously buying up such a huge quantity of gold, he had assumed that, as with all Napoleon’s wars, this would be a long one. It was a near fatal miscalculation.

“Wellington famously called the Battle of Waterloo ‘the nearest run thing you ever saw in your life’. After a day of brutal charges, countercharges and heroic defense, the belated arrival of the Prussian army finally proved decisive. For Wellington, it was a glorious victory. Not so for the Rothschilds. No doubt it was gratifying for Nathan Rothschild to receive the news of Napoleon’s defeat first, thanks to the speed of his couriers, nearly forty-eight hours before Major Henry Percy delivered Wellington’s official dispatch to the Cabinet. No matter how early it reached him, however, the news was anything but good from Nathan’s point of view. He had expected nothing as decisive so soon. Now he and his brothers were sitting on top of a pile of cash that nobody needed – to pay for a war that was over. With the coming of peace, the great armies that had fought Napoleon could be disbanded, the coalition of allies dissolved. That meant no
more soldiers’ wages and no more subsidies to Britain’s wartime allies. The price of gold, which had soared during the war, would be bound to fall. Nathan was faced not with the immense profits of legend but with heavy and growing losses.

“But there was one possible way out: the Rothschilds could use their gold to make a massive and hugely risky bet on the bond market. On 20 July 1815 the evening edition of the London Courier reported that Nathan had made ‘great purchases of stock’, meaning British government bonds. Nathan’s gamble was that the British victory at Waterloo, and the prospect of a reduction in government borrowing, would send the price of British bonds soaring upwards. Nathan bought more and, as the price of consols duly began to rise, he kept on buying. Despite his brothers’ desperate entreaties to realize profits, Nathan held his nerve for another year. Eventually, in late 1817, with bond prices up more than 40 per cent, he sold. Allowing for the effects on the purchasing power of sterling of inflation and economic growth, his profits were worth around £600 million today. It was one of the most audacious trades in financial history, one which snatched financial victory from the jaws of Napoleon’s military defeat. The resemblance between victor and vanquished was not lost on contemporaries. In the words of one of the partners at Barings, the Rothschilds’ great rivals, ‘I must candidly confess that I have not the nerve for his operations. They are generally well planned, with great cleverness and adroitness in execution – but he is in money and funds what Bonaparte was in war.’ To the Austrian Chancellor Prince Metternich’s secretary, the Rothschilds were simply die Finanzbonaparten. Others went still further, though not without a hint of irony. ‘Money is the god of our time,’ declared the German [Jewish] poet Heinrich Heine in March 1841, ‘and Rothschild is his prophet.’

“To an extent that even today remains astonishing, the Rothschilds went on to dominate international finance in the half century after Waterloo. So extraordinary did this achievement seem to contemporaries that they often sought to explain it in mystical terms...

“The more prosaic reality was that the Rothschilds were able to build on their successes during the final phase of the Napoleonic Wars to establish themselves as the dominant players in an increasingly international London bond market. They did this by establishing a capital base and an information network that were soon far superior to those of their nearest rivals, the Barings. Between 1815 and 1859, it has been estimated that the London house issued fourteen different sovereign bonds with a face value of nearly £43 million, more than half the total issued by all banks in London. Although British government bonds were the principal security they marketed to investors, they also sold French, Prussian, Russian, Austrian, Neapolitan and Brazilian bonds. In addition, they all but monopolized bond issuance by the Belgian government after 1830. Typically, the Rothschilds would buy a tranche of new bonds outright from a government, charging a commission for distributing these to their network of brokers and investors throughout Europe, and remitting funds to the government only when all the instalments had been received from buyers. There would usually be a generous spread between the price the Rothschilds paid the sovereign borrower and the price they asked of investors (with room for an additional price ‘run up’
after the initial public offering). Of course, as we have seen, there had been large-scale international lending before, notably in Genoa, Antwerp and Amsterdam. But a distinguishing feature of the London bond market after 1815 was the Rothschilds’ insistence that most new borrowers issue bonds denominated in sterling, rather than their own currency, and make interest payments in London or one of the other markets where the Rothschilds had branches. A new standard was set by their 1818 initial public offering of Prussian 5 per cent bonds, which – after protracted and often fraught negotiations – were issued not only in London, but also in Frankfurt, Berlin, Hamburg and Amsterdam. In his book On the Traffic in State Bonds (1825), the German legal expert Johann Heinrich Bender singled out this as one of the Rothschilds’ most important financial innovations: ‘Any owner of government bonds... can collect the interest at his convenience in several different places without any effort.’ Bond issuance was by no means the only business the Rothschilds did, to be sure: they were also bond traders, currency arbitrageurs, bullion dealers and private bankers, as well as investors in insurance, mines and railways. Yet the bond market remained their core competence. Unlike their lesser competitors, the Rothschilds took pride in dealing only in what would now be called investment grade securities. No bond they issued in the 1820s was to default by 1829, despite a Latin American debt crisis in the middle of the decade (the first of many).

“With success came ever greater wealth. When Nathan died in 1836, his personal fortune was equivalent to 0.62 per cent of British national income. Between 1818 and 1852, the combined capital of the five Rothschild ‘houses’ (Frankfurt, London, Naples, Paris and Vienna) rose from £1.8 million to £9.8 million. As early as 1825 their combined capital was nine times greater than that of Baring Brothers and the Banque de France. By 1899, at £41 million, it exceeded the capital of the five biggest German joint-stock banks put together. Increasingly, the firm became a multinational asset manager for the wealth of the managers’ extended family. As their numbers grew from generation to generation, familial unity was maintained by a combination of periodically revised contracts between the five houses and a high level of intermarriage between cousins or between uncles and nieces. Of twenty-one marriages involving descendants of Nathan’s father Mayer Amschel Rothschild that were solemnized between 1824 and 1877, no fewer than fifteen were between his direct descendants. In addition, the family’s collective fidelity to the Jewish faith, at a time when some other Jewish families were slipping into apostasy or mixed marriage, strengthened their sense of common identity and purpose as ‘the Caucasian [Jewish] royal family’."

While Ricardian theory and Rothschildian practice enabled a few to get rich quick – mainly those with initial capital and entrepreneurial skills, - for the great majority of Englishmen the nineteenth century meant the horror and squalor of William Blake’s “satanic mills”. If “freedom” in liberal theory means “freedom from”, it certainly did not mean freedom from poverty, disease or death for the workers crowded together in filthy slums in Manchester.

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In view of this, it is hardly surprising that not only the poor, but also many of the better-off who pitied them, came to see look upon these liberal “freedoms” with jaundiced eyes... Later, of course, largely under the pressure of humanitarian ideas and the labour movement, capitalism did begin to restrain itself, thereby disproving Marx’s prophecy of its imminent collapse. But the rise of collectivism was not checked by these concessions, but was rather strengthened, as we see throughout Europe as the nineteenth century progressed.

Free trade, the main principle of economic liberalism, was a very important concept, first in England, and then in other countries that followed the English way. “True,” writes J.M. Roberts, “it is almost impossible to find economic theorists and publicists of the early industrial period who advocated absolute non-interference with the economy. Yet there was a broad, sustaining current which favoured the view that much good would result if the market economy was left to operate without the help or hindrance of politicians and civil servants. One force working this way was the teaching often summed up in a phrase made famous by a group of Frenchmen: laissez-faire. Broadly speaking, economists after Adam Smith had said with growing consensus that the production of wealth would be accelerated, and therefore the general well-being would increase, if the use of economic resources followed the ‘natural’ demands of the market. Another reinforcing trend was individualism, embodied in both the assumption that individuals knew their own business best and the increasing organization of society around the rights and interests of the individual.

“These were the sources of the long-enduring association between industrialism and liberalism; they were deplored by conservatives who regretted a hierarchical, agricultural order of mutual obligations and duties, settled ideas, and religious values. Yet liberals who welcomed the new age were by no means taking their stand on a simply negative and selfish base. The creed of ‘Manchester’, as it was called because of the symbolic importance of that city in English industrial and commercial development, was for its leaders much more than a matter of mere self-enrichment. A great political battle which for years preoccupied Englishmen in the early nineteenth century made this clear. Its focus was a campaign for the repeal of what were called the ‘Corn Laws’, a tariff system originally imposed to provide protection for the British farmer from imports of cheaper foreign grain. The ‘repealers’, whose ideological and political leader was a none-too-successful businessman, Richard Cobden, argued that much was at stake. To begin with, retention of the duties on grain demonstrated the grip upon the legislative machinery of the agricultural interest, the traditional ruling class, who ought not to be allowed a monopoly of power. Opposed to it were the dynamic forces of the future which sought to liberate the national economy from such distortions in the interest of particular groups. Back came the reply of the anti-repealers: the manufacturers were themselves a particular interest who only wanted cheap food imports in order to be able to pay lower wages; if they wanted to help the poor, what about some regulation of the conditions under which they employed women and children in factories? There, the inhumanity of the production process showed a callous disregard for the obligations of privilege which would never have been tolerated in rural
England. To this, the repealers responded that cheap food would mean cheaper goods for export. And in this, for someone like Cobden, much more than profit was involved. A worldwide expansion of Free Trade untrammelled by the interference of mercantilist governments would lead to international progress both material and spiritual, he thought; trade brought peoples together, exchanged and multiplied the blessings of civilization and increased the power in each country of its progressive forces. On one occasion he committed himself to the view that Free Trade was the expression of the Divine Will (though even this did not go as far as the British consul at Canton who had proclaimed that ‘Jesus Christ is Free Trade, and Free Trade is Jesus Christ’)...

“Only in England was the issue fought out so explicitly and to so clear-cut a conclusion. In other countries, paradoxically, the protectionists soon turned out to have the best of it. Only in the middle of the century, a period of expansion and prosperity, especially for the British economy, did Free Trade ideals get much support outside the United Kingdom, whose prosperity was regarded by believers as evidence of the correctness of their views and even mollified their opponents; Free Trade became a British political dogma, untouchable until well into the twentieth century. The prestige of British economic leadership helped to give it a brief popularity elsewhere, too. The prosperity of the era in fact owed as much to other influences as to this ideological triumph, but the belief added to the optimism of economic liberals. Their creed was the culmination of the progressive view of Man’s potential as an individual, whose roots lay in Enlightenment ideas.”

The difference between the old patriarchal attitude towards social and economic relations and the new liberal attitude is seen in the contrast between Lord Ashley and Richard Cobden: “Lord Ashley, the Christian Tory philanthropist who did so much to campaign for the improvement of working conditions for the poor, hated the competitive atmosphere of factories. Visiting his ancestral seat, St. Giles in the county of Dorset, he noted in his diary on 29 June 1841, ‘What a picture contrasted with a factory district, a people known and cared for, a people born and trained on the estate, exhibiting towards its hereditary possessors both deference and sympathy, affectionate respect and a species of allegiance demanding protection and repaying it in duty.’ To the Northern factory-owners such patronizing attitudes led only to stultification. There was no movement, no struggle, in Ashley’s view of society. Cobden, the Corn Law reformer par excellence, hated Ashley’s attempts to set limits to an employer’s powers – the length of hours he could make factory hands work, or the limiting of the age of his employees. ‘Mine is that masculine species of charity which would lead me to inculcate in the minds of the labouring classes the love of independence, the privilege of self respect, the disdain of being patronised or petted, the desire to accumulate and the ambition to rise.’”

In fact, Cobden had still wider, international aims in campaigning for the repeal of the Corn Laws. “It was expected not merely to destroy the domestic

bases of British militarism by crushing landlord power, but also to link states commercially through what we would today call ‘interdependence’, thus making war all but impossible. Free trade, Cobden predicted, would inaugurate ‘the greatest revolution that ever happened in the world’s history’, destroy ‘the antagonism of race, and creed and language’, and make ‘large and mighty empires... gigantic armies and great navies’ redundant.”

Cobden’s “masculine species of charity” was imitated by other industrial employers and landlords, who felt much less bound by custom and morality to protect their employees than had the feudal landlords of previous ages. Trevelyan writes: “Throughout the ‘forties nothing was done to control the slum landlords and jerrybuilders, who, according to the prevalent laissez-faire philosophy, were engaged from motives of self-interest in forwarding the general happiness. These pioneers of ‘progress’ saved space by crowding families into single rooms or thrusting them underground into cellars, and saved money by the use of cheap and insufficient building materials, and by providing no drains – or, worse still, by providing drains that oozed into the water supply. In London, Lord Shaftesbury discovered a room with a family in each of its four corners, and a room with a cesspool immediately below its boarded floor. We may even regard it as fortunate that cholera ensued, first in the years of the Reform Bill and then in 1848, because the sensational character of this novel visitation scared society into the tardy beginnings of sanitary self-defence.”

What legislation there was in this period of “unrestrained capitalism” (Popper) only exacerbated the plight of the poor. This was especially true of the Poor Law Act of 1834, which prescribed the building of workhouses designed to be as unattractive as possible. Thus the Reverend H.H. Milman wrote to Edwin Chadwick: “The workhouses should be a place of hardship, of coarse fare, of degradation and humility; it should be administered with strictness – with severity; it should be as repulsive as is consistent with humanity.”

The Poor Law, as John Gray writes, “set the level of subsistence lower than the lowest wage set by the market. It stigmatised the recipient by attaching the harshest and most demeaning conditions to relief. It weakened the institution of the family. It established a laissez-faire regime in which individuals were solely responsible for their own welfare, rather than sharing that responsibility with their communities.

“Eric Hobsbawm captures the background, character and effects of the welfare reforms of the 1830s when he writes: ‘The traditional view, which still survived in a distorted way in all classes of rural society and in the internal relations of working-class groups, was that a man had a right to earn a living, and, if unable to do so, a right to be kept alive by the community. The view of middle-class liberal economists was that men should take such jobs as the market offered, wherever and at whatever rate it offered, and the rational man

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42 Trevelyan, in Harvey, *op. cit.* p. 268.
would, by individual or voluntary collective saving and insurance make
provision for accident, illness and old age. The residuum of paupers could not,
admittedly, be left actually to starve, but they ought not to be given more than
the absolute minimum – provided it was less than the lowest wages offered in
the market, and in the most discouraging conditions. The Poor Law was not so
much intended to help the unfortunate as to stigmatize the self-confessed
failures of society… There have been few more inhuman statutes than the Poor
Law Act of 1834, which made all relief ‘less eligible’ than the lowest wage
outside, confined it to the jail-like work-house, forcibly separating husbands,
wives and children in order to punish the poor for their destitution.’

“This system applied to at least 10 per cent of the English population in the
mid-Victorian period. It remained in force until the outbreak of the First World
War.

“The central thrust of the Poor Law reforms was to transfer responsibility for
protection against insecurity and misfortune from communities to individuals
and to compel people to accept work at whatever rate the market set. The same
principle has informed many of the welfare reforms that have underpinned the
re-engineering of the free market in the late twentieth century…”

“No less important than Poor Law reform in the mid-nineteenth century was
legislation designed to remove obstacles to the determination of wages by the
market. David Ricardo stated the orthodox view of the classical economists
when he wrote, ‘Wages should be left to fair and free competition of the market,
and should never be controlled by the interference of the legislature.’

“It was by appeal to such canonical statements of laissez-faire that the Statute
of Apprentices (enacted after the Black Death in the fourteenth century) was
repealed and all other controls on wages ended in the period leading up to the
1830s. Even the Factory Acts of 1833, 1844 and 1847 avoided any head-on
collision with laissez-faire orthodoxies. ‘The principle that there should be no
interference in the freedom of contract between master and man was honoured
to the extent that no direct legislative interference was made in the relationship
between employers and adult males… it was still possible to argue for a further
half-century, though with diminishing plausibility, that the principle of non-
interference remained inviolate.’

“The removal of agricultural protection and the establishment of free trade,
the reform of the poor laws with the aim of constraining the poor to take work,
and the removal of any remaining controls on wages were the three decisive
steps in the construction of the free market in mid-nineteenth century Britain.
These key measures created out of the market economy of the 1830s the
unregulated free market of mid-Victorian times that is the model for all
subsequent neo-liberal policies.”

The industrial bourgeoisie who formed the core of the new “middle class” were, as Eric Hobsbawm writes, “self-made men, or at least men of modest origins who owed little to birth, family or formal higher education. (Like Mr. Bounderly in Dickens’ Hard Times, they were not reluctant to advertise the fact.) They were rich and getting richer by the year. They were above all imbued with the ferocious and dynamic self-confidence of those whose own careers prove to them that divine providence, science and history have combined to present the earth to them on a platter.

“’Political economy’, translated into a few simple dogmatic propositions by self-made journalist-publishers who hymned the virtues of capitalism... gave them intellectual certainty. Protestant dissent of the hard Independent, Utilitarian, Baptist and Quaker rather than the emotional Methodist type gave them spiritual certainty and a contempt for useless aristocrats. Neither fear, anger, nor even pity moved the employer who told his workers:

“’The God of Nature has established a just and equitable law which man has no right to disturb; when he ventures to do so it is always certain that he, sooner or later, meets with corresponding punishment... Thus when masters audaciously combine that by an union of power they may more effectually oppress their servants; by such an act, they insult the majesty of Heaven, and bring down the curse of God upon themselves, while on the other hand, when servants unite to extort from their employers that share of the profit which of right belongs to the master, they equally violate the laws of equity.’

“There was an order in the universe, but it was no longer the order of the past. There was only one God, whose name was steam and spoke in the voice of Malthus, McCulloch, and anyone who employed machinery...

“A pietistic Protestantism, rigid, self-righteous, unintellectual, obsessed with puritan morality to the point where hypocrisy was its automatic companion, dominated this desolate epoch. ‘Virtue’, as G.M. Young said, ‘advanced on a broad invincible front’; and it trod the unvirtuous, the weak, the sinful (i.e. those who neither made money nor controlled their emotional or financial expenditures) into the mud where they so plainly belonged, deserving at best only of their betters’ charity. There was some capitalist economic sense in this. Small entrepreneurs had to plough back much of their profits into the business if they were to become big entrepreneurs. The masses of new proletarians had to be broken into the industrial rhythm of labour by the most draconian labour discipline, or left to rot if they would not accept it. And yet even today the heart contracts at the sight of the landscape constructed by that generation.

“’You saw nothing in Coketown but what was severely useful. If the members of a religious persuasion built a chapel there – as the members of eighteen religious persuasions had done – they made it a pious warehouse of red brick, with sometimes (but this only in highly ornamented examples) a bell in a bird-cage on the top of it... All the public inscriptions in the town were pained alike, in severe characters of black and white. The jail might have been the infirmary, the town-hall might have been either, or both, or anything else, for anything that
appeared to the contrary in the graces of their construction. Fact, fact, fact, everywhere in the material aspect of the town; fact, fact, fact, everywhere in the immaterial… Everything was fact between the lying-in hospital and the cemetery, and what you couldn’t state in figures, or show to be purchaseable in the cheapest market and saleable in the dearest, was not and never should be, world without end, Amen.’

“This gaunt devotion to bourgeois utilitarianism, which the evangelicals and puritans shared with the agnostic eighteenth-century ‘philosophic radicals’ who put it into logical words for them, produced its own functional beauty in railway lines, bridges and warehouses, and its romantic horror in the smoke-drenched endless grey-black or reddish files of small houses overlooked by the fortresses of the mills. Outside it the new bourgeoisie lived (if it had accumulated enough money to move), dispensing command, moral education and assistance to missionary endeavour among the black heathen abroad. Its men personified the money which proved their right to rule the world; its women, deprived by their husbands’ money even of the satisfaction of actually doing household work, personified the virtue of their class: stupid (‘be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever’), uneducated, impractical, theoretically unisexual, propertyless and protected. They were the only luxury which the age of thrift and self-help allowed itself.

“The British manufacturing bourgeoisie was the most extreme example of its class, but all over the continent there were smaller groups of the same kind: Catholic in the textile districts of the French North or Catalonia, Calvinist in Alsace, Lutheran pietist in the Rhineland, Jewish all over central and eastern Europe. They were rarely quite as hard as in Britain, for they were rarely quite as divorced from the older traditions of urban life and paternalism. Leon Faucher was painfully struck, in spite of his doctrinaire liberalism, by the sight of Manchester in the 1840s, as which continental observer was not? But they shared with the English the confidence which came from steady enrichment…”

Even the Anglican Church, which hardly penetrated into the new industrial slums, seemed to be on the side of the exploiters. “A typical representative of this kind of Christianity was the High Church priest J. Townsend, author of A Dissertation on the Poor Laws, by a Well-wisher of Mankind, an extremely crude apologist for exploitation whom Marx exposed. ‘Hunger,’ Townsend begins his eulogy, ‘is not only a peaceable, silent, unremitting pressure but, as the most natural motive of industry and labour, it calls forth the most powerful exertions.’ In Townsend’s ‘Christian’ world order, everything depends (as Marx observes) upon making hunger permanent among the working class; and Townsend believes that this is indeed the divine purpose of the principle of the growth of population; for he goes on: ‘It seems to be a law of nature that the poor should be to a certain degree improvident, so that there may always be some to fulfil the most servile, the most sordid, the most ignoble offices in the community. The stock of human happiness is thereby much increased, whilst the more delicate… are left at liberty without interruption to pursue those callings which are suited

to their various dispositions.’ And the ‘delicate priestly sycophant’, as Marx called him for this remark, adds that the Poor Law, by helping the hungry, ‘tends to destroy the harmony and beauty, the symmetry and order, of that system which God and nature have established in the world.’”

With the official Church effectively on the side of the exploiters, it was left to “Christian socialists”, individual preachers and philanthropists, and, above all, novelists to elicit the milk of human kindness from the hard breasts of the rich. The realistic novel in the hands of great writers such as Dickens and Balzac acquired an importance it had not had in earlier ages, teaching morality without moralising. Thus Mrs. Elisabeth Gaskell’s North and South not only brought home to readers in the rural south the sufferings of the industrial north: it also showed how the philosophy of Free Trade tended to drive out even the Christian practice of almsgiving. For the novel describes how the industrialist Thornton, though not a cruel man at heart, is against helping the starving families of his striking workers on the grounds that helping them would help prolong the strike, which, if successful, would force him out of business, which would mean unemployment and starvation for those same workers. But in the end he is led by the woman he loves to see how a thriving business and kindness to the workers can be combined...

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VICTORIAN RELIGION AND MORALITY

Since the English were so devoted to material gain, so callous towards the poor (while priding themselves on their abolition of the slave trade), and so devoted to a purely pagan understanding of liberty, one might have expected that there would be no room for religion in their life. And it was certainly true that religion was not something that gentlemen practiced or talked about much. Thus, as David Starkey and Katie Greening write, “the Church of England had fallen to a new low earlier in the century, Its buildings were crumbling, and Anglican church services had become not only devoid of ceremony and ritual, but were often badly organized, understaffed and sparsely attended. On Easter Sunday, 1800, only six communicants attended the morning celebration in St. Paul’s Cathedral.” Again, one of the leaders of the Oxford Movement, William Palmer, looking back in 1883 on England in 1833, when the Movement began, wrote: “Allusions to God’s being and providence became distasteful to the English parliament. They were voted ill-bred and superstitious; they were the subjects of ridicule as overmuch righteousness. Men were ashamed any longer to say family prayers, or to invoke the blessing of God upon their partaking of His gifts; the food which He alone had provided. The mention of His name was tabooed in polite circles.”

And yet only a few decades later, the English could be counted among the more religious nations of Europe. Continental atheism found little response in English hearts. And if some surprising blasphemies did escape the lips of senior public servants - such as the British consul in Canton’s remark: “Jesus Christ is Free Trade, and Free Trade is Jesus Christ” - this was not common. True, Free Trade was probably the real faith of many in the English governing classes. But officially England was a “most Christian” nation.

This was owing in no small part to the religio-moral movement that we know as Victorianism. As in the patriotic and religious revival of the mid-eighteenth century, music played an important part in this movement. The German Jewish composer Felix Mendelssohn, with the help of Victoria and Albert, raised the level of church music, and recalled Handel in his composing the oratorios St. Paul (1836) and Elijah (1846).

Francis Fukuyama writes: “The Victorian period in Britain and America may seem to many to be the embodiment of traditional values, but when this era began in the mid-nineteenth century, they were anything but traditional. Victorianism was in fact a radical movement that emerged in reaction to the kinds of social disorder that seemed to be spreading everywhere at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a movement that deliberately sought to create new social rules and instill virtues in populations that were seen as

50 Starkey and Greening, op. cit., p. 302.
wallowing in degeneracy. The shift toward Victorian values began in Britain but was quickly imported into the United States beginning in the 1830s and 1840s. Many of the institutions that were responsible for its spread were overtly religious in nature, and the changes they brought about occurred with remarkable speed. In the words of Paul E. Johnson: “In 1825 a northern businessman dominated his wife and children, worked irregular hours, consumed enormous amounts of alcohol, and seldom voted or went to church. Ten years later the same man went to church twice a week, treated his family with gentleness and love, drank nothing but water, worked steady hours and forced his employees to do the same, campaigned for the Whig Party, and spent his spare time convincing others that if they organized their lives in similar ways, the world would be perfect.’ The nonconformist churches in England and the Protestant sects in the United States, particularly the Wesleyan movement, led the Second Great Awakening in the first decades of the century that followed hard on the rise in disorder and created new norms to keep that order under control. The Sunday school movement grew exponentially in both England and America between 1821 and 1851, as did the YMCA movement, which was transplanted from England to America in the 1850s. According to Richard Hofstadter, U.S. church membership doubled between 1800 and 1850, and there was a gradual increase in the respectability of church membership itself as ecstatic, evangelical denominations became more restrained in their religious observances. At the same time, the temperance movement succeeded in lowering per capita alcohol consumption on the part of Americans back down to a little over two gallons by the middle of the century…

“These attempts to reform British and American society from the 1830s on in what we now label the Victorian era were a monumental success…”

We can measure the success of Victorianism by the sharp reversal in the trends for crime and illegitimacy, which increased through the first half of the nineteenth century (and especially during the Napoleonic wars), but from about 1845 declined steadily until the end of the century. We find a similar pattern in America, with the peak in crime coming about thirty years later.

In spite of its undoubted success in raising the external morality and efficiency of the Anglo-Saxon nations, Victorianism has had a bad press. It has been seen as the product of pride and engendering hypocrisy. As we shall see, there is some truth in this. The rise of Victorianism coincided, paradoxically, with a decline in faith in many spheres. Thus “doubts there were aplenty”, writes A.N. Wilson, about various questions. “But we who live in a fragmented society have become like an individual addicted to psychoanalysis, struggle with our uncertainties, pick at our virtues and vices as if they were scabs. The Victorian capacity not to do this, to live, very often, with double standards, is what makes so many of them – individually and collectively – seem to be humbugs and hypocrites.”

52 Fukuyama, op. cit., pp. 268-269.
53 Wilson, op. cit., p. 53.
One of the questions that troubled the Victorians was the relationship between religion and science, doubts that would become more acute after the publication of Darwin’s *The Origin of Species* in 1859. Another was the impact of industrialization on the spiritual life in a more general sense. Thus Thomas Carlyle wrote in *Sartor Resartus*: “Now the Genius of Mechanism smothers [man] worse than any Nightmare did. In Earth and Heaven he can see nothing but Mechanism; he has fear for nothing else, hope in nothing else... To me the Universe was all void of Life, of Purpose, of Volition, even of Hostility: it was one huge, dead, immeasurable Steam-engine, rolling on, in its dead indifference, to grind me limb from limb.”

But whatever their doubts, and however great the inconsistencies between their beliefs and actions, the Victorians were prepared to go to great pains to export their religion to other lands, as the efforts of Livingstone in Africa and Lord Redstock in Russia demonstrate. As late as 1904, writes Niall Ferguson, the German satirical magazine *Simplicissimus* pointed to this religiosity and missionary enthusiasm of the British Empire by comparison with the other empires “with a cartoon contrasting the different colonial powers. In the German colony even the giraffes and crocodiles are taught to goose-step. In the French, relations between the races are intimate to the point of indecency. In the Congo the natives are simply roasted over an open fire and eaten by King Leopold. But British colonies are conspicuously more complex than the rest. There, the native is force-fed whisky by a businessman, squeezed in a press for every last penny by a soldier and compelled to listen to a sermon by a missionary…”54

The Russian theologian Alexis Khomiakov was amazed at how silent the streets of London were on a Sunday. And he wrote: “Germany has in reality no religion at all but the idolatry of science; France has no serious longings for truth, and little sincerity; England with its modest science and its serious love of religious truth might [seem] to give some hopes…”55

The Oxford movement, which was designed to bring Anglicanism closer to its Catholic past, excited Khomiakov with hopes of a genuine rapprochement between Anglicans and Orthodox. This movement began with John Keble’s sermon to the Oxford Assize Judges in July, 1833, in which he warned against “the growing indifference, in which men indulge themselves, to other men’s religious sentiments”. Later, in his famous *Tract 90*, John Newman sought to interpret the Anglican 39 Articles in such a way as to make them consistent with

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55 Khomiakov, *First Letter to William Palmer*, in W.J. Birkbeck, *Russia and the English Church*, London: Rivington, Percival & Co., 1895, p. 6. Cf. the Fourth Letter: “An almost boundless Individualism is the characteristic feature of Germany, and particularly of Prussia. Here in Berlin it would be difficult to find one single point of faith, or even one feeling, which could be considered as a link of true spiritual communion in the Christian meaning of the word. Even the desire for harmony seems to be extinguished, and that predominance of individualism, that spiritual solitude among the ever-busy crowd, sends to the heart a feeling of dreariness and desolation.... Still the earnestness of the German mind in all intellectual researches is not quite so disheartening as the frivolous and self-conceited gaiety of homeless and thoughtless France.” (Birkbeck, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-78).
Catholic teaching. This led to a backlash, which eventually forced Newman to leave the Church of England and become a Roman cardinal. The Oxford movement then devolved into the Cambridge Camden Society, which explored medieval liturgy, music and architecture. Its leader, E.B. Pusey, developed the branch theory of the Church, according to which Anglicanism, Catholicism and Orthodoxy were three branches of the One Church.  

The main contribution of the Oxford Movement was to return attention to the dogma of the Church, which Anglican theology had seriously neglected. “The whole point of the Movement,” writes Geoffrey Faber, “lay in the assertion – no less passionately made than the Evangelical’s assertion of his private intimacy with God – that men deceive themselves if they seek God otherwise than through the Church. It should be needless to add that in the teachings of Keble, Pusey, Newman, and the Tractarians generally, the relationship of the individual soul to God was just as important as in the teaching of John Wesley. But the importance of that relationship was not to be thought of as transcending the importance of the Church. The Church was the divinely established means of grace. But she was something else and something greater. She was the continuing dwelling place of God’s spirit upon earth, and as such she had owed to her all the honour and glory within the power of men to pay.”

The semblance of Catholicity that the Oxford Movement gave to Anglicanism deceived Khomyakov – as it deceived many later Orthodox theologians. In the midst of her “Babylonian” materialism, as exemplified above all by the 1851 Great Exhibition, England seemed to him to have “higher thoughts”: “England, in my opinion, has never been more worthy of admiration than this year. The Babylonian enterprise of the Exhibition and its Crystal Palace, which shows London to be the true and recognised capital of Universal Industry, would have been sufficient to engross the attention and intellectual powers of any other country; but England stands evidently above its own commercial wonders. Deeper interests agitate her, higher thoughts direct her mental energy…”

In the end, as the Oxford movement petered out - Khomiakov’s friend, William Palmer, joined Catholicism, not Orthodoxy, as, more famously, did Newman, - and England joined with “insincere” France and infidel Turkey in the Crimean War against Holy Russia, Khomiakov’s admiration turned to disillusion and anger. In his last years he may well have felt closer in his

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56 Dr. Joseph Overbeck, one of the first Western converts to Orthodoxy, wrote about Pusey: "Dr. Pusey is the father of the so-called Anglo-Catholics, sometimes styled Puseyites, though by this by-name are generally understood those High-Churchmen who revel in decorative tom-fooleries and stylish ceremonies. He was, though not the originator, still a mighty support of the Tractarian movement. He quieted the passions of the young hot-brained Tractarians, smoothed down the Romanizing tendencies, and was always an upright friend of the Eastern Church, which he considered to be in unison with his own. Still he remained a Western Churchman, guided by the true idea that both Churches are fully entitled to have their own way and subsistence, only linked by the bond of common Catholic truth and Catholic Constitution. He would be quite right, provided his Church were a true branch of the Western Catholic Church.”

57 Faber, op. cit., p. 325.

estimate of England to Fyodor Dostoyevsky, who was appalled by his visit to London in 1862.

"On the streets," writes Geir Kjetsaa, Dostoyevsky "saw people wearing beautiful clothes in expensive carriages, side by side with others in filth and rags. The Thames was poisoned, the air polluted; the city seemed marked by joyless drinking and wife abuse. The writer was particularly horrified by child prostitution:

"‘Here in the Haymarket, I saw mothers who brought along their young daughters and taught them their occupation. And these twelve-year-old girls took you by the hand and asked to be accompanied. One evening, in the swarm of people I saw a little girl dressed in rags, dirty, barefoot, emaciated and battered. Through her rags I could see that her body was covered with bloody stripes. She wandered senseless in the crowd... perhaps she was hungry. No one paid her any attention. But what struck me most was her sad expression and the hopelessness of her misery. It was rather unreal and terribly painful to look at the despair and cursed existence of this small creature.’"

"When he visited the London World’s Fair with ‘civilization’s shining triumphs’, Dostoyevsky again found himself possessed by feelings of fear and dejection. Appalled, he recoiled from the hubris that had created the Crystal Palace’s ‘colossal decorations’. Here was something taken to its absolute limit, he maintained, here man’s prideful spirit had erected a temple to an idol of technology: ‘This is a Biblical illustration, this speaks of Babylon, in this a prophet of the Apocalypse is come to life. You feel that it would take unbelievable spiritual strength not to succumb to this impression, not to bow before this consummate fact, not to acknowledge this reality as our ideal and mistake Baal for God.’" 

Dostoyevsky’s rival, Lev Tolstoy, had a similar negative impression after his visit in 1861. He noted the sexual hypocrisy of the city with its thousands of prostitutes, but thought they had an important role to play in preserving the institution of the family. “Imagine London without its 80,000 magdalenes – what would happen to families?” he wrote. And again he wrote: “I was struck when I saw in the streets of London a criminal escorted by the police, and the police had to protect him energetically from the crowd, which threatened to tear him in pieces. With us it is just the opposite, police have to drive away in force the people who try to give the criminal money and bread. With us, criminals and prisoners are ‘little unhappy ones’.”

Dostoyevsky agreed with Khomiakov that the English were religious. But he saw through their religiosity, and had no hesitation in calling it “atheism”, because ultimately it was the worship of man wrapped in the trappings of the

worship of God. Dostoyevsky noted that English thinkers such as Mill were impressed by Auguste Comte’s idea of a “Religion of Humanity”, and much later, in 1876, he wrote: “In their overwhelming majority, the English are extremely religious people; they are thirsting for faith and are continually seeking it. However, instead of religion – notwithstanding the state ‘Anglican’ religion – they are divided into hundreds of sects…. Here, for instance, is what an observer who keeps a keen eye on these things in Europe, told me about the character of certain altogether atheistic doctrines and sects in England: ‘You enter into a church: the service is magnificent, the vestments are expensive; censers; solemnity; silence; reverence among those praying. The Bible is read; everybody comes forth and kisses the Holy Book with tears in his eyes, and with affection. And what do you think this is? This is the church of atheists. Why, then, do they kiss the Bible, reverently listening to the reading from it and shedding tears over it? – This is because, having rejected God, they began to worship ‘Humanity’. Now they believe in Humanity; they deify and adore it. And what, over long centuries, has been more sacred to mankind than this Holy Book? – Now they worship it because of its love of mankind and for the love of it on the part of mankind; it has benefited mankind during so many centuries – just like the sun, it has illuminated it; it has poured out on mankind its force, its life. And “even though its sense is now lost”, yet loving and adoring mankind, they deem it impossible to be ungrateful and to forget the favours bestowed by it upon humanity…’

“In this there is much that is touching and also much enthusiasm. Here there is actual deification of humankind and a passionate urge to reveal their love. Still, what a thirst for prayer, for worship; what a craving for God and faith among these atheists, and how much despair and sorrow; what a funeral procession in lieu of a live, serene life, with its gushing spring of youth, force and hope! But whether it is a funeral or a new and coming force – to many people this is a question.”^62

Dostoyevsky then quotes from his novel, A Raw Youth, from the “dream of a Russian of our times – the Forties – a former landowner, a progressive, a passionate and noble dreamer, side by side with our Great Russian breadth of life in practice. This landowner also has no faith and he, too, adores humanity ‘as it befits a Russian progressive individual.’ He reveals his dream about future mankind when there will vanish from it every conception of God, which, in his judgement, will inevitably happen on earth.

“‘I picture to myself, my dear,’ he began, with a pensive smile, ‘that the battle is over and that the strife has calmed down. After maledictions, lumps of mud and whistles, lull has descended and men have found themselves alone, as they wished it; the former great idea has abandoned them; the great wellspring of energy, that has thus far nourished them, has begun to recede as a lofty, receding Sun, but this, as it were, was mankind’s last day. And suddenly men grasped that they had been left all alone, and forthwith they were seized with a feeling of great orphanhood. My dear boy, never was I able to picture people as

having grown ungrateful and stupid. Orphaned men would at once begin to draw themselves together closer and with more affection; they would grasp each other’s hands, realizing that now they alone constituted everything to one another. The grand idea of immortality would also vanish, and it would become necessary to replace it, and all the immense over-abundance of love for Him who, indeed, had been Immortality, would in every man be focused on nature, on the universe, on men, on every particle of matter. They would start loving the earth and life irresistibly, in the measure of the gradual realization of their transiency and fluency, and theirs would now be a different love – not like the one in days gone by. They would discern and discover in nature such phenomena and mysteries as had never heretofore been suspected, since they would behold nature with new eyes, with the look of a lover gazing upon his inamorata. They would be waking up and hastening to embrace one another, hastening to love, comprehending that days are short and that this is all that is left to them…”

“Isn’t there here, in this fantasy, something akin to that actually existent ‘Atheists’ Church?’”

The American writer Emerson came to the same conclusion in his English Traits (1856). As Lionel Trilling writes: “To the general sincerity of the English which Emerson finds so pleasing there is one exception that he remarks, and with considerable asperity – these people, he says, have no religious belief and therefore nothing is ‘so odious as the polite bows to God’ which they constantly make in their books and newspapers... [However, continues Trilling.] no student of Victorian life will now confirm Emerson in the simplicity with which he describes the state of religious belief in England. It is true that the present indifference of the English to religion – apart from the rites of birth, marriage, and death – was already in train. By the second half of the nineteenth century the working classes of England were almost wholly alienated from the established Church and increasingly disaffected from the Nonconformist sects. It was the rare intellectual who was in any simple sense a believer. The commitment of the upper classes was largely a social propriety, and Emerson was doubtless right when he described it as cant. It is possible to say that the great Dissenting sects of the middle classes were animated as much by social and political feelings as by personal faith and doctrinal predilections. Still, when all the adverse portents have been taken into account, the fact remains that religion as a force in the life of the nation was by no means yet extinct and not even torpid, what with Low Church and High Church, Oxford Movement and the unremitting dissidence of Dissent, public trials over doctrine and private suffering over crises of belief. Christian faith was taken for granted as an element of virtue; as late as 1888, Mrs. Humphry Ward, a niece of Matthew Arnold, could scandalize the nation with her novel, Robert Elsmere, the history of a gifted and saintly young clergyman who finds Christian doctrine unacceptable; Gladstone himself felt called upon to review the book at enormous length.

63 Dostoyevsky, The Diary of a Writer, op. cit., p. 266.
“The history of England was bound up with religion, which still exercised a decisive influence upon the nation’s politics, its social and ethical style, and its intellectual culture. If there was indeed an attenuation of personal faith which gave rise to the insincerity that Emerson discerned, among the intellectual classes it had an opposite effect, making occasion for the exercise of a conscious and strenuous sincerity. The salient character-type of the Victorian educated classes was formed, we might say, in response to the loss of religious faith – the non-believer felt under the necessity of maintaining in his personal life the same degree of seriousness and earnestness that had been appropriate to the state of belief; he must guard against falling into the light-minded libertinism of the French – ‘You know the French…,’ Matthew Arnold said. Perhaps the greatest distress associated with the evanescence of faith, more painful and disintegrating than can now be fully imagined, was the loss of the assumption that the universe is purposive. This assumption, which, as Freud says, ‘stands and falls with the religious system’, was, for those who held it, not merely a comfortable idea but nothing less than a category of thought; its extirpation was a psychic catastrophe. The Victorian character was under the necessity of withstanding this extreme deprivation, which is to say, of not yielding to the nihilism it implied.

“How this end might be achieved is suggested by the anecdote about George Eliot – it has become canonical – which F.W.H. Myers relates. On a rainy May evening Myers walked with his famous guest in the Fellows’ Garden of Trinity College, Cambridge, and she spoke of God, Immortality, and Duty. God, she said, was inconceivable. Immortality was unbelievable. But it was beyond question that Duty was ‘peremptory and absolute’. ‘Never, perhaps,’ Myers says, ‘have sterner accents affirmed the sovereignty of impersonal and unrecompensing Law. I listened and night fell; her majestic countenance turned towards me like a sybil in the gloom; it was as though she withdrew from my grasp the two scrolls of promise, and left me with the third scroll only, awful with inscrutable fate.’ Much as George Eliot had withdrawn from her host, she had not, we may perceive, left him with nothing. A categorical Duty – might it not seem, exactly in its peremptoriness and absoluteness, to have been laid down by the universe itself and thus to validate the personal life that obeyed it? Was a categorical Duty wholly without purpose, without some end in view, since it so nearly matched one’s own inner imperative, which, in the degree that one responded to it, assured one’s coherence and selfhood? And did it not license the thought that man and the universe are less alien to each other than they may seem when the belief in God and Immortality are first surrendered?”

This Victorian attachment to Duty in the place of God and Immortality explains the puzzling fact that while English liberalism made a fetish of liberty, both political and economic, and the Anglican Church tolerated a wide range of beliefs in the most liberal fashion, in the realm of morals, as Mosse writes, “very little freedom was allowed. For Liberals accepted and furthered that change in morality which came about at the turn of the century. It is important, therefore, to discuss this morality in connection with liberalism, even though it became the

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64 Trilling, Sincerity and Authenticity, Oxford University Press, 1974, pp. 115-118.
dominant morality in England generally and in much of Europe as well. Liberal freedom... was severely circumscribed and restricted by this development.

“It is difficult to analyze the moral pattern which accompanied liberal thought. There is no doubt that the turn of the century saw a change in the moral tone of society, which is easily illustrated. Sir Walter Scott’s aged aunt asked him to procure for her some of the books she had enjoyed in her youth during the previous century. Sir Walter did as he was bid and later when he ventured to hope that she had enjoyed this recapturing of her youth her answer greatly surprised him. His aunt blushed at the mention of the books and allowed that she had destroyed them because they were not fit reading. Similarly, in Germany, a lady sitting next to the writer Brentano told him how much she had enjoyed a play he had written in his youth. How startled she must have been when the author, instead of being pleased, replied that as a woman and mother she should have been ashamed to read such a work. This change is what Sir Harold Nicolson has characterised as the ‘onslaught of respectability’. It was, as these examples show, quite rapid, almost within one generation.

“What lay behind this tightening up of morality? Only tentative answers can be given, for as yet little is known about this phenomenon. It seems certain that the evangelical movement in England, the strongest element in nonconformity, and the pietistic movements in Europe had a direct influence on the morality of the age. Both these movements had remained outside the mainstream of the Enlightenment; both were opposed to its main tenets. It is often forgotten that the eighteenth century witnessed a religious revival even while the philosophes were writing their enlightened tracts. This revival stressed piety, not the piety of Church attendance but the piety of the heart. Dogma had no great interest for either the Wesley brothers in England or Count Zinzendorf in Germany; true conversion of the spirit was the center of their religious thought. Such piety required a casting off of the worldly frivolities. Especially in England it revived the Puritan idea of life as a struggle between the world and the spirit, between the lusts of the flesh and dedication to one’s calling.

“Two other factors strengthened this reawakened moral passion. There was a moral reaction against the French Revolution and its antireligious bent. Madame de Staël had seen in the Reign of Terror a moral failing on the part of the people; many Englishmen linked the events of the French Revolution to the prevalence of immorality in that nation. Men and women of the nobility and middle classes called for moral reform at home in order that Revolutionary immorality might be withstood in the struggle between the two nations. Pamphlets and diaries give ample evidence of an attempted reform of manners. Frivolity, worldly and sexual excesses were regarded as unworthy of a nation engaged in a life and death struggle with forces which symbolized all that was immoral. The Evangelicals in England benefited from this feeling of distaste. Sunday observances were revived; frivolity was taken as a sign of levity in a time of serious crisis. William Wilberforce persuaded King George III to issue a royal proclamation in 1787 which condemned vice. Considering the immoral tone of his sons, this could not have lacked irony.
“The second factor, associated with the expanding economy, was the rapid rise within the social hierarchy of the newly rich. This self-assertive and ambitious bourgeoisie brought with them a dedication to hard work and a sense of the superiority of the values of the self-made man to those of the old aristocracy. These values blended in with the revived Puritan impetus exemplified by the evangelical movement. Never a part of the idle and sophisticated aristocracy, these men, through the increasing fluidity of English class lines, now infiltrated that class. No wonder that Edmund Burke lamented the vanished ‘unbought grace of life’ of a previous age. Now the grace of membership in the upper classes was bought and that, in itself, created a different attitude toward life. Piety, moral revulsion against the French Revolution, and the attitudes of the bourgeoisie all contributed to the new moral tone. This was not confined to England; such conditions were present in all of western Europe, but it was England which best exemplified these moral attitudes, for they fitted in with liberal thought which now took up and furthered this morality as suited to its ideology in the age of the Industrial Revolution. Individualism stood in the forefront combined with the kind of toughness which made for victory in the struggle for existence. What was needed was sobriety, hard work, and an emphasis on action. Such a life exemplified the true Christian spirit and on the basis of the individuality of one’s own character led to self-fulfilment.

“Two passages from Charles Kingsley’s famous novel Westward Ho! (1855) demonstrate the conception of this new attitude by a leading Evangelical. The duty of man was to be bold against himself, as one of the book’s heroes explained to his young companion: ‘To conquer our fancies and our own lusts and our ambitions in the sacred name of duty; this is to be truly brave, and truly strong; for he who cannot rule himself, how can he rule his crew or his fortunes?’ What the Puritans had designated their ‘calling’ was here named duty. The individualism involved was brought out further in another passage from Kingsley’s book. There were two sorts of people: one trying to do good according to certain approved rules he had learned by ear, and the other not knowing whether he was good or not, just doing the right thing because the Spirit of God was within him. It was this sort of piety which became fashionable at the turn of the century. The contemplative side of pietism gave way to a piety of action. This transformation was in tune with the experiences of the commercial and industrial classes, though seventeenth-century Puritans had already stated repeatedly that ‘action is all’.

“This action was exemplified by what the Victorians called the ‘gospel of work’. As Carlyle put it: ‘…. Not what I have but what I do is my kingdom.’ It was in work that duty was exemplified. John Henry Newman shared this emphasis on work: ‘We are not here that we might go to bed at night, and get up in the morning, toil for our bread, eat and drink, laugh and joke, sin when we have a mind and reform when we are tired of sinning, rear a family and die.’ Work had to be done in the right spirit: the service of God in one’s secular calling.
“Samuel Smiles’s *Self Help* (1859), which propagandised this morality and its application to work, was the most successful book of the century – over a quarter of a million copies were sold by 1905. Its popularity was as great outside England as within the country. Garibaldi was a great admirer of the book, as was the Queen of Italy. In Japan it was the rage under the title *European Decision and Character Book*. The mayor of Buenos Aires compared Smiles, surprisingly, to Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Quite rightly these underdeveloped countries saw in Smiles’s book a reflection of attitudes which were making an important contribution to the successful industrialization of England.

“The aim of *Self Help* was to aid the working classes in improving themselves so as to reach the top. This path was marked by the improvement of the individual character of those who desired to be a success in life. ‘The crown and glory of life is character.’ What this character should be Smiles illustrated through examples of men who raised themselves to fame and fortune. Character had to be formed by morals, for to Smiles, social and economic problems were really problems for morality. When he talked about thrift and saving it was the moral aspect of self-reliance and restraint which appealed to him and not the economic consequences of such practices. Character was also shaped by the competitive struggle – stop competition and you stop the struggle for individualism. This struggle had to be conducted in a ‘manly way’ if success was to follow. He exhorted the workers to become gentlemen, for this meant the acquisition of a keen sense of honor, scrupulously avoiding mean actions. ‘His law is rectitude – action in right lines.’ Here was a rooted belief in a moral code as the sole road to worldly success…”

Yes, Victorian morality was the road to worldly success. And as such it was supremely worldly. And hypocritical. For these successful self-made men who abhorred the slightest manifestation of sexuality in their womenfolk poured into London’s brothels in large numbers. And while calling on the working class to help themselves, they made sure that they did not themselves help them. Not that there were not many charities in England at the time – indeed, this was the age of charities par excellence. But for many this was but another chance to flaunt their wealth and the “character” that had gained them their wealth. The words of Christ apply well to the Victorians: “Verily I say unto you: they have had their reward [already, in this life]” (Matthew 6.5)…

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65 Mosse, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-114. The Victorians’ keen sense of honour appears to go back to an attitude of the Italian Renaissance. Thus in about 1860 Jacob Burckhardt wrote about “that moral force which was then the strongest bulwark against evil. “The highly gifted man of that day thought to find it in the sentiment of honour. This is that enigmatic mixture of conscience and egotism which often survives in the modern man after he has lost, whether by his own fault or not, faith, love and hope. This sense of honour is compatible with much selfishness and great vices, and may be the victim of astonishing illusions; yet, nevertheless, all the noble elements that are left in the wreck of a character may gather around it, and from this foundation may draw new strength. It has become, in a far wider sense than is commonly believed, a decisive test of conduct in the minds of the cultivated Europeans of our own day, and many of those who yet hold faithfully by religion and morality are unconsciously guided by this feeling in the gravest decisions of their lives” (*The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, London: Penguin, 1990, p. 273).

66 For a striking example, see Kate Summerscale, "Divorce, Victorian Style", *Seven*, April 29, 2012, pp. 12-13.
39. THE BRITISH EMPIRE

The British Empire presents us with a puzzling paradox: how could a country whose ideology was liberalism, and which had fought, and would continue to fight, under the banner of freedom from tyranny for all peoples, then set about creating the largest empire the world had ever seen, enslaving hundreds of millions of peoples to itself?

Of course, there are many very different kinds and qualities of empire. The principal argument of this series of books is that one kind in particular – the Orthodox Christian Empire, based on the symphony of powers between the Orthodox Autocrat and the Orthodox Church – is in fact the best form of government yet devised for the attainment of the supreme end of man: the salvation of his immortal soul. The British Empire was not of this type, although it also claimed to be bringing salvation in Christ to heathen peoples.

But could it be argued that the British Empire, as the first exemplar of what Simon Schama calls “the empire of good intentions”, did more good than evil?

Niall Ferguson summarizes his case for the British Empire as follows: “For much (though certainly, as we shall see, not all) of its history, the British Empire acted as an agency for imposing free markets, the rule of law, investor protection and relatively incorrupt government on roughly a quarter of the world. The Empire also did a good deal to encourage those things in countries which were outside its formal imperial domain but under its economic influence through the ‘imperialism of free trade’. Prima facie, there therefore seems a plausible case that empire enhanced global welfare – in other words, was a Good Thing.

“Many charges can of course be leveled against the British Empire; they will not be dropped in what follows. I do not claim, as John Stuart Mill did, that British rule in India was ‘not only the purest in intention but one of the most beneficent in act ever known to mankind’; nor, as Lord Curzon did, that ‘the British Empire is under Providence the greatest instrument for good that the world has seen’; nor, as General Smuts claimed, that it was ‘the widest system of organized human freedom which has ever existed in human history’. The Empire was never so altruistic. In the eighteenth century the British were indeed as zealous in the acquisition and exploitation of slaves as they were subsequently zealous in trying to stamp slavery out; and for much longer they practiced forms of racial discrimination and segregation that we today consider abhorrent. When imperial authority was challenged – in India in 1857, in Jamaica in 1831 or 1865, in South Africa in 1899 – the British response was brutal. When famine struck (in Ireland in the 1840s, in India in the 1870s) their response was negligent, in some measure positively culpable. Even when they took a scholarly interest in oriental cultures, perhaps they did subtly denigrate them in the process.

“Yet the fact remains that no organization in history has done more to promote the free movement of goods, capital and labour than the British Empire in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. And no organization has done
more to impose Western norms of law, order and governance around the world. To characterize all this as ‘gentlemanly capitalism’ risks underselling the scale – and modernity – of the achievement in the sphere of economics; just as criticism of the ‘ornamental’ (meaning hierarchical) character of British rule overseas tends to overlook the signal virtues of what were remarkable non-venal administrations.”

Of course, this begs the question whether “the free movement of goods, capital and labour” is such an indubitable good. In England for generations it was an indubitable evil, in that it plunged the vast majority of the population – the rural as well as the urban poor – into terrible, soul-destroying poverty, while increasing the pride, cruelty and hypocrisy of the governing class to a proverbial degree (“Victorian hypocrisy” is still a byword). Nor does the fact that liberal England gradually, very gradually corrected these ills – significantly, by abandoning the strict theory of Free Trade and the non-interference of government through the enactment of various social reforms and the beginning of the Welfare State – alter this judgement, unless we are to believe, with the Jesuits, that “the end justifies the means”, and that the cruelty of Victorian England is justified by the relatively more just and humane England of the later twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

If “the free movement of goods, capital and labour” was such a disaster for the British themselves as weighed on the scale of that utilitarian principle of Jeremy Bentham, “the greatest happiness of the greatest number”, it is difficult to see how it could have been a boon for anyone else. Thus the destruction of the indigenous Indian textile industry by competition with the factories of Northern England doomed millions of Indian peasants to even greater poverty. And if the British administration was indeed less venal than the Mughal one that it replaced, this was a relatively small benefit to place in the scale against the five million dead in the Bengal famine of 1873-74 and the famines that periodically recurred thereafter. But if it is argued that such suffering was justified in that it was a necessary stage “on the path to modernity” and the modern, democratic India, then we are back with the Jesuit principle again and the idea that the sufferings of one generation, undertaken unwillingly and imposed for less than altruistic motives, can compensate for the relatively greater prosperity of another, much later one.

Ferguson continues: “Even if we allow for the possibility that trade, capital flows and migration could have been ‘naturally occurring’ in the past 300 years, there remain the flows of culture and institutions. And here the fingerprints of empire seem more readily discernible and less easy to expunge.

“When the British governed a country – even when they only influenced its government by flexing their military and financial muscles – there were certain distinctive features of their own society that they tended to disseminate. A list of the most important of these would run:

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67 Ferguson, op. cit, pp. xxi-xxii.
1. The English language
2. English forms of land tenure
3. Scottish and English banking
4. The Common Law
5. Protestantism
6. Team Sports
7. The limited or ‘night watchman’ state
8. Representative assemblies
9. The idea of liberty

“The last of these is perhaps the most important because it remains the most distinctive feature of the Empire, the thing that sets it apart from its continental rivals. I do not mean to claim that all British imperialists were liberals: some were very far from it. But what is striking about the history of the Empire is that whenever the British were behaving despotically, there was almost always a liberal critique of that behaviour from within British society. Indeed, so powerful and consistent was this tendency to judge Britain’s imperial conduct by the yardstick of liberty that it gave the British Empire something of a self-liquidating character. Once a colonized society had sufficiently adopted the other institutions the British brought with them, it became very hard for the British to prohibit that political liberty to which they attached so much significance for themselves.”

This is a fair point, but a highly paradoxical one. For it presupposes that the “liberal Empire” of Britain could only introduce the benefits of liberalism by illiberal means - coercion, and that these benefits were perceived not immediately, but only after several generations had passed, when the formerly uncivilised tribes had matured to the extent of being capable of parliamentary self-government. This was because, as Ferguson admits, the spreading of liberalism was not the real motivation for the creation of the Empire, but rather commercial gain from the import of sugar, spices, cotton, etc., and the export of manufactures, financial services, etc. When that commercial gain was threatened for one reason or another, the British response was to send in the gunboats or the redcoats, and annex the territory in question before introducing those western institutions - property rights, contractual law - that would guarantee a stable, long-term trading relationship. And so “the rise of the British Empire, it might be said, had less to do with the Protestant work ethic or English individualism than with the British sweet tooth.”

And when the end of the Empire came, after the Second World War, it came not so much as result of the British at length deciding that the natives were now mature enough to govern themselves, nor even because the natives’ demand for self-government acquired an unstoppable momentum, but simply because the Empire was now broke and could no longer afford its colonies...

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68 Ferguson, op. cit., pp. xxiii-xxiv.  
69 Ferguson, op. cit., p. 13.  
70 Ferguson, op. cit., chapter 6.
40. THE BRITISH IN IRELAND

The doctrine of economic liberalism, or Free Trade, gained its decisive victory in 1846, when the Tory Prime Minister, Lord Peel, made a dramatic volte-face and voted for the repeal of the Corn Laws, thereby creating civil war in his party and condemning it to the political wilderness for a generation. But before he left office, the terrible fruits of the doctrine he had just espoused were making themselves felt in one of the greatest tragedies of modern history: the Irish famine.

True, the immediate cause of the famine was not Free Trade, but a blight of the potato crop on which the eight million Irish depended for their survival. However, it was the callousness of the English governing class – caused in no small part by the political and economic doctrines it espoused – that made the eventual death-toll (1.1 million between 1845 and 1850) as large as it was. As Niall Ferguson writes: “It may have been phytophthora infestans that ruined the potatoes; but it was the dogmatic laissez-faire policies of Ireland’s British rulers that turned harvest failure into outright famine.”

John Mitchel put the same point as follows in his *The Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps) 1860*: “The Almighty indeed sent the potato blight, but the English created the Famine.”

“These words,” writes A.N. Wilson, “very understandably became the unshakeable conviction of the Irish, particularly those forced into exile by hunger. The tendency of modern historians is not so much to single out individuals for blame, such as Charles Edward Trevelyan, permanent head of the Treasury, as to point to the whole attitude of mind of the governing class and the, by modern standards, gross inequalities which were taken for granted. Almost any member of the governing class would have shared some of Trevelyan’s attitudes.

“But there is more to John Mitchel’s famous statement (one could almost call it a declaration of war) than mere rhetoric. Deeply ingrained with the immediate horrors of the famine was the overall structure of Irish agrarian society, which placed Irish land and wealth in the hands of English (or in effect English) aristocrats. It was the belief of a Liberal laissez-faire economist such as Lord John Russell that the hunger of Irish peasants was not the responsibility of government but of landowners. No more callous example of a political doctrine being pursued to the death – quite literally – exists in the annals of British history. But Lord John Russell’s government, when considering the Irish problem, were not envisaging some faraway island in which they had no personal concern. A quarter of the peers in the House of Lords had Irish interests…”

72 Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 80.
Another factor contributing to English callousness was “No Popery”. “There were plenty who saw [the famine] as ‘a special “mercy”, calling sinners both to evangelical truth and the Dismantling of all artificial obstacles to divinely-inspired spiritual and economic order’, as one pamphlet put it.”

In spite of such attitudes, there were English men and women who felt their consciences and contributed to the relief of the famine – Queen Victoria and Baron Rothschild among them. “Yet these overtures from the English side,” continues Wilson, “were undoubtedly made against a tide of prejudice and bitterness. The hordes of Irish poor crowding into English slums did not evoke pity – rather, fear and contempt. The Whiggish Liberal *Manchester Guardian* blamed the famine quite largely on the feckless Irish attitudes to agriculture, family, life in general. Small English farmers, said this self-righteous newspaper, don’t divide farms into four which are only sufficient to feed one family. (The economic necessities which forced the Irish to do this were conveniently overlooked by the *Manchester Guardian*: indeed economic weakness, in the Darwinian jungle, is the equivalent of sin.) Why weren’t the English starving? Because ‘they bring up their children in habits of frugality, which qualify them for earning their own living, and then send them forth into the world to look for employment’.

“We are decades away from any organized Irish Republican Movement. Nevertheless, in the midst of the famine unrest, we find innumerable ripe examples of British double standards where violence is in question. An Englishman protecting his grossly selfish way of life with a huge apparatus of police and military, prepared to gun down the starving, is maintaining law and order. An Irishman retaliating is a terrorist. John Bright, the Liberal Free Trader, hero of the campaign against the Corn Laws, blamed Irish idleness for their hunger – ‘I believe it would be found on inquiry, that the population of Ireland, as compared with that of England, do not work more than two days a week.’ The marked increase in homicides during the years 1846 and 1847 filled these English liberals with terror. There were 68 reported homicides in Ireland in 1846, 96 in 1847, 126 shootings in the latter year compared with 55 the year before. Rather than putting these in the contexts of hundreds of thousands of deaths annually by starvation, the textile manufacturer from Rochdale blames all the violence of these starving Celts on their innate idleness. ‘Wherever a people are not industrious and not employed, there is the greatest danger of crime and outrage. Ireland is idle, and therefore she starves; Ireland starves, and therefore she rebels.’

“Both halves of this sentence are factually wrong. Ireland most astonishingly did *not* rebel in, or immediately after, the famine years; and we have said enough to show that though there was poverty, extreme poverty, before 1845, many Irish families survived heroically on potatoes alone. The economic structure of a society in which they could afford a quarter or a half an acre of land on which to grow a spud while the Duke of Devonshire owned Lismore,

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73 Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 76.
Bolton (and half Yorkshire), Chatsworth (and ditto Derbyshire), the whole of Eastbourne and a huge palace in London was not of the Irish peasant’s making.

“By 1848/9 the attitude of Lord John Russell’s government had become Malthusian, not to say Darwinian, in the extreme. As always happens when famine takes hold, it was followed by disease. Cholera swept through Belfast and Co. Mayo in 1848, spreading to other districts. In the workhouses, crowded to capacity, dysentery, fevers and ophthalmia were endemic – 13,812 cases of ophthalmia in 1849 rose to 27,200 in 1850. Clarendon and Trevelyan now used the euphemism of ‘natural causes’ to describe death by starvation. The gentle Platonist-Hegelian philosopher Benjamin Jowett once said, ‘I have always felt a certain horror of political economists, since I heard one of them say that he feared the famine of 1848 in Ireland would not kill more than a million people, and that would scarcely be enough to do much good.’ As so often Sydney Smith was right: ‘The moment the very name of Ireland is mentioned, the English seem to bid adieu to common feeling, common prudence and common sense, and to act with the barbarity of tyrants and the fatuity of idiots.’”

Although one part of the English establishment came to favour “Home Rule”, i.e. independence, for the Irish, the bitterness that earlier policies caused remained, making Ireland the biggest failure of British imperial rule...

74 Wilson, op. cit., pp. 82-83.
41. THE BRITISH IN CHINA

We have seen that the British ruling classes thoroughly exploited their industrial poor for financial reasons, and did the same to their nearest neighbours, the Irish, for the same reasons. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the British Empire further afield was no less exploitative. If it did not kill the natives on quite the same scale as the Spanish in the Americas, it nevertheless destroyed their institutions, their indigenous industries and their dignity with a callowness and sense of racial and cultural superiority that was to elicit a long and bitter nationalist and anti-imperialist backlash in the twentieth century…

In China, however, they came up against a nation that was much older than theirs, and a culture that was arguably, if we overlook its paganism, distinctly superior. Moreover, the Chinese were perhaps the only nation in the world that could rival the British in their sense of racial superiority… The clash between the two was therefore bound to have profound and long-lasting consequences…

Maria Hsia Chang writes: “It is difficult to imagine two civilizations more dissimilar than those of China and the West. Continental in proportion, agrarian China was insular and self-sufficient; industrial Western Europe was driven to export and championed free trade. Chinese culture deified authority and the group; Western civilization was rooted in individualism. Europeans were Judeo-Christians who regarded the Chinese, with their ancestor worship, as benighted pagans. Westerners believed in the rule of law, due process, and innocence until proven guilty; Chinese long opted for rule by Confucian ethics, in which the courts were a last recourse where the accused was presumed to be guilty until proven innocent. Although East and West were each other’s complete opposites, both were great and proud civilizations. The Chinese, an ancient people with a 5,000-year history, still thought they were the centre of the world; Westerners, with a civilization that reached back to Greco-Roman antiquity, found only confirmation of their superiority in their excursions across the globe. It does not take the gifts of a prophet to predict that contact between two such disparate civilizations could only lead to deadly conflict. Indeed, a British trader, writing in 1833 on the miserable trade conditions in China, ominously concluded that ‘war with the Chinese cannot be doubted’.”

