AN ESSAY IN UNIVERSAL HISTORY

From an Orthodox Christian Point of View

VOLUME IV: THE AGE OF EMPIRE (1861-1914)

PART 2: from 1894 to 1914

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The system worked, throughout Europe, with an extraordinary success and facilitated the growth of wealth on an unprecedented scale. To save and to invest became at once the duty and the delight of a large class. The savings were seldom drawn on, and accumulating at compound interest, made possible the material triumphs which we now all take for granted. The morals, the politics, the literature and the religion of the age joined in a grand conspiracy for the promotion of saving. God and Mammon were reconciled. Peace on earth to men of good means. A rich man could, after all, enter into the Kingdom of Heaven - if only he saved.


It is impossible to conquer Russia, we have convinced ourselves of that in the course of hundreds of years. But it is possible to inoculate the Russians with false values, and then they will conquer themselves.

Count Otto von Bismarck.

Oh, we shall all still have to drink of his [Nietzsche’s] blood! Not one of us will be spared that.

Franz Servis (1895).

Russia, if you fall away from your faith, as many intelligently have already done, then you will no longer be Russia or Holy Rus’. And if there is no repentance in the Russian people, the end of the world is near. God will remove the pious tsar and send a whip in the persons of impious, cruel, self-appointed rulers, who will drown the whole earth in blood and tears.

St. John of Kronstadt (1905).

After God “died”, man himself became the supreme person, the only divinity… With the field thus cleared of supernatural encumbrances, the true approach to the divine came to consist in man’s probing of his own innermost states. For this century everything from dream analysis to the perception of relativity, became self-knowledge as the first stage to self-assumption. The ancient sin of hubris, man’s too-great arrogance in the face of the cosmos, disappeared when divine powers no longer existed outside man. Evil was confined to failure in confronting oneself.


The roots of the need for religion are in the parental complex; the almighty and just God, and kindly Nature, appear to us grand sublimations of father and mother.

Sigmund Freud.

A leap in the dark has its attractions…

Theobald von Bethmann-Hellweg, Chancellor of Germany (July 1914).

And over Russia I see a quiet pall,
A Far-spread ing fire consuming al.

Alexander Blok.

The opponents of statehood would like to take the path of radicalism, the path of liberation from the historical path of Russia, of liberation from cultural traditions. They need great upheavals, we need a great Russia.

Peter Arkadievi ch Stolypin.
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III. THE WEST: “LA BELLE EPOQUE” (1894-1914)
36. THE FOUNDING OF ZIONISM

“In the second half of the nineteenth century,” writes Peter Mansfield, “there was a steady movement of Jews from eastern Europe to settle in Palestine. Supported by Jewish [especially Rothschild] philanthropy, they went mainly to found colonies to work the land. They were the pioneers of ‘practical Zionism’. They were very much fewer than those who went to western Europe and the United States, but by 1914 there were about 80,000 Jews (including the indigenous communities) in Palestine, compared with about 650,000 Jews.

“‘Political Zionism’, or the concept of turning Palestine into a national Jewish state, was founded by Theodor Herzl…”

As Daniel Barenboim writes, Herzl was a successful Austrian journalist who, "confronted by the increasing anti-Semitism in Austria and France, was initially in favor of complete assimilation of the Jews. Interestingly, Herzl's choice of words was not fundamentally different from that of Wagner's in describing the situation of Jews in German society. In 1893 he wrote that 'to cure the evil' the Jews would have to 'rid themselves of the peculiarities for which they are rightly reproached.' One would have to 'baptize the Jewboys' in order to spare them excessively difficult lives. 'Untertauchen im Volk!': go underground amongst the people was his appeal to the Jewish population. Richard Wagner also spoke of the 'Untergang,' the sinking: 'consider that only one thing can be the deliverance from the curse that weighs on you: the deliverance of Ahasuerus -- sinking! (der Untergang)'. Wagner's conclusion about the Jewish problem was not only verbally similar to Herzl's; both Wagner and Herzl favored the emigration of the German Jews. It was Herzl's preoccupation with European anti-Semitism that spurred him on to want to found a Jewish state. His vision of a Jewish state was influenced by the tradition of European liberalism. In the novel Altneuland (1903), he describes what the settled Jewish community in Palestine might look like; Arabic residents and other non-Jews would have equal political rights.”

However, Herzl's views began to change on 5 January 1895, when Captain Alfred Dreyfus, the only Jew serving in the French army general staff, was publicly degraded. Paul Johnson writes that he "had been accused, tried and convicted - on what subsequently emerged to be fabricated evidence - of handing secrets to the Germans. Watching the ceremony, one of the few journalists allowed to attend, was Theodore Herzl (1860-1904), the Paris correspondent of the Vienna liberal daily, Neue Freie Presse. Two weeks before he had attended the courtroom and heard Dreyfus pronounced guilty. Now he stood by as Dreyfus was brought before General Darras, who shouted: 'Alfred Dreyfus, you are unworthy to bear arms. In the name of the French people we degrade you!' Immediately, in a loud voice, Dreyfus shouted: 'Soldiers! An innocent man is being degraded! Soldiers! An innocent is dishonoured! Long live France - long live the Army!' A senior non-commissioned officer cut off Dreyfus' badges and buttons. He took out his sword and broke it across his knee. The prisoner was marched round the courtyard, still shouting that he was innocent. An

immense and excited crowd, waiting outside, heard his cries and began to whistle and chant slogans. When Herzl left the building, it was beginning to scream 'Death to Dreyfus! Death to the Jews!' Less than six months later, Herzl had completed the draft of the book which would set in motion modern Zionism, *Der Judenstaat.*

The Dreyfus affair had an enormous impact on Herzl. It demonstrated to him that for various reasons - envy at Jewish success, the influx of Jews from Eastern Europe, the increase of racist theories - the Jews would never be assimilated into the existing system of European statehood, and would have to seek a homeland, a territorial State, of their own if they were to survive. "It was against this threatening background that Herzl began to abandon his assimilationist position. He had previously considered all kinds of wild ideas to get the Jews accepted. One was a huge programme of social re-education for Jews, to endow them with what he termed 'a delicate, extremely sensitive feeling for honour and the like'. Another was a pact with the Pope, whereby he would lead a campaign against anti-Semitism in return for 'a great mass movement for the free and honourable conversion of all Jews to Christianity'. But all these schemes soon seemed hopeless in face of the relentless rise of anti-Semitic hatred..."

In 1895 Karl Lueger became Mayor of Vienna. At a time when Vienna was the home of some very cultured and famous Jews, such as Gustav Mahler and Sigmund Freud, Lueger launched into a ferocious invective against them. He "once referred to the Jews as ‘beasts of prey in human form’, said that ‘wolves, leopards and tigers were closer to humans than Jews, and agreed that a good solution to the ‘Jewish problem’ would be to put them all on a big ship and sink them at sea.”

In view of this invective, it is not surprising that Herzl was alarmed and feared what influence by Lueger might do (a certain Adolf Hitler came to Vienna in 1908, while Lueger was still Mayor). He was therefore determined, as Johnson writes, “to devise an alternative refuge for the Jews, who might soon be expelled from all over Europe, seemed an urgent necessity. The Jews must have a country of their own!

"Herzl completed the text of his book, *Der Judenstaat,* outlining his aims, in the winter of 1895-6. The first extracts were published in the London *Jewish Chronicle,* 17 January 1896. The book was not long, eighty-six pages, and its appeal was simple. 'We are a people, one people. We have everywhere tried honestly to integrate with the national communities surrounding us and to retain only our faith. We are not permitted to do so... In vain do we exert ourselves to increase the glory of our fatherlands by achievements in at and in science and their wealth by our contributions to commerce... We are denounced as strangers... If only they would

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4 As he admitted to the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration in London in 1902: "Seven years ago, when I was living in Paris, I was so impressed with the state of Jewry throughout Europe that I turned my attention to the Jewish question and published a pamphlet which I called 'A Jewish State'. I may say that it was not my original intention to publish the pamphlet or to take part in a political movement. But, after placing before a number of influential Jews my views upon the Jewish question, and finding that they were utterly oblivious of the danger which I then foresaw - that they could not see the large black cloud gathering in the East - I published the pamphlet which resulted in the establishment of the Zionist movement." *(Vital, op. cit., p. 439).*
5 Johnson, *op. cit.,* pp. 395.
leave us in peace... But I do not think they will...' So Herzl proposed that sovereignty be conceded to the Jews over a tract of land large enough to accommodate their people. It did not matter where. It could be in Argentina, where the millionaire Baron Maurice de Hirsch (1831-96) had set up 6,000 Jews in a series of agricultural colonies. Or it could be Palestine, where similar Rothschild-financed colonies were in being. What mattered was the sanction of Jewish opinion; and they would take what was offered...

"Herzl began by assuming that a Jewish state would be created in the way things had always been done throughout the Exile; by wealthy Jews at the top deciding what was the best solution for the rest of Jewry, and imposing it. But he found this impossible. Everywhere in civilized Europe the Jewish establishments were against his idea. Orthodox rabbis denounced or ignored him...

"Nevertheless, what Herzl quickly discovered was that the dynamic of Judaism would not come from the westernised elites but from the poor, huddled masses of the Ostjuden, a people of whom he knew nothing when he began his campaign. He discovered this first when he addressed an audience of poor Jews, of refugee stock, in the East End of London. They called him 'the man of the little people', and 'As I sat on the platform... I experienced strange sensations. I saw and heard my legend being born.' In Eastern Europe, he quickly became a myth-like figure among the poor. David Ben-Gurion (1886-1973) recalled that, as a ten-year-old boy in Russian Poland, he heard a rumour: 'The Messiah had arrived, a tall, handsome man, a learned man of Vienna, a doctor no less.' Unlike the sophisticated middle-class Jews of the West, the eastern Jews could not toy with alternatives, and see themselves as Russians, or even as Poles. They knew they were Jews and nothing but Jews... and what Herzl now seemed to be offering was their only chance of becoming a real citizen anywhere. To Chaim Weizmann (1874-1952), then a second-year student in Berlin, Herzl's proposals 'came like a bolt from the blue'. In Sofia, the Chief Rabbi actually proclaimed him the Messiah. As the news got around, Herzl found himself visited by shabby, excitable Jews from distant parts, to the dismay of his fashionable wife, who grew to detest the very word Zionism. Yet these were the men who became the foot soldiers, indeed the NCOs and officers, in the Zionist legion; Herzl called them his 'army of schnorrers'.

7 When Herzl ascended the podium at the first Zionist conference, "he looked like 'a man of the House of David, risen all of a sudden from his grave in all his legendary glory,' recalled Mordechai Ben-Ami, the delegate from Odessa. 'It seemed as if the dream cherished by our people for two thousand years had come true at last and Messiah the Son of David was standing before us."' (Karen Armstrong, A History of Jerusalem, London: HarperCollins, 1997, p. 365). (V.M.).
In spite of the importance of the Ostjuden, the Zionist movement remained, as Bernard Simms notes, “not only secular but very much German in character and orientation. Herzl himself was a fervent admirer of Bismarck, German was the working language of the Zionist movement, and Berlin soon became the informal capital of the World Zionist Executive. Zionists did not expect to be able to achieve their state on their own: they would need a great-power sponsor, and Herzl expected and hoped that that would be what he regarded as the most progressive polity in late-nineteenth-century Europe, Imperial Germany. ‘The character of the Jewish people,’ Herzl wrote, ‘can only become healthier under the protectorate of the great, powerful, moral Germany, with its practical administration and strict organization. Zionism will enable the Jews once more to love Germany, to which, despite everything, our hearts belong. ‘We owe it to the German in us that we are Jews again,’ the German Zionist Moses Calvary wrote. ‘Here,’ Calvary concluded, ‘is the living proof of the extent of Germany’s nurturing of our own creative being: political Zionism is Europe’s gift to Judaism.’”

However, in spite of his Germanophilia, Herzl was quick to change his orientation within the Zionist movement from the West European Jews to the Ostjuden, who were much more interested in Zionism. Thus he paid heed to the Russian Jewish doctor Lev Pinsker’s Autoemancipation (1882), which appealed to Russian and German Jewry to abandon, in view of the pogroms of the previous year, the failed idea of emancipation and the last gleams of hope in the brotherhood of peoples. "For the living," he wrote, "the Jew is a dead man; for the natives, an alien and a vagrant; for property holders, a beggar; for the poor, an exploiter and a millionaire; for the patriot, a man without a country; for all classes a hated rival."

Another important East European Zionist was Usher Ginzberg, or Ahad-Gaam ("one of the people"). Solzhenitsyn writes: "He sharply criticised practical Palestinophilia as it then was. His position was: 'Before directing our efforts at "redemption on the land", it is necessary to care about "redemption of hearts", about the intellectual and moral perfection of the people'. 'To place in the centre of Jewry a living spiritual striving for the unification of the nation, its stirring up and free development in the national spirit, but on pan-human foundations'. This point of view later received the name of 'spiritual Zionism' (but not 'religious', this is important).

"In the same 1889 Ahad-Gaam, for the unification of those who were devoted to the redemption of Jewish national feelings, created a league - or order, as he called it, 'Bnei Moshe' ("the Sons of Moses"). Its constitution 'was in many ways like the constitutions of Masonic lodges: the entrant gave a promise on oath to fulfil exactly all the demands of the constitution; new members were initiated by a master, an 'elder brother'... The entering 'brother' bound himself selflessly to serve the idea of national redemption, even if he were sure that there was no hope for the speedy realisation of the ideal'. In the manifesto of the order it was proclaimed that 'the national consciousness has primacy over religious [consciousness], and individual interests are subject to national [interests]', and it was demanded that he deepen his feeling of selfless love for Jewry above every other aim of the movement. The order

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prepared 'the ground for the reception of the political Zionism' of Herzl, which Ahad-Gaam did not want at all.

"In 1891, 1893 and 1900 Ahad-Gaam also travelled to Palestine - and reproached the lack of organisation and rootlessness of the Palestinian colonisation of that time, 'he subjected to severe criticism the dictatorial behaviour of those serving Baron' E. Rothschild.

"Thus in Europe Zionism was born a decade later than in Russia...

"At the first Congress the representatives of Russian Zionism 'constituted a third of the participants... 66 out of 197 delegates' - in spite of the fact that for some this might look like an oppositional move in relation to the Russian government... In this way 'Zionism drew its strength... from the circles of oppressed Eastern Jewry, which found only a limited support amongst the Jews of Western Europe'. But for this reason the Russian Zionists represented for Herzl the most serious opposition. Ahad-Gaam conducted a stubborn struggle with the political Zionism of Herzl (on whose side, however, there rose the majority of the old Palestinophiles). He sharply criticised the pragmatism of Herzl and Nordau and, as he thought, '[their] alienation from the spiritual values of Jewish culture and tradition'. He 'found political Zionism's hope of founding a Jewish autonomous State in the near future chimerical; he considered the whole of this movement to be exceptionally harmful for the work of the spiritual regeneration of the nation... Not to care about saving perishing Judaism, that is, not to care about spiritual-national and cultural-historical attainments, to strive not for the regeneration of the ancient people, but for the creation of a new one from the scattered particles of the old matter'. He used and even emphasised the word 'Judaism', but evidently not in a religious sense, but as an inherited spiritual system...