The problem was that the West, and in particular Britain, wanted to trade with China, but the Chinese did not want to trade with the West. In what he saw as a magnanimous gesture, Emperor Kangxi (1662-1722) had allowed western merchants to trade within a kind of ghetto in Canton with a monopolistic group of Chinese merchants, the Thirteen Hongs. But the British, the “proudest” and “stiffest” of the westerners, found these restrictions “tiresome, insulting, and stultifying”.


52
“The China trade,” continues Chang, “had become important for both British consumers and their government. Until 1830, when India began the commercial cultivation of tea, tea could be bought only from China. In 1785, some 15 million pounds of Chinese tea a year were purchased by the British East India Company; tax on that tea accounted for a tenth of the British government’s total revenue. In 1795, and again in 1816, envoys were sent from London to prevail upon the Chinese emperor to improve trade conditions by lifting the restrictions in favor of a modern commercial treaty. Both missions, like the earlier Dutch effort, returned empty handed. To add fuel to fuel, the emperor treated the representatives of the British monarch with customary imperiousness, sublimely oblivious that he was dealing with a new breed of ‘barbarians’. That arrogance was only too evident in the letter to King George III from Emperor Qianlong (1736-1795), in response to the Macartney mission of 1795:

“’My capital is the hub and centre about which all quarters of the globe revolve… Our Celestial Empire possesses all thing in prolific abundance… [and has] no need to import the manufactures of outside barbarians… But as the tea, silk and porcelain which the Celestial Empire produces, are absolute necessities to… yourselves, we have permitted, as a signal mark of favor, that foreign hongs should be established at Canton, so that… your country thus participate in our beneficence.’

“What the Chinese did not realize was that Britain had the power to force them into making trade concessions. But before force could be resorted to, a casus belli had to be found. That pretext was opium…”

“William Jardine and James Matheson,” writes Niall Ferguson, “were buccaneering Scotsmen who had set up a trading company in the southern Chinese port of Guangzhou (then known as Canton) in 1832. One of their best lines of business was importing government-produced opium from India. Jardine was a former East India Company surgeon, but the opium he was bringing into China was for distinctly non-medicinal purposes. This was a practice that the Emperor Yongzheng had prohibited over a century before, in 1729, because of the high social costs of opium addiction. On 10 March 1839 an imperial official named Lin Zexu arrived in Canton under orders from the Daoguang Emperor to stamp out the trade once and for all. Lin blockaded the Guangzhou opium godowns (warehouses) until the British merchants acceded to his demands. In all, around 20,000 chests of opium valued at £2 million were surrendered. The contents were adulterated to render it unusable and literally thrown into the sea. The Chinese also insisted that henceforth British subjects in Chinese territory should submit to Chinese law. This was not to Jardine’s taste at all. Known to the Chinese as ‘Iron-Headed Old Rat’, he was in Europe during the crisis and hastened to London to lobby the British government. After three meetings with the Foreign Secretary, Viscount Palmerston, Jardine seems to have persuaded him that a show of strength was required, and that ‘the want of power of their war junks’ would ensure an easy victory for a ‘sufficient’ British

force. On 20 February 1840 Palmerston gave the order. By June 1840 all the naval preparations were complete. The Qing Empire was about the feel the full force of history’s most successful narco-state: the British Empire.

“Just as Jardine had predicted, the Chinese authorities were no match for British naval power. Guangzhou was blockaded, Chusan (Zhoushan) Island was captured. After a ten-month stand off, British marines seized the forts that guarded the mouth of the Pearl River, the waterway between Hong Kong and Guangzhou. Under the Convention of Chuenpi, signed in January 1841 (but then repudiated by the Emperor), Hong Kong became a British possession. The Treaty of Nanking, signed a year later after another bout of one sided fighting, confirmed this cession and also gave free reign to the opium trade in five so-called treaty ports: Canton, Amoy (Xiamen), Foochow (Fuzhou), Ningbo and Shanghai. According to the principle of extraterritoriality, British subjects could operate in these cities with complete immunity from Chinese law.”

“Thereafter,” writes Chang, “the political integrity of China began to unravel. In 1844, without fighting a war, treaties were concluded with the United States and France that had effects more far-reaching than the Treaty of Nanjing. The Treaty of Wangxia with the United States introduced the most-favored-nation clause and the right of extraterritoriality, both of which had devastating impact on China’s well-being and sovereignty. The most-favored-nation clause extended all bilateral treaties between China and a foreign country to all other interested powers, thereby enabling the United States to obtain all the benefits that Britain had derived from the Treaty of Nanjing (excepting Hong Kong and the indemnity). The right of extraterritoriality, for its part, gave foreigners to China immunity from its laws and criminal justice system. Foreigners suspected of having committed crimes in China would be handed over to their consuls for trial in accordance with their own country’s laws – which was rarely followed through in practice. More than that, the right of extraterritoriality was not mutual. Chinese immigrants in Western countries enjoyed no reciprocal legal immunity.

“France followed the United States by concluding the Treaty of Huangpu, which promptly invoked the most-favored-nation principle, thereby gaining for France every erstwhile concession obtained by Britain and the United States. Additionally, the Chinese agreed to lift their ban on Christianity, opening China to proselytization by French and other Western missionaries.”

The Second Anglo-Chinese War (1856-60), which ended with the sack of Peking and the Treaty of Tianjin, inflicted still greater humiliation on China. More cities were opened to foreign trade, and westerners took over China’s maritime customs. British cotton exports to China – one of Britain’s main aims – multiplied. As did the export of opium... British “free” trade had been imposed on the world’s greatest non-Christian empire at the point of a gun...

78 Chang, op. cit., pp. 70-71.
“For China,” writes Ferguson, “the first Opium War ushered in an era of humiliation. Drug addiction exploded. Christian missionaries destabilized traditional Chinese beliefs. And in the chaos of the Taiping Rebellion – a peasant revolt against a discredited dynasty led by the self-proclaimed younger brother of Christ – between 20 and 40 million people lost their lives.”

That the leader of the Taiping Rebellion should call himself the brother of Jesus Christ was a sign of another kind of western influence, this time religious. However, this Christian influence, however perverted, was mixed with other, communistic ideas. Thus J.M. Roberts writes: “The basis of Taiping society was communism: there was no private property but communal provision for general needs. The land was in theory distributed for working in plots graded by quality to provide just shares. Even more revolutionary was the extension of social and educational equality to women. The traditional binding of their feet was forbidden and a measure of sexual austerity marked the movement’s aspirations (though not the conduct of the ‘Heavenly King’ himself). These things reflected the mixture of religious and social elements which lay at the root of the Taiping cult and the danger it presented to the traditional order.”

Such elements might lead one to think that this rebellion was undertaken under the direct influence of the West, being an eastern offshoot of the European Age of Revolution. But this would be a mistake, according to Jacques Gernet, insofar as Hung “was only following in the footsteps of other rebel leaders and usurpers who had been regarded as reincarnations of Maitreya, the saviour Buddha… This view fails to recognize the role played by heterodox religions in the big rebellions of Chinese history and the opposition – a basic factor in China – between the official cults, patronized by the legitimate authority, and the religious practices frowned on by the state (yin-ssu). Taoism, Buddhism, and Manicheism all provided popular risings with the messianic hope of a world at peace, harmony, and general prosperity; the Christianity of the T’ai P’ing comes into the same category.”

Be that is may, it is intriguing that this enormous rebellion, together with the later rebellions it gave rise to, resulting in no less than 20 million deaths (although only a small proportion of these were deaths in battle), should have taken place at just the time when western ideas were beginning to enter into China. Some causal link seems highly probable. Thus we may agree with the judgement of Eric Hobsbawm that “these convulsions were in important respects the direct product of the western impact on China.

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79 Ferguson, op. cit., p. 292.
“Perhaps alone among the great traditional empires of the world, China possessed a popular revolutionary tradition, both ideological and practical. Ideologically its scholars and its people took the permanence and centrality of their Empire for granted: it would always exist, under an emperor (except for occasional interludes of division), administered by the scholar-bureaucrats who had passed the great national civil service examinations introduced almost two thousand years before – and only abandoned when the Empire itself was about to die in 1916. Yet its history was that of a succession of dynasties each passing, it was believed, through a cycle of rise, crisis and supersession: gaining and eventually losing that ‘mandate of Heaven’ which legitimise their absolute authority. In the process of changing from one dynasty to the next, popular insurrection, growing from social banditry, peasant risings and the activities of popular secret societies to major rebellion, was known and expected to play a significant part. Indeed its success was itself an indication that the ‘mandate of Heaven’ was running out. The permanence of China, the centre of world civilisation, was achieved through the ever-repeated cycle of dynastic change, which included this revolutionary element.

“The Manchu dynasty, imposed by northern conquerors in the mid-seventeenth century, had thus replaced the Ming dynasty, which had in turn (through popular revolution) overthrown the Mongol dynasty in the fourteenth century. Though in the first half of the nineteenth century the Manchu regime still seemed to function intelligently and effectively – thought it was said with an unusual amount of corruption – there had been signs of crisis and rebellion since the 1790s. Whatever else they may have been due to, it seems clear that the extraordinary increase of the country’s population during the past century (whose reasons are still not fully elucidated) had begun to create acute economic pressures. The number of Chinese is claimed to have risen from around 140 million in 1741 to about 400 million in 1834. The dramatic new element in the situation of China was the western conquest, which had utterly defeated the Empire in the first Opium War (1839-42). The shock of this capitulation to a modest naval force of the British was enormous, for it revealed the fragility of the imperial system, and even parts of popular opinion outside the few areas immediately affected may have become conscious of it. At all events there was a marked and immediate increase in the activities of various forces of opposition, notably the powerful and deeply rooted secret societies such as the Triad of south China, dedicated to the overthrow of the foreign Manchurian dynasty and the restoration of the Ming. The imperial administration had set up militia forces against the British, and thus helped to distribute arms among the civilian population. It only required a spark to produce an explosion.

“That spark was provided in the shape of an obsessed, perhaps psychopathic prophet and messianic leader, Hung Hsiu Chuan (1813-64), one of those failed candidates for the imperial Civil Service examination who were so readily given to political discontent. After his failure at the examination he evidently had a nervous breakdown, which turned into a religious conversion. Around 1847-8 he founded a ‘Society of those who venerate God’, in Kwangsi province, and was rapidly joined by peasants and miners, by men from the large Chinese
population of pauperised vagrants, by members of various national minorities and by supporters of the older secret societies. Yet there was one significant novelty in his preaching. Hung had been influenced by Christian writings, had even spent some time with an American missionary in Canton, and thus embodied significant western elements in an otherwise familiar mixture of anti-Manchu, heretico-religious and social-revolutionary ideas. The rebellion broke out in 1850 in Kwangsi and spread so rapidly that a ‘Celestial Realm of Universal Peace’ could be proclaimed within a year with Hung as the supreme ‘Celestial King’. It was unquestionably a regime of social revolution, whose major support lay among the popular masses, and dominated by Taoist, Buddhist and Christian ideas of equality. Theocratically organised on the basis of a pyramid of family units, it abolished private property (land being distributed only for use, not ownership), established the equality of the sexes, prohibited tobacco, opium and alcohol, introduced a new calendar (including a seven-day week) and various other cultural reforms, and did not forget to lower taxes. By the end of 1853, the Taipings with at least a million active militants controlled most of south and east China and had capture Nanking, though failing - largely for want of cavalry - to push effectively into the north. China was divided, and even those parts not under Taiping rule were convulsed by major insurrections such as those of the Nien peasant rebels in the north, not suppressed until 1868, the Miao national minority in Kweichow, and other minorities in the south-west and north-west.

“The Taiping revolution did not maintain itself, and was in fact unlikely to. Its radical innovations alienated moderates, traditionalists and those with property to lose – by no means only the rich – the failure of its leaders to abide by their own puritanical standards weakened its popular appeal, and deep divisions within the leadership soon developed. After 1856 it was on the defensive, and in 1864 the Taiping capital of Nanking was recaptured. The imperial government recovered, but the price it paid for recovery was heavy and eventually proved fatal. It also illustrated the complexities of the western impact.

“Paradoxically the rulers of China had been rather less ready to adopt western innovations than the plebeian rebels, long used to living in an ideological world in which unofficial ideas drawn from foreign sources (such as Buddhism) were acceptable. To the Confucian scholar-bureaucrats who governed the empire what was not Chinese was barbarian. There was even resistance to the technology which so obviously made the barbarians invincible. As late as 1867 Grand Secretary Wo Jen memorialised the throne’s warning that the establishment of a college for teaching astronomy and mathematics would ‘make the people proselytes of foreignism’ and result ‘in the collapse of uprightness and the spread of wickedness’, and resistance to the construction of railways and the like remained considerable. For obvious reasons a ‘modernising’ party developed, but one may guess that they would have preferred to keep the old China unchanged, merely adding to it the capacity to produce western armaments. (Their attempts to develop such production in the 1860s were not very successful for that reason.) The powerless imperial administration in any case saw itself with little but the choice between different
degrees of concession to the west. Faced with a major social revolution, it was even reluctant to mobilise the enormous force of Chinese popular xenophobia against the invaders. Indeed, the overthrow of the Taiping seemed politically by far its most urgent problem, and for this purpose the help of the foreigners was, if not essential, then at any rate desirable; their good-will was indispensable. Thus imperial China found itself tumbling rapidly into complete dependence on the foreigners. An Anglo-French-American triumvirate had controlled the Shanghai customs since 1854, but after the second Opium War (1856-8) and the sack of Peking (1860) which ended with total capitulation, an Englishman actually had to be appointed ‘to assist’ in the administration of the entire Chinese customs revenue. In practice Robert Hart, who was Inspector General of Chinese Customs from 1863 until 1909, was the master of the Chinese economy and, though he came to be trusted by the Chinese governments and to identify himself with the country, in effect the arrangement implied the entire subordination of the imperial government to the interests of the westerners.”

82 Hobsbawm, The Age of Capital 1848-1875, London: Abacus, 1997, pp. 155-159. Hobsbawm’s analysis is supported by Samuel Burt in his review of Stephen Platt’s Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom: China, the West and the Epic Story of the Taiping Civil War. “The central message of the book is that foreign intervention in the struggle between the Qing Dynasty and the Taipings, though rationalised (often sincerely) on humanitarian grounds, had disastrous consequences during and after the war. ‘China was not a closed system, and globalism is hardly the recent phenomenon we sometimes imagine it to be. By consequence, the war in China was tangled up in threads leading around the globe to Europe and America, and it was watched from outside with a sense of immediacy and horror.’ (p. xxiii) The rebellion was, for Platt, a reminder of just how fine the line is that separates humanitarian intervention from imperialism’ (p. xxvi). (Open Democracy, August 18, 2012)
The generation after the Crimean War saw Britain reach the peak of her power. Far outstripping her competitors in industrial production (it was still some time before America and Germany caught up), mistress of the seas and of an ever-expanding empire on which, as the saying went, the sun never set, Britain’s boast, paradoxically, was in something quite different: in being the world champion of freedom and liberalism in both political and economic life. But how was it possible to be both liberal and imperialist at the same time?

The clue lay in the so-called doctrine of benign intervention: the teaching that Britain, alone among the empires of world history, had acquired her empire for the benefit, not of her own, but of her subject peoples, to whom she communicated the fruits of her liberal civilization by her benign interventions in their lives – in other words, by her annexation of their territories and taking over of their government. This teaching was expounded by Britain’s foremost liberal thinker, John Stuart Mill, in his essay, “A Few Words on Non-Intervention”, in which he asserted that England was “incomparably the most conscientious of all nations… the only one whom mere scruples of conscience… would deter” and “the power which of all in existence best understands liberty”.83

As Noam Chomsky writes, Mill “urged Britain to undertake the enterprise [of humanitarian intervention] vigorously – specifically, to conquer more of India. Britain must pursue this high-minded mission, Mill explained, even though it will be ‘held up to obloquy’ on the continent. Unmentioned was that by doing so, Britain was striking still further devastating blows at India and extending the near-monopoly of opium production that it needed both to force open Chinese markets by violence and to sustain the imperial system more broadly by means of its immense narco-trafficking enterprises, all well known in England at the time. But such matters could not be the source of the ‘obloquy’. Rather, Europeans are ‘exciting odium against us’, Mill wrote, because they are unable to comprehend that England is truly ‘a novelty in the world.’ A remarkable nation that acts only ‘in the service of others’. It is dedicated to peace, though if ‘the aggressions of barbarians force it to a successful war’, it selflessly bears the cost while ‘the fruits it shares in fraternal equality with the whole human race’, including the barbarians it conquers and destroys for their own benefit. England is not only peerless but near perfect, in Mill’s view, with no ‘aggressive designs’, desiring ‘no benefit to itself at the expense of others’. Its policies are ‘blameless and laudable’. England was the nineteenth-century counterpart of the ‘idealistic new world bent on ending inhumanity’, motivated by pure altruism and uniquely dedicated to the highest ‘principles and values’, though also sadly misunderstood by the cynical or perhaps paranoid Europeans…”84


There are indeed grounds for a certain cynicism here: the main motive of Britain’s imperial expansion was undoubtedly commercial profit, a profit that was unquestionably immoral when gained at the expense of jobless Indian textile workers or Chinese opium addicts. Britain’s empire in India, for example, was acquired by the need to protect and expand the commercial interests of the East India Company. Indeed, the Company was British India – with its own civil service and army – until, being “too big to be allowed to fail”, it was taken over and “nationalized” by the British government.

However, a balanced picture of British imperialism must recognize that there were other, nobler motivations, if not among the businessmen and entrepreneurs, at any rate among the Evangelical missionaries who poured into the new dominions. For mission, and protection from false religion, remains the only really defensible justification of one people’s dominion over another. It was at the root of the idea of Christian Rome, which brought Orthodoxy to the peoples of the Mediterranean basin and to the Slav nations to the north. The Russian Empire extended it still further into Asia and even America – and with much less damage to indigenous cultures than the Western missionaries. With their heretical ideas and disdain for both Byzantium and Russia, the British could not be expected to follow this example: pagan Rome was their role model. Nevertheless, they did see religious mission as an important part of their duty, “the white man’s burden”, and part of the justification of their colonialism.

The French were even more missionary-minded than the British. Thus “when King Charles X came to the Chamber of Deputies formally to announce intervention in Algeria, he justified it as ‘for the benefit of Christianity’.”

“In one sense,” writes Dominic Lieven, “religion was a relatively unimportant factor in Britain’s empire. From the seventh and eighth centuries, for instance, Muslim conquerors converted the Near East and southern Mediterranean to Islam, in the process forever changing identities and geopolitics in a vast region. Religion was also very important in the Spanish conquest of the Americas, great effort being put into subsequent conversion of the indigenous population. Though Elizabethan imperialists sometimes talked the language of religious mission, in reality little effort went into converting indigenous peoples to Christianity in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Until 1813 the East India Company strictly limited missionary activity in India. Only with the onset

85 Chomsky again: “India was a real competitor with England: as late as the 1820s, the British were learning advanced techniques of steel-making there, India was building ships for the British navy at the time of the Napoleonic Wars, they had a developed textiles industry, they were producing more iron than all of Europe combined – so the British just proceeded to de-industrialize the country by force and turn it into an impoverished rural society” (Understanding Power: The Indispensable Chomsky, London: Vintage, 2003, p. 257).

86 “It is a remarkable fact,” writes Ferguson, “that throughout the first half of the nineteenth century the amount the East India Company earned from its monopoly on the export of opium was roughly equal to the amount it had to remit to London to pay the interest on its huge debt. The opium trade was crucial to the Indian balance of payments.” (op. cit., p. 166, note).

of the Evangelical Movement in the late eighteenth century did missionaries begin to play a role of any significance in the British Empire. Even subsequently, however, missionaries never converted large communities and when compared to the activities of the Islamic or Spanish empires, their impact was very small.”

Nevertheless, in his Considerations on Representative Government (1861), Mill had mentioned “the decay of usages or superstitions which interfere with the effective implementation of industry” as one of the main benefits of British imperialism.

After citing this phrase, Niall Ferguson writes: “Nowadays, the modern equivalents of the missionary societies campaign earnestly against ‘usages’ in far-flung countries that they regard as barbaric: child labour or female circumcision. The Victorian non-governmental organizations were not so different. In particular, three traditional Indian customs aroused the ire of British missionaries and modernizers alike. One was female infanticide, which was common in parts of north-western India. Another was thagi (then usually spelt ‘thuggee’), the cult of assassin-priests, who were said to strangle unwary travellers on the Indian roads. The third, the one the Victorians most abhorred, was sati (or ‘suttee’): the act of self-immolation when a Hindu widow was burned alive on her husband’s funeral pyre... Between 1813 and 1825 7,941 women died this way in Bengal alone…”

However, in 1857 the Indian Mutiny deeply impressed upon the British the limitations of their power in the reformation of Hindu “usages or superstitions”. The mutiny was sparked by the fact that the cockade on the new turban issued to Indian troops appeared to be made of cow or pig hide. This offended the religious sensibilities, and so “at root the Vellore mutiny was about religion”.

“The year 1857 was the Evangelical movement’s annus horribilis. They had offered India Christian civilization, and the offer had been not merely declined but violently spurned. Now the Victorians revealed the other, harsher face of their missionary zeal. In churches all over the country, the theme of the Sunday sermon switched from redemption to revenge. Queen Victoria – whose previous indifference to the Empire was transformed by the Mutiny into a passionate interest – called the nation to a day of repentance and prayer: ‘A Day of Humiliation’, no less. In the Crystal Palace, that monument to Victorian self-confidence, a vast congregation of 25,000 heard the incandescent Baptist preacher Charles Spurgeon issue what amount to a call for holy war:

“’My friends, what crimes they have committed... The Indian government never ought to have tolerated the religion of the Hindoos at all. If my religion consisted of bestiality, infanticide and murder, I should have no right to it unless I was prepared to be hanged. The religion of the Hindoos is no more than a mass

89 Ferguson, op. cit., pp. 139, 141.
90 Ferguson, op. cit., p. 145.
of the rankest filth that imagination ever conceived. The gods they worship are not entitled to the least atom of respect. Their worship necessitates everything that is evil and morality must put it down. The sword must be taken out of its sheath, to cut off our fellow subjects by their thousands.’

“These words would be taken literally when the sections of the Indian army that remained loyal, the Gurkhas and Sikhs in particular, were deployed. In Cawnpore Brigadier-General Neill forced captured mutineers to lick the blood of their white victims before executing them. At Peshawar forty were strapped to the barrels of cannons and blown apart, the old Mughal punishment for mutiny. In Delhi, where the fighting was especially fierce, British troops gave no quarter. The fall of the city in September was an orgy of slaughter and plunder…”

In fact, the British response to the Mutiny was anything but liberal, and it resulted in a significant change in British imperial policy with regard to the conversion of the natives. From now on, the emphasis would be less on the saving of souls and more on the political and economic benefits of British rule. Thus “on 1 November 1858 Queen Victoria issued a proclamation that explicitly renounced ‘the right and the desire to impose Our convictions on any of Our subjects’. India was henceforth to be ruled not by the East India Company – it was to be wound up – but by the crown, represented by a Viceroy. And the government of India would never again lend its support to the Evangelical project of Christianization. On the contrary, the aim of British policy in India would henceforth be to govern with, rather than against, the grain of indigenous tradition.”

“From another angle,” continues Lieven, “Protestantism was vital to the whole English sense of imperial mission. From the sixteenth to the twentieth century, most Englishmen believed that the Protestant conscience was at the core of all progress. They were convinced that the Protestant had a sense of individual responsibility and a strong motivation to better himself and succeed in life. He was self-disciplined, purposeful and based his life on firm moral principles, which he derived for himself by reading the Bible and struggling to define his own path to salvation. Eighteenth-century Enlightenment and nineteenth-century liberalism had no doubt of their descent from the Protestant tradition even if they had sometimes lost faith in a personal god. By contrast, Catholics were seen to be the slaves of sentiment, tradition, ritual and ignorance. Muslims were worse, and Hindus and Buddhists worst of all. Racial stereotypes of Africans in the late nineteenth century were very familiar from sixteenth-century Ireland: the natives were shifty, immoral and idle, and needed for their own good to be forced to work. Nor had English attitudes to Catholics in general

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91 Ferguson, op. cit., pp. 150-151.
92 “On 4 October 1857 the novelist Charles Dickens assured his readers in London that were he commander-in-chief in India, he would ‘do my utmost to exterminate the Race on whom the stain of the late cruelties rested… and with all convenient dispatch and merciful swiftness of execution, to blot out of mankind and raze it off the face of the earth.’ He meant Indians, of all ages, and, presumably, men, women and children alike…” (Wheatcroft, op. cit., p. 259)
93 Ferguson, op. cit., p. 154.
or the Irish in particular necessarily changed much over the previous 300 years. In 1882 the Regius Professor of History at Oxford University commented that ‘the Celts of Ireland are as yet unfit for parliamentary government... Left to themselves, without what they call English misrule, they would almost certainly be... the willing slaves of some hereditary despot, the representative of their old cosherring chiefs, with a priesthood as absolute and as obscurantist as the Druids.’

“Such views explain the English imperialist’s powerful sense of cultural superiority and civilizing mission among indigenous populations. They explain too the doctrine of terra nullius, first proclaimed in sixteenth-century Ireland, which justified the expropriation and exploitation by a more civilized invading people of human and natural resources which a backward native society was wasting. Armed with this doctrine, one could easily justify the expropriation of indigenous peoples’ land and the eradication of indigenous culture in the name of progress. One could even at a pinch justify turning the lazy African into a productive slave or forcing the Chinese government to allow the import of opium, since these were essential to the development of the British-led international economy and the latter was the driving wheel of progress.

“Whether Catholics, Muslims and pagans could actually be converted to English Protestant virtues and, if so, how quickly the task could be accomplished was a moot point. As one might expect, the Enlightenment and its early Victorian heirs were optimistic. Some Enlightened eighteenth-century observers expected the conversion of Irish Catholics to ‘rationality’, on other words to the culture of the Protestant elite but with God largely removed. In the 1830s it was widely believed that consistent government policy, particularly as regards education, would lead to Anglicization first of India’s elites and then of the whole population. In the reformers’ minds there was no doubt that this would be wholly to Indians’ advantage, their belief in mankind’s perfectibility being matched only by their utter contempt for non-European cultural and intellectual traditions. As Charles Trevelyan put matters, ‘trained by us to happiness and independence, and endowed with our learning and political institutions, India will remain the proudest monument of British benevolence.’ In these first pristine years of Victorian liberal optimism some Englishmen had a faith in rapid progress to rationality along unilinear paths foreordained by history which was subsequently equalled by Lenin’s.

“In the British imperial context this vision always had its doubters. They included pragmatists conscious of the social disruption and political danger liberal policy might create; financial officials aware that Westminster would insist on India living on its own revenues, and that the latter barely sufficed to pay for army, police and administration – let alone ‘luxuries’ like education. More ideological opposition to liberalism also existed. This encompassed an increasing tide of late Victorian racialism, which stressed the innate biological inferiority of non-Whites. It included too romantics and, later, anthropologists, who gloried in native culture and proclaimed the need to preserve its unique traditions.
“But the British Empire could never give up its basic, albeit stuttering commitment to progress and enlightenment, since these were essential to its British elite’s understanding of history, their perception of themselves and of the legitimacy of Britain’s empire. Clearly, British liberal values and ideology did convert growing sections of the indigenous elite, firstly in India and then elsewhere: it was precisely in the name of these values that self-government and independence from Britain were demanded. But in this as in so much else formal empire was only one element in a much broader process of change and Westernization…”

Foreigners were impressed by England’s political system because it seemed to combine freedom with stability, individualism with solidarity, power with prosperity (for the few), gradual extension of rights with traditional deference to title and rank, science and progress with morality and religion. And yet, as we have seen, the objective reasons for a revolution from below were, if anything, stronger in England than anywhere else; the poverty of the majority was worse; the contempt in which they were held by the rich minority greater. So why was England able to avoid the continual upheavals that we see in contemporary France and on the continent?

One reason was undoubtedly that the rich minority were able to use the improved methods of communication, especially the railways, to concentrate the power of a greatly increased police force against troublemakers more quickly than on the continent. A second was the unprecedentedly large emigration to America and the White Dominions (in the case of Australia, of course, this “emigration” was compulsory), which served as a safety-valve to expel the desperately poor (or criminal). A third was that the rapidly increasing lower middle classes, though poor, already had more than their chains to lose, and so tended to support the existing system. They needed the patronage of the rich, and looked down on the proletarians below them, whose desperation they feared. The rich took this into account, and so were able to proceed more slowly than they might otherwise have done in the work of helping the poor, introducing just enough reforms to maintain stability.

As Jacques Barzun writes: “This knack of judging when and how things must change without upsetting the apple cart was painfully acquired by the English over the centuries. They were long reputed the ungovernable people. But fatigue caught up at last and a well-rooted anti-intellectualism helped to keep changes unsystematic and under wraps. Forms, titles, décor remain while different actions occur beneath them; visual stability maintains confidence. It was the knack of rising above principle, the reward of shrewd inconsistency.”

This “knack” paid dividends (literally and metaphorically). The 1850s saw England at her peak from an external, material point of view. Her navies ruled the seas; her trade and industry was far greater than any other country’s (though America and Germany were catching up fast); and while liberalism was checked on the continent after 1848 as monarchy revived and the proletariat raged, in England it remained remarkably stable.

As John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge write, “British liberals took a decrepit old system and reformed it, establishing a professional civil service, attacking cronyism, opening up markets, and restricting the state’s right to subvert liberty. The British state shrank in size even as it dealt with the problems
of a fast-industrializing society and a rapidly expanding global empire. Gross income from all forms of taxation fell from just under 80 million pounds in 1816 to well under 60 million pounds in 1846, despite a nearly 50 percent increase in the size of the population. The vast network of patronage appointees who made up the unreformed state was rolled up and replaced by a much smaller cadre of carefully selected civil servants. The British Empire build a ‘night-watchman state’, as it was termed by the German socialist Ferdinand Lasalle, which was both smaller and more competent than its rivals across the English Channel.

“The thinker who best articulated these changes was John Stuart Mill, who strove to place freedom, rather than security, at the heart of governance… Mill’s central political concern was not how to create order out of chaos but how to ensure that the beneficiaries of order could achieve self-fulfilment. For Mill, the test of a state’s virtue was the degree to which it allowed each person to develop fully his or her abilities. And the surest mechanism for doing this was for government to get out of the way…”

It was to give a theoretical underpinning to this English variety of liberalism, that John Stuart Mill wrote his famous essay On Liberty, which remains to this day the most elegant and influential defence of English liberalism.

Mill admired de Tocqueville, and was a passionate opponent of “the tyranny of the majority”. To protect society against this tyranny he proposed a single “very simple” principle which would place a limit on the ability of the state to interfere in the life of the individual: “The object of this essay is to assert one very simple principle, as entitled to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control, whether the means to be used by physical force in the form of legal penalties or the moral coercion of public opinion. That principle is that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinion of others, to do so would be wise or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him, but to do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to someone else. The only part of the conduct of anyone or which it is amenable to society is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.”

Mill asserted that this “Liberty Principle” or “Harm Principle” applied only to people in “the maturity of their faculties”, not to children or to “those backward states of society in which the race itself may be considered as in its nonage.” For “Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved through free and equal discussion”.

This qualification provided a neat justification for the spread of the British Empire among the pagan nations; and in general, in spite of the fact that Mill was concerned above all to protect the liberty of the individual against the tyranny of the majority and popular morality, his theory fitted in remarkably well with the prejudices of the majority in the England of his time. Thus the English prided themselves on their freedom of speech, and their giving refuge to political exiles of every kind, from Louis XVIII and Louis Napoleon to Herzen and Bakunin, Kossuth and Marx. No tyranny of the majority here!

Mill provided a passionate defence of the widest possible freedom of thought and speech. “First,” he argued, “the opinion which it is attempted to suppress by authority may possibly be true. Those who desire to suppress it, of course, deny its truth; but they are not infallible. They have no authority to decide the question for all mankind and exclude every other person from the means of judging. To refuse a hearing to an opinion because they are sure that it is false is to assume that their certainty is the same thing as absolute certainty. All silencing of discussion is an assumption of infallibility.”

No: there is a difference between certainty and the assumption of infallibility. A man may consider himself to be a wretched sinner and prone to all kinds of errors, and yet be completely certain of some things. All true religious belief is of this kind – and much false religious belief also. Faith, according to the definition of the Apostle, is certainty in the existence of invisible realities (Hebrews 11.1); it is incompatible with the least doubt. But even if one is not completely certain about something, one may be sufficiently sure to act to censor what one considers a false opinion. Thus a government may not be completely certain that a certain drug has no serious side effects. But it may still act to ban it, and ban any propaganda in its favour, in the belief that the risks are sufficiently great to warrant such action. Mill may be able to accommodate this example with his

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100 Dostoyevsky described how a Member of Parliament, Sir Edward Watkins, welcomed Don Carlos to England: “Of course, he himself knew that the newly arrived guest was the leading actor in a bloody and fratricidal war; but by meeting him he thereby satisfied his patriotic pride and served England to the utmost of his ability. Extending his hand to a blood-stained tyrant, in the name of England, and as a member of Parliament, he told him, as it were: ‘You are a despot, a tyrant, and yet you came to the land of freedom to seek refuge in it. This could have been expected: England receives everybody and is not afraid to give refuge to anyone: entée et sortie libres. Be welcome’” (The Diary of a Writer, 1876, London: Cassell, part I, trans. Boris Brasol, pp. 262-263).
“Harm Principle”, but not on the grounds that to exclude a certain opinion on the grounds that it is likely to be false amounts to a belief in one’s infallibility.

Mill anticipates this objection: “Men and governments must act to the best of their ability. There is no such thing as absolute certainty, but there is assurance sufficient for the purposes of human life. We may, and must assume our opinions to be true for the guidance of our own conduct; and it is assuming no more when we forbid bad men to pervert society by the propagation of opinions which we regard as false and pernicious.”

But Mill will have none of this; it is only by allowing our opinion to be contested by those who think otherwise, he argues, that we come to know whether it is really deserving of confidence, and hence whether the opposite opinion should be censored. “The most intolerant of churches, the Roman Catholic Church, even at the canonization of a saint admits, and listens patiently to, a ‘devil’s advocate’. The holiest of men, it appears, cannot be admitted to posthumous honours until all that the devil could say against him is known and weighed.”

In practice, this means that no opinion should ever be censored; “the lists have to be kept open” in case someone appears who will expose the flaw in the accepted “truth”. And this applies even if the dissenting opinion goes against one’s most treasured and vital convictions concerning God or morality. For “however positive anyone’s persuasion may be, not only of the falsity but of the pernicious consequences – not only of the pernicious consequences, but (to adopt expressions which I altogether condemn) the immorality and impiety of an opinion – yet if, in pursuance of that private judgement, though backed by the public judgement of his country or his contemporaries, he prevents the opinion from being heard in its defence, he assumes infallibility. And so far from the assumption being less objectionable or less dangerous because the opinion is called immoral or impious, this is the case of all others in which it is most fatal. These are exactly the occasions on which the men of one generation commit those dreadful mistakes which excite the astonishment and horror of posterity.”

And then Mill cites the examples of Socrates and Jesus Christ, who, though the most admirable of men, became the victims of the censoriousness of their generation.

Mill’s most powerful argument in favour of complete liberty of speech – an argument expressed before him in More’s Utopia and Milton’s Areopagitica - is that it is only in an atmosphere of complete intellectual freedom that truth can be truly understood and become well rooted. “Truth gains more even by the errors of one who, with due study and preparation, thinks for himself than by the true

102 Mill, On Liberty, p. 79.
103 Mill, On Liberty, p. 81.
104 Mill, On Liberty, p. 84.
opinions of those who only hold them because they do not suffer themselves to think. Not that it is solely, or chiefly, to form great thinkers that freedom of thinking is required. On the contrary, it is as much and even more indispensable to enable average human beings to attain the mental stature which they are capable of. There have been, and may again be, great individual thinkers in a general atmosphere of mental slavery. But there never has been, nor ever will be, in that atmosphere an intellectually active people.”

Mill cites the Reformation, the late eighteenth-century in France and the early nineteenth-century in Germany as admirable periods of intellectual freedom. “In each, an old mental despotism had been thrown off, and no new one had yet taken its place. The impulse given at these three periods has made Europe what it now is. Every single improvement which has taken place either in the human mind or in institutions may be traced distinctly to one or other of them.”

However, the citing of these three periods exposes the false assumptions of Mill’s argument. The Reformation was indeed an intellectually exciting period, when many of the abuses and falsehoods of the medieval period were exposed. But did it lead to a greater understanding of positive truth? By no means. Similarly, the late eighteenth century was the period in which the foundations of Church and State were so effectively undermined as to lead to the bloodiest revolution in history to that date, a revolution which most English liberals quite rightly abhorred. As to the early nineteenth century in Germany, its most dominant thinker was Hegel, who, as we shall see, constructed probably the most pompous and contradictory – indeed, strictly nonsensical – of all philosophical systems, which is considered, with some justice, to be an ancestor of both communism and fascism.

As for the Anglo-Saxon world, in the one-and-a-half centuries since Mill’s time, although it has attained a still greater degree of freedom of thought and speech than prevailed in those three epochs. And yet it has been at the expense of the almost complete decay of traditional Christian belief and morality... Evidently, freedom does not necessarily lead to truth. Nor did the Truth incarnate ever claim that it would, declaring rather the reverse relationship, namely, that “ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8.32). And part of the truth consists in the sober recognition that men’s minds are fallen, and for much of the time do not even want the truth, so that if given complete freedom to say what they like, the result will be the falling away of society from truth into the abyss of destruction. As Timothy Snyder writes, interpreting the lessons of George Orwell’s 1984 for today’s mass democracies: “The core texts of liberal toleration, such as Milton’s Areopagitica and Mill’s On Liberty, take for granted that individuals will wish to know the truth. They contend that in the absence of censorship, truth will eventually emerge and be recognised as such. But even in democracies this may not always be true.”

Mill’s arguments in favour of complete freedom of expression rest on the assumption, as he freely admitted, that the men who are given this freedom are not children or barbarians. And yet the corruption of mind and heart we associate with the word “barbarian” is present in every single man; this is what we mean by the term “original sin”. And if men were not very often children in mind, the Apostle Paul would not have been forced to say: “Brethren, be not children in your thinking; be babes in evil, but in thinking be mature” (I Corinthians 14.20).

James Fitzjames Stephen, in his Liberty, Equality, Fraternity (1873) pointed to further important flaws in Mill’s argument. Liberty was like fire, he said; it could be used for good and ill; to assume otherwise was naïve and dangerous. It was by no means certain that full freedom from interference by others would lead to greater searching for truth; it could just as easily lead to idleness and lack of interest in social affairs.

Moreover, writes Gertrude Himmelfarth, “what disturbed him about Mill’s doctrine was the possibility that its adoption would leave society impotent in those situations where there was a genuine need for social action. Implicit too was the possibility that the withdrawal of social sanctions against any particular belief or act would be interpreted as a sanctioning of that belief or act, a licence to do that which society could not prohibit.”

Stephen’s line of argument has been developed in our time by Lord Devlin in his essay entitled The Enforcement of Morals (1968). “The occasion for Devlin’s essay,” writes Himmelfarth, “was the Report of the Wolfenden Commission recommending the legalization of homosexuality between consenting adults. Against the Commission’s claim that private morality and immorality were ‘not the law’s business’, Devlin argued that ‘the suppression of vice is as much the law’s business as the suppression of subversive activities; it is not more possible to define a sphere of private morality than it is to define private subversive activity.’

As we know, the Wolfenden Commission’s recommendation with regard to homosexuality was accepted by the English parliament, which demonstrates the power – the highly destructive power – that the application of Mill’s Principle has acquired in our times, a power that Mill himself would probably have deplored. Indeed, a completely consistent application of the Principle would probably lead to the sweeping away of prohibitions against such activities as euthanasia, incest and prostitution on the grounds that these are within the sphere of private morality or immorality and so of no concern to the State. But then, asks Devlin, “if prostitution is... not the law’s business, what concern has the law with the ponce or the brothel-keeper...? The Report recommends that the laws which make these activities criminal offences should be maintained...
and brings them... under the heading of exploitation.... But in general a ponce exploits a prostitute no more than an impresario exploits an actress.”

Mill justifies the prohibition of certain acts, such as public decency, on the grounds that they “are a violation of good manners, ... coming thus within the category of offences against others”.

And yet, as Jonathan Wolff points out, it is difficult to see how such a prohibition can be justified on the basis of the Harm Principle alone. For “what harm does ‘public indecency’ do? After all, Mill insists that mere offence is no harm. Here Mill, without being explicit, seems to allow customary morality to override his adherence to the Liberty Principle. Few, perhaps, would criticize his choice of policy. But it is hard to see how he can render this consistent with his other views: indeed, he appears to make no serious attempt to do so. “Once we begin to consider examples of this kind we begin to understand that following Mill’s ‘once simple principle’ would lead to a society of a kind never seen before, and, perhaps, one which we would never wish to see...”

And so, while English liberalism of the Mills variety carefully sought to protect society both from the continental-style tyranny of one man, and from the American-style tyranny of the majority, it ended up delivering society into a series of tyrannies of the minorities, which is best exemplified by the European Human Rights Act that is devastating Christian faith and morality in contemporary Britain. This should not surprise us; for liberalism is in essence a pagan doctrine, owing its origin more to fifth-century Athens than to any period of Christian history. Mills extolled the Liberty or Harm Principle not simply because it supposedly guaranteed freedom from tyranny and the triumph of truth, but because it fostered that ideal of the human being, vigorous, independent, unafraid of being different, even eccentric, which he found in Classical Greece. Indeed, he openly rejected the ascetic, Calvinist-Anglican ideal in favour of the pagan Greek: “There is a different type of human excellence from the Calvinistic: a conception of humanity as having its nature bestowed on it for other purposes than merely to be abnegated. ‘Pagan self-assertion’ is one of the elements of human worth, as well as ‘Christian self-denial’. There is a Greek ideal of self-development, which the Platonic and Christian ideal of self-government blends with, but does not supersede. It may be better to be a John Knox than an Alcibiades, but it is better to be a Pericles than either; nor would a Pericles, if we had one in these days, be without anything good which belonged to John Knox.”

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111 Wolff, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-141. For the difficulties created for Mills’ theory by public indecency, see several articles in *Philosophy Now*, issue 76, November-December, 2009.
In 1844 Engels published *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, the first major exposé of the terrible plight of the English proletariat. Marx built on this work to argue that the workers would not better their lot through helping themselves, and still less through receiving help from governments or employers, but *through revolution*. At first it seemed that the workers agreed...

Thus the result of increasing poverty for the great majority in the 1840s, writes Hobsbawm, “was social revolution in the form of spontaneous risings of the urban and industrial poor”, which “made the revolution of 1848 on the continent, the vast Chartist movement in Britain. Nor was discontent confined to the labouring poor. Small and inadaptable businessmen, petty-bourgeois, special sections of the economy, were also the victims of the Industrial Revolution and of its ramifications. Simple-minded labourers reacted to the new system by smashing the machines which they thought responsible for their troubles; but a surprisingly large body of local businessmen and farmers sympathized profoundly with these Luddite activities of their labourers, because they too saw themselves as victims of a diabolical minority of selfish innovators. The exploitation of labour which kept its incomes at subsistence level, thus enabling the rich to accumulate the profits which financed industrialization (and their own ample comforts), antagonized the proletarian. However, another aspect of this diversion of national income from the poor to the rich, from consumption to investment, also antagonized the small entrepreneur. The great financiers, the tight community of home and foreign ‘fund-holders’ who received what all paid in taxes... - something like 8 per cent of the entire national income – were perhaps even more unpopular among small businessmen, farmers and the like than among labourers, for these knew enough about money and credit to feel a personal rage at their disadvantage. It was all very well for the rich, who could raise all the credit they needed, to clamp rigid deflation and monetary orthodoxy on the economy after the Napoleonic Wars; it was the little man who suffered, and who, in all countries and at all times in the nineteenth century demanded easy credit and financial unorthodoxy. Labour and the disgruntled petty-bourgeois on the verge of toppling over into the unpropertied abyss, therefore shared common discontents. These in turn united them in the mass movements of ‘radicalism’, ‘democracy’ or ‘republicanism’ of which the British Radicals, the French Republicans and the American Jacksonian Democrats were the most formidable between 1815 and 1848.”

Violent collectivist reaction to the excesses of liberal individualism seemed inevitable. However, there were still some who can be called socialist but who believed in peaceful reform and the importance of individuals. Thus M.S. Anderson writes: “Two main schools of thought can be distinguished within [early nineteenth-century socialism]. On the one hand was that which traced from the Jacobin regime of 1793-94 in France and which was uncompromisingly activist and power-oriented. Represented from the 1830s onwards most clearly

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113 Hobsbawm, op. cit., pp. 54-55.
by the fanatical professional revolutionary Auguste Blanqui, it believed that the new age could be ushered in, in any existing society, only by a violent **coup d’état** which must be the work of an enlightened minority, the agents of an inexorable historical process. Once established in power, this minority would establish a regime based on complete social and political equality, the end towards which history was inescapably moving. After some unavoidable coercion the majority, their eyes opened by education, would embrace the new regime with enthusiasm. It would then become permanent and unalterable, since no man, as a rational being, could wish to change it. Aspirations of this kind were first given practical expression in the Babeuf conspiracy of 1796 in Paris. Through the *Conspiration pour l’égalité* of Buonarotti, a history of that conspiracy published in 1828 which became ‘the manual of the communist movement in the 1830s and 1840s and the chief source of its ideology’, they were to remain part of the European, later the world, revolutionary vision until our own day.

“Side by side with this harsh and uncompromising scheme there developed another current of thought, represented in Great Britain by Robert Owen and in France by Charles Fourier and to a lesser extent Louis Blanc and that most idiosyncratic of thinkers, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. These writers, dominated less by ideas of historical inevitability than by a desire for justice and for the lessening of human suffering, disliked the totalitarianism, the violence, the centralization of power which were essential to the Jacobin-Babouvist-Blanquist outlook. They dreamed rather of a new society, achieved peacefully or with a minimum of violence, in which patterns and initiatives would emerge from below. Owen and Fourier, the most extreme representatives of this attitude, envisaged the dissolution of central authority and its transfer to small self-contained communities based on a perfect division of labour.”

These “Utopian” Socialists were particularly influenced by the economic ideas of the so-called Philosophical Radicals: Jeremy Bentham, Malthus, Ricardo and James Mill, the father of J.S. Mill. Utopian socialism, writes Bertrand Russell, “began in the heyday of Benthamism, and as a direct outcome of orthodox economics. Ricardo, who was intimately associated with Bentham, Malthus, and James Mill, taught that the exchange value of a commodity is entirely due to the labour expended in producing it. He published this theory in 1817, and eight years later Thomas Hodgskin, an ex-naval officer, published the first Socialist rejoinder, *Labour Defended Against the Claims of Capital*. He argued that if, as Ricardo taught, all value is conferred by labour, then all the reward ought to go to labour; the share at present obtained by the landowner and the capitalist must be mere extortion. Meanwhile Robert Owen, after much practical experience as a manufacturer, had become convinced of the doctrine which soon came to be called Socialism. (The first use of the word ‘Socialist’ occurs in 1827, when it is applied to the followers of Owen.) Machinery, he said, was displacing labour, and laisser-faire gave the working classes no adequate means of combating mechanical power. The method which he proposed for dealing with the evil was the earliest form of modern Socialism.

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“Although Owen was a friend of Bentham, who had invested a considerable amount of money in Owen’s business, the Philosophical Radicals did not like his new doctrines; in fact, the advent of Socialism made them less Radical and less philosophical than they had been. Hodgskin secured a certain following in London, and James Mill was horrified. He wrote:

‘Their notions of property look ugly;... they seem to think that it should not exist, and that the existence of it is an evil to them. Rascals, I have no doubt, are at work among them... The fools, not to see that what they madly desire would be such a calamity to them as no hands but their own could bring upon them.’

“This letter, written, in 1831, may be taken as the beginning of the long war between Capitalism and Socialism. In a later letter, James Mill attributes the doctrine to the ‘made nonsense’ of Hodgskin, and adds: ‘These opinions if they were to spread, would be the subversion of civilized society; worse than the overwhelming deluge of Huns and Tartars.’”

“His creed,” writes Sir Isaiah Berlin, “was summarised in the sentence inscribed at the head of his journal, The New Moral World: ‘Any general character, from the best to the worst, from the most ignorant to the most enlightened, may be given to any community, even the world at large, by the application of proper means, which means are to a great extent at the command and under the control of those who have influence in the affairs of men.’ He had triumphantly demonstrated the truth of his theory by establishing model conditions in his own cotton mills in New Lanark, limiting working hours, and creating provision for health and a savings fund. By this means he increased the productivity of his factory and raised immediately the standard of living of his workers, and, what was even more impressive to the outside world, trebled his own fortune. New Lanark became a centre of pilgrimage for kings and statesmen, and, as the first successful experiment in peaceful co-operation between labour and capital, had a considerable influence on the history both of socialism and of the working class. His later attempts at practical reform were less successful. Owen, who died in deep old age in the middle of the nineteenth century, was the last survivor of the classical period of rationalism, and, his faith unshaken by repeated failures, believed until the end of his life in the omnipotence of education and the perfectibility of man.”

In his Declaration of Mental Independence, Owen declared that from then mankind should consider itself liberated from "the trinity of evils responsible for all the world’s misery: traditional religion, conventional marriage and private property". And since traditional religion was the main buttress of conventional marriage and private property, it was the worst evil.

However, Owen’s later schemes failed, and kind-hearted entrepreneurs remained few and far between. His last scheme, in New Harmony, Indiana,
failed because when he tried to put into effect his belief in the abolition of private property, his workers did not respond - their nature was not as perfectible as Owen believed.\textsuperscript{117} John Stuart Mill drew from Owen’s failure the conclusion that only state action could solve the problem of poverty and inequity. In his \textit{Principles of Political Economy}, he made another proposal that was to be seen as the essence of socialism: redistribution. With this proposal, writes Barzun, he "broke with the liberal school by asserting that the distribution of the national product could be redirected at will and that it should be so ordered for the general welfare. That final phrase, perpetually redefined, was a forecast.... It was [its] underlying idea - essential socialism - that ultimately triumphed, taking the twin form of Communism and the Welfare State, either under the dictatorship of a party and its leader or under the rule of a democratic parliament and democracy.”\textsuperscript{118}

However, the English liberal solutions of self-help and education (Owen) and redistribution of wealth (Mill) were rejected by radical thinkers on the continent, especially in France. The most radical was the anarchist Proudhon, who anticipated the nihilists of the following generation by calling for the destruction of all authorities, even God. “The Revolution is not atheistic, in the strict sense of the word... it does not deny the absolute, it eliminates it...’ “The first duty of man, on becoming intelligent and free, is to continually hunt the idea of God out of his mind and conscience. For God, if he exists, is essentially hostile to our nature... Every step we take in advance is a victory in which we crush Divinity.’ ‘Humanity must be made to see that God, if there is a God, is its enemy.’”\textsuperscript{119}

It was Proudhon who uttered the famous words: “What is property? Property is theft.” Marx disagreed with the latter statement insofar as it presupposed real rights in property. Nevertheless, he admitted the importance of Proudhon’s analysis of private property relations. “The two forces,” writes Berlin, “which Proudhon conceived as fatal to social justice and the brotherhood of man were the tendency towards the accumulation of capital, which led to the continual increase of inequalities of wealth, and the tendency directly connected with it, which openly united political authority with economic control, and so was designed to secure a growth of a despotic plutocracy under the guise of free liberal institutions. The state became, according to him, an instrument designed to dispossess the majority for the benefit of a small minority, a legalised form of robbery...”\textsuperscript{120}

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Other French thinkers tried to be more constructive. Among them was the Comte de Saint-Simon, who saw the salvation of society in its rationalist reconstruction on the basis of science.

\textsuperscript{118} Barzun, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 527-528.
\textsuperscript{119} Proudhon, in Rose, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 61.
\textsuperscript{120} Berlin, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 82-83.
Talmon writes: “Saint-Simon’s earliest pamphlet, *A Letter from a Citizen of Geneva*, contains the bizarre scheme of a Council of Newton. The finest savants of Europe were to assemble in a mausoleum erected in honour of the great scientist, and deliberate on the problems of society. The author thereby gave picturesque expression to his view that in the French Revolution popular sovereignty had proved itself as fumbling, erratic and wrong as the divine right of kings, and that the tenets of rationalism about the rights of man, liberty and equality, had shown themselves just as irrelevant to man’s problems as theological doctrine. Not being rooted in any certainty comparable to that of science, old and new political ideas alike became only a pretext for the will of one set of men to dominate all others – which was all, in fact, that politics had ever been.

“What had made men yield to such palpable error for so long and then caused Saint-Simon to see through them at precisely that moment? Unlike eighteenth-century philosophers – such as his masters Turgot and Condorcet – Saint-Simon does not invoke the march of progress, the victory of enlightenment, or the sudden resolve of men. He points to the importance assumed by scientific advance, technological development and problems of industrial production, all based upon scientific precision, verifiable facts and quantitative measurements which left no room for human arbitrariness.

“In the past, mythological and theological modes of thought, medieval notions of chivalry, metaphysical preoccupations and so on were the accompaniment – or, as Saint-Simon more often seems to suggest, the matrix – of the economic conditions and the social-political order of the day. In brief, frames of mind, modes of production and social political systems hang together, and develop together, and the stages of such overall development cannot be skipped. The industrial system which the nineteenth century was ushering in had its beginnings in the Middle Ages. Within the womb of a civilization dominated by priests and warriors, shaped by values and expectations not of this world, geared for war and inspired by theatrical sentiments of chivalry, there began a mighty collective effort to fashion things, instruments and values designed to enhance men’s lives here and now: industrial production, economic exchange and scientific endeavour. The communes had at first no thought of subverting the feudal-theological order, within which they made their earliest steps – firstly because they were as yet too weak for such a revolt, and secondly because they did not value the external accoutrements of power. They believed only in positive tangible goods and solid achievements in the social-economic and scientific domain.

“This was the cause of a divorce between content and form. While in external appearance warriors and priests still held the reins of authority, real power was increasingly concentrated in the hands of the productive classes. These classes, whose position, indeed whose very existence, lacked acknowledged legitimacy in the official scheme of things, developed a special ethos. Knowing the ruling classes to be incompetent to deal with matters of decisive importance to them, the bourgeoisie restored to a theory of *laissez-faire* which condemned all government interference and glorified individual initiative and the interplay of
economic interests. In order to clothe this class interest in theoretical garb, bourgeois spokesmen evolved the doctrine of the natural rights of man and the theory of checks and balances and division of power. These designed to curb the power-drives of the feudal forces, and indeed succeeded in undermining the self-assurance of the aristocratic order.

“In Saint-Simon’s view, the French Revolution signified not so much the triumph of rationalist-democratic ideas as the total victory of the productive classes and the final swamping of feudal-theological values by positive forces. But this fundamental fact was distorted and obscured by those metaphysicians and lawyers who, having played an important part in helping the industrial classes to win, mistook their secondary role for a mission to impose their ideas and their rule upon society. Instead of stepping aside and letting the imperatives of industrial endeavour shape new institutions, they set out to impose their conjectural ideas upon society, side-tracking the real issues and befogging them with rhetoric and sophistry. In effect their intention was not to abolish the old system which divided society into rulers and ruled, but to continue it, only substituting themselves for the feudal lords; in other words, to rule by force. For where the relationship between rulers and ruled is not grounded in the nature of things as is that, for example, between doctor and patient, teacher and pupil — that is, on division of functions – the only reality is the rule of man over man based on force. This form of relationship dated from the days when man was considered to need protection by superiors because he was weak, lowly and ignorant, or had to be kept from mischief because he was riotous and savage. It was no longer justified since the Revolution had proved that man had come of age. It was time for government, in other words the state, to make room for an administration of things, and conscious, sustained planning of the national economy. The need to keep law and order, allegedly always so pressing and relentless, would be reduced to a minimum when social relations were derived from objective necessities. The whole problem was thus reduced to the discovery of the ‘force of things’, the requirements of the mechanism of production. Once these had become the measure of all things, there would be no room for the distinction between rulers in the traditional political sense. The nexus of all human relationships would be the bond between expert knowledge and experience on the one hand, and discipleship, fulfillment of necessary tasks, on the other. The whole question of liberty and equality would then assume a quite different significance.

“In fact men would no longer experience the old acute craving for liberty and equality. A scientific apportioning of functions would ensure perfect cohesion of the totality, and the high degree of integration would draw the maximum potential from every participant in the collective effort. Smooth, well-adjusted participation heightens energy and stills any sense of discomfort or malaise. There is no yearning for freedom and no wish to break away in an orchestra, a choir, a rowing boat. Where parts do not fit and abilities go to waste, there is a sense of frustration and consequently oppression, and man longs to get away. The question of equality would not arise once inequality was the outcome of a necessary and therefore just division of tasks. There is no inequality where there is no domination for the sake of domination.
“Such a perfect integration remained to be discovered. Pursuing his quest, Saint-Simon stumbled upon socialism, and then found himself driven to religion. Waste, frustration, deprivation, oppression were the denial of both cohesion of the whole and the self-expression of the individual. Those scourges were epitomized in the existence of the poorest and most numerous class – the workers. And so what started with Saint-Simon as a quest for positive certainty and efficiency gradually assumed the character of a crusade on behalf of the disinherited, the underprivileged and frustrated. The integrated industrial productive effort began to appear as conditioned upon the abolition of poverty, and dialectically the abolition of poverty now seemed the real goal of a fully integrated collective endeavour.

“But was the removal of friction and waste enough to ensure the smooth working of the whole? And would rational understanding suffice to ensure wholehearted participation in the collective effort? Saint-Simon was led to face at a very early stage of socialism the question of incentives. He felt that mechanical, clever contrivances, intellectual comprehension and enlightened self-interest were in themselves insufficient as incentives and motives. And so the positivist, despising mythical, theological and metaphysical modes of thought, by degrees evolved into a mystical Romantic. He became acutely aware of the need for incentives stronger, more impelling and compelling than reason and utility. In a sense he had already come to grips with the problem in the famous distinction between organic and critical epochs in history, a distinction which was destined to become important in the theory of his disciple, Auguste Comte.

“These two types of epoch alternate in history. There is a time of harmony and concord, like the pre-Socratic age in Greece and the Christian Middle Ages, and there are times of disharmony and discord, like post-Socratic Greece and the modern age, which began with the Reformation, evolved into rationalism, and came to a climax in the French Revolution. The organic ages are period of a strong and general faith, when the basic assumptions comprise a harmonious pattern and are unquestioningly taken for granted. There are no dichotomies of any kind, and classes live in harmony. In the critical ages there is no longer any consensus about basic assumptions; beliefs clash, traditions are undermined, there is no accepted image of the world. Society is torn by class war and selfishness is rampant.

“The crying need of the new industrial age was for a new religion. There must be a central principle to ensure integration of all the particular truths and a single impulse for all the diverse spiritual endeavours. The sense of unity of life must be restored, and every person must be filled with such an intense propelling and life-giving sense of belonging to that unity, that he would be drawn to the centre by the chains of love, and stimulated by a joyous irresistible urge to exert himself on behalf of all.

“Saint-Simon called this new religion of his ‘Nouveau Christianisme’. It was to be a real fulfillment of the original promise of Christianity, and was to restore that unity of life which traditional Christianity – decayed and distorted – had
done its best to deny and destroy. The concept of original sin had led to a
pernicious separation of mankind into a hierarchy of the perfect and the mass of
simple believers. This carried with it the distinction between theory and practice,
the perfect bliss above and the vale of tears below; the result was compromise
and reconciliation with – in effect, approval of – evil here and now.”

Saint-Simon reduced Christianity to Christ’s words: “Love thy neighbour”.
“Applied to modern society,” writes Edmund Wilson, this principle “compels us
to recognize that the majority of our neighbours are destitute and wretched. The
emphasis has now been shifted from the master mind at the top of the hierarchy
to the ‘unpropertied man’ at the bottom; but the hierarchy still stands as it was,
since Saint-Simon’s whole message is still his own peculiar version of the
principle of noblesse oblige. The propertied classes must be made to understand
that an improvement in the condition of the poor will mean an improvement in
their condition, too; the savants must be shown that their interests are identical
with those of the masses. Why not go straight to the people? he makes the
interlocutor ask in his dialogue. Because we must try to prevent them from
resorting to violence against their governments; we must try to persuade the
other classes first.

“And he ends – the last words he ever wrote – with an apostrophe to the Holy
Alliance, the combination of Russia, Prussia and Austria which had been
established upon the suppression of Napoleon. It was right, says Saint-Simon, to
get rid of Napoleon, but what have they themselves but the sword? They have
increased taxes, protected the rich; their church and their courts, and their very
attempts at progress, depend on nothing but force; they keep two million men
under arms.

“‘Princess!’ he concludes, ‘hear the voice of God, which speaks to you
through my mouth: Become good Christians again, throw off the belief that the
hired armies, the nobility, the heretical clergy, the corrupt judges, constitute
your principal supporters; unite in the name of Christianity and learn to
accomplish the duties which Christianity imposes on the powerful; remember
that Christianity command them to devote their energies to bettering as rapidly
as possible the lot of the very poor!’”

Saint-Simon is an important link between the Masonic visionaries of the
French revolution and the “scientific” vision of the Marxists. The importance he
attached to economic factors and means of production formed one of the main
themes of Marxism – although Marx himself dismissed him as a “Utopian
socialist”. That he could still think in terms of a “New Christianity” shows his
attachment to the religious modes of thought of earlier ages, although, of course,
his Christianity is a very distorted form of the faith (he actually took
Freemasonry as his ideal). Marx would purge the religious element and make
the economic element the foundation of his theory, while restoring the idea of
Original Sin in a very secularized form. As for the incentives which Saint-Simon

122 Wilson, To the Finland Station, London: Phoenix, 2004, pp. 84-85.
thought so necessary and which he thought to supply with his “New Christianity”, Marx found those through his adoption of the idea of a scientifically established progress to a secular Paradise, whose joyous inevitability he borrowed from the dialectical historicism of one of the most corrupting thinkers in the history of thought – Hegel.

One of Saint-Simon’s disciples was Auguste Comte (1798-1857), who founded the extremely influential doctrine of positivism. “Comte,” writes Norman Stone, “held that all knowledge passed through three successive stages of development, where it is systematized according to (respectively) theological, metaphysical, and ‘positive’ or scientific principles. The theological and metaphysical states had to be discarded in order to arrive at the state of true knowledge, which is science. Comte placed the sciences in a kind of hierarchy with a new “science of society”, or sociology, at the summit. The social scientists’ task was “to know in order to foresee, and to foresee in order to know”.123

Comtean positivism is one of the corner-stones of the modern world-view; and his idea of science as the only true knowledge became as accepted in the capitalist West as in the communist East.