"The quarrels shook the Zionists. Ahad-Gaam sharply criticised Herzl, and in support of the latter Nordau accused Ahad-Gaam of 'secret Zionism'. Every year there took place Zionist World Congresses, and in 1902 there took place a Congress of Russian Zionists in Minsk, whither the quarrels crossed over...

"At the beginning of the century the poet N. Minsky expressed the following thought: 'that Zionism is the loss of the pan-human measure, that it reduces the universal cosmopolitan dimensions of Jewry [!] to the level of ordinary nationalism. 'The Zionists, while talking about nationalism, in fact turn away from the genuine national face of Jewry and are zealous only that they should be like everyone, and become no worse than others.'

"It is interesting to compare this with the remark of the Orthodox [Christian] thinker S. Bulgakov, which was also made before the revolution: 'The greatest difficulty for Zionism consists now in the fact that it is not able to return the faith of the fathers that is being lost, and is forced to base itself on the national or cultural-ethnographic principle, on which no truly great nationality can establish itself.'\textsuperscript{10}

\footnote{Solzhenitsyn, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 257-258, 260-261, 262, 263.}
So Herzl had considerable opposition from within Jewry: most assimilated Jews, the Jews who already had their own plans for Jewry in Palestine (like Baron Edmund Rothschild) and the religious Jews who rejected the idea of a secular Jewish nationalism, were against Zionism. However, he found unexpected support from some Gentile leaders, who were in favour of Zionism as a means of reducing the Jewish population of Europe.

Thus the Russian interior minister, V.K. Plehve, said to him in August, 1903: "You are preaching to a convert... we would very much like to see the creation of an independent Jewish State capable of absorbing several million Jews."\(^{11}\)

Again, the Kaiser said: "I am all in favour of the kikes going to Palestine. The sooner they take off the better..."\(^{12}\)

Herzl even had support from Gentile Christians. "In fact," writes Walter Russell Mead, "American Protestant Zionism is significantly older than the modern Jewish version; in the nineteenth century, evangelicals repeatedly petitioned U.S. officials to establish a refuge in the Holy Land for persecuted Jews from Europe and the Ottoman Empire.

"U.S. evangelical theology takes a unique view of the role of the Jewish people in the modern world. On the one hand, evangelicals share the widespread Christian view that Christians represent the new and true children of Israel, inheritors of God's promises to the ancient Hebrews. Yet unlike many other Christians, evangelicals also believe that the Jewish people have a continuing role in God's plan. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, close study of biblical prophecies convinced evangelical scholars and believers that the Jews would return to the Holy Land before the triumphant return of Christ."\(^{13}\)

However, the contemporary symbiotic relationship between America and Israel did not yet exist. More important at this stage were the British, who, as Karen Armstrong writes, had "developed a form of gentile Zionism. Their reading of the Bible convinced them that Palestine belonged to the Jews, and already in the 1870s sober British observers looked forward to the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine under the protection of Great Britain."\(^{14}\)

Thus, as Geoffrey Hanks writes, "Herzl was actively assisted by an Anglican clergyman, William Hechler, whose motivation was quite different to that of Herzl. For Hechler, his reading of prophecy had led him to conclude that the Jews would be returned to their homeland which would be followed by the Second Coming. After reading Herzl's book, The Jewish State, he joined forces with the author to promote the Zionist cause by persuading the Sultan of Turkey to allow Jewish immigration to

\(^{11}\) According to Vital (op. cit., p. 468), Plehve's memorandum to Herzl was approved beforehand by the Tsar. However, little came of his promise because in July, 1904 Herzl died and Plehve himself was assassinated by the Social Revolutionaries.

\(^{12}\) In 1879 William Marr had written: "The Jewish idea of colonizing Palestine could be wholesome for both sides [Jews and Germans]" (in Pipes, op. cit., p. 28).

\(^{13}\) Mead, "God's Country?", Foreign Affairs, September/October, 2006, p. 39.

\(^{14}\) Armstrong, op. cit., p. 360.
In exchange for their supporting the Zionist project, Herzl usually offered the Great Powers "all kinds of monetary advantages, from a university to long-term credits". Typical was his approach to the Turkish Sultan Abdul Hamid. But the Sultan replied: "I cannot agree to vivisection... my people fought for this land and fertilized it with their blood... let the Jews keep their millions..."16

But it was the support of England that was to prove critical. It was in Britain that the Zionists could act most freely and where, according to Herzl, there was least anti-Semitism.17 As Paul Johnson writes, "Herzl rightly called it 'the Archimedean point' on which to rest the lever of Zionism. There was considerable goodwill among the political elite. A lot had read Tancred; even more Daniel Deronda. Moreover, there had been a vast influx of Russian Jewish refugees into Britain, raising fears of anti-Semitism and threats of immigrant quotas. A Royal Commission on Alien Immigration was appointed (1902), with Lord Rothschild one of its members. Herzl was asked to give evidence, and Rothschild now at last agreed to see him, privately, a few days before, to ensure Herzl said nothing which would strengthen the cry for Jewish refugees to be refused entry. Rothschild's change from active hostility to friendly neutrality was an important victory for Herzl and he was happy, in exchange, to tell the Commission (7 July 1902) that further Jewish immigration to Britain should be accepted but that the ultimate solution to the refugee problem was 'the recognition of the Jews as a people and the finding by them of a legally recognized home'.

"This appearance brought Herzl into contact with senior members of the government, especially Joe Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary, and the Marquess of Lansdowne, Foreign Secretary. Both were favourable to a Jewish home in principle. But where? Cyprus was discussed, then El Arish on the Egyptian border. Herzl thought it could be 'a rallying-point for the Jewish people in the vicinity of Palestine' and he wrote a paper for the British cabinet bringing up, for the first time, a powerful if dangerous argument: 'At one stroke England will get ten million secret but loyal subjects active in all walks of life all over the world.' But the Egyptians objected and a survey proved unsatisfactory. Then Chamberlain, back from East Africa, had a new idea, Uganda. 'When I saw it,' he said, 'I thought, 'That is a land for Dr. Herzl. But of course he is sentimental and wants to go to Palestine or thereabouts.' In fact Herzl would have settled for Uganda. So Lansdowne produced a letter: 'If a site can be found which the [Jewish Colonial] Trust and His Majesty's Commission consider suitable and which commends itself to HM Government, Lord Lansdowne will be prepared to entertain favourable proposals for the establishment of a Jewish colony of settlement, on conditions which will enable the members to observe their national customs.' This was a breakthrough. It amounted to diplomatic recognition for a proto-Zionist state. In a shrewd move, Herzl aroused the interest of

the rising young Liberal politician, David Lloyd George, by getting his firm of
solicitors to draft a proposed charter for the colony. He read Lansdowne's letter to
the Sixth Zionist Congress, where it aroused 'amazement [at] the magnanimity of
the British offer'. But many delegates saw it as a betrayal of Zionism; the Russians
walked out. Herzl concluded: 'Palestine is the only land where our people can come
to rest.' At the Seventh Congress (1905), Uganda was formally rejected.”18

At the Sixth Congress Herzl had been forced to stand before the delegates, raise
his right hand and quote the words of the psalmist: 'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may
my right hand wither!'19 But to outsiders the Zionists asked only for: "not a Jewish
state, but a home in the ancient land of our forefathers where we can live a Jewish life
without oppression of persecution". And to critics they said: “Only those suffering
from gross ignorance or actuated by malic could accuse us of a desire of establishing
an independent Jewish Kingdom.”20

Even with the Zionist movement formally committed to Palestine as its only
possible homeland, there was still strong opposition to the idea from within Jewry.
As we have seen, religious opposition to secular Zionism was already present in the
nineteenth century in the works of Samuel Hirsch and "the Forerunners of Zionism" -
the Serbian Rabbi Alkalai and the Polish Rabbi Kalischer. Now the Orthodox, writes
Johnson, "argued that Satan, having despaired of seducing Israel by persecution, had
been given permission to try it by even more subtle methods, involving the Holy
Land in his wicked and idolatrous scheme, as well as all the evils of the
enlightenment. Zionism was thus infinitely worse than a false messiah - it was an
entire false, Satanic religion. Others added that the secular state would conjure up the
godless spirit of the demos and was contrary to God's command to Moses to follow
the path of oligarchy: 'Go and collect the elders of Israel'; 'Heaven forbid', wrote two
Kovno sages, 'that the masses and the women should chatter about meetings or
opinions concerning the general needs of the public.' In Katowice on 22 May 1912 the
Orthodox sages founded the Agudist movement to coordinate opposition to Zionist
claims. It is true that some Orthodox Jews believed Zionism could be exploited for
religious purposes. Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (1865-1935) argued that the new
'national spirit of Israel' could be used to appeal to Jews on patriotic grounds to
observe and preach the Torah. With Zionist support he was eventually made Chief
Rabbi of Jerusalem. But most of the religious Jews already in Eretz Israel heard of
Zionism with horror. 'There is great dismay in the Holy Land,' wrote Rabbi Joseph
Hayyim Sonnenfeld (1848-1932), 'that these evil men who deny the Unique One of
the world and his Holy Torah have proclaimed with so much publicity that it is in
their power to hasten redemption for the people of Israel and gather the dispersed
from all the ends of the earth.' When Herzl entered the Holy Land, he added, 'evil
entered with him, and we do not yet know what we have to do against the destroyers
of the totality of Israel, may the Lord have mercy'. This wide, though by no means
universal opposition of pious Jews to the Zionist programme inevitably tended to
push it more firmly into the hands of the secular radicals…”21

18 Johnson, op. cit., pp. 400-402.
19 Armstrong, op. cit., p. 366.
But the reverse process was also seen: the conversion of secular radicals to an almost mystical love of the land of Israel, a factor that makes Zionism more than just a form of secular nationalism.

For, as Karen Armstrong writes, "Jerusalem was still a symbol that had power to inspire these secular Zionists as they struggled to create a new world, even if they had little time for the city as an earthly reality. Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, who would become the second President of the State of Israel, was converted to Zionism while speaking at a revolutionary rally in Russia. Suddenly he felt dissociated from his surroundings and in the wrong place. 'Why am I here and not there?' he asked himself. Then he had a vision. There arose 'in my mind's eye the living image of Jerusalem, the holy city, with its ruins, desolate of its sons'. From that moment he thought no more of revolution in Russia but only of 'our Jerusalem'. 'That very hour I reached the absolute decision that our place is the Land of Israel, and that I must go there, dedicate my life to its upbuilding, and as soon as possible.'…"

"The trouble was that Jerusalem was not 'desolate of its sons'. It already had sons, a people who had lived there for centuries and who had their own plans for the city. Nor was the city a ruin, as Ben-Zvi imagined... [Moreover,] its Arab resident had come to resent the Turkish occupation and were alarmed by the Zionist settlers. In 1891 a number of Jerusalem notables sent a petition to Istanbul, asking the government to prevent a further immigration of Jews and the sale of land to Zionists. The last known political act of Yusuf al-Khalidi had been to write a letter to Rabbi Zadok Kahn, the friend of Herzl, begging him to leave Palestine alone: for centuries, Jews, Christians, and Muslims had managed to live together in Jerusalem, and this Zionist project would end such coexistence. After the Young Turk revolt in 1908, Arab nationalists of Palestine began to dream of a state of their own, free of Turkish control. When the first Arab Congress met in Paris in 1913, a telegram of support was signed by 387 Arabs from the Near East, 130 of them Palestinians. In 1915, Ben-Gurion became aware of these Arab aspirations for Palestine and found them profoundly disturbing. 'It hit me like a bomb,' he said later. 'I was utterly confounded.' Yet, the Israeli writer Amos Elon tells us, despite this bombshell, Ben-Gurion continued to ignore the existence of the Palestinian Arabs. Only two years later, he made the astonishing suggestion that in a 'historical and moral sense,' Palestine was a country 'without inhabitants.' Because the Jews felt at home there, all other inhabitants of the country were merely the ethnic descendants of various conquerors. Ben-Gurion wished the Arabs well as individuals but was convinced that they had no rights at all..."22

And so most of the elements necessary for the creation of the most insoluble political problem of modern times were already in place: Jewish Zionism, the "Christian Zionism" of the Anglo-Saxon nations, and Arab nationalism. Only one element was lacking (or rather: dormant): fundamentalist Islam.

22 Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 367-369. Ironically, in 1918, Ben Gurion and Ben-Zvi wrote a book entitled *Eretz Israel*, which argued, as Shlomo Sand writes, that "the population that survived [in Palestine] since the seventh century had originated from the Judean farming class that the Muslim conqueror had found when they reached the country" (*The Invention of the Jewish People*, London: Verso, 2009, p. 186). So the Muslim fellahin, or farming class of Palestine, were in fact Jewish by race!
"The malaise of the late nineteenth century," writes A.N. Wilson, "was not primarily a political or an economic one, though subsequent historians might choose to interpret it thus. Men and women looked at the world which Western capitalism had brought to pass since Queen Victoria had been on the throne - over forty years now! - and they sensed that something had gone hideously awry.

"Gladstone bellowing on the windswept moorlands of Mithlothian; Wagner in the new-built Bayreuth Festival Theatre watching the citadel of the Gods go down in flames; world-weary Trollope scribbling himself to death in the London clubs; Dostoyevsky coughing blood, and thirsting, as he did, his New Testament into the hands of his son - these could hardly be more different individuals. Yet they all at roughly the same moment in history were seized with comparable misgiving. It is like one of these disconcerting moments in a crowd of chattering strangers when a silence suddenly falls; or when a sudden chill, spiritual more than atmospheric, causes an individual to shiver and to exclaim 'I feel as if a man has just walked over my grave.'"23

Christianity "had, by the time of the nineteenth century, begun to stare at its own apocalypse. The biblical scholars of Tübingen had undermined the faith of the Protestant North in the infallibility of Scripture; while the painstaking lifetime of botanical and biological observations of Charles Darwin had shaken the faith of intellectuals in the Creator himself. By the end of the Victorian century, atheism had become the religion of the suburbs, as G.K. Chesterton observed.