* * *

Another Utopian Socialist figure was Charles Fourier. He believed in the old chiliastic dream of Paradise on earth, in which men would live to be 144 years old.124 He had other dreams, too: “he believed that the world would last precisely 80,000 years and that by the end of that time every soul would have traveled 810 times between the earth and certain other planets which he regarded as certainly inhabited, and would have experienced a succession of existences to the precise number of 1626!125

“His starting point,” according to Talmon, “was very much that of Rousseau. Man, he believed, had come out of the hands of nature a good and noble being. The institutions of civilization had brought about his undoing. Greed and avarice were the root of all evil. They had created the existing dichotomies between private morality and commercial and political codes of behaviour, between things preached and ways practiced. Morose, ascetical teachings about the evil character of the natural urges were motivated by the avarice and

123 Davies, op. cit., p. 790.
124 Hieromonk Damascene (Christensen), Father Seraphim Rose: His Life and Writings, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 2003, p. 623.
125 Wilson, op. cit., p. 89. These early socialists, in spite of their materialist bent of mind, were peculiarly susceptible to quasi-religious visions. Thus Saint-Simon had visions of Charlemagne, and it was revealed to him “in a vision that it was Newton and not the Pope whom God had elected to sit beside Him and to transmit to humanity His purposes” (Wilson, op. cit., p. 83). As for Owen, “he came in his last days to believe that all the magnanimous souls he had known, Shelley, Thomas Jefferson, Channing, the Duke of Kent... - all those who when living had listened to him with sympathy, of whom he had felt that they had really shared his vision, and who were lost to him now through death – he came to believe that they were returning from the other world, to make appointments with him and keep them, to talk to him and reassure him” (Wilson, op. cit., p. 97).
ambition of the greed and strong, who wished to instill into their victims a sense of sin, and with it humility and readiness to bear privations, perform the dirtiest jobs, and receive the whip. The attempt to stifle natural impulses had the effect of turning the energy contained in them into channels of perversion and aggressiveness.

“Such impulses were inflamed by the spectacle of avarice rampant and all-pervasive, in spite of the official ascetic teachings. Fourier may have moralized, may have dreamed of the waters of the oceans turning into lemonade and of lions changed into modern aeroplanes and carrying men over vast distance; but his homilies and dreams are buttressed by a very acute analysis and critique of commercial, if not quite capitalist, civilization. He also analysed history into a succession of social economic stages, and sketched a historical dialectic from which Marx and Engels could – and it seems did – learn something.

“Here, however, we are concerned with Fourier’s contribution to the problem of organization and freedom. In his view, the state and its laws were instruments of exploitation, and any large centralized state was bound to develop into an engine of tyranny. Fourier therefore held that the state ought to be replaced by a network of small direct democracies. Each should enjoy full autonomy and be at once a wholly integrated economic unit and a closely-knit political community. In these ‘phalanstères’ all would be co-partners, everybody would know all the other members (Fourier laid down a maximum of 1800), and decisions would be reached by common consent. By these means men would never be subjected to some anonymous, abstract power above and outside them.

“Fourier also tackled the problem of reconciling integration with self-expression. He argued that it was absurd to expect to eliminate the love of property, desire to excel, penchant for intrigue or craving for change, let alone sex and gluttony. Such an attempt was sure to engender frustration and anti-social phenomena. And there was no escape from the fact that people had different characteristics and urges of different intensity. Happily, benevolent nature had taken care of that by creating different sorts of characteristics and passions, like symphonic compositions in which the most discordant elements are united into a meaningful totality. The task was therefore reduced to the art of composing the right groups of characteristics – perfectly integrated partnerships based on the adjustment of human diversities. It followed that the other task was to manipulate the human passions so cleverly that they would become levers of co-operative effort and increased production instead of impediments to collaboration. (This implies an ardent faith in education and environmental influence comparable to Robert Owen’s.\(^\text{126}\)) To take first the love of property: it would not be abolished or made equal. There would be a secured minimum of private property, but beyond that it would depend on investment, contribution, type of work, degree of fatigue and boredom, and so on, with progressively

\(^\text{126}\) Cf. Owen’s words: “Every day will make it more and more evident that the character of man is, without a single exception, always formed for him; that it may be, and is, chiefly created by his predecessors: that they give him, or may give him, his ideas and habits, which are the powers that govern and direct his conduct. Man, therefore, never did, nor is it possible he ever can, form his own character” (in Anderson, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 341). (V.M.)
decreasing dividends. Persons of diverse characteristics joined into one group would stimulate each other, and competition between groups would be strongly encouraged. The paramount aim was to turn labour into a pleasure instead of a curse. In order to obviate the danger of boredom, spells of work would be short and changes in the type of labour frequent. Gangs of children would be set the task of doing the dirty jobs in a spirit of joyous emulation. Finally, industry would be combined with an Arcadian type of agriculture.

“This is Fourier’s solution to the dilemmas which have plagued our common sense for so long: who will do the disagreeable jobs in a perfectly harmonious society, and what will be the relationship between superiors and inferiors in it?”

Before leaving the French thinkers, we should briefly take note of the great historian Jules Michelet. In the first half of his book, The People, written shortly before the 1848 revolution, he analyzed industrial society in a way that anticipated Marx, but which was broader in scope and more balanced in its vision. “Taking the classes one by one, the author shows how all are tied into the social-economic web – each, exploiting or being exploited, and usually both extortionist and victim, generating by the very activities which are necessary to win its survival irreconcilable antagonisms with its neighbours, yet unable by climbing higher in the scale to escape the general degradation. The peasant, eternally in debt to the professional moneylender or the lawyer and in continual fear of being dispossessed, envies the industrial worker. The factory worker, virtually imprisoned and broken in will by submission to his machines, demoralizing himself still further by dissipation during the few moments of freedom he is allowed, envies the worker at a trade. But the apprentice to a trade belongs to his master, is servant as well as workman, and he is troubled by bourgeois aspirations. Among the bourgeoisie, on the other hand, the manufacturer, borrowing from the capitalist and always in danger of being wrecked on the shoal of overproduction, drives his employees as if the devil were driving him. He gets to hate them as the only uncertain element that impairs the perfect functioning of the mechanism; the workers take it out in hating the foreman. The merchant, under pressure of his customers, who are eager to get something for nothing, brings pressure on the manufacturer to supply him with shoddy goods; he leads perhaps the most miserable existence of all, compelled to be servile to his customers, hated by and hating his competitors, making nothing, organizing nothing. The civil servant, underpaid and struggling to keep up his respectability, always being shifted from place to place, has not merely to be polite like the tradesman, but to make sure that his political and religious views do not displease the administration. And, finally, the bourgeoisie of the leisure class have tied up their interests with the capitalists, the least public-spirited members of the nation, and they live in continual terror of communism. They have now wholly lost touch with the people. They have shut themselves up in their class; and inside their doors, locked so tightly, there is nothing but emptiness and chill....

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“’Man has come to form his soul according to his material situation. What an amazing thing! Now there is a poor man’s soul, a rich man’s soul, a tradesman’s soul... Man seems to be only an accessory to his position.’”
45. THREE WESTERN JEWS: (1) DISRAELI

Among the nationalisms that became such an important feature of European life in the nineteenth century, none is more important that that of the Jews. Jewish nationalism is a particularly complex variety that does not fit easily into the category of the nationalisms either of the great, “historic” nations (Nationen) or of the lesser, newer nationalities (Nationalitätchen) that grew up in reaction to the former.¹²⁸

Of course, Jewish nationalism of one kind had existed for thousands of years, being closely linked with the religion, first, of the Old Testament and, later, after their rejection of Christ, of the Talmud. But nineteenth-century Jewish nationalism was of a different kind, being strongly influenced by the western varieties that arose out of the French revolution. Its development was slow because it had to contend with other currents of thought that also arose out of the revolution and were particularly strong among the Jews: anti-nationalism or assimilationism, union with the prevailing liberal-secular culture of the West, and violent rejection of that same culture on the basis of the creed of the internationalist proletarian revolution.¹²⁹ Other factors making for the great complexity of Jewish nationalism were: the lack of a territorial base or homeland, the different conditions of Jews in different parts of Europe, and the different relationships between the religion and the nation of the Jews in the different regions.

Jewish nationalism arose at least in part as a reaction to assimilationism. Since 1789 and the declaration of the rights of men, Jewish assimilation into European life, which was achieved either through Christian baptism (the favoured route), or through the sanitised, almost Protestant religion known as Reform Judaism, had progressed rapidly, if unevenly, through Europe. It was furthest advanced in Britain, where we see it triumphant in the careers of such men as the banker Lionel Rothschild, the philanthropist Sir Moses Montefiore and the politician Benjamin Disraeli. And yet the striking fact especially about these men is their continued attraction to Israel: Montefiore financed Jewish colonies in Palestine, and Disraeli wrote novels, particularly Tancred, about the return to Zion.

In his early novels, such as Coningsby and Sybil, Disraeli showed himself to be a passionate monarchist, a defender of the old aristocratic order based on the land and an enemy of the contemporary worship of Mammon that produced such a lamentable contrast between the “two nations” of England, the rich and the poor. “Toryism,” he predicted, “will yet rise... to bring back strength to the Crown, liberty to the subject, and to announce that power has only one duty: to secure the social welfare of the PEOPLE.”¹³⁰

¹²⁹ In a speech in the House of Commons in 1852 Disraeli spoke of the secret societies aiming to destroy tradition, religion and property. And he said that at the head of all of them stood people of the Jewish race...
Such a creed, combined with his Anglicanism, might lead us to believe that Disraeli was trying, like so many assimilated Jews, to distance himself as far as possible from his Jewish roots and make himself out to be a High Tory Englishman. But this was only half true; as Constance de Rothschild wrote, “he believed more in the compelling power of a common ancestry than in that of a common faith. He said to me, as he has said over and over again in his novels, ‘All is race, not religion – remember that.’”

Nor did he hide his views. In 1847 he made them public, first in the third novel of his trilogy, Tancred, published in March, and then in his famous speech pleading Jewish emancipation in the Commons in December.

“Tancred,” writes Sarah Bradford, “which Disraeli began in 1845, the year in which Peel’s Jewish Disabilities Bill had opened every municipal office to the Jews (membership of Parliament still remaining closed to them), was Disraeli’s favourite among his novels. It had originally been conceived as part of the Young England plan, an examination of the state of the English Church as an instrument of moral regeneration, but evolved into an exposition of the debt of gratitude which European civilization, and the English Church in particular, owed to the Jews as the founders of their religious faith. It was the expression of all his most deeply-felt convictions, combining his feeling for Palestine and the East and his theory of the superiority of the Jewish race with the revolt of the romantic against progress and scientific materialism…

“… Disraeli’s hero, Tancred de Montacute, is young, rich and noble, heir to the Duke of Bellamont. Serious and deeply religious, Tancred, disappointed by the failure of the ‘mitred nullities’ of the Anglican Church to satisfy his spiritual needs, conceives the idea of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in search of redemption. He is encouraged in this project by Sidonia, a thinly disguised London Rothschild, whose City office, Sequin Court, and select dinner parties are minutely described. Sidonia talks to Rothschild of ‘the spiritual hold which Asia has always had upon the North’, recommending him to contact, Lara, prior of the Convent of Terra Santa in Jerusalem, who is a descendant of an aristocratic Spanish Sephardic family and a Nuevo Cristiano, or converted Jew. He compares Lara’s knowledge of the Old (Jewish) faith with the New (Christian) learning of the English Church in a manner extremely derogatory to the Anglican bishops, while introducing the main theme of the book: ‘You see, he is master of the old as well as the new learning; this is very important; they often explain each other. Your bishops here know nothing about these things. How can they? A few centuries back they were tattooed savages.’

“This was hardly a tactful way of putting his argument to his English readers; but when Disraeli gets Tancred to the East, his statements become even odder and, to his Victorian Gentile audience, more offensive. Tancred visits Jerusalem and establishes himself in Syria… He meets and falls in love with a beautiful Jewess named Eva, whom Disraeli uses as a mouthpiece for his main message. ‘Half Christendom worships a Jewess,’ Eva tells Tancred, ‘and the other half a

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131 Rothschild, in Bradford, op. cit., p. 186.
Jew. Now let me ask you. Which do you think should be the superior race, the worshipped or the worshippers?’ Disraeli goes even further, for not only do Christians owe a debt of gratitude to the Jews as the forerunners of their religion, but if the Jews had not crucified Christ there would be no Christianity. He aims his argument at a specifically British audience: ‘Vast as is the obligation of the whole human family to the Hebrew race, there is no portion of the modern population indebted to them as the British people.’

“As the book progresses Disraeli’s arguments become even more mystical and confusing. He introduces an odd supernatural figure, the Angel of Arabia, who accords Tancred a visionary interview on Mount Sinai. The Angel, in Disraelian fashion, blames the sickness of human society on the atheistic influence of the French Revolution…

“…The Angel, Tancred and the author are anti-Progress. In a famous passage that was to rouse The Times to fury, Disraeli declares: ‘And yet some flat-nosed Frank, full of bustle and puffed up with self-conceit (a race spawned perhaps in the morasses of some Northern forest hardly yet cleared) talks of Progress! Progress to what, and from where? Amid empires shrivelled into deserts, amid the wrecks of great cities, a single column or obelisk of which nations import for the prime adornment of their mud-built capitals, amid arts forgotten, commerce annihilated, fragmentary literatures, and by populations destroyed, the European talks of progress, because by an ingenious application of some scientific acquirements, he has established a society which has mistaken comfort for civilisation.’ Tancred’s cure for the ‘fever of progress’ is to ‘work out a great religious truth on the Persian and Mesopotamian plains’, and by revivifying Asia to regenerate Europe.

“Disraeli, carried away by the onrush of his feelings and wild ideas, simply backs away when faced with the necessity of producing some solution to Tancred’s vague plans for revivifying Europe… [He] had conceived the love between Eva and Tancred as a symbol of his most important message, the synthesis between Judaism and Christianity; but in the end he finds even this impossible to carry through…

“… The Times… reproved Disraeli for writing a novel with a message: ‘It is a bastard kind of writing – that of fiction “with a purpose”, … the “unsubstantial” aim of “converting the whole world back to Judaism”.’ The reviewer ridiculed this notion by pointing out the anxiety of contemporary Jewry to approximate itself ever more nearly to Gentile society, with particular reference to the Rothschilds: ‘Whilst Mr. Disraeli eloquently discourses of a speedy return to Jerusalem, Sidonia buys a noble estate in Bucks, and Sidonia’s first cousin is high-sheriff of the county. So anxious, indeed, are the Hebrews generally to return to the Holy Land as a distinct race, that they petition Parliament for all the privileges of British citizens… During the last ten years the Western Jew has travelled faster and farther from Jerusalem than he journeyed during ten centuries before.’
“Disraeli was not deterred by the public reaction to *Tancred*; he was to repeat his arguments in the debate on Jewish Disabilities on 16 December. The background to the bill was the election, in August of that year, of Disraeli’s friend, Baron Lionel de Rothschild, as Liberal candidate for the City of London. As a Jew, Baron Lionel had felt unable to take the oath requiring a member of Parliament to swear ‘on the true faith of a Christian’ and was therefore debarred from taking his seat…

“[Disraeli’s] argument… aimed at removing Christian scruples by pointing out that Judaism and Christianity were practically synonymous, that Judaism was the foundation of Christianity.

“’The Jews,’ Disraeli began, ‘are persons who acknowledge the same God as the Christian people of this realm. They acknowledge the same divine revelation as yourselves.’ No doubt many of the listening squires did not greatly like the idea of their Anglican faith being equated with that of ‘the Ikys and Abys’, but worse was to come. They should be grateful, Disraeli told them, because ‘They [the Jews] are, humanly speaking, the authors of your religion. They unquestionably those to whom you are indebted for no inconsiderable portion of your known religion, and for the whole of your divine knowledge.’ At this point the first outraged cries of ‘Oh!’ broke out, but Disraeli only warmed to his theme. ‘Every Gentleman here,’ he told the astonished House, ‘does profess the Jewish religion, and believes in Moses and the Prophets’, a statement that provoked a chorus of angry cries.

“’Where is your Christianity, if you do not believe in their Judaism?’ Disraeli asked them. He went on: ‘On every sacred day, you read to the people the exploits of Jewish heroes, the proofs of Jewish devotion, the brilliant annals of past Jewish magnificence. The Christian Church has covered every kingdom with sacred buildings, and over every altar… we find the tables of the Jewish law. Every Sunday – every Lord’s day – if you wish to express feelings of praise and thanksgiving to the Most High, or if you wish to find expressions of solace in grief, you find both in the words of the Jewish poets.’

“No doubt most of Disraeli’s hearers thought he was going too far, and stirred uncomfortably in their seats. When, however, he prepared to launch into yet another paragraph on the same theme, ‘… every man in the early ages of the Church, by whose power, or zeal, or genius, the Christian faith was propagated, was a Jews,’ the dissidents in the House lost patience and shouted him down. ‘ Interruption’ Hansard notes flatly.

“At this, Disraeli too lost patience. He rounded on his tormentors, telling them in so many words that much of their concern for the safeguarding of Christianity was humbug, and that the real reason for their opposition to admitting the Jews was pure anti-Semitic prejudice: ‘If one could suppose that the arguments we have heard… are the only arguments that influence the decision of this question, it would be impossible to conceive what is the reason of the Jews not being admitted to full participation in the rights and duties of a Christian legislature. In exact proportion to your faith ought to be your wish to
do this great act of national justice... But you are influenced by the darkest superstitions of the darkest ages that ever existed in this country. It is this feeling that has been kept out of this debate; indeed that has been kept secret in yourselves... and that is unknowingly influencing you.'

“He ended defiantly: ‘I, whatever may be the consequences – must speak what I feel. I cannot sit in this House with any misconception of my opinion on the subject. Whatever may be the consequences on the seat I hold... I cannot, for one, give a vote which is not in deference to what I believe to be the true principles of religion. Yes, it is as a Christian that I will not take upon me the awful responsibility of excluding from the Legislature those who are of the religion in the bosom of which my Lord and Saviour was born.’”

It is difficult to know at whom to be more amazed – at the audacity of Disraeli in telling the highest assembly of perhaps the most powerful Christian nation on earth that all the greatest Christians were in fact Jews, and that Christianity was merely a variety of Judaism, or the ignorance and naivety of the English (and, later, of the Anglo-Saxons as a whole), who in essence bought the argument, eventually passed the Bill (Lionel de Rothschild became Liberal MP for the City in 1858) and from then on acted as the main protectors of the Jews and Judaism on the stage of world history! This confirms Keble’s charge in his Assize Sermon of 1833 that “under the guise of charity and toleration we are come almost to this pass: that no difference, in matters of faith, is to disqualify for our approbation and confidence, whether in public or domestic life.”

Ignored, it would seem, by everyone in this debate was the fundamental fact that Judaism since Annas and Caiaphas was not the religion of the great saints of the Old Testament, that Christ was killed by the Jews, and that the Talmud, the contemporary Jews’ real “Bible”, expressed the most vituperative hatred of both Christ and Christians.

Disraeli’s speech was a sign of the times, a sign not only that the Jews had now truly broken through the barrier of “anti-Semitism” to reach the highest positions in the western world (Disraeli himself became the British Prime Minister), but also, and more importantly, that once having reached the top of the “greasy pole” (Disraeli’s phrase), they would unfailingly use their position to advance the interests of their race, whether baptised or unbaptised. In other words, if we were to judge from the behaviour of the Rothschilds and Montefiores and Disraelis, at any rate, the Jews would never be fully assimilated. For, as Disraeli himself said: “All is race, not religion – remember that...”

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And yet there were many assimilated Jews who went to the other extreme: far from emphasizing their Jewishness, they did everything in their power not only to deny it in their own personal lives, but also to extirpate the very principle of nationality from political life in general. The French revolution had been the watershed. Before it, Jewish revolutionary activity had been religious in character - and therefore nationalist as well, insofar as Talmudism was in essence the faith of the Jewish nation. During the revolution, the activity of the Jewish revolutionaries had been neither religious nor specifically anti-religious in character, but nationalism under the guise of internationalism, Jewish emancipation under the guise of obtaining equal rights for all men and all nations.

According to Norah Webster, “religious feeling appears to have played an entirely subordinate part” among the Jews in the French Revolution. “The Jews... were free before the Revolution to carry on the rites of their faith. And when the great anti-religious campaign began, many of them entered wholeheartedly into the attack on all religious faiths, their own included... The encouragement accorded by the Jews to the French Revolution appears thus to have been prompted not by religious fanaticism but by a desire for national advantage...”

However, after the revolution the situation changed again. There were as many Jews as ever in the secret societies; but nationalism no longer seems to have been their motive. For the Jews were now, as we have seen, thoroughly emancipated in some western countries, such as Britain and France, and on the way there in many more. Their financial power, symbolized by the Rothschilds, was enormous. And except to some extent in Germany, there were no real barriers to their political advancement, either. And even in Germany, according to William Marr, “we Germans completed in the year 1848 our abdication in favour of the Jews... Life and the future belong to Judaism, death and the past to Germandom.”

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134 This fact was well-known to Disraeli, from “the exceptional intelligence service linking the London house of Rothschild with the branches in Paris, Frankfurt, Vienna and Naples” (Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 187). However, he chose not to mention it when, on July 14, 1856, he said in the House of Commons: “There is in Italy a power which we seldom mention in this House... I mean the secret societies... It is useless to deny, because it is impossible to conceal, that a great part of Europe – the whole of Italy and France and a great portion of Germany, to say nothing of other countries – is covered with a network of these secret societies, just as the superficies of the earth is now being covered with railroads. And what are their objects? They do not attempt to conceal them. They do not want constitutional government; they do not want ameliorated institutions... they want to change the tenure of land, to drive out the present owners of the soil and to put an end to ecclesiastical establishments... Some of them may go further...”

135 Wilhelm Marr, *Der Sieg des Judentums über das Germanentum (The Victory of Jewry over the German Spirit)*, 1879, pp. 27, 44; in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 630.
But the Jews who poured into the socialist revolutionary movements in the second quarter of the nineteenth century were neither Judaists nor interested in the fate of their fellow Jews. Rather, they tended to identify Jewry and Jewishness with the most hated aspects of the capitalist system. A forerunner of this phenomenon was the German Jewish poet Heinrich Heine.

Heine, as Paul Johnson writes, “hated being a Jew. He wrote of ‘the three evil maladies, poverty, pain and Jewishness’. In 1822 he was briefly associated with the Society for Jewish Science, but he had nothing to contribute. He did not believe in Judaism as such and saw it as an anti-human force. He wrote the next year: ‘That I will be enthusiastic for the rights of the Jews and their civil equality, that I admit, and in bad times, which are inevitable, the Germanic mob will hear my voice so that it resounds in German beerhalls and palaces. But the born enemy of all positive religion will never champion the religion which first developed the fault-finding with human beings which now causes us so much pain.’ But if he rejected Talmudic Judaism, he despised the new Reform version. The Reformers were ‘chiropodists’ who had ‘tried to cure the body of Judaism from its nasty skin growth by bleeding, and by their clumsiness and spidery bandages of rationalism, Israel must bleed to death... we no longer have the strength to wear a beard, to fast, to hate and to endure out of hate; that is the motive of our Reform.’ The whole exercise, he said scornfully, was to turn ‘a little Protestant Christianity into a Jewish company. They make a tallis out of the wool of the Lamb of God, and a vest out of the feathers of the Holy Ghost, and underpants out of Christian love, and they will go bankrupt and their successors will be called: God, Christ & Co.’…

“Heine suffered from a destructive emotion which was soon to be commonplace among emancipated and apostate Jews: a peculiar form of self-hatred. He attacked himself in [his attacks on the baptised Jew] Gans. Later in life he used to say he regretted his baptism. It had, he said, done him no good materially. But he refused to allow himself to be presented publicly as a Jew. In 1835, lying, he said he had never set foot in a synagogue. It was his desire to repudiate his Jewishness, as well as his Jewish self-hatred, which prompted his many anti-Semitic remarks. A particular target was the Rothschild family. He blamed them for raising loans for the reactionary great powers. That, at any rate, was his respectable reason for attacking them. But his most venomous remarks were reserved for Baron James de Rothschild and his wife, who showed him great kindness in Paris. He said he had seen a stockbroker bowing to the Baron’s chamber-pot. He called him ‘Herr von Shylock in Paris’. He said, ‘There is only one God – Mammon. And Rothschild is his prophet.’… Heine was both the prototype and the archetype of a new figure in European literature: the Jewish radical man of letters, using his skill, reputation and popularity to undermine the intellectual self-confidence of established order.”

But there are strong indications that while trying to repudiate his Jewishness, Heine remained loyal to his race. Thus “I would fall into despair,” he wrote to a friend in 1823, “if you approved of my baptism”. Again, in one work he

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described three symbolic beauties: Diana – ancient classical art, Abondona – romantic art, and Herodias – a Jewess, and declared himself to prefer “the dead Jewess”. Indeed, according to the Jewish historian Graetzk, Heine only superficially renounced Jewry, “and was like those warriors who remove the arms and banner from the enemy, so as to use them to beat and annihilate him more thoroughly!” To prove the point, some four of five years before his death (from syphilis), Heine returned to the Judaist faith…

Again, if Heine was a radical, he saw more clearly than almost any conservative – and this clarity of sight was another characteristic of his Jewishness, given to him by his outsider status - the horrors to which radicalism would lead. As Golo Mann writes, “he foresaw the inevitable annihilation of the rich and their state by the poor, the ‘dangerous classes’ as they were called in France at the time. His prescience did not make him happy, yet he despised the existing social order; his attitude was that of one who was above or outside it. It was as though Heine was bewitched by Communism. In his articles he constantly talked about it at a time when only a very few people concerned themselves with it. He spoke of it more with dread than hope, as of an elemental movement of the age, immune to politics.

“Communism is the secret name of the terrible antagonist who confronts the present-day bourgeois regime with proletarian domination and all its consequences. There will be a terrible duel… Though Communism is at present little talked about, vegetating in forgotten attics on wretched straw pallets, it is nevertheless the dismal hero destined to play a great, if transitory part in the modern tragedy…” (20 June 1842).

“Three weeks later he prophesied that a European war would develop into a social world revolution from which would emerge an iron Communist dictatorship, ‘the old absolutist tradition… but in different clothes and with new catchphrases and slogans… Maybe there will then only be one shepherd and one flock, a free shepherd with an iron crook and an identically shorn, identically bleating human herd. Confused, sombre times loom ahead, and the prophet who might want to write a new apocalypse would need to invent entirely new beasts, and such frightening ones that St. John’s animal symbols would appear like gentle doves and amoretty by comparison… I advise our grandchildren to be born with very thick skins.’

“Then again he saw Communism not as a system under which men would enjoy the material benefits of life but as one under which they would slave at their jobs with dreary monotony; once he even predicted [with Dostoyevsky] the marriage of the Catholic Church with the Communists and foresaw an empire of asceticism, joylessness and strict control of ideas as the child of this union. Heine made himself few friends by such prophecies. The conservatives, the good German citizens, regarded him as a rebel and a frivolous wit. The Left saw in him a faithless ally, a socialist who was afraid of the revolution, who took back

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today what he had said yesterday and who behaved like an aristocrat. It is true that Heine, the artist, was both an aristocrat and a rebel. He hated the rule of the old military and noble caste, particularly in Prussia, despised the role of the financiers, particularly in France, and yet feared a leveling reign of terror by the people.

“Heine could not identify himself with any of the great causes that excited his compatriots at home or in exile [in Paris]; the servant of beauty and the intellect cannot do this. He could only see things with gay, sarcastic or melancholy eyes, without committing himself. Yet just because he was detached, sometimes to the point of treachery, his work has remained more alive than that of his more resolute contemporaries.

“Those who had no doubts, who were reliable, were equally irritated by Heine’s attitude towards Germany. At times he loved it and could not do otherwise. He had been born there and spoke its language; he was only a young man when he wrote the poems which have become part of Germany’s national heritage. Sick and lonely in exile, he longed for home. Yet at other times he mocked his compatriots in a manner which they could not forgive for their philistinism, their provincialism, their weakness for titles, their bureaucrats, soldiers and thirty-six monarchs. In an extremely witty poem he says that if there were ever to be a German revolution the Germans would not treat their kings as roughly as the British and French had treated theirs...

“No sooner had Heine written verses of this kind and mocked at the Germans for their lamb-like patience than he warned the French that the German revolution of the future would far exceed theirs in terror.

“‘A drama will be enacted in Germany compared with which the French Revolution will seem like a harmless idyll. Christianity may have restrained the martial ardour of the Teutons for a time, but it did not destroy it; now that the old restraining talisman, the cross, has rotted away, the old frenzied madness will break out again.’

“The French must not believe that it would be a pro-French revolution, though it might pretend to be republican and extreme. German nationalism, unlike that of the French, was not receptive to outside influences filled with missionary zeal; it was negative and aggressive, particularly towards France. ‘I wish you well and therefore I tell you the bitter truth. You have more to fear from liberated Germany than from the entire Holy Alliance with all its Croats and Cossacks put together...’ Heine toyed with things cleverly and irresponsibly. At the time it was thought in France, in Italy and in Germany too that nationalism was international, closely related to the republican and the democratic cause; that nations, once they were free and united at home, would join forces in one great league of nations. Heine did not share this view. He regarded nationalism, particularly German nationalism, as a stupid, disruptive force motivated by hatred...”

138 Mann, op. cit., pp. 80-82.
Talmon writes that Heine “was vouchsafed an uncanny prophetic insight into the terrifying potentialities of German Romantic pantheism, with its vision of man as a being swallowed up or impelled by cosmic forces, the all-embracing Will of History, and the destiny of the Race. These were the favourite images of the various architects of catastrophe, who never tired of pouring scorn on the bloodless, cogitating, analysing and vacillating creature cut off from the vital forces of being.”  

139 Talmon, op. cit., p. 162.
Karl Marx, a friend of Heine’s, was a still more developed and important example of the same phenomenon: the God-hating, Jew-hating Jew. According to Johnson, “Heine’s jibe about religion as a ‘spiritual opium’ was the source of Marx’s phrase ‘the opium of the people’. But the notion that Heine was the John the Baptist to Marx’s Christ, fashionable in German scholarship of the 1960s, is absurd. A huge temperamental gulf yawned between them. According to Arnold Ruge, Marx would say to Heine: ‘Give up those everlasting laments about love and show the lyric poets how it should be done – with the lash.’ But it was precisely the lash Heine feared: ‘The [socialist] future,’ he wrote, ‘smells of knouts, of blood, of godlessness and very many beatings’; ‘it is only with dread and horror that I think of the time when those dark iconoclasts will come to power’. He repudiated ‘my obdurate friend Marx’, one of the ‘godless self-gods’.

“What the two men had most in common was their extraordinary capacity for hatred, expressed in venomous attacks not just on enemies but (perhaps especially) on friends and benefactors. This was part of the self-hatred they shared as apostate Jews. Marx had it to an even greater extent than Heine. He tried to shut Judaism out of his life... Despite Marx’s ignorance of Judaism as such, there can be no doubt about his Jewishness. Like Heine and everyone else, his notion of progress was profoundly influenced by Hegel, but his sense of history as a positive and dynamic force in human society, governed by iron laws, an atheist’s Torah, is profoundly Jewish. His Communist millennium is deeply rooted in Jewish apocalyptic and messianism. His notion of rule was that of the cathedocrat. Control of the revolution would be in the hands of the elite intelligentsia, who had studied the texts, understood the laws of history. They would form what he called the ‘management’, the directorate. The proletariat, ‘the men without substance’, were merely the means, whose duty was to obey – like Ezra the Scribe, he saw them as ignorant of the law, the mere 'people of the land'”.

Johnson ignores the anti-Christian essence of Talmudic Judaism. Nevertheless he is perceptive in his analysis of Marx’s Communism “as the end-product of his theoretical anti-Semitism... In 1843 Bruno Bauer, the anti-Semite leader of the Hegelian left, published an essay demanding that the Jews abandon Judaism completely and transform their plea for equal rights into a general campaign for human liberation both from religion and from state tyranny.

“Marx replied to Bauer’s work in two essays published in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbucher* in 1844, the same year Disraeli published *Tancred*. They are called ‘On the Jewish Question’. Marx accepted completely the savagely anti-Semitic context of Bauer’s argument, which he said was written ‘with boldness, perception, with and thoroughness in language that is precise as it is vigorous and meaningful’. He quoted with approval Bauer’s maliciously exaggerated assertion that ‘the Jews determines the fate of the whole [Austrian] empire by his
money power... [and] decides the destiny of Europe’. Where he differed was in rejecting Bauer’s belief that the anti-social nature of the Jew was religious in origin and could be remedied by tearing the Jew away from his religion. In Marx’s view, the evil was social and economic. ‘Let us,’ he wrote, ‘consider the real Jew. Not the Sabbath Jew... but the everyday Jews.’ What, he asked, was ‘the profane basis of Judaism? Practical need, self-interest. What is the worldly cult of the Jew? Huckstering. What is his worldly god? Money.’ The Jews had gradually conveyed this ‘practical’ religion to all society: ‘Money is the jealous God of Israel, besides which no other god may exist. Money abases all the gods of mankind and changes them into commodities. Money is the self-sufficient value of all things. It has, therefore, deprived the whole world, both the human world and nature, of their own proper value. Money is the alienated essence of man’s work and existence: this essence dominates him and he worships it. The god of the Jews has been secularised and has become the god of this world.’

“The Jews, Marx continued, were turning Christians into replicas of themselves, so that the once staunchly Christian New Englanders, for example, were now the slaves of Mammon. Using his money-power, the Jew had emancipated himself and had gone on to enslave Christianity. The Jew-corrupted Christian ‘is convinced he has no other destiny here below than to become richer than his neighbours’ and ‘the world is a stock exchange’. Marx argued that the contradiction between the Jew’s theoretical lack of political rights and ‘the effective political power of the Jew’ is the contradiction between politics and ‘the power of money in general’. Political power supposedly overrides money; in fact ‘it has become its bondsman’. Hence: ‘It is from its own entrails that civil society ceaselessly engenders the Jew.’”

There was much truth in Marx’s analysis; but it was one-sided. Contemporary European and American civilization was based on a complex intertwining of

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141 Johnson, op. cit., pp. 350-351. Cf. Oleg Platonov’s development of this argument: “Under the influence of Jewish economics the personal worth of a man was turned into an exchange value, into merchandise. Instead of the spiritual freedom given to the people of the New Testament, Jewish-Masonic civilisation brought ‘the shameless freedom of trade’. As the Jewish philosopher Moses Hesse wrote, ‘money is the alienated wealth of a man, attained by him in commercial activity. Money is the quantitative expression of the worth of a man, the brand of our enslavement, the seal of our shame, of our grovelling. Money is the coagulated blood and sweat of those who at market prices trade their inalienable property, their wealth, their vital activity, for the sake of accumulating that which is called capital. And all this is reminiscent of the insatiability of the cannibal.’

“‘Money is the god of our time, while Rothschild is its prophet!’ replied the Jewish poet Heinrich Heine to Hesse. The whole family of the Rothschilds, which had enmeshed in its octopus grip of debt obligations the political and industrial structures of Europe, seemed to the poet to be ‘true revolutionaries’. And he called Baron M. Rothschild ‘the Nero of financiers’, remembering that the Roman Nero ‘annihilated’ the privileges of the patricians for the sake of creating ‘a new democracy’.

“In creating economics on the antichristian foundations of the Talmud, Jewry not only acquired for itself financial power. Through Jewry money became a world power, by means of its control over the Christian peoples. The gold-digging spirit of Jewish economics, crossing the frontiers of Jewry, began to corrupt the Christians themselves; and in the precise expression of K. Marx, ‘with the help of money the Jews liberated themselves to the same extent as the Christians became Jews.’” (Ternovij Venets Rossii (Russia’s Crown of Thorns), Moscow, 1998, p. 147).
apostate Jewry and heretical Christianity. If the Jews had taught the Christians the worship of money, and gone on to enslave them thereby, the Christians had nevertheless prepared the way for this by betraying their own Christian ideals and introducing to the Jews the semi-Christian, semi-pagan ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity, human rights, etc. The Jews had seized on these ideas to emancipate themselves and then take them to their logical extreme in the proletarian revolution, taking control both of money power in the heights, and of political power in the depths of society. And so the relationship between the Jews and the Christians was mutually influential and mutually destructive.

The only question that remained was Lenin’s: kto kogo?, who would control whom? The answer to this was: the Jews would control the Christians. Why? Because the Christians, though fallen away from the true faith, nevertheless retained vestiges of Christian values and morality that restrained them from ultimate evil; they lacked that extra insight and ruthlessness that was given to the Jews for their greater ambition, greater hatred, greater proximity to Satan… And so heretical Christians might cooperate with apostate Jews in the overthrow of Christian civilization, as Engels cooperated with Marx. But in the end the heretical Christians would do the will of the apostate Jews, as Engels did the will of Marx. The only power that could effectively stand against both – and was therefore hated by both – was the power of the true faith, the Orthodox faith, upheld by the Russian Orthodox Empire. It was logical, therefore, for Marx and Engels to see in Russia the main obstacle to the success of the revolution…

Johnson continues: “Marx’s solution, therefore, is not like Bauer’s, religious, but economic. The money-Jew had become the ‘universal anti-social element of the present time’. To ‘make the Jew impossible’ it was necessary to abolish the ‘preconditions’ and the ‘very possibility’ of the kind of money activities for which he was notorious. Once the economic framework was changed, Jewish ‘religious consciousness would evaporate like some insipid vapour in the real, life-giving air of society’. Abolish the Jewish attitude to money, and both the Jew and his religion, and the corrupt version of Christianity he had imposed on the world, would simply disappear: ‘In the final analysis, the emancipation of the Jews is the emancipation of mankind from Judaism.’ Or again: ‘In emancipating itself from bucksterism and money, and thus from real and practical Judaism, our age would emancipate itself.’

“Marx’s two essays on the Jews thus contain, in embryonic form, the essence of his theory of human regeneration: by economic changes, and especially by abolishing private property and the personal pursuit of money, you could transform not merely the relationship between the Jew and society but all human relationships and the human personality itself. His form of anti-Semitism became a dress-rehearsal for Marxism as such. Later in the century August Bebel, the German Social Democrat, would coin the phrase, much used by Lenin: ‘Anti-Semitism is the socialism of fools.’ Behind this revealing epigram was the crude argument: we all know that Jewish money-men, who never soil their hands with toil, exploit the poor workers and peasants. But only a fool grasps the Jews alone. The mature man, the socialist, has grasped the point that the Jews are only symptoms of the disease, not the disease itself. The disease is the
religion of money, and its modern form is capitalism. Workers and peasants are exploited not just by the Jews but by the entire bourgeois-capitalist class – and it is the class as a whole, not just its Jewish element, which must be destroyed.

“Hence the militant socialism Marx adopted in the later 1840s was an extended and transmuted form of his earlier anti-Semitism. His mature theory was a superstition, and the most dangerous kind of superstition, belief in a conspiracy of evil. But whereas originally it was based on the oldest form of conspiracy-theory, anti-Semitism, in the later 1840s and 1850s this was not so much abandoned as extended to embrace a world conspiracy theory of the entire bourgeois class. Marx retained the original superstition that the making of money through trade and finance is essentially a parasitical and anti-social activity, but he now placed it on a basis not of race and religion, but of class. The enlargement does not, of course, improve the validity of the theory. It merely makes it more dangerous, if put into practice, because it expands its scope and multiplies the number of those to be treated as conspirators and so victims. Marx was no longer concerned with specific Jewish witches to be hunted but with generalized human witches. The theory remained irrational but acquired a more sophisticated appearance, making it highly attractive to educated radicals. To reverse Bebel’s saying, if anti-Semitism is the socialism of fools, socialism became the anti-Semitism of intellectuals. An intellectual like Lenin, who clearly perceived the irrationality of the Russian anti-Semitic pogrom, and would have been ashamed to conduct one, nevertheless fully accepted its spirit once the target was expanded into the whole capitalist class – and went on to conduct pogroms on an infinitely greater scale, killing hundreds of thousands on the basis not of individual guilt but merely of membership of a condemned group.”

Johnson’s definition of socialism as the anti-Semitism of intellectuals has considerable psychological plausibility; but it needs to be extended and deepened. The original irrational rebellion against civilized society was the rebellion of the Jews, the former people of God, against their Lord, God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. This was the original anti-Semitism, in that it was directed both against the greatest Semite, Jesus Christ, and his Semitic disciples, and against the original, pure religion of the Semites, which Jesus Christ came to fulfil in the Church founded on Himself, “in whom there is neither Jew nor Greek”.

As Christianity spread among the Gentiles, this original anti-Semitism, full of hatred and “on the basis not of individual guilt but merely of a condemned group”, was transmuted into the anti-Gentilism of the Talmud, being directed against the whole of Gentile Christian society. As Christian society degenerated into heresy, the Jewish virus of anti-Christian hatred infected the Christians themselves, becoming standard anti-Semitism. The sign that this anti-Semitism was simply the reversal of the same Jewish disease of anti-Gentilism is the fact that its object ceased to be the Talmudic religion, the real source of the disease, but the Jews as a race and as a whole.

However, with the gradual assimilation of the Jews into Western Christian society during the nineteenth century, Jewish radicals such as Marx joined with Gentile intellectuals such as Engels to create a new strain of the virus, a strain directed not against Jews alone or Christians alone, but against a whole class, the class of the bourgeois rich.

In this perspective we can see that Marx's view that the solution of "the Jewish question" lay in economics was wrong. Bauer was right that its solution was religious; but he was wrong in thinking that simply destroying the Talmud would cure the disease. For what was to be put in its place? The heretical, lukewarm Christianity of the West, which hardly believed in itself any more and was in any case, as we have seen, deeply infected by both Jewish and pagan elements?

As the example of Disraeli proves, that could never satisfy the spiritual quest of the more intelligent Jews. It could only prepare the way for a new, more virulent strain of the virus, which is in fact what we see in Marxism. The only solution was a return to the original, untainted faith of the Apostles... But that was only to be found in the East, and especially in Russia – where, however, the true faith of the Apostles lived in conjunction with both Jewish anti-Gentilism and Gentile anti-Semitism, and where the most virulent form of the virus, Marxism, would find its most fertile breeding-ground...

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Although English and French socialism contributed to Marx's thought, he probably owed even more to German atheism and historicism. Marx had no need of teachers in respect of atheism. There is some evidence that in his youth he turned against God and became a Satanist because God did not give him the girl he loved. As he said: "I shall build my throne high overhead", which is a more or less direct quotation of Satan's words in Isaiah 14.13.\textsuperscript{143} Again, in his doctor's thesis he wrote: 'Philosophy makes no secret of the fact: her creed is the creed of Prometheus - 'In a word, I detest all the gods.' This is her device against all deities of heaven or earth who do not recognize as the highest divinity the human self-consciousness itself."\textsuperscript{144} In later life Marx was known as "Old Nick", and his little son used to call him "devil".\textsuperscript{145} "In spite of all Marx's enthusiasm for the 'human',' writes the socialist Edmund Wilson, "he is either inhumanly dark and dead or almost superhumanly brilliant".\textsuperscript{146}

Marx's atheism received an impetus from Feuerbach's \textit{The Essence of Christianity} (1841), which reduced God to a psychological idea: "The divine essence is nothing else than the essence of man; or, better, it is the essence of man when freed from the limitations of the individual, that is to say, actual corporeal

\textsuperscript{143} Richard Wurmbrand, \textit{Was Karl Marx a Satanist?}, Diane Books (USA), 1976.
\textsuperscript{144} Wilson, \textit{To the Finland Station}, p. 122.
\textsuperscript{145} Wilson, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 118-119.
\textsuperscript{146} Wilson, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 152.
man, objectified and venerated as an independent Being distinct from man himself." Marx, too, defined religion as a purely human product: "the heart of a heartless world, as it is the spirit of spiritless conditions, the opium of the people." He praised Feuerbach, according to Isaiah Berlin, "for showing that in religion men delude themselves by inventing an imaginary world to redress the balance of misery in real life - it is a form of escape, a golden dream, or, in a phrase made celebrated by Marx, the opium of the people; the criticism of religion must therefore be anthropological in character, and take the form of exposing and analysing its secular origins. But Feuerbach is accused of leaving the major task untouched: he sees that religion is an anodyne unconsciously generated by the unhappy to soften the pain caused by the contradictions of the material world, but then fails to see that these contradictions must, in that case, be removed: otherwise they will continue to breed comforting and fatal delusions: the revolution which alone can do so must occur not in the superstructure - the world of thought - but in its material substratum, the real world of men and things. Philosophy has hitherto treated ideas and beliefs as possessing an intrinsic validity of their own; this has never been true; the real content of a belief is the action in which it is expressed. The real convictions and principles of a man or a society are expressed in their acts, not their words. Belief and act are one; if acts do not themselves express avowed beliefs, the beliefs are lies - 'ideologies', conscious or not, to cover the opposite of what they profess. Theory and practice are, or should be, one and the same. 'Philosophers have previously offered various interpretations of the world. Our business is to change it.'

By the mid-1840s, writes Edmund Wilson, Marx and Engels had taken what they wanted from the socialist utopians. "From Saint-Simon they accepted as valid his [supposed] discovery that modern politics was simply the science of regulating production; from Fourier, his arraignment of the bourgeois, his consciousness of the ironic contrast between 'the frenzy of speculation, the spirit of all-devouring commercialism', which were rampant under the reign of the bourgeoisie and 'the brilliant promises of the Enlightenment' which had preceded them; from Owen, the realization that the factory system must be the root of the social revolution. But they saw that the mistake of the utopian socialists had been to imagine that socialism was to be imposed upon society from above by disinterested members of the upper classes. The bourgeoisie as a whole, they believed, could not be induced to go against its own interests. The educator, as Marx was to write in his Theses on Feuerbach, must, after all, first have been educated: he is not really confronting disciples with a doctrine that has been supplied him by God; he is merely directing a movement of which he is himself a member and which energizes him and gives him his purpose. Marx and Engels combined the aims of the utopians with Hegel's process of organic development."

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150 Wilson, op. cit., p. 143.
In this way they substituted Hegel’s idea of the historical role of nations with that of the role of class. “The history of all hitherto existing society is a history of class struggle”, wrote Marx and Engels in *The Communist Manifesto*. Marx claimed that this was his only original contribution to Marxism. Be that as it may (Plato, as Sir Karl Popper points out, had said something similar), it was certainly one of the two fundamental axioms of his theory.

As Robert Service writes, “the founders of Marxism put class struggle at the forefront of their analysis; they said the working class (or the proletariat) would remake the politics, economics and culture of the entire world… Salvation according to Marx and Engels would come not through an individual but through a whole class. The proletariat’s experience of degradation under capitalism would give it the motive to change the nature of society; and its industrial training and organisation would enable it to carry its task through to completion. The collective endeavour of socialist workers would transform the life of well-meaning people – and those who offered resistance would be suppressed…

“[Marx’s] essential argument was that the course of change had been conditioned not by the brilliance of ‘great men’ or by dynamic governments but by the clash of social classes – and Marx insisted that classes pursued their objective economic interests. The French ‘proletariat’ had lost its recurrent conflict with the bourgeoisie since the end of the eighteenth century. But Marx was undeterred. He had asserted in his *Theses on Feuerbach*, penned in 1845: ‘Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it.’

“The ultimate objective for Marx and Engels was the creation of a worldwide communist society. They believed that communism had existed in the distant centuries before ‘class society’ came into being. The human species had supposedly known no hierarchy, alienation, exploitation or oppression. Marx and Engels predicted that such perfection could and inevitably would be reproduced after the overthrow of capitalism. ‘Modern communism’, however, would have the benefits of the latest technology rather than flint-stone. It would be generated by global proletarian solidarity rather than by disparate groups of illiterate, innumerate cavemen. And it would put an end to all forms of hierarchy. Politics would come to an end. The state would cease to exist. There would be no distinctions of personal rank and power. All would engage in self-administration on an equal basis. Marx and Engels chastised communists and socialists who would settle for anything less. They were maximalists. No compromise with capitalism [although Engels was a factory owner] or parliamentarism was acceptable to them. They did not think of themselves as offering the watchword of ‘all or nothing’ in their politics. They saw communism as the inevitable last stage in human history; they rejected their predecessors and rival contemporaries as ‘utopian’ thinkers who lacked a scientific understanding.”

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The other fundamental axiom of Marx’s theory was his economic materialism, his teaching that economics is the foundation of all human civilization. Everything is determined, according to Marx, by man’s struggle for economic survival, which in turn depends on his relationship to the economic conditions of production. The juridical, political, religious, aesthetic and philosophical aspects of man’s existence are all simply “ideological forms of appearance” of the only true reality, his economic position in society – that is, his class membership. As he put it in his famous epigram: “It is not the consciousness of man that determines his existence – rather, it is his social existence that determines his consciousness.”  

For “I was led,” he wrote, “to the conclusion that legal relations, as well as forms of state, could neither be understood by themselves, nor explained by the so-called general progress of the human mind, but that they are rooted in the material conditions of life which Hegel calls… civil society. The anatomy of civil society is to be sought in political economy.”

As Maria Hsia Chang writes, “Classical Marxism (the ideas of Marx and Engels) conceived society’s economic base as composed of the forces of production (means of production) that determine the relations of production (the nature of economic classes and their relations – who gets what, when, and how). The economic base, in turn determines the epiphenomenal superstructure composed of such elements as law, philosophy, religion, and ideology. The relations of production were subordinate to and contingent upon the productive forces – as productive forces change, social relations change; as social relations change, all of life changes.

“Marx was unequivocal on the determinant role of the forces of production. In the 1859 Preface to his Critique of Political Economy, he wrote that ‘in the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will,’ relations that ‘correspond to a definite state of development of their material productive forces.’ ‘The multitude of productive forces accessible to men determines the nature of society’ as well as the ‘forms of intercourse’ between human beings. Even the ‘phantoms formed in the human brain’ – religious convictions, ethics, and law – were ‘sublimates’ of the more fundamental processes of production. In the final analysis, the ‘productive forces… are the basis of all… history.’

“It follows that socialism could only be a product of a fully developed economy. As early as the German Ideology of 1845, Marx had insisted that socialist revolution could come only to advanced industrial systems because only those systems would inherit the productive potential to fully satisfy human needs without having recourse to invidious class distinctions and oppressive political rule. If an attempt were made to introduce socialism into an economically underdeveloped environment, Engels foresaw the consequence to be a ‘slide back… to [the] narrow limits’ of the old system. True socialist liberation was a function of ‘the level of development of the material means of existence’. To

152 Marx, A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy.
attempt to build communism on a primitive economic base could only be a ‘chiliastic, dream fantasy’.”  

“The single operative cause,” writes Berlin, “which makes one people different from another, one set of institutions and beliefs opposed to another is, so Marx now came to believe, the economic environment in which it is set, the relationship of the ruling class of possessors to those whom they exploit, arising from the specific quality of the tension which persists between them. The fundamental springs of action in the life of men, he believed, all the more powerful for not being recognised by them, are their relationships to the alignment of classes in the economic struggle: the factor, knowledge of which would enable anyone to predict successfully men’s basic line of behaviour, is their actual social position – whether they are outside or inside the ruling class, whether their welfare depends on its success or failure, whether they are placed in a position to which the preservation of the existing order is or is not essential. Once this is known, men’s particular personal motives and emotions become comparatively irrelevant to the investigation: they may be egoistic or altruistic, generous or mean, clever or stupid, ambitious or modest. Their natural qualities will be harnessed by their circumstances to operate in a given direction, whatever their natural tendency. Indeed, it is misleading to speak of a ‘natural tendency’ or an unalterable ‘human nature’. Tendencies may be classified either in accordance with the subjective feeling which they engender (and this is, for purposes of scientific prediction, unimportant), or in accordance with their actual aims, which are socially conditioned. Men behave before they start to reflect on the reasons for, or the justification of, their behaviour; the majority of the members of a community will act in a similar fashion, whatever the subjective motives for which they will appear to themselves to be acting as they do. This is obscured by the fact that in the attempt to convince themselves that their acts are determined by reasons or by moral or religious beliefs, men have tended to construct elaborate rationalisations of their behaviour. Nor are these rationalisations wholly powerless to affect action, for, growing into great institutions like moral codes or religious organisations, they often linger on long after the social pressures, to explain away which they arose, have disappeared. Thus these great organised illusions themselves become part of the objective social situation, part of the external world which modifies the behaviour of individuals, functioning in the same way as the invariant factors, climate, soil, physical organism, function in their interplay with social institutions.

“Marx’s immediate successors tended to minimise Hegel’s influence upon him; but his vision of the world crumbles and yields only isolated insights if, in the effort to represent him as he conceived himself, as the rigorous, severely factual social scientist, the great unifying, necessary pattern in terms of which he thought, is left out or whittled down.

“Like Hegel, Marx treats history as phenomenology. In Hegel the Phenomenology of the human Spirit is an attempt to show... an objective order in the development of human consciousness and in the succession of

civilisations that are its concrete embodiment. Influenced by a notion prominent in the Renaissance, but reaching back to an earlier mystical cosmogony, Hegel looked upon the development of mankind as being similar to that of an individual human being. Just as in the case of a man a particular capacity, or outlook, or way of dealing with reality cannot come into being until and unless other capacities have first become developed – that is, indeed, the essence of the notion of growth or education in the case of individuals – so races, nations, churches, cultures, succeed each other in a fixed order, determined by the growth of the collective faculties of mankind expressed in arts, sciences, civilisation as a whole. Pascal had perhaps meant something of this kind when he spoke of humanity as a single, centuries old, being, growing from generation to generation. For Hegel all change is due to the movement of the dialectic, which works by a constant logical criticism, that is, by struggle against, and final self-destruction of, ways of thought and constructions of reason and feeling which, in their day, had embodied the highest point reached by the ceaseless growth (which for Hegel is the logical self-realisation) of the human spirit; but which, embodied in rules or institutions, and erroneously taken as final and absolute by a given society or outlook, thereby become obstacles to progress, dying survivals of a logically ‘transcended’ stage, which by their very one-sidedness breed logical antimonies and contradictions by which they are exposed and destroyed. Marx translated this vision of history as a battlefield of incarnate ideas into social terms, of the struggle between classes. For him alienation (for that is what Hegel, following Rousseau and Luther and an earlier Christian tradition, called the perpetual self-divorce of men from unity with nature, with each other, with God, which the struggle of thesis against antithesis entailed) is intrinsic to the social process, indeed it is the heart of history itself.

Alienation occurs when the results of men’s acts contradict their true purposes, when their official values, or the parts they play, misrepresent their real motives and needs and goals. This is the case, for example, when something that men have made to respond to human needs – say, a system of laws, or the rules of musical composition – acquires an independent status of its own, and is seen by men, not as something created by them to satisfy a common social want (which may have disappeared long ago), but as an objective law or institution, possessing eternal, impersonal authority in its own right, like the unalterable laws of Nature as conceived by scientists and ordinary men, like God and His Commandments for a believer. For Marx the capitalist system is precisely this kind of entity, a vast instrument brought into being by intelligible material demands – a progressive improvement and broadening of life in its own day that generates its own intellectual, moral, religious beliefs, values and forms of life. Whether those who hold them know it or not, such beliefs and values merely uphold the power of the class whose interests the capitalist system embodies; nevertheless, they come to be viewed by all sections of society as being objectively and eternally valid for all mankind. Thus, for example, industry and the capitalist mode of exchange are not timeless valid institutions, but were generated by the mounting resistance by peasants and artisans to dependence on the blind forces of nature. They had had their
moment; and the values these institutions generated will change or vanish with them.”

Marx differed from Hegel also in his vision of the final outcome of the historical process. Whereas for Hegel the self-realization of the Divine Idea culminated in the Prussian State (although, looking towards America, he was inclined to hedge his bets), for Marx it culminated in the victory of the proletariat, and finally in the withering away of the now unnecessary state... One thing was certain: the bourgeoisie could not stand.

For Marx and Engels understood the characteristic of the industrial, bourgeois age that distinguished it from all previous ages – its dynamism. Whereas previous ages aimed to preserve the social structure in order to preserve their place in it, the bourgeois were in effect constantly changing it, knowing that technological advance was constantly making present relationships obsolete and unprofitable. Not only did it overthrow the old, patriarchal and feudal society that came before it: it was constantly working to overthrow itself.

“The bourgeoisie,” they wrote, “cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society. Conservation of the old modes of production in unaltered form, was, on the contrary, the first condition of existence for all earlier industrial classes. Constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their trace of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into the air.”

But this constant change, though promoted by the bourgeoisie, at the same time built up the numbers and resources of the proletariat. “Not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons – the modern working class – the proletarians. In proportion as the bourgeoisie, i.e. capital, is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed.”

Was Marx’s theory true? As regards his first axiom, the idea that class conflict is the sole determinant of world history, there are countless counter-examples that disprove it. If his second axiom, that man’s thought is determined by his economic status, is true, then there is no reason for believing it to be true insofar as Marx’s thought, too, must be determined by his economic status.

154 Berlin, op. cit.
156 Marx and Engels, The Communist Manifesto, pp. 11-12.
157 Popper cites the conflict between the popes and emperors, both of the same class (op. cit., p. 116).
And so, since both his fundamental axioms are false, there is no reason for believing the rest of his theory. As for his prediction that true socialism could only succeed in an economically advanced society, this is disproved by its “success” in such peasant societies as Russia and China. The almost universal fall of those same societies in the late twentieth century is still further proof that Marx was a false prophet.

It is too kind to describe Marxism, as some have done, as a burning love of justice clothed in a false economic theory. Its motive power is neither the love of justice nor the love of men, but simply hatred – hatred of God and God’s order in the first place, but hatred also of men. Marx despised not only the ruling classes and the bourgeoisie, but even the proletariat whose triumph he falsely predicted, rejecting “the notion that the poor in society were inherently decent and altruistic”.\footnote{Service, op. cit., p. 22.} He delighted in the destruction and death that the revolution would bring (he brought only misery to his own relatives), consigning all those who opposed the laws of dialectical materialism (and many of those who did not) to “the dustbin of history”. He loved only the cold goddess History, the Moloch of the twentieth century, whose most zealous and merciless servant he was...
In his *Theses on Feuerbach* Marx had declared: "The philosophers have only interpreted the world. Our business is to change it." His chance to change the world came in 1848, with the simultaneous publication of his most famous work, *The Communist Manifesto*, and the first European-wide revolution. This revolution began in France and spread with remarkable speed through all the major states of Continental Europe to the borders of the Russian Empire.

The 1848 revolution, writes Hobsbawm, “coincided with a social catastrophe: the great depression which swept across the continent from the middle 1840s. Harvests – and especially the potato crop – failed. Entire populations such as those of Ireland, and to a lesser extent Silesia and Flanders, starved. Food-prices rose. Industrial depression multiplied unemployment, and the masses of the labouring poor were deprived of their modest income at the very moment when their cost of living rocketed. The situation varied from one country to another and within each, and – fortunately for the existing regimes – the most miserable populations, such as the Irish and the Flemish, or some of the provincial factory workers were also politically among the most immature: the cotton operatives of the Nord department of France, for instance, took out their desperation on the equally desperate Belgian immigrant who flooded into Northern France, rather than on the government or even the employers. Moreover, in the most industrialized economy, the sharpest edge of discontent had already been taken away by the great industrial and railway-building boom of the middle 1840s. 1846-8 were bad years, but not so bad as 1841-2, and what was more, they were merely a sharp dip in what was now visibly an ascending slope of economic prosperity. But, taking Western and Central Europe as a whole, the catastrophe of 1846-8 was universal and the mood of the masses, always pretty close to subsistence level, tense and impassioned.

“A European economic cataclysm thus coincided with the visible corrosion of the old regimes. A peasant uprising in Galicia in 1846; the election of a ‘liberal’ Pope in the same year; a civil war between radicals and Catholics in Switzerland in later 1847, won by the radicals; one of the perennial Sicilian autonomist insurrections in Palermo in early 1848: they were not merely straws in the wind, they were the first squalls of the gale. Everyone knew it. Rarely has revolution been more universally predicted, though not necessarily for the right countries or the right dates. An entire continent waited, ready by now to pass the news of revolution almost instantly from city to city by means of the electric telegraph. In 1831 Victor Hugo had written that he already heard ‘the dull sound of revolution, still deep down in the earth, pushing out under every kingdom in Europe its subterranean galleries from the central shaft of the mine which is Paris’. In 1847 the sound was loud and close. In 1848 the explosion burst.”

L.A. Tikhomirov writes: “Revolutionary agitation between the years 1830 and 1848 was carried out mainly by the Carbonari and various ‘Young Germanies’,

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‘Young Italies’, etc. In the Masonic world before 1848 something powerful, similar to 1789, was being planned, and preparations for the revolution went ahead strongly in all countries. In 1847 a big Masonic convention was convened in Strasbourg from deputies elected at several small conventions convened earlier… At the convention it was decided to ‘masonize’ the Swiss cantons and then produce a revolutionary explosion at the same time throughout Europe. As we know, movement did in fact follow, with a difference of several months, in a whole series of countries: Paris, Vienna, Berlin, Milan, Parma, Venice, etc. Reformist ‘banquets’ laying the beginning of the revolution in Paris were organized by the directors of the Masonic lodges…”

“Citizen-King” Louis Philippe’s attempt to create a compromise between the principles of monarchy and revolution collapsed. He abdicated and fled to England in February, 1848. At this, “the Masonic lodge loudly expressed its joy. On March 10, 1848 the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite welcomed the Provisional government. On March 24 a delegation of the Grand Orient also welcomed the Provisional government and was received by two ministers, Crémieux and Garnier-Pages… who came out in their Masonic regalia.”

However, the Provisional Government of the Second Republic, which included a worker in its ranks, Albert Martin, did not last long: the elections to the Constituent Assembly, now on the basis of universal male suffrage, returned a massive monarchist majority. Many of the liberal bourgeoisie, fearing social revolution, voted for the right, as did the property-owning peasantry. What seems to have happened is that the Masons underwent a change of heart in the middle of the revolution, and decided, out of fear or for some other reason, not to allow it to proceed to its logical conclusion. For during the bloody “June days”, they switched sides, supporting the government General Cavaignac against the workers in the streets. Thus “on June 27, the day after the revolutionaries had been defeated, the Grand Orient issued a statement supporting Cavaignac.” Perhaps it was the spectre of communism as set out in The Communist Manifesto that had set the Masons thinking. In any case, the consequences were profound. As the new government arrested revolutionary leaders, clawed back some of the concessions of February and abolished national workshops, the urban poor rose in rebellion against the republic they had helped to create. This rebellion was put down with much bloodshed.

"For the time being," write Robert and Isabelle Tombs, "revolution in France was over, and it ceased to be an inspiration for radicals in Britain. The real beneficiary was someone who had recently begun to attract notice in Britain,

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160 Tikhomirov, Religioznno-Filosofskie Osnovy Istorii (The Religio-Philosophical Foundations of History), Moscow, 1997, p. 463.
161 Tikhomirov, op. cit., p. 464.
162 As predicted by Count Cavour, the future architect of a united Italy, in 1846: “If the social order were to be genuinely menaced, if the great principles on which it rests were to be a serious risk, then many of the most determined oppositionists, the most enthusiastic republicans would be, we are convinced, the first to join the ranks of the conservative party” (in Hobsbawm, The Age of Capital, op. cit., p. 28).
Louis-Napoleon, Napoleon's nephew. The emperor's only son - 'Napoleon II', 'The Eaglet' - had died young in Austria. Louis-Napoleon was his political heir. Until 1848 his career had been a bad joke. He made absurd attempts in 1836 and 1840 to seize power, was imprisoned, escaped, and lived as a man-about-town in London. After the revolution, he returned to France and found himself a political celebrity. When he announced his candidature to be the first elected president of the republic, it soon became clear that he would win by a landslide; and in December 1848 he duly did. The Napoleonic legend, fashioned on St. Helena to portray the emperor as a selfless philanthropist, enabled him to declare that 'my name is a programme in itself'. He had created an image of concern for social problems. The political alternatives - republican, royalist, socialist - had all made themselves unpopular. He attracted support for different, even contradictory, reasons: he would both prevent further revolution and stop royalist counter-revolution; he would both help the poor and restore business confidence; he would both make France great and keep the peace. However, the new constitution allowed presidents to serve for only one four-year term, which was not enough for a Bonaparte. To stay in power he carried out a coup d'état on 2 December 1851, which involved brief fighting in Paris and a major insurrection in the provinces. A plebiscite gave him overwhelming popular support; but it was never forgotten that he had shed French blood and transported thousands to penal colonies.\(^{164}\)

The pattern of events in France between 1848 and 1851 was remarkably similar to that of the First French Revolution and Empire under Napoleon the First: constitutional monarchy, followed by revolution, followed by one-man dictatorship. As Alfonse Karr wrote, plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.\(^{165}\)

However, two things radically distinguished 1848 from 1789. The first was that the monarchical principle was now much weaker. Thus in January, 1848 De Tocqueville declared: "The old monarchy [of Louis XVI] was stronger than you, because of its [hereditary] origin; it had better support than you from ancient practices, old customs, ancient beliefs; it was stronger than you, and yet it fell into the dust. Can you not feel - how shall I put it? - the wind of revolution in the air?\(^{166}\)

The second was that the spirit of revolution now had a more radical and quasi-intellectual support in the form of the theory that took its name from its founder, Marx.