"There is no doubt that, as the career and popularity of H.G. Wells demonstrates, unbelief was rife among the masses."24

However, it was not "pure" atheism that was the real threat. Most people did not become atheists: more common was the resort to antichristian forms of religion, of which Freemasonry was one. In spite of being banned by both the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches, Masonry continued to grow during the nineteenth century, consisting of 26,000 lodges and 1,670,000 adepts by its end.25

In the Anglo-Saxon countries and Germany, Masonry was theist and anti-revolutionary, concentrating on the development of ritual. Thus at a conference of Supreme Councils in Lausanne in 1875, when some of the resolutions were tending in an antichristian direction, the English delegates called for a review of the texts in order to emphasize belief in God and the immortality of the soul. When other delegates rejected such a review, the English left the conference. Only later was their demand satisfied.26

26 Soloviev, op. cit., p. 29.
However, it was different in France: after the Republican victory in the 1877 general election, the Grand Orient "decided to remove all references to God and the Great Architect [and the immortality of the soul] from their ceremonies, to remove the Bible from their lodges, and to admit agnostics and atheists, this was too much for the English Grand Lodge. The Grand Orient argued that to admit atheists was the final step in the policy of religious toleration which the Freemasons had always supported; but English Grand Lodge broke off relations with the Grand Orient, as did the American Freemasons. The Grand Orient declared that by their action English Grand Lodge has struck a blow against the cosmopolitan and universal spirit of Freemasonry".\(^{27}\)

"The victory of universal suffrage, laicism and positivism in the Grand Orient was complete. From now on Masonry became the school and the provider of cadres of the republican party. In general it identified itself with the middle and petit bourgeoisie, who through their elites strove to snatch the administration of the country from the highest-placed social classes, and the history of the Third Republic demonstrates how successful they were."\(^{28}\)

Of course, the theism of Anglo-Saxon Masonry was not theist in a Christian sense. If most of the lower-order Masons considered that "the Grand Architect of the Universe" was simply another name for the Christian God, higher-order Masons knew better. Since 1750, when the Royal Arch degree had been introduced into Masonry, these higher initiates knew that the name of the Masonic god. The Mason Jasper Ridley explains who this is: "In the admission ceremony to the Royal Arch, the initiate is told the name of God, the Great Architect of the Universe. This is one of the most closely guarded secrets of the Freemasons. In recent years they have published many of the secrets that they have guarded for centuries, but not the name of God, which is revealed to the members of the Royal Arch. Renegades from Freemasonry have published it, and it is now generally known that the name is Jahbulon, with the 'Jah' standing for Jehovah, the 'Bul' for Baal, and the 'On' for Osiris."

"The anti-masons have made great play with the masons' worship of Jahbulon. The Egyptian God, Osiris, might be acceptable [], but the masons' worship of Baal outrages them. The bishops of the Church of England who have become Freemasons are asked to explain how they can reconcile their Christian beliefs with a worship of Baal, who is regarded in the Bible as absolute evil; and these bishops have been very embarrassed by the question."\(^{29}\)

There were important practical reasons why the Masonic god should be a syncretist mixture of different gods. Masonry was now spreading to non-European races, and it was desirable that the gods of these races should be given a place within the all-encompassing Masonic deity. Thus English Masonry allowed both Muslims and Hindus into its Indian lodges on the grounds, as the Duke of Sussex ruled, that "the various 'gods' of the Hindus were not separate gods but personifications of characteristics of one central deity". Implicitly, therefore, Krishna and Shiva and Allah

29 Ridley, op. cit., pp. 70-71.
were considered to be personifications of the Great Architect no less than Jehovah, Baal and Osiris. The result was, as Ridley writes, that "before the end of the nineteenth century Rudyard Kipling, who was an especially ardent Freemason and was first initiated as a mason in India, was claiming that the religious and racial quarrels which troubled British India disappeared inside the masonic lodges".30

By contrast with Anglo-Saxon Masonry, the Grand Orient in France adopted a more revolutionary, naturalist and anti-theist stance. It was to these naturalist Masons that Pope Leo III addressed his famous encyclical, Humanum Genus: “In the sphere of politics, the Naturalists lay down that all men have the same rights and that all are equal and alike in every respect; that everyone is by nature free and independent; that no one has the right to exercise authority over another; that it is an act of violence to demand of men obedience to any authority not emanating from themselves. All power is, therefore, in the free people. Those who exercise authority do so either by the mandate or permission of the people, so that, when the popular will changes, rulers of State may lawfully be deposed even against their will. The source of all rights and civic duties is held to reside either in the multitude or in the ruling power of the State, provided that it has been constituted according to the new principles. They hold also that the State should not acknowledge God and that, out of the various forms of religion, there is no reason why one should be preferred to another. According to them, all should be on the same level. Now, that these views are held by the Freemasons also, and that they want to set up States constituted according to this ideal, is too well known to be in need of proof. For a long time they have been openly striving with all their strength and with all the resources at their command to bring this about. They thus prepare the way for those numerous and more reckless spirits who, in their mad desire to arrive at equality and common ownership of goods, are ready to hurl society into an even worse condition, by the destruction of all distinctions of rank and property... In this mad and wicked design, the implacable hatred and thirst for vengeance with which Satan is animated against Our Lord Jesus Christ becomes almost visible to our bodily eyes.”

The closeness of Continental Masonry and International Socialism is shown by the coincidence of their major congresses. Thus in 1889, on the one hundredth anniversary of the French Revolution, the Grand Orient "created in Paris an international Masonic congress of representatives of the centres in Spain, Italy, Portugal, Hungary, Greece and other states. Almost simultaneously in Paris there took place a representative international socialist congress, which factually speak laid the foundations of the Second Internationale. At the sessions sharp differences were immediately revealed between the revolutionary wing, the reformists and the anarchists, which, however, did not prevent them from taking a series of important decisions. Among the delegates were also Masons: P. Lafargue and L. Dupré (France), A. Costa and E. Malatesta (Italy), D. Neuwenhuis (Holland) and others. It is important to note that from this time a definite synchronicity can be observed in the conducting of the congresses of both organizations, with essentially fairly similar problems being reviewed. It also impossible not to see a definite influence of the order on the Internationale."31

30 Ridley, op. cit., p. 220.
Again, in August, 1900 another international congress of Continental Masonry took place, followed soon after by another congress of the Second Internationale. Many of the delegates to the latter were Masons, including Lafargue (on the revolutionary wing), Costa and Malatesta (from the reformists). "As a result, with some qualifications a resolution was passed in the spirit of reconciliation between labour and capital, which the Masons had long insisted on."

In 1902 the Continental Masons decided to form an International Bureau of Masonic Links (IBML) in Neuchatel, Switzerland, whose organization was entrusted to the local "Alpina" lodge. Alpina was chosen because of it had official contacts with both the French and Anglo-Saxon lodges, and still retained references to the Great Architect and the immortality of the soul in its constitution. "Although the Bureau, headed by the former Grand Master of the 'Alpina' lodge, Pastor E. Cartier la Tante (1866-1924) sent a circular informing the federations of England, the USA, Germany and their numerous allies of its formation, suggesting that they unite, the latter did not react, and with the exception of the Germans did not take part in the activity of the IBML. However, in, for example, the London Masonic press the position of the United Great Lodge of that country was laid out in some detail. The Bureau was represented as 'the central power' of Masonry having sovereignty, while 'Alpina' was seen as the captive and servant of the Grand Orient of France. In becoming friendly with GOF, which had removed from its rules the reference to the Great Architect of the Universe, Alpina had thereby 'taken a step in an atheist direction' and could not be recognized as a lawful association. As for the other members of the Bureau, they were to be considered as "underground and incorrect great lodges. The accusations had an artificial character, but with some variations they continued for several more long years."*

Masonry, and antichristianity in general, was given an enormous boost by the Dreyfus affair, which had enormous implications for France, splitting the country into two ideological camps long after his eventual acquittal. The Jew Bernard Lazare and the left-wing politician Georges Clemenceau led the Dreyfusards, while the writer Charles Maurras and many Catholics and intellectuals sided with their opponents. In 1898 the Catholic monarchist nationalist association Action Française was founded, and in the same year the novelist Emile Zola entered the lists on the side of the Dreyfusards, publishing his famous pamphlet J'accuse.

"J'accuse," writes Alistair Horne, "an open letter to the President of the Republic, dramatically crystallized opinion in Paris. L'affaire was, in the words of Léon Blum, a future prime minister and a Jew himself, then in his twenties, 'a human crisis, less extended and less prolonged in time but no less violent than the French Revolution.' To an English visitor, 'Paris palpitated', and the same man sensed a lust for blood in the air. Divisions created by l'affaire ran all through Parisian society. At cafés 'Nationalists' and 'Revisionists' sat at different tables on opposite sides of the terraces; salons became polarized; Monet and Degas didn't speak for years; Clemenceau fought

a duel with an outspoken anti-Semite; six out of seven Ministers of Defence resigned in the course of the scandal.34

Jean Comby writes: "Waldeck-Rousseau, head of government, took steps against those members of religious orders who had become involved in politics, the Assumptionists, and then worked out legislation against the congregations which had grown up without definite legal status. They were upbraided for their political action, their riches, their rejection of human rights, and their influence on some of the youth group whom they made an opposition to Republican youth.

"The law of 9 July 1901, which on the whole was very liberal towards the associations, made an exception of the congregations: they had to obtain special authorization from the Chamber of Deputies or the Senate.

"In 1902 the new head of government, Emile Combes, a one-time seminarian who had become fiercely anti-clerical, turned the law on associations into a militant law. He closed 3000 educational establishments which had not been authorized. In 1903 he caused all requests for authorization to be refused en bloc with the exception of a few missionary congregations. Finally in 1904 he forbade even authorized congregations to do any teaching. The dispersion of the congregations gave rise to some painful scenes, such as the expulsion of the Carthusians. Men and women belonging to religious orders had to shut their schools and return to the lay state, or else go into exile. It was a traumatic experience for them to live in the secular world when they were old and had no resources.

"Anti-clericalism broke out to an unprecedented degree. Outcasts in the administration, teaching and the army, practising Catholics had files opened on them and were kept under surveillance. Processions were attacked, sometimes with loss of life. Saints who had given their names to streets had to make way for heroes of the Republic and of science.

"The Concordat existed, but what did it mean in such a context? A great many small things led to the breaking off of diplomatic relations between France and the Vatican in July 1904. Everything was pointing towards separation. Catholics observed the Concordat for doctrinal and financial reasons. Some supporters of separation wanted to make de-Christianization a machine. Others, in particular the law reporter Aristide Briand, wanted a moderate separation which would burst the abscess of anti-clericalism. The Law of Separation was promulgated on 9 December 1905. It recognized freedom of worship. It recognized freedom of conscience and abolished the budget for worship. The churches' possessions were handed over to administrative religious associations formed by the faithful of the various denominations.

"The Concordat of 1901 was abolished in a unilateral manner because the other signatory, the pope, had not been consulted. Pius X condemned the law for the first time in the encyclical Vehementer (February 1906), and for a second time (August 1906) when forbidding the formation of administrative religious organizations which took no account of the hierarchical organization of the church. Meanwhile, the

survey of the churches' possessions had led to violent incidents in some places. Because of its association with them, the church had to abandon seminaries, presbyteries, bishoprics, which were handed over to the community. However, in order not to inflame the situation, the churches and many of the presbyteries were allowed to use the buildings as before and the community was responsible for their upkeep. 

According to John Cornwell, "the French government attempted to control Church property by setting up joint lay-clerical administrative bodies (originally, these were to have included non-Catholic laity). In order to free the Church of any such secular influence, Pius X voluntarily handed over all Church property to the State in France, putting the good of the Church, as he expressed it, before her goods. The French responded by evicting the clergy and religious from their houses and monasteries. The government was determined to exert jurisdictional control over the Church it had set adrift from the State; Pius X was determined to exert untrammeled primacy over the Church as a spiritual, doctrinal, legal, and administrative entity. This was the clear-eyed papal vision of total separation of sovereignties; the Church with the Pope unquestioningly at its head, and the world mediated through the papal diplomatic service and the bishops."

As was to be expected, many of the violent attacks on the Church came from the Grand Orient and its affiliates in continental Masonry, which, as we have seen, had been exclusively anti-theist and militantly antichristian since 1877.

Thus in 1881 the Belgian Mason Frély wrote: "Down with the Crucified One! You have already held the world under your yoke for 18 centuries, your kingdom is finished. God is not needed!"

Again, at the 1902 Convent of the Grand Orient, the Grand Master, Brother Delpeche, expressed this hatred of Christ in a striking form: "The triumph of the Galilean has lasted twenty centuries. In his turn he is dying. That mysterious voice, which once cried: 'Great Pan is dead!' from the mountains of Epirus, is today proclaiming the end of that deceiving God who had promised an age of peace and justice to those who would believe in him. The illusion has lasted long enough; but the lying God is disappearing in his turn; he is going to take his place, amidst the dust of

35 Comby, op. cit., pp. 160-162. Comby quotes two opposing views. First, that of the socialist deputy Maurice Allard (10 April 1905): "It has to be said very loudly that the Church, Catholicism or even Christianity is incompatible with any republican regime. Christianity is an outrage to reason, an outrage to nature. I also declare very clearly that I wish to pursue the idea of the Convention and to complete the work of de-Christianizing France which was taking place in utter calm and as happily as could be imagined until the day when Napoleon concluded his Concordat. And why do we Republicans and above all we socialists want to de-Christianize this country? Why are we fighting against religion? We are fighting against religion because we believe - and I say this again - that it is a permanent obstacle to progress and civilization."

On the other hand, the Pope in his encyclical Vehementer (11 February 1906) wrote: "This theory of separation is the clearest negation of the supernatural order. In fact it limits the action of the state to the pursuit of public prosperity in this life, though that is only a secondary matter for religious societies; and as though such a thing were alien to it, it is in no way concerned with the ultimate reason for their existence, which is eternal bliss." (Comby, op. cit., p. 161) (V.M.)

37 Frély, in Archpriest Lev Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1997, p. 357.
the ages, with those other divinities of India, Egypt, Greece and Rome, who saw so many deluded creatures prostrate themselves before their altars. Freemasons, we realise, not without joy, that we ourselves are no strangers to this downfall of false prophets. The Church of Rome, based on the Galilean myth, began to decline rapidly from the very day on which the Masonic association was established. From a political point of view, Freemasons have often differed among themselves. But at all times Freemasonry has stood firm on this principle - to wage war against all superstitions and against all forms of fanaticism.”38

Again, in 1913 the Convent of the Grand Orient of France declared: "We no longer recognize God as the aim of life; we have created an ideal which is not God, but humanity."39

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Another popular antichristian religion was Spiritualism, part of the “epidemic of the occult” that swept the West. This, writes L.A. Tikhomirov, "was already abundant in the United States of America, and in 1852 there were up to 30,000 mediums and several million convinced spiritualists. From America spiritualism migrated in 1853 to England, and then to France and Germany, passing everywhere, as V. Bykov says, through one and the same developmental progression. That is, first it would manifest itself in knocks, then in table-levitation, then writing, and finally direct communications [with evil spirits]. This teaching was embraced in Europe even by noted scientists, such as Aragon, Farraday, Tyndal, Chevrel, Flammarion, Kruke, Wallace, Rimman, Tsolner, etc., who first approached spiritualist phenomena with scepticism, but then became ardent followers of spiritualism. In 1858 a certain Hippolyte Rivel, writing under the pseudonym Allan Kardek and with the help of spirits, composed a six-volumed work containing the spiritualist philosophy with a religious-mystical colouring. In the opinion of V. Bykov, it is not possible to establish exactly when spiritualism appeared in Russia, but in any case at the beginning of the 50s of the 19th century, that is, at the same time as the whole of Europe and, moreover, in its mature form (table-lifting, writing and speaking mediumism) and in 'such an epidemic force' that already in 1853 Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow considered it necessary to speak against it. In the 60s the spiritualist movement increased still more in strength. It was also joined here by several eminent scientists and social activists, such as Professor N. Wagner, Professor Yurkevich, Vladimir Dal', the academician Ostrogradsky, Professor Buglerov, etc. A.N. Aksakov was particularly involved in the popularisation of this movement. At the beginning of the 20th century a notable role in the development of our spiritualism was played by Vladimir Bykov, who later spoke out against it and became its untiring opponent.