However, this support was still too weak, too little-known and too extreme for the majority even of leftists. And several other factors contributed to the collapse of the revolution. One was the continued support of the armies for the dynastic principle. Another was the distrust of the peasants, still by far the majority part of the population in most countries, for the urban intellectuals. A third was the fear of the propertied classes for their property. This had been predicted by Count Cavour, the future architect of a united Italy, in 1846: "If the social order were to be genuinely menaced, if the great principles on which it

\(^{166}\) De Tocqueville, in Almond, op. cit., p. 98.
rests were to be a serious risk, then many of the most determined oppositionists, the most enthusiastic republicans, would be, we are convinced, the first to join the ranks of the conservative party”.\textsuperscript{167}

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While the 1848 revolution must be considered a failure from the revolutionary point of view, it put the idea, if not the reality, of the nation-state to the forefront of European politics. It could hardly fail to do so when many thousands of "Poles, Danes, Germans, Italians, Magyars, Czechs and Slovaks, Croats, and Romanians rose up in arms, claiming the right of self government." But it was above all the use by Napoleon III of the plebiscite that demonstrated that Europe had entered a new age, the age of the nation-state. For, as Philip Bobbitt writes, "when Louis Napoleon resorted to the plebiscite, he first used it to legitimate a new constitution, and later in 1852 in order to confer the title of emperor and to make this title hereditary. [But] the use of the national referendum to determine the constitutional status of a state is more than anything else the watermark of the nation-state. For on what basis other than popular sovereignty and nationalism can the mere vote of a people legitimate its relations with others? It is one thing to suppose that a vote of the people legitimates a particular policy or ruler; this implies that, within a state, the people of that state have a say in the political direction of the state. It is something else altogether to say that vote of the people legitimates a state within the society of states. That conclusion depends on not simply a role for self-government, but a right of self-government. It is the right of which Lincoln spoke at Gettysburg."\textsuperscript{168}

Some of these nationalist movements had already made themselves felt and were well-known as threats to the Holy Alliance. For example, the Poles. "Liberal and socialist plans for the reconstitution of Poland threatened the very core of the Tsarist Empire. ‘Poland is understood by the Poles,’ the Russian diplomat Baron Peter von Meyendorff warned in March 1848, ‘extends to the mouth of the Vistula and Danube, as well as to the Dniepr at Kiev and Smolensk.’ ‘Such a Poland,’ he continued, ‘enters Russia like a wedge, destroys her political and geographical unity, throws her back into Asia, [and] puts her back two hundred years.’ Stopping this, Meyendorff concluded, was the cause of ‘every Russian’.”\textsuperscript{169} Thus when the Russians made their decisive intervention against the Hungarian revolution through Transylvania in 1849, they were driven, according to Stephen Winder, “by disgust at insurrection, but also because they could not help noticing how many Poles were joining the Hungarian army: a liberal, republican, independent Hungary providing a shelter for Poles would have featured very high in the long list of the Tsar’s nightmares that focused on the threat posed by personal freedoms.”\textsuperscript{170}

\textsuperscript{167} Cavour, in Hobsbawm, \textit{The Age of Capital}, p. 28.
\textsuperscript{168} Bobbitt, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 179-180.
\textsuperscript{169} Simms, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 115-116.
Further west, the most important of the nationalist movements were those for the unification of Italy and Germany. Italy was still little more than "a geographical expression", in Metternich's phrase. And when the Italian revolution began, as the Tuscan radical, Giuseppe Montanelli, said, "there was no unity of direction; therefore there was no national government. We fought as Piedmontese, as Tuscans, as Neapolitans, as Romans, not as Italians."

Thus when the Austrians counter-attacked against revolutionary Milan and Venice, many of their soldiers were poor Italians who distrusted the urban revolutionaries; and the Bourbon King of the Two Sicilies Ferdinand II found allies amongst the Neapolitan poor. Mazzini's slogan, Italia farà da sé (Italy will do it alone), had failed. His romantic associate Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-82) fled to South America.

German unification was a little further advanced; in 1834 Prussia and the other German states except the Austrian empire had formed a Zollverein, or customs union, to promote trade (an early model for the European Economic Union); and in March, 1848 an all-German preparatory parliament (Vorparlament) convened in Frankfurt. But there were arguments over what kind of constitution a united Germany should have, and whether it should be a "great Germany" with Austria or a "little Germany" without it. In any case, the problem of what to do with non-German national minorities remained. The parliament ignored the demands of the Prussian Poles for national self-determination; and the Czechs, among other national minorities, "saw the [Austro-Hungarian] Empire as a less unattractive solution than absorption by some expansionist nationalism such as the Germans' or the Magyars'. 'If Austria did not already exist,' Professor Palacky, the Czech spokesman, is supposed to have said, 'it would be necessary to invent it.'"

As we have seen, Napoleon's victories over the German armies before 1813, and the continued dividedness of the German lands after 1815, had fostered in the German people a powerful feeling of wounded pride, "some form of collective humiliation" in Sir Isaiah's Berlin's phrase. This feeling, which was felt especially in relation to France, but also in relation to other great powers, was to be one of the great driving forces of European history until the destruction of the Third Reich in 1945. German philosophers such as Fichte and Hegel, and German historians such as Leopold von Ranke, built on the writings of Herder in the eighteenth century to proclaim a mysterious essence of Germanness. Thus von Ranke wrote in 1836 "that the fatherland 'is with us, in us'. And as 'a mysterious something that informs the lowest among us' the idea of the nation 'precedes any form of government and animates and permeates all its forms'."

171 Almond, op. cit., pp. 103, 104.
173 Hobsbawm, The Age of Capital, p. 25
Again, E.M. Arndt redefined “freedom” as, in the words of George Mosse, "the right to integrate one's self with the tradition and customs of one's own people. The innocent and just against whom no force must be used are those who desire to live in that way. In Arndt's mind these were the Prussians opposed to Napoleon. What is rejected from the 'religion' of liberty is its cosmopolitanism based on the view of a natural law which makes the goal of freedom the same all over the world. This emphasis upon freedom as circumscribed by national customs and traditions contrasts with the liberal ideas of men like Cobden and Bright in England. For them liberty was the same in all nations, a moral imperative which transcended nationalism and was indeed hostile to it."

Arndt foreshadowed the future, the rise of what in Germany would be called “national liberalism”, the increasing stress upon the historic nation rather than upon the universality of freedom... As Mosse writes: "The revolution of 1848 seemed to give liberalism another chance. But at the high tide of the revolution, the Frankfurt Parliament, the revolution's nationalist impetus became as evident as its liberal framework. From Frankfurt's Church of Saint Paul, where the Parliament sat, came a declaration of the rights of the German people which enumerated all the principles of the religion of liberty: individual freedom under the law, freedom of belief, the abolition of all entrenched privileges, the inviolability of private property and, finally, the call for a constitution. But what was missing from this declaration is equally significant. The principle that 'he who governs best governs least' was never apparent. Instead, the declaration insisted that military service was the paramount duty of the citizen; no citizen could be allowed exemption from duty to the state on the grounds of conscience.

"The fact that true revolutionaries of 1848 had to resolve the question of nationalism as well as that of freedom produced a change in liberal thought, a change which was foreshadowed by Arndt. The men of 1848 desired liberty - a liberty, however, that rested upon a national base. The revolution failed and a second chance was lost. Its manner of failure further influenced the construction of a national liberalism. The common explanation of this failure has been that the Parliament at Frankfurt talked too much and acted too little. By drawing out their proceedings, the explanation runs, the Parliament gave the territorial rules ample time to gain back their lost power. But the story involved more than a simple delight in speechifying. There was in this Parliament a minority whose ideas on reform far exceeded those of the majority. They were Republicans, revolutionaries of the left. Encouraged by some local successes, especially in the state of Baden, these men were allied with the Socialists; Karl Marx looked to their successes with hope. In Parliament they filibustered. The Liberals were thus caught between the left and the reaction.

"It was the left they feared more than the right even from the beginning of the revolution. Like Liberals all over Europe, they believed that wealth was an open road to be trod by talent and morality in tandem - but they were equally keen to close that road to the challenge of popular democracy. The famous Frankfurt Parliament was not elected by a universal franchise but by restrictive electoral practices which excluded the lower classes from the vote, just as in England
parliamentary reform had erected the barrier of a high property qualification for voting. In Germany as in England the lower classes protested. The Chartists and the radical Republicans, as they were called in Germany, tried to establish universal suffrage. Both failed. But where in England the Chartist agitation, though peaceful, accomplished nothing, in Germany the radicals did capture momentary control of some regions. In Baden, for example, their attempted reforms were later called by their adversaries the 'red terror'.

"Though this radicalism was only a small factor in the revolution itself, it was to have a great effect on the future of German liberalism. The middle classes were driven still further into the arms of the state. They now feared a 'red terror' and sought, above all, stability, those national roots, which contemporaries had already held up as desirable goals. Within a few years after the event one leading Liberal could characterize 1848 as the 'idiotic revolution'. German liberalism took on aspects which would have been unthinkable in England or France. A man like the writer Gustav Freytag, regarded as a leading Liberal by both contemporary and future generations of German Liberals, could combine ideas of constitutionalism with racial stereotypes. For him rootedness in the nation was an essential prerequisite for any kind of liberty. Those who preserved any custom or religion alien to the deep roots of the German past were enemies of the German people. National liberalism was unable to fight authoritarian encroachments on individual freedom, as did English and French liberalism. Nationalism swamped the religion of liberty in Germany."176

It was the Hungarian revolution that came the nearest to success. Hobsbawm writes: "Unlike Italy, Hungary was already a more or less unified political entity ('the lands of the crown of St. Stephen'), with an effective constitution, a not negligible degree of autonomy, and indeed most of the elements of a sovereign state except independence. Its weakness was that the Magyar aristocracy which governed this vast and overwhelmingly agrarian area ruled not only over the Magyar peasantry of the great plain, but over a population of which perhaps 60 per cent consisted of Croats, Serbs, Slovaks, Rumanians and Ukrainians, not to mention a substantial German minority. These peasant peoples were not unsympathetic to a revolution which freed the serfs, but were antagonised by the refusal of even most of the Budapest radicals to make any concession to their national difference from the Magyars, as their political spokesmen were antagonised by a ferocious policy of Magyarisation and the incorporation of hitherto in some ways autonomous border regions into a centralised and unitary Magyar state. The court at Vienna, following the habitual imperialist maxim 'divide and rule', offered them support. It was to be a Croat army, under Baron Jellacic [Jelačić], a friend of Gay, the pioneer of a Yugoslav nationalism, which led the assault on revolutionary Vienna and revolutionary Hungary."177

Misha Glenny explains what happened: "The initiative to appoint Jelačić [as Imperial Ban or Viceroy of Croatia] had originated in a petition to the [Austrian] Kaiser, signed jointly by representatives of Croatia’s gentry and its aristocracy. They had been prompted to do so by the vigorous rebellion that swept through Croatia and Slavonia in March 1848. They saw Jelačić as a guarantor both of greater autonomy and of law and order against a restless peasantry, potentially the most powerful revolutionary force in Croatia in 1848. His appointment was also the first move in a complicated game played by the court in Vienna to set Hungarian and Croatian nationalism against each other. The resulting collision played a key role in the defeat of revolution in the Empire."

The Hungarian liberal revolutionaries led by Kossuth were prepared to make compromises with the Austrian monarchy (which it promised to recognize as their own), and with the Magyar peasantry (who were pacified by a land reform). But they were determined not to negotiate with the Slavic national minorities, Croat, Slovak, Slovene and Serb. And after they had proclaimed the union of Hungary with Transylvania, they also came into conflict with the Romanians of Transylvania.

An important role here was played by the Serbs of Novi Sad, who were much wealthier and savvier than their Free Serb brothers across the Danube. In March they "presented a petition to the Hungarian government, demanding the restoration of autonomy for the Orthodox Church and the recognition of Serbian as a state language. In exchange, the Serbs said they would back the Hungarian struggle against Vienna. Kossuth dismissed their demands with a brusque warning that 'only the sword would decide the matter'. In doing so he sealed the unspoken alliance between Serbs and Croats - the 'one-blooded nation with two faiths' - and, as a result, the fate of the Hungarian revolution.

"On 2 April, a Serb delegation in Vienna appealed for the unification of the Banat and Bačka (two provinces within Vojvodina) with Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia. With the approval of Serbia's Prince Alexander Karadjordjević, who had come to power in 1842, and Ilija Garašanin in Belgrade, Serb leaders at Novi Sad decided to convene a Serb National Assembly. At the beginning of May, Serbs from all over the Banat streamed into Sremski Karlovci, the former seat of the Orthodox Church in the Habsburg Empire. Joined by Croats, Czechs, Poles and Slavs, they gathered in the streets and began chanting 'Rise up, rise up, Serbs!' Through popular acclamation, the government of the Serbian Vojvodina was proclaimed, headed by Colonel Josip Šupljikac, the supreme Vojvoda (Military Leader or Duke). Rajačić was named Patriarch of the restored seat in Karlovci. Conspicuously, the new assembly did not rescind allegiance either to Vienna or to the Kingdom of Hungary. But the concluding words of the proclamation breathed life into the Yugoslav idea for the first time: 'Before all else, we demand resolutely a true and genuine union with our brothers of the same blood and tribe, the Croats. Long Live Unity! Long Live the Triune Kingdom!'"
Immediately, war broke out between the Hungarians and the Serbs... This was "the most curious of all wars, in which troops on both sides flew the same flag, claimed loyalty to the same ruler, and treated their opponents as traitors and rebels... Many officials believed sincerely that his majesty was on their side, others were Magyar or Serb nationalists; the majority were desperate and confused. The mutual reluctance of many combatants did not prevent the war in the South from deteriorating into general brutality. In the extraordinary ethnic mosaic of the Banat... where Serbian, Hungarian, Romanian, German, Slovak and Bulgarian settlers of the Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant faiths had lived in peace for centuries, people were massacring one another in the name of nationality [emphasis added]." This was a modern conflict, triggered by imperial collapse and the nationalist rivalry of two liberal bourgeoisies. It was not an explosion of ancient tribal hatreds, as if so often claimed. And the Serbs and Croats, after all, were fighting side by side as brothers...

"The Hungarian forces drove the imperial forces out of the country. At this point in the summer of 1849, Tsar Nicholas I offered his services to Franz Joseph in the name of the Holy Alliance. Two Russian armies, one stationed east of the Pruth in Bessarabia, the other east of the Vistula in Russian-controlled Poland [300,000 troops in all], swept across and down into Hungary and finally smashed the revolution in August.

"Reaction had triumphed throughout the Habsburg Empire. In Hungary, the newly restored Austrian authorities exacted a terrible retribution against the rebels. Elsewhere in the Empire, the demands of other national communities, especially the Croats and Serbs, who had contributed significantly to the exhaustion of the Hungarian forces, were simply ignored by the Kaiser. Liberal nationalism had apparently suffered a catastrophic defeat." 180

The question raised by this defeat was: could liberalism and nationalism coexist in the long term? And the answer provided by history since the French revolution appears to be: no. Liberalism demands freedom and equality for each individual citizen, regardless of his race or creed. Nationalism, on the other hand, calls for the freedom and equality of every nation, no matter how small. Both demands are impossible to fulfil. No state is able to fulfil the endless list of human rights demanded by every citizen and every minority without descending into anarchy. And no state is able to fulfil the supposed national rights of every nation without descending into war, as the demand that one nation have its own sovereign, inclusive and homogeneous territory inevitably involves the "ethnic cleansing" of other groups on the same territory.

The only solution nineteenth-century history provided was the multinational empire, which suppressed both liberalism and nationalism and in which the emperor stood above all his empire's constituent national groups, being the guarantor of the rights of every individual citizen. Such were the empires of Russia, Austro-Hungary and Turkey in the nineteenth century.
Of course, many nations within these empires saw themselves as being tyrannized by the dominant nation from which the empires took their names. But at any rate all the subordinate nations had a kind of brotherhood in misery, being equally prisoners in "the prison of the peoples". This suppressed age-old rivalries among themselves. Moreover, many members of national minorities acquired a kind of sincerely imperial patriotism. Only when central authority began to falter did this supra-national patriotism weaken and national conflicts return with a vengeance, as we see in the 1848 revolution in Austro-Hungary.

"Hencefore," writes Hobsbawm, "there was to be no general social revolution of the kind envisaged before 1848 in the ‘advanced’ countries of the world. The centre of gravity of such social revolutionary movements, and therefore of twentieth-century socialist and communist regimes, was to be in the marginal and backward regions... The sudden, vast and apparently boundless expansion of the world capitalist economy provided political alternatives in the ‘advanced’ countries. The (British) industrial revolution had swallowed the (French) political revolution.”

The main “political alternative” was the liberalization of the western European regimes in the following decades that blunted the hunger of the more moderate revolutionaries, persuading them to think of working with rather than against the system to attain their aims. For then they would have more than their chains to lose... “In 1848-9 moderate liberals therefore made two important discoveries in western Europe: that revolution was dangerous and that some of their substantial demands (especially in economic matters) could be met without it. The bourgeoisie ceased to be a revolutionary force.”

What of the Church, that bastion of counter-revolution? There will still some Catholics who spoke the truth in public. Thus Montalembert said in a speech to the Chamber of Deputies in September, 1848: “The church has said to the poor: you shall not steal the goods of others, and not only shall you not steal them, you shall not covet them. In other words, you shall not listen to this treacherous teaching which ceaselessly fans in your soul the fire of covetousness and envy. Resign yourself to poverty and you will be eternally rewarded and compensated. That is what the church has been saying to the poor for a thousand years, and the poor have believed it – until the day when faith was snatched from their hearts.”

However, the leaders of the Church were moving to come to terms with the prevailing Zeitgeist. Thus Cardinal de Bonald told his priests: “Show the faithful the example of obedience and submission to the Republic. Frequently make a vow to yourselves to enjoy this freedom which makes our brothers in the United States so happy; you will have this freedom. If the authorities wish to deck religious buildings with the national flag, attentively heed the desires of the

183 Montalembert, in Comby, op. cit., p. 133.
magistrates. The flag of the Republic will always be a flag which protects religion… Agree to all measures which may improve the lot of the workers… Citizens, Jesus Christ was the first, from up on his cross, to make the magnificent words ‘Freedom, equality, brotherhood’ resound throughout the world. The Christ who died for you on the tree of liberty is the holy, the sublime Republican of all times and all countries.”

M.S. Anderson writes: “The governments which reasserted themselves after the revolutions were much stronger than their pre-revolutionary predecessors. To some extent this was merely a matter of physical factors. The new railways were making it easier than ever before to move soldiers quickly to crush rebellion before it could offer a serious threat. They also made it possible to transport food rapidly to areas of dearth and thus stave off the famine which alone could produce mass disorder. The new telegraph was allowing a central government to be informed almost instantaneously of events in the most distant parts of its territory, and thus to control these events and still more the day-to-day activity of its own officials. More fundamentally, however, the new regimes of the 1850s embodied attitudes different from those of the age of Metternich, and reflected a changing intellectual climate. Positivism and materialism were now helping to give to the actions of governments a cutting edge of ruthlessness, as well as an energy which they had generally lacked before 1848. In France Louis Napoleon had dreams, and capacities for good and evil, which were quite beyond the scope of Louis-Philippe, as well as an apparatus of political control much more efficient than any possessed by his predecessor. In the Habsburg Empire, Bach and Kübeck, the dominant ministers of the 1850s, were men of a very different stamp from Metternich. In Prussia, now beginning a period of spectacular economic growth, the medievalist dreams of Frederick William IV had lost all significance before he himself collapsed into insanity in 1858. Tempered by the fires of successfully resisted revolution, fortified by new technical aids and helped by a favourable economic climate, the governments of Europe were entering a new era…”

Of course, this positivist stamp on post-1848 governments guaranteed a further decay in the foundations of Christian society and therefore a bringing closer of the revolution. But that was not how things were seen by the disillusioned revolutionaries themselves - that is, those who had not changed sides, who had not been bought, who refused to work from within the system. They all believed that a proletarian revolution was not on the cards for at least another generation.

Marx and Engels now thought that society had to go through all the stages of bourgeois development before the proletariat could rise up and take power. That meant that the revolution would not come first in peasant societies such as Russia (the European peasantry had proved frustratingly conservative in 1848), but in highly industrialised ones, such as Britain or Germany, as the proletariat there became poorer. But these predictions turned out to be wrong. In the West

no revolution took place as the workers’ lot was improved by trade-union agitation from below and prudent concessions from above. The revolution finally took place in the predominantly peasant country of Russia…

Another consequence of the failure of 1848 was that Marx and Engels saw no role in the revolution for the smaller nations, of which there were so many in Central and Eastern Europe. For the Croats, for example, had fought on the side of counter-revolution. And so they damned the Croats, writes Mark Almond, “as the arch-collaborators with tottering reaction: ‘An Austria shaken to its very foundations was kept in being and secured by the enthusiasm of the Slavs for the black and yellow;… it was precisely the Croats, Slovenes, Dalmatians…’ But the two prophets of Marxism tinged their savage political condemnation of the Croats with a genocidal, albeit ‘progressive’, racism.

“Along with the Czechs and the Russians, whose troops had dealt the death-blow to the revolutionary dreams of 1848, it was the Croats who were excommunicated from the future communist society by Marx and Engels. An anonymous poet in Marx’s paper, the Neue Rheinische Zeitung could not find abuse enough for them: the Croats were ‘That horde of miscreants, rogues and vagabonds… riff-raff, abject peasant hirelings, vomit…’ But it was left to Engels to issue the terrible formal sentence of annihilation on the Croats like other inherently ‘counter-revolutionary peoples’. Convinced that he knew where history was going and that it belonged to the great homogeneous peoples like the Germans and had no room for little nations who got in the way, like the Gaels or Basques as well as Croats, Engels proclaimed that the ‘South Slavs are nothing more than the national refuse of a thousand years of immensely confused development’…. Engels noted that ‘this national refuse... sees its salvation solely in a reversal of the entire development of Europe…’ His conclusion was that a ‘war of annihilation and ruthless terrorism’ was necessary against ‘reactionary’ and ‘unhistoric’ peoples as well as reactionary classes.

“Engels remained decidedly unsympathetic to the aspirations of the South Slavs for independence or unity until the end of his days. Even in the 1880s, after all the public outrage in Britain about the Bosnian and Bulgarian atrocities, he could still write to Bernstein that the Hercegovinians ‘right to cattle-rustling must be sacrificed without mercy to the interests of the European proletariat’, which lay in peace at that time. Both Marx and Engels bequeathed to the left in the twentieth century a powerful tendency to sympathise with large-scale ‘progressive’ states at the expense of the poor and small.”

“Another for whom the years 1849-51 was a kind of watershed was [Thomas] Carlyle (the coup d’état of Louis Napoleon in the latter year was in a sense the conclusion of the revolutionary episode and had its own impact). The diatribe on the state of Europe and England which he published in 1851 as Latter-Day Pamphlets is, perhaps not altogether coincidentally, the last of his works to exhibit, intermittently, the immense imaginative vitality of his earlier ones. Carlyle was not a revolutionary or even, in any directly political sense, a

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democrat, but he had lived his earlier life in an atmosphere tense with the expectation of revolution and he had made prophesying it and preparing to meet it a kind of vocation; it fitted his conception of history, founded on notions, Biblical, Saint-Simonian and German metaphysical, of retribution and reward. The prospect of a sort of baulked apocalypse threw him into a, for him, new kind of gloom and frenzy. The fiery reign of revolution, exhilarating though fearful, seemed quenched in a morass of mud, and worse than mud, which was how he saw the contemporary world. The imagery of Latter-Day Pamphlets, is excremental; the contemporary English preoccupation with sanitation provided Carlyle’s impatience with pictures of almost Dantesque force, of clogged immobility and dismal, squalid repetition, like the dead dog rolled up and down the filthy Thames with the tide…”

Thus did 1848’s “springtime of the nations” turn into a bitter “winter of discontent”. Although the monarchists had triumphed, there were few monarchists who believed that the tide of history was returning their way. As for the revolutionaries like Marx and Herzen, and even moderate liberals, they felt that the “miasma of the fifties”, as Nietzsche put it, compared badly with the idealism of the forties. Thus the historian Johann Gustav Droysen wrote: “Our spiritual life is deteriorating rapidly; its dignity, its idealism, its intellectual integrity are vanishing... Meanwhile the exact sciences grow in popularity; establishments flourish where pupils will one day form the independent upper middle class as farmers, industrialists, merchants, technicians and so one; their education and outlook will concentrate wholly on material issues. At the same time the universities are declining... At present all is instability, chaos, ferment and disorder. The old values are finished, debased, rotten, beyond salvation and the new ones are as yet unformed, aimless, confused, merely destructive... we live in one of the great crises that lead from one epoch of history to the next…”

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187 Burrow, op. cit., p. 27.
188 Droysen, in Mann, op. cit., p. 124.
As we have seen, one of the reasons for the failure of the 1848 revolution was that the Masons drew back from taking the revolution to its logical extreme. This is understandable - most Masons were wealthy men. However, it is still surprising, and worthy of investigation, why they should have blessed (eventually) the formation of a dictatorship in France under Louis Napoleon.

Jasper Ridley writes: "On 10 December 1848 the election was held for the new President of the Republic. The Freemasons' journal, Le Franc-Maçon, called on its readers to vote for Lamartine [though he was not a Mason], because he believed in 'the sacred words, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity'; but Louis Napoleon Bonaparte (who would soon become the Emperor Napoleon III) was elected by a very large majority; he defeated Cavaignac, Ledru-Rollin, the Socialist François Raspail, and Lamartine, receiving 75 per cent of the votes cast, and coming top of the poll in all except four of the eighty-five departments of France. He was the son of Louis Bonaparte, King of Holland, and in his youth had been involved in the revolutionary movement in Italy in 1831. It has been suggested that he joined the Carbonari and the Freemasons in Italy, but this cannot be proved. He afterwards tried twice to make a revolution against Louis Philippe, and on the second occasion was sentenced to life imprisonment in the fortress at Ham near St Quentin in north-eastern France; but he made a sensational escape, took refuge in England, and returned to Paris to his electoral triumph in 1848."

"Although he had been suspected at one time of being a Communist, as soon as he was elected President of the Republic he relied on the support of the Right wing and the Catholic Church. Young Radicals who flaunted red cravats, and shouted 'Long live the Social Republic!' were sentenced to several years' imprisonment. From time to time a Freemasons' lodge was raided by the police, and warnings were sent by local officials to the government that 'members of the anarchist party' were planning to gain control of the Masonic lodges in Paris and the provinces."

"The Grand Orient thought it would be wise to revise their constitution. In 1839, when they were living happily under Louis Philippe, they had stated that 'Masonry is a universal philanthropic association' and that one of their objectives was 'the examination and discussion of all social and economic questions which concern the happiness of humanity'. In August 1848, after the June Days and the legislation suppressing secret political societies, they changed this article in their constitution by deleting the words 'social and economic'; and a year later, on 10 August 1849, Grand Orient stated that all Freemasons must believe in God and in the immortality of the soul."189

When, in addition to this, Napoleon sent his troops to crush the Roman republic under Mazzini, it must have seemed that the Masons would now, at last, turn against him. And indeed, when he established his dictatorship on December 2, 1851, "there was an attempt at resistance in Paris next day, led by

189 Ridley, op. cit., pp. 207-208.
the deputy Baudin, a Freemason." But Baudin was shot on the barricade; and when Napoleon held a plebiscite on whether he should continue as President for ten years, the Grand Orient called on all Masons to vote for him.

Some light is cast on this mystery by Tikhomirov: "According to the very weighty tome of Deschampes, the empire of Louis Napoleon was considered desirable. This became known to Deschampes through Michelet, who played an important role in revolutionary circles, but was a personal friend of Deschampes.

"Soon after the coup of 1851 (more precisely: on February 7, 1852), Michelet wrote to Deschampes: 'By this time a great convention of the heads of the European societies had taken place in Paris, where they discussed France. Only three members (whose leader was Mazzini) demanded a democratic republic. A huge majority thought that a dictatorship would better serve the work of the revolution - and the empire was decreed 'sur les promesses formelles' (on the basis of the formal promises) of Louis Napoleon to give all the forces of France to the services of Masonry. All the people of the revolution applied themselves to the success of the state coup. Narvaets, who was in obedience to Palmerston [British Prime Minister in 1855-1858 and from 1859], even loaned Louis Napoleon 500,000 francs not long before December 2.'

"If Napoleon III really gave 'formal promises', then this could refer only to the unification of Italy, and consequently, to the fate of the Pope's secular dominion. Deschampes has no evidence concerning Louis Napoleon's membership of Masonry, otherwise than in the form of Carbonarism. He had long belonged to the Carbonari in its Italian form, and as such was obliged to work for the unification of Italy. For breaking this oath he was pursued by attempts on his life, until, after Orsini's attempt [on his life], he renewed his promise and began to fulfil it, risking that the Pope would lose his dominions. But in general Masonry protected Napoleon III. At any rate Palmerston, who had, as they affirm, been the highest leader of European Masonry (the Orient of Orient), supported Napoleon with all his strength, and, perhaps, would not have allowed his fall, if he had not died five years before the Franco-Prussian War."

So here we see why Napoleon was able to retain the support of the Masons, while supporting their mortal enemy, the Catholic Church, he had a very powerful friend, Lord Palmerston, the British Prime Minister, a former supreme

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190 According to Alexander Selyanin, on October 15, 1852, the Masons addressed Napoleon and said: "Guarantee the happiness of us all and put the emperor's crown on your noble head" (Taimaia sila masonstva (The Secret Power of Masonry), St. Petersburg, 1911, p. 82).
191 However, in spite of the Masons' support for Napoleon III, the Freemason Benito Juarez, president of Mexico from 1861 to 1872, succeeded in driving out the French occupation under the Emperor Maximilian. This shows yet again that Freemasonry was not a united force - Masons were on opposite sides in many conflicts from the American revolution onwards. (V.M.)
192 Tikhomirov, op. cit., p. 465.
head of Masonry. Nor, as we have seen, were the Catholics as irreconcilably opposed to the liberal revolution as before... And so Britain under Palmerston, France under Napoleon, the Pope and the Sultan all worked together to humble the real enemy of Masonry, Russia, in the Crimean War of 1854-1856, of which more in the next chapter...

But if Tikhomirov was right, there was another important reason why the Masons should have supported Napoleon: his support for the Italian revolution and weakening of the monarchical powers of Austria-Hungary and the Papacy. For in remarkable way, Napoleon III paralleled and continued his more famous uncle's work of destroying the old order in Europe.

Thus "in 1859," writes Philip Bobbitt, "France intervened in Italy after Napoleon III concluded a secret agreement with Cavour, the Piedmontese prime minister, providing that the kingdom of Piedmont would be extended into a Kingdom of Upper Italy to include Lombardy, Venetia, and the Romagna. France would receive Nice and Savoy. A Kingdom of Central Italy, composed of Tuscany, Parma, Modena, Umbria, and the Marches, would be given to Napoleon's cousin, Prince Napoleon. As with the French demands against the Ottoman Empire, French intrigue had singled out another vulnerable state-nation: the Austrian empire.

"Fighting broke out in April, most of the warfare taking place between French and Austrian forces. The battles of Magenta and Solferino were actually French victories, not those of the Piedmontese or Italian volunteers. The decision to cease fire was also French, and an agreement was signed between Napoleon III and the Austrian emperor Francis Joseph on July 11, 1859. This truce clearly sacrificed Italian nationalism to French ambitions. Lombardy was given to Piedmont but Venetia remained with the Austrians. Nothing was said of the French agreement with Cavour. The settlement ignited a firestorm of reaction among the Italians, who had not been consulted. Cavour resigned his premiership. Assemblies called by Tuscany, Parma, Modena, and the Papal Legations [the northern Papal states] met and requested annexation by the kingdom of Piedmont.

"At first Napoleon III and fell back on a call for a European congress to settle the question of central Italy. This approach might have strengthened the system of collective security in Europe, but then, in December, he changed course. Relying on Britain, where Palmerston and his foreign secretary, Lord John Russell, supported the principle of self-determination, Napoleon III renewed the agreement between France and Piedmont. Cavour returned to power in less than a month.

"Piedmont annexed the Duchies and the Legations and promptly organized a plebiscite, based on universal suffrage, held in March 1860. The Piedmontese king, Victor Emmanuel, took over the new territories by decree. Elections to a single Italian parliament were held in Piedmont-Sardinia, Lombardy, the Duchies, and the Legations. The first task of this legislature was to ratify the
annexations to Piedmont as well as those to France. The French annexations of Nice and Savoy had been similarly endorsed by local plebiscites.

"The French annexations, however, had enraged the Italian partisan leader Garibaldi (a native of Nice) and other Italian revolutionaries, and he mounted an insurrection in Sicily in April. The success of this insurrection, which was quickly joined by discontented peasants recruited by promises of land reform, prompted Cavour to dispatch officials to prepare plebiscites for annexation in the newly liberated areas. These officials Garibaldi expelled or avoided. When Garibaldi marched on Naples, Cavour planned a pre-emptive coup, but this failed, and Garibaldi entered Naples in September.

"Fearful of losing the leadership of the emerging unification movement to Garibaldi’s partisans, Piedmont sent forces into the Papal States and defeated a Catholic army at Castelfidardo in mid-September. When Bourbon forces in the south began to gain ground against Garibaldi, the latter called on Piedmont for assistance. This permitted Cavour to announce to the parliament on October 2, 1860, that the revolution was at an end. Sicily and Naples were annexed after a plebiscite by universal suffrage on October 21.

"Italian unification was not quite complete. French troops remained in Rome, kept there by conservative pressure on Napoleon III, and it was not until the German victory at Sedan in 1870 that they were finally withdrawn. Nevertheless, without French determination to drive Austria from Italy, unification would not have happened at this time. Whether it was wise of Napoleon III to accomplish this is open to question; by weakening Austria, he removed the strongest check on Prussian ambitions to unify Germany, a development that could only threaten France in the long run..."193

50. THE ORIGINS OF NATIONALISM: (5) ITALY

The great enemy of imperialism was nationalism. The two phenomena grew up together; it was as if nationalism was the worm in the apple of imperialism, its hidden avenger... Early nineteenth-century nationalism of the French type was – or claimed to be - romantic, religious and universalist in the sense that it longed for the liberation of all nations, not just one's own. However, the nationalism of the later decades of the nineteenth century was more hard-nosed, anti-religious and particularist.

Adam Zamoyski writes about early nationalism: "Lafayette and his peers were natural believers. Most of them left the Christian Church at some stage, but they never eradicated God from their minds. They sought Him in nature, in art, in everything but religion. Some found Him in humanity, as represented by the nation. Robespierre described this faith as a 'tender, imperious, irresistible passion, the torment and delight of magnanimous souls', just as the great ecstatic saints had described their love of God. For him, 'this sacred love of the Patrie, this most sublime and holy love of humanity,' would one day find its spiritual consummation in the contemplation of 'the ravishing spectacle of universal happiness'. For Michelet, faith in the nation meant 'the salvation of all by all'. He hated Catholicism because it saved people individually, thereby undermining the love of the nation. 'No more individual salvation; God in all and all Messiahs!' he preached. In other words, salvation could only be achieved by, with and through the nation. 'We shall bring about the freedom of nations all over the world,' wrote Slowacki in November of the terrible year 1848, 'our blood and our body is the property of the world and will be its nourishment, strengthening those who have grown weak under oppression.'

"These were no mere rebels; they aspired to emulate Christ by immolating themselves for the sake of humanity. And they offered hope, not political solutions. The wars and revolutions they started or embraced were acts of faith. They were for the most part born of vague longing not specific grievance, and that was why they lingered on in the memory as glorious acts however dismal their outcome: grievances can fail to be righted, but hope can never be defeated.

"Devotion to the cause became the only and all-embracing purpose of their lives, more important than the achievement of its end. They sublimated the mission itself. They accepted its purpose without question, because to question it would have made nonsense of their sacrifices and their whole lives. This made them fear and denounce everything that smacked of lukewarm belief or heresy. In order to fortify themselves in the faith, they leaned on ritual, invoked exemplars and martyrs, and venerated relics. They had, in fact, created a faith and a church of their own, with all the trappings of the Christian one they affected to despise. And, as with all faiths, the ultimate longing, because it provided escape into another, and necessarily better, world, was death in the service of the cause. They were certainly all a little mad, but theirs was a devoted and holy madness."\(^{194}\)

Nationalism engendered some great art, especially music, which in turn added an extra energy to nationalism. We think of Sibelius for the Finns, Dvorak for the Czechs, and, especially, Giuseppe Verdi for the Italians. Verdi’s operas, from *Nabucco* in 1842 (with its famous “Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves”) to *Don Carlos* in 1870, which was completed three years before Italian troops entered Rome and completed the task of national unification, “provided the soundtrack to the desire for independence. Through his many works, Verdi reflected, and even shaped, the struggle for Italian unification.” As an Italian writer wrote in 1855: “With what marvelous avidity the populace of our Italian cities was seized by these broad and clear melodies, singing as they went…, confronting the grave reality of the present with aspirations for the future.”

Verdi’s counterpart in politics was Giuseppe Mazzini. "To him," writes M.S. Anderson, "nationality was truly a religion; national unity must be based upon religious belief and be itself a form of religious belief. The fundamental truths he thought of as known intuitively, leaving to reason only a subordinate function. The duties of men were more important than their rights; for individuals existed to fulfill a mission in the service of humanity, and liberty was no more than the ability to choose between different ways of doing this. Nations could be constituted only by the will of the individuals composing them, by those individuals recognizing a common duty and its consequences and affirming a common purpose. Each had its own specific moral mission to perform. 'Every nation has a mission, a special office in the collective work, a special aptitude with which to fulfill it: this is its sign, its legitimacy.' A world of sovereign nation-states, each fulfilling its God-given task, would therefore be one of peace and happiness. Mazzini was much more than a selfish or parochial nationalist. His ideas were always at bottom universalist. To him the idea that the nations of Europe as soon as they had gained their freedom would spontaneously unite in some form of association was fundamental; and his last significant work, the *Politica Internazionale* (1871) was a vision of a Europe of free peoples thus voluntarily associated. The national state was to him the norm towards which all political life and action should tend, not merely a panacea for specific grievances. 'The nation,' he wrote, 'is the God-appointed instrument for the welfare of the human race.'

It was possible to be deceived into believing that this early species of nationalism was holy because it invoked the name of God and because it was universalist; that is, it believed in the nationalist cause in every nation. Thus Mazzini declared: "I believe in the immense voice of God which the centuries transmit to me through the universal tradition of Humanity; and it tells me that the Family, the Nation and Humanity are the three spheres within which the

human *individual* has to labour for a common *end*, for the moral perfecting of himself and of others, or rather of himself through others and for others."\(^{197}\)

Such universalism was possible in the first half of the 19th century, when nationalism was still closely integrated with the romantic reaction against the destructive, anti-traditional Enlightenment programme, when thinkers were trying to combine universalism with local traditions and the sacredness of the individual. "In practice, however," writes Anderson, "it was inevitable that the idea of national mission should normally be put forward in support of the demands and grievances of some specific national group."\(^{198}\) And as the century progressed, and as the nationalism of one country became opposed to that of another, universalism became rarer. Religious idealism gave way to anti-theistic cynicism. Even among the nationalists in a single nation we find this transition.

Thus there is a marked contrast between the idealism of Mazzini and the cynicism of Garibaldi. Zamoyski writes of a decorative poster produced by the garibaldini in 1864 headed "The Doctrine of Giuseppe Garibaldi":

"This opens with the words: 'In the name of the Father of the Nation', shamelessly substituting Garibaldi for God, and the service of Italy for Catholic practice. The catechetical question of how many Garibaldis there are elicits the answer that there is only one Garibaldi, but that there are three distinct persons in him: 'The Father of the Nation, the Son of the People, and the Spirit of Liberty'. Garibaldi was, of course, made man in order to save Italy, and to remind her sons of the ten commandments, which are:

*I am Giuseppe Garibaldi, your General.*

*Thou shalt not be a soldier of the General's in vain.*

*Thou shalt remember to keep the National Feast-days.*

*Thou shalt honour thy Motherland.*

*Thou shalt not kill, except those who bear arms against Italy.*

*Thou shalt not fornicate, unless it be to harm the enemies of Italy.*

*Thou shalt not steal, other than St. Peter's pence in order to use it for the redemption of Rome and Venice.*

*Thou shalt not bear false witness like the priests do in order to sustain their temporal power.*

*Thou shalt not wish to invade the motherland of others.*

*Thou shalt not dishonour thy Motherland.*

"The poster contains an 'Act of Faith' to be recited daily, as well as an act of contrition for those who have transgressed the commandments and offended the Father. There is also a travesty of the Lord's Prayer which contains such gems as 'Give us today our daily cartridges'."\(^{199}\)

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198 Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 211.
Here we see that the “holy madness” of early nineteenth century nationalism had become distinctly unholy without ceasing to be mad. Can we say anything more about the nature of this madness?..
51. THE WORLD AS WILL: SCHOPENHAUER

One of those who profited from the change in mood after 1848 was the philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer, whose main work, *The World as Will and Representation*, had been written in 1819 but only now became popular. He became famous, writes Golo Mann, "because of historical trends which he would have disapproved of if he had been clear about them: post-revolutionary disappointment of the middle class, a temporary lack of interest in politics. These trends helped Schopenhauer, who despised history and politics."\(^{200}\)

While retaining German idealism's characteristic starting-point in psychology (or meta-psychology), and its post-Hegelian emphasis on history and becoming, Schopenhauer changed its direction by arguing that the essence of reality, the "thing-in-itself", was not Idea or Mind or Reason, but *Will*. This idea could be said to be a German challenge to the Frenchman Descartes' "I think, therefore I am." For Schopenhauer, by contrast, the fundamental axiom of philosophy was: "I will, therefore I am." This will is, however, destined to ultimate extinction, which gives Schopenhauer's philosophy an extremely pessimistic colouring: "We begin in the madness of carnal desire and the transport of voluptuousness, we end in the dissolution of all our parts and the musty stench of corpses. And the road from one to the other goes, in regard to our well-being and enjoyment in life, steadily downhill: happily dreaming childhood, exultant youth, toil-filled years of manhood, infirm and often wretched old age, the torment of the last illness and finally the throes of death."

According to Bertrand Russell, "Schopenhauer's system is an adaptation of Kant's, but one that emphasizes quite different aspects of the *Critique* from those emphasized by Fichte or Hegel. They got rid of the thing-in-itself, and thus made knowledge metaphysically fundamental. Schopenhauer retained the thing-in-itself, but identified it with will. Kant had maintained that a study of the moral law can take us beyond phenomena, and give us knowledge which sense-perception cannot give; he also maintained that the moral law is essentially concerned with the will."\(^{201}\)

Not that Schopenhauer denied the sphere of thought. But he ascribed the primacy to will over knowledge, desire over thought; for him, knowledge and thought were at all times the servants of will and desire. In this way he provided the philosophical justification of that critical transition in German life from the dreamy, brilliant but somewhat ineffective Romantic period to the intensely active, enterpreneurial period that began after the 1848 revolution and continued after 1871 into the Second Reich. Moreover, the emphasis on will and desire corresponded to the intense development of the science of biology in this period.

\(^{200}\) Mann, *A History of Germany since 1789*, p. 141.
As John Gray has pointed out, Schopenhauer anticipated Freud in his emphasis on the dominance of unconscious desire over conscious thought, on the importance of the sexual impulse, slips of the tongue, repressed emotions, and so on. Yanis Varoufakis develops this theme, which links Schopenhauer not only with Freud but also with Nietzsche and Marx: “The German philosopher Schopenhauer castigated us modern humans for deceiving ourselves into thinking that our beliefs and customs are subject to our consciousness. Nietzsche concurred, suggesting that all the things we believe in, at any given time, reflect not truth but someone else’s power over us. Marx dragged economics into this picture, reprimanding us all for ignoring the reality that our thoughts have become hijacked by capital and its drive to accumulate. Naturally, although it follows its own steely logic, capital evolves mindlessly. No one designed capitalism and no one can civilize it now that it is going at full tilt…”

Copleston asks: "How does Schopenhauer arrive at the conviction that the thing-in-itself is Will? To find the key to reality I must look within myself. For in inner consciousness or inwardly directed perception lies 'the single narrow door to the truth'. Through this inner consciousness I am aware that the bodily action which is said to follow or result from volition is not something different from volition but one and the same. That is to say, the bodily action is simply the objectified will: it is the will become idea or presentation. Indeed, the whole body is nothing but objectified will, will as a presentation to consciousness. According to Schopenhauer anyone can understand this if he enters into himself. And once he has this fundamental intuition, he has the key to reality. He has only to extend his discovery to the world at large.

"This Schopenhauer proceeds to do. He sees the manifestation of the one individual Will in the impulse by which the magnet turns to the north pole, in the phenomena of attraction and repulsion, in gravitation, in animal instinct, in human desire and so on. Wherever he looks, whether in the inorganic or in the organic sphere, he discovers empirical confirmation of his thesis that phenomena constitute the appearance of the one metaphysical Will.

"The natural question to ask is this. If the thing-in-itself is manifested in such diverse phenomena as the universal forces of Nature, such as gravity, and human volition, why call it 'Will'? Would not 'Force' or 'Energy' be a more appropriate term, especially as the so-called Will, when considered in itself, is said to be 'without knowledge and merely a blind incessant impulse', 'an endless striving'? For the term 'Will', which implies rationality, seems to be hardly suitable for describing a blind impulse or striving.

"Schopenhauer, however, defends his linguistic usage by maintaining that we ought to take our descriptive term from what is best known to us. We are immediately conscious of our own volition. And it is more appropriate to describe the less well known in terms of the better known than the other way round.

"Besides being described as blind impulse, endless striving, eternal becoming and so on, the metaphysical Will is characterized as the Will to live. Indeed, to say 'the Will' and to say 'the Will to live' are for Schopenhauer one and the same thing. As, therefore, empirical reality is the objectification or appearance of the metaphysical Will, it necessarily manifests the Will to live. And Schopenhauer has no difficulty in multiplying examples of this manifestation. We have only to look at Nature's concern for the maintenance of the species. Birds, for instance, build nests for the young which they do not yet know. Insects deposit their eggs where the larva may find nourishment. The whole series of phenomena of animal instinct manifests the omnipresence of the Will to live. If we look at the untiring activity of bees and ants and ask what it all leads to, what is attained by it, we can only answer 'the satisfaction of hunger and the sexual instinct', the means, in other words, of maintaining the species in life. And if we look at man with his industry and trade, with his inventions and technology, we must admit that all this striving serves in the first instance only to sustain and to bring a certain amount of additional comfort to ephemeral individuals in their brief span of existence, and through them to contribute to the maintenance of the species.

"Now, if the Will is an endless striving, a blind urge or impulse which knows no cessation, it cannot find satisfaction or reach a state of tranquillity. It is always striving and never attaining. And this essential feature of the metaphysical Will is reflected in its self-objectification, above all in human life. Man seeks satisfaction, happiness, but he cannot attain it. What we call happiness or enjoyment is simply a temporary cessation of desire. And desire, as the expression of a need or want, is a form of pain. Happiness, therefore, is 'the deliverance from a pain, from a want'; it is 'really and essentially always only negative and never positive'. It soon turns to boredom, and the striving after satisfaction reasserts itself. It is boredom which makes beings who love one another so little as men do seek one another's company. And great intellectual powers simply increase the capacity for suffering and deepen the individual's isolation.

"Each individual thing, as an objectification of the one Will to live, strives to assert its own existence at the expense of other things. Hence the world is the field of conflict, a conflict which manifests the nature of the Will as at variance with itself, as a tortured Will. And Schopenhauer finds illustrations of this conflict even in the inorganic sphere. But it is naturally to the organic and human spheres that he chiefly turns for empirical confirmation of his thesis. He dwells, for example, on the ways in which animals of one species prey on those of another. And when he comes to man, he really lets himself go. 'The chief source of the most serious evils which afflict man is man himself: homo homini lupus. Whoever keeps this last fact clearly in view sees the world as a hell which surpasses that of Dante through the fact that one man must be the devil of another.' War and cruelty are, of course, grist for Schopenhauer's mill. And the man who showed no sympathy with the Revolution of 1848 speaks in the sharpest terms of industrial exploitation, slavery and such like social abuses.

"We may not that it is the egoism, rapacity and hardness and cruelty of men which are for Schopenhauer the real justification of the State. So far from being a
divine manifestation, the State is simply the creation of enlightened egoism which tries to make the world a little more tolerable than it would otherwise be."\textsuperscript{203}

The philosopher understands that there is only this constant striving and suffering, and therefore no other path for him except the decision to renounce the Will to live, which is the cause of all suffering. But this is not accomplished through suicide, as one might expect, for suicide is in fact an attempt to escape certain evils, and therefore the expression of a concealed will to live.

Only two things relieve the bleakness of this nihilist vision to any degree: art and asceticism... In the contemplation of art - especially music, which exhibits the inner nature of the Will, the thing-in-itself - desire is temporarily stilled. For "it is possible for me to regard the beautiful object neither as its object of desire nor as a stimulant to desire but simply and solely for its aesthetic significance."\textsuperscript{204}

However, "aesthetic contemplation affords no more than a temporary or transient escape from the slavery of the Will. But Schopenhauer offers a lasting release through renunciation of the Will to live. Indeed, moral progress must take this form if morality is possible at all. For the Will to live, manifesting itself in egoism, self-assertion, hatred and conflict, is for Schopenhauer the source of evil. There really resides in the heart of each of us a wild beast which only waits the opportunity to rage and rave in order to injure others, and which, if they do not prevent it, would like to destroy them. This wild beast, this radical evil, is the direct expression of the Will to live. Hence morality, if it is possible, must involve denial of the Will. And as man is an objectification of the Will, denial will mean self-denial, asceticism and mortification."\textsuperscript{205}

"We must banish the dark impression of that nothingness which we discern behind all virtue and holiness as their final goal, and which we fear as children fear the dark; we must not even evade it like the Indians, through myths and meaningless words, such as reabsorption in Brahma or the Nirvana of the Buddhists. Rather do we freely acknowledge that what remains after the entire abolition of will is for all those who are still full of will certainly nothing; but, conversely, to those in whom the will has turned and has denied itself, this our world, which is so real, with all its suns and milky ways - is nothing."\textsuperscript{206}

With the surrender of the Will, "all those phenomena are also abolished; that constant strain and effort without end and without rest at all the grades of objectivity in which and through which the world consists; the multifarious forms succeeding each other in gradation; the whole manifestation of the will; and, finally, also the universal forms of this manifestation, time and space, and

\textsuperscript{204} Copleston, op. cit., p. 43.
\textsuperscript{205} Copleston, op. cit., pp. 47-48.
\textsuperscript{206} Schopenhauer, in Russell, op. cit., p. 785. Here, perhaps, we see the influence of Buddhism. "In his study," notes Russell, "he had a bust of Kant and a bronze Buddha." (op. cit., p. 785).
also its last fundamental form, subject and object; all are abolished. No will: no idea, no world. Before us there is certainly only nothingness.\footnote{Schopenhauer, in Russell, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 785.}

So, contrary to the Christian vision, there is no positive end to the self-denial that Schopenhauer recommends. Nor could there be. For there is nothing other than the Will to live, which is neither God nor any positive ideal, but pure egoism "objectified" in various forms and ending in death.

The most a man can hope for as a result of his self-denial is to "penetrate the veil of Maya [illusion] to the extent of seeing that all individuals are really one. For they are all phenomena of the one undivided Will. We then have the ethical level of sympathy. We have goodness or virtue which is characterized by a disinterested love of others. True goodness is not, as Kant thought, a matter of obeying the categorical imperative for the sake of duty alone. True goodness is love, \textit{agape} or \textit{caritas} in distinction from \textit{eros}, which is self-directed. And love is sympathy. 'All true and pure love is sympathy (\textit{Mitleid}), and all love which is not sympathy is selfishness (\textit{Selbstsucht}). \textit{Eros} is selfishness; \textit{agape} is sympathy.'\footnote{Copleston, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 48.}

However, the existence of a "true and pure love" attainable by philosophy and self-denial seems to be inconsistent with the premises of Schopenhauer's system. For how can there be a selfless love when all that exists is the selfish Will to live? Indeed, for Schopenhauer "existence, life, is itself a crime: it is our original sin. And it is inevitably expiated by suffering and death."\footnote{Copleston, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 48.}Since for Schopenhauer there is no paradiasiac innocence, but only original sin, there can be no escape from sin, and no return to paradise, but only the vain and self-contradictory attempt of existence to deny itself.

Schopenhauer's vision represents a significant new turn in European philosophy. On the one hand, it reflects the highly practical spirit (\textit{will} rather than mind) of the early industrial age. On the other, it reflects the underlying scepticism of the post-1848 age in which it was read (rather than the age in it was written). Gone is the optimism of the Enlightenment, and its belief in reason and the perfectibility of man; gone, too, the innocence and freshness of the first wave of Romanticism. In its place we find Byronic despair and Eastern pessimism, the despair of a man who has cut himself off from the last vestiges of the Christian \textit{Good News}\footnote{"Nevertheless," writes Golo Mann, "he was a Christian [!] and distinguished between two basic tendencies in Christianity: an optimistic one promising paradise on earth, which he regarded as Jewish in origin, and an ascetic one proclaiming the misery and treachery of the world, teaching resignation and compassion" (\textit{op. cit.}, pp. 142-143.).}, who believes neither in God nor in anything else except his baser instincts, and is preparing to escape from his suffering by plunging into what he insists will be a sea of nothingness, but which he fears will be something very different and much more terrifying...
52. WAGNER’S WELTANSCHAUUNG

The shift in German politics from the liberalism of 1848 to the conservatism of Bismarck’s era can be seen in the writings of the famous composer Richard Wagner. Wagner’s youthful faith was in the socialist revolution. Thus in the revolutionary year of 1848, after the Frankfurt Parliament’s failure to enlist the support of Friedrich Wilhelm of Prussia, he wrote *The Revolution*, in which he said: “I will destroy every evil that has power over mankind. I will destroy the domination of one over another, of the dead over the living; I will shatter the power of the mighty, of the law and of property. Man’s sole master shall be his own will, his only law his own desire, his only property his own strength, for only the free man is holy and there is nothing higher than he. Let there be an end to the evil that gives one man power over millions… since all are equal I shall destroy every dominion of one over another.”

Here we see not only the influence of the revolution, but also of the concept of *Will*, even before his meeting with Schopenhauer, and the embryo of a *Will to Power* such as we find later in Nietzsche, who greatly admired Wagner (until he thought that he had sold out to the bourgeoisie in his later years).

The collapse of the 1848 revolution somewhat cooled Wagner’s revolutionary ardour, and made him an exile from his native Germany for many years. Nevertheless, he never completely shook off his early faith, but combined it in an original way with ideas that would seem to be incompatible with the revolution. Thus he combined *anti-capitalism* with *anti-communism*, and *republicanism* with *monarchism*.

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Let us first look at his combination of *anti-capitalism anti-communism*. In his celebrated "Fatherland Club Speech", delivered on June 14, 1848 in Dresden, Wagner declared that his aim is that the "demonic idea of Money vanish from us, with all its loathsome retinue of open and secret usury, paper-juggling, percentage and bankers’ speculations. That will be the full emancipation of the human race; that will be the fulfilment of Christ’s pure teaching, which enviously they hide from us behind parading dogmas, invented to bind the simple world of raw barbarians, to prepare them for a development towards whose higher consummation we now must march in lucid consciousness. Or does this smack to you of Communism? Are ye foolish or ill-disposed enough to declare the necessary redemption of the human race from the flattest, most demoralising servitude to vulgarest matter, synonymous with carrying out the most preposterous and senseless doctrine, that of Communism? Can ye not see that this doctrine of a mathematically equal division of property and earnings is simply an unreasoning attempt to solve that problem, at any rate dimly apprehended, and an attempt whose sheer impossibility itself proclaims it stillborn? But would ye denounce therewith the task itself [i.e. the removal of the power of money] for reprehensible and insane, as that doctrine of a surety [i.e.

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Communism] is? Have a care! The outcome of three-and-thirty years of unruffled peace shews you Human Society in such a state of dislocation and impoverishment, that, at end of all those years, ye have on every hand the awful spectacle of pallid Hunger! Look to it, or e'er it be too late! Give no alms, but acknowledge a right, a God-given right of Man, lest ye live to see the day when outraged Nature will gird herself for a battle of brute force, whose savage shout of victory were of a truth that Communism; and though the radical impossibility of its continuance should yield it but the briefest spell of reign, that short-lived reign would yet have sufficed to root up every trace, perchance for many an age to come, of the achievements of two thousand years of civilisation. Think ye, I threaten? Nay, I warn!"\(^{212}\)

It was a prophetic warning, published in the same year as The Communist Manifesto and directed precisely against it. And in his zeal that his warning about the coming of Communism should not be fulfilled, Wagner called for the preservation of the Monarchy in Saxony. Only he argued that his idea of monarchy was not in opposition to the Republic, but in union with it.

All he asked was for "the King to be the first and sterlingest Republican of all. And who is more called to be the truest, faithfulest Republican, than just the Prince? RESPUBLICA means: the affairs of the nation. What individual can be more destined that the Prince, to belong with all his feelings, all his thoughts and actions, entirely to the Folk's affairs? Once persuaded of his glorious calling, what could move him to belittle himself, to cast in his lot with one exclusive smaller section of his Folk? However warmly each of us may respond to feelings for the good of all, so pure a Republican as the Prince can he never be, for his cares are undivided: their eye is single to the One, the Whole; whilst each of us must needs divided and parcel out his cares, to meet the wants of everyday."\(^{213}\)

Here Wagner is expressing one of the key ideas of Orthodox Christian monarchism: that only the king is able to transcend individual and party political factionalism and self-interest, and labour for the nation as a whole. In this sense the king is the guarantee of the freedom of his people rather than its destroyer; for only he can preserve the freedom of individuals and parties from encroachment from other individuals and parties. And so "if he is the genuine free Father of his Folk, then with a single high-hearted resolve he can plant peace where war was unavoidable."\(^{214}\)

Wagner defends himself against the charge that he is not a Republican. He is a Republican. But the Republic will be proclaimed by - the King! "Not we, will proclaim the republic, no! this prince, the noblest, worthiest King, let him speak out: -

"'I declare Saxony a Free State.'

\(^{212}\) Wagner, "What Relation bear Republican Endeavours to the Kingship?" in Art and Politics, London and Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996, pp. 139-140.

\(^{213}\) Wagner, op. cit., p. 141.

\(^{214}\) Wagner, op. cit., p. 142.
"And let the earliest law of this Free State, the edict giving it the fairest surety of endurance, be: 'The highest executive power rests in the Royal House of Wettin, and descends therein from generation to generation, by right of primogeniture.'

"The oath which we swear to this State and this edict, will never be broken: not because we have sworn it (how many an oath is sworn in the unthinking joy of taking office!) but because we have sworn it in full assurance that through this proclamation, through that law, a new era of undying happiness has dawned, of utmost benefit, of most determinant presage, not alone for Saxony, no! for Germany, for Europe. He who thus boldly has expressed his enthusiasm, believes with all his heart that never was he more loyal to the oath he, too, has sworn his King, than when he penned these lines today."215

All this may seem like the height of romantic fantasy - and Wagner was nothing if not a romantic. However, his idea of a "People's Monarchy" as essential to the spiritual well-being of Germany did not leave him; and if he did not find it in Saxony, he appeared to have found it for a time in Ludwig II of Bavaria some 16 years later. Moreover, already in 1848 he was quite clear that he did not mean by a "People's Monarchy" a kind of compromise between Monarchy and Republicanism in the form of an English-style "constitutional monarchy": "Now would this have brought about the downfall of the Monarchy? Ay! But it would have published the emancipation of the Kinghood. Dupe not yourselves, ye who want a 'Constitutional Monarchy upon the broadest democratic basis.' As regards the latter (the basis), ye either are dishonest, or, if in earnest, ye are slowly torturing your artificial Monarchy to death. Each step forward, upon that democratic basis, is a fresh encroachment on the power of the Mon-arch, i.e. the sole ruler; the principle itself is the completest mockery of Monarchy, which is conceivable only as actual alone-ruling: each advance of Constitutionalism is a humiliation to the ruler, for it is a vote of want-of-confidence in the monarch. How shall love and confidence prevail, amid this constant, this often so unworthily manoeuvred contest twixt two opposing principles? The very existence of the monarch, as such, is embittered by shame and mortification. Let us therefore redeem him from this miserable half-life; let us have done altogether with Monarchism, since Sole-rule is made impossible by just the principle of Folk's rule (Democracy): but let us, on the contrary, emancipate the Kinghood in its fullest, its own peculiar meaning! At head of the Free State (the republic) the hereditary King will be exactly what he should be, in the noblest meaning of his title [Fürst]: the First of the Folk, the Freest of the Free! Would not this be alike the fairest commentary upon Christ's saying: 'And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall he be servant of all?' Inasmuch as he serves the freedom of all, in his person he raises the concept of Freedom itself to the loftiest, to a God-implanted consciousness.

"The farther back we search among Germanic nations for the Kinghood's meaning, the more intimately will it fit this new-won meaning."216

215 Wagner, op. cit., pp. 142-143.

216 Wagner, op. cit., p. 143.
Wagner returned to this subject in 1864, in an article entitled "On State and Religion" written at the request of his patron, King Ludwig II. If in 1848, the year of revolution, he had been concerned to show that kingship was compatible with freedom, here he links freedom with stability, which is the main aim of the State.

"For it constitutes withal the unconscious aim in every higher human effort to get beyond the primal need: namely to reach a freer evolution of spiritual attributes, which is always cramped so long as hindrances forestall the satisfaction of that first root-need. Everyone thus strives by nature for stability, for maintenance of quiet: ensured can it only be, however, when the maintenance of existing conditions is not the preponderant interest of one party only. Hence it is in the truest interest of all parties, and thus of the State itself, that the interest in its abidingness should not be left to a single party. There must consequently be given a possibility of constantly relieving the suffering interests of less favoured parties.

"The embodied voucher for this fundamental law is the Monarch. In no State is there a weightier law than that which centres on stability in the supreme hereditary power of one particular family, unconnected and un-commingling with any other lineage in that State. Never yet has there been a Constitution in which, after the downfall of such families and abrogation of the Kingly power, some substitution or periphrasis has not necessarily, and for the most part necessitously, reconstructed a power of similar kind. It therefore is established as the most essential principle of the State; and as in it resides the warrant of stability, so in the person of the King the State attains its true ideal.