"At the world congress in Belgium in 1910, the numbers of correctly organized spiritualists, having their own circles and meetings, were calculated at 14,000,000 people, and the numbers of sympathizers who had not yet managed to organize themselves correctly - at 10,000,000."40

38 De Poncins, Freemasonry and the Vatican, Chulmleigh: Britons Publishing Company, p. 73.
40 Tikhomirov, op. cit., pp. 480-481.
Related to spiritualism was the false religion of Theosophy, whose most famous adept in the West was the Irish poet W.B. Yeats. Yeats, writes Peter Watson, “would probably not have turned to the occult sciences with such alacrity had not a movement in that direction already been well under way. As Richard Ellmann describes it: ‘All over Europe and America young men dropped like him, and usually without his caution, into the treacherous currents of semi-mystical thought... Since Christianity seemed to have been exploded, and since science offered to Western man little but proof of his own ignominiousness, a new doctrine purporting to be an ancient and non-European one was evolved by a strange Russian lady. The new movement called itself Theosophy and offered a “synthesis of science, religion, and philosophy” which opposed the contemporary developments of all three.’

“The ‘strange lady’ was Madame Helen Blavatsky, born in 1831 in Yekaterinoslav, who advanced ‘with certainty’ her theories that ‘man has never been an ape’ and that Herbert Spencer was in fundamental error and accused the Christian priesthood of modern materialism. Modern religion, she insisted, was but ancient thought distorted; and to uncover what such thought really was, she turned to comparative mythology, which, since about 1860, had been highly developed in books by such scholars as Max Müller, a German who taught at Oxford, and culminated in James Frazier’s The Golden Bough (1890).

“In an early work of her own, Madame Blavatsky drew attention to what she saw as the similarity in the fundamental beliefs across all religions, and attributed this ‘to the existence of a secret doctrine which was their common parent’. She claimed access to an oral tradition, for the true doctrine according to her had never been allowed to be set down. ‘Now,’ she said, ‘an ancient brotherhood was keeping the secret wisdom high in the mountain fastnesses of Tibet.’ The members of this brotherhood had no interest in spreading their wisdom, but should they choose to do so, she confided, they would ‘astonish’ the world. And they had at least shown certain things to Madame Blavatsky, for the onward transmission of their secret doctrine was the ‘Theosophical Society’. ‘As these mysteries were gradually revealed, the world would slowly progress towards the greater spirituality that had been prophesied for it.’

“One of the reasons the movement was popular – it was a ‘magnet’ for disaffected members of the educated public, says the Yeats scholar Margaret Mills Harper - was that it was both anti-atheist and anti-clerical. It attacked science but used scientific concepts where it suited the moment; it espoused fatalism, yet also offered hope of progress. ‘Spiritual revolution restored the hope which natural evolution had removed.’

“And it was Blavatsky’s The Secret Doctrine, her chief work, that drew Yeats to Theosophy, the first of several forms of occult reasoning that attracted him. Her doctrine proposed three main ideas. First, she said, there was an ‘Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless and Immutable Principle on which all speculation is impossible’ – the Theosophists paid little attention to deity. Second, the world is essentially a conflict of polar opposites, contraries without which life cannot exist. Third, she proclaimed the fundamental identity of all souls with the ‘Universal Oversoul’ which carried the implication that any soul might, under proper conditions, partake of the
Oversoul’s power, a heady possibility. The soul had seven elements, or principles, and it evolved through these elements over time. Heaven and hell were to be considered as ‘states’, not actual places.

“During this spiritual evolution humankind progressed from a more intuitive way of thinking to a more intellectual style, growing more conscious. This is where the world is at present, she said, in the fourth stage. In future stages – five, six and seven – intuition, intelligence and consciousness will fuse into an intense spirituality that, at present we cannot imagine. When it suited them, the Theosophists reinforced their arguments with examples from Eastern religions – for instance, they espoused the idea of Nirvana.”

Bearing in mind that in the Old Testament Mosaic Law contact with demonic spirits was punishable by death, we should not wonder why from 1914 God unleashed His wrath so terribly on the so-called Christians of Europe...

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38. THE PSYCHOLOGISTS’ ASSAULT ON RELIGION: (1) FREUD

If Darwinist biology and geology remained the sciences most favoured by the enemies of Christianity in their assault on the faith, a new science appearing at the turn of the century was to be hardly less influential in this respect – psychology. The first and most famous name in this field was undoubtedly the Viennese Jew, Sigmund Freud... If Darwin defines the modern attitude to the physical and biological world, and Marx does the same in relation to the social world, while Schopenhauer gives to both a philosophical base, Freud defines it in relation to the inner world of the psyche. His theory, like theirs, is a doctrine of will, combining both the eros-will of the biological world as interpreted by Darwin and Schopenhauer and the thanatos-will of the social world as interpreted by Marx. But he internalizes them, as it were, within the individual human psyche and in particular within the unconscious, the "id".

Great sea-changes in human thought are often accompanied by changes in the honour accorded to particular human faculties. The Renaissance, for example, exalted reason; hence the heretical mind-set that exaggerates the power of reason and which we know as rationalism. The Romantic era, on the other hand, tended to downgrade reason in favour of the irrational faculties of will, imagination and emotion, which in artistic geniuses were considered capable of attaining higher truths than those attained by philosophers and scientists. Another human faculty that came into prominence during the Romantic era was memory, both collective and individual. The nineteenth century therefore marks the heyday of historiography and historicism and the belief that the truth about a man, a nation or an epoch is to be discovered above all in his or its history. "In my beginning is my end".

Freud inherited all three trends: rationalist, romantic-irrationalist and historicist. Thus he considered himself first and foremost a rationalist and a scientist. And if he had been able to read later assessments of his work, he would probably have been upset most by the fact that (in Anglo-Saxon countries, at any rate) he is not considered to have been a scientist at all insofar as his methods were not objectively empirical and quantitative. But even if he personally valued reason above all, he reveals his romantic heritage in his discovery (if it is truly that) of the enormous extent to which our apparently rational thinking is dominated by the irrational, by that huge, dark reservoir of repressed feelings, desires and memories which he called the unconscious and which is revealed especially in dreams.

Freud’s Interpretation of Dreams (1900), which A.N. Wilson calls “one of the most extraordinary and revolutionary texts ever to come from a human brain”, is sometimes seen as heralding the beginning of a truly modern consciousness. It “expounded the theory on which all subsequent psychoanalysis was based, even or especially those psychoanalytical theories which reacted most violently against it: namely, that the human mind consists of what might be described as two layers. With the outer layer, of our conscious mind, we reason and form judgements. In reasonable, well-balanced individuals, the pains and sorrows of childhood have been worked through, put behind them. With the unhealthy, however, neurotic or hysterical individuals, there is beneath the surface of life a swirling cauldron of
suppressed memories in which lurk the traumas (the Greek word for wounds) of early experiences. Under hypnosis, or in dreams, we re-enter the world of the subconscious and with the care of a helpful analyst we can sometimes revisit the scenes of our early miseries and locate the origins of our psychological difficulties...

“On the publication of Die Traumdeutung, there were many people who, if not actually tempted to burn the book, must have found its contents shocking. ‘If Oedipus the King is able to move modern man no less deeply than the Greeks who were Sophocles’ contemporaries, the solution can only be that the effect of Greek tragedy does not depend on the contrast between fate and human will, but is to be sought in the distinctive nature of the subject-matter exemplifying this contrast. There must be a voice within us that is ready to acknowledge the compelling force of fate in Oedipus... His fate moves us only because it could have been our own as well, because at our birth the oracle pronounced the same curse upon us as it did on him. It was perhaps ordained that we should all of us turn our first sexual impulses towards our mother, our first hatred and violent wishes against our father. Our dreams convince us of it. King Oedipus, who killed his father Laius and married his mother Jocasta, is only the fulfillment of our childhood wish. But, more fortunate that he, we have since succeeded, at least insofar as we have not become psychoneurotics, in detaching our sexual impulses from our mothers, and forgetting our jealousy of our fathers.’ Dr. Freud, further, told his Vienna lecture audiences: ‘The dream of having sexual intercourse with the mother is dreamed by many today as it was then, and they recount it with the same indignation and amazement [as Oedipus].’”

Freud called the conscious layer of the mind the “ego”, and the unconscious layer - the “id”. Later he added a third layer, that of the “super-ego”, a kind of internalized social conscience which forces the memories of childhood sexual experiences and conflicts into the “id”. The process whereby these memories are forced by the “super-ego” into the “id” is called repression. For Freud, the “super-ego”, is no less irrational in origin than the “id”. The task of psychoanalysis is to strengthen the “ego”, the sole outpost of rationality in the soul, against the irrational pressure of both the “id” and the “super-ego”. This was not to say that the “super-ego” was rejected completely - as Freud argued in Civilization and its Discontents (1930), submission to it, at least most of the time, is the price we pay for our deliverance from primitive savagery and our enjoyment of civilization. But it was recognized as being deprived of any higher or other-worldly origin. It was a faculty owing its origins to childhood conflicts and traumas and no more rational in itself than the “id” which it censored and repressed.

Another way in which Freud showed his romantic heritage was the significance he attached to art. Thus already in his early obituary on Charcot (1893), he clearly saw the relationship between "the poet's eye" and the gift of clinical diagnosis. He acknowledged his debt to the Greek tragedians, Goethe and Shakespeare; in his Leonardo he felt the need to forestall the criticism that he had merely written "a psycho-analytic novel"; and he included literary history and literary criticism among the disciplines to be studied in the ideal Faculty of Psychoanalysis.

According to Philip Rieff, the fact that “Freud owed most to Sophocles and Shakespeare (cf. The Interpretation of Dreams, SE IV, Part I, 264) and least to the scientific psychology of his era shows us how dangerous scientific training can be to the mental life of the scientist when poetry is excluded from what is conceived as significant in his training. William James said this best, in the conclusion to his Gifford Lectures, The Varieties of Religious Experience: ‘Humbug is humbug, even though it bear the scientific name, and the total expression of human experience, as I view it objectively, invincibly urges me beyond the narrow “scientific” bounds’ (London, rev. ed., 1902, p. 519).”

Norman Holland writes: "What Freud admires in the writer are his powers as a seer, his ability to grasp intuitively truths the psychologist gets at only by hard work. As early as 1895, he wrote, 'Local diagnosis and electrical reactions lead nowhere in the study of hysteria, whereas a detailed description of mental processes such as we are accustomed to find in the works of imaginative writers enables me, with the use of a few psychological formulas, to obtain at least some kind of insight'. 'Creative writers,' he wrote in Delusions and Dreams, 'are valuable allies and their evidence is to be prized highly, for they are apt to know a whole host of things between heaven and earth of which our philosophy has not yet let us dream'. Writers could see, for example, the 'necessary conditions for loving' before psychologists could. Shakespeare had understood the meaning of slips of the tongue long before Freud, and not only that, he had assumed that his audiences would understand, too, The writer, however, knows these things 'through intuition - really from a delicate self-observation', while Freud himself had to 'uncover' them through 'laborious work'."

Freud defined the difference between conscious and unconscious contents in terms of the element of naming or verbalization which belongs to the conscious content alone: "What we have permissibly called the conscious presentation of the object can now be split up into the presentation of the word and the presentation of the thing... We now seem to know all at once what the difference is between a conscious and an unconscious presentation. The two are not, as we supposed, different registrations of the same content in different psychical localities, nor yet different functional states of cathexis in the same locality; but the conscious presentation comprises the presentation of the thing plus the representation of the word belonging to it, while the unconscious presentation is the presentation of the thing alone...

“Now, too, we are in a position to state precisely what it is that repression denies to the rejected presentation in the transference neuroses: what it denies to the presentation is translation into words which shall remain attached to the object. A presentation which is not put into words, or a psychical act which is not hyper-cathected, remains thereafter in the Ucs in a state of repression.”

Dreams, according to Freud, are a kind of language for repressed presentations; we are to read them as we read a poem, treating the techniques of "dream work" - displacement, condensation, symbolization, dramatization, etc. - as a critic might treat the devices of poetry, such as metaphor and allegory. According to the literary critic Lionel Trilling, Freud’s greatest achievement was his discovery that "poetry is indigenous to the very constitution of the mind", which is "in the greater part of its tendency exactly a poetry-making organ". Thus psychoanalysis is, in effect, "a science of tropes, of metaphor and its variants, synecdoche and metonymy."\(^{48}\)

Dreams are like the first draft of a poem, the expression of an unconscious content in a semi-conscious form. More work needs to be done on them in order to bring them into the full light of consciousness, work which the patient must carry out with help from the psychotherapist. In this way psychotherapy is a kind of artistic collaboration, with the therapist encouraging his patient to do as Shakespeare exhorted in his Sonnet 77:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Look what thy memory cannot contain} \\
\text{Commit to these waste blanks, and thou shalt find} \\
\text{Those children nurs’d, deliver’d from thy brain,} \\
\text{To take a new acquaintance of thy mind.}
\end{align*}
\]

The importance of memory in Freudianism brings us to its third major characteristic: historicism. The psychoanalyst’s work in unearthing the unconscious can be compared to that of the historian or archaeologist. Just as the latter unearths and interprets old documents that cast light on the present, so the psychoanalyst unearths significant events and strata in the patient’s life, especially his early sexual history, that have been repressed from his conscious memory but continue to colour and distort his present behaviour. In his theory of the collective archetypes, Freud’s most famous disciple, Karl Jung, extended the importance of memory in psychoanalysis still further into the past, not only of the individual, but also of the race. And Freud himself, in his later works such as Moses and Monotheism, pointed to certain hypothetical events in the history of the race or tribe, such as the killing of the tribal leader, that supposedly continue to influence all succeeding generations.

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In 1912 the International Association of Psychoanalysis published its journal Imago. It was to be edited, writes Peter Watson, "jointly by Freud himself and Otto Rank, a young Viennese psychoanalyst much influenced by Ibsen and Nietzsche…"

"In the first issue, Freud stressed the need to extend the scope of psychoanalytic research to fields such as language, customs, religion and the law, mythology, aesthetics, literature, the history of art, and philology; folklore, criminology and moral theory were also to be included. And the journal’s ambitions grew still further with time – in the early thirties, Freud was writing that psychoanalysis could ‘become indispensable to all the sciences which are concerned with the evolution of human civilization and its major institutions such as art, religion and the social order.’"

“Imago” published the first of four essays representing Freud’s application of psychoanalysis to social and anthropological problems, and outlined nothing less than his view of how human society originated, in particular from where the religious beliefs of early man derive. *Totem and Taboo* was published in book form in 1913, though Freud had begun to air his views on religion a few years earlier. In 1907, he began his paper ‘Obsessive Actions and Religious Practices’ as follows: ‘I am certainly not the first person to have been struck by the resemblance between what are called obsessive actions in sufferers from nervous afflictions and the observances by means of which believers give expression to their piety.’ To him, he said, the resemblance seemed more than superficial, ‘so that an insight into the origin of neurotic ceremonial may embolden us to draw inferences by analogy about the psychological processes of religious life.’

“All the same, Freud was careful at that point to stress the differences as much as the similarities between neurosis and religious practice, concluding that ‘obsessional neurosis presents a travesty, half-comic and half-tragic, of a private religion.’ At the same time, he went on to say that, just as many patients were unaware of the unconscious reasons for carrying out their obsessional actions, many religious people were unaware of the motives that impelled them to religious practices. He drew a further parallel in saying that both obsessional neurotics and the pious are motivated by an unconscious sense of guilt, and this sense of guilt ‘has its source in certain early mental events, but it is constantly being revived by renewed temptations which arise whenever there is a contemporary provocation.’

“Religion, like obsessional neurosis, he said, was based on a suppression of instinct. In the neurotic, the instinct suppressed was invariably sexual, and though that wasn’t quite so true of religion, that instinct was ‘usually not without a sexual component’. ‘Perhaps because of the admixture of sexual components, perhaps because of some general characteristics of the instincts, the suppression of instinct proves to be an inadequate and interminable process in religious life also. Indeed, complete backsliding into sin is more common among pious people than among neurotics and… give[s] rise to a new form of religious activity, namely acts of penance, which have their counterparts in obsessional neurosis.’ And he concluded: ‘In view of these similarities and analogies one might venture to regard obsessional neurosis as a pathological counterpart of the formation of a religion, and to describe neurosis as an individual religiosity and religion as a universal obsessional neurosis.’

“Although he had begun by trying to sugarcoat the pill he was administering, by the end of his paper Freud had concluded with a message that was bound to be as unpopular as it was controversial: that, in effect, religion was the manifestation of a form of – emotionally equivalent to – mental illness. In the following years he widened the attack. In 1910, in ‘Future Aspects of Psychoanalytic Therapy’, he went so far as to link secularization with an increase in neurosis. ‘You cannot exaggerate the intensity of man’s inner resolution and craving for authority. The extraordinary increase in the neuroses since the power of religion has waned may give you some indication of it.’ As he was to say later, ‘Devout believers are safeguarded in a high degree against the risk of neurotic illness.’
“Freud’s theory of faith was rooted in his theory of psychology. For him, the anxiety we feel as infants over our helplessness ‘is the fundamental feeling which impels a person towards religious faith’. As he put it in a paper on Leonardo da Vinci, published in 1910, ‘Biologically speaking, religiousness is to be traced to the small human child’s long-drawn-out helplessness and need of help.’ Freud discovered (if we set aside the criticisms for the moment) the profound effect of childhood experiences on adult emotional life, and he went on to argue that ‘many people are unable to surmount the fear of loss of [parental] love; they never become sufficiently independent of other people’s love and in this respect carry on their behavior as infants.’ Freud thought that an efficacious religion ‘helps the believer master the regressive anxiety that is stirred up by developmental danger-situations when they recur in adult life and become traumas.’ ‘The roots of the need for religion are in the parental complex; the almighty and just God, and kindly Nature, appear to us a grand sublimations of father and mother.’

“Social factors, unique to modernity, have reinforced this dependency. Childhood was extended by the abolition of child labor, while work could call fathers away from home for long periods. In addition, the breakdown of the extended family has tended to isolate the mother-child relationship. All this increases the dependency of the pre-oedipal child on the mother. Many find in religion what they once had in childhood.

“Freud went on to say that religion actually contributes to the resolution of the Oedipus complex, thereby protecting believers from neurosis: this is why secularization has been such a painful process for so many people. The religious are unaware of the psychological origins of their religious loyalties. Religion, being in part a substitute for the parents, radiates love and security to the believer – without, however, the anxiety that is usually aroused by intense libidinal ties to the parents. Thus religion helps keep the lid on erotic and aggressive instincts, thereby benefitting society.

“So far, Freud had equated religious feelings and behavior with neurotic behavior and symptoms, and had rooted religion in the psychodynamics of family life, in what has been called from the child’s viewpoint ‘the two-parent family love triangle’. Essentially, this subsumed religion as a subset phenomenon of psychology. In Totem and Taboo, which he began in the spring of 1911, Freud widened his horizons and sought the anthropological origins of religion in an evolutionary context. He surrounded himself, he told friends, with some ‘thick books’ that he wasn’t really interested in, ‘since I already know the results’. He wrote his own book in the Tyrol, well aware of the reception it was likely to provoke – it was ‘the most daring enterprise I have ever ventured,’ he told one friend, an attempt to ‘smuggle psychoanalysis into ethnopsychology’, as he told another.

“The book consisted of four essays: ‘The Horror of Incest’, ‘Taboo and Emotional Ambivalence’, ‘Animism, Magic and the Omnipotence of Thought’ and ‘The Return of Totemism in Childhood’. The fourth, which contains the nub of the argument, is of interest here. Freud’s hypothesis took as its starting point Darwin’s ‘primal horde’, by which Darwin meant little more than a small self-supporting group under the control of ‘the father’, who exercised absolute rule over other males in the group, retaining all the women for his own ‘use’. Freud argued that eventually the young
men revolted, then murdered and consumed the father; and in atonement they forbade the slaughter of a totem animal (which substituted for the father). However, in order to prevent a recurrence of the original crime, under which ran rivalry for the women, marriage within the group was forbidden, as was killing. For Freud this neatly explained the only two crimes with which, he held, primitive society concerned itself – murder and incest.

“From our perspective, it doesn’t matter – for now, at least – that the anthropology on which Freud based his theories has been superseded, shown by more recent studies to have been off base by some distance... At the time, Freud’s attempts to marry psychology, anthropology and social institutions such as religion and art as advances in the synthesis of knowledge, such a symbiosis being itself regarded as evidence of advance. And Freud’s psycho-anthropological theories invited the view that religion was a natural phenomenon, that there was nothing ‘transcendental’ about it, that it was to be understood ultimately in anthropological terms. Moreover, since Freud drew attention to the similarities between neurosis and religious practice, it followed that religion was to be regarded, not exactly as a pathological aspect of society (since he acknowledged that some people were helped by it), but certainly as subordinate to psychology as a way for humankind to understand itself.”

But how can religion be a way for humankind to understand itself if it is objectively false?! Moreover, how can religion be said to be subordinate to psychology if those psychological ideas are, to put it gently, unproven? For not only his anthropological ideas, but also most of Freud’s most purely psychological ideas, such as the Oedipus Complex, have not been confirmed by empirical research. Indeed: “Every particular idea [of Freud] is wrong,” says psychiatrist Peter D. Kramer: “the universality of the Oedipus complex, penis envy, infantile sexuality...”

This is not to say that these Freudian phenomena are never found, only that they do not play that vast role in the life of the soul that Freud attributed to them.

An exception to this rule, according to C.S. Lewis, is the Freudian concept of repression, which is valid. But repression, says Lewis, must not be confused with suppression. “Psychology teaches us that ‘repressed’ sex is dangerous. But ‘repressed’ is here a technical term: it does not mean ‘suppressed’ in the sense of ‘denied’ or ‘resisted’. A repressed desire or thought is one which has been thrust into the subconscious (usually at a very early age) and can now come before the mind only in a disguised and unrecognisable form. Repressed sexuality does not appear to the patient to be sexuality at all. When an adolescent or an adult is engaged in resisting a conscious desire, he is not dealing with a repression nor is he in the least danger of creating a repression. On the contrary, those who are seriously attempting chastity are more conscious, and soon know a great deal more about their own sexuality than anyone else...”

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49 Watson, op. cit., pp. 84-88.
Christians would therefore agree with Freud that repression is bad for the soul, just as any refusal to face up to the facts about oneself is bad. In this respect psychoanalysis has something in common with the Christian practice of the confession of sins. Insofar, then, as psychoanalysis helps one to unearth hidden traumas and shine the light of reason on the irrational depths of the soul, it should not be considered harmful. However, Christianity cannot agree with the Freudian presupposition that the contents of the “id” are morally neutral, nor with the idea – which belongs less to Freud than to the Freudians and popular interpretations of his ideas – that the suppression (as opposed to the repression) of the “id” is harmful.

Again, “conscience” for the Christian is by no means to be identified with the “super-ego” of the Freudians (which is not to say that something like the “super-ego” does not exist). In the true sense it is not the internalization of the social conscience of contemporary society, with all its pride and prejudice, but “the eye of God in the soul of man”; it is not another form of irrationality, but the super-rational revelation of God’s will. As such its judgements cannot be ignored or rejected by reason, but must be accepted as having objective validity.

Freud has been unjustly accused of opening the floodgates to all kinds of immorality. He never preached free love or abnormal love in the manner of his contemporaries H.G. Wells and D.H. Lawrence. Nevertheless, insofar as he encouraged the view that the contents of the unconscious should be revealed without being judged from a moral point of view, it is undoubtedly contrary to Christianity.

Psychoanalysis, according to Lewis, says nothing very useful about normal feelings, but does help to remove abnormal or perverted feelings. “Thus fear of things that are really dangerous would be an example of the first kind [of feelings]: an irrational fear of cats or spiders would be an example of the second kind. The desire of a man for a woman would be of the first kind: the perverted desire of a man for a man would be of the second… What psychoanalysis undertakes to do is to remove the abnormal feelings, that is, give the man better raw material for his acts of choice; morality is concerned with the acts of choice themselves.”

However, this optimistic view of the potential of psychoanalysis is unwarranted. On the one hand, as we have seen, many of its theoretical constructs have been rejected, and so the occasional successes of therapy may be attributable, not to the truth of the theory itself, but rather to other factors having nothing to do with psychoanalysis as such – for example, the love of the therapist for his patient. On the other hand, and still more fundamentally, there exists no criterion within Freudianism for distinguishing the normal from the abnormal. Homosexuality, for example, may have been judged abnormal by Freud and his contemporaries, as it has always been judged abnormal by Christians. But whereas Christianity possesses a detailed model of the normal man – that is, the saint, and believes in a God-given conscience, Freudianism possesses no such model, and does not believe in conscience (which, as we have seen, is not the same as the “super-ego”). It can have no reason

53 Lewis, op. cit., p. 81.
for declaring a certain feeling or desire good or evil, normal or abnormal, so long as its presence does not create conflicts with other psychical processes. And this is another reason for concluding that while Freudianism may not actively encourage immorality, its attitude to life is essentially amoral.

Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) makes this point well: “The criterion of the norm for every person in psychoanalysis is the person himself with all his sins and inadequacies, in a condition of calm after the overcoming of all conflicts arising within his consciousness. In psychoanalysis they try to overcome and remove conflicts by putting the conscience to sleep and reconciling the person with the sin that lives in him. Therefore the very profound critic of psychoanalysis, Arved Runestam, in his book Psychoanalysis and Christianity (Augustiana Press, 1958) notes with reason that psychoanalysis in theory and practice is in general a powerful proclaimer of the right to a life directly ruled by instinct. ‘One cannot say,’ he writes, ‘that this signifies the recognition of morality as an evil in itself. But morality is represented rather as an inescapable evil than a positive good’ (p. 37)…”  

As for religion, Freud’s attitude to it did not change in the post-war years – except that he took a darker view of it than before. Instead of seeing it as an illusion that might nevertheless help to avert neurosis, he saw it as an illusion that would be best confined to the dustbin of history. Judaism was an illusion based on the worship of the Father; Christianity – on the worship of the Son. Neither was true and therefore neither could be truly useful. Nevertheless, religion was an illusion that could never disappear entirely; for, as he wrote in 1928: “If you want to expel religion from our European civilization, you can only do it by means of another system of doctrines; and such a system would from the outset take over all the psychological characteristics of religion – the same sanctity, rigidity and intolerance, the same prohibition of thought – for its own defence.”

When we turn from the psychological theory of psychoanalysis to its philosophical foundations, then its incompatibility with Christianity becomes still more obvious. Thus Freud believed that human psychology is completely reflected in the activity of the brain, so that the sciences of the brain and of psychology should eventually merge. This is simply materialism, the denial of the existence of the rational soul and its survival after the death of the body.

As Bishop Gregory writes: “Although psychoanalysis contains within its name the word ‘soul’, it concentrates its investigations on the functions of the brain. But we, of course, know that with the latter is mysteriously linked our invisible soul, which


56 The idea was first put forward in his Project for a Scientific Psychology (1895) (Claudia Kalb, “The Therapist as Scientist”, Newsweek, March 27, 2006, p. 42).
constitutes a part of our personality. We must suppose that much that the psychiatrists refer to as the workings of the subconscious sphere of the brain in fact belong not only, or not so much, to the brain, as to the soul.”57

Again, Freud believed that the roots, not only of man’s abnormal actions, but even of his higher activities, the things which are most characteristic of his humanity - politics, art and religion - are to be found in childhood traumas and conflicts. Of course, the phenomena of totalitarian politics, pornographic art and sectarian religion do manifest abnormal psychological traits, and as such may be illumined to some extent by psychoanalytic ideas. However, the higher we ascend in our study of these spheres, the more inadequate, crude and distorting of a true understanding will the theory of psychoanalysis appear.

Thus if politics is reduced by psychoanalysis to narcissism, or to the libidinal relations between the leader and his followers58, then there can be no higher politics of the kind that we find in the lives of the holy kings and princes of Orthodox Christian history. Again, if the psychoanalysts’ study of art consists in “the pursuit of the personal, the neurotic and the infantile in the work of artists”59, then we may justly wonder whether they understand art at all. And if religion is reduced to hatred and love for a repressed father-figure, then it is not difficult to see why psychoanalysis should be seen as one of the roots of contemporary atheism…

Freudianism on the one hand exposed the hypocrisy of the Victorian bourgeois class that pretended to deny its sexual and aggressive drives. And on the other hand, as we shall see, it had a limited explanatory power in showing how much the power that the totalitarian dictators exerted over the peoples who followed them owed to the pathological resurgence of those repressed drives, making the age that began in 1914 unparalleled in its barbarism… But as an objective model of human nature it must be rejected…

57 Grabbe, op. cit.
58 Freud, Group Psychology, pp. 103, 94.
Fin-de-siècle intellectual life was not hostile to religion as such, only to organized religion in general and traditional Christianity in particular. As we have seen, even Freud took a condescending view of religion (at any rate before the Great War); he conceded that it might help avert or ameliorate neurosis. Other leading psychologists took a similarly condescending view towards it; some even conceded that it might be real – in the technical, philosophical sense, that since it “worked”, and since reality is that which “works”, which has an effect, religion must be agreed to be “real”.

Such was the attitude of the American pragmatist philosopher and psychologist William James. Son of the Swedenborgian theologian Henry James Sr., and brother of the famous novelist Henry James, William James, as A.N. Wilson writes, was probing “the mystery of religious belief. Was it the case, as nineteenth-century literalists had believed, that Christianity depended upon the verifiability of a series of actual events or the provability - whatever that would mean - of the existence of God? Was there something in the human mind or personality which could explain why we are, or are not, religious? In his book, The Varieties of Religious Experience, delivered as lectures at St. Andrews University in 1902, William James found all but no 'evidence' which could justify belief, but he refused to be reductionist and suggest that piety was simply a matter of temperament, still less that religious feeling was a substitute for other sorts of feeling. He maintained the legitimacy of faith, and he did so on the robust grounds that faith, for many, worked. He quoted with approval another American psychologist, Professor Leuga, as saying: ‘God is not known, he is not understood; he is used - sometimes as meat-purveyor; sometimes as moral support, sometimes as friend, sometimes as an object of love. If he proves himself useful, the religious impulse asks for no more than that. Does God really exist? How does he exist? What is he? are so many irrelevant questions. Not God, but life, more life, a larger, richer, more satisfying life, is, in the last analysis, the end of religion.’”