"For, as the King on the one hand gives assurance of the State's solidity, on the other his loftiest interest soars high beyond the State. Personally he has naught in common with the interests of parties, but his sole concern is that the conflict of these interests should be adjusted, precisely for the safety of the whole. His sphere is therefore equity, and where this is unattainable, the exercise of grace (Gnade). Thus, as against the party interests, he is the representative of purely-human interests, and in the eyes of the party-seeking citizen he therefore occupies in truth a position well-nigh superhuman. To him is consequently accorded a reverence such as the highest citizen would never dream of distantly demanding for himself."217

The subject relates to the King through the self-sacrificing emotion of patriotism. In a democracy, on the other hand, the position of the King is taken by public opinion, the veneration of which is far more problematic, leading as it does to "the most deplorable imbroglios, into acts the most injurious to Quiet".218

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"The reason lies in the scarcely exaggerable weakness of the average human intellect, as also in the infinitely diverse shades and grades of perceptive-faculty in the units who, taken all together, create the so-called public opinion. Genuine respect for this 'public opinion' is founded on the sure and certain observation that no one is more accurately aware of the community's true immediate life-needs, nor can better devise the means for their satisfaction, than the community itself: it would be strange indeed, were man more faultily organised in this respect than the dumb animal. Nevertheless we often are driven to the opposite view, if we remark how even for this, for the correct perception of its nearest, commonest needs, the ordinary human understanding does not suffice - not, at least, to the extent of jointly satisfying them in the spirit of true fellowship: the presence of beggars in our midst, and even at times of starving fellow-creatures, shews how weak the commonest human sense must be at bottom. So here already we have evidence of the great difficulty it must cost to bring true reason into the joint determinings of Man: though the cause may well reside in the boundless egoism of each single unit."\textsuperscript{219}

Another problem with public opinion is that it has an extremely unreliable "pretended vice-regent" in the press. The press is made out to be "the sublimation of public spirit, of practical human intellect, the indubitable guarantee of manhood's constant progress." But in fact "it is at all times havable for gold or profit."\textsuperscript{220}

In fact, "there exists no form of injustice, of onesidedness and narrowness of heart, that does not find expression in the pronouncements of 'public opinion', and - what adds to the hatefulness of the thing - forever with a passionateness that masquerades as the warmth of genuine patriotism, but has its true and constant origin in the most self-seeking of all human motives. Whoso would learn this accurately, has but to run counter to 'public opinion', or indeed to defy it: he will find himself brought face to face with the most implacable tyrant; and no one is more driven to suffer from its despotism, than the Monarch, for very reason that he is the representative of that selfsame Patriotism whose noxious counterfeit steps up to him, as 'public opinion', with the boast of being identical in kind.

"Matters strictly pertaining to the interest of the King, which in truth can only be that of purest patriotism, are cut and dried by his unworthy substitute, this Public Opinion, in the interest of the vulgar egoism of the mass; and the necessitation to yield to its requirements, notwithstanding, becomes the earliest source of that higher form of suffering which the King alone can personally experience as his own."\textsuperscript{221}

Ordinary men pursue definite, practical aims associated with their particular, lowly station in life. But "the King desires the Ideal, he wishes justice and humanity; nay, wished he them not, wished he naught but what the simple

\textsuperscript{219} Wagner, "On State and Religion", \textit{op. cit.}, p. 18.
\textsuperscript{220} Wagner, "On State and Religion", \textit{op. cit.}, p. 20.
\textsuperscript{221} Wagner, "On State and Religion", \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 20-21.
burgher or party-leader wants, - the very claims made on him by his office, claims that allow him nothing but an ideal interest, by making a traitor to the idea he represents, would plunge him into those sufferings which have inspired tragic poets from all time to paint their pictures of the vanity of human life and strife. True justice and humanity are ideals irrealisable: to be bound to strive for them, nay, to recognise an unsilenceable summons to their carrying out, is to be condemned to misery. What the thoroughly noble, truly kingly individual directly feels of this, in time is given also to the individual unqualified for knowledge of his tragic task, and solely placed by Nature's dispensation on the throne, to learn in some uncommon fashion reserved for kings alone& The highly fit, however, is summoned to drink the full, deep cup of life's true tragedy in his exalted station. Should his construction of the Patriotic ideal be passionate and ambitious, he becomes a warrior-chief and conqueror, and thereby courts the portion of the violent, the faithlessness of Fortune; but should his nature be noble-minded, full of human pity, more deeply and more bitterly than every other is he called to see the futility of all endeavours for true, for perfect justice."

"To him more deeply and more inwardly than is possible to the State-citizen, as such, is it therefore given to feel that in Man there dwells an infinitely deeper, more capacious need than the State and its ideal can ever satisfy. Wherefore as it was Patriotism that raised the burgher to the highest height by him attainable, it is Religion alone that can bear the King to the stricter dignity of manhood."

Therefore just as Monarchy is more purely disinterested, more truly solicitous of the needs - the deepest as well as the more temporary needs - of all its citizens, than "Franco-Judaico-German Democracy"224, so through this very necessity of having to rise above individual, partial, lower interests and needs, it ascends into the realm of religion. And, we should add, receives its strength and confirmation and sanctification from religion. In this Wagner, paradoxically, is not far from the Orthodox Christian conception of true kingship...

Wagner's early political views, and especially his anti-capitalism found expression in his later music dramas. One of these was the corrupting power of money. Thus his greatest work, the four-opera Ring cycle, describes how money, symbolized by a golden ring, is incompatible with true love and happiness.

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222 Wagner, "On State and Religion", op. cit., pp. 22-23. We remember the great speech of the king in Shakespeare's Henry V (IV.1):

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Upon the king! Let us our lives, our souls,
Our debts, our careful wives,
Our children, and our sins lay on the king!
We must bear all. O hard condition!
Twin-born with greatness, subject to the breath
Of every fool, whose sense no more can feel
But his own wringing, What infinite heart's ease
Must kings neglect that private men enjoy!
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224 Wagner, "What is German?", op. cit., p. 166.
In 1877, during a trip down the Thames in a steamer, as A.N. Wilson writes, "Wagner said, 'This is Alberich's dream come true - Nibelheim, world dominion, activity, work, everywhere the oppressive feeling of steam and fog.'"

"One of the most disturbing novels of the 1870s was Trollope's The Way We Live Now - disturbing because genial, comic Anthony Trollope, who had so consistently amused his public with tales of country-house gossip and cathedral-feuds, chose to depict an England extremely vulgarised, sold to Mammon, dominated by money-worship... Professor Polhemus, an American scholar quoted by Trollope's biographer James Pope-Hennessy, makes the point that Trollope saw the same truth as Marx and Engels - 'a world where there is no other bond between man and man but crude self-interest and callous cash-payment', a world that 'has degraded personal dignity to the level of exchange-value', creating 'exploitation that is open, unashamed, direct and brutal'. Professor Polhemus points out that, while Karl Marx was an optimist, Trollope's later years were suffused with pessimism and gloom.

"The Way We Live Now was published the year before the opening of the Bayreuth Festival Playhouse and the first complete performance of Wagner's Ring. As Bernard Shaw reminded 'The Perfect Wagnerite' in 1898, 'the Ring, with all its gods and giants and dwarfs, its water-maidens and Valkyries, its wishing-cap, magic ring, enchanted sword, and miraculous treasure is a drama of today, and not of a remote and fabulous antiquity. It could not have been written before the second half of the nineteenth century, because it deals with events which were only then consummating themselves.'

"Shaw rightly saw Alberich the dwarf, amassing power through his possession of the ring, and forcing the Niebelungs to mine his gold, as the type of capitalism. 'You can see the process for yourself in every civilized country today, where millions of people toil in want and disease to heap up more wealth for our Alberichs, laying up nothing for themselves, except sometimes agonizing disease and the certainty of premature death.'

"No allegory of any work is exhausted by drawing too punctilious a match between symbol and signified. The audience to Wagner's musical drama is caught up in an experience which is profound in itself, and to say Alberich = the Big Capitalist or that the befriending of Alberich by Loki and Wotan = the Church and the Law embracing the power of capital is too narrow and too specific an account of what stands as a universal work of art. Shaw was right, however, to say that Wagner's masterpiece was rooted in its time. What is suggested in the final opera of the cycle is a universal collapse - the Gods themselves hurtling towards self-destruction. As the 'storm-clouds of the nineteenth century' - John Ruskin's phrase - gather, we sense impending disaster in many of the great art-works of the period."225

225 Wilson, op. cit., pp. 413-414, 415.
However, Wagner’s best-known political views were not on capitalism or kingship, but on the Jews. These arose in part from his views on good and bad art, from a contrast between “good” Greek and “bad” Jewish art.

Like Nietzsche, Wagner took Greek art as his ideal. Thus in 1849 he wrote: “It is our task to make out of Greek art the completely human art; to remove from it the conditions under which it was precisely a Greek and not a completely human art; to widen the garb of religion, in which alone it was communal Greek art, after the removal of which, as a selfish individual art species, it could not longer fulfill the need of the community, but only that of luxury – however beautiful! – to widen this garb of the specifically Greek religion to the bond of the religion of the future – that of universality – in order to form for ourselves a true conception of the artwork of the future.”

Paradoxically, however, - and Wagner is full of paradoxes - while extolling universality in art, Wagner believed it had to be rooted in the soil of a national culture. Hence his violent aversion to Judaism in Music – the title of his notorious article of 1850. “Jews, says Wagner, have no ‘national’ culture, so the art they produce is superficial – it has no grounding in racial ‘soil’ and is therefore far as removed from holy Greek art as can be imagined. Jews could be acceptable, not simply by being ‘assimilated’ into a vibrant national culture (as many of them were attempting to do in the Germany of the latter half of the nineteenth century) but by being purged, ‘redeemed’ of their ‘Jewishness’.”

Wagner’s views on Jewry became steadily more radical. Indeed, German anti-semitism can be said to have begun in earnest with Wagner, who, as Paul Johnson writes, "advocated the Untergang (downfall) of the Jews. 'I regard the Jewish race as the born enemy of pure humanity and everything that is noble in it; it is certain that we Germans will go under before them, and perhaps I am the last German who knows how to stand up as an art-loving man against the Judaism that is already getting control of everything.' He wrote this in Religion and Art (1881),... Wagner was particularly influential in intensifying anti-Semitism, especially among the middle and upper classes, not only because of his personal standing but because he repeatedly advanced the argument - with innumerable examples - that the Jews were progressively 'taking over' the citadel of German culture, especially its music. Even their so-called 'geniuses', he insisted - men like Giacomo Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn or Heine himself - were not truly creative, and meanwhile a host of Jewish middlemen were taking over the critical press, publishing, theatres and operas, art galleries and agencies. It was Wagner's writings which provoked the furious outpourings of Eugen Dühring, who throughout the 1880s published a succession of widely read racial

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227 Johnson, op. cit., p. 69.
attacks on the Jew: the 'Jewish question', he declared, should be 'solved' by 'killing and extirpation'."

The term "Antisemitism" was coined at this time. Thus Daniel Pipes writes: "Antisemitism, a term coined in 1879 with the founding in Berlin of the Antisemitenliga (Antisemitic League), is a form of anti-Jewish hatred that differs in several ways from what came before: (1) it changes the emphasis from religion to race, (2) it transforms dislike into fear, (3) it turns a bias into an all-encompassing ideology, even way of life, and (4) it replaces the episodic persecution of Jews with a permanent one. Antisemitism moved Jew hatred from the realm of emotions to that of political activism, from defensive to offensive, and from life's sidelines to its core. It also changed the depiction of Jews from heretics into malevolently powerful figures."

Antisemitism came, according to Alexander Solzhenitsyn, "in the 70s from conservative and clerical circles, who demanded that German Jews be restricted in their rights and further immigration be forbidden. From the end of the 70s this movement 'also took hold of the intellectual circles of society'. It was expressed and brought to its most generalized formulations by the prominent Prussian historian Henrich von Trietschke: 'The present agitation has correctly caught the mood of society, which considers the Jews to be our national misfortune', 'the Jews can never be fused with the West European peoples' and express their hatred for Germanism. After him came Eugen During (who is so well known for his quarrel with Marx and Engels): 'The Jewish question is simple a racial question, and the Jews are not only foreign to us, they are innately and unalterably a corrupt race'. Then came the philosopher Eduard Hartmann. - In the political sphere this movement led in 1882 to the First International Anti-Jewish Congress (in Dresden), which accepted a 'Manifesto to the governments and peoples of the Christian states, who are perishing from Jewry', and demanding the expulsion of the Jews from Germany. - But by the 90s the anti-Jewish parties had weakened and suffered a series of political defeats."

Wagner's later music-dramas, staged every year until his death in a specially constructed theatre at Bayreuth, provided the kind of "Jew-purged" art that he demanded; they propagated, in Richard Evans' words, "heroic figures from Nordic legend [that] were to serve as model leaders for the German future" – that is, models of Aryan purity with no admixture of Semitism. But even as early as Judaism in Music he was arguing "that the 'Jewish spirit' was inimical to musical profundity. His remedy was for the complete assimilation of Jews into German culture, and the replacement of Jewish religion, indeed all religion, by secular aesthetic impulses of the sort he poured into his own music-dramas. But towards the end of his life his views took on an increasingly racist tome under the influence of his second wife, Cosima, daughter of the composer Franz Liszt. By the end of the 1870s she was recording in her diaries that Wagner, whose outlook on civilization was distinctly pessimistic by this time, had read Wilhelm

230 Solzhenitsyn, Doesti let omeste (Two hundred years together), Moscow, 2002, pp. 315-316.
Marr’s anti-semitic tract of 1873 and broadly agreed with it. As a consequence of this shift in his position, Wagner no longer desired the assimilation of the Jews into German society, but their expulsion from it. In 1881, discussing Lessing’s classic play *Nathan the Wise* and a disastrous fire in the Vienna Ring Theatre, in which more than four hundred people, many of them Jewish, had died, Cosima noted that her husband said ‘In a vehement quip that all Jews should burn in a performance of *Nathan*.’

“After Wagner’s death [in 1883], his widow turned Bayreuth into a kind of shrine, at which a band of dedicated followers would cultivate the dead Master’s sacred memory. The views of the circle she gathered round her at Bayreuth were rabidly anti-Semitic. The Wagner circle did its best to interpret the composer’s operas as pitting Nordic heroes against Jewish villains, although his music was of course capable of being interpreted in many other ways as well…”

*In 1854 Wagner read Schopenhauer’s *The World as Will and Representation* for the first time. “Over the next year,” writes Stephen Johnson, “he read it four times. Schopenhauer – unlike most German philosophers of the nineteenth century – was as fine a writer as he was a thinker, and this would have been part of the attraction. It was, however, Schopenhauer’s vision that turned Wagner’s thinking upside down – yet with it went a peculiar sense of recognition. There was so much in this book that reflected what Wagner already felt, even he had not articulated it consciously. This may seem strange, since Schopenhauer is often presented as philosophy’s great pessimist, and Wagner’s revolutionary theory and talk of the future had been determinedly, if not always convincingly, optimistic. On one crucial point, though Schopenhauer, the Young Germans and Wagner all agreed: the world as it stood was a terrible place. Injustice prevailed; mindless cruelty and pointless suffering were rife. The Young Germans had believed that the world could, indeed would, be changed. Surely the great philosopher Hegel had shown for all time that history itself was an unstoppable process of change for the better? Schopenhauer laughed that idea to scorn. If there were an underlying process it was the ‘Will’: the blind, naked craving for life that lay at the heart of nature – in today’s less metaphysically inclined age it might be called ‘the selfish gene’. For Schopenhauer there was no satisfying this craving: it attempts to fulfill itself only created more suffering – for others and, ultimately, for itself. The only way out of suffering was the path undertaken by saints of all the world’s religions: renunciation, reflecting the Will back on itself, saying ‘no’… Here was another possible answer to Wagner’s old yearning for personal redemption and political revolution: forget Utopia, and turn instead toward Nirvana.

“There was another highly relevant message for Wagner in *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*. In his Zurich essays, particularly *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*, Wagner had put forward his idea of an ideal synthesis of the arts, all mutually

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subservient: the word he used in that essay was Gesamtkunstwerk – the ‘total/unified work of art’ – though it is worth noting that this is his only recorded use of that now-famous term.

“For Schopenhauer, music was supreme. Through music one could achieve an almost mystical awareness of that blind craving urge within us all and stand outside it in contemplation. Music was in itself a means towards redemption. During his childhood in Danzig (now Gdansk), Schopenhauer had heard how a cellist returning home one night was cornered by a pack of slavering bloodhounds that had escaped from a nearby warehouse. In a kind of inspired desperation the cellist had played to them. The dogs quietened down and began to listen, and the cellist was saved. Schopenhauer was enthralled by the story – and so was Wagner. He saw that his dramatic ideals would have to change. Music would not be subservient to the other arts. It had a special role to play. ‘I must confess to having arrived at a clear understanding of my own works of art through the help of another,’ Wagner wrote.”

However, the philosopher had a direct and powerful influence on the composer, not only in his retrospective Vorstellung, but also on the future manifestations of his Wille in his music – and especially on Tristan and Isolde, which was completed in 1865.

“This would be a tale of two lovers, their desire for one another expressed in music in which sensuous beauty would combine with aching sadness. It would be desire stripped of comforting illusions, a longing that in the end could only find fulfillment in death. Musically this would be expressed by the poignant yearning motif that opens the Tristan Prelude. The motif is founded on a single unresolved dissonance: a dissonance that finds its true tonal resolution only in the final bars of the opera – namely after the death of both lovers. And yet Wagner’s paradoxical nature declares itself even here. Evidently he had not yet renounced hope of erotic fulfillment through his relationship with Mathilde Wesendonck: the two were spending more and more time in each other’s company, despite the immediate proximity of both Otto [Mathilde’s husband] and Minna [Wagner’s wife]. Some years later, in a letter to Mathilde of December 1858, Wagner said that he had to correct ‘friend Schopenhauer’. There was another way ‘leading to the perfect appeasement of the Will’: a simpler and more direct way than Schopenhauerian renunciation, by which he meant the love that ‘has its roots in sex’. But only a year after this he was writing to another woman friend: ‘Lovingly I turn my eyes toward the land Nirvana. Yet Nirvana always becomes Tristan again.’ Wagner could be accused of simply wanting to have his cake and eat it: to cling to the comforting idea of renunciation while retaining the possibility that he might fulfill his desires after all.

“The greatness of Tristan und Isolde lies partly in the way that Wagner explores this painful paradox to the full in his music, even if he could never satisfactorily resolve it in words.”

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Wagner tried to make a religion out of his art. Christianity was undergoing a profound crisis throughout Europe, and Wagner found the substitute in his own operas. As he wrote in his 1880 essay, “Religion and Art”, “While the priest stakes everything on the religious allegories being accepted as matters of fact, the artist has no concern at all with such a thing, since he freely and openly gives out his work as his own invention.” And again: “One could say that at the point when religion becomes artificial it is for art to salvage the essence of religion by construing the mythical symbols, which religion wants us to believe to be literal truth in terms of their figurative value, so as to let us see their profound hidden truth through idealist representation. Whereas the priest is concerned only that the religious allegories should be regarded as factual truths, this is of no concern to the artist, since he presents his work frankly and openly as his invention.”

As Douglas Murray writes, he followed Schopenhauer and Feuerbach in supposing that religion was simply the expression of our innermost desires. “The role of art, he believed, was to ‘save the spirit of religion’. And what he was attempting to speak to, in his music and essays was the source of that otherworldly, subconscious voice that speaks to us, asks questions and seeks answers. From Tannhauser right through to Parsifal, Wagner’s ambition... was to create a kind of religion which could stand up on its own and sustain itself...”

As such, of course, it was a false religion. Even his last work, the pseudo-Christian Parsifal with its Holy Grail and its emphasis on love and compassion, is an imitation of Christianity rather than the real thing, in spite of its undoubted power. And yet it was sufficiently redolent of the faith that the Nazis pronounced it “ideologically unacceptable” in 1933 and banned it completely in 1939.

It is intriguing to compare Wagner’s attitude to art and religion to that of another great artist whose major works on art and religion were produced at almost the same time – Lev Tolstoy... Now Tolstoy devoted a whole chapter of his What is Art? to a rejection of Wagner’s music. Rosamund Barrett writes: “Tolstoy had more or less built an entire artistic and religious edifice on the foundation of one aspect of Christianity (the Sermon on the Mount), and although he can be forgiven for not reading Wagner’s ponderous aesthetic writings, here was a classic case of him willfully refusing to consider all the

234 Johnson, op. cit., pp. 78-79. We do not know whether Wagner and Mathilde consummated their passion. But we do know that he and his second wife Cosima had a daughter whom they called Isolde (Johnson, op. cit., p. 95).
236 Johnson, op. cit., p. 123.
dimensions of a structure in his path that did not conform to his specifications in the rush to tear it down. Although Wagner and Tolstoy were in certain important respects poles apart (the composer’s bombast and love of luxury spring to mind), there are also some intriguing parallels between them. Under the influence of Schopenhauer both formulated a religious vision based on a highly idiosyncratic theology of redemptive love which had little in common with traditional Christianity. Redemption can be attained only by renouncing eros and practicing compassion or agape, the word for love used in the New Testament: such are the lessons of Wagner’s last work *Parsifal* and all of Tolstoy’s late works from *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* onwards. Only love can redeem mankind and bring about a state where human beings can be at peace with themselves and with each other. Thomas Mann was quite correct when he wrote in 1933 that the pattern of Tolstoy’s artistic career was identical to that of Wagner, for in both cases, everything in their later oeuvre was prefigured in their earlier works. For all its enthralling narrative, for example, *War and Peace* is ultimately about sin (separation from God, and the absence of human relatedness) and redemption (the restoration of love), as can be seen by following Natasha Rostova’s spiritual journey.

“Mann’s comparison of the consistency of Wagner’s artistic evolution with that of Tolstoy is instructive, for both Wagner and Tolstoy came to distinguish the simple religion of love and compassion for the poor and oppressed that Jesus Christ had founded from the deforming edifice of the Christian Church (it is striking that they both made a serious study of Renan’s *Life of Jesus* in 1878). They both wished to revive the spiritual essence of Christianity by removing its superstitious elements and the Old Testament notion of a vengeful God in order to create a purer and more practical religion. And the pacifism and vegetarianism both espoused in their final years went hand in hand with their views on the regeneration of society and a corresponding desire to simplify their aesthetic style. Before he died in 1883, Wagner came to see vegetarians and anti-vivisectionists as the harbingers of cultural renewal, and, ever the Romantic idealist, he hoped that through the medium of religious art (specifically music, his kind of music) a culture of compassion would replace the contemporary ‘civilisation’ of power and aggression. Tolstoy came to the same conclusions, but naturally the religious art he had in mind was primarily the verbal kind. Both Wagner and Tolstoy were anxious for the rest of the world to gain insight into Jesus’ radical idea that responding to violence with more violence can only lead to the further desecration of nature…”

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Denis de Rougemont put forward an original hypothesis of the origin of nationalism, which saw in nationalism the transfer to the Nation of a passion that he sometimes called Eros but which should perhaps more accurately be called Thanatos; for it is not sexual, nor a “sublimation” of sexuality, since its real object is not a woman nor anything in the created world. This passion he traced, in western history, to the emergence of the heresy of Catharism (otherwise known as Manichaeism or Albigensianism) in Southern France in the early twelfth century. The Catharist heretics deliberately cultivated a kind of refined eroticism, but not for overtly sexual or political ends – on the contrary, both sexual intercourse and war were considered to be evil, insofar as the whole created world was considered to be the work of the evil demiurge, - but in order to escape this world entirely and unite with the Light beyond the grave (which is why this passion could as well be called Thanatos).

This love of passionate Love received a symbolic expression in the poetry of the Troubadors and a “myth” expressed in such early romances as Tristan and Lancelot, in which, under the guise of an adulterous passion for an unattainable married lady, with whom union was not possible, and not even desired in this life, but only after death, the Catharist’s striving for union with the uncreated Light was represented.

The “sacred” symbolic poetry of the troubadors soon degenerated, in the later Middle Ages and Renaissance, into profane love poetry and tragic dramas (Romeo and Juliet, Phèdre) and the first romantic novels, which instead of symbolizing an essentially religious and other-worldly ideal in the form of courtly love, represented unmistakably profane love under the guise of an irresistible, “divine” passion and with no taboo on sexual consummation. This was, of course, a complete reversal of the original intent of the myth. By the eighteenth century in France, even the “divinity” of this passion had been discarded, and in figures such as Don Juan or the Marquis de Sade only its supposed irresistibility and undoubted incompatibility with conventional Christian morality remained.

However, towards the end of the eighteenth century two events served to resurrect the original myth: the rise of German romanticism and the French revolution. German romanticism once again represented eros as a divine passion that could not be fulfilled in this life, but only in and through death. And German romanticism reached its climax in Wagner’s opera Tristan und Isolde, in

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238 As Constantine the Serbian poet says in Rebecca West’s Black Lamb and Grey Falcon (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2006, p. 385): “The French make love for the sake of life; and so, like living, it often falls to something less than itself, to a little trivial round. The Germans make love for the sake of death; as they like to put off their civilian clothes and put on uniform, because there is more chance of being killed, so they like to step out of the safe casual relations of society and let loose the destructive forces of sex. So it was with Werther and Elective Affinities, and so it was in the years after the [First World] war, when they were so promiscuous that sex meant nothing at all…” (my italics (V.M.).
which the original myth is represented in something like its original religious force - and in music of an originality and power that transformed the later history of opera and music in general.

According to De Rougemont, “Tristan is far more profoundly and indisputably Manichaean than the Divine Comedy is Thomist…

“The drama opens with a monumental evocation of the powers that rule the world of day – the hate and pride, and the barbarous and sometimes even criminal violence, of feudal honour. Isolde wishes to avenge the affront she has suffered. The potion she gives to Tristan is intended to bring about his death, but a death disallowed by Love, a death in accordance with the laws of day and of revenge – brutal, accidental, and devoid of mystical significance. The highest Minne, however, causes Brengain to make a mistake that can preserve Love. For the death-potion she substitutes the drink of initiation. Hence the one embrace which conjoins Tristan and Isolde as soon as they have drunk is the solitary kiss of the Catharist sacrament, the consolamentum of the Pure! From that moment the laws of day, hate, honour, and revenge, lose all power over their hearts. The initiated pair enter the nocturnal world of ecstatic release. And day, coming back with the royal procession and its discordant flourish of trumpets, is unable to recapture them. At the end of the ordeal which it compels them to undergo – this is their passion [“passion” derives from passio, meaning “suffering] – they have already foreseen the other death, the death that will alone fulfill their love.

“The second act is the passion song of souls imprisoned in material forms. When every obstacle has been overcome, and the lovers are alone together in the dark, carnal desire still stands between them. They are together, and yet they are two. The ‘und’ of Tristan und Isolde is there to indicate their duality as creatures. Here music alone can convey the certitude and substance of their twin nostalgia for one-ness; music alone can harmonize the plaint of the two voices, and make of it a single plaint in which there is already being sounded the reality of an ineffable other world of expectation. This is why the leitmotif of the love duet is already that of death.

“Once again day returns. The treacherous Melot wounds Tristan. But by now passion has triumphed. It wrecks away the apparent victory of day. The wound through which life flows out is passion’s pledge of a supreme recovery – that recovery of which the dying Isolde sings once she has cast herself upon Tristan’s corpse in an ecstasy of the ‘highest bliss of being’.

“Initiation, passion, fatal fulfillment – the three mystic moments to which Wagner, with a genius for simplification, saw that he could reduce the three acts of the drama, express the profound significance of the myth, a significance kept out of sight even in the medieval legends by a host of epic and picturesque detail. Nevertheless, the art form adopted by Wagner renews the possibility of ‘misunderstanding’. The story of Tristan had now to be in the form of an opera… Even as the transgression of the rules of chaste love by the legendary lovers turned the poetic lay of the troubadors into the novel – so the powers of day, when brought forward in the first act, introduce struggle and duration, the
elements of drama. But a play does not allow everything to be stated, for the religion of passion is ‘in essence lyrical’. Hence music alone is equal to conveying the transcendental interaction, the wildly contradictory and contrapuntal character of the passion of Darkness, which is the summons to uncreated Light.”

It will be immediately apparent that the love of death is related to the revolutionary passion, even if for the revolutionaries the accent is on “death” rather than “love”, and even if there is no literal belief in a life beyond the grave. And in the French revolution, according to de Rougemont, there took place a transference of the myth into the realm of war, with the Nation in the place of the woman who can be united with only in death.

“At the end of the eighteenth century, there occurred the magnification of all that the Tristan myth, and later its literary substitutes, had been intended to contain. The middle-class nineteenth century witnessed the spread into the profane mind of a ‘death instinct’ which had long been repressed in the unconscious, or else directed at its source into the channels of an aristocratic art. And when the framework of society burst – under a pressure exerted from quite another quarter – the content of the myth poured out over everyday life. We were unable to understand this diluted elevation of love. We supposed it to be a new springtime of instinct, a revival of dionysiac forces which a so-called Christianity had persecuted…”

“From a strictly military standpoint, what novelty was contributed by the Revolution? ‘An outburst of passion never before equalled’, is the answer given by Foch. According to him, the heresy of the old school had been to seek to make war into an exact science when it is really a terrible and passionate drama. Everybody knows, of course, that an explosion of sentimentality preceded and accompanied the Revolution, an event passionate far more than – in the strict sense of the word – political. With the murder of the king – a deed which in a primitive society would have had a sacred and ritualistic significance – the violence that had long been pinned down by the classical formality of warfare became once again something at once horrifying and alluring. It was the cult and blood-spilling mystery that gave rise to a new form of community – the Nation. And a Nation requires that passion shall be transferred to the level of the people as a whole. Actually, it is easier to feel that this happened then than to give an account of it. Every passion, it may be objected, presupposes the existence of two beings, and it is therefore difficult to see, if passion was taken over by a Nation, to whom the Nation then addressed itself. Let us remember, however, that the passion of love is at bottom narcissism, the lover’s self-magnification, far more than it is a relation with the beloved. Tristan wanted the branding of love more than he wanted the possession of Iseult. For he believed that the intense and devouring flame of passion would make him divine; and, as Wagner grasped, the equal of the world.

240 De Rougemont, op. cit., pp. 247-249.
Eyes with joy are blinded…
I myself am the world.  

Passion requires that the self shall become greater than all things, as solitary and powerful as God. Without knowing it, passion also requires that beyond its apotheosis death shall indeed be the end of all things.

“And nationalist ardour too is a self-elevation, a narcissistic love on the part of the collective Self… And what does the national passion require? The elevation of collective might can only lead to the following dilemma: either the triumph of imperialism – of the ambition to become the equal of the whole world – or the people next door strongly object, and there ensues war. Now it is to be noticed that a nation undergoing the early surges of its passion seldom recoils from war, even if that war must be hopeless. A nation thus unconsciously expresses a readiness to court the risk of death, and even to meet death, rather than surrender its passion. ‘Liberty or death’, the Jacobins yelled, at a time when the forces of the enemy seemed to be twenty times as strong as their own, and when therefore ‘liberty’ and ‘death’ were words very near to having one and the same meaning.

“Thus Nation and War are connected as Love and Death are connected. And from this point onwards nationalism has been the predominant factor in war. ‘Whoever writes upon strategy and tactics should confine himself to expounding a national strategy and tactics, for these alone can be of use to the nation for whom he writes.’ Thus General von der Goltz, a follower of Clausewitz. And Clausewitz constantly asserted that the Prussian theology of war must be based on the experience gained in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic campaigns. The Battle of Valmy was a victory of passion over ‘exact science’. It was to the cry of ‘Long live the Nation!’ that the sans-culottes repulsed an allied army still bent on consolidating operations on ‘classic’ lines. It will be recalled that Goethe, after witnessing the battle, said: ‘On this field and on this day a new era begins in the history of the world.’ To this famous pronouncement Foch adds: ‘Truly enough a new era had begun, the era of national wars that are

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241 That Wagner considered the “true religion” to be a form of Manichaeism or Catharism is revealed in the following: “Religion, of its very essence, is radically divergent from the State. The religions that have come into the world have been high and pure in direct ratio as they seceded from the State, and in themselves entirely upheaved it. We find State and Religion in complete alliance only where each still stands upon its lowest step of evolution and significance. The primitive Nature-religion subserves no ends but those which Patriotism provides for in the adult State: hence with the full development of patriotic spirit the ancient Nature-religion has always lost its meaning for the State. So long as it flourishes, however, so long do men subsume by their gods their highest practical interest of State; the tribal god is the representative of the tribesman’s solidarity; the remaining Nature-gods become Penates, protectors of the home, the town, the fields and flocks. Only in the wholly adult State, where these religions have paled before the full-fledged patriotic duty, and are sinking into inessential forms and ceremonies; only where ‘Fate’ has shown itself to be Political Necessity – could true Religion step into the world. Its basis is a feeling of the unblessedness of human being, of the State’s profound inadequacy to still the purely-human need. Its inmost kernel is denial of the world – i.e. recognition of the world as a fleeting and dreamlike state reposing merely on illusion – and struggle for Redemption from it, prepared for by renunciation, attained by Faith.” (“On State and Religion”, in Art and Politics, p. 24). (V.M.)
fought under no restraints whatever, because a nation throws all its resources into the struggle, because the aim of these wars is not to safeguard some dynastic claim, but to defeat or propagate philosophical ideas and intangible advantages, because these wars are staked upon feelings and passions, elemental forces never enlisted before.”

Of course, the readiness to die in battle for one’s nation did not begin only with the French Revolution. But the sheer ferocity of French revolutionary nationalism needs explanation. Whether de Rougemont’s explanation - in terms of a revival of the passion propelling the Catharist heresy that had lain latent in western civilization since its suppression in the thirteenth century - is convincing cannot be determined here. What we can say, however, is that insofar as this passion is directed as much against fellow-countrymen as against citizens of other nations, it cannot be said to be purely nationalistic. It would be more accurate to say that aggressive nationalism is a phase or aspect of the revolutionary passion as such, that aspect which it presents in relation to other nations.

Thus the revolution first presents itself to the people of its own nation in an internationalist form – the slogans of the “freedom, equality and brotherhood” of all people, the principles of universal human rights, etc. Then, having captured the collective of the nation by destroying or neutralizing those members of it that refuse to be possessed by its revolutionary spirit, it proceeds to the nationalist phase of its expression. The revolution is now the work of la grande nation; and all nations that do not want to submit to this Nation must be conquered or destroyed. For, as Metropolitan Anastasy writes: “The nation, this collective organism, is just as inclined to deify itself as the individual man. The madness of pride grows in this case in the same progression, as every passion becomes inflamed in society, being refracted in thousands and millions of souls.”

The word “possessed” indicates the true nature of this passion – a demonic force that possesses men, which uses human passions but is different from them. De Rougement is right to emphasize the boundlessness of the passion, its egoism and its orientation, ultimately, to self-annihilation and death. But this mystical, religious nature of the passion, combined with its blasphemy, reveals its non-human, satanic origin – and the inadequacy of purely psychological explanations such as Berlin’s “collective humiliation”. It follows that nationalist passion, as opposed to healthy patriotism, cannot be assuaged by political or military success, as hunger is assuaged by food or thirst by drink. For satanic egoism and self-deification knows no bounds, and only grows with success. Nationalism can only be tamed by the instilling of the true faith into the national organism. Then national consciousness, instead of being distorted and inflamed in the passion of nationalism, will be transformed into the pure flame of patriotism, which loves the nation, not for its own sake, but as being the bearer of a higher principle, the principle of true religion...

243 Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky), Besedy s sobstvennym serdtsem (Conversations with my own heart), Jordanville, 1998, p. 33.
Parallel with these developments and influencing them was the wider retreat of European thought from traditional religious ideas and customs. This anti-religious onslaught was carried out in tandem by two apparently opposing movements that actually converged in their final end: the rationalism of the Enlightenment, and the irrationalism of the Counter-Enlightenment and the Romantic movement. However, the defeat of the 1848 revolution, and the vast industrial boom of the 1850s, placed a temporary damper on these irrationalist tendencies. So this was the age of the realistic novel in art and positivism in philosophy, when Hegel's definition: "the real is the rational" became the motto of all "progressive" spirits.

The Bible of the new rationalism was Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, published in 1859 but written considerably earlier. The year 1859, according to M.S. Anderson, "can be seen as the beginning of a new era in intellectual life"; for it "gave birth not merely to the *Origin of Species* but also to Marx's *Critique of Political Economy* and Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. If eighteenth-century Deism had banished God to the heavens, leaving for Him only the function of Creator, Darwinism deprived Him even of this function, ascribing all creativity to the blind will of nature working entirely through chance. Of course, this could be seen as the height of irrationalism - which it was, and a return to the crudest pagan nature-worship - which it also was. But Darwin succeeded in ascribing to his pagan mysticism the aura of *science* - and few there were, in the 1860s, who dared to question the authority of science.

The theory maintains that all life, even the most complex, has evolved from the simplest organisms over a period of hundreds of millions of years. This process is entirely random, being propelled forward by two mechanisms: *natural selection*, which "selects out" for survival those organisms with advantageous variations (this was Darwin's preferred mechanism), and *genetic mutations*, which introduce variations into the genotypes of the organisms (this is the favoured mechanism of the "neo-Darwinists").

"Therefore," writes Bertrand Russell, "among chance variations those that are favourable will preponderate among adults in each generation. Thus from age to age..."

244 Darwin may have waited many years before publishing his theory because, as David Quammen writes, he was anxious "about announcing a theory that seemed to challenge conventional religious beliefs - in particular, the Christian beliefs of his wife, Emma. Darwin himself quietly renounced Christianity during his middle age, and later described himself as an agnostic. He continued to believe in a distant, impersonal deity of some sort, a greater entity that had set the universe and its laws into motion, but not in a personal God who had chosen humanity as a specially favored species. Darwin avoided flaunting his lack of religious faith, at least partly in deference to Emma. And she prayed for his soul..." (*Was Darwin Wrong?*, *National Geographic*, November, 2004, p. 9)

In 1880 Darwin wrote to a Francis McDermott: "I am sorry to have to inform you that I do not believe in the Bible as a divine revelation & therefore not in Jesus Christ as the son of God." (*A Matter of Faith for Darwin*, *The Irish Times*, Fine Arts and Antiques Section, September 19, 2015, p. 21)

age deer run more swiftly, cats stalk their prey more silently, and giraffes' necks become longer. Given enough time, this mechanism, so Darwin contended, could account for the whole long development from the protozoa to *homo sapiens*.246

"Given enough time..." Time - enormous amounts of it - was indeed a critical ingredient in Darwin's theory; in fact it took the place of a satisfactory causal mechanism. But such a theory chimed in with the historicist temper of the times. It also chimed in with the idea, as Jacques Barzun writes, "that everything is alive and in motion - a dynamic universe".247

Liberals believed in gradual progress, socialists believed in progress through revolution, everyone except for a few diehards like the Pope believed that things had to change, and that change had to be for the better. Above all, evolution appealed to man's pride, in the belief that man was destined for greater and greater things. "You know," says Lady Constance in Disraeli's novel *Tancred* (1847), "all is development - the principle is perpetually going on. First, there was nothing; then - I forget the next - I think there were shells; then fishes; then we came - let me see - did we come next? Never mind, we came at last and the next change will be something very superior to us, something with wings."248

It will be noted that this was written twelve years before Darwin's *Origin of the Species*, which shows that the "scientific" theory filled an emotional need already expressed by poets and novelists. Evidently not feeling this need himself, Disraeli said that as between the idea that man was an ape or an angel, he was "on the side of the angels"249; but he forgot that, as Lady Constance had opined in his novel, evolution was for many a way of attaining angelic status ("something with wings") in the very long run. For those who did not believe in the deification of man through Christ, evolution provided another, secular and atheist form of deification. This elicited the not unfounded derision of the conservatives. Thus Gobineau said that man was "not descended from the apes, but rapidly getting there".250

Paradoxically, Darwin's book never actually discussed the origin of species - the very first and simplest step in evolution, the supposed transformation of inorganic matter into organic. This was perhaps because Darwin knew of Louis Pasteur's contemporary discovery that spontaneous generation is impossible. But modern scientists have continued to try and prove the impossible to be possible in their laboratories, if not in nature - with no success whatsoever. Instead, they have discovered more and more theoretical barriers - especially in the fields of genetics (DNA) and molecular biology - to the creation of life out of non-life.

249 Barzun, op. cit., p. 571.
250 Barzun, op. cit., p. 571.
The most recent of these is the discovery that even the simplest living cell is irreducibly complex - that is, it cannot be built up piece-meal from simpler ingredients, but every single ingredient has to be in its exactly assigned place in the extraordinarily complex structure of the cell from the beginning.

Darwin even had doubts about natural selection. "To suppose," he wrote. "that the eye with all its inimitable contrivances for adjusting the focus to different distances, for admitting different amounts of light, and for the correction of spherical and chromatic aberration, could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree." Instead he turned to the discredited theory of Lamarck, that acquired characteristics are inherited - a theory accepted, in modern times, only by Stalin's scientists...

Many contemporaries rejected the theory, including, perhaps surprisingly, the German philosopher Nietzsche. He pointed out, as Copleston writes, "that during most of the time taken up in the formation of a certain organ or quality, the inchoate organ is of no use to its possessor and cannot aid it in its struggle with external circumstances and forces. The influence of 'external circumstances' is absurdly overrated by Darwin. The essential factor in the vital process is precisely the tremendous power to shape and create forms from within, a power which uses and exploits the environment."252

The idea that all things came into being out of nothing by chance was rejected already in the fourth century by St. Basil the Great: "Where did you get what you have? If you say that you received it by chance, you are an atheist, you do not know your Creator and are not grateful to your Benefactor."253 And St. Nectarius of Aegina, writing in the 1880s, was withering in his rejection of this new version of the old heresy: "The followers of pithecogeny [the derivation of man from the apes] are ignorant of man and of his lofty destiny, because they have denied him his soul and Divine revelation. They have rejected the Spirit, and the Spirit has abandoned them. They withdrew from God, and God withdrew from them; for, thinking they were wise, they became fools... If they had acted with knowledge, they would not have lowered themselves so much, nor would they have taken pride in tracing the origin of the human race to the most shameless of animals. Rightly did the Prophet say of them: 'Man being in honour, did not understand; he is compared to the dumb beasts, and is become like unto them.'254

A little later, St. Nectary of Optina affirmed that the fossils, the only scientific evidence for evolution, were actually laid down by the Great Flood: "Once a man came to me who simply couldn't believe that there had been a flood. Then I told him that on very high mountains in the sand are found shells and other remains from the ocean floor, and how geology testifies to the flood, and he came to believe. You see how necessary learning is at times." And again the elder said:

253 St. Basil the Great, Sermon on Avarice.
254 St. Nectarios, Sketch concerning Man, Athens, 1885.
"God not only permits, but demands of man that he grow in knowledge. However, it is necessary to live and learn so that not only does knowledge not ruin morality, but that morality not ruin knowledge." \(^{255}\)

The ruination of morality by false theories such as Darwin's was emphasised by St. Nectary's fellow-elder at Optina, St. Barsanuphius (+1912): "Darwin created an entire system according to which life is a struggle for existence, a struggle for the strong against the weak, where those that are conquered are doomed to destruction. This is already the beginning of a bestial philosophy, and those who come to believe in it wouldn't think twice about killing a man, assaulting a woman, or robbing their closest friend - and they would do all this calmly, with a full recognition of their right to commit their crimes." \(^{256}\)

It was the implicit denial of the rational, free and moralizing soul that particularly shocked the early critics of Darwinism. For as Darwinism rapidly evolved from a purely biological theory of origins into universal evolutionism going back to what scientists now call the Big Bang, the image of man that emerged was not simply animalian but completely material. Man was made in the image, not of God, but of dead matter.

Moreover, evolutionism turned out to be an explanation of the origins of the whole universe on the basis of a supposedly new philosophy or religion that was in fact very old and very pagan. For "all things were made" now, not by God the Word, the eternal Life and Light of the world, but by blind mutation and "natural selection" (i.e. death). These were the two hands of original Chaos, the father of all things - a conception as old as the pre-Socratic philosophers Anaximander and Heraclitus and as retrogressive as the pre-Christian religions of Egypt and Babylon.

Darwin's idea of species evolving into and from each other also recalls the Hindu idea of reincarnation. A more likely contemporary influence was Schopenhauer's philosophy of Will. For both Schopenhauer and Darwin the blind, selfish Will to live was everything; for both there was neither intelligent design nor selfless love, but only the struggle to survive; for both the best that mankind could hope for was not Paradise but a kind of Buddhist nirvana.

Schopenhauer in metaphysics, Darwin in science, and Marx in political theory formed a kind of unholy consubstantial trinity, whose essence was Will. \(^{257}\) Marx liked Darwinism because it appeared to justify the idea of class struggle as the fundamental mechanism of human evolution. 'The idea of class struggle logically flows from 'the law of the struggle for existence'. It is precisely by this law that Marxism explains the emergence of classes and their struggle, whence

\(^{257}\) Marx's task was "to convert the 'Will' of German philosophy and this abstraction into a force in the practical world" (A.N. Wilson, After the Victorians, London: Hutchinson, 2005, p. 126).
logically proceeds the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Instead of racist pre-eminence class pre-eminence is preached.\textsuperscript{258}

However, Darwinism was also congenial to Marxism because of its blind historicism and implicit atheism. As Richard Wurmbrand notes: "After Marx had read The Origin of Species by Charles Darwin, he wrote a letter to Lassalle in which he exults that God - in the natural sciences at least - had been given 'the death blow'.\textsuperscript{259}

"Karl Marx," writes Hieromonk Damascene, "was a devout Darwinist, who in \textit{Das Kapital} called Darwin's theory 'epoch making'. He believed his reductionist, materialistic theories of the evolution of social organization to be deductible from Darwin's discoveries, and thus proposed to dedicate \textit{Das Kapital} to Darwin. The funeral oration over Marx's body, delivered by Engels, stressed the evolutionary basis of communism: 'Just as Darwin discovered the law of evolution in organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of evolution in human history.'\textsuperscript{260}

"The years after 1870," writes Gareth Stedman Jones, "were dominated by the prestige of the natural sciences, especially that of Darwin. Playing to these preoccupations, Engels presented Marx's work, not as a theory of communism or as a study of capitalism, but as the foundation of a parallel 'science of historical materialism'. Socialism had made a transition from 'utopia' to 'science'"...\textsuperscript{261}

Not only Marxism, but also its ideological rival, capitalism, found support in Darwinism. For Darwinism can be seen as the application of the principles of capitalist competition to nature. Thus Bertrand Russell writes: 'Darwinism was an application to the whole of animal and vegetable life of Malthus's theory of population, which was an integral part of the politics and economics of the Benthamites - a global free competition, in which victory went to the animals that most resembled successful capitalists. Darwin himself was influenced by Malthus, and was in general sympathy with the Philosophical Radicals. There was, however, a great difference between the competition admired by orthodox economists and the struggle for existence which Darwin proclaimed as the motive force of evolution. 'Free competition,' in orthodox economics, is a very artificial conception, hedged in by legal restrictions. You may undersell a competitor, but you must not murder him. You must not use the armed forces of the State to help you to get the better of foreign manufacturers. Those who have the good fortune to possess capital must not seek to improve their lot by revolution. 'Free competition', as understood by the Benthamites, was by no means really free.

"Darwinian competition was not of this limited sort; there were no rules against hitting below the belt. The framework of law does not exist among

\textsuperscript{258} Fr. Timothy Alferov, \textit{Pravoslavnoe Mirovozzrenie i Sovremennoe Estestvoznanie} (The Orthodox World-View and the Contemporary Science of Nature), Moscow: "Palomnik", 1998, p. 158.
\textsuperscript{259} Wurmbrand, \textit{Was Karl Marx a Satanist?}, Diane Books (USA), 1976, p. 44.
\textsuperscript{261} Gareth Jones, "The Routes of Revolution", \textit{BBC History Magazine}, vol. 3 (6), June, 2002, p. 36.
animals, nor is war excluded as a competitive method. The use of the State to secure victory in competition was against the rules as conceived by the Benthamites, but could not be excluded from the Darwinian struggle. In fact, though Darwin himself was a Liberal, and though Nietzsche never mentions him except with contempt, Darwin's 'Survival of the Fittest' led, when thoroughly assimilated, to something much more like Nietzsche's philosophy than like Bentham's. These developments, however, belong to a later period, since Darwin's *Origin of Species* was published in 1859, and its political implications were not at first perceived...

As for the political implications of Darwin's book, they are obvious from its full title: *On the Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the struggle for life*. Darwin did not mean by "races" races of men, but species of animals. However, the inference was easily drawn that certain races of men are more "favoured" than others; and this inference was still more easily drawn after the publication of *The Descent of Man* in 1871.

Very soon different races or classes or groups of men were being viewed as if they were different species. "Applied to politics," writes Jacques Barzun, "[Darwinism] bred the doctrine that nations and other social groups struggle endlessly in order that the fittest shall survive. So attractive was this 'principle' that it got the name of Social Darwinism." Thus Social Darwinism may be defined as the idea that "human affairs are a jungle in which only the fittest of nations, classes, or individuals will survive." Social Darwinism leads to the conclusion that certain races are congenitally superior to others. "Only congenital characteristics are inherited," writes Russell, "apart from certain not very important exceptions. Thus the congenital differences between men acquire fundamental importance." As Fr. Timothy Alferov writes: "The ideas of racial pre-eminence - racism, Hitlerism - come from the Darwinist teaching on the origin of the races and their unequal significance. The law of the struggle for existence supposedly obliges the strong races to exert a strong dominance over the other races, to the extent of destroying the latter. It is not necessary to describe here the incarnation of these ideas in life in the example of Hitlerism, but it is worth noting that Hitler greatly venerated Darwin.

However, while appearing to widen the differences between races of men, Social Darwinism also reduces them between men and other species - with some startling consequences. Thus Russell writes: "If men and animals have a common ancestry, and if men developed by such slow stages that there were creatures which we should not know whether to classify as human or not, the question

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arises: at what stage in evolution did men, or their semi-human ancestors, begin to be all equal? Would Pithecanthropus erectus, if he had been properly educated, have done work as good as Newton’s? Would the Piltdown Men have written Shakespeare’s poetry if there had been anybody to convict him of poaching? A resolute egalitarian who answers these questions in the affirmative will find himself forced to regard apes as the equals of human beings. And why stop at apes? I do not see how he is to resist an argument in favour of Votes for Oysters. An adherent of evolution should maintain that not only the doctrine of the equality of all men, but also that of the rights of man, must be condemned as unbiological, since it makes too emphatic a distinction between men and other animals.  

Arthur Balfour, who became British Prime Minister in 1902, described the world-view that universal evolutionism proclaimed as follows: "A man - so far as natural science is able to teach us, is no longer the final cause of the universe, the Heaven-descended heir of all the ages. His very existence is an accident, his story a brief and transitory episode in the life of one of the meanest of the planets. Of the combination of causes which first converted a dead organic compound into the living progenitors of humanity, science indeed, as yet knows nothing. It is enough that from such beginnings famine, disease, and mutual slaughter, fit nurses of the future lords of creation, have gradually evolved after infinite travail, a race with conscience enough to feel that it is vile, and intelligent enough to know that it is insignificant. We survey the past, and see that its history is of blood and tears, of helpless blundering, of wild revolt, of stupid acquiescence, of empty aspirations. We sound the future, and learn that after a period, long compared with the individual life, but short indeed compared with the divisions of time open to our investigation, the energies of our system will decay, the glory of the sun will be dimmed, and the earth, tideless and inert, will no longer tolerate the race which has for a moment disturbed its solitude. Man will go down into the pit, and all his thoughts will perish..."

A truly melancholy philosophy – but fortunately there is no reason to believe in it. C.S. Lewis wrote: 'By universal evolutionism I mean the belief that the very formula of universal process is from imperfect to perfect, from small beginnings to great endings, from the rudimentary to the elaborate, the belief which makes people find it natural to think that morality springs from savage taboos, adult sentiment from infantile sexual maladjustments, thought from instinct, mind from matter, organic from inorganic, cosmos from chaos. This is perhaps the deepest habit of mind in the contemporary world. It seems to me immensely implausible, because it makes the general course of nature so very unlike those parts of nature we can observe. You remember the old puzzle as to whether the owl came from the egg or the egg from the owl. The modern acquiescence in universal evolutionism is a kind of optical illusion, produced by attending

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267 Russell, op. cit., p. 753. A British television programme once seriously debated the question whether apes should have the same rights as human beings, and came to a positive conclusion... See Joanna Bourke, What it Means to be Human, London: Virago, 2011.

exclusively to the owl's emergence from the egg. We are taught from childhood to notice how the perfect oak grows from the acorn and to forget that the acorn itself was dropped by a perfect oak. We are reminded constantly that the adult human being was an embryo, never that the life of the embryo came from two adult human beings. We love to notice that the express engine of today is the descendant of the 'Rocket'; we do not equally remember that the 'Rocket' springs not from some even more rudimentary engine, but from something much more perfect and complicated than itself - namely, a man of genius. The obviousness or naturalness which most people seem to find in the idea of emergent evolution thus seems to be a pure hallucination..."269

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IV. THE EAST: THE GENDARME OF EUROPE (1830-1861)
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 to Golenischev-Kutuzov: “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 and had to punish the rebels as his first task.

Some have portrayed the Tsar as having been unreasonably strict and censorious. However, he 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.” The three elements of the formula were closely linked, and there was a definite order in them. First came 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: “Orthodoxy as the everyday faith of the Russian people can be respected also by others, even by non-Christians. 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 Orthodox-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 diluting 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 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 criticize 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.”

However, this is not the view of Archpriest Lev Lebedev, who writes: “Beginning already with Paul I, the rapprochement of imperial power with the Church continued under Nicholas I, being raised 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.276

275 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 321.
In spite of these positive changes, 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 said: “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 in the Holy Church”. In the administration of the Church, intoned articles 42 and 43, “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…”

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277 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).


279 Metropolitan Ioann (Snychev), Zhizn’ i deiatel’nost’ mitropolita Philareta (The Life and Activity of Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow), Tula, 1994, p. 238.


Again, in 1835 the Emperor wanted his son and heir, the Tsarevich Alexander Nikolaevich, 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. Shamed, the tsarevich henceforth refrained from attending sessions of the Holy Synod.²⁸²

²⁸² Sergius and Tamara Fomin, Rossia pered vtorym prishestviem (Russia before the Second Coming), Moscow, 1994, vol. I, p. 322.
56. THE ORIGINS OF NATIONALISM: (6) POLAND

It was Tsar Nicholas’ destiny to suppress the revolution not only at home, but also abroad. But he decided not to intervene in the revolutions in France and Belgium in 1830. Encouraged by this, the Poles rose against Tsarist authority in November, 1830.

This time the Tsar did act. As he wrote to his brother, who ruled the Polish Kingdom: “It is our duty to think of our security. When I say ours, I mean the tranquillity of Europe.” And so the rebellion was crushed. Europe was saved again – and was again uncomprehending and ungrateful.

Archpriest Lev Lebedev writes: “The revolutions of 1830 in France and Belgium gave an impulse to the Masonic movement in Poland. It had two basic tendencies – an extreme republican one (headed by the historian Lelevel) and a more moderate aristocratic one (headed by A. Chartoysky). At the end of 1830 there began a rebellion in Warsaw. Great Prince Constantine Pavlovich with a detachment of Russian soldiers was forced to abandon Poland. In 1831 there came there the armies of General Dibich, which had no significant success, in particular by reason of a very strong outbreak of cholera, from which both Dibich and Great Prince Constantine died. Meanwhile the revolutionaries in Warsaw created first a ‘Provisional government’ with a ‘dictator’ at its head, and then convened the Sejm. The rebels demanded first the complete independence of Poland with the addition to it of Lithuania and western Rus’, and then declared the ‘deposition’ of the Romanov dynasty from the throne of the Kingdom of Poland. Count Paskevich of Erevan was sent to Poland. He took Warsaw by storm and completely destroyed the Masonic revolutionary armies, forcing their remnants abroad [where they played a significant role in the revolutionary movement in Western Europe]. Poland was divided into provinces and completely included into the composition of the Russian Empire. The language of business was declared to be Russian. Russian landowners received land in Poland. A Deputy was now placed at the head of the Kingdom of Poland. He became Paskevich with the new title of Prince of Warsaw. In connection with all this it became clear that the Polish magnates and landowners who had kept their land-holdings in Belorussia and Ukraine had already for some time been persecuting the Orthodox Russians and Little Russians and also the uniates, and had been occupied in polonizing education in general the whole cultural life in these lands. Tsar Nicholas I was forced to take severe measures to restore Russian enlightenment and education in the West Russian and Ukrainian land. In particular, a Russian university was opened in Kiev. The part of the Belorussian and Ukrainian population headed by Bishop Joseph Semashko which had been in a forcible unia with the Catholic Church since the end of the 16th century desired reunion with Orthodoxy. Nicholas I decided to satisfy this desire and in 1839 all the uniates (besides the inhabitants of Kholm diocese) were united to ‘to the ancestral Orthodox All-Russian Church’, as they put it. This was

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a great feast of Orthodoxy! Masses of uniates were united *voluntarily*, without any compulsion. All this showed that Russia had subdued and humbled Poland not because she wished to lord it over her, and resist her independence, but only because *Poland* wanted to lord it (both politically and *spiritually*) over the ages-old Russian population, depriving it of its own life and ‘ancestral’ faith! With *such* a Poland as she was then striving to be, there was nothing to be done but completely subdue her and force her to respect the rights of other peoples! But to the Polish Catholics Russia provided, as usual, every opportunity of living in accordance with their faith and customs.”

Unfortunately, the Poles and the West did not see it like that. Thus the composer Frederick Chopin wrote: “The suburbs [of Warsaw] are destroyed, burned... Moscow rules the world! O God, do You exist? You’re there and You don’t avenge it. How many more Russian crimes do You want – or – are You a Russian too!!”

Another artist who gave expression to the new Polish faith was the poet Mickiewicz. “Poland will arise,” he wrote, “and free nations of Europe from bondage. Ibi patria, ubi male; wherever in Europe liberty is suppressed and is fought for, there is the battle for your country.”

Adam Zamoyski writes that Mickiewicz turned “the spiritual fantasies of a handful of soldiers and intellectuals into the articles of faith that built a modern nation.

“Mickiewicz had established his reputation as Poland’s foremost lyric poet in the 1820s, and enhanced his political credentials by his exile in Russia, where he met several prominent Decembrists and grew close to Pushkin [who, however, did not sympathize with his views on Poland]. In 1829 Mickiewicz received permission to go to Germany to take the waters. He met Mendelssohn and Hegel in Berlin, Metternich in Marienbad, and August Schlegel in Bonn, and attended Goethe’s eightieth birthday party in Weimar. Goethe kissed him on the forehead, gave him the quill with which he had worked on Faust, and commissioned a portrait of him for his collection. Mickiewicz then went to Italy where, apart from a de rigueur trip to Switzerland (Chillon and Altdorf, with Byron and Schiller’s Wilhelm Tell in his hand), he spent the next year-and-half. It was in Rome that news of the November Rising [in Warsaw] reached him. He set off for Poland, but his attempts to cross the border were foiled by Cossack patrols, and he was obliged to watch the debacle from Dresden.

“In this tranquil Saxon city he was gripped by inspiration and wrote frantically in fits lasting up to three days, without pausing to eat or sleep. The fruit was the third part of a long poetic drama entitled *Forefathers’ Eve*, which can only be described as a national passion play. Mickiewicz had also seen the significance of the holy night [of November 29, 1830], and he likened all

monarchs, and Nicholas in particular, to Herod – their sense of guilty foreboding led them to massacre the youth of nations. The drama describes the transformation through suffering of the young poet and lover, Konrad, into a warrior-poet. He is a parable for Poland as a whole, but he is also something more. ‘My soul has now entered the motherland, and with my body I have taken her soul: I and the motherland are one,’ he declares after having endured torture. ‘My name is Million, because I love and suffer for millions… I feel the sufferings of the whole nation as a mother feels the pain of the fruit within her womb.’

“In Paris in 1832 Mickiewicz published a short work entitled *Books of the Polish Nation and of the Pilgrimage of Poland*. It was quickly translated into several languages and caused a sensation. It is a bizarre work, couched in biblical prose, giving a moral account of Polish history. After an Edenic period, lovingly described, comes the eighteenth century, a time when ‘nations were spoiled, so much so that among them there was left only one man, both citizen and soldier’ – a reference to Lafayette. The ‘Satanic Trinity’ of Catherine of Russia, Frederick of Prussia and Maria Theresa of Austria decided to murder Poland, because Poland was Liberty. They crucified the innocent nation while degenerate France played the role of Pilate. But that was not to be the end of it. ‘For the Polish nation did not die; its body lies in the tomb, while its soul has left the earth, that is public life, and visited the abyss, that is the private life of peoples suffering slavery at home and in exile, in order to witness their suffering. And on the third day the soul will re-enter the body, and the nation will rise from the dead and will liberate all the peoples of Europe from slavery.’ In a paraphrase of the Christian Creed, Liberty will then ascend the throne in the capital of the world, and judge the nations, ushering in the age of peace.

“So the Polish nation was now in Limbo, and all it had to do in order to bring about its own resurrection and that of all grieving peoples was to cleanse and redeem itself through a process of expiation which Mickiewicz saw as its ‘pilgrimage’. This was to be a kind of forty days in the wilderness. The pilgrims must fast and pray on the anniversaries of the battles of Wawer and Grochow, reciting litanies to the 30,000 dead of the Confederation of Bar and the 20,000 martyrs of Praga; they must observe their ancient customs and wear national dress. One is reminded of Rousseau’s admonitions in his *Considérations sur le Gouvernement de Pologne*.

287 Chopin also blamed the French. For “Lafayette moved heaven and earth to make France go to war in support of Poland, but he could not move Louis Philippe. He formed a committee to help the Poles, with the participation of Victor Hugo and a string of artists and heroes” (Zamoyski, *Holy Madness: Romantics, Patriots and Revolutionaries*, 1776-1871, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999, p. 278). (V.M.)

288 The passage continues: “And three days have already passed; the first ending with the first fall of Warsaw; the second day with the second fall of Warsaw; and the third day cometh but it shall have no end. As at the resurrection of Christ the sacrifice of blood ceased upon the earth, so at the resurrection of the Polish Nation shall war cease in Christendom.” “This,” comments Neal Ascherson, “was the extraordinary doctrine of Messianism, the identification of the Polish nation as the collective reincarnation of Christ. Messianism steadily gained strength over the next century-and-a-half. History saw to that” (Black Sea, London: Vintage, 1995, p. 160). (V. M.)
“Rousseau would have been proud of this generation. As one freedom fighter writes in his memoirs: ‘Only he loves Poland with his heart and his soul, only he is a true son of his Motherland who has cast aside all lures and desires, all bad habits, prejudice and passions, and been reborn in the pure faith, he who, having recognized the reasons for our defeats and failures through his own judgement and conviction, brings his whole love, his whole – not just partial, but whole – conviction, his courage and his endurance, and lays them on the altar of the purely national future.’ He had taken part in the November Rising and a conspiratorial fiasco in 1833, for which he was rewarded with fifteen years in the Spielberg and Küfstein prisons. Yet decades later he still believed that the November Rising had ‘called Poland to a new life’ and brought her ‘salvation’ closer by a hundred years. Such feelings were shared by tens of thousands, given expression by countless poets and artists, and understood by all the literate classes.

“Most of Mickiewicz’s countrymen read his works and wept over them. They identified with them and learned them by heart. They did not follow the precepts laid down in them, nor did they really believe in this gospel in any literal sense. These works were a let-out, an excuse even, rather than a guiding rule. But they did provide an underlying ethical explanation of a state of affairs that was otherwise intolerable to the defeated patriots. It was an explanation that made moral sense and was accepted at the subconscious level. It was a spiritual and psychological lifeline that kept them from sinking into a Slough of Despond. It made misfortune not only bearable, but desirable…”

55,000 Polish troops and 6,000 civilians who made a great exodus to the West and Paris kept this cult alive, not in Polish hearts only, but throughout Europe. Only the Russians were not seduced by its masochistic charm… Nevertheless, when Alexander II became Tsar and was crowned King of Poland, he granted a general amnesty to Polish prisoners in Russia, and about 9000 exiles returned to their homes from Siberia between 1857 and 1860. However, they brought back with them the virus of nationalism. Thus on the day after the Tsar’s brother, Grand Duke Constantine, was made viceroy of Poland, he was shot in the shoulder. Nor did a programme of “re-Polonization” – more liberal state administration and local government regulations governing the use of the Polish language, and Polish educational institutions – appease the nationalists. Even when all the other nations of Europe had settled down after the abortive revolutions of 1848, the Poles rose again. “In January 1863,” writes John van de Kiste, “they slaughtered Russian soldiers asleep in their Warsaw barracks, and national resistance turned to general uprising. This spread through the kingdom into the nine formerly Polish provinces known as Russia’s Western region, where powerful landlords and Catholic clergy were ready to give vent to their hatred of Russian domination. For a while it looked as if England, France and Austria might join in on the side of Warsaw after giving their tacit blessing to the rebels, but Russia put down the unrest at no little cost to the Poles…. While the Poles butchered scores of Russian peasants including women and children, the Russians erected gibbets in the streets where rebels and civilians were hanged in

their hundreds, with thousands more sent to Siberia. The insurrection was finally quelled in May 1864, when the more conservative Count Theodore Berg was sent to replace Constantine as viceroy.”