“What James was advocating, then,” writes Watson, “was first the pragmatic argument that, for those who believe in God, he is real because he produces real effects; people believe they achieve a more satisfying life because of religion (and he examined many detailed first-person accounts of religious experiences, most of which, he said, were trustworthy). At the same time, with his aim to create a ‘science of religions’, he saw religion primarily as a psychological phenomenon, an entirely natural emotional response to the ‘misty’ ambiguity of life, to fear, and to the conflict within us between assertion and passive surrender as ways to face life, the ever present conflict between the ‘yes-function’ and the ‘no-function’; a response to the very real pragmatic predicament that, in life, lots of ideas negate other ideas. He claimed that many people suffer from what he called ‘over-belief’, too strong a faith state; that the religious life always risks self-indulgence; and that any attempt to demonstrate the truthfulness of any one set of religious beliefs as ‘hopeless’.

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60 Wilson, op. cit., pp. 89-90.
“In his Gifford Lectures, he was pointing out that religion is a natural phenomenon, rooted in our divided self; but he was also saying, indirectly, that advances in understanding the subconscious might well lead to a better understanding of the central uneasiness that we have within us.”

James experimented with drugs, he went to séances, and he was a member of the Theosophical Society. From an Orthodox Christian point of view, this dabbling in spirits – so typical of this, the age of fake spirituality and spiritualism - would in itself have disqualified him from being capable of an objective view of religion since it placed him in bondage to the demons. But his relativistic pragmatic philosophy – again, so typical of this, the age of relativity - would in any case have prevented him from finding the truth.

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Freud’s most famous disciple (and rival), Carl Jung, modified and broadened the Freudian approach to psychology in three important ways. First, he criticized Freud's classification of the instincts into two categories: self-preservative and sexual, as being too limited, thereby broadening the potential scope of the interpretation of dreams and of the unconscious generally. Secondly, he suggested that the symbols in dreams may have a collective as well as a personal significance, being archetypal images common to human experience as a whole. Thirdly, he introduced the concepts of individuation and active imagination, which are processes directed towards the attainment of psychic integration and which are most clearly evident in the work of artistic geniuses; for Jung, like Freud, drew much of his inspiration from art and literature.

Many have found in Jung the most “religion-friendly” of the famous early psychologists. This would seem to be confirmed by the passage, quoted above, in which he appears to accept the reality of demon-possession. However, it is doubtful that Jung really believed in God (as opposed to the devil)...

Unlike Freud, but like William James, Jung was also interested in the supernatural and the occult. This interest manifested itself early, writes Peter Watson, “in his fourth year of study [of psychiatry], when he attended a séance in which the subject was his fifteen-year-old cousin: in trance, she lost her Basel accent and spoke in High German, claiming she was controlled by spirits. An account of this episode formed the starting point of his first published work: his degree dissertation, On the Psychology and Pathology of So-Called Occult Phenomena (1902). This neatly encapsulates his lively interest in both the occult and the unconscious.

“His main disagreements with Freud lay in his rejection of the latter’s insistence on the supreme importance of repressed sexuality in the etiology of neurosis, and his conviction that beneath consciousness and the (personal) unconscious there is a third, deeper level, the collective unconscious. Jung’s rival view, derived from his clinical experience and his researches among myths, ethnography and animal behavior, he said, was based on observation, on the fact that, as he found it, ‘psychic energy’ was more significant as a source of neurosis than was sexual repression. These researches

61 Watson, op. cit., p. 59.
showed, he claimed, that across the world – in myths, for example – there were many images and patterns that overlapped, causing him to conclude that they derive from very ancient experiences that have been incorporated into our nature 'at the deepest levels'.

“To these patterns Jung attached the term ‘archetype’, of which he identified five as the most important: persona, anima and animus, extravert and introvert, shadow and self.

“Persona is the mask we present to the world, designed to mislead; anima is the female tendency in males and animus the male tendency in females; extravert and introvert are characteristic stances we have toward the world and represent perhaps Jung’s most widely accepted innovation. What most concerns us here is his idea that God is an archetype. That is to say, it is a disposition within us, a disposition to believe in God, though at this point Jung gets very ambiguous.

“An archetype cannot be known directly, he says, only inferred or intuited. Patterns observed – in mythology, for example – refer to ‘archetype-contents’, not to the actual ‘archetype-form’. This is – or appears to be – a little like G.E. Moore’s understanding of ‘the good’, which cannot be defined without corrupting and limiting the idea. Jung further complicates matters by arguing that the archetype of the self is very similar to – may even be identical with – the God-archetype. There are, within the collective unconscious, archetypes of ‘wholeness’ and ‘perfection’ (Jesus figures here); and the purpose of life, in the process of what he called ‘individuation’, is to bring the personal and collective unconscious into ‘balance’ so that the self-archetype and the God-archetype are in harmony…”

Individuation is perhaps Jung’s most interesting and fruitful idea; it has been defined by the Jungian-trained psychiatrist Antony Storr as "coming to terms with oneself by means of reconciling the opposing factors within". He continues: "We are all divided selves, and that is part of the human condition. Neurotics, because of a deficiency in the controlling apparatus (a weak ego), suffer from neurotic symptoms, as we all may do at times. Creative people may be more divided than most of us, but, unlike neurotics, have a strong ego; and, although they may periodically suffer from neurotic symptoms, have an especial power of integrating opposites within themselves without recourse to displacement, denial, repression and other mechanisms of defence. Creative people, and potentially creative people, therefore, may suffer and be unhappy because of the divisions within them, but do not necessarily display neurosis.”

"Creative people," continues Storr, "show a wider than usual division in the mind, an accentuation of opposites. It seems probable that when creative people produce a new work they are in fact attempting to reconcile opposites in exactly the way Jung describes. Many of Jung’s patients drew and painted so-called mandalas, circular forms which express and symbolise the union of opposites and the formation of this new centre of personality…

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"Works of art have much in common with mandalas, just as mandalas can be regarded as primitive works of art. For the artist, the work of art serves the same purpose; that is, the union of opposites within himself, and the consequent integration of his own personality. Jung and his followers tend to describe the individuation process in terms of a once-for-all achievement, like maturity, or self-realisation, or self-actualisation, or genitality for that matter. But every experienced psychotherapist knows that personality development is a process which is never complete; and no sooner is a new integration achieved, a new mandala painted, than it is seen as inadequate. Another must follow which will include some other omitted element, or be a more perfect expression of the new insight."

Then he explains why this artistic kind of integration is important for all of us: "By identifying ourselves, however fleetingly, with the creator, we can participate in the integrating process which he has carried out for himself. The more universal the problem with which the artist is dealing, the more universal the appeal. That is why the pursuit of the personal, the neurotic and the infantile in the work of artists is ultimately unrewarding, although it will always have some interest... The great creators, because their tensions are of universal rather than personal import, can appeal to all of us when they find, in their work, a new path of reconciliation."

Returning to the idea that individuation is the process brings "the personal and collective unconscious into 'balance' so that the self-archetype and the God-archetype are in harmony", we may note that this sounds intriguingly close to the Christian idea that the self is the image of God in man. But is Jung in fact speaking the language of theology within the confines of a sophisticated atheism? Watson poses the critical question thus: "This is certainly radical (insofar as it is understandable) – but is it friendly to religion or blasphemous? This is the problem with Jung. He thought his concept of the collective unconscious was as important as quantum theory, but many people failed to grasp it. (No doubt many fail to follow quantum theory, but enough do to construct a technology based on it.) Critics point out that archetypes are as metaphysical as Plato’s ideas and that although, after Jung, Claude Lévi-Strauss and Noam Chomsky found ‘deep structures’ in anthropology and linguistics, they have not produced a transformation in our understanding, as quantum theory has done.

“Jung was convinced that the modern world is in a spiritual crisis brought about by secularization, materialism and extraversion. But he did not seek a return to the church – he saw organized religion as ‘spiritual death’. He thought we needed a ‘massive reinvestment in spiritual life’, to be achieved by reconnecting with the mythical world. ‘Myths express life more precisely than science,’ he said. ‘Man cannot stand a meaningless life... meaning comes from an unequivocal affirmation of the self... The decisive question is: is man related to something infinite or not?... The cosmic questions is a fundamental requirement of the self.’ As Anthony Stevens puts it, Jung himself had a reverence for the unconscious, the imagination, transcendence and gnosis (by which he meant knowledge through experience, not book-learning or belief), and he wanted others to experience the same. As Erich Fromm characterized it, Freud’s unconscious contains mainly vices, Jung’s contains man’s wisdom.

64 Storr, op. cit., pp. 233, 234-35.
65 Storr, op. cit., pp. 236, 237.
“At the same time, Jung insisted that the existence of a God-archetype was a psychological truth, not a theological one: it said nothing about the existence or otherwise of God or his/her/its form. This is why Jung has proved so controversial, and why his work so perplexes religious writers. His ideas are so ambiguous that we cannot be totally sure what he meant. At root he is saying – or seems to be saying – that man an innate disposition to conceive of God (but not necessarily to believe in him), and that without coming to terms in some way with this disposition we can never feel whole or complete, or in balance; we cannot be spiritually healthy. We need to express the God-archetype to avoid neurosis.

“Jung said that he ‘abhorred metaphysics’, yet his own thinking is even more metaphysical, less grounded in empiricism, than Freud’s. And he finished by saying the exact opposite to Freud. Whereas Freud argued that religion was a form of collective neurosis, grounded in repressed sexual energy wrapped up in the oedipal dilemma, Jung said religious feelings helped cure neurosis. Whatever else it is, and however successful or unsuccessful his opaque theories may be, Jung’s is the most elaborate attempt yet to marry theology and psychology…”

* * *

This brief review of the giants of early twentieth-century psychology allows us to draw the following conclusions about the new science’s approach to religion:

1. They all refused to consider the possibility that some religious faith might be true. They all assumed that modern science – specifically, Darwinism – had excluded that. And yet an objective approach to religion must first of all attempt to understand the religions in their own terms, as claimants to objective truth. Thus it is impossible to understand Christianity without attempting to answer the question: “Was Christ – God Himself, or a charlatan or madman?” Again, it is impossible to understand Islam without attempting to answer the question: “Did Mohammed really receive the Koran from the Archangel Gabriel?” And it is impossible to understand Hinduism without attempting to answer the question: “Do Krishna and Shiva really exist as spirits independent of their worshippers’ minds?”

2. In consequence, the psychologists (with the partial exception of William James) steadfastly ignored the vast differences and contradictions between religions, as if assenting to Blavatsky’s theory that all religions have a common origin. And yet for them, instead of all religion deriving from a common “secret doctrine”, as Blavatsky asserted, it all came from human needs – neurotic or “normal”, depending on your point of view – which in turn derived from biological evolution - in other words, blind matter. Of course, at that time (unlike now), it was unfashionable to call oneself an atheist, and impolitic to alienate one’s readers, most of whom still believed in some kind of god. Therefore psychologists strove to hide (although Freud was more honest in this respect) their firm belief that all religion was an illusion, albeit a useful one (according to Jung and James), and that the origins of all “spirituality” were in fact base matter...

3. In spite of their common reverence for empirical science, the fathers of modern psychology hardly succeeded in carrying out an empirical study of their subject. Even such quasi-religious phenomena as demon-possession, exorcism and occult phenomena, which both aroused the interest of Jung and James (if not Freud), and which would appear to have been capable of truly empirical investigation, did not receive it. And this leads to a general observation on the nature of psychology: that it either ends up trivializing and falsifying its subject-matter by trying to force it into some other scientific subject (for example, physiology or zoology), or wanders into metaphysical clouds of nonsense and/or ambiguity that increase neither scientific nor any other kind of knowledge…
40. AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

Russia and America were exceptional among the "Greater European" empires - Russia because she rejected the democratic ethos of the others in favour of Orthodox Autocracy, and America because she rejected the very idea of empire. In fact, she was so anti-imperial that "when Santo Domingo (the future Dominican Republic) effectively offered itself up for annexation in 1869, the proposal was defeated in Congress."67 And yet America was an empire in all but name. Essentially, she was the same type of commercial empire as the British, and by the later part of the nineteenth century had even overtaken the British, thanks to the techniques of standardization of parts and mass production. "In 1870," writes Landes, "the United States had the largest economy in the world, and its best years still lay ahead. By 1913, American output was two and a half times that of the United Kingdom or Germany, four times that of France. Measured by person, American GDP surpassed that of the United Kingdom by 20 percent, France by 77, Germany by 86."68

America was fast becoming the world’s major liberal "anti-imperial empire". Like the British, their main motivation was commercial gain - although they were less committed than they to Free Trade. For her further development, however, it was essential that the Americans settle scores with the British; for the two nations had often warred against each other in the past, and the British remained the only power that could seriously contest American domination in the Western Hemisphere – for the time being, at any rate. British non-intervention in the American Civil War had the important consequence of initiating a growing reconciliation between the two nations that had often warred against each other in the past. Marriages between American heiresses and English aristocrats (as between Winston Churchill’s parents) helped, as did the Anglophilia of great American writes such as Henry James. But reconciliation did not happen just by itself: it was conditioned by America beginning to translate her economic power into military might.

“Until 1865,” writes Dominic Lieven, “London believed with reason that it could defend its position in the Western Hemisphere by force if necessary and thereby sustain a balance of power in the region.”69 Indeed, as late as 1890, writes Henry Kissinger, “the American army ranked fourteenth in the world, after Bulgaria’s, and the American navy was smaller than Italy’s, a country with one-thirteenth of America’s industrial strength. As late as the presidential inaugural of 1885, President Grover Cleveland described American foreign policy in terms of detached neutrality and as entirely different from the self-interested policies pursued by older, less enlightened states. He rejected ‘any departure from that foreign policy commended by the history, the traditions, and the prosperity of the Republic. It is the policy of independence, favored by our position and defended by our known love of justice and by our power. It is the policy of peace suitable to our interests. It is the policy of neutrality, rejecting any share in foreign broils and ambitions upon other continents and repelling their intrusion here.’

67 Ferguson, Colossus, p. 41.
69 Lieven, Towards the Flame. Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia, London: Allen Lane, 2015, p. 23.
“A decade later, [however,] America’s world role having expanded, the tone had become more insistent and considerations of power loomed larger. In a border dispute in 1895 between Venezuela and British Guiana, Secretary of State Richard Olney warned Great Britain – then still considered the premier world power – of the inequality of military strength in the Western Hemisphere. ‘To-day the United States is practically sovereign on this continent, and its fiat is law.’ America’s ‘infinite resources combined with its isolated position render it master of the situation and practically invulnerable as against any or all other powers.’

“America was now a major power, no longer a fledgling republic on the fringes of world affairs. American policy no longer limited itself to neutrality; it felt obliged to translate its long-proclaimed universal moral relevance into a broader geopolitical role. When, later that year, the Spanish Empire’s colonial subjects in Cuba rose in revolt, a reluctance to see an imperial rebellion crushed on America’s doorstep mingled with the conviction that the time had come for the United States to demonstrate its ability and will to act as a great power, at a time when the importance of European nations was in part judged by the extent of their overseas empires…”

As a result of the Spanish-American War that then took place, America vaulted herself into the ranks of the major powers – a position that the British chose not to contest. For, as Lieven writes, by 1900 “Britain faced an increasing number of competitors at a time when it had long ceased to be the only industrial economy in the world. In these circumstances, any confrontation with the United States would be a disaster. In the twenty years around the turn of the century, Britain conceded hegemony in the Western Hemisphere to the United States, appeasing the Americans by giving way on a series of issues concerning competing interests in Brazil, Venezuela, and Panama. German observers noted sourly but correctly that the British tolerated behavior and rhetoric from the Americans that would have led to furious protests and even war had they come from continental Europeans. Although British wooing of the Americans was by no means always reciprocated on the other side of the Atlantic, the Germans knew that in a competition for American goodwill the English had many advantages, beginning but by no means ending with their shared language.

“The Anglo-American alliance in the twentieth century was indeed never simply a matter of Realpolitik and shared geographical interests. On the contrary, what gave this alliance its strength was that common strategic interests were intertwined with ethnic and ideological solidarity. It was precisely around the turn of the century that the English-Speaking Union and a number of similar organizations were created to emphasize the deep cultural bonds that spanned the North Atlantic. The steamship and intermarriage brought East Coast and British elites closer together. When Britain’s survival in 1940 depended on American support, it helped that its leader, Winston Churchill, had a famous American mother, Jennie Jerome. So too did the whole ideology of Anglo-Saxonism, which drew on increasingly widespread and fashionable racial and biological interpretations of human society and historical progress. In the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century, British elites had compared their ‘mixed constitution’ to unstable, irrational, and aggressively expansionist

American democracy. By the 1890s, however, Britain itself had evolved towards a full-scale democracy. London and Washington could celebrate ideological solidarity while often feeling in their hearts that only male, Anglo-Saxon Protestants had the self-discipline and the rationality to make democracy viable. Lord Salisbury had sometimes regretted the United States’ arrival, but for Arthur Balfour, his nephew and successor as Conservative prime minister, Anglo-American solidarity became the key to sustaining global order and Western civilization. 71

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President McKinley at first hesitated to intervene in Cuba. But then his political opponent Theodore Roosevelt mocked him, saying that he had "no more backbone than a chocolate éclair". 72 McKinley crumbled, therefore, not because he had rationally come to the conclusion that this intervention was in America’s best interests, but because he feared being called a “sissy”.

It was not only Roosevelt who had imperial leanings. Thus "the American imperialist Albert Beveridge claimed, 'We are a conquering race, we must obey our blood and occupy new markets and if necessary new lands.' The Pacific was 'the true field of our operations. There Spain has an island empire in the Philippines. There the United States has a powerful squadron. The Philippines are logically our first target…'" 73

Again, the new imperial mood "was vividly caught in 1898 by one newspaper's observation that 'a new consciousness seems to have come upon us - the consciousness of strength - and with it a new appetite, the yearning to show our strength... whatever it may be, we are animated by a new sensation. We are face to face with a strange destiny. The taste of Empire is in the mouth of the people even as the taste of blood in the jungle. It means an Imperial policy..." 74

“In February 1895,” writes Protopresbyter James Thornton, “Cubans began an insurrection against Spain’s control of the island. Over the next several years this struggle for independence became ever more harsh and bloody, so that by early January 1898 the American consul-general in Havana, Fitzhugh Lee, came to believe that American lives and property were in danger. He therefore asked the United States to send a battleship to Havana Harbor as a show of force, to discourage any threats to American citizens. The battleship Maine was dispatched, arriving January 25. On February 15 the Maine mysteriously exploded and sank, killing 266 American sailors. An American Board of Inquiry determined that the ship was likely sunk by a mine, while Spain’s investigatory commission determined that the explosion came from a malfunction inside the ship itself.

“In 1974, Admiral Hyman Rickover led an investigation of the sinking, concluding that a fire in the coal bunker caused an explosion in an adjacent ammunition magazine. Another investigation, this one financed by National Geographic magazine,

72 Reynolds, op. cit., p. 295.
73 Preston, op. cit., p. xxiii.
74 Roberts, op. cit., pp. 102-103.
was inconclusive and only demonstrated that either theory — internal coal fire or external mine — was possible. Whatever the case, which we may never know with certainty, it is highly improbable that the Spanish government or military would have authorized the deliberate sinking of an American warship and thereby sparked a war in which a Spanish defeat was a near certainty. At the same time, it is abundantly evident that elements within the American political establishment of that time desired war and thus seized the occasion of the sinking to rouse public opinion in favor of war. ‘Remember the Maine’ became their incendiary catchphrase.

“On March 30, 1898 the United States demanded that Spain grant Cuba immediate independence, a demand that Spain refused the following day. Consequently, on April 11, President McKinley asked Congress to authorize the deployment of U.S. troops to Cuba to end the strife there. Congress passed a joint resolution demanding Spain’s immediate withdrawal from Cuba and authorizing McKinley to use whatever force necessary to gain Cuba’s independence. An ultimatum was sent to Spain, and the United States initiated a blockade of the island. That brought a declaration of war by Spain against the United States on April 23. On April 25, Congress declared war on Spain retroactive to April 21.

“At the Battle of Manila Bay, May 1, 1898, the U.S. Asiatic Squadron, led by Commodore George Dewey, defeated and destroyed a Spanish squadron and seized Manila. Subsequently, 11,000 U.S. troops landed on the Philippines, which then came under American tutelage. The Spanish-controlled island of Guam was captured without bloodshed on June 20. Puerto Rico was attacked by sea beginning May 12, and by land June 25. Armed conflict continued on that island until the end of the war. Victory in Cuba was achieved by joint naval and ground action. The U.S. Navy first took Guantánamo Bay in early June, and then Santiago de Cuba in early July. Ground troops were landed in the far south, just east of Santiago de Cuba. Over the next several weeks the United States fought and won a fiercely contested series of battles. After its string of defeats, especially at sea, Spain sued for peace. On August 12, an armistice was signed, halting all hostilities, followed by a peace treaty on December 10. As a result, Spain ceded control of the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico to the United States, and also relinquished control of Cuba, which became a U.S. protectorate. Thus America gained several overseas possessions that, among other things, vastly enhanced its naval strength.”

75 Thornton, “Partnering with Putin”, New American, November 20, 2015, http://www.thenewamerican.com/culture/history/item/21998-partnering-with-putin. Indeed, it was the growth in America’s naval power that more than anything else underpinned her growing power among the nations. For, as Ferguson writes, "until such times as the United States had a world-class navy, it could not really enforce its claim to what amounted to a hemispheric exclusion zone. In the 1880s the American fleet was still an insignificant entity, smaller even than the Swedish. However, inspired by Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan’s hugely influential book The Influence of Sea Power upon History, the United States embarked on a navy-building program more ambitious even than Germany’s. The achievement was astonishing: by 1907 the American fleet was second only to the Royal Navy. With this, the Monroe Doctrine belatedly acquired credibility. When Britain and Germany blockaded Venezuela in 1902, in response to attacks on European ships and defaults on European debts, it was Theodore Roosevelt’s threat to send fifty-four American warships from Puerto Rico that persuaded them to accept international arbitration. By the early 1900s Great Britain recognized the United States as one of those rival empires serious enough to be worthy of appeasement.” (Colossus, pp. 42-43)
And so McKinley won his “splendid little war”, as he put it. But at great cost to America’s reputation.

For before, as John B. Judis writes: "the United States stood firmly against countries acquiring overseas colonies, just as American colonists once opposed Britain's attempt to rule them. But by taking over parts of the Spanish empire, the United States became the kind of imperial power it once denounced. It was now vying with Britain, France, Germany, Russia, and Japan for what future U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt called 'the domination of the world'.”

In Cuba, writes Joseph Smith, "the military intervention of the United States transformed a struggle for national liberation into a war of American military conquest. Americans used their superior power to dictate the peace settlement and the future political status of the island. The pre-eminence of the United States in Cuba was symbolically demonstrated in Havana on 1 January 1899 when the American military authorities refused to allow armed rebel soldiers to participate in the ceremonies marking the formal evacuation of the Spanish army from the island. It was a historic moment ending almost four centuries of imperial rule by Spain... Cuba had finally become independent in 1902. But independence was more nominal than real. Overshadowed by 'the monster', Cuba entered the twentieth century as an American protectorate rather than a truly independent nation."

In the Philippines it was a similar story. "McKinley's reported justification for annexing the [Philippines] was a masterpiece of presidential sanctimony, perfectly pitched for his audience of Methodist clergymen: 'I walked the floor of the White House night after night until midnight; and I am not ashamed to tell you... that I went down on my knees and prayed Almighty God for light and guidance more than one night. And one night late it came to me this way - I don't know how it was but it came... (1) That we could not give them back to Spain... (2) That we could not turn them over to France and Germany - our commercial rivals in the Orient... (3) that we could not leave them to themselves - they were unfit for government... (4) that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them as our fellow-men for whom Christ also died.'"

"As McKinley portrayed it, annexation was an onerous duty, thrust upon the United States by the will of Providence. Such religious appeals doubtless had considerable public resonance. The decisive arguments for the occupation with the American political elite were nevertheless more military and mercenary than missionary" - especially in view of the fact that the Filipinos were Catholics."

At the Treaty of Paris, the Philippines were ceded to the United States for $20 million - a good price, it would seem. But the eventual cost was much greater, because the Filipinos decided not to accept the Americans as their new colonial masters. A war of national liberation broke out against the Americans...

76 Judis, "Imperial Amnesia", Foreign Policy, July-August, 2004, p. 54.
78 Smith, op. cit.
As a result, writes Judis, "the United States then waged a brutal war against the same Philippine independence movement it encouraged to fight against Spain. The war dragged on for 14 years. Before it ended, about 120,000 U.S. troops were deployed, more than 4,000 were killed, and more than 200,000 Filipino civilians and soldiers were killed."  

The war was expensive in both blood and money; it eventually cost $600 million... 

American imperialism was not always so violent: in 1898, after decades of interference, the Americans annexed Hawaii without bloodshed, and Puerto Rico was ceded to the United States by Spain in the same year.

However, it was the violent conquest of the Philippines which proved to be the turning-point in American foreign policy.

In what happened in the Philippines, as Ferguson writes, "seven characteristic phases of American engagement can be discerned:

- Impressive initial military success
- A flawed assessment of indigenous sentiments
- A strategy of limited war and gradual escalation of forces
- Domestic disillusionment in the face of protracted and nasty conflict
- Premature democratisation
- The ascendancy of domestic economic considerations
- Ultimate withdrawal." 

But withdrawal would come later: at the beginning of the twentieth century, America had no intention of withdrawing from anywhere. Her new and macho president, Theodore Roosevelt, proclaimed what Kissinger has called “the ’Roosevelt Corollary’ to the Monroe doctrine, to the effect that the United States had the right to intervene preemptively in the domestic affairs of other Western Hemisphere nations to remedy flagrant cases of ‘wrongdoing or impotence’. Roosevelt described the principle as follows: ‘All that this country desires is to see the neighboring countries stable, orderly, and prosperous. Any country whose people conduct themselves well

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79 Judis, op. cit., p. 50.
80 Ferguson, Colossus, p. 50.
81 "The Kingdom of Hawaii," writes Thornton, "gained the recognition of the United States and the major European powers in the 1840s. In 1887, a constitutional monarchy was created, the constitution of which the king, Kalakaua, only reluctantly signed. When the king died in 1891, his sister, Lili'okalani, succeeded him as monarch. Not liking the restrictions on monarchical power in the 1887 constitution, the queen began the process of adopting a new constitution, which would restore some of the rights of the throne. In 1893, men opposed to any constitutional revision overthrew the queen, proclaiming a provisional government. A petition was sent to the United States asking that it annex Hawaii. However, President Grover Cleveland, disapproving of the manner in which the queen’s government was toppled, declined to annex the islands. An independent Republic of Hawaii was then formed and the idea of annexation by the United States was set aside until after the expiration of President Cleveland’s term of office. The islands were formally annexed as the Territory of Hawaii in July 1898 during the administration of William McKinley.” (op. cit.)
82 Ferguson, Colossus, p. 48.
can count upon our hearty friendship. If a nation shows that it knows how to act with reasonable efficiency and decency in social and political matters, if it keeps order and pays its obligations, it need fear no interference from the United States. Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power. As in the original Monroe Doctrine, no Latin American countries were consulted. The corollary amounted to a U.S. security umbrella for the Western Hemisphere. Henceforth no outside power would be able to use force to redress its grievances in the Americas; it would be obliged to work through the United States, which assigned itself the task of maintaining order.

"Backing up this ambitious concept was the new Panama Canal, which enabled the United States to shift its navy between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans without the long circumnavigations of Cape Horn at the southern tip of South America. Begun in 1904 with American funds and engineering expertise on territory seized from Columbia by means of a local rebellion supported by the United States, and controlled by a long-term American lease of the Canal Zone, the Panama Canal, officially opened in 1914, would stimulate trade while affording the United States a decisive advantage in any military conflict in the region...."  

But the way in which the Canal Project was carried out incurred the lasting suspicions of the Latin Americans. And no wonder. Even the New York Times not inaccurately called the American engineered revolution that preceded it "an act of sordid conquest"; and the project cost 5,600 lives (mainly black employees). In time, however, Roosevelt’s "enthusiasm for overseas expansion waned. Urged by imperialists to take over the Dominican Republic, he quipped, 'as for annexing the island, I have about the same desire to annex it as a gorged boa constrictor might have to swallow a porcupine wrong-end-to.' Under Roosevelt, U.S. colonial holding shrank. And after the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-05, Roosevelt changed the United States' diplomatic posture from competitor with the other imperial powers to mediator in their growing conflicts."  

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83 Kissinger, op. cit., pp. 250-251. David Reynolds provides some more details of the coup: "In 1901, a treaty with the United States providing for the acquisition of a canal zone from Colombia was held up by the Colombian legislature. A revolution was more or less overtly engineered in Panama, the area of Colombia where the canal was to run, and the revolutionaries were given United States naval protection against the Colombian government. A new Panamanian republic duly emerged which gratefully bestowed upon the United States the necessary land together with the right to intervene in its affairs to maintain order. Work at last began in 1907 and the canal was duly opened in 1914 [more precisely, on August 3, 1914, the day Germany declared war on France], an outstanding engineering triumph. The capability it created to move warships swiftly from the Atlantic to the Pacific and back transformed American naval strategy. A deep distrust had been sown, too, in the minds of Latin Americans, about the ambitions and lack of scruple of American foreign policy." (America, Empire of Liberty, London: Penguin, 2010, p. 301).
85 Reynolds, op. cit., p. 301.
86 Judis, op. cit., p. 54.
Thus in relation to the Western Hemisphere, Roosevelt’s foreign policy was openly hegemonic, pursuing America’s national interest ruthlessly and without much regard for anyone else’s. But in relation to the rest of the world he was more cautious, trying to preserve the balance of power in order to prevent the rise of a hegemon. Here he imitated Great Britain, and to some degree cooperated with her.