As we have seen, Tsar Nicholas again intervened in Europe during the 1848 revolution, sending troops to crush the Hungarian rebellion against the Austrians. This had important repercussions in Russia in the following decade: censorship in Russia, already tight, became still tighter, and the gulf between liberals and radicals, and between supporters and opponents of the autocracy, increased. As Sir Isaiah Berlin writes. “The prison walls within which Nicholas I had enclosed the lives of his thinking subjects... led to a sharp break with the polite civilization and the non-political interests of the past, to a general roughening of fibre and exacerbation of political and social differences. The gulf between the right and the left – between the disciples of Dostoevsky and Katkov and the followers of Chernyshevsky or Bakunin – all typical radical intellectuals in 1848 – had grown very wide and deep. In due course there emerged a vast and growing army of practical revolutionaries, conscious – all too conscious – of the specifically Russian character of their problems, seeking specifically Russian solutions. They were forced away from the general current of European development (with which, in any case, their history seemed to have so little in common) by the bankruptcy in Europe of the libertarian movement of 1848: they drew strength from the very harshness of the discipline which the failure in the West had indirectly imposed upon them. Henceforth the Russian radicals accepted the view that ideas and agitation wholly unsupported by material force were necessarily doomed to impotence; and they adopted this truth and abandoned sentimental liberalism without being forced to pay for their liberation with that bitter, personal disillusionment and acute frustration which proved too much for a good many idealistic radicals in the West. The Russian radicals learnt this lesson by means of precept and example, indirectly as it were, without the destruction of their inner resources. The experience obtained by both sides in the struggle during these dark years was a decisive factor in shaping the uncompromising character of the later revolutionary movement in Russia...”

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57. THE RUSSIAN CHURCH AND THE ANGLICANS

It was in the reign of Tsar Nicholas I that a beginning was made to ecumenical relations with the western confessions. Surprisingly, in view of the political tensions between the two Great Powers, it was with England and the Anglican Church that these relations were the warmest. This was largely because certain individuals in the Anglo-Catholic arm of the Anglican Church, believing fervently in the “branch theory” of the Church, according to which the Orthodox, the Catholics and the Anglicans were the three branches of the One Church, were very eager that their theory should be tested in Russia…

The pioneer in these ecumenical relations on the Orthodox side was Alexei Khomiakov, whose correspondence with the Anglican Deacon William Palmer is one of the earliest and best examples of how to conduct ecumenical relations without betraying the truth. He was very well informed about the religious situation in both East and West, clearly longed for union, and was not seeking merely to “score points” over an adversary. He was generous about what was good in the West, and not afraid to admit weaknesses in the East. But he was politely but unbendingly firm in his defence of the Orthodox position on questions of faith (e.g. the Filioque) and ecclesiology (i.e. where the True Church is and where it is not). However, the matter did not end well; for Palmer was shocked to learn that the Greeks would receive him into communion by baptism, and the Russians by chrismation only. In spite of Khomiakov’s attempts to explain the Orthodox use of condescension or “economy”, Palmer remained dissatisfied by what he saw as a difference in ecclesiology between the Greeks and the Russians, and eventually joined the Roman Catholic Church.

When Palmer criticised the dominance of the State over the Church in Russia (completely ignoring the Erastianism of the Anglicans), 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 not, too much restrained, is no business of ours as members of the Church (though I, for my part, 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…”

In spite of his ardent desire for union, Khomiakov was pessimistic about its prospects; and this not so much because of the doctrinal obstacles, as of the moral obstacles. As he explained to Palmer: “A very weak conviction in points of doctrine can bring over a Latin to Protestantism, or a Protestant to the Latins. A Frenchman, a German, an Englishman, will go over to Presbyterianism, to Lutheranism, to the Independents, to the Camerons, and indeed to almost every form of belief or disbelief; he will not go over to Orthodoxy. As long as he does not step out of the circles of doctrines which have taken their origin in the Western world, he feels himself at home; notwithstanding his apparent change, he does not feel that dread of apostasy which renders sometimes the passage from error to faith as difficult as from truth to error. He will be condemned by his former brethren, who will call his action a rash one, perhaps a bad one; but it will not be utter madness, depriving him, as it were, of his rights of citizenship in the civilized world of the West. And that is natural. All the Western doctrine is born out of the Latins; it feels (though unconsciously) its solidarity with the past; it feels its dependence on one science, on one creed, on one line of life; and that creed, that science, that life was the Latin one. This is what I hinted at, and what you understand very rightly, viz., that all Protestants are Crypto-Papists; and, indeed, it would be a very easy task to show that in their theology (as well as philosophy) all the definitions of all the objects of creed or understanding are merely taken out of the old Latin System, though often made negative in the application. In short, if it was to be expressed in the concise language of algebra, all the West knows but one datum, a; whether it be preceded by the positive sign +, as with the Latins, or with the negative −, as with the Protestants, the a remains the same. Now, a passage to Orthodoxy seems indeed like an apostasy from the past, from its science, creed, and life. It is rushing into a new and unknown world, a bold step to take, or even to advise.

“This, most reverend sir, is the moral obstacle I have been speaking about; this, the pride and disdain which I attribute to all the Western communities. As you see, it is no individual feeling voluntarily bred or consciously held in the heart; it is no vice of the mind, but an involuntary submission to the tendencies and direction of the past. When the unity of the Church was lawlessly and unlovingly rent by the Western clergy, the more so inasmuch as at the same time the East was continuing its former friendly intercourse, and submitting to the opinion of the Western Synods the Canons of the Second Council of Nicaea, each half of Christianity began a life apart, becoming from day to day more estranged from the other. There was an evident self-complacent triumph on the side of the Latins; there was sorrow on the side of the East, which had seen the dear ties of Christian brotherhood torn asunder – which had been spurned and rejected, and felt itself innocent. All these feelings have been transmitted by hereditary succession to our time, and, more or less, either willingly or unwillingly, we are still under their power. Our time has awakened better feelings; in England, perhaps, more than anywhere else, you are seeking for the past brotherhood, for the past sympathy and communion. It would be a shame for us not to answer your proferred friendship, it would be a crime not to cultivate in our hearts an intense desire to renovate the Unity of the Church; but let us consider the question coolly, even when our sympathies are most awakened.

“The Church cannot be a harmony of discords; it cannot be a numerical sum of Orthodox, Latins, and Protestants. It is nothing if it is not perfect inward harmony of creed and outward harmony of expression (notwithstanding local differences in the rite). The question is, not whether the Latins and Protestants have erred so fatally as to deprive individuals of salvation, which seems to be often the subject of debate – surely a narrow and unworthy one, inasmuch as it throws suspicion on the mercy of the Almighty. The question is whether they have the Truth, and whether they have retained the ecclesiastical tradition unimpaired. If they have not, where is the possibility of unity?…

“Do not, I pray, nourish the hope of finding Christian Truth without stepping out of the former protestant circle. It is an illogical hope; it is a remnant of that pride which thought itself able and wished to judge and decide by itself without the Spiritual Communion of heavenly grace and Christian love. Were you to find all the truth, you would have found nothing; for we alone can give you that without which all would be vain – the assurance of Truth.”

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In spite of Khomiakov’s pessimism, successive over-procureators, supported by the Holy Synod, took great interest in the idea of an Orthodox mission in England. Thus in 1856 the convert Stephen Hatherley, who had been baptized in the Greek Church, turned for help to the Russians, who decided to bless and financially support his idea of a mission church in Wolverhampton. However, the Russians did not satisfy Hatherley’s request that he be ordained for that

mission; so he turned to the Greeks and received ordination in Constantinople in 1871. But then the Greeks, succumbing to intrigues on the part of the Anglicans, banned Hatherley from making any English converts. Hatherley obeyed this directive, which unsurprisingly led to the collapse of his mission...

For all the enthusiasm of the Russians, the fruit of their labours in England was meager. Some of the reasons for this were well pinpointed by Archpriest Joseph Wassilief in a report sent to the Holy Synod in 1865 after a visit to England:

“... 2. Plans for union with the Orthodox Church are curiously conceived by those who promote this movement and they cannot be reconciled with Orthodox or any other theological approaches to their realization. Thus the practical and mutual benefits of union are given preference over and against the necessity for a preliminary agreement in doctrine.

“... 3. Only a few individuals recognize the necessity for unity of dogmas and labour to reconcile the differences, but without decisive concessions on the part of the Anglican Church.’

“Father Wassilief,” continues Fr. Christopher Birchall, “was frustrated by the lack of any real desire to face the dogmatic issues and ascribed this, in part, to the fact that the Church of England had existed for centuries without any real unity of belief. Consequently, [they] assumed that union with the Orthodox could be achieved on the same basis. Part of the Anglican hierarchy would have liked to strengthen its position by being recognized by the Orthodox, but nothing could be done without the consent of Parliament and the laity, who would resist any change. ‘The past and its customs give support to any opposition,’ he wrote, ‘in England they are virtually idolized.’ Echoing the ideas of Khomiakov, he continued, ‘One of the reasons for the Anglican’s faithfulness to his tradition and establishment lies in an exaggerated sense of superiority before other people, and in personal and national pride. He also extends this feeling to his Church, which is a national creation and thus national property. It is extremely difficult for the Anglican to admit that his forefathers constructed the Anglican Church unsuccessfully, that this sphere of life is higher, truer and firmer in Russian and among other Eastern peoples, who in all other respects are less favoured than the English.’

“Another factor hindering unity, Wassilief noted, was the Anglican Church’s ‘enormous possessions and income.’ ‘If only some of the Anglican bishops together with a number of priests and faithful would unite with the Orthodox Church in rejecting the 39 heretical Articles of the Anglican Church as ratified by Parliament, then the government might well consider this society a sect, and might deprive its pastors of their worldly benefits by which they profit in the Anglican Church and condemn them to a life which would be the more arduous

since their present life is so full of abundance and luxury. For a bishop or a dean to renounce his salary, he would have to possess an immutable belief and an exceptional faith…”

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In 1864, four years after Khomiakov’s death, Pastor Jung, a delegate of the New York convocation of the Episcopalian Church with authority from some of the bishops there to enter into relations with the older Russian hierarchs, came to Russia. In a meeting with Metropolitan Philaret and other bishops, he explained the significance of the 39 articles for the Anglicans and Episcopalians. The metropolitan said that a rapprochement between the Russian and American Episcopalian Churches might create problems with their respective “mother churches” in England and Greece. For example, the Greeks were less accommodating with regard to the canonicity of baptism by pouring than their Russian co-religionists. The metropolitan probably had in mind here the experience of William Palmer…

In 1867, the metropolitan expressed the following opinion: “A member of the Anglican Church, who has definitely received a baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, even though it be by effusion (pouring), can, in accordance with the rule accepted in the Church of Russia (which the Church of Constantinople considers to be a form of condescension), be received into the Orthodox Church without a new baptism, but the sacrament of chrismation must be administered to him, because confirmation, in the teaching of the Anglican Church, is not a sacrament…

“The question as to whether an Anglican priest can be received into the Orthodox Church as an actual priest awaits the decision of a Church Council, because it has not yet been clarified whether the unbroken Apostolic Succession of hierarchical ordination exists in the Anglican Church, and also because the Anglican Church does not acknowledge ordination as a sacrament, although it recognizes the power of grace in it…”

In another meeting with Pastor Jung, Metropolitan Philaret posed five questions relating to the 39 articles:

1. How can the 39 articles not be a stumbling-block to the union of the Churches?
2. How can the teaching of the American Episcopalian Church’s teaching on the procession of the Holy Spirit [the Filioque] be made to agree with the teaching of the Eastern Church?
3. Is the uninterruptedness of apostolic hierarchical ordination fully proven in the American Church?

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4. Does the American Church recognize reliable Church Tradition to be a subsidiary guiding principle for the explanation of Holy Scripture and for Church orders and discipline?

5. What is the view of the American Church on the sevenfold number of sacraments in the Eastern Church?

At another meeting the pastor gave preliminary replies to these questions, and insisted that the 39 articles had a political rather than a spiritual meaning, and did not have a fully dogmatic force.

Although the two sides parted on friendly terms, nothing positive came from the meeting. The public in America were not ready for this, and there even began something in the nature of a reaction. Learning about this, Philaret sadly remarked: “The reconcilers of the churches... are weaving a cover for division, but are not effecting union.” “How desirable is the union of the Churches! But how difficult to ensure that the movement towards it should soar with a pure striving for the Truth and should be entirely free from attachment to entrenched opinions.” “O Lord, send a true spirit of union and peace.”

“Will the idea of the union of the churches, which has lit up the west like a glow on the horizon, remain just the glow of sunset in the west, or will it turn into an Eastern radiance of sunrise, in the hope of a brighter morning? Thou knowest, O Lord.”

* * *

Perhaps the most distinguished Western converts to Orthodoxy in this period were the Anglicized German Dr. Joseph Overbeck and the Frenchman Fr. Vladimir Guettée. “Dr. Julian Joseph Overbeck (1820-1905) was perhaps the most well-known of Western Roman Catholic converts to Orthodoxy in the later half of the 19th century in the English speaking world. A German by nat[ionality], he was raised in the Papist Faith, eventually becoming a priest in it. He was also an extremely learned man, knowing around 12 ancient languages, and many modern. His grasp of ancient and medieval Christian history was as good as any; any mistakes he makes are generally no worse than that of other scholars. However, as Dr. Overbeck stated ‘history was always the weak point of the Jesuits, and consequently of the Papists.’ His study led him away from Romanism; in initial despair he contemplated perhaps having something to do with some form of high Lutheranism. Yet, he could not ultimately swallow such. He eventually immigrated to England and became a Professor in German at the Royal Military Academy in 1863. In 1865, convinced of the equal untenability and imminent collapse of both Papism and Protestantism, and sure of the Truth of the Orthodox Faith, he was received into the Orthodox Church by Fr. Eugene Popoff, chaplain of the Russian Embassy in London.

“For the next 40 years he was a constant antagonist of the heterodox, an opponent of the earliest forms of proto-ecumenism (which he saw as being fundamentally of

297 Snychev, op. cit., p. 357.
298 Birchall, op. cit., p. 91.
Anglican-Protestant origination and heresy), and thus the finest proponent and only apologists and polemist for the Orthodox Christian Faith in the English speaking world. He was in concourse with the famed Fr. Vladimir (Guettée) (i.e. Abbe Guettée) who had a similar story to Dr. Overbeck; the difference being that Dr. Overbeck, having left Roman Catholicism and the Papist priesthood, was later married. However, upon his conversion to Orthodoxy, the Russian Church told Dr. Overbeck that he could not serve as a priest since he was married after ordination (the Russian Church had the practice of receiving Roman Catholic clergy by vesting); though, Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow had supposedly informed him that if he had joined Orthodoxy via the Greek Church, he would have been baptized, and the question would have been handled entirely differently. Despite this, Dr. Overbeck continued his work. His errors are no more than those of the time and of the contemporary Russian Church (i.e., a semi-scholasticized understanding of some of the Mysteries); his projects, while seemingly ‘fantastical’ to the Anglican critic (and modern) were supported by the Synod in Russia (and others), and while many never came to full fruition in his own lifetime, they did demonstrate a wholesale devotion to Orthodoxy in all matters (thus, his gaining approval from the Holy Governing Synod of Russia and the Ecumenical Patriarchate for the idea of an Orthodox Western rite based upon Orthodox Canon Law and pre-Schism praxis of the West [something entirely ignored by the later Antiochian proponents who found Dr. Overbeck equally repugnant for his polemic against Anglicanism and nascent anti-ecumenism]; the resurrection of local Orthodox sees in the West, etc).

“Dr. Overbeck was a constant opponent and antagonist of the Anglican heresy just as much as he was the Roman. The Romans, in general, tried to ignore him and belittle him (as they did Fr. Vladimir until the spigots of threats were turned on); the Anglicans tried the same, but found themselves unable. At the Bonn Conference in the 1870s, an early attempt by the Orthodox Church to bring the nascent Old Catholic movement wholesale into Orthodoxy, Dr. Overbeck was present at the commission discussions. He and other Russian Church delegates had stalwartly opposed the introduction of Anglican representatives to have any part in the debates between the Orthodox and Old Catholics. Overbeck saw them as meddlesome interlopers who would only muddy the water and provide cover for the Old Catholics on issues that caused their continuing separation from the Church. However, the Anglicans insinuated themselves into the affair, and the results were largely disastrous; the Old Catholic movement, though abandoning the Filioque clause in 1877, was never to make good on anything. It was continually to degenerate and fall more and more into the Anglican orbit (ecclesially, theologically, liturgically), which is exactly what Dr. Overbeck had noted would happen if they did not become Orthodox. He thus wrote them off, just as he did the Anglicans, looking only for individual conversions.

“The experience of the Anglicans with Dr. Overbeck at the conference had made Overbeck a target for Anglican criticism and slander for the rest of his life. Yet, despite this, he continued to publish the first apologetic, polemic, and historical journals in English that taught the Orthodox position in the English language (the Orthodox Catholic Review; it is difficult to find copies of all the volumes which were published monthly from 1867-1885)... 

“... Dr. Overbeck (and many other Orthodox) foresaw massive changes ahead with the creation of “Papal Infallibility”; which in essence is the elevation of man above
God. He says as much when addressing it. He stated, ‘The poisonous seed is sown: what may the plant, the full grown plant be? We do not indulge in fancies or unsubstantial apprehensions.’ Well, we know today more than ever.

“Indeed, if Dr. Overbeck were walking upon the Earth today, it would not just be Papism and Protestantism he would target, but, it would be the modern Ecumenical Patriarchate and its sister Patriarchates for their desired union with the former in the heresy of ecumenism; not to mention their wholesale embrace of the modernist heresy.”

Tsar Alexander’s project of settling the Jews as farmers on the new territories of Southern Russia had proved to be a failure, in spite of very generous terms offered to them – terms that were not offered to Russian peasants.

In spite of this failure, writes Alexander Solzhenitsyn, in his Statute of 1835, which replaced Alexander’s of 1804, Nicholas “not only did not abandon Jewish agriculture, but even broadened it, placing in the first place in the building of Jewish life ‘the setting up of the Jews on the basis of rules that would open to them a free path to the acquisition of a prosperous existence by the practice of agriculture and industry and to the gradual education of their youth, while at the same time cutting off for them excuses for idleness and unlawful trades’. If before a preliminary contribution of 400 roubles was required for each family [settling in the new territories] from the Jewish community, now without any condition ‘every Jew is allowed “at any time” to pass over to agriculture’, and all his unpaid taxes would immediately be remitted to him and to the community; he would be allowed to receive not only State lands for an unlimited period, but also, within the bounds of the Pale of Settlement, to buy, sell and lease lands. Those passing over to agriculture were freed from poll-tax for 25 years, from land tax for 10, and from liability to military service – for 50. Nor could any Jew ‘be forced to pass over to agriculture’. Moreover, ‘trades and crafts practised in their village life’ were legalised.

“(150 years passed. And because these distant events had been forgotten, an enlightened and learned physicist formulated Jewish life at that time as ‘the Pale of Settlement in conjunction with a ban [!] on peasant activity’. But the historian-publicist M.O. Gershenzon has a broader judgement: ‘Agriculture is forbidden to the Jew by his national spirit, for, on becoming involved with the land, a man can more easily become rooted to the place’.”

In general, the Statute of 1835 “did not lay any new restrictions on the Jews”, as the Jewish encyclopaedia puts it in a restrained way. And if we look into the details, then according to the new Statute ‘the Jews had the right to acquire any kind of real estate, including populated estates, and carry out any kind of trade on the basis of rights identical with those granted Russian subjects’, although only within the bounds of the Pale of Settlement. The Statute of 1835 defended all the rights of the Jewish religion, and introduced awards for rabbis and the rights of the merchants of the first guild. A rational age for marriage (18 and 16 years) was established [contrary to the rabbis, who married off young Jews at much younger ages]. Measures were undertaken that Jewish dress should not be so different, separating Jews from the surrounding population. Jews were directed to productive means of employment (forbidding the sale of wine on credit and on the security of household effects), all kinds of manufacturing activity (including the farming of wine distilleries). Keeping Christians in servitude was forbidden only for constant service, but it was allowed ‘for short jobs’ without indication of exactly how long, and also ‘for assisting in arable farming,

300 A.I. Solzhenitsyn, Doesti Let Vmeste (Two Hundred Years Together), Moscow, 2001, p. 114.
gardening and work in kitchen gardens’, which was a mockery of the very idea of ‘Jewish agriculture’. The Statute of 1835 called on Jewish youth to get educated [up to then the rabbis had forbidden even the learning of Russian. No restrictions were placed on the entry of Jewish to secondary and higher educational institutions. Jews who had received the degree of doctor in any branch of science... were given the right to enter government service. (Jewish doctors had that right even earlier.) As regards local self-government, the Statute removed the Jews’ previous restrictions: now they could occupy posts in dumas, magistracies and town councils ‘on the same basis as people of other confessions are elected to them’. (True, some local authorities, especially in Lithuania, objected to this: the head of the town on some days had to lead the residents into the church, and how could this be a Jew? Or how could a Jew be a judge, since the oath had to be sworn on the cross? The opposition proved to be strong, and by a decree of 1836 it was established for the western provinces that Jews could occupy only a third of the posts in magistracies and town councils.) Finally, with regard to the economically urgent question linked with cross-frontier smuggling, which was undermining State interests, the Statute left the Jews living on the frontiers where they were, but forbade any new settlements.

“For a State that held millions of its population in serfdom, all this cannot be characterised as a cruel system...”

This is an important point in view of the persistent western and Jewish propaganda that Nicholas was a persecutor of the Jews. And in this light even the most notorious restriction on the Jews – that they live in the Pale of Settlement – looks generous. For while a peasant had to live in his village, the Jews could wander throughout the vast territory of the Pale, an area the size of France and Germany combined; while for those who were willing to practise agriculture, or had acquired education, they could go even further afield.

Of particular importance were the Tsar’s measures encouraging Jewish education, by which he hoped to remove the barriers built up around the Jews by the rabbis. ‘Already in 1831 he told the ‘directing’ committee that ‘among the measures that could improve the situation of the Jews, it was necessary to pay attention to their correction by teaching... by the building of factories, by the banning of early marriage, by a better management of the kahals,... by a change of dress’. And in 1840, on the founding the ‘Committee for the Defining of Measures for the Radical Transformation of the Jews in Russia’, one of its first aims was seen to be: ‘Acting on the moral formation of the new generation of Jews by the establishment of Jewish schools in a spirit opposed to the present Talmudic teaching’...

“The masses, fearing coercive measures in the sphere of religion, did not go.

“However, the school reform took its course in... 1844, in spite of the extreme resistance of the ruling circles among the kahals. (Although ‘the establishment of

301 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 115-117.
302 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 122.
Jewish schools by no means envisaged a diminution in the numbers of Jews in the general school institutions; on the contrary, it was often pointed out that the general schools had to be, as before, open for Jews'.) Two forms of State Jewish schools ['on the model of the Austrian elementary schools for Jews'] were established: two-year schools, corresponding to Russian parish schools, and four-year schools, corresponding to uyezd schools. In them only Jewish subjects were taught by Jewish teachers. (As one inveterate revolutionary, Lev Deutsch, evaluated it: 'The crown-bearing monster ordered them [the Jews] to be taught Russian letters'.) For many years Christians were placed at the head of these schools; only much later were Jews also admitted.

"The majority of the Jewish population, faithful to traditional Jewry, on learning or guessing the secret aim of Uvarov [the minister of enlightenment], looked on the educational measures of the government as one form of persecution. (But Uvarov, in seeking possible ways of bringing the Jews and the Christian population closer together through the eradication 'of prejudices instilled by the teaching of the Talmud', wanted to exclude it completely from the educational curriculum, considering it to be an antichristian codex.) In their unchanging distrust of the Russian authorities, the Jewish population continued for quite a few years to keep away from these schools, experiencing 'school-phobia': 'Just as the population kept away from military service, so it was saved from the schools, fearing to give their children to these seed-beds of "free thought"'. Prosperous Jewish families in part sent other, poor people's children to the State schools instead of their own... And if by 1855 70 thousand Jewish children were studying in the 'registered' [rabbinic schools], in the State schools of both types there were 3,200."

This issue of education was to prove to be crucial. For when, in the next reign, the Jews did overcome their "school-phobia", and send their children to the State schools, these had indeed become seed-beds of "free-thinking" and revolution. It is ironic and tragic that it was the Jews' education in Russian schools that taught them how to overthrow the Russian Orthodox Autocracy...

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59. RUSSIAN HEGELIANISM

The most important influence on young intellectuals in Russia in the 1820s was German idealism, especially the philosophy of Hegel. Many went to Germany and listened to the lectures of Hegel himself, and of other important German philosophers such as Schelling. The influence of these lectures on the Russian intelligentsia lasted deep into the nineteenth century.

“In Russia, as elsewhere,” writes Richard Pipes, “the principal consequence of Idealism was greatly to enhance the creative role of the human mind. Kant’s critique of empirical theories had this inadvertent result that it transformed the mind from a mere recipient of sensory impressions into an active participant in the process of cognition. The manner in which intelligence, through its inbuilt categories, perceived reality was in itself an essential attribute of that reality. With this argument, the Idealist school which sprung up to overshadow Empiricism, gave a weapon to all those interested in promoting the human mind as the supreme creative force – that is, in the first place, the intellectuals. It was now possible to argue that ideas were every bit as ‘real’ as physical facts, if not more so. ‘Thought’ broadly defined to include feelings, sensations, and, above all, creative artistic impulses was raised to a status of equality with ‘Nature’. Everything fitted together; nothing was accidental: intelligence merely had to grasp how phenomena related to ideas. ‘I owe to Schelling the habit I now have of generalizing the least events and the most insignificant phenomena which I encounter’, wrote V.F. Odoevskii, a leading Schellingian of the 1820s. In the late 1830s when Russian intellectuals became drunk on Hegel, the addiction acquired extreme forms. Alexander Herzen, having returned from exile, found his Moscow friends in a kind of collective delirium:

“'Nobody at this time would have disowned such as sentence as this: “The concrescence of abstract ideas in the sphere of the plastic represents that phase of the self-questing spirit in which it, defining itself for itself, is potentialized from natural immanence into the harmonious sphere of the formal consciousness in beauty”... Everything that in fact is most immediate, all the simplest feelings were erected into abstract categories and returned from thence as pale, algebraic ghosts, without a drop of living blood... A man who went for a walk... went not just for a walk, but in order to give himself over to the pantheistic feelings of his identification with the cosmos. If, on the way, he met a tipsy soldier or a peasant woman who tried to strike up a conversation, the philosopher did not simply talk with them, he determined the substantiality of the popular element, both in its immediate and its accidental manifestations. The very tear which might arise to his eye was strictly referred to its proper category: to Gemüth or the “tragic element in the heart”.’

“Secondly, and only slightly less importantly, Idealism injected into philosophy a dynamic element. It conceived reality, both in its spiritual and physical aspects, as undergoing constant evolution, as ‘becoming’ rather than ‘being’. The entire cosmos was evolving, the process leading towards a vaguely defined goal of a perfectly free and rational existence. This ‘historicist’ element,
present in all Idealist doctrines, has become ever since an indispensable ingredient of all ‘ideologies’. It gave and continues to give the intelligentsia the assurance that the reality with which they happen to be surrounded and in varying degrees repudiate is by the very nature of things transitory, a stepping stone to something superior. Furthermore, it allows them to argue that whatever discrepancy there might exist between their ideas and reality is due to the fact that reality, as it were, has not yet caught up with their ideas. Failure is always temporary for ideologues, as success is always seen by them to be illusory for the powers that be.

“The net effect of Idealism was to inspire Russian intellectuals with a self-confidence which they had never possessed before. Mind was linked with nature, both participating in a relentless unfolding of historical processes; compared to this vision, what were mere governments, economies, armies and bureaucracies? Prince Odoevskii thus describes the exaltation he and his friends experienced on being first exposed to these heady concepts:

“‘What solemn, luminous, and joyful feeling permeated life once it had been shown that it was possible to explain the phenomena of nature by the very same laws to which the human spirit is subject in its evolution, seemingly to close forever the gap separating the two realms, and fashion them into a single receptacle containing the eternal idea and eternal reason. With what youthful and noble pride did we at that time envisage the share which had been allotted to man in this universal existence! By virtue of the quality and right of thought, man transposed visible nature within himself and analysed it in the innermost recesses of his own consciousness: in short, he became nature’s focal point, judge and interpreter. He absorbed nature and in him it revived for rational and inspired existence... The more radiantly the eternal spirit, the eternal idea reflected themselves in man, the more fully did he understand their present in all the other realms of life. The culmination of the whole [Idealist] outlook were moral obligations, and one of the most indispensable obligations was to emancipate within oneself the divine share of the world idea from everything accidental, impure, and false in order to acquire the right to the blessings of a genuine, rational existence.’

“Of course, not all Russian intellectuals succumbed to such ecstasy. Idealism had also more sober followers, as, for example, among academic historians who took from Hegel little more than a general scheme of development of human societies. But in some degree, in the reign of Nicholas I (1825-55) Idealism was an all-pervading philosophy of the Russian intelligentsia, and its influence persisted well into the second half of the nineteenth century, after its principal tenets had been repudiated and replaced by materialism...”

But idealism was not replaced only by materialism... Some of the Russian Hegelians became materialists and Marxists. But others began to return to the roots of Russian national and religious consciousness in the movement known as Slavophilism...

There were some positive things that the Russians gained from Hegelianism. Among them was the idea 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 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 no 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 uninterrupted 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 Russian 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 Russian interest in history was the greater concentration, among the Russians, on Hegel’s concept of “the historical nation”, and on Herder’s idea 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.

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Thus the nobleman Peter Chaadaev, a convert to Catholicism, according to Andrej Kompaneets, “attached a great importance to history in his investigations. Chaadaev was sure: if humanity allowed itself to see in their true light the causes and consequences of the historical process, then even nationalities divided up to now ‘would unite for the attainment of an agreed and general result’. The aim of the philosophy of history is ‘to attain a clear representation of the general law governing the succession of epochs’, but this law constituted a certain idea (a moral idea) moving civilizations. But when this idea is exhausted, the state perishes. Thus, for example, the Roman Empire, Egypt, Alexandria: ‘these were rotting corpses; they (the barbarians – A.K.) only scattered their dust in the wind’.”

“What was the relationship between the old, pre-Petrine Russia and the new, post-Petrine Russia?” they asked. “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?”

More particularly, it was Hegel’s failure “to find room for the Slavs”, as G. Vernadsky put it, that provoked and intrigued the Russian intellectuals, both westerners like Chaadaev and Herzen and Slavophiles like Khomiakov and Kireyevsky. 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.”

Was Russia no more than “an intermediate nationality”? asked the Russian intellectuals indignantly. 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?

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307 Hegel, Lectures on the Philosophy of History; quoted in Cohen and Major, op. cit., p. 175.
60. GREECE AFTER THE REVOLUTION

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. If the Turks had been driven out, then 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. In an encyclical to the clergy he wrote: “Speak to the hearts of the people the law of God, rightly dividing the word of truth. Announce peace. Evangelize unanimity. Teach philanthropy, love for each other, that all may be one in Christ”. 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’.”

309 Gregory Frazee, *The Orthodox Church and Independent Greece 1821-1852*, Cambridge University Press, 1969, p. 44.
310 Frazee, op. cit., p. 62.
311 Frazee, op. cit., p. 54.
312 Frazee, op. cit., pp. 54-57.
313 Boanerges (Esphigmenou monastery, Mount Athos), 24, March-April, 2006, p. 32.
Misha Glenny comments: "Although [he] attempted to integrate the various factions into his system of authoritarian government, he underestimated the strength of particularism. All sides distinguished themselves by their appalling behavior. The Hydriots, who had excelled themselves during the war, mounted an insurrection in August 1831 so bitter that they preferred to scuttle their entire fleet, the only real source of independent Greek power, rather than see it come under central government control. By imprisoning Petrobey, the Maniot leader of the Mavromichalis family, Kapodistrias sealed his own fate. The President was shot dead in October 1831 while leaving the church in Greece's first capital, the pretty harbor town of Nauplio."\[315\]

On May 7, 1832 Britain, France, Russia and Bavaria signed a treaty in London guaranteeing Greece’s independence and naming 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…”\[316\]

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, and George von Maurer, a liberal Protestant. Pressed by the British and French envoys, 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.”\[317\]

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".

\[316\] Zamoyski, Holy Madness, pp. 243, 245.
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.”

Not only did the Ecumenical Patriarchate condemn the new Church: many Greeks in Greece were also very unhappy with their situation.

In effect, the Greek Church had 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 were 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 Luthero-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.”

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318 Frazee, op. cit., p. 114.
320 Flammiatos, cited in Monk Augustine, “To imerologiakon skhisma apo istorikis kai kanonikis apopseos exetazomenou” (The calendar schism from an historical and canonical point of view), Agios Agathangelos Esphigmenitis, 129, January-February, 1992, p. 12 (in Greek).
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.\textsuperscript{321}

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 evil 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...

These questions and preoccupations led to the emergence of two schools of thought on the nature and destiny of Russia: the westerners, who basically thought that the westernizing path chosen by Peter had been correct, and the Slavophiles, who believed in Orthodoxy, in the pre-Petrine symphony of powers, and in a special, distinct path chosen by God for Russia. Almost the whole of the public intellectual life of Russia until the revolution could be described as increasingly complex variations on these two viewpoints and the various intermediate positions: Chaadaev and Pushkin, Belinsky and Gogol, Herzen and Khomiakov, Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky, Soloviev and Pobedonostev, Lenin and Tikhomorov. The result was paradoxical: an increasing westernization of the noble educated classes, and an increasing “Slavophilisation” of the tsars themselves, culminating in the most Orthodox and Slavophile of all the tsars, Nicholas II.

The great debate began in 1836 with the publication, by Chaadaev, of the first of his Philosophical Letters (1829 – 1831). N.O. Lossky writes: “The letters are ostensibly addressed to a lady who is supposed to have asked Chaadaev’s advice on the ordering of her spiritual life. In the first letter Chaadaev advises the lady to observe the ordinances of the Church as a spiritual exercise in obedience. Strict observance of church customs and regulations may only be dispensed with, he says, when ‘beliefs of a higher order have been attained, raising our spirit to the source of all certainty;’ such beliefs must not be in contradiction to the ‘beliefs of the people’. Chaadaev recommends a well-regulated life as favorable to spiritual development and praises Western Europe where ‘the ideas of duty, justice, law, order’ are part of the people’s flesh and blood and are, as he puts it, not the psychology, but the physiology of the West. He evidently has in mind the disciplinary influence of the Roman Church.

As to Russia, Chaadaev is extremely critical of her. Russia, in his opinion, is neither the West nor the East. ‘Lonely in the world, we have given nothing to the world, have taught it nothing; we have not contributed one idea to the mass of human ideas.’ ‘If we had not spread ourselves from [the] Behring Straits to [the] Oder, we would never have been noticed.’ We do not, as it were, form part of the human organism and exist ‘solely in order to give humanity some important lesson’.” According to Chaadaev, “not a single useful thought has sprouted in our country’s barren soil; not a single great truth has emerged from our ambit…. Something in our blood repulses all true progress. In the end we have lived and now live solely to serve as some inscrutable great lesson for the distant generations that will grasp it; today, whatever anyone may say, we are a void in the intellectual firmament.”

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322 The idea that Church regulations and customs, such as fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays, could be dispensed with was an attitude of the nobility which St. Seraphim of Sarov, in particular, criticized. He said that he who does not fast is not Orthodox. (V.M.)
Sir Isaiah Berlin sums up the matter well: “Chaadaev’s attack, with its deification of Western traditions, ideas and civilisation, was the key to later Russian ‘social thought’. Its importance was enormous. It set the tone, it struck the dominant notes which were echoed by every major Russian writer up to and beyond the Revolution. Everything is there: the proclamation that the Russian past is blank or filled with chaos, that the only true culture is the Roman West, and that the Great Schism robbed Russia of her birthright and left her barbarous, an abortion of the creative process, a caution to other peoples, a Caliban among nations. Here, too, is the extraordinary tendency toward self-preoccupation which characterises Russian writing even more than that of the Germans, from whom this tendency mainly stems. Other writers, in England, France, even Germany, write about life, love, nature and human relations at large; Russian writing, even when it is most deeply in debt to Goethe or Schiller or Dickens or Stendhal, is about Russia, the Russian past, the Russian present, Russian prospects, the Russian character, Russian vices and Russian virtues. All the ‘accursed questions’ (as Heine was perhaps the first to call them) turn in Russian into notorious proklyatye voprosy – questions about the destinies (sud’by) of Russia: Where do we come from? Whither are we bound? Why are we who we are? Should we teach the West or learn from it? Is our ‘broad’ Slav nature higher in the spiritual scale than that of the ‘Europeans’ – a source of salvation for all mankind – or merely a form of infantilism and barbarism destined to be superseded or destroyed? The problem of the ‘superfluous man’ is here already; it is not an accident that Chaadaev was an intimate friend of the creator of Eugene Onegin [Pushkin]. No less characteristic of this mental condition is Chaadaev’s contrary speculation that was also destined to have a career in subsequent writing, in which he wondered whether the Russians, who have arrived so late at the feast of the nations and are still young, barbarous and untried, do not thereby derive advantages, perhaps overwhelming ones, over older or more civilised societies. Fresh and strong, the Russians might profit by the inventions and discoveries of the others without having to go through the torments that have attended their mentors’ struggles for life and civilisation. Might there not be a vast positive gain in being late in the field? Herzen and Chernyshevsky, Marxists and anti-Marxists, were to repeat this with mounting optimism. But the most central and far-reaching question was still that posed by Chaadaev. He asked: Who are we and what should be our path? Have we unique treasures (as the Slavophiles maintained) preserved for us by our Church – the only true Christian one – which Catholics and Protestants have each in their own way lost or destroyed? Is that which the West despises as coarse and primitive in fact a source of life – the only pure source in the decaying post-Christian world? Or, on the contrary, is the West at least partially right: if we are ever to say our own word and play our part and show the world what kind of people we are, must we not learn from the Westerners, acquire their skills, study in their schools, emulate their arts and sciences, and perhaps the darker sides of their lives also? The lines of battle in the century that followed remained where Chaadaev drew them: the weapons were ideas which, whatever their origins, in Russian became matters of the deepest concern – often of life and death – as they never we in England or France or, to such a degree, in Romantic Germany.
Kireyevsky, Khomiakov and Aksakov gave one answer, Belinsky and Dobrolyubov another, Kavelin yet a third."325

Chaadaev’s letter had an enormous impact on Russian society; Herzen remarked that it “shook the whole of intellectual Russia”. The tsar was furious. Klementy Rosset, an officer of the General Staff, wrote to the famous poet Alexander Pushkin: “The Emperor has read Chaadaev’s article and found it absurd and extravagant, saying that he was sure ‘that Moscow did not share the insane opinions of the Author’, and has instructed the governor-general Prince Golitsyn to inquire daily as to the health of Chaadaev’s wits and to put him under governmental surveillance…”326

This letter, together with the other Philosophical Letters, elicited from Pushkin the first, and one of the best statements of the opposing, Slavophile position. Pushkin had known Chaadaev for a long time. In 1818, when his views were more radical (and blasphemously atheist) than they came to be at the end of his life, he had dedicated to Chaadaev the following lines:

Comrade, believe: joy’s star will leap
Upon our sight, a radiant token;
Russia will rise from her long sleep;
And where autocracy lies, broken,
Our names shall yet be graven deep.327

But even here anti-autocratic sentiments are combined with a belief in Russia. So although Pushkin admitted to the Tsar that he would have participated in the Decembrist rebellion if he had not been in exile, he was never a typical westernizer. This fact, combined with his deep reading in Russian history, the stabilising experience of marriage and, as we have seen, an enlightening interview with the Tsar himself, led Pushkin to a kind of conversion to Russia, to Tsarism and to a belief in her significance as a phenomenon independent of Europe: “Why is it necessary that one of us [the tsar] should become higher than all and even higher than the law itself? Because the law is a tree, and in the law man hears something cruel and unfraternal. You don’t get far with merely the literal fulfillment of the law: but none of us must break it or not fulfill it: for this a higher mercy softening the law is necessary. This can appear to men only in a fully-empowered authority. The state without a fully-empowered monarch is an automaton: many, if attains to what the United States has attained. But what is the United States? A corpse. In them man has disappeared to the point that he’s not worth a brass farthing. A state without a fully-empowered monarch is the same as an orchestra without a conductor. However good the musicians, if there is not one among them who gives the beat with the movement of his baton, the concert gets nowhere…”328

328 Razgovory Pushkina (The Conversations of Pushkin), Moscow, 1926.
The sincerity of his conversion was demonstrated during the Polish rebellion in 1830. Although “enlightened” Europe condemned the Tsar for crushing the rebellion, on August 2, 1830, just three weeks before the taking of Warsaw by Russian troops, Pushkin wrote “To the Slanderers of Russia”. From that time, as the friend of the poet’s brother, Michael Yuzefovich, wrote, “his world-view changed, completely and unalterably. He was already a deeply believing person: [he now became] a citizen who had changed his mind, having understood the demands of Russian life and renounced utopian illusions.”\(^\text{329}\)

However, Chaadaev had not undergone this conversion, and was still not convinced that Russia’s past was anything more than “a blank sheet of paper”, “an unhappy country with neither past, present nor future”.

Valery Lepakhin and Andrei Zavarzin summarised the debate between Chaadaev and Pushkin as follows: “Russia and Europe. This problem especially occupied the minds of Russians at the beginning of the 19th century. Chaadaev considered the schism (the division of the Churches [in 1054]) as a tragedy for Russia, which separated it from Christianity (of course, from Catholicism, and not from Christianity, but at that time these terms were synonymous for Chaadaev), from ‘the world idea’, form ‘real progress’, from ‘the wonderworking principle’, from ‘the enlightened, civilized peoples’. In principle Pushkin agreed with Chaadaev, but specified that ‘the schism disunited us from backward Europe’: first, it separated ‘us’, that is, not only Russia, but in general the whole of the eastern branch of Christianity, and secondly, it separated simply from ‘backward Europe’, and not from ‘enlightened and civilized people’, as Chaadaev claimed. In reading the Russian chronicles, sermons and lives of saints, it is impossible not to notice the fact that they are full of gratitude to God for the fact the Rus’ accepted baptism from Orthodox Constantinople, and not from Catholic Rome.\(^\text{330}\) This fact is never viewed as a tragedy in Russian literature and history, rather the opposite: beginning with the description of the holy Prince Vladimir’s choice of faith, this event became the subject of poetry and chant. And not out of hostility to Catholicism, and from faith in Divine Providence, which judged that it should be so and which the consciousness of believers perceived with gratitude, for Providence cannot err. But Chaadaev, who speaks so much about Christianity, sees in this fact ‘the will of fate’ in a pagan manner.

“Pushkin agreed with his friend of many years that ‘we did not take part in any of the great events which shook her (Europe)’. But it does not occur to Chaadaev to ask the simple question: why should Rus’ have taken part. Or, for example, would not this ‘participation’ have been for the worse, both for Europe and for Rus’? Pushkin gives a simple, but principled reply at this point: Russia has ‘her own special calling’, which Pushkin in another place calls ‘lofty’: ‘It was Russia and her vast expanses that were swallowed up by the Mongol invasion.


\(^{330}\) At the time of the baptism of Rus’ in 988, Rome was still formally Orthodox and in communion with Constantinople. Nevertheless, heretical tendencies were already deeply rooted in the West. (V.M.)
The Tartars did not dare to cross our western frontiers and leave us in their rear. They departed for their deserts, and Christian civilisation was saved... By our martyrdom the energetic development of Catholic Europe was delivered from all kinds of hindrances'. From Pushkin’s reply it follows that indirectly at any rate Russia did take part in the life of Western Europe, and, in accordance with its historical significance, this participation was weighty and fraught with consequences for the West. It was not a direct participation insofar as Russia had a different calling. The complete opposition of Pushkin’s and Chaadaev’s views on the problem is characteristic. For the latter the Tartar-Mongol yoke was a ‘cruel and humiliating foreign domination’. For Pushkin this epoch was sanctified by the lofty word ‘martyrdom’, which Russia received not only for herself, but also for her western brothers, for Christian civilization generally. In his reply Pushkin links the special calling of Russia with her reception of Orthodoxy, and see in it not ‘the will of fate’, but Russia’s preparation of herself for this martyrdom.

“Chaadaev’s attitude to Byzantium also elicited objections from Pushkin. Chaadaev called Byzantium ‘corrupt’, he affirmed that it was at that time (the 10th century – the reception of Christianity by Rus’) ‘an object of profound disdain’ for the West European peoples. Now it is difficult even to say what there is more of in this passage from Chaadaev: simple ignorance of the history of Byzantium and Europe and complete absorption in his speculative historiosophical conception, or the conscious prejudice of a westerniser. The beginning of the 10th century in Byzantium was marked by the activity of Leo VI, ‘the Wise’, the middle – by the reign of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, and the end – by the victories of Basil II the Bulgar-slayer. It was precisely this period that saw the development of political theories and the science of jurisprudence, theoretical military thought and knowledge of the natural sciences. New schools were opened, and a good education was highly prized both in the world and in the Church. Significant works were produced in the sphere of philosophy, literature and the fine arts, and theology produced such a light as Simeon the New Theologian, the third (after the holy Evangelist John the Theologian and St. Gregory the Theologian) to be given the title ‘theologian’ by the Orthodox Church. ... This period is considered by scientists to be the epoch of the flourishing of Byzantine aesthetic consciousness, of architecture and music. If one compares the 10th century in Byzantium and in Europe, the comparison will not be in favour of the latter. Moreover, Chaadaev himself speaks of the ‘barbarism’ of the peoples that despised Byzantium.

“‘You say,’ writes Pushkin, ‘that the source from which we drew up Christianity was impure, that Byzantium was worthy of disdain and was disdained’, but, even if it was so, one should bear in mind that ‘from the Greeks we took the Gospel and the traditions, and not the spirit of childish triviality and disputes about words. The morals of Byzantium never were the morals of Kiev. For Chaadaev it was important ‘from where’, but for Pushkin ‘how’ and ‘what’ they took it. After all, ‘was not Jesus Christ Himself born as a Jew and was not Jerusalem a proverb among the nations?’ Pushkin did not want to enter into polemics on the subject of Byzantium insofar as that would have dragged out his letter. Moreover, the problem was a special one not directly connected with the
polemic surrounding the history of Russia. For him it was evident that Russia, as a young and healthy organism, had filtered through her Byzantine heritage, assimilated the natural and cast out that which was foreign and harmful. Above mention was made of the fact that in the chronicles praise was often offered to God for the reception of Christianity by Rus’ from Byzantium. But no less often do we find critical remarks about the Greek metropolitans, and of the Greeks and Byzantium in general. Therefore Pushkin placed the emphasis on the critical assimilation of the Byzantine heritage. For him, Rus’ received from Byzantium first of all ‘the light of Christianity’.

“Both Chaadaev and Pushkin highly esteemed the role of Christianity in world history. In his review of The History of the Russian People by N. Polevoj, the latter wrote: ‘The greatest spiritual and political turning-point [in the history of] of our planet is Christianity. In this sacred element the world disappeared and renewed itself. Ancient history is the history of Egypt, Persia, Greece, Rome. Modern history is the history of Christianity.’ Chaadaev would also have signed up to these words, but immediately after this common affirmation differences would have arisen. For Chaadaev true Christianity rules, shapes and ‘lords over everything’ only in Catholic Europe – ‘there Christianity accomplished everything’. Chaadaev even considers the history of Catholic Europe to be ‘sacred, like the history of the ancient chosen people’.

“He recognises the right of the Russians, as, for example, of the Abyssinians, to call themselves Christians, but in the Christianity of the former and the latter that ‘order of things’, which ‘constitutes the final calling of the human race’ was not realised at all. ‘Don’t you think,’ says Chaadaev to his correspondent, ‘that these stupid departures from Divine and human truths (read: Orthodoxy) drag heaven down to earth?’ And so there exist Catholic Europe, the incarnation of Christianity, and Russia, Abyssinia and certain other historical countries which have stagnated in ‘stupid departures from Divine and human truths’. Chaadaev refuses these countries the right to their own path, even the right to have a future.

“In one of his reviews Pushkin indirectly replies to Chaadaev: ‘Understand,’ he writes, ‘that Russia never had anything in common with the rest of Europe; her history demands other thoughts, other formulae, different from the thoughts and formulae extracted by Guizot from the history of the Christian West’. For Pushkin it is absolutely obvious that any schema of historical development will remain a private, speculative schema and will never have a universal character. Any conception is built on the basis of some definite historical material, and to transfer it, out of confidence in its universality, to other epochs or countries would be a mistake. After all, as often as not that which does not fit into a once-worked-out schema is cut off and declared to have no significance and not worthy of study or analysis. But Pushkin makes his own generalisations, proceeding from history, from concrete facts. S. Frank wrote: ‘The greatest Russian poet was also completely original and, we can boldly say, the greatest Russian political thinker of the 19th century’. This was also noticed by the poet’s contemporaries. Vyzamesky wrote: ‘In Pushkin there was a true understanding of history… The properties of his mind were: clarity, incisiveness, sobriety… He
would not paint pictures according to a common standard and size of already-prepared frames, as is often done by the most recent historians in order more conveniently to fit into them the events and people about to be portrayed’. But it was precisely this that was the defect of Chaadaev’s method. Moreover, the non-correspondence of schema and historical reality (frame and picture) was sometimes so blatant with him that he had completely to reject the historical and religious path of Russia for the sake of preserving his schema of world development.

“Pushkin also disagreed with Chaadaev concerning the unity of Christianity, which for Chaadaev ‘wholly consisted in the idea of the merging of all the moral forces of the world’ for the establishment of ‘a social system or Church which would have to introduce the kingdom of truth among people’.331 To this Pushkin objected already in his letter of 1831: ‘You see the unity of Christianity in Catholicism, that is, in the Pope. Does it not consist in the idea of Christ, which we find also in Protestantism?’ Pushkin notes the Catholico-entrism of Chaadaev, and reminds him of the Protestant part of the Western Christian world. But the main point is that Pushkin turns out to be better-prepared theologically than Chaadaev. The Church is the Body of Christ, and Christ Himself is Her Head, according to the teaching of the Apostle Paul (Ephesians 1.23, 4.16; Colossians 1.18, etc.). Here Pushkin in a certain sense anticipates the problems of Dostoyevsky, who considered that Rus’ had preserved that Christ that the West had lost, and that the division of the Churches had taken place precisely because of different understandings of Christ.

“Pushkin considered it necessary to say a few words also about the clergy, although Chaadaev had not directly criticised them in his first letter. ‘Our clergy,’ writes the poet, ‘were worthy of respect until Theophan [Prokopovich]. They never sullied themselves with the wretchednesses of papism..., and, of course, they would never have elicited a Reformation at a moment when mankind needed unity more than anything.’ In evaluating the role of the clergy in Russian history, Pushkin distinguished between two stages: before Peter and after Peter. The role of the clergy in Russian life before Peter was exceptionally great. Ancient Rus’ inherited from Byzantium, together with the two-headed eagle on her arms, the idea of the symphony of secular and ecclesiastical power. This idea was equally foreign both to caesaropapism and papocaesarism and the democratic idea of the separation of the Church from the State. Of course, symphony never found its full incarnation in State life, but it is important that as an idea it lived both in the Church and in the State, and the role of the clergy as the necessary subject of this symphony was naturally lofty and indisputable. But even outside the conception of ‘symphony’, the clergy played an exceptionally important role in the history of Russia. In the epoch of the Tatar-Mongol yoke they were almost the only educated class in Russian society: ‘The clergy, spared by the wonderful quick-wittedness of the Tatars alone in the course of two dark centuries kept alive the pale sparks of Byzantine education’. In another place

331 For Chaadaev “the supreme principle” was “unity”, which he saw incarnate in Western Catholic Christendom - completely forgetting that the West was torn by the division between Catholicism and Protestantism. See Pushkin’s remark below. (V.M.)
Pushkin even found it necessary to contrast the Russian and Catholic clergy—true, without detailed explanations of his affirmation: ‘In Russia the influence of the clergy was so beneficial, and in the Roman-Catholic lands so harmful… Consequently we are obliged to the monks of our history also for our enlightenment’.

“A new era began from the time of Theophan Prokopovich (more exactly: Peter I), according to Pushkin. In a draft of a letter dated 1836 he wrote to Chaadaev: ‘Peter the Great tamed (another variant: ‘destroyed’) the clergy, having removed the patriarchate’. Peter made the clergy into an institution obedient to himself and destroyed the age-old idea of symphony. Now they had begun to be excised from the consciousness both of the clergy and of the simple people, and of state officials. In losing their role in society, the clergy were becoming more and more backward, more and more distant from the needs and demands of the life of society. They were being forced to take the role of ‘fulfillers of the cult’.

“In Pushkin’s opinion, a serious blow against the clergy was later delivered by Catherine II. And if we are to speak of the backwardness of the Russian clergy, it is there that we must see its source. ‘Catherine clearly persecuted the clergy, sacrificing it to her unlimited love of power, in the service of the spirit of the times… The seminaries fell into a state of complete collapse. Many villages did not have priests… What a pity! For the Greek [Orthodox Christian] confession gives us our special national character’. If Chaadaev reproaches Russia for not having ‘her own face’, then for Pushkin it is evident that Russia has ‘her own face’ and it was formed by Orthodoxy. Therefore a sad note is heard in Pushkin’s evaluation of the era of Catherine: she has her own face, her own ‘special national character’, if only she does not lose it because of ill-thought-out reforms and regulations foreign to the spirit of Russian life. In contrast to Chaadaev, Pushkin linked the backwardness of the contemporary clergy not with the reception of Christianity from Byzantium, but with the recent transformations in Russian State and Church life, and sought the roots of this backwardness not in the 10th century but in the 18th century, in the reforms of Peter and in the epoch of the so-called Enlightenment…”332

Such was the debate in its main outlines. And yet, just as Pushkin moved towards the Slavophile position later in life, so, less surely, did Chaadaev. Thus in 1830 he praised Pushkin’s nationalist poems on the Warsaw insurrection. And later, in his Apology of a Madman (1837), he was inclined to think that the very emptiness of Russia’s past might enable her to contribute to the future. Indeed, he then believed that Russia was destined “to resolve the greater part of the social problems, to perfect the greater part of the ideas which have arisen in older societies, to pronounce judgement on the most serious questions which trouble the human race”.333 Moreover, in the same Apology (1837), he spoke of

333 Walicki, op. cit., p. 89.
the Orthodox Church as “this church that is so humble and sometimes so heroic”. And in a conversation with Khomiakov in 1843 he declared: “Holy Orthodoxy shines out for us from Holy Byzantium”.\textsuperscript{334}

However, while Slavophile tendencies sometimes surfaced in Chaadaev, as in other westerners, his fundamentally westernizing radicalism was revealed by his anti-monarchical remark on the occasion of the European revolutions in 1848: “We don’t want any king except the King of heaven”…\textsuperscript{335}

\textsuperscript{334} But Byzantium, he notes, was still in communion with Rome at that time, and “there was a feeling of common Christian citizenship”. (Wil van den Bercken, \textit{Holy Russia and Christian Europe}, London: SCM Press, 1999, p. 198).

\textsuperscript{335} Lossky, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 49. Moreover, in 1854, during the Crimean War, he wrote: “Talking about Russia, one always imagines that one is talking about a country like the others; in reality, this is not so at all. Russia is a whole separate world, submissive to the will, caprice, fantasy of a single man, whether his name be Peter or Ivan, no matter – in all instances the common element is the embodiment of arbitrariness. Contrary to all the laws of the human community, Russia moves only in direction of her own enslavement and the enslavement of all the neighbouring peoples. For this reason it would be in the interest not only of other peoples but also in that of her own that she be compelled to take a new path” (in Pipes, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 266). Note the use of the word “compel”…
The figure of Peter the Great continued to be a critical point of difference between the Westerners and the Slavophiles. The Westerners admired him (for Chaadaev he was, with Alexander I, almost the only significant Russian): the Slavophiles criticised him as the corrupter of the true Russian tradition. All felt they had to interpret his place in Russian history.

Once again it was Pushkin who began the reappraisal with his famous poem on the statue of Peter, The Bronze Horseman. However, it was the literary critic Vissarion Grigoryevich Belinsky who made the decisive contribution from the Westerners’ side. And another writer, Nicholas Vasilyevich Gogol, who took the Slavophile argument one step further…

Unlike most of the intellectuals of the time, Belinsky was not a nobleman, but a raznochinets (that is, of undetermined or “sundry” rank, a nobleman by birth who did not occupy himself with a nobleman’s pursuits). Moreover, he was an atheist. In fact, he rejected all the traditional pillars of Russian life. He was one of the first to recognize the greatness of Pushkin. And he was equally perceptive of the talent of Gogol and Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky. And yet these writers, “discovered” by Belinsky, turned decisively against his westernising philosophy…

Belinsky was concerned, writes Walicki, “above all with the role of Peter the Great and the antithesis of pre-and post-reform Russia. In his analysis, he made use of a dialectical scheme current among the Russian Hegelians, although he was the first to apply it to Russian history. Individuals as well as whole nations, he argued, pass through three evolutionary stages: the first is the stage of ‘natural immediacy’; the second is that of the abstract universalism of reason, with its ‘torments of reflection’ and painful cleavage between immediacy and consciousness; the third is that of ‘rational reality’, which is founded on the ‘harmonious reconciliation of the immediate and conscious elements’.

“Belinsky developed this idea in detail as early as 1841, in his long essay on ‘The Deeds of Peter the Great’, in which he wrote: ‘There is a difference between a nation in its natural, immediate and patriarchal state, and this same nation in the rational movement of its historical development’. In the earlier stage, he suggested, a nation cannot really properly be called a nation (natsiia), but only a people (narod). The choice of terms was important to Belinsky: during the reign of Nicholas the word narodnost’, used… by the exponents of Official Nationality [together with the words ‘Orthodoxy’ and ‘Autocracy’ to express the essence of Russian life], had a distinctly conservative flavour; natsional’nost’, on the other hand, thanks to its foreign derivation evoked the French Revolution and echoes of bourgeois democratic national developments.

“Belinsky’s picture of pre-Petrine Russia was surprisingly similar to that presented by the Slavophiles, although his conclusions were quite different from theirs. Before Peter the Russian people (i.e. the nation in the age of immediacy)
had been a close-knit community held together by faith and custom – i.e. by the unreflective approval of tradition idealized by the Slavophiles. These very qualities, however, allowed no room for the emergence of rational thought or individuality, and thus prevented dynamic social change.

“Before Russians could be transformed into a nation it was necessary to break up their stagnating society... Belinsky argued that the emergence of every modern nation was accompanied by an apparently contradictory phenomenon – namely the cleavage between the upper and lower strata of society that so disturbed the Slavophiles. He regarded this as confirmation of certain general rules applying to the formation of modern nation-states: ‘In the modern world,’ he wrote, ‘all the elements within society operate in isolation, each one separately and independently... in order to develop all the more fully and perfectly... and to become fused once more into a new and homogeneous whole on a higher level than the original undifferentiated homogeneity’. In his polemics with the Slavophiles, who regarded the cleavage between the cultivated elite and the common people as the prime evil of post-Petrine Russia, Belinsky argued that ‘the gulf between society and the people will disappear in the course of time, with the progress of civilization’. This meant ‘raising the people to the level of society’, he was anxious to stress, and not ‘forcing society back to the level of the people’, which was the Slavophiles’ remedy. The Petrine reforms, which had been responsible for this social gulf, were therefore, in Belinsky’s view, the first and decisive step toward modern Russia. ‘Before Peter the Great, Russia was merely a people [narod]; she became a nation [natsiia] thanks to the changes initiated by the reformer.’”

Berlin writes: “The central question for all Russians concerned about the condition of their country was social, and perhaps the most decisive single influence on the life and work of Belinsky was his social origin. He was born in poverty and bred in the atmosphere, at once bleak and coarse, of an obscure country town in a backward province. Moscow did, to some degree, soften and civilise him, but there remained a core of crudeness, and a self-conscious, rough, sometimes aggressive tone in his writing. This tone now enters Russian literature, never to leave it. Belinsky spoke in this sort of accent because this kind of raised dramatic tone, this harshness, was as natural to him as to Beethoven. Belinsky’s followers adopted his manner because they were the party of the enragés, and this was the traditional accent of anger and revolt, the earnest of violence to come, the rough voice of the insulted and the oppressed peasant masses proclaiming to the entire world the approaching end of their suffering at the hands of the discredited older order.

“Belinsky was the first and most powerful of the ‘new men’, the radicals and revolutionaries who shook and in the end destroyed the classical aristocratic tradition in Russian literature. The literary élite, the friends of Pushkin, despite radical ideas obtained abroad after the Napoleonic wars, despite Decembrist tendencies, was on the whole conservative, if not in conviction, yet in social habits and temper, connected with the court and the army, and deeply patriotic.

336 Walicki, op. cit., pp. 93-94.
Belinsky, to whom this seemed a retrograde outlook, was convinced that Russia had more to learn from the West than to teach it, that the Slavophile movement was romantic illusion, at times blind nationalistic megalomania, that Western scientific progress offered the only hope of lifting Russia from her backward state. And yet this same prophet of material civilisation, who intellectually was so ardent a Westerner, was emotionally more deeply and unhappily Russian than any of his contemporaries, spoke no foreign language, could not breathe freely in any environment save that of Russia, and felt miserable and persecution-ridden abroad. He found Western habits worthy of respect and emulation, but to him personally quite insufferable. When abroad he began to sigh most bitterly for home and after a month away was almost insane with nostalgia. In this sense he represents in his person the uncompromising elements of a Slav temperament and way of life to a far sharper degree than any of his contemporaries, even Dostoyevsky.

“This deep inner clash between intellectual conviction and emotional – sometimes almost physical – predilection is a very characteristically Russian disease. As the nineteenth century developed, and as the struggle between social classes became sharper and more articulate, this psychological conflict which tormented Belinsky emerges more clearly: the revolutionaries, whether they are social democrats, or social revolutionaries, or communists, unless they are noblemen or university professors – that is, almost professionally members of an international society – may make their bow with great conviction and sincerity to the West in the sense that they believe in its civilisation, above all its sciences, its techniques, its political thought and practice, but when they are forced to emigrate they find life abroad more agonising than other exiles...

“To some degree this peculiar amalgam of love and hate is intrinsic to contemporary Russian feeling about Europe: on the one hand intellectual respect, envy, admiration, desire to emulate and excel; on the other emotional hostility and suspicion and contempt, a sense of being clumsy, de trop, of being outsiders; leading as a result to an alternation between excessive self-prostration before, and aggressive flouting of, Western values. No recent visitor to the Soviet Union can have failed to remark this phenomenon: a combination of intellectual inadequacy and emotional superiority, a sense of the West as enviably self-restrained, clever, efficient and successful; also cramped, cold, mean, calculating and fenced in, incapable of large views or generous emotion, incapable of feeling which at times rises too high and overflows its banks, unable to abandon everything and sacrifice itself in response to some unique historical challenge; incapable of ever attaining a rich flowering of life. This attitude is the most constant element in Belinsky’s most personal and characteristic writings: if it is not the most valuable element in him, it is the most Russian: Russian history past and present is not intelligible without it, today more palpably than ever…”

The Slavophiles were free of this neurotic attitude to the West that Belinsky typified among the westerners; they were both more critical of the West, and calmer in relation to it. The reason was that they, unlike the Westerners, had

discovered the heart of Russia, her Orthodox Christianity. For them, the critical event in European history was not the Catholic-Protestant schism, but the schism between Eastern and Western Christianity in the middle of the eleventh century. In thus tracing the origins of the difference between East and West to the religious schism between the Orthodox and the Roman Catholics of the eleventh century, as opposed to later events such as the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century or the reforms of Peter the Great in the eighteenth century, the Slavophiles made a very important step towards the reintegration of Russian historical thought with the traditional outlook on history of Orthodox Christianity. This wider and deeper historical perspective enabled them to see that, after the schisms of the West from the unity of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of the East for so many centuries, it was inevitable that a new kind of man, homo occidentalis, with a new psychology, new aims and new forms of social and political organization, should have been created in the West, from where it penetrated into the Orthodox East.

One of the first to see this clearly was Gogol. Having made his name by satirical and fantastical works such as Notes of a Madman, The Greatcoat, The Government Inspector and, above all, Dead Souls, he suddenly and quite unexpectedly turned to Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationhood. This change of heart was clearly proclaimed in Correspondence with Friends.

While Belinsky looked forward to the rationalism of Tolstoy, Gogol’s views on the Westernizer-Slavophile controversy both looked back to Pushkin and forward to Dostoyevsky’s Pushkin Speech. “All these Slavists and Europeans,” he wrote, “or old believers and new believers, or easterners and westerners, they are all speaking about two different sides of one and the same subject, without in any way divining that they are not contradicting or going against each other.” The quarrel was “a big misunderstanding”. And yet “there is more truth on the side of the Slavists and easterners”, since their teaching is more right “on the whole”, while the westerners are more right “in the details”.

“The main theme of the book,” writes I.M. Andreev, “was God and the Church. And when Gogol was reproached for this, he replied, simply and with conviction: ‘How can one be silent, when the stones are ready to cry out about God.’

“Like Khomiakov and Ivan Kireyevsky, Gogol summoned all ‘to life in the Church’.

“The pages devoted to the Orthodox Church are the best pages of the book! No Russian writer had expressed as did Gogol such sincere, filial love for the Mother Church, such reverence and veneration for Her, such a profound and penetrating understanding both of Orthodoxy as a whole and of the smallest details of the whole of the Church’s rites.

‘We possess a treasure for which there is no price,’ is how he characterizes the Church, and he continued: ‘This Church which, as a chaste virgin, has alone been preserved from the time of the Apostles in her original undefiled purity, this Church, which in her totality with her profound dogmas and smallest external rites has been as it were brought right down from heaven for the Russian people, which alone has the power to resolve all our perplexing knots and questions… And this Church, which was created for life, we have to this day not introduced into our life’ …

“The religio-political significance of Correspondence was huge. This book appeared at a time when in the invisible depths of historical life the destiny of Russia and Russian Orthodox culture was being decided. Would Russia hold out in Orthodoxy, or be seduced by atheism and materialism? Would the Russian Orthodox autocracy be preserved in Russia, or would socialism and communism triumph? These questions were linked with other, still more profound ones, that touched on the destinies of the whole world. What was to come? The flourishing and progress of irreligious humanistic culture, or the beginning of the pre-apocalyptic period of world history?

“Gogol loudly and with conviction proclaimed that the Truth was in Orthodoxy and in the Russian Orthodox Autocracy, and that the historical ‘to be or not to be’ of Russian Orthodox culture, on the preservation of which there also depended the destiny of the whole world in the nearest future, was now being decided. The world was on the edge of death, and we have entered the pre-apocalyptic period of world history.

“Correspondence came out in 1847. Pletnev published it at Gogol’s behest.

“This book, in its hidden essence, was not understood by its contemporaries and was subjected to criticism not only on the part of enemies, but also of friends (of course, the former and the latter proceeded from completely different premises).

“The enemies were particularly disturbed and annoyed by Gogol’s sincere and convinced approval of the foundations of those social-political ordered which to so-called ‘enlightened’ people seemed completely unsustainable.”

Belinksy was furious. “Russia expects from her writers salvation from Orthodox, Nationhood and Autocracy,” he wrote in his Letter to Gogol in 1847. And he now called Gogol a “preacher of the knout, apostle of ignorance, champion of superstition and obscurantism”. Russia, he thundered, “does not need sermons (she has had her fill of them!), nor prayers (she knows them by heart), but the awakening in people of the feeling of human dignity, for so many centuries buried in mud and dung; she needs laws and rights compatible not with the doctrines of the church, but with justice and common sense.”

340 Hosking, op. cit., p. 299.
Gogol’s friends, continues Andreyev, “criticized Correspondence for other reasons... The most serious and in many respects just criticism belonged to the Rzhev Protopriest Fr. Matthew Konstantinovsky, to whom Gogol, who did not yet know him personally, sent his book for review. Fr. Matthew condemned many places, especially the chapter on the theatre, and wrote to Gogol that he ‘would give an account for it to God’. Gogol objected, pointing out that his intention had been good. But Fr. Matthew advised him not to justify himself before his critics, but to ‘obey the spirit living in us, and not our earthly corporeality’ and ‘to turn to the interior life’.

“The failure of the book had an exceptionally powerful effect on Gogol. After some resistance and attempts to clarify ‘the whirlwind of misunderstandings’, without rejecting his principled convictions, Gogol humbled himself and acknowledged his guilt in the fact that he had dared to be a prophet and preacher of the Truth when he personally was not worthy of serving it. Even to the sharp and cruel letter of Belinsky Gogol replied meekly and humbly: ‘God knows, perhaps there is an element of truth in your words.’” 341

341 Andreev, op. cit., p. 175.
Belinsky had deified the West, but never felt at home there. Alexander Herzen was the first Westernizer to symbolize the westerners’ exile from Russian values by permanently settling in the West, in London. From there, writes Berlin, “he established his free printing press, and in the 1850s began to publish two periodicals in Russia, *The Pole Star* [recalling the Masonic lodge of the same name] and *The Bell* (the first issues appeared in 1855 and 1857 respectively), which marked the birth of systematic revolutionary agitation – and conspiracy – by Russian exiles directed against the tsarist regime.”  

Herzen followed Belinsky and the westerners in his disdain for Russia’s pree-Petrine past: “You need the past and its traditions, but we need to tear Russia away from them. We do not want Russia before Peter, because for us it does not exist, but you do not want the new Russia. You reject it, but we reject ancient Rus’”.

However, after the failure of the 1848 revolution, Herzen began to lose faith in the western path to happiness. He began to see the futility (if not the criminality) of violent revolution, and of such senseless slogans as Proudhon’s “all property is theft”, or Bakunin’s “the Passion to destroy is the same as the Passion to create”. The revolution had only left the poor poorer than ever, while the passion to destroy seemed as exhilarating as the passion to create only in the heat of the moment, and not when the pieces had to be picked up and paid for the next day...

“A curse on you,” he wrote with regard to 1848, “year of blood and madness, year of the triumph of meanness, beastliness, stupidity!... What did you do, revolutionaries frightened of revolution, political tricksters, buffoons of liberty?... Democracy can create nothing positive... and therefore it has no future... Socialism left a victor on the field of battle will inevitably be deformed into a commonplace bourgeois philistinism. Then a cry of denial will be wrung from the titanic breast of the revolutionary minority and the deadly battle will begin again... We have wasted our spirit in the regions of the abstract and general, just as the monks let it wither in the world of prayer and contemplation.”

And again: “If progress is the goal, or whom are we working? Who is this Moloch who, as the toilers approach him, instead of rewarding them, draws back; and, as a consolation to the exhausted and doomed multitudes, shouting ‘morituri te salutant’ [‘those who are about to die salute you’], can only give the... mocking answer that after their death all will be beautiful on earth. Do you truly wish to condemn the human beings alive today to the sad role... of wretched galley-slaves who, up to their knees in mud, drag a barge... with... ‘progress in the future’ upon its flag?... a goal which is infinitely remote is no
goal, only... a deception; a goal must be closer – at the very least the labourer's wage, or pleasure in work performed.”

“He was disillusioned with western civilization and found that it was deeply penetrated by the petty bourgeois spirit, and was built on ‘respect for the sacred right of property’ and ‘has no other ideals except a thirst for personal security’.

“‘Europe,’ said Herzen, ‘is approaching a terrible cataclysm. The medieval world is collapsing. The political and religious revolutions are weakening under the burden of their own powerlessness, they have done great things, but they have not fulfilled their task... They have destroyed faith in the throne and the altar, but have not realized freedom, they have lit in hearts a desire which they are not able to satisfy. Parliamentarism, Protestantism – all these were deferments, temporary salvation, powerless outposts against death and degeneration; their time has passed. From 1849 they began to understand that neither ossified Roman law nor cunning casuistry nor nauseating deistic philosophy nor merciless religious rationalism are able to put off the realization of the destinies of society.’

“Herzen did not believe in the creative function of contemporary democracy, he considered that it possessed only a terrible power of destruction, but not the capacity to create.

“‘In democracy,’ said Herzen, ‘there is a terrible power of destruction, but when it takes it upon itself to create something, it gets lost in student experiments, in political etudes. There is no real creativity in democracy.’

“Hence Herzen drew the merciless conclusion that the perishing order must be destroyed to its foundations.

“This destruction had to be universal, it would come in a storm and blood.

“‘Who knows what will come out of this blood? But whatever comes out, it is enough that in this paroxysm of madness, revenge, discord and retribution the world that restricts the new man, and hinders him from living, hinders him from establishing himself in the future, will perish. And that is good, and for that reason let chaos and destruction flourish and may the future be constructed.’”

But then the unexpected: disillusioned with the West, this westernizer par excellence turns in hope to – Russia. “‘The future,’ declared Herzen, not without some pride, ‘belongs to the Russian people, who is called to bring an end to the decrepit and powerless world and clear a place for the new and beautiful [world].’

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346 Ivanov, op. cit., pp. 341-342.
“In 1851 in a letter to Michelet Herzen wrote: ‘Amidst this chaos, amidst this dying agony and tormented regeneration, amidst this world falling into dust around its cradle, men’s gaze is involuntarily directed towards the East.’” And when Alexander II emancipated the peasants in 1861, he hailed him in the words of Julian the Apostate to Christ: “You have conquered, Galilaean!”

That which particularly aroused the hopes of Herzen for Russia was the peasant commune or mir. He thought that this was a specifically Russian kind of socialism. As N.O. Lossky writes: “Disappointed with Western Europe and its ‘petty bourgeois’ spirit, he came to the conclusion that the Russian village commune and the artel hold a promise of socialism being realized in Russia rather than in any other country. The village commune meant for him peasant communism [‘The Russian People and Socialism’, 1852, II, 148]. In view of this he came to feel that reconciliation with the Slavophiles was possible. In his article ‘Moscow Panslavism and Russian Europeanism’ (1851) he wrote: Is not socialism ‘accepted by the Slavophiles as it is by us? It is a bridge on which we can meet and hold hands’ (I, 338).”

Certainly, the Slavophiles agreed with Herzen on the mir. The most famous of them, Alexis Stepanovich Khomiakov, praised “its meetings that passed unanimous decisions and its traditional justice in accordance with custom, conscience, and inner truth.” As Richard Pipes writes, the Slavophiles “became aware of the peasant commune as an institution confined to Russia, and extolled it as proof that the Russian people, allegedly lacking in the acquisitive ‘bourgeois’ impulses of western Europeans, were destined to solve mankind’s social problems. Haxthausen popularised this view in his book, published in 1847. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Russian mir became in Western Europe the starting-point of several theories concerning communal land-tenure of primitive societies…” Moreover, there seemed to be some prima facie similarity between Herzen’s idea of “Russian socialism” and Khomiakov’s key idea of sobornost’…

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347 Ivanov, op. cit., p. 342.
348 And yet he continued his revolutionary agitation against “the Galilaean”, especially in Poland. But when the Polish uprising failed in 1863, subscriptions to Kolokol fell by a factor of six times.
350 Lossky, op. cit., p. 39.
351 Pipes, op. cit., p. 17. “In 1854, however, this whole interpretation was challenged by Boris Chicherin, a leading spokesman for the so-called Westerner camp, who argued that the peasant commune as then known was neither ancient nor autochthonous in origin, but had been introduced by the Russian monarchy in the middle of the eighteenth century as a means of ensuring the collection of taxes. Until then, according to Chicherin, Russian peasants had held their land by individual households. Subsequent researches blurred the lines of the controversy. Contemporary opinion holds that the commune of the imperial period was indeed a modern institution, as Chicherin claimed, although older than he had believed. It is also widely agreed that pressure by the state and landlord played a major part in its formation. At the same time, economic factors seem also to have affected its evolution to the extent that there exists a demonstrable connection between the availability of land and communal tenure: where land is scarce, the communal form of tenure tends to prevail, but where it is abundant it is replaced by household or even family tenure” (op. cit., pp. 17-18).
Khomiakov had not gone through the tormenting journey from westernism to Orthodoxy that his friend Kireyevsky had undergone, but had remained that rarity in the Russian educated classes – a committed Orthodox who practised his faith openly and without shame while remaining completely au courant with modern developments (he had several technological inventions to his credit). As Roy Campbell writes, “he was as far removed from the ‘ridiculousness of conservatism’ as he was from the revolutionary movement with its ‘immoral and passionate self-reliance’”.

“In contradistinction to Kireyevsky and K. Aksakov,” writes Lossky, “Khomiakov does not slur over the evils of Russian life but severely condemns them. At the beginning of the Crimean War (against Turkey, France and England, 1854-1855) he denounced with the fire and inspiration of a prophet, the Russia of his day (before the great reforms of Alexander II) and called her to repentance.

“Western Europe has failed to embody the Christian ideal of the wholeness of life through overemphasizing logical knowledge and rationality; Russia has so far failed to embody it because complete, all-embracing truth from its very nature develops slowly… Nevertheless Khomiakov believes in the great mission of the Russian people when it comes fully to recognize and express ‘all the spiritual forces and principles that lie at the basis of Holy Orthodox Russia.’ ‘Russia is called to stand at the forefront of universal culture; history gives her the right to do so because of the completeness and many-sidedness of her guiding principles; such a right given to a nation imposes a duty upon every one of its members.’ Russia’s ideal is not to be the richest or most powerful country but to become ‘the most Christian of all human societies’.

“In spite of Khomiakov’s… critical attitude toward Western Europe,… [he] speaks of it in one of his poems as ‘the land of holy miracles’. He was particularly fond of England. The best things in her social and political life were due, he thought, to the right balance being maintained between liberalism and conservatism. The conservatives stood for the organic force of the national life developing from its original sources while the liberals stood for the personal, individual force, for analytical, critical reason. The balance between these two forces in England has never yet been destroyed because ‘every liberal is a bit of a conservative at bottom because he is English’. In England, as in Russia, the people have kept their religion and distrust analytical reason. But Protestant scepticism is undermining the balance between the organic and the analytic forces, and this is a menace to England in the future…”

In another place, Khomiakov saw the menace to England in her conservatism: “England with her modest science and her serious love of religious truth might give some hope; but – permit the frank expression of my thoughts – England is held by the iron chain of traditional custom.”

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353 Lossky, op. cit., p. 40.
While attached to England, when it came to comparing the Eastern and Western forms of Christianity, Khomiakov was severe in his judgements. Influenced by Elder Ambrose of Optina as Kireyevsky had been by Elder Macarius, he had a deep, unshakeable confidence in the Orthodox Church. "Peter Christoff characterizes Khomiakov’s belief as follows, ‘Although Khomiakov respected and valued much in the Western nations he was absolutely convinced of the superiority of Orthodoxy.’ The Slavic world-view and the Russian peasant commune specifically served as a foundation for a new social order with the emphasis on the Orthodox Church. To refer to Khomiakov’s Christian Orthodox messianism would in no way do him an injustice. Khomiakov believed that Russia had a mission to bring the whole world under the ‘roof’ of the Orthodox Church.’”

"The Church," he wrote in his famous ecclesiological tract, The Church is One, "does not recognize any power over herself other than her own, no other’s court than the court of faith". The Church is One, declared Khomiakov, and that Church is exclusively the Orthodox Church. "Western Christianity has ceased to be Christianity,” he wrote. “In Romanism [Roman Catholicism] there is not one word, not one action, upon which the seal of spiritual life might lie”. “Both Protestantisms (Roman and German)... already bear death within themselves; it is left to unbelief only to take away the corpses and clean the arena. And all this is the righteous punishment for the crime committed by the ‘West’”.

This points to the fundamental difference between the Slavophiles and westerners: their attitude to the faith, to Orthodoxy; the Slavophiles embraced Orthodoxy, while the westernizers rejected it. “It is to Herzen [the leader of the westerners] that there belongs the most apt word expressing the difference between the two camps. Not without sorrow at the collapse of his friendship with Kireyevsky, Herzen wrote: ‘The walls of the church were raised between us.’

Paradoxically, however, some have accused Khomiakov of degrading the theological mystery of sobornost into a secular, westerning ideal, of confusing sobornost with democracy, the spiritual warmth of communion in Christ with the natural warmth of a family or society.

It is certainly true to say that for Khomiakov, as for the other early Slavophiles, there was a close connection between his teaching on the Church and his teaching on the peasant commune, the mir.

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356 Khomiakov, The Church is One, in Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenij (Complete Works), Moscow, 1907, vol. II.
358 Kusakov, “juridicheskaiia eres’ i Pravoslavnaiia Vera”, in Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), Dogmat Iskuplenia (The Dogma of Redemption), Moscow, 1913, pp. 76-77.
Indeed, as Fr. Georges Florovsky writes, “the hidden meaning of the Slavophile teaching becomes completely clear only when we divine that both these, at first sight discordant teachings coincide completely, in that what the commune should be in the sphere of external inter-human relationships, in the sphere of ‘earthly’ life, is what the Church is in the order of the spiritual life of the person. And the other way round: the commune is that form of social existence which is realized as a result of the application of the principles of Orthodox ecclesiasticism to the question of social inter-relations.”

“One could even say,” writes S. Khoruzhij, “that the social aspect, the interpretation of sobornost’ as the principle of social existence, in time came to occupy centre stage, leaving the original ecclesiological meaning of the concept in the background and almost forgotten. Here we see a fairly systematic evolution. From the beginning there lived in the minds of the early Slavophiles an idea of the communal ideal expressing the harmonious management of social life. They were in agreement in considering the closest historical approximation to it the village commune, the peasant mir, and, correspondingly, the ideal was usually called ‘communality’ or ‘communal unity’, being defined as ‘unity which consists in… the concept of a natural and moral brotherhood and inner justice’ (I, 99). It is a banal tradition to reproach the Slavophiles for idealizing the communal set-up and Russian history. For all its triteness, the reproach is just; although Khomiakov tried to moderate this tendency (especially after the Crimean war), he never managed to measure with one measure and judge with an equal judgement home and abroad, Russia and the West. But we must point something else out here. However embellished were his descriptions of the sources and bases of Russian history and statehood, embellishment never became deification, nor was communality identified with sobornost’. They were two different principles, and Khomiakov did not think of merging them into each other, bringing a human, secular matter to the level of the Theandric and grace-filled. He saw an impassible boundary between the one and the other.

“However, it was not long before people with frightening ease lost the ability to discern this boundary – and then learned to deny it. Sobornost’ was inexorably, with greater and greater strength and openness, brought down to earth, deprived of its grace-filled content and reduced to a simple social and organic principle: to a certain degree this process was the very essence of the ideological evolution of Slavophilism, from its earlier to its later variants, and from it to the conservatism of the last reign, to post-revolutionary Eurasianism and still further. In this process of the degeneration of the path of sobornost’ it crossed paths with the socialist idea: as has been pointed out more than once, ‘in this attraction to the ideal of… the commune it is not difficult to discern a subconscious and erroneous thirst for sobornost’” [Florovsky]. Therefore in the same descending line we find in the end all the communard variations on the theme of collectivisation, Soviet patriotism and even National Bolshevism… At the same time as grace freedom is cast out – and, as a result, sobornost’

359 Florovsky, “Vechnoe i prekhodiaschee v uchenii russkikh slavianofilov” (The eternal and the passing in the teaching of the Russian Slavophiles”), in Vera i Kul’tura, op. cit., p. 93.
completely lost its spiritual nature, being turned into the regulative principle either of mechanical statehood, or of the organic life of the primitive community. The link with the Church, churchness, was for the most part preserved externally. However, it goes without saying that the very idea of the Church could here degenerate as much as the idea of sobornost’. In the first case the Church was likened to the state to the point of being indistinguishable from it, and in the second it was a primitively pagan institution for the sanctification of life and manners. They claimed to be preserving churchness, while rejecting the principle of freedom – and this was spiritual blindness. ‘Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom’, says Paul, and Orthodoxy reveals his covenant through the ascetic principle of synergy: the grace of the Holy Spirit lives in the Church, but each member of the Church acquires it by his personal spiritual activity, to the realization of his own personal liberty. And only in ‘the agreement of personal liberties’ (Khomiakov) is the grace-filled Body of the Lord put together.”

64. RUSSIA AND EUROPE: (4) KIREYEVSKY

We have seen that the Slavophiles believed that western civilization since the Schism in the eleventh century had created a new kind of man, homo occidentalis. The question, then, was: what were the main characteristics of this new man, and in what did he differ from homo orientalis, the older, original kind of Christian and European, who was now to be found only in Russia and the Balkans? The first clear answer to this question was expounded by Ivan Vasilievich Kireyevsky, a man of thoroughly western education, tastes and habits, who converted to the Orthodox ideal in adult life, becoming a disciple of the Optina Elder Macarius. In his Reply to Khomiakov (1839) and On the Character of European Civilization and Its Relationship to Russian Civilization (1852), he gave his own answer to the question of the cause of the appearance of homo occidentalis - the growth of western rationalism.

The beginning of Kireyevsky’s spiritual emancipation may be said to date to 1829, when, as Fr. Sergius Chetverikov writes, he “appeared for the first time in the field of literature with an article about Pushkin, which revealed a remarkably clear understanding of the works of this poet. In this article he already expressed doubt in the absolute truth of German philosophy and pointed out the pressing need for the development of a school of original Russian scientific thought. ‘German philosophy cannot take root in us. Our philosophy must arise from current questions, from the prevailing interest of our people and their individual ways of life.’ But at the same time we must not reject the experience of Western European thought. ‘The crown of European enlightenment served as the cradle of our education. It was born when the other states had already completed the cycle of their intellectual development; and where they finished, there we began. Like a young sister in a large harmonious family, Russia was enriched by the experience of her older brothers and sisters prior to her entry into the world.’”

“Europe,” wrote Kireyevsky in 1830, “now presents an image of stupor. Both political and moral development have come to an end in her.” Only two peoples “from the whole of enlightened humanity... are not taking part in the general falling asleep; two peoples, young and fresh, are flourishing with hope: these are the United States and our fatherland.”

At this stage the full uniqueness and saving truth of Orthodoxy was perhaps not yet fully revealed to Kireyevsky. The decisive moment in his conversion, as Nina Lazareva writes, was his marriage to Natalya Petrovna Arbeneva in 1834: “The beginning of his family life was for Ivan Vasilievich also the beginning of the transformation of his inner world, the beginning of his coming out of that dead-end in which his former rationalistic world-view had led him. The difference between the whole structure of Natalya Petrovna’s life, educated as

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she had been in the rules of strict piety, and that of Ivan Vasilievich, who had
passed his days and nights in tobacco-filled rooms reading and discussing the
latest philosophical works, could not fail to wound both of them.

“In the note written by A.I. Koshelev from the words of N.P. Kireyevsky and
entitled ‘The Story of Ivan Vasilievich’s Conversion’, we read: ‘In the first period
after their marriage her fulfilment of our Church rites and customs made an
unpleasant impression on him, but from the tolerance and delicacy that was
natural to him he did not hinder her in this at all. She on her side was still more
sorrowfully struck by his lack of faith and complete neglect of all the customs of
the Orthodox Church. They had conversations which ended with it being
decided that he would not hinder her in the fulfilment of her obligations, and he
would be free in his actions, but he promised in her presence not to blaspheme
and by all means to cut short the conversations of his friends that were
unpleasant to her. In the second year of their marriage he asked his wife to read
Cousin. She willing did this, but when he began to ask her for her opinion of this
book, she said that there was much good in it, but that she had not found
anything new, for in the works of the Holy Fathers it was all expounded in a
much profounder and more satisfying way. He laughed and was quiet. He
began to ask his wife to read Voltaire with him. She told him that she was ready
to read any serious book that he might suggest to her, but she disliked mockery
and every kind of blasphemy and she could neither hear nor read them. Then
after some time they began to read Schelling together, and when great, radiant
thoughts stopped them and I.V. Kireyevsky demanded wonderment from his
wife, she first said that she knew these thoughts from the works of the Holy
Fathers. She often pointed them out to him in the books of the Holy Fathers,
which forced Ivan Vasilievich to read whole pages sometimes. It was unpleasant
for him to recognise that there really was much in the Holy Fathers that he had
admired in Schelling. He did not like to admit this, but secretly he took his wife’s
books and read them with interest.’

“At that time the works of the Holy Fathers were hardly published in Russia,
lovers of spiritual literature transcribed them themselves or for small sums of
money they engaged transcribers. Natalya Petrovna made notes from those
books which her spiritual father, Hieromonek Philaret (Puliashkin) gave her to
read. In his time he had laboured much to prepare the Slavonic Philokalia for
publication. These were works of the Holy Fathers collected by St. Paisius
Velichkovsky which contained instructions on mental prayer, that is, on the
cleansing of the soul from passions, on the means to attaining this and in
particular on the union of the mind and the heart in the Jesus prayer. In 1836
Ivan Vasilievich for the first time read the works of St. Isaac the Syrian, who was
called the teacher of silence. Thus the philosopher came into contact with the
hitherto unknown to him, centuries-old Orthodox enlightenment, which always
witnessed to the True Light, our Lord Jesus Christ.

“‘Acquaintance with the Novospassky monk Philaret, conversations with the
holy elder and the reading of various works of the Holy Fathers gave him
pleasure and drew him to the side of piety. He went to see Fr. Philaret, but each
time as it were unwillingly. It was evident that he wanted to go to him, but
forcing was always necessary.’ This continued until, according to the Providence of God, and thanks to the clairvoyance of Elder Philaret and his knowledge of the human soul, a truly wondrous event took place: ‘I.V. Kireyevsky in the past never wore a cross round his neck. His wife had more than once asked him to do that, but Ivan Vasilyevich had not replied. Finally, he told her once that he would put on a cross if it would be sent to him by Fr. Philaret, whose mind and piety he warmly admired. Natalya Petrovna went to Fr. Philaret and communicated this to him. The elder made the sign of the cross, took it off his neck and said to Natalya Petrovna: ‘Let this be to Ivan Vasilyevich for salvation.’

“When Natalya Petrovna went home, Ivan Vasilyevich on meeting her said: ‘Well, what did Fr. Philaret say?’ She took out the cross and gave it to Ivan Vasilyevich. Ivan Vasilyevich asked her: ‘What is this cross?’ Natalya Petrovna said to him that Fr. Philaret had taken it off himself and said: let this be to him for salvation. Ivan Vasilyevich fell on his knees and said: ‘Well, now I expect salvation for my soul, for in my mind I had determined: if Fr. Philaret takes off his cross and sends it to me, then it will be clear that God is calling me to salvation.’ From that moment a decisive turnaround in the thoughts and feelings of Ivan Vasilyevich was evident.”

Soon Kireyevsky met the famous Optina Elder Macarius, with whom he started the series of Optina translations of the works of the Holy Fathers into Russian. This, as well as being of great importance in itself, marked the beginning of the return of a part of the educated classes to a more than nominal membership of the Church. It was on the basis of the teaching of the Holy Fathers that Kireyevsky determined to build a philosophy that would engage with the problems felt by the Russian intelligentsia of his day and provide them with true enlightenment.

A very important element in this philosophy would be a correct “placing” of Russia in relation to Western Europe.

According to Kireyevsky, “three elements lie at the foundation of European [i.e. Western European] education: Roman Christianity, the world of the uneducated barbarians who destroyed the [western] Roman empire, and the classical world of ancient paganism.

“This classical world of ancient paganism, which did not enter into the inheritance of Russia, essentially constitutes the triumph of the formal reason of man over everything that is inside and within him – pure, naked reason, based on itself, recognizing nothing higher than or outside itself and appearing in two forms – the form of formal abstraction and the form of abstract sensuality. Classicism’s influence on European education had to correspond to this same character.

363 Lazareva, “Zhizneopisanie” (“Biography”), introduction to I.V. Kireyevsky, Razum na puti k Iстине (Reason on the Path to Truth), Moscow: “Pravilo very”, 2002, pp. XXXVI- XXXIX.
“Whether it was because Christians in the West gave themselves up unlawfully to the influence of the classical world, or because heresy accidentally united itself with paganism, the Roman Church differs in its deviation from the Eastern only in that same triumph of rationalism over Tradition, of external ratiocination over inner spiritual reason. Thus it was in consequence of this external syllogism drawn out of the concept of the Divine equality of the Father and the Son [the Filioque] that the dogma of the Trinity was changed in opposition to spiritual sense and Tradition. Similarly, in consequence of another syllogism, the pope became the head of the Church in place of Jesus Christ. They tried to demonstrate the existence of God with a syllogism; the whole unity of the faith rested on syllogistic scholasticism; the Inquisition, Jesuitism – in a word, all the particularities of Catholicism, developed by virtue of the same formal process of reason, so that Protestantism itself, which the Catholics reproach for its rationalism, proceeded directly from the rationalism of Catholicism…

“Thus rationalism was both an extra element in the education of Europe at the beginning and is now an exclusive characteristic of the European enlightenment and way of life. This will be still clearer if we compare the basic principles of the public and private way of life of the West with the basic principles of the same public and private way of life which, if it had not developed completely, was at least clearly indicated in old Russia, when she was under the direct influence of pure Christianity, without any admixture from the pagan world.

“The whole private and public way of life of the West is founded on the concept of individual, separate independence, which presupposes individual isolation. Hence the sacredness of formal relationships; the sacredness of property and conditional decrees is more important than the personality. Every individual is a private person; a knight, prince or city within his or its rights is an autocratic, unlimited personage that gives laws to itself. The first step of each personage into society is to surround himself with a fortress from the depths of which he enters into negotiations with others and other independent powers.

“… I was speaking about the difference between enlightenment in Russia and in the West. Our educative principle consisted in our Church. There, however, together with Christianity, the still fruitful remnants of the ancient pagan world continued to act on the development of enlightenment. The very Christianity of the West, in separation from the Universal Church, accepted into itself the seeds of that principle which constituted the general colouring of the whole development of Greco-Roman culture: the principle of rationalism. For that reason the character of European education differs by virtue of an excess of rationalism.

“However, this excess appeared only later, when logical development had already overwhelmed Christianity, so to speak. But at the beginning rationalism, as I said, appeared only in embryo. The Roman Church separated from the Eastern because it changed certain dogmas existing in the Tradition of the whole of Christianity into others by deduction. She spread other dogmas by means of the same logical process, again in opposition to Tradition and the spirit of the
Universal Church. Thus a logical belief lay at the very lowest base of Catholicism. But the first action of rationalism was limited to this at the beginning. The inner and outer construction of the Church, which had been completed earlier in another spirit, continued to exist without obvious changes until the whole unity of the ecclesiastical teaching passed into the consciousness of the thinking part of the clergy. This was completed in the philosophy of scholasticism, which, by reason of the logical principle at the very foundation of the Church, could not reconcile the contradictions of faith and reason in any other way than by means of syllogism, which thereby became the first condition of every belief. At first, naturally, this same syllogism tried to demonstrate the truth of faith against reason and subdue reason to faith by means of rational arguments. But this faith, logically proved and logically opposed to reason, was no longer a living, but a formal faith, not faith as such, but only the logical rejection of reason. Therefore during this period of the scholastic development of Catholicism, precisely by reason of its rationality, the Western church becomes an enemy of reason, its oppressive, murderous, desperate enemy. But, taken to its extreme, as the continuation of this same logical process, this absolute annihilation of reason produced the well-known opposite effect, the consequences of which constitute the character of the present enlightenment. That is what I meant when I spoke of the rational element of Catholicism.

“Christianity in the East knew neither this struggle of faith against reason, nor this triumph of reason over faith. Therefore its influence on enlightenment was dissimilar to that of Catholicism.

“When examining the social construction of old Russia, we find many differences from the West, and first of all: the formation of society into so-called mirs [communes]. Private, personal idiosyncracy, the basis of western development, was as little known among us as was social autocracy. A man belonged to the mir, and the mir to him. Agricultural property, the fount of personal rights in the West, belonged with us to society. A person had the rights of ownership to the extent that entered into the membership of society.

“But this society was not autonomous and could not order itself, or itself acquire laws for itself, because it was not separated from other similar communities that were ruled by uniform custom. The innumerable multitude of these small communes, which constituted Russia, was all covered with a net of churches, monasteries and the remote dwellings of hermits, whence there spread everywhere identical concepts of the relationship between social matters and personal matters. These concepts little by little were bound to pass over into a general conviction, conviction – into custom, whose place was taken by law, which established throughout the whole space of the lands subject to our Church one thought, one point of view, one aim, one order of life. This universal uniformity of custom was probably one of the reasons for its amazing strength, which has preserved its living remnants even to our time, in spite of all the opposition of destructive influences which, in the course of two hundred years, strove to introduce new principles in their place.
“As a result of these strong, uniform and universal customs, it was impossible for there to be any change in the social order that was not in agreement with the order of the whole. Every person’s family relationships were defined, first of all, by his birth; but in the same predetermined order the family was subject to the commune, and the wider commune to the assembly, the assembly to the veche, and so on, whence all the private circles came together in one centre, in one Orthodox Church. No personal reasoning, no artificial agreement could found any new order, think up new rights and privileges. Even the very word right was unknown among us in its western sense, but signified only justice, righteousness. Therefore no power could be given to any person or class, nor could any right be accorded, for righteousness and justice cannot be sold or taken, but exist in themselves independently of conditional relationships. In the West, by contrast, all social relationships are founded on convention or strive to attain this artificial basis. Outside convention there are no correct relationships, but only arbitrariness, which in the governing class is called autonomy, in the governed - freedom. But in both the one and the other case this arbitrariness demonstrates not the development of the inner life, but the development of the external, formal life. All social forces, interests and rights exist there in separation, each in itself, and they are united not by a normal law, but either accidentally or by an artificial agreement. In the first case material force triumphs, in the second - the sum of individual reasonings. But material force, material dominance, a material majority, the sum of individual reasonings in essence constitute one principle only at different moments of their development. Therefore the social contract is not the invention of the encyclopaedists, but a real ideal to which all the western societies strove unconsciously, and now consciously, under the influence of the rational element, which outweighs the Christian element.”

“Private and social life in the West,’ Kireyevsky wrote, ‘are based on the concept of an individual and separate independence that presupposes the isolation of the individual. Hence the external formal relations of private property and all types of legal conventions are sacred and of greater importance than human beings”.

“Only one serious thing was left to man, and that was industry. For him the reality of being survived only in his physical person. Industry rules the world without faith or poetry. In our times it unites and divides people. It determines one’s fatherland, it delineates classes, it lies at the base of state structures, it moves nations, it declares war, makes peace, changes mores, gives direction to science, and determines the character of culture. Men bow down before it and erect temples to it. It is the real deity in which people sincerely believe and to which they submit. Unselfish activity has become inconceivable; it has acquired the same significance in the contemporary world as chivalry had in the time of Cervantes.”

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364 Kireyevsky, “V otvet A.S. Khomiakovu” (In Reply to A.S. Khomiakov), Razum na puti k Istine (Reason on the Path to Truth), Moscow, 2002, pp. 6-12.
This long and tragic development had its roots, according to Kireyevsky, in the falling away of the Roman Church. "In the ninth century the western Church showed within itself the inevitable seed of the Reformation, which placed this same Church before the judgement seat of the same logical reason which the Roman Church had itself exalted... A thinking man could already see Luther behind Pope Nicolas I just as... a thinking man of the 16th century could foresee behind Luther the coming of 19th century liberal Protestantism..."366

According to Kireyevsky, just as in a marriage separation or divorce takes place when one partner asserts his or her self against the other, so in the Church schisms and heresies take place when one party asserts itself over against Catholic unity. In the early, undivided Church “each patriarchate, each tribe, each country in the Christian world preserved its own characteristic features, while at the same time participating in the common unity of the whole Church.”367

A patriarchate or country fell away from that unity only if it introduced heresy, that is, a teaching contrary to the Catholic understanding of the Church. The Roman patriarchate fell away from the Unity and Catholicity of the Church through an unbalanced, self-willed development of its own particular strength, the logical development of concepts, by introducing the Filioque into the Creed in defiance of the theological consciousness of the Church as a whole. But it fell away from that Unity and Catholicity in another way, by preaching a heresy about Unity and Catholicity. For the Popes taught that the Church, in order to be Catholic, must be first and above all Roman – and “Roman” not in the sense employed by the Greeks when they called themselves Roman, that is, belonging to the Christian Roman Empire and including both Italians and Greeks and people of many nationalities. The Popes now understood “Rome”, “the Roman Church” and “the Roman Faith” in a different, particularist, anti-Catholic sense – that is, “Roman” as opposed to “Greek”, “the Roman Church” as opposed to “the Greek Church”, “the Roman Faith” as opposed to, and something different from and inherently superior to, “the Greek Church”. From this time that the Roman Church ceased to be a part of the Catholic Church, having trampled on the dogma of Catholicity. Instead she became the anti-Catholic, or Romanist, or Latin, or Papist church.

“Christianity penetrated the minds of the western peoples through the teaching of the Roman Church alone – in Russia it was kindled on the candlestands of the whole Orthodox Church; theology in the West acquired a ratiocinative-abstract character – in the Orthodox world it preserved an inner wholeness of spirit; there there was a division in the powers of the reason – here a striving for their living unity; there: the movement of the mind towards the truth by means of a logical chain of concepts – here: a striving for it by means of an inner exaltation of self-consciousness towards wholeness of heart and

367 Kireyevsky, in Young, op. cit.
concentration of reason; there: a searching for external, dead unity – here: a striving for inner, living unity; there the Church was confused with the State, uniting spiritual power with secular power and pouring ecclesiastical and worldly significance into one institution of a mixed character – in Russia it remained unmixed with worldly aims and institution; there: scholastic and juridical universities – in ancient Russia: prayer-filled monasteries concentrating higher knowledge in themselves; there: a rationalist and scholastic study of the higher truths – here: a striving for their living and integral assimilation; there: a mutual growing together of pagan and Christian education – here: a constant striving for the purification of truth; there: statehood arising out of forcible conquest – here: out of the natural development of the people’s everyday life, penetrated by the unity of its basic conviction; there: a hostile walling-off of classes – in ancient Russia their unanimous union while preserving natural differences; there: the artificial connection of knights’ castles with what belonged to them constituted separate states – here: the agreement of the whole land spiritually expresses its undivided unity; there: agrarian property is the first basis of civil relationships – here: property is only an accidental expression of personal relationships; there: formal-logical legality – here: legality proceeding from everyday life; there: the inclination of law towards external justice – here: preference for inner justice; there: jurisprudence strives towards a logical codex – here: instead of an external connectedness of form with form, it seeks the inner connection of lawful conviction with convictions of faith and everyday life; there improvements were always accomplished by violent changes – here by a harmonious, natural growth; there: the agitation of the party spirit – here: the unshakeability of basic conviction; there: the pursuit of fashion – here: constancy of everyday life; there: the instability of personal self-rule – here: the strength of familial and social links; there: the foppishness of luxury and the artificiality of life – here: the simplicity of vital needs and the exuberance of moral courage; there: tender dreaminess – here: the healthy integrity of rational forces; there: inner anxiety of spirit accompanied by rational conviction of one’s moral perfection – among the Russians: profound quietness and the calm of inner self-consciousness combined with constant lack of trust of oneself and the unlimited demands of moral perfection – in a word, there: disunity of spirit, disunity of thoughts, disunity of sciences, disunity of state, disunity of classes, disunity of society, disunity of family rights and obligations, disunity of the whole unity and of all the separate forms of human existence, social and personal – in Russia, by contrast, mainly a striving for integrity of everyday existence both inner and outer, social and personal, speculative and practical, aesthetic and moral. Therefore if what we have said above is just, disunity and integrity, rationalism and reason will be the final expression of West European and Russian education."

We may wonder whether the contrast between East and West has been drawn too sharply, too tidily here. But there can be no doubt that Kireyevsky has unerringly pointed to the main lines of bifurcation between the development of

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368 Kireyevsky, “O kharaktere prosveschenia Evropy i o ego otnoshenii k prosveschenii Rossi.” (On the Character of the Enlightenment of Europe and its Relationship to the Enlightenment of Russia), in Razum na puti k istine, op. cit., pp. 207-209.
the Orthodox East and the Catholic-Protestant West. The explanation lies in his spiritual development. “Having himself been a son of the West and gone to study with the most advanced philosophers,” writes Fr. Seraphim Rose, ‘Kireyevsky was thoroughly penetrated with the Western spirit and then became thoroughly converted to Orthodoxy. Therefore he saw that these two things cannot be put together. He wanted to find out why they were different and what was the answer in one’s soul, what one had to choose…”

\[369\] Monk Damascene Christenson, *Not of this World: The Life and Teaching of Fr. Seraphim Rose*, Forestville, Ca.: Fr. Seraphim Rose Foundation, 1993, pp. 589-590
Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky had, like Gogol, been a protégé of Belinsky. But, again like Gogol, he had broken with him because of his atheism and readiness to subordinate art to propaganda. However, he did not decisively cast off his socialist acquaintances, and his return to conscious Christianity was correspondingly tortuous, slow and punctuated by harsh lessons from life.

Dostoyevsky’s Christian critique of socialism, though not yet fully articulate in the 1840s, had already begun to reveal itself in his relations with Belinsky, of whom he wrote much later: “Treasuring above all reason, science and realism, at the same time he comprehended more keenly than anyone that reason, science and realism alone can merely produce the ant’s nest, and not social ‘harmony’ within which man can organize his life. He knew that moral principles are the basis of all things. He believed, to the degree of delusion and without any reflex, in the new moral foundations of socialism (which, however, up to the present have revealed nothing but abominable perversions of nature and common sense). Here was nothing but rapture. Still, as a socialist he had to destroy Christianity in the first place. He knew that the revolution must necessarily begin with atheism. He had to dethrone that religion whence the moral foundations of the society rejected by him had sprung up. Family, property, personal moral responsibility – these he denied radically. (I may observe that, even as Herzen, he was also a good husband and father.) Doubtless, he understood that by denying the moral responsibility of man, he thereby denied also his freedom; yet, he believed with all his being (much more blindly than Herzen, who, at the end, it seems, began to doubt) that socialism not only does not destroy the freedom of man, but, on the contrary, restores it in a form of unheard-of majesty, only on a new and adamantine foundation.

“At this juncture, however, there remained the radiant personality of Christ Himself to contend with, which was the most difficult problem. As a socialist, he was duty bound to destroy the teaching of Christ, to call it fallacious and ignorant philanthropy, doomed by modern science and economic tenets. Even so, there remained the beatific image of the God-man, its moral inaccessibility, its wonderful and miraculous beauty. But in his incessant, unquenchable transport, Belinsky did not stop even before this insurmountable obstacle, as did Renan, who proclaimed in his Vie de Jésus – a book permeated with incredulity – that Christ nevertheless is the ideal of human beauty, an inaccessible type which cannot be repeated even in the future.

“‘But do you know,’ he screamed one evening (sometimes in a state of great excitement he used to scream), ‘do you know that it is impossible to charge man with sins, to burden him with debts and turning the other cheek, when society is organized so meanly that man cannot help but perpetrate villainies; when, economically, he has been brought to villaiy, and that it is silly and cruel to demand from man that which, by the very laws of nature, he is impotent to perform even if he wished to…?’
“That evening we were not alone: there was present one of Belinsky’s friends whom he respected very much and obeyed in many ways. Also present was an author, quite young, who later gained prominence in literature [Dostoyevsky].

“‘I am even touched to look at him,’ said Belinsky, suddenly interrupting his furious exclamations, turning to his friend and pointing at me. ‘Every time I mention Christ his face changes expression, as if he were ready to start weeping... But, believe me, naïve man,’ he jumped at me again, ‘believe me that your Christ, if He were born in our time, would be a most imperceptible and ordinary man; in the presence of contemporary science and contemporary propellers of mankind, He would be effaced!’”

The essence of “The Parable of the Grand Inquisitor” is in that scene, with Belinsky in the role of Inquisitor and Dostoyevsky - in that of the silent Christ.

However, Dostoyevsky was not yet ready to break decisively with the socialist camp. As he wrote: “All these new ideas of those days were very appealing to us in Petersburg; they seemed holy in the highest degree and moral, and – most important of all – cosmopolitan, the future law of all mankind in its totality. Even long before the Paris revolution of ’48 we fell under the fascinating influence of these ideas. Already in ’46 I had been initiated by Belinsky into the whole truth of that future ‘regenerated world’ and into the whole holiness of the forthcoming communist society. All these convictions about the immorality of the very foundations (Christian) of modern society, the immorality of religion, family, right of property; all these ideas about the elimination of nationalities in the name of universal brotherhood of men, about the contempt for one’s native country as an obstacle to universal progress, and so on and so forth – all these constituted such influences as we were unable to overcome and which, contrariwise, swayed our hearts and minds in the name of some magnanimity. At any rate, the theme seemed lofty and far above the level of the then prevailing conceptions, and it was precisely this that was tempting...

“The human mind, once having rejected Christ, may attain extraordinary results. This is an axiom. Europe, in the persons of her highest intellectual representatives, renounces Christ, while we, as is known, are obligated to imitate Europe...”

The revolution of 1848 in Europe, writes V.F. Ivanov, “gave wings of hope to all the antichristian and destructive forces.

“The profound thinker V.A. Zhukovsky, in January, 1848, in an excerpt from a letter, What is Going to Happen, prophetically foretold the bloody chaos of which we are the witnesses in our own days.

“‘We live,’ wrote Zhukovsky, ‘on the crater of a volcano which not long ago was giving out fire, which calmed down and which is now again preparing to

throw up. Its first lava flow has not yet cooled, and already in its depths a new one is bubbling, and the thunder of stones flying out of the abyss is announcing that it will soon pour out. One revolution has ended, and another stepping on its toes, and what is remarkable is that the course of the last is observing the same order as did the first, in spite of the difference in their characters. The two are similar in their first manifestations, and now, as then, they are beginning with a shaking of the main foundation of order: religion. But now they are doing it in a bolder way and on a broader scale. Then they attack the faith obliquely, preaching tolerance, but now they are directly attacking every faith and bluntly preaching atheism; then they were secretly undermining Christianity, apparently arming themselves against the abuses of Church authorities, but now they are yelling from the roots that both Christianity and the Church and the Church authorities and every authority is nothing other than abuse. What is the aim of the present reformers? – I am speaking about those who sincerely desire what is better, sincerely believe in the reality and beneficence of their speculations – what is the aim of the present reformers?, who are entering on the same path which their predecessors trod, whose end we saw with shuddering, knowing that the desired improvement would never be found there. What is the aim of the present reformers? They themselves do not clearly see it. It is very probable that many of them are deceiving themselves, and, while going forward with banners on which there shine the words of our age: forward, freedom, equality, humanity, they themselves are sure that their path leads straight to the promised land. And perhaps it is fated for them, as for many others of their predecessors, to shudder on the edge or on the bottom of this abyss, which will soon open up under their feet.

“'Behind these preachers of education and progress, who are acting openly, others are acting in secret, who are not blinded, who have a practical aim which they see clearly in front of them: for them it is no longer a matter of political transformation, or of the destruction of privileges and age-old historical formations (that was already accomplished in the first revolution), but simply of the annihilation of the difference between yours and mine, or, more correctly, of turning yours into mine.'”

The first revolutionary movement in Russia after 1848 was the “Petrashevtsy”, named after its leader, Michael Petrashevsky. He expressed his “realist” views with typically Russian explicitness: "[Naturalism] means a science which holds that by thought alone, without the help of tradition, revelation, or divine intervention, man can achieve in real life a state of permanent happiness through the total and independent development of all his natural faculties. In the lower phases of its evolution, naturalism considers the appearance of the divine element in positive religions to be a falsehood, the result of human rather than divine action. In its further evolution, this science - having absorbed pantheism and materialism - conceives divinity as the supreme and all-embracing expression of human understanding, moves towards atheism, and finally becomes transformed into anthropotheism - the science that proclaims that the only supreme being is man himself as a part of nature. At this

stage of its rational evolution, naturalism considers the universal fact of the recognition of God in positive religions to be a result of man's deification of his own personality and the universal laws of his intellect; it considers all religions that reflected the historical evolution of mankind to be a gradual preparation for anthropotheism, or - in other words - total self-knowledge and awareness of the vital laws of nature.  

The Petrashevtsy especially admired Fourier; and on his birthday D.D. Akhsharumov declared: “We venerate his memory because he showed us the path we must follow, he revealed the source of wealth, of happiness. Today is the first banquet of the Fourierists in Russia, and we are all here: ten people, not much more! Everything begins from something small and grows into something big. Our aim is to destroy the capitals and cities and use all their materials for other buildings, and turn the whole of this life of torments, woes, poverty and shame into a life that is luxurious, elegant, full of joy, wealth and happiness, and cover the whole poor land with palaces and fruits and redecorate them in flowers. We here, in our country, will begin its transfiguration, and the whole land will finish it. Soon the human race will be delivered from intolerable sufferings…”

One member of the circle, the proud, silent and handsome Nikolai Speshnev, considered all distinctions between beauty and ugliness, good and evil to be “a matter of taste”. He did not believe in the transformation of Russia from the top, but in a socialist revolution from below, to which end only verbal propaganda was necessary. “I intend to use it, without the slightest shame or conscience, to propagandise socialism, atheism, terrorism, and all that is good.” Speshnev formed his own “Russian Society”, which was joined by Dostoyevsky. He called him his “Mephistopheles”, and was fascinated by him. But he was never wholly convinced by him, and continued to believe in Christ…

However, in 1849 the Petrashevtsy, including Dostoyevsky, were arrested – Dostoeievsky, for reading Belinsky’s Letter to Gogol in public. They were imprisoned in the Peter and Paul fortress, and then, after a mock-execution, sent to four years’ hard labour in Siberia. The experience – recounted in The House of the Dead – brought Dostoeievsky to repentance. As he wrote to his brother: “In my absolute spiritual solitude, I re-examined the whole of my former life. I scrutinized every minute detail. I thought very carefully about my past. Alone as I was, I judged myself harshly, without mercy. Sometimes I even thanked my fate because it had sent me into solitude, for without it, this new judgement of myself would never have happened…” As St. Ambrose of Optina said: “This is a man who repents!”

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374 Aksharumov, in Ivanov, op. cit., pp. 323-324.
376 Dostoyevsky, in Kjetsaa, op. cit., p. 105.
Then, in Siberia, by being “personally classed with villains”, he came to know the Russian people as they really were for the first time. And through them, as he wrote later, “I again received into my soul Christ, Who had been revealed to me in my parents’ home and Whom I was about to lose when, on my part, I transformed myself into a ‘European liberal’.”378 “The moral idea is Christ,” wrote Dostoyevsky. “In the West, Christ has been distorted and diminished. It is the kingdom of the Antichrist. We have Orthodoxy. As a consequence, we are the bearers of a clear understanding of Christ and a new idea for the resurrection of the world… If faith and Orthodoxy were shaken in the people, then they would begin to disintegrate… The whole matter lies in the question: can one believe, being civilized, that is, a European, that is, believe absolutely in the Divinity of the Son of God, Jesus Christ? (for all faith consists in this)... You see: either everything is contained in faith or nothing is: we recognize the importance of the world through Orthodoxy. And the whole question is: can one believe in Orthodoxy? If one can, then everything is saved: if not, then better to burn… But if Orthodoxy is impossible for the enlightened man, then… all this is hocus-pocus and Russia’s whole strength is provisional… It is possible to believe seriously and in earnest. Here is everything, the burden of life for the Russian people and their entire mission and existence to come…”379

And so Dostoyevsky became, after Pushkin and Gogol, the third great Russian writer to be rescued from European atheism and converted to “the Russian God”, Jesus Christ... Like the other Slavophiles, Dostoyevsky saw the beginning of the European disease in the reforms of Peter the Great. Unlike them, however, he came to believe that this turning to the West was providential – and not only in that enabled Russians to acquire European arts and sciences. “Throughout these hundred and fifty years after Peter we have done nothing but live through a communion with all human civilization, affiliating ourselves with their history and their ideals. We have learned, and trained ourselves, to love the French, the Germans and everybody else, as if they were our brethren – notwithstanding the fact that they never liked us and made up their minds never to like us. However, this was the essence of our reform – the whole Peter cause; we have derived from it, during that century and a half, an expansion of our view, which, perhaps, was unprecedented and cannot be traced in any other nation, whether in the ancient or the new world. The pre-Peter Russia was active and solid, although politically she was slow to form herself; she had evolved unity within herself and she had been ready to consolidate her border regions. And she had tacitly comprehended that she bore within herself a treasure which was no longer existent anywhere else – Orthodoxy; that she was the conservatrix of Christ’s truth, genuine truth – the true image of Christ which had been dimmed in all other religions and in all other nations. This treasure, this eternal truth inherent in Russia and of which she had become the custodian, according to the view of the best Russians of those days, as it were, relieved their conscience of the duty of any other enlightenment. Moreover, in Moscow the conception had been formed that any closer intercourse with Europe might even exercise a harmful and corrupt influence upon the Russian mind and the Russian

378 Dostoyevsky, The Diary of a Writer, 1880.

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idea; that it might distort Orthodoxy itself and lead Russia along the path to
perdition 'much in the same way as all other peoples'. Thus ancient Russia, in
her isolation, *was getting ready to be unjust* – unjust to mankind, having taken the
resolution to preserve passively her treasure, her Orthodoxy, for herself, to
seclude herself from Europe – that is, mankind – much as our schismatics who
refuse to eat with you from the same dish and who believe it to be a holy
practice that everyone should have his own cup and spoon. This is a correct
simile because prior to Peter’s advent, there had developed in Russia almost
precisely this kind of political and spiritual relation with Europe. With Peter’s
reform there ensued an unparalleled broadening of the view, and herein – I
repeat – is Peter’s whole exploit. This is also that very treasure about which I
spoke in one of the preceding issues of the *Diary* – a treasure which we, the
upper cultured Russian stratum, are bringing to the people after our century-
and-a-half absence from Russia, and which the people, after we ourselves shall
have bowed before their truth, must accept from us *sine qua non*, ‘without
which the fusion of both strata would prove impossible and everything would
come to ruin.’ Now, what is this ‘expansion of the view’, what does it consist of,
and what does it signify? Properly speaking, this is not enlightenment, nor is it
science; nor is it a betrayal of the popular Russian moral principles for the sake
of European civilization. No, this is precisely something inherent only in the
Russian people, since nowhere and at no time has there ever been such a reform.
This is actually, and in truth, almost our brotherly fifty-year-long living
experience of our intercourse with them. This is our urge to render universal
service to humanity, sometimes even to the detriment of our own momentous
and immediate interests. This is our reconciliation with their civilizations;
cognition and *excuse* of their ideals even though these be in discord with ours;
this is our acquired faculty of discovering and revealing in each one of the
European civilizations – or, more correctly, in each of the European
individualities – the truth contained in it, even though there be much with which
it would be impossible to agree. Finally, this is the longing, above all, to be just
and to seek nothing but truth. Briefly, this is, perhaps, the beginning of that
active application of our treasure – of Orthodoxy – to the universal service of
mankind to which Orthodoxy is designated and which, in fact, constitutes its
essence. Thus, through Peter’s reform our former idea – the Russian Moscow
idea – was broadened and its conception was magnified and strengthened.
Thereby we got to understand our universal mission, our individuality and our
role in humankind; at the same time we could not help but comprehend that this
mission and role do not resemble those of other nations since, there, every
national individuality lives solely for, and within, itself. We, on the other hand,
will begin – now that the hour has come – precisely with becoming servants to
all nations, for the sake of general pacification. And in this there is nothing
disgraceful; on the contrary, therein is our grandeur because this leads to the
ultimate unity of mankind. He who wishes to be first in the Kingdom of God
must become a servant to everybody. This is how I understand the Russian
mission *in its ideal.*”

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We have discussed Orthodoxy and Nationhood, but said little about the central element in the tripartite formula of Nicholas I’s reign: Autocracy, which was coming more and more under attack from the westerners as the century wore on. With the exception of Kireyevsky, the Slavophiles had little to say about Autocracy. As Lev Tikhomirov writes, “the greatest merit of the Slavophiles consisted not so much in their working out of a political teaching, 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.

Thus Khomiakov wrote: “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 Emperor. 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, and general Church piety – and for that reason it could not transfer such power to its Emperor.”

Here again we see the myth of an early pact between the Tsar and the people. For this was what the Slavophiles were above all concerned to emphasize: that the Tsar is not separated from his people, that Tsar and people form one harmonious whole and have a single ideal.

Khomiakov was also concerned to emphasize that it was not the Tsar who ruled the Russian Orthodox Church, as the Fundamental Laws 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’ (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).”

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382 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”, in Vera i Kul’tura, p. 95).
383 Lossky, op. cit., pp. 35-36.
"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."384

This estimate is probably least true in relation to Kireyevsky, although of all the Slavophiles he 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 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 instrument for the Tsar’s power. This is 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.”

385 Kireyevsky, “Ob otnoshenii k tsarskoj vlasti” (On the relationship to Tsarist power), in Razum na put’ k istine, op. cit., 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 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 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 hostility to the people itself, even if these actions afford it some earthly advantages.”

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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.387

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”.388

As a diplomat Tiutchev knew much about the threat to the Orthodox autocracy posed by the 1848 revolution; 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.

“The fact of this rivalry is now being revealed everywhere. In spite of that, the understanding of our age, 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.

387 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).
“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 fulfill 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 compulsory good works. And instead of brotherhood preached and accepted in the name of God, it intended to establish a brotherhood imposed by fear on the people-master. With the 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. Around the sphere in which they are present there is formed a desert and a huge mental emptiness, and governmental thought, not meeting from outside itself either control or guidance or even the slightest point of support, ends by weakening under its own weight even before it destined to fall under the blows of events.”

“Why,” he wrote 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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390 Tiutchev, “O tsenzure v Rossii” (On Censorship in Russia).
Other Slavophiles, such as 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 fulfills 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.*

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Ne’er will he say, with prayers and tears combined,  
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!"^393^  

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.^394^  

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 enshrined in religion, tradition, and customs – in a word, all values that together form an inner unifying force and help to forge social bonds based on shared moral convictions. The external truth, on the other hand, is represented by law and the

^393^ Tiutchev, *Nash Vek* (Our Age).  
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.

Moreover, it was inaccurate to represent the power of the Russian tsars as being “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.

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.”

With the failure of the 1848 revolution in Europe, hopes were raised in the hearts of Russian Slavophiles that the time had at last come for the fulfilment of the age-old dream of Russia the Third Rome. Tiutchev had his own idiosyncratic version of this dream, seeing Russia as the new Slavic Empire which could liberate the East Europeans, including even the Czechs and Moravians, from the false empire, church and civilization of the West. According to V. Tsimbursky, Tiutchev called on Nicholas I “to play on the revolutionary self-destruction of western civilization to place on its ruins the ‘ark’ of the new Empire: may ‘the Europe of Peter’ take the place of ‘the Europe of Charles’. With Tiutchev, as in the fears of the West, the europeanization of Russia becomes the growth of a power called to take the place and replace Romano-German Europe. Tiutchev… in return for the Florentine unia of 1439, puts forward a project for helping the Roman papacy out of the corner it was driven into by the Italian revolution on condition of its honourable return to Orthodoxy.”

However, Nicholas did not share this vision. Alone among the rulers of Europe, he believed in the legitimacy of Europe’s existing regimes, with the exception of revolutionary France but including Austria’s, in which many Slavs lived. For as K.N. Leontiev wrote, he “was a true and great ‘legitimist’. He did not like even the Orthodox ‘rayas’ [peoples of the Ottoman Empire] permitting themselves to rebel against the Sultan, reasonably ascribing to himself alone the lawful right to conquer the Sultan and bring him into submission, as the right of a tsar…

396 Walicki, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98.
“The unsuccessful and lightmindedly liberal Decembrist rebellion of the nobility had a less profound influence on his royal mind than the later events of the 1830s, which shook him and made him understand. From that time the Tsar became an opponent of all emancipation, all equalization, all confusion both in Russia and in other countries.…

“Of special interest is the explanatory note which the young [I.S.] Aksakov was forced to present in reply to the questions of the Third Department in 1849. Some passages in this reply were underlined by Tsar Nicholas Pavlovich, and objections against them were made by the Tsar in his own hand. Opposite the place where Aksakov writes about ‘the heartfelt sympathy of the so-called Slavophiles for the western Slavs and in general for the situation of their co-religionist and consanguineous brothers’, the Emperor made the following comment: ‘Under the guise of sympathy for the Slavic tribes supposedly oppressed in other states, there is hidden the criminal thought of a rebellion against the lawful authority of neighbouring and in part allied states, and of a general union they expect to attain not through the will of God’.…

“By these ‘states’ we must understand, of course, first of all Austria, and then in part Turkey… Nicholas Pavlovich recognized himself to have the right of exerting pressure on the Sultan 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.’”  

From 1843 the Old Ritualists had begun to seek a degree of legality from the State and permission to build churches and prayer houses. Tsar Nicholas would have none of it, and large Old Ritualist centres were closed: first in Irgiz (1839), then in Vyg, in Moscow and Petersburg (at the beginning of the 1850s). "At the closing of the Irgiz monasteries," writes S.A. Zenkovsky, "the Old Ritualists resisted and, in view of the application by the administration of armed force, many of them suffered physically. But again these were victims of the conflict, and not of tortures or executions of arrested Old Ritualists. These were not religious persecutions, but the desire of Nicholas I and his ministers of the interior to introduce 'order' into the religious life of the country and control the religious communities of the Old Ritualists that were de facto independent of the administration."

Metropolitan Philaret supported the Tsar's policy. He was very disturbed by the Old Ritualists' not commemorating the Emperor during their services. And he reported that in the Preobrazhensky workhouse the Old Ritualists were distributing books that taught "that no marriages should be recognized; the schismatics in marital unions with people not belonging to the schism should have their union broken; that bodily relationship should not be recognized in Christian marriages; that from 1666 married Christians are a satanic nest of vipers and the most shameful dwelling-place of his demons; that now satan is thinking about the multiplication of the human race and a soul is being given from the devil for the conception of a child."

At about this time the Popovtsi Old Ritualists began to look for a bishop overseas. No such bishop was found in the Caucasus, Syria, Palestine, Persia and Egypt. Finally, writes Dobroklonsky, they "lured to themselves a former metropolitan of Bosnia, the Greek Ambrose, who had been deprived of his see and was living in Constantinople. In 1846 he was brought to Belaia Krinitsa (in Bukovina, in Austria) and was received into the communion of the Popovtsi by cursing some supposed heresies and chrismation. In 1847, in accordance with the wish of the schismatics, he consecrated Bishop Cyril as his deputy and Arcadius for the Nekrasovtsi (in Turkey). Thus was the existence of the Belokrinitsky hierarchy established. Although in the following year, at the insistence of the Russian government, Ambrose was removed from Belaia

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399 Zenkovsky, "Staroobriadoshestvo, Tserkov' i Gosudarstvo" (Old Ritualism, the Church and the State), Russkoe Vozrozhdenie (Russian Regeneration), 1987 - I, pp. 93-94.
400 Metropolitan Ioann (Snychev), Zhizn' i Deiatel'nost' Filareta, Mitropolita Moskovskogo, Tula, 1994, p. 319.
401 "In 1866 Patriarch Anthimus of Constantinople wrote an epistle to Metropolitan Joseph of Karlovtsy, in which he wrote the following about Metropolitan Ambrose: 'The hierarch whom we are discussing, being considered subject to trial because of his flight, canonically cannot carry out hierarchical actions'" (Archbishop Nicon (Rlitsky), Zhizneopisanie Blazhennyshago Antonia, Mitropolitana Kievskago i Galitskago (Life of his Beatitude Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich), volume 3, New York, 1957, p. 167). (V.M.)
Krinitsa to restricted residence in the city of Tsilla (in Styria) and the Belokrinitsky monastery was sealed, in 1859 the Austrian government again recognised the lawfulness of the Belokrinitsky metropolia and the monastery was unsealed. Cyril, who succeeded Ambrose, took care to consecrate new bishops, and such soon appeared for the Turkish, Moldavian and, finally, Russian schismatics. The first of the Russians was the shopkeeper Stephen Zhirov, who was made bishop of Simbirsk with the name Sophronius in 1849; by 1860 there were already up to 10 schismatic dioceses within the boundaries of Russia. A 'spiritual council' was formed in Moscow to administer church affairs; it was composed of false bishops and false priests. Sophronius was dreaming of founding a patriarchate, and even set up a patriarch, but, at the insistence of the schismatics, himself condemned his own undertaking. At first the government repressed the Old Ritualist hierarchs and the priests ordained by them. However, the Austrian priesthood continue to spread. From the time of Alexander II it began to enjoy toleration, although the government did not recognize it as lawful. In spite of a visible success, the Austrian hierarchy from the very beginning of its existence displayed signs of disintegration. Quarrels constantly arose between the schismatic bishops. They became especially fierce after the publication in 1862 in the name of the spiritual council of a certain 'encyclical of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church'. It was composed by an inhabitant of Starodub, Hilarion Egorovich Kabanov with the aim of condemning the reasonings of the Bespopovtsi, whose distribution had dealt a blow to the Austrian priesthood. Having examined several books of the Bespopovtsi, the epistle expressed [the following] view of the Orthodox Church: 'The ruling church in Russia, as also the Greek, believe in the same God as we (the Old Ritualists), the Creator of heaven and earth& Therefore, although we pronounce and write the name of the Saviour 'Isus', we do not dare to condemn that which is written and pronounced 'Iisus' as being the name of some other Jesus, the opponent of Christ, as certain Bespopovtsi think to do. Similarly, we do not dishonour and blaspheme the cross with four ends.' It was also recognised that the true priesthood of Christ continued in the Orthodox Church (Great Russian and Greek) and would remain until the day of judgement. While some accepted the epistle, others condemned it. Thus there appeared mutually opposing parties of 'encyclicalers' and 'anti-encyclicalers'. The latter, who had tendencies towards Bespopovschina, began to affirm that the name 'Iisus', as accepted by the Orthodox Church, is the name of another person than 'Isus', and is the name of the Antichrist. Both parties had their own bishops. 402

After the creation of the Belokrinitsky hierarchy, the attitude of the Russian government towards the Old Ritualists became stricter. In 1854 they were deprived of all rights as merchants, and their chapel in the Rogozhsky cemetery was closed. However, from the beginning of Alexander II's reign, they were allowed to have services in the cemetery. In 1865 the government wanted to introduce a further weakening of the legislation against the Old Ritualists, and only the voice of Metropolitan Philaret stopped it. "In 1858, for example, he

complained that the Old Believers [Ritualists] were increasingly confident that the government would refrain from enforcing various restrictions on their influence and activities. Warning of the Old Believers' pernicious moral influence, Philaret insisted on the need for strict control and rejected the idea of religious tolerance then gaining popularity in educated society. Philaret appealed not to tradition or canons, but to the state's own self-interest: 'The idea [of religious tolerance] appears good, but it is fair only when the subject and limits are precisely and correctly determined. The idea of protecting the unity of the ruling confession in the state (thereby preserving the popular spirit - a source of strength for the state and an important aid to governance) should come before the idea of religious tolerance and should impose limits on the latter.' Hence, he noted, European countries (even liberal England) imposed limits on religious freedom. Moreover, the state had a particular interest in defending the Church against the Old Belief [Rite]: 'But tolerance extended without limits to the schism (which emerged as much from a refusal to obey the Church as from a rebellion against the state, and through its intensified proselytism constantly acts to harm the unity of the Church and state) would be both an injustice to the Church and a serious political mistake.' Despite such arguments, Philaret could do little to halt the gradual liberalization of policy toward Old Believers that only fueled their expectations for still more concessions. Unable to arrest this process, Philaret darkly warned that, 'if the secular government fails to show sufficient caution against the pseudo-bishops and pseudo-priests [of the schism], then this will fall on its conscience before God, the Church, and the fatherland.'

However, Snychev argues that "the struggle of the holy hierarch with the schism in the last years of his life had, if not a very large, at any rate a definite success. Many of the schismatics joined either Orthodoxy or the Yedinoverie. Thus in 1854 some schismatics from the Preobrazhensky cemetery joined the Yedinoverie, and in 1865 the following activists of the Belokrinitsky metropolia joined the Orthodox Church with the rights of the Yedinoverie: among the bishops, the metropolitan's deputy, Onuphrius of Braila, Paphnutius of Kolomna, Sergius of Tula and Justin of Tulchinsk; Hieromonk Joasaph; the archdeacon of Metropolitan Cyril, his secretary and the keeper of the archives Philaret; Hierodeacon Melchizedek, who was able to take the archive of the metropolia and transfer it across the Russian frontier. The success might have been greater if the government had more actively supported Philaret and his deeds in the struggle against the schism."
The task of defending the Autocracy from its westernizing critics fell in the first place on the Church... Now the most outstanding hierarch in the Holy Synod at this time was Metropolitan Philaret (Drozdov) (+1867), a great theologian and defender of the Church who had ruled the see of Moscow for nearly half a century. But he was also a great defender of the State, as was demonstrated during his conduct during the Decembrist rebellion of 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 I. Therefore his views on the Autocracy, and on the relationship between the Church and the State, were particularly important. Perhaps it is Philaret, writes Robert Nicols, who “should be credited with the first efforts [in the Russian Church] to work out a theory of church-state relations that insisted on the legitimacy of divinely instituted royal authority without endorsing the seemingly unlimited claims of the modern state to administer all aspects of the lives of its citizens.”

According to Metropolitan Ioann (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 the tsar'. 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. 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 its 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 emphasized 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 self-sacrifice and self-forgetfulness in obedience to the laws and sacred authority of the autocrat."

408 "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.)

409 Florovsky, "Philaret, mitropolit Moskovskij" (Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow), in *Vera i Kul'tura* (Faith and Culture), St. Petersburg, 2002, pp. 261-264.


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 antechamber 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).

"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 necessity requires, the limits placed upon freedom of action, hinder as far they can the abuse of natural 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 fulfill 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.

"I would have much to say about the freedom that is Christian and inner, and not external, which is moral and 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."\(^{412}\)

However during the 1840s, as Nicols writes, the holy metropolitan "became disenchanted with Russia’s growing regimentation under Tsar Nicholas I and his officials. For Filaret, this was a period of ‘crisis’, and his response to it shows him to be a follower of the Orthodox ascetical and contemplative approach to the tasks of personal and social reconstruction in the Christian life. This approach decisively defined his outlook as a churchman, for it suggested to him that beyond the decisions of Synods, the education of seminaries and academies, the unity found in political and ecclesiastical formulations, the only adequate means for combating a new irreligious and secular age could be found in the healing power of the Holy Spirit most effectively mediated through those perfected by asceticism, prayer, and silence. Just as in the arduous age of St Anthony the Great in the Egyptian desert, or in the dangerous one of St Sergius of Radonezh, sufficient power for healing, renewal, and salvation could only be acquired by those cloistered in the ‘wilderness’ of Russia’s Northern Thebaid. The divisions of the raskol and the Unia, the theological differences between Catholics, Orthodox, and Protestants, the inadequate knowledge of Scripture and Christian teaching by ordinary Russians could not be surmounted by formal decrees of secret committees or specially trained missionaries and dogmatists working in the Nicholaevan spirit of military discipline and regimentation. Christianity required an inner freedom and vitality that was immediately suspected as a subversive current pulling against the official tide. ‘In such circumstances,’ Filaret warned, ‘no amount of caution will suffice, but nonetheless assiduous caution is necessary.’ Filaret’s criticisms and actions in the 1840s brought him into official disfavor, and his private papers at one point were secretly examined for damaging and incriminating evidence against him. He was forced to leave St Petersburg and the Holy Synod under a dark cloud. He did not return again until after the emperor’s death in 1855..."\(^{413}\)

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\(^{412}\) Metropolitan Philaret, "Slovo v den' Blagochestivejshego Gosudaria Imperatora Nikolaia Pavlovich" (Sermon on the day of his Most Pious Majesty Emperor Nicholas Pavlovich), in Kozlov, op. cit., pp. 274-275, 277-279.

\(^{413}\) Nicols, op. cit., pp. 83-84.
However legitimate the 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. 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. 414

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, as head of the Third Rome, 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....

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“[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 the cause would joyfully risk 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.’”

"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 much greater and more dangerous confrontation. Given the strength of Russian religious convictions Tsar Nicholas was unwilling to accept the Sultan's decision

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- which he regarded as an affront not just to him but to the millions of Orthodox Christians under his protection - and he was determined to have it reversed, if need be by using force himself.  

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 fulfillment."

Seeking advice, the Tsar asked if there were any holy elders in Kiev. The Metropolitan mentioned 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, the Tsar proclaimed: "By the occupation of the Principalities we desire such security as will ensure the restoration of our dues [in Palestine]. 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. Tiutcheva 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, but also with the other Christian confessions, which, taking the side of the religion of Mohammed, are thereby betraying their own vital principle."
The British, the French and later the Sardinians joined the Turks. In March, 1854, the British Foreign Secretary Lord Palmerston in a secret memorandum prepared for the cabinet wrote of the Russian empire's "dismemberment. Finland would be restored to Sweden, the Baltic provinces would go to Prussia, and Poland would become a sizable kingdom. Austria would renounce her Italian possessions but gain the Danubian principalities and possibly even Bessarabia in return, and the Ottoman empire would regain the Crimea and Georgia."419

As A.S. Khomiakov wrote: "Whatever political bases and excuses 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 he 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 [his opposition to the Filioque]; 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."420

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.421)

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."422

Sebastopol fell in September, 1855. In 1856 the new Tsar, Alexander II, signed the Treaty of Paris, thereby bringing the Crimean war to an end. While the Russians had lost some battles and the port of Sebastopol, they retained Kars, which (with Erzurum) they had conquered from the Turks. At the Peace Conference, 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 demilitarized. 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

421 Ivanov, op. cit., p. 327.
Nikolaev stirred up by Lord Clarendon have been resolved by our replies." 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!"

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 and the triumph of the Christian monarchical principle, this had not happened in 1854-56. Russia had "not yet been beaten half enough," in Palmerston's words; but her losses had been far greater than those of the Allies, and the war had revealed that Russia was well behind the Allies in transport and weaponry, especially rifles. Moreover, Russia's anti-monarchist enemies had taken heart from her defeat; and her primary war-aim, the retention of her right to act as guardian of the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire, had not been achieved - she now had to share the guardianship with four other Great Powers.

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; 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 "Kasperovskai" icon. However, examples of unbelief had been seen among the commanding officers at Sebastopol, and some of the intelligentsia, such as B.N. Chicherin, openly scoffed the idea of a holy war. One scoffer was a young officer who was soon to make a

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423 Orlov, in Selischev, op. cit., p. 12.
426 See "Zhitiye sviatitelia Innokentia Khersonskogo" ("The Life of the holy Hierarch Innocent of Cherson"), in Zhitiia i Tovreenia Russikh Sviatiykh (The Lives and Works of the Russian Saints), Moscow, 2001, pp. 701-702. Archbishop Innocent of Kherson and Odessa, within whose jurisdiction the Crimea fell, had had sermons "widely circulated to the Russian troops in the form of pamphlets and illustrated prints (lubki)." Innocent portrayed the conflict as a 'holy war' for the Crimea, the centre of the nation's Orthodox identity, where Christianity had arrived in Russia. Highlighting the ancient heritage of the Greek Church in the peninsula, he depicted the Crimea as a 'Russian Athos', a sacred place in the 'Holy Russian Empire' connected by religion to the monastic centre of Orthodoxy on the peninsula of Mount Athos in northeastern Greece. With [Governor] Stroganov's support, Innocent oversaw the creation of a separate bishopric for the Crimea as well as the establishment of several new monasteries in the peninsula after the Crimean War" (Figes, op. cit., p. 423). However, in the end it was on the other side of the Black Sea, in Abkhazia, that the great monastery of New Athos was constructed shortly before the First World War.
worldwide reputation in another field - Count Leo Tolstoy. In his *Sebastopol Sketches* he made unflattering comparisons between the western and the Russian armies. His comments on the defenders of Sebastopol were especially unjust: "We have no army, we have a horde of slaves cowed by discipline, ordered about by thieves and slave traders. This horde is not an army because it possesses neither any real loyalty to faith, tsar and fatherland - words that have been so much misused! - nor valour, nor military dignity. All it possesses are, on the one hand, passive patience and repressed discontent, and on the other, cruelty, servitude and corruption." 427

Tolstoy was to cast his ferociously cynical eye over much more than the army in the course of his long life as a novelist and publicist. Idolized by the public, he would subject almost every aspect of Russian life and faith to his withering scorn. For, as the poet Athanasius Fet noted, he was distinguished by an "automatic opposition to all generally accepted opinions" 428; and in this way was in a real sense "the mirror of the Russian revolution".

The leading Slavophiles of the prewar period, such as Khomiakov and Kireyevsky, died soon after the war, and with their deaths the ideological struggle shifted in favour of the westerners. While the war of 1812 had united the nation behind the Tsar, the Crimean war was followed by increasing division and dissension. The conclusion drawn by Constantine Aksakov (who, in spite of his anti-statism, ardently supported the war) was as follows: "From the very beginning the reason for all 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." 429

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428 Fet, in Figes, *op. cit.*, p. 446
429 C. Aksakov, in E.N. Annenkov, "Slaviano-Khristianskie' idealy na fone zapadnoj tsivilizatsii, russkie spory 1840-1850-kh gg." ("Slavic-Christian' ideas against the background of western civilization, Russia quarrels in the 1840s and 50s"), in V.A. Kotel'nikov (ed.), *Khristianskoe i Russkaia Literatura* (Christianity and Russian Literature), St. Petersburg: "Nauka", 1996, pp. 143-144. Cf. Yury Samarin: "We were defeated not by the external forces of the Western alliance, but
In the foreign sphere, the most important long-term consequence was the destruction of the Holy Alliance of Christian monarchist powers established by Tsar Alexander I in 1815. Russia had been the main guarantor of the integrity of both Prussia and Austria, and in 1848 had saved Austria from the revolution. But a bare seven years later, Austria had turned her against her benefactor...

“Hitherto,” writes Bernard Simms, “the Tsarist Empire had tried to stay on good terms with both Prussia and Austria, but tilted strongly towards the latter on ideological grounds. During the war, both powers had blotted their copybooks in St. Petersburg, but Austria’s humiliating ultimatum [“in December 1855, the Austrians joined the French and the British in an ultimatum to the new tsar... to end hostilities or face combined action against him”] had given far more offence than Prussia’s timid neutrality. Henceforth, the Russians saw the Austrians as the principal barrier to their Balkan ambitions, and the idea that the path to Constantinople ran through Vienna – a common slogan in later decades – began to gain currency in St. Petersburg. Even more crucially, the Russians were determined that they would never again face the full force of the German Confederation under the aegis of Austria. Vienna would have to be unbolted from the leadership of Germany. So in late August 1856 the new Russian foreign minister, Gorchakov, announced in a widely discussed circular that the tsar would no longer support his fellow monarchs. The message was clear: the Habsburgs would face the next revolutionary challenge on their own…”

by our own internal weakness... Stagnation of thought, depression of productive forces, the rift between government and people, disunity between social classes and the enslavement of one of them to another... prevent the government from deploying all the means available to it and, in emergency, from being able to count on mobilising the strength of the nation” (“O krepostnom sostojanii i o perekhode iz nego k grazhdanskoj svobode” (“On serfdom and the transition from it to civil liberty”), Sochinenia (Works), vol. 2, Moscow, 1878, pp. 17-20; quoted in Hosking, op. cit., p. 317).

In spite of her defeat in the Crimean War, Russia continued to extend her influence into Asia. Her missions to Siberia and Central Asia, China, Japan and Alaska were to bring forth rich fruit; later Persia would feel her beneficial influence. And she fulfilled her mission as the Third Rome in her protection of the ancient Orthodox kingdom of Georgia.

Georgia depended for her very survival on the support of Russia against the Muslim peoples to the south. Correspondingly, Russia's constant aim in the Caucasus region was to establish a firm and reliable bridge to Georgia across the Caucasus mountains. To this end, as Protopriest Lev Lebedev writes, "it was necessary to overcome the opposition of Persia and Turkey and the warlike mountain peoples of the Northern Caucasus and the Caspian and Black Sea coasts whom they often stirred up.

"It is fashionable to talk about the cruelties committed by the Russian armies in this 'Caucasian war'. But it is not fashionable to talk about the bestial acts of the Muslim mountaineers in relation to the Russians, and also in relation to those of their own people who had accepted Orthodoxy (for example, the Ossetians and Georgians). And these acts exceeded all human imagination. War is war! The mutual hardening of the sides was, alas, inevitable here. And so there were also excesses of violence and cruelty on the side of the Russians… Gradually, at a dear price, Russia managed to break the opposition of the mountaineers and thereby guarantee a constant safe 'bridge' of communication with Orthodox Georgia."

Russia first made contact with the Caucasian mountaineers when she achieved her great victory over the Tatar Mohammedans at the taking of Kazan. In 1552 two Cherkassian princes asked Ivan IV, the conqueror of Kazan, to receive them as subjects to help them in their struggle against the Turkish sultan and his vassal, the Crimean Khan. In 1557 two Kabardinian princes, Temryuk and Tizryut, asked for the same in their struggle against Shamkhal of Tarki. Soon there were Cossacks on the banks of Terek, and in 1586 the Russian Tsar and King Alexander of Georgia formed an alliance against Shamkhal, as a result of which Tarki was stormed in 1594. But Sultan-Muta, son of Shamkhal, and the whole of Dagestan rebelled against the Russians. Tarki was destroyed in 1604 and the Russian armies were destroyed. It was not until over a century later, in 1722, that Peter I resumed the Russian advance and conquered the Caspian coast. This brought the Russians in conflict with the Shah of Persia, who in 1741 tried to conquer the area, but was defeated.

431 At least one Saint worked on the Chinese mission-field in this period: Archbishop Gurias of Tauris, who worked for twenty years in the Peking Spiritual mission, translating into Chinese the Gospels, Service Book, Lives of the Saints, as well as other religious works. In 1929 his body was found to be incorrupt (http://orthodox.cn/saints/20080421gurykarpov_en.htm).
432 Lebedev, Velikorossia, pp. 324, 325.
"To some extent," writes Dominic Lieven, "the Russians were pulled into the Trans-Caucasus - in other words, across the mountains - by appeals for support from the Georgians, a fellow Orthodox people. Georgia was too weak to defend itself against increasing pressure from both the Ottomans and the Persians. Georgia had good reason to seek the protection of empire and to escape the anarchy, economic devastation and loss of population that had resulted from existing in an insecure borderland. In the mid-thirteenth century there were five million Georgians, by 1770 there were barely 500,000. In the last decades of the eighteenth century Petersburg wavered as to whether it was worthwhile to take on the burden of defending and ruling Georgia. In the end what mattered most were strategic and geopolitical considerations. Given both traditional hostility to the Ottoman Empire and growing rivalry with Napoleonic France and Britain in Persia and the Ottoman Empire, it was decided to annex Georgia as Russia's base and centre of power beyond the Caucasus. Once established in the region, however, the Russians to some extent had to obey the laws of local geopolitics. This entailed, for example, conquering the land and sea communications between the Trans-Caucasus and Russia. Subduing the mountain peoples of the North Caucasus proved a hugely expensive and time-consuming struggle, not concluded until the 1860s."

In 1785-87 Sheikh Mansur led Chechnya and Dagestan in rebellion against the Russians. He was defeated. However, in 1812 rebellion flared up again. Then, "in 1826," writes Lebedev, "for the sake of her interests in Georgia and without a declaration of war, Persia invaded Transcaucasia. General Ermolov, the commander-in-chief of the Russian armies in the Caucasus, was not able with his forces to deal with the invasion. There came to his help the armies led by General Paskevich. In a series of battles Paskevich defeated the Persians, took Erivan (Yerevan), invaded Persia and headed for its capital - Teheran. The Persian Shah sought peace, which was concluded in 1828 in Turkmanchai, in accordance with which the lands of present-day Armenia and Azerbaidjan passed permanently to Russia. An end was placed to Persia's pretensions. Nicholas I bestowed the title of Count of Erivan on Paskevich. It was more difficult to bring into submission the mountain tribes of the Northern Caucasus, with whom the Russian Cossack settlements on the Terek and Kuban had long had dealings. The Chechens, the Cherkessy and other warlike peoples not only warred against the Cossacks, they also lived next to them and entered into peaceful relations with the Russians, encountering in these cases a completely friendly response from the Russians. But in 1825 there began the 'Miurizm' movement, which was introduced from Turkey. The 'Miuridy' (novices) were obliged to wage a holy war against the 'infidel' Russians under the leadership of 'holy elders' - imams and sheiks - with the aim of creating an extensive 'caliphate' from Stambul to the Kuban. The imams Kazi-mullah and later Shamil became popular leaders."

From the middle of the 1840s Shamil became both the political and the religious leader of the state of Imamat, "the ruler of the right-believing"; all executive, judicial and legislative power was in his hands. Declaring all the tribal

434 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 324.
leaders who submitted to the Russians to be traitors and apostates, he united all
the North Caucasus mountaineers for the first time. As the French consul in
Tiflis wrote: "We have to distinguish two personalities united in Shamil.... On the
one hand, the political leader, dictator, to whom limitless power was presented
by events with a democratic system based on the principle of absolute equality.
But at the same time he is a religious leader, to whom the calling of the great
imam, the supreme head of the right believers, a sacred character is attached.
Having this dual calling, he is the only judge in the question of offering the
sacrifices demanded by the war. His power is firmly organized."436

However, God was with the Russian armies. Thus on December 24, 1853
Archbishop Isidore, the exarch of Georgia, wrote to Metropolitan Philaret of
Moscow: "The captured Turks told us openly that when the battle near
Alexandropol' became fierce, and the whole Russian detachment became
involved, the Turks saw a radiant woman coming down from heaven holding a
banner in her hands and accompanied by two warriors. The light from her was so
bright that it was like the shining of the sun, and no eye could stand it. This
appearance produced horror in the ranks of the fighters and was the reason why,
on seeing that God was on the side of Rus', all the Turks turned to flight and lost
the battle. The Russians did not see this appearance. By the Providence of God
our foreign enemies witnessed to it."437

In 1859 Shamil was captured, and by 1864 the war had come to an end. It had
claimed the lives of nearly 100,000 Russians killed since 1801. At this point,
writes Lieven, most of the population of the western region of the Caucasus
"were 'encouraged' to emigrate to the Ottoman Empire amidst great suffering
and loss of life. The Chechens and Dagestanis of the eastern region, who had
resisted the Russians with equal determination, were allowed to remain in their
homeland. The reason for this was that the western region, bordering on a Black
Sea on which Russia [after the Crimean War] was not permitted to have a navy,
was acutely vulnerable to Ottoman or British attack. In the aftermath of the
Crimean War, St. Petersburg's perception was that Russia was dangerously
weak, and Palmerston's England on the offensive worldwide. Palmerston
himself commented that 'these half-civilized governments such as those of
China, Portugal, Spanish America require a Dressing every eight or ten years to
keep them in order', and no one who knew his views on Russia could doubt his
sense that she too deserved to belong to this category of states. The Russians
were not therefore prepared to leave on this coastline a Sunni population whom
they quite rightly believed to be potential allies of the Ottomans in any future
war. A British historian of the 'Great Game' (i.e. Anglo-Russian nineteenth-
century rivalry in Central Asia) comments that 'the forcible exile of six hundred
thousand Circassians from the Black Sea Coast deprived the Turks and the
British of their most valuable potential allies within the Russian Empire.'438

436 Kaziev, op. cit., p. 53.
437 Snychev, op. cit., p. 325.
438 Lieven, op. cit., pp. 213-214. The historian referred to is David Gillard.
71. THE ORIGINS OF NATIONALISM: (7) GREECE

In his book *The Idea of Nationalism* (1944), Hans Kohn, a Zionist of Czech-German background, made an important distinction between two dominant categories of nationalism that has been summarized by Shlomo Sand as follows: “Western nationalism, with an essentially voluntarist approach, which developed on either side of the Atlantic Ocean, bounded on the east by Switzerland; and the organic national identity that spread eastward from the Rhine, encompassing Germany, Poland, the Ukraine and Russia.

“Nationalism in the West, except in Ireland, is an original phenomenon that sprang from autochthonous sociopolitical forces, without outside intervention. In most cases it appears when the state, which is engaged in modernization, is well established or is being established. This nationalism draws its ideas from the traditions of the Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment, and its principles are based on individualism and liberalism, both legal and political. The hegemonic class that engenders this national consciousness is a powerful, secular bourgeoisie, and it constructs civil institutions with political power that play a decisive role in the formation of liberal democracy. It is a self-confident bourgeoisie, and the national politics it fosters tend generally toward openness and inclusiveness. Becoming a citizen of the United States, Britain, France, the Netherlands or Switzerland depends not only on origin and birth but also on the will to join. For all the differences between national perceptions, anyone naturalized in these countries is seen, legally and ideologically, as a member of the nation, with the state as the common property of the citizenry.

“According to Kohn, the nationalism that developed in Central and Eastern Europe (the Czech case being something of an exception) was, by contrast, a historical product catalyzed principally from outside. It came into being during Napoleon’s conquests and began to take shape as a movement of resistance against the ideas and progressive values of the Enlightenment. In these countries, the national idea arose before, and in fact unconnected with, the consolidation of a modern state apparatus. In these political cultures the middle classes were weak, and the civil institutions they founded were deferential toward the central and aristocratic authorities…”

While we may quarrel with some aspects of this distinction, the central point, that East European nationalism was influenced more by the more mystical, blood-and-soil nationalism of Germany than by the more civic nationalism of France, is valid. A particularly important influence coming from Germany was that of Johann Gottfried von Herder, whose concept of the unique essence of each nation was also to influence Russian Hegelian thinkers in the 1840s. According to Daniel P. Payne, “the importance of Herder for East European nationalism” has been demonstrated by Peter Sugar. “According to Sugar, Herder’s concept of the Volk was transformed in the Eastern European context. In the concept of the Volk, Herder simply meant nationality and did not imply the nation as such. In his arguments against the search for the ideal state, Herder

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maintained that the concept of liberty must conform to the needs of each particular nationality. Sugar notes: ‘This is a romantic and, even more, a humanitarian concept. It condemns those who place the state, even the ideal state, ahead of people.’ Consequently, in Eastern Europe this contextualization on the basis of each particular nationality led to a unique messianism in the particularization of each Volk. In this particularization a ‘confusion of nationality and nation, of cultural, political, and linguistic characteristics was further extended to justify the Volk’s mission. This mission could be accomplished only if it had free play in a Volksstaat, nation-state.’ Thus, the concept of the nation-state as it developed in Eastern Europe was very different from the Western understanding. In the East each Volk needed its own nation-state in order to fulfill its messianic mission rooted in the Volksville. Herder’s romanticism combined with the political ideas of the West, creating the form of cultural-political nationalism that is uniquely its own.”

However, there were special factors that distinguished Balkan nationalism from German, Herderian nationalism. The most important of these was the role of the Orthodox Church. Whereas in Western Europe the Churches, with the exception of the Catholic Church in Ireland, played only a small role, in the Balkans the Orthodox Church played a decisive part. We have seen how it was Metropolitan Germanos of Patras who actually raised the standard of revolution in the Peloponnese in 1821, and the Church was equally important in the Serbian revolution. At the same time, the Church by her nature, being an international community with a universalist message, was opposed to the divisive tendencies introduced by the various nationalisms.

Thus on the one hand the Orthodox Church supported the struggles for national independence insofar as they were struggles for the survival of the Orthodox faith against Islam. The Ottoman Muslim yoke had a similar effect in stimulating nationalism in the Balkans as Napoleon’s victories had had in stimulating nationalism in Germany. And the Church was on the side of the people against the infidel oppressor.

On the other hand, the Church in the Ottoman empire could not afford to identify too closely with the individual national revolutions. And this for two main reasons. First, because the revolutions had caused atrocities – for example, the wiping out of every Turkish man, woman and child in the Peloponnese (57,000 people) – that the Church could not possibly approve of. And secondly because while the Orthodox Christian people of the Balkans constituted a single millet, or people, ruled by a single head – the Ecumenical Patriarch, the individual nationalisms competed with each other and even fought wars against each other. Thus Serbs fought Bulgarians, and Bulgarians fought Greeks – and all three nations fought the Turks, not together, but in competition with each other. Even the Patriarch, who should have been the symbol of Orthodox unity, tended to further Greek interests at the expense of those of his Slav parishioners. This encouraged anti-clerical tendencies among the Slav nationalists.

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Thus Payne writes: “With the advent of nationalism in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Eastern Europe, which led to the eventual dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the various nationalities revolted not only against their Ottoman overlords but also their clerical authorities, especially the Ecumenical Patriarch (EP). Under the leadership of the Greek patriarch, a process of Grecification had occurred to insure ecclesiastical unity in the millet. Instead of the use of Church Slavonic in the Slav churches, the Greek liturgy and practice was enforced, especially in the mid- to late nineteenth century. Additionally, the high taxes placed upon the Orthodox people by the hierarchical authorities to insure their positions with the Sublime Porte produced increasing anti-clericalism in the Balkan peoples. This anti-clericalism against the Greek bishops was also rooted in the Enlightenment ideas of Western Europe. Borrowing the Erastian model of church–state relations that developed in Western Europe, whereby the Church was placed under the authority of the state, East European secular nationalists, desiring their own independent churches, argued for the creation and subjection of national churches to the political authorities. As Aristeides Papadakis argues, ‘Significantly, one of the first steps taken by these independent states was to separate the church within their frontiers from the authority of Constantinople. By declaring it autocephalous, by “nationalizing” it, they hoped to control it.’

“At the time of the development of nationalism in the Balkans, there were two differing opinions as to the direction of the polity to succeed the Ottoman Empire. On the one hand, many of the Phanariots believed that the Ottoman Empire eventually would become Greek, allowing for the resurrection of the Byzantine Empire. Thus, they did not support the various nationalist movements that led to the breakup of the Ottoman Empire. Instead, they looked to its natural devolution. This understanding was supported by the traditional Byzantine political ideology of the oikoumene, which holds that the one empire has only one church. In a modified position, Rigas Pheraios Vestinlis articulated an understanding of an Orthodox commonwealth of nations in the succeeding empire, with the EP as its head. However, the Western-educated secular nationalists contested the vision of Rigas and what Zakynthos calls ‘neo-byzantine universalism,’ employing instead the Enlightenment ideas of Voltaire to articulate the development of independent nation-states with autocephalous national churches. Adopting the secular national vision of the state with its concomitant national church led to the transmogrification of the Orthodox understanding of the ‘local church.’

“Greek sociologist Paschalis Kitromilides argues similarly, using Benedict Anderson’s concept of ‘imagined communities,’ that the national historiographies smoothed over the antinomical relationship between Orthodoxy and nationalism. He states: ‘It was the eventual abandonment of the ecumenicity of Orthodoxy, and the “nationalization” of the churches, that brought intense national conflicts into the life of the Orthodox Church and nurtured the assumption concerning the affinity between Orthodoxy and nationality.’ The various national histories created imagined national communities whereby the Church’s opposition to nationalism was dismissed.
and its support as a nation-building institution was promoted. Kitromilides argues that the Church instead opposed nationalism and the Enlightenment ideas underlying it in order to sustain its traditional theological position of being the ‘one’ Church. However, under the influence of secular nationalism, the Church’s position eventually changed, assuming a nationalist position, especially in regards to the Macedonian crisis of the late nineteenth century…”

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Modern Greek nationalism began shortly after the foundation of the Free Greek State in 1832. The question that immediately arose was: who were the Greeks? “Although,” as Roderick Beaton writes, “just about all the citizens of the kingdom with the exception of the king and his advisers who came from Bavaria, were united by the Greek language and the Orthodox religion, many more co-religionists and Greek speakers lived beyond its boundaries, in territories still under the control of the Ottomans. Since a state now existed, and the very concept of European statehood had previously been foreign to traditional Greek concepts of themselves, it followed that in order to live up convincingly to that concept, the Greek state would have to include all the Greeks. Greek irredentism is therefore as old as the Greek state, a logical consequence of the Romantic concept of nationhood used to define that state from the beginning.

“The inescapable requirement for the state to incorporate all its ‘nationals’ within its boundaries in order to justify its own self-definition, was first articulated in a famous speech to the Constituent Assembly in Athens in January 1844 by Ioannis Kolettis, a veteran strategist of the war of independence and soon to become prime minister: ‘Greece is geographically placed at the centre of Europe, between East and West, her destiny in decline [i.e. the destiny of ancient Greece] to spread light to the West, but in her rebirth in the East. The former task our forefathers achieved, the latter falls to us. In the spirit of this oath [i.e. to liberate Greece] and of this great idea I have consistently seen the nation’s representatives gathered here to decide the fate not only of Greece, but of he Greek race.’…”

In the same speech Kolettis went on to say: "The kingdom of Greece is not Greece; it is only a part, the smallest and poorest, of Greece. The Greek is not only he who inhabits the kingdom, but also he who lives in Janina, or Thessaloniki, or Serea, or Adrianople, or Constantinople, or Trebizond, or Crete, or Samos, or any other country of the Greek history or race. There are two great centers of Hellenism, Athens and Constantinople. Athens is only the capital of the kingdom; Constantinople is the great capital, the City, I Polis, the attraction and the hope of all the Hellenes." So the revolutionary aim of the new nationalism was to unite

441 Payne, op. cit.
443 Kolettis, in Glenny, op. cit. Italics mine (V.M.).
Constantinople and Greek-speaking Anatolia – and perhaps even the whole of the territory formerly ruled by Alexander the Great and the Byzantine autocrats! - to the Kingdom of Greece, although Athens and Constantinople were disunited not only politically but also ecclesiastically. Fortunately, the ecclesiastical schism, as we have seen, was healed in 1852. However, the political schism was never healed because the revolution failed disastrously in 1922. The vast majority of Anatolian Greeks were indeed united with their Free Greek cousins, but only through an exchange of populations in 1922-23. Even after the collapse of the Ottoman empire, Constantinople and Anatolia remained in Turkish hands...

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 small and poor to rescue him in times of peril. In the past the Russian Tsar had been cast by many of the Greeks in the role of saviour. That had had its advantages; for,
though the Tsar continually let his Greek clients down, 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 [i.e. Universal] 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, generosity 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."

The philhellene Russian diplomat C.N. Leontiev wrote in the 1880s: "The movement of contemporary political nationalism is nothing other than the spread of cosmopolitan democratization 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 removed themselves, nothing was found except the most complete plutocratic and grammatocratic egalitarianism. When a people does not have its own privileged, more or less immobile classes, the richest and most educated of the citizens must, of course, gain the superiority over the others. Therefore in an egalitarian-literal order a very mobile plutocracy and grammatorcacy 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."445

"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 both the one and the other. In Russian history, for example, we see that from the time of Demetrius 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 not combined in the souls of the people’s leaders with those ideals and ideas with which national patriotism has been yoked in the nineteenth century in the minds of contemporary leaders. What seemed important then were 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 'democratization 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 individual 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."\textsuperscript{446}

\textsuperscript{446}Leontiev, "Plody natsional’nykh dvizhenij na pravoslavnom Vostoke", \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 536-537, 538.
72. THE ORIGINS OF NATIONALISM: (8) SERBIA

The main practical idea underpinning the varieties of Balkan nationalist ideologies was that the national state had the right to extend its boundaries to include everyone of the same race within its territory, even if these ethnic enclaves had for centuries belonged to other states. Since no state was ethnically homogeneous, and since almost every nation had ethnic enclaves in more than one state, this was a recipe for almost permanent nationalist war and revolution, and especially in the bewildering patchwork of interwoven national enclaves that constituted the Balkans. The most consistent and determined advocates of this idea were the Serbs...

As we have seen, the Greek revolution was to a large extent inspired by the ideology of the French revolution. This was not the case in Serbia, which had very few western-educated intellectuals infected by this ideology. But in both countries’ liberation the Orthodox Church played an important role.

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,447, and the Peć patriarchate, which was abolished by the Ecumenical Patriarch Samuel in 1766, but which recovered its autocephaly in the course of the revolution.448 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.

In 1791 Austria-Hungary ended its war with Turkey at the Treaty of Sistovo. Simon Winder writes: “A critical element at Sistov, now the Danubian Bulgarian town of Svishtov, was the decision to hand over Belgrade to the Turks. This gesture was designed to be generous enough to ensure that fighting could come to an end and troops moved to France, but it had head-spinning and quite unintended consequences. If Belgrade had been part of the new Habsburg Empire as it emerged during the following decade, then not only would Vienna have controlled the only major hub in the northern Balkans, but the Serbs would have become an important group in the Empire much like the Czechs, rather...

447 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-Szeben) (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.

448 The Serbian Peć Patriarchate was founded as an autocephalous archiepiscopate by St. Savva in 1218-19, raised to the rank of a patriarchate with its see in Peć 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.
than just a small element in parts of Hungary. The history of the nineteenth century then takes a dazzlingly different turn. As it was, the Serbs soon revolted and pushed the Turks out of Belgrade on their own. This formed the kernel of an independent state that would never have been allowed to exist if it had still been under Habsburg rule.”

But the Serbian revolution was hindered by the rivalry of its two main peasant leaders, Karadjordje and Obrenović.

Karadjordje took command of the first uprising in 1804, which paradoxically was fought by the Serbian peasants in the name of the Sultan against four Dahi, local Muslim lords who had rebelled against the Sultan's authority and had begun to oppress the Serbian peasantry. As a result of Karadjordje's victories over the Dahi, he was able to extract some concessions from the Sultan for the Serbian pashalik. But the Serbs could not hope to liberate their nation fully and permanently from the Ottomans without the active support of the Russians, who in 1806 declared war on the Porte. However, in 1812, the Russian Tsar Alexander was forced to sign the Treaty of Bucharest with the Sultan and withdraw his troops from the Balkan to face Napoleon's Great Army in Russia. And so in 1813 the Ottomans were free to invade Serbia, Karadjordje was forced to flee, and his rival Obrenović took over the leadership of the liberation movement.

"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 against him including three major uprisings between 1815 and 1830. In 1830 the sultan nevertheless formally accepted Miloš's hereditary princeship." 450

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,

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‘announce the presence of an emergent civilisation.’ In fact, similar trends of town planning and European architecture were transforming Ottoman cities as well.

“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 Obrenović 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…”451

The early history of the Serbian princedom was not inspiring. Karadjordje had killed his stepfather before being killed by his godfather, and the pattern of violence continued. But "behind the drama of intrigue, shoot-outs and murder," writes Misha Glenny, "lay a serious struggle concerning the constitutional nature of the Serbian proto-state. Karadjordje wanted to establish a system of monarchical centralism while his baronial opponents were fighting for an oligarchy in which each leader would reign supreme in his own locality. A third, weaker force was made up of tradesmen and intellectuals from Vojvodina in the Habsburg Empire. They argued for an independent judiciary and other institutions to curb the power of both Karadjordje and the regional commanders. The modernizing influence of the Vojvodina Serbs was restricted to the town of Belgrade."452

Gradually the monarchical idea prevailed over the oligarchical one. But somehow the idea of the sacred person of the monarch, and the sacred horror at the thought of regicide, never caught on in Serbia... Thus when Karadjordje’s son Alexander replaced Miloš’s son Milan in 1842, he purged the Obrenović faction. But in 1858 the Obrenovićes returned to power. Then in 1868 Prince Michael and his family were murdered...

In 1844 Ilija Garašanin, Minister of Internal Affairs under Prince Alexander of Serbia, published his Načertanije, or "Blueprint". This was in effect a blueprint for a Greater Serbia that would include the Bosnian Croats, since they were considered to be Catholicized Serbs.

“Garašanin's project,” writes Misha Glenny, “was informed by a historicist approach, recalling the supposed halcyon days of Tsar Dušan’s medieval Serbian empire, and by a linguistic-cultural criterion. The sentiment underlying the Načertanije seemed to imply that where there was any doubt, it could be assumed that a south Slav was a Serb, whether he knew it or not.”453

451 Mazower, op. cit., p. 95.
452 Glenny, op. cit., p. 17.
The Načertanije, according to John Etty, “was the main development in Serbian nationalism. Though concerned about upsetting them, this secret document identified Turkey and Austria-Hungary as obstacles to Serbian greatness and detailed, in order of ease of acquisition, the annexation of all Serbian-speaking regions. Although implementation was delayed by domestic disruption, such expansionist aspirations were significant. Before 1890, Nikolai Pašić (future Prime Minister) referred to the Načertanije when he explained ‘the Serbs strive for the unification of all Serb tribes on the basis of tradition, memory and the historical past of the Serb race.’”

Garašanin looked to Russia as a likely patron of Greater Serbia; but Nicholas I’s foreign minister Nesselrode was not interested in the idea of a Greater Serbia, which would inevitably drag Russia into yet another war with the Ottoman empire...

Serbian nationalism flourished especially in Montenegro, a tiny but completely independent Serbian principality on the Adriatic coat. It had a peculiar system of Church-State relations, as Adrian 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 18th 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.”

Danilo's predecessor was Bishop-Prince Petar Petrovic Njegoš. In view of the Serbian wars of the 1990s, it is important to note the long-term influence of his poem, The Mountain Wreath, which glorifies the mass slaughter of Muslims who refuse to convert to Christianity. The principal character, Vladyka Danilo, says:

The blasphemers of Christ's Name  
We will baptize with water or with blood!  
We'll drive the plague out of the pen!  
Let the son of horror ring forth,  
A true altar on a blood-stained rock!

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456 He is not to be confused with is uncle, 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 twenty-three, 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. See https://oca.org/saints/lives/2015/10/18/108067-st-peter-of-cetinje.
In another poem Njegoš writes that "God's dearest sacrifice is a boiling stream of tyrant's blood". A defensive armed struggle against the infidel for the sake of Christ can be a good deed. 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."

This bloodthirsty 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." This perverted tradition was to have profoundly damaging 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...

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73. THE ORIGINS OF NATIONALISM: (9) ROMANIA

Romania, unlike the other Balkan Christian States, had never had a long spell as a unified, independent State. The reign of Stephen the Great in the fifteenth century was the nearest they ever came to it; but this brief moment of genuine Romanian Orthodox autocracy, sandwiched between the fall of the Byzantine autocracy and the rise of the Russian one, had been snuffed out by the Ottoman sultans, who handed over administration of Wallachia and Moldavia to rich Greek Phanariots from Constantinople. Closer to Russia than Bulgaria or Serbia, but without the Slavic blood ties that linked those States to Russia, Romania finally regained her unity and independence as a result of Russia's gradual weakening of Ottoman power in a series of wars (between 1711 and 1829, seven major wars were fought on Romanian territory), and then of the power vacuum created by Russia's defeat in the Crimean War.

In order to understand the situation, we need to go back to the time of the Greek revolution... As Glenny writes, "in January 1821, Tudor Vladimirescu, a minor boyar and former soldier in the Russian army, led an uprising of militiamen whose primary aim was to depose the Greek prince, the hospodar, and banish Phanariot rule from the two Principalities, Wallachia and Moldavia. Throughout the eighteenth century the hospodars had sucked the cultural and economic lifeblood out of the Principalities, as illustrated by the mutation of the Greek word kiverneo, meaning 'to govern', into its Romanian derivative chiverniseala, which means 'to get rich'. Subordinate to the Porte, the hospodars administered an economic region that forced Romania's indigenous aristocracy, the boyars, to sell a large part of their produce to Constantinople at prices fixed below the value of the goods in Western Europe. At a time when the Ottoman Empire's ability to harvest declining resources was under pressure, the hospodar system, which ensured the steady flow of annual tribute, commodities and tax revenue, was extremely useful.

"The Vladimirescu uprising was driven by hostility to Greeks. Herein lies a bizarre paradox: carried out by Romanians in the heart of Wallachia, the uprising was conceived and executed as the first act of the Greek Revolution. It was intended to soften up the Principalities' defences to facilitate Alexander Ypsilantis's invasion from Russia into Moldavia. The affair was planned by the Philiki Etairia whose leadership hoped it would trigger a wave of instability throughout the Empire, leading to the eventual liberation not of the Romanians but of the Greeks.

"Vladimirescu and Ypsilantis failed to ignite a broader revolution because they did not receive the expected support from Russia. St. Petersburg and Istanbul were old enemies, but Tsar Alexander was deeply conservative and felt obliged to resist revolution wherever it occurred, whether in Russia or in neighbouring empires. While it was legitimate to beat the Turk on the battlefield, it was not done to subvert him from within. Thus the first lesson from the debacle was that no revolutionary movement in the Principalities could succeed
without the backing of a great power... The Principalities stood at the intersection of the Russian, Austrian and Turkish empires, and acted as the last land bridge which Russian armies had to cross into the Balkan peninsula. In the eyes of St. Petersburg, their strategic importance among the proto-states of the Balkans was unparalleled. The fate of such a crucial region could not possibly be left to the people who happened to live there...”

This last statement is unfair to St. Petersburg, and an analysis of why it is unfair is revealing. The tsars had been engaged in a life-and-death struggle with the Turks for centuries. Their own security depended on a weakening of Turkish power, and it was in the interests of all the Orthodox Christians that they should succeed. For under which regime was Orthodoxy more likely to be protected – the Russian or the Ottoman? The answer is obvious, and was obvious to earlier generations of Balkan Orthodox – but not, unfortunately, to those born in later, more revolutionary times...

Nor could the region simply “be left to the people who happened to live there”. For the native Orthodox were not yet strong enough to have their own independent state, and if left without supervision would simply fall into the hands of another great power – if not the Turks, then the still more dangerous Austro-Hungarians, who were persecutors of the Orthodox faith.

Glenny continues: "Disillusioned with Ypsilantis and the Etairia, Vladimirescu nonetheless found himself in control of Bucharest. Here he assumed the role of revolutionary Prince to replace the hospodar who had been poisoned by Vladimirescu's co-conspirators. But Vladimirescu soon found himself in trouble with his own people. The peasants around Bucharest seized the revolutionary moment to make their own demands, mainly to abolish the hated feudal obligation, the clacă, which obliged the peasant to work an unlimited number of days for his landlord every year. When the Turkish army crossed the Danube to restore order, the Romanian landowners were greatly relieved.

"The Turks did agree to do away with the hospodars, who had become too unreliable. The boyars were happy to continue collecting the tribute for the Porte while augmenting their economic power with political influence. For the peasantry, however, a greedy Romanian oligarchy had replaced a Greek kleptocracy. Landowners did not pay taxes, peasants did. In Greece and Serbia, the peasants had formed the backbone of the military force that shook Ottoman rule, and while this did not eliminate tension between the emerging elites and the peasantry, it did mean that peasant interests were not ignored. In Wallachia and Moldavia, it never entered the boyars' heads that the peasants had any legitimate demands whatsoever.

"Nonetheless, French revolutionary ideas were transmitted to Romania more swiftly that to anywhere else in the Ottoman Empire because of the close

linguistic affinity between Romanian and French. The sons of rich boyars, especially from Wallachia, were sent to study in Paris where they quickly adopted French political culture as their own. During the reign of the hospodars, the hitherto hereditary title of boyar had been devalued by regulations allowing its sale. The proliferation of noble titles created a new type of boyar, less wedded to the countryside but eager to exercise political influence. This urban boyar became first the agent of western ideas in the Principalities and later the backbone of the Liberal party, just as the landowning boyar would later support the Conservatives.

"The works of Montesquieu, Voltaire and Rousseau flooded into the private and public libraries of the Principalities, particularly Wallachia. Boyars, intellectuals, and merchants from Bucharest and Iaşi made the pilgrimage to Paris. The appearance of Romanian cities was transformed over a twenty-year period from the mid-1820s. The boyars embarked on the large-scale cultivation of wheat, which was sent up the Danube to western markets. The barges returned loaded with clothes, furniture and cigars. Fashion changed dramatically, as the Ottoman robes of the east were discarded in favour of the hats and suits of St. Petersburg and Vienna. One contemporary commentator noted in 1829 how Bucharest had been struck by 'the disease of love'. Divorce, affairs, elopement and rape appear to have been part of the staple culture of the Wallachian capital's nobility.

"With their awakened passion for national revival, the boyars established the principle of joint citizenship for the people of Wallachia and Romania. The idea of being Romanian, with a common heritage, was invented in its modern form. The demand for the unification of the Principalities was heard ever louder, especially in Bucharest where people regarded the city as the natural centre of power in a future Romanian state. Although dramatic, these changes affected a small proportion of society. As the leading historian of modern Romania puts it, the boyars had listened to only one part of the revolutionary message from France, 'the foreign policy and the revival of nationalism, completely ignoring its democratic aspect, social equality'.

"Four peculiar circumstances - an absentee landlord, the Sultan; an indigenous landlord class; proximity to Russia and Austria; and the growing influence of Enlightenment ideas - allowed the Principalities to stumble into autonomy in the late 1820s. Unlike the Serbs and the Greeks, the Wallachians and Moldavians did not have to run the gauntlet of full-scale armed insurrection against the Muslim landlord. The boyars continued much as before, accommodating themselves to the vagaries of great-power politics.

"The decisive event came in 1829 with the Treaty of Adrianople, which concluded the Russo-Turkish war and drove the Ottomans from the Principalities in all but name. Although the Principalities were still obliged to pay an annual tribute to the Porte and recognize the Sultan as sovereign, Russia now dominated Wallachia and Moldavia, creating a quasi-constitution, known as the Organic Regulations, for each Principality. The boyars were no longer
restricted to the Ottoman markets - they could sell their produce wherever they wanted.\textsuperscript{461}

The period of the Russian protectorate was in general good for Romania, allowing both the economy (with some restrictions) and the political institutions (two assemblies composed of 800 boyars subordinated to an elected prince) to develop at a steady pace. At the same time, Tsar Nicholas I acted as a restraining power on the spread of revolutionary ideas. But then came the revolution of 1848. The tsar crushed the revolution in Hungary, thereby relieving the pressure of the Hungarian Catholics on the Romanian Orthodox of the Hungarian province of Transylvania. But when the Organic Regulations were burned in Bucharest, the tsar, ever the legitimist and enemy of revolution, joined with the Sultan to occupy the Principalities and suppress the revolution.

"A central goal of the revolutionaries had been unification of the two Principalities, but they faced internal opposition. A broad political division separated the Moldavian and Wallachian elites, symbolized by the different intellectual influences in their two capitals, Iași and Bucharest. Among intellectuals in the Moldavian capital, the influence of German Romantic nationalism, especially the ideas of J.G. Herder, was paramount. Herder's work suggested that the essence of national identity was transmitted through popular language and culture. During the nineteenth century his theories were adopted by conservative nationalists who believed that national identity could not be learned, but only transmitted through blood. In contrast, the Bucharest intellectuals had imbibed the French conception of nationhood which saw commitment to a particular culture as the central requirement in establishing a person's national identity. (Everyone could be considered French provided they accepted French culture - unless, of course, they had yet to attain 'civilization', like the Algerians.) For this latter group, anyone, regardless of origin, could join the Romanian national struggle by accepting its goals (but Romania's Jews were excluded from this liberal embrace).

"Bucharest intellectuals, like Ion C. Brătianu and C.A. Rosetti, who established the revolutionary government of 1848 and would later inspire the founding of the Liberals, were the first to advance the theory that Romanians formed the last outpost of western culture in south-eastern Europe. Their ethnic identity and autonomous traditions, they believed, meant that they shared much more in common with French and English culture than with the 'Asiatic' values of the other regions of the Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{462}

These anti-Orthodox ideas, if allowed to develop, would have been extremely dangerous for the future of Romania, and would have torn her away from the Orthodox Christian commonwealth. Not coincidentally, therefore, Divine Providence arranged for foreign intervention. Thus in 1853 Tsar Nicholas occupied the Principalities in the opening stage of the Crimean War. "The two

\textsuperscript{461} Glenny, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 58-60.  
\textsuperscript{462} Glenny, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 62-63.
princes of Moldavia and Wallachia were forced out of office and fled to Vienna. The Russian authorities introduced a harsh military regime and suppressed political organizations.\textsuperscript{463}

However, the Russians were forced out by the Austrians and Ottomans, who occupied the country until the end of the war. "Thereafter," writes Barbara Jelavich, "primarily with French aid, the Romanian leaders were able to secure the election of a single prince, Alexander Cuza, for both Wallachia and Moldavia. He then united the administrations and legislatures of the two provinces. During Cuza's reign important reforms to improve the condition of the peasants were introduced.\textsuperscript{464}

Romania's greatest saint, Callinicus of Cernica, "took part in the sessions of the Parliament of 1857, as one of the deputies representing the clergy of Oltenia [of which he was bishop]. It was this Parliament which on 2nd November 1857 requested that those who should inherit the throne of the united Romanian lands should be of the Orthodox religion, and that the language to be written and spoken in Parliament should be that which 'the people understand'. On 12th December 1857 St. Callinicus was among those who declared that they would not participate in further sessions of the Parliament, until the great powers of Europe had accepted the desires of the Romanian nation for unity and national independence. During this time of struggle for the Romanian people he urged his clergy, through his diocesan letters to pray in their churches 'for the union of the Romanians in a single heart and soul'. When, on 24th January 1859, Prince Cuza was elected as Prince of both the Romanian principalities, Moldavia and Wallachia, St. Callinicus was one of the members of the Assembly. He was amongst those who signed the official statement sent to Cuza, at Iași, informing him that he had been elected Prince of Romania. During the reign of this Prince, St. Callinicus was constantly at his side, supporting his measures of reform, and dissenting only in some of his ecclesiastical reforms. Prince Cuza for his part, as N. Iorga observes, 'knew how to honour this man of many qualities, even though so different from his own'. Cuza honoured and appreciated him, since he saw in him 'a true and holy man of God', declaring that 'such another does not exist in all the world'...\textsuperscript{465}

For a brief moment Romania had acquired something like that "symphony of powers" which is the only normal and Divinely blessed form of government for an Orthodox nation. But in 1866 a group of conspirators called "the monstrous coalition" forced their way into Prince Cuza's bedroom and forced him to abdicate - the revolution was underway again. Agents scoured Europe for a western prince that would be favoured by the western powers and came up with

\textsuperscript{463} Glenny, op. cit., p. 64.


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Charles of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, a member of the Catholic branch of the Prussian royal family. The Moldavian Orthodox hierarchy protested, and for half a day there were demonstrations in Iași with placards such as: "Revolution: Fear Not. Hold on a Few Hours, the Russians Are Coming to Our Aid". But the Russians didn't come, and all the great powers abstained from intervention. Romania was “free”.

But this was not the freedom that St. Callinicus had prayed for. Freedom from Ottoman rule - yes. Monarchy, albeit one limited by a parliament and constitution - yes. But a Catholic monarch, with all that that implied for the future penetration of Romania by western heresy - no. The saint died on April 11, 1868 standing, as if there was still an important job to be done, a vital war to be won...  

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466 Glenny, op. cit., p. 68.
CONCLUSION. THE TSAR, THE SULTAN AND THE PATRIARCH

We have seen that the national revolutions of Greece, Serbia and Romania were all ambiguous affairs, mixtures of good intentions and evil acts. The essential flaw in all of them (but not in all their participants) was their inversion of the true order of values, their placing of national freedom above religious faith, the earthly kingdom above the Heavenly Kingdom. As often as not, the laudable aim of national freedom from the Turks or Austro-Hungarians was placed higher than "the one thing necessary" - true faith and love, - and therefore became corrupted by evil passions. The national movements raised the banner of political freedom, understood in the heretical sense of the French revolutionaries, and not that of spiritual freedom, that is, Orthodoxy. The result was a general decline of religious life throughout the region, even when - or rather, especially when - political freedom had been attained.

Hardly less distressing was the way in which the national movements took place in more or less complete separation from each other. There was no general, united movement of the Orthodox Balkans against oppression, but only uncoordinated insurgencies of Greeks, Serbs, Romanians, etc. There was no real unity within or between the Orthodox nations; and without such unity real success - that is, success that was pleasing to God - was impossible.

Where could Orthodox leadership be found that was not in thrall to particularist nationalist ambitions or western revolutionary ideologies? There were only two possibilities. One was the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, which had jurisdiction over all the Orthodox of the Balkans and could therefore be expected to acts in the interest of Orthodoxy as a whole. Unfortunately, however, as we have seen, the Patriarchate was not truly ecumenical; it was more universal in its ambitions than in its love. Though less tied to Greek nationalism than the Church of the Free State of Greece, it still aimed to subdue the whole of the Balkans to the Greeks, as it showed through its abolition of the Serbian and Bulgarian patriarchates in 1766-1767 and its support for Greek Phanariot rule in Romania. In any case, the Ecumenical Patriarch was an ecclesiastical, not a political leader. His political role as exarch of the Orthodox millet had been imposed upon him by the Turks, but was not, according to Orthodox teaching, consistent with his role as patriarch.

The other source of Orthodox unity was the Russian Tsar. The only Orthodox great power, Russia had steadily grown in power since she inherited the mantle of Byzantium in the fifteenth century. At great cost to herself, she had pushed the boundaries of her dominion southward, weakening the Ottomans' dominion over the Balkan Orthodox. Without Russian military, diplomatic and financial help the Balkan Orthodox would have been in a much worse situation. The trouble was: with the partial exception of the Serbs, they did not recognize this; for many of them Russia was not "the Third Rome", but just another greedy, expansionist great power - an image that western historians and diplomats encouraged then and continue to encourage now.
The Ecumenical Patriarch's political loyalties were divided between the Turkish Sultan, to whom he had sworn an oath of allegiance, the King of Greece, to whom his nationalist sympathies drew him, and the Tsar of Russia, to whom his religious principles should have led him. After all, in 1598 Patriarch Jeremiah II had called the tsar the sovereign "of all Christians throughout the inhabited earth," and explicitly called his empire "the Third Rome". But now, centuries later, the image of Russia the Third Rome had faded from the minds of the Patriarchs; it was the image of a resurrected New Rome, or Byzantium, that attracted them and their Greek compatriots - this was the truly "great idea". The Russians were, of course, Orthodox, and their help was useful; but the Greeks would liberate themselves. To adapt a phrase of Elder Philotheus of Pskov, it was as if they said: "Constantinople is the Second Rome, and a Third Rome there will not be"...

But what of the oath of allegiance that the Patriarch had sworn to the Sultan, which was confirmed by his commemoration at the Divine Liturgy? Did not this make the Sultan his political master to whom he owed obedience? Certainly, this was the position of Patriarch Gregory V in 1821, as we have seen, and of other distinguished teachers of the Greek nation, such as the Chian, Athanasios Parios. Moreover, the Tsar who was reigning at the time of the Greek Revolution, Alexander I, also recognized the Sultan as a lawful ruler, and as lawful ruler of his Christian subjects, even to the extent of refusing them help when the Greeks rose up against the Sultan in 1821. Even his successor, Tsar Nicholas I, who did come to the rescue of the Greeks in 1827 and again in 1829, continued to regard the Sultan as a legitimate ruler. 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)." 468

But perhaps commemoration and obedience are different matters, so that commemoration of an authority may be refused while obedience is granted... Or perhaps the Sultan could not be commemorated by name because no heterodox can be commemorated at the Divine Liturgy, but could and should have been prayed for 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...

468 Zhukov, Russkaia Pravoslavnaiia Tserkov' na Rodine i za Rubezhom (The Russian Orthodox Church in the Homeland and Abroad), Paris, 2005, pp. 18-19.
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.

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The critical question, therefore, was: if there was a war between the Muslim Sultan, on the one side, and the Orthodox Tsar, on the other, whom were the Orthodox Christians of the Balkans to pray for and support?...

Precisely this situation arose during the Crimean War. The Russians were fighting for a cause dear to every Orthodox Christian heart: the control of the Holy Places. And their enemies were an alliance of three of the major anti-Orthodox powers, Muslim (Turkey), Catholic (France) and Protestant (England). So the supreme loyalty inherent in faithfulness to Orthodox Christianity - a loyalty higher than an oath given to an infidel enemy of the faith under duress - would seem to have dictated that the Patriarch support the Russians. But he neither supported them, nor even prayed for the Russian Tsar at the liturgy.

Perhaps the likely terrible retribution of the Turks on the Balkan Orthodox was a sufficient reason not to support the Tsar openly. But could he not commemorate the Tsar at the liturgy, or at any rate not commemorate the Sultan as other Balkan Churches did not? For even if the Sultan was accepted as a legitimate authority to whom obedience was due in normal situations, surely his legitimacy failed when his used his authority to undermine the much higher authority of the Orthodox Christian Empire?

Certainly, the Athonite Elder Hilarion (whom we have met before as Fr. Ise, confessor of the Imeretian King Solomon II) felt that loyalty to the Tsar came first in this situation, although he was not Russian, but Georgian. He 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". And the rebuke he delivered to his ecclesiastical superior, the Ecumenical Patriarch, was soon shown to have the blessing of God.

"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 protoses 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 read aloud. When the abbot, Elder Eulogius, had read us this patriarchal epistle and said to the elder: 'Have
you understood what our head, our father is writing to us?’, my elder was horrified 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? God on high is angry with 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.469

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 of Sarov: "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."470

And yet back home, in Russia, the foundations of love for the God-established tsar were being shaken, as were all the foundations of the Christian life. As St. Macarius, the great Elder of Optina, wrote: "The heart flows with blood, in pondering our beloved fatherland Russia, our dear mother. Where is she racing headlong, what is she seeking? What does she await? Education increases but it is pseudo-education, it deceives itself in its hope. The young generation is not being nourished by the milk of the doctrine of our Holy Orthodox Church but has been poisoned by some alien, vile, venomous spirit, and how long can this continue? Of course, in the decrees of God’s Providence it has been written what must come to pass, but this has been hidden from us in His unfathomable wisdom…”471

470 Hieromonk Anthony of the Holy Mountain, Ocherki Zhizni i Podvigov Startsa Ieroskhimonakha Ilariona Gruzina (Sketches of the Life and Struggles of Elder Hieroschemamonk Hilarion the Georgian), Jordanville, 1985, p. 95.
In spite of this, the Orthodox Church in the mid-nineteenth century presented an impressive God-established reality that was quite capable of attracting the souls of westerners dissatisfied with the sterility of the western heterodox confessions. Thus the Anglican priest John Mason Neale wrote in his *History of the Eastern Church*: “Uninterrupted successions of Metropolitans and Bishops stretch themselves to Apostolic times; venerable liturgies exhibit doctrine unchanged, and discipline uncorrupted; the same Sacrifice is offered, the same hymns are chanted, by the Eastern Christians of today, as those which resounded in the churches of St. Basil or St. Firmilian... In the glow and splendor of Byzantine glory, in the tempests of the Oriental middle ages, in the desolation and tyranny of the Turkish Empire, the testimony of the same immutable church remains. Extending herself from the sea of Okhotsk to the palaces of Venice, from the ice-fields that grind against the Solovetsky monastery to the burning jungles of Malabar, embracing a thousand languages, and nations, and tongues, but binding them together in the golden link of the same Faith, offering the Tremendous Sacrifice in a hundred Liturgies, but offering it to the same God, and with the same rites, fixing her Patriarchal Thrones in the same cities as when the Disciples were called Christians first at Antioch, and James, the brother of the Lord, finished his course at Jerusalem, oppressed by the devotees of the False Prophet, as once by the worshippers of false gods, - she is now, as she was from the beginning, multiplex in her arrangements, simple in her faith, difficult of comprehension to strangers, easily intelligible to her sons, widely scattered in her branches, hardly beset by her enemies, yet still and evermore, what she delights to call herself, One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic...”