For, as Kissinger writes, “so long as Britain's naval power remained dominant, it would see to the equilibrium in Europe. During the Russo-Japanese conflict of 1904-5, Roosevelt demonstrated how he would apply his concept of diplomacy to the Asian equilibrium and, if necessary, globally. For Roosevelt, the issue was the balance of power in the Pacific, not flaws in Russia’s czarist autocracy (though he had no illusions about these). Because the unchecked eastward advance into Manchuria and Korea of Russia – a country that, in Roosevelt’s words, ‘pursued a policy of consistent opposition to us in the East, and of literally fathomless mendacity’ – was inimical to America’s interests, Roosevelt at first welcomed the Japanese military victories. He described the total destruction of the Russian fleet, which had sailed around the world to its demise in the Battle of Tsushima, as Japan ‘playing our game’. But when the sale of Japan’s victories threatened to overwhelm the Russian position in Asia entirely, Roosevelt had second thoughts. Though he admired Japan’s modernization – and perhaps because of it – he began to treat an expansionist Japanese Empire as a potential threat to the American position in Southeast Asia and concluded that it might someday ‘make demands on [the] Hawaiian islands’.

“Roosevelt, though in essence a partisan of Russia, undertook a mediation of a conflict in distant Asia underlining America’s role as an Asian power. The Treaty of Portsmouth in 1905 was a quintessential expression of Roosevelt’s balance-of-power diplomacy. It limited Japanese expansion, prevented a Russian collapse, and achieved an outcome in which Russia, as he described it, ‘should be left face to face with Japan so that each may have a moderating action on the other’. For his mediation, Roosevelt was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, the first American to be so honored…”

In order to exert a moderating influence on the Japanese war party, Roosevelt sent a fleet of sixteen battle-ships around the world. It was painted in white to denote peace, and was called the Great White Fleet. In this way Roosevelt showed how America “speak softly and carry a big stick”…

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The next president, Woodrow Wilson, was still more ambitious than Theodore Roosevelt, but rather less successful. Upon becoming president, he boasted “that he could 'teach the South American republics to elect good men.' After Mexican Gen. Victoriano Huerta arranged the assassination of the democratically elected President Francisco Madero and seized power in February 1913, Wilson promised to unseat the unpopular dictator, using a flimsy pretext to dispatch troops across the border. But instead of being greeted as liberators, the U.S. forces encountered stiff resistance and inspired riots and demonstrations, uniting Huerta with his political opponents. In

87 Kissinger, op. cit. pp. 251-252.
Mexico City, schoolchildren chanted, 'Death to the Gringos'. U.S.-owned stores and businesses in Mexico had to close. The Mexico City newspaper *El Imparcial* declared, in a decidedly partial manner, 'The soil of the patria is defiled by foreign invasion! We may die, but let us kill!' Wilson learned the hard way that attempts to instil U.S.-style constitutional democracy and capitalism through force were destined to fail.989

While American power might look old-fashioned imperialist from a Latin American or Filippino perspective, there were in fact subtle but important differences between America and the European colonial powers. As Adam Tooze writes, "Having formed itself as a nation state of global reach through a process of expansion that was aggressive and continental in scope but had avoided conflict with other major powers, America’s strategic outlook was different from either that of the old power states like Britain and France or their newly arrived competitors – Germany, Japan and Italy. As it emerged onto the world stage at the end of the nineteenth century, America quickly realized its interest in ending the intense international rivalry which since the 1870s had defined a new age of global imperialism. True, in 1898 the American political class thrilled to its own foray into overseas expansion in the Spanish-American War. But, confronted with the reality of imperial rule in the Philippines, the enthusiasm soon waned and a more fundamental strategic logic asserted itself. America could not remain detached from the twentieth-century world. The push for a big navy would be the principal axis of American military strategy until the advent of strategic air power. America would see to it that its neighbours in the Caribbean and Central America were ‘orderly’ and that the Monroe Doctrine, the bar against external intervention in the western hemisphere, was upheld. Access must be denied to other powers. America could accumulate bases and staging posts for the projection of its power. But one thing that the US could well do without was a ragbag of ill-assorted, troublesome colonial possessions. On this simple but essential point there was a fundamental difference between the Continental United States and the so-called ‘liberal imperialism’ of Great Britain.

“The true logic of American power was articulated between 1899 and 1902 in the three ‘Notes in which Secretary of State John Hay first outlined the so-called ‘Open Door’ policy. As the basis for a new international order these ‘Notes’ proposed one deceptively simple but far-reaching principle: equality of access for goods and capital. It is important to be clear what this was not. The Open Door was not an appeal for free trade. Amongst the large economies, the United States was the most protectionist. Nor did the US welcome competition for its own sake. Once the door was opened, it confidently expected American exporters and bankers to sweep all their rivals aside. In the long run the Open Door would thus undermine the Europeans’ exclusive imperial domains. But the US had no interest in unsettling the imperial racial hierarchy or the global colour-line. Commerce and investment demanded order not revolution. What American strategy was emphatically directed towards suppressing was imperialism, understood not as productive colonial expansion nor the racial rule of white over coloured people, but as the ‘selfish’ and violent rivalry of France, Britain, Germany, Italy, Russia and Japan that threatened to divide one world into segmented spheres of interest.

989 Judis, op. cit., p. 54.
“The [First World] war would make a global celebrity of President Woodrow Wilson, who was hailed as a great path-breaking prophet of liberal internationalism. But the basic elements of his programme were predictable extensions of the Open Door logic of American power. Wilson wanted international arbitration, freedom of the seas and non-discrimination in trade policy. He wanted the League of Nations to put an end to inter-imperialist rivalry. It was an anti-militarist, post-imperialist agenda for a country convinced of the global influence that it would exercise at arm’s length through the means of soft power – economics and ideology. What is not sufficiently appreciated, however, is how far Wilson was willing to push this agenda of American hegemony against all shades of European and Japanese imperialism…. As Wilson drove America to the forefront of world politics in 1916, his mission was to ensure not that the ‘right’ side won in World War I, but that no side did. He refused any overt association with the Entente and did all he could to suppress the escalation of the war that London and Paris were pursuing and which they hoped would draw America onto their side. Only a peace without victory, the goal that he announced in an unprecedented speech to the Senate in January 1917, could ensure that the United States emerged as the truly undisputed arbiter of world affairs…”

“For Wilson as for Roosevelt the war was a test of America’s new self-confidence and strength. But whereas Roosevelt wanted to prove the manhood of the US, for Wilson the war raging in Europe challenged the nation’s moral equilibrium and self-restraint. By America’s refusal to become embroiled in the war, its democracy would confirm the nation’s new maturity and immunity to the inflammatory wartime rhetoric that had done such harm fifty years earlier. But this insistence of self-restraint should not be misunderstood for modesty. Whereas interventionists of Roosevelt’s ilk aspired merely to equality – to have America counted as a fully-fledged great power – Wilson’s goal was absolute pre-eminence. Nor was this a vision that scorned ‘hard power’. Wilson had thrilled in 1898 to the excitement of the Spanish-American War. His naval expansion programme and his assertion of America’s grip on the Caribbean approaches was more aggressive than that of any predecessor. In order to secure the Panama canal, Wilson in 1915 and 1916 did not hesitate to order the occupation of the Dominican Republic and Haiti, and intervention in Mexico. But thanks to its God-given natural endowments, America had no need of extensive territorial conquests. Its economic needs had been formulated at the turn of the century by the ‘Open Door’ policy. The US had no need of territorial domination, but its goods and capital must be free to move around the world and across the boundaries of any empire. Meanwhile, from behind an impenetrable naval shield it would project an irresistible beam of moral and political influence.

“For Wilson the war was a sign of ‘God’s providence’ that had brought the United States ‘an opportunity such as has seldom been vouchsafed any nation, the opportunity to counsel and obtain peace in the world…’ – on its own terms. A peace accord on American terms would permanently establish the ‘greatness’ of the United States as ‘the true champion of peace and of concord’…”

91 Tooze, op. cit., pp. 44-45.
The change from Roosevelt’s vision to Wilson’s was to prove crucially important; together with that other utopian secular vision, Marxism, it would shape the history of the twentieth century.

For “when America entered World War I,” writes Kissinger, “a conflict which started a process that would destroy the European state system, it did so not on the basis of Roosevelt’s geopolitical vision but under a banner of moral universality not seen in Europe since the religious wars three centuries before. The new universality proclaimed by the American President sought to universalize a system of governance that existed only in the North Atlantic countries and, in the form heralded by Wilson, only in the United States. Imbued by America’s historic sense of moral mission, Wilson proclaimed that America had intervened not to restore the European balance of power, but to ‘make the world safe for democracy’ – in other words, to base world order on the compatibility of domestic institutions reflecting the American example. Though the concept ran counter to their tradition, Europe’s leaders accepted it as the price of America’s entry into the war.

“Setting out his vision of the peace, Wilson denounced the balance of power for the preservation of which his new allies had originally entered the war. He rejected established diplomatic methods (decried as ‘secret diplomacy’) as having been a major contributing cause of the conflict. In their place he put forward, in a series of visionary speeches, a new concept of international peace based on a mixture of traditional American assumptions and a new insistence on pushing them toward a definitive and global implementation. This has been, with minor variations, the American program for world order ever since.

“Like many American leaders before him, Wilson asserted that a divine dispensation had made the United States a different kind of nation. ‘It was as if,’ Wilson told the graduating class at West Point in 1916, ‘in the Providence of God a continent had been kept unused and waiting for a peaceful people who loved liberty and the rights of men more than they loved anything else, to come and set up an unselfish commonwealth.’

“Nearly all of Wilson’s predecessors in the presidency would have subscribed to such a belief. Where Wilson differed was in his assertion that an international order based on it could be achieved within a single lifetime, a single administration. John Quincy Adams had lauded the special American commitment to self-government and international fair play but warned his countrymen against seeking to impose these virtues outside the Western Hemisphere among other powers not similarly inclined. Wilson was playing for higher stakes and set a more urgent objective. The Great War, he told Congress, would be ‘the culminating and final war for human liberty’.”

But this vision turned out to be utopian, and was already in trouble during the talks at Versailles in 1919. More realistic in the long term was the vision of his predecessor, Theodore Roosevelt. Let us return to the differences between their two visions as described by Niall Ferguson through the eyes of Henry Kissinger.

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92 Kissinger, op. cit., p. 257.
“Roosevelt,” wrote Kissinger [in Diplomacy], “started from the premise that the United States was a power like any other, not a singular incarnation of virtue. If its interests collided with those of other countries, America had the obligation to draw on its strength to prevail.” Roosevelt did not build a wall along the U.S.-Mexican border, but he did formulate the “Corollary” to the Monroe Doctrine, which asserted the right of the United States to exercise “however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of . . . wrong-doing or impotence . . . an international police power” in Latin America and the Caribbean. That principle became the basis for interventions in Haiti, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba—and for the acquisition of the territory on which the Panama Canal was constructed: one of the great infrastructure projects of the early 1900s.

“Moreover, Roosevelt was dismissive of liberal designs such as multilateral disarmament and collective security, enthusiasms not only of Woodrow Wilson but of the three-times-defeated Democratic presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan: ‘I regard the Wilson-Bryan attitude of trusting to fantastic peace treaties, to impossible promises, to all kinds of scraps of paper without any backing in efficient force, as abhorrent [wrote Roosevelt]. It is infinitely better for a nation and for the world to have the Frederick the Great and Bismarck tradition as regards foreign policy than to have the Bryan or Bryan-Wilson attitude as a permanent national attitude. . . . A milk-and-water righteousness unbacked by force is to the full as wicked as and even more mischievous than force divorced from righteousness.’

“For Roosevelt, the principle of Cardinal Richelieu held: ‘In matters of state, he who has the power often has the right, and he who is weak can only with difficulty keep from being wrong in the opinion of the majority of the world.’ He sympathized with Japan when it attacked Russia in 1904. He acquiesced in the Japanese occupation of Korea four years later. For Roosevelt the only real law of geopolitics was the balance of power, and he relished the opportunity to play the powerbroker. Thus it was at Roosevelt’s home at Oyster Bay that Russia and Japan began the peace negotiations that culminated the Peace of Portsmouth (1905), a treaty intended to limit Japan’s gains from victory and re-establish equilibrium in the Far East. When war broke out in Europe in 1914, Roosevelt at first hesitated to take sides, but then concluded that a German victory would pose a more serious threat to the United States than a British one, because ‘within a year or two’ a victorious Germany ‘would insist upon taking the dominant position in South and Central America.’

“For Roosevelt, too, the cultural affinity between the United States and the United Kingdom was not unimportant. His only regret was that his fellow Americans—who opposed his call for increased armament to counter the German threat—could not be more wholeheartedly warlike, like their Old World cousins. ‘Our people are short-sighted, and they do not understand international matters,’ he complained to the English novelist and poet Rudyard Kipling during the World War. ‘Your people have been short-sighted, but they are not as short-sighted as ours in these matters. . . . Thanks to the width of the ocean, our people believe that they have nothing to fear . . . and that they have no responsibility . . .’
“In short, Theodore Roosevelt favored an American foreign policy that was firmly based on the national interest, the build-up of military force, and the balance of power. ‘If I must choose between a policy of blood and iron and one of milk and water,’ he told a friend, ‘I am for the policy of blood and iron. It is better not only for the nation but in the long run for the world.’ Wilson’s League of Nations reminded him of Aesop’s fable ‘of how the wolves and the sheep agreed to disarm, and how the sheep as a guarantee of good faith sent away the watchdogs, and were then forthwith eaten by the wolves.’”

41. THE FALL OF THE CHINESE EMPIRE

Having modernized herself on the western model, Japan quickly acquired the characteristic vice of the West: aggressive imperialism. As Maria Hsia Chang writes, “Korea became the first target of Japan’s imperial ambition – but China stood in the way. Korea was a vassal of China, a relationship in which the former acceded to the latter’s will, especially over matters of foreign policy, in exchange for Chinese protection of the Korean monarch from external invaders and internal unrest. In 1876, China agreed in a treaty with Japan that Korea would be an independent state no longer under Chinese suzerainty. That treaty was put to the test in January 1894, when the Qing dynasty, responding to an appeal for help by the Korean monarch, dispatched 3,000 soldiers to suppress a rebellion by the Tonghak, a Korean secret society. Japan reacted to China’s action with a force of 10,000 and, on August 1, 1894, declared war against China.

“To China’s utter dismay and humiliation, the Imperial Japanese army quickly overran the Chinese forces, even the vaunted Beiyang naval fleet. The Sino-Japanese War ended in April 1895 with the Treaty of Shimonoseki, which declared Korea’s independence (a condition that proved to be short-lived); required that China pay Japan an indemnity of 200 million silver dollars; opened four inland cities, including Chongqing (Chungking), to foreign trade; and ceded to Japan, in perpetuity, Taiwan (Formosa), Penghu (Pescadore Islands), and the Liaodong Peninsula in Chinese Manchuria.

“It was one thing for China to be defeated in the Opium War by the greatest power in the world. It was quite another matter for China to be overcome by its small neighbor across the sea – the same Japan that once looked to China as its mentor, whose inhabitants Chinese had traditionally dismissed as the ‘dwarfs to the east’. Defeat in the Sino-Japanese War not only humiliated the Chinese, it thoroughly exposed to the world the hollowness of the once mighty Middle Kingdom. More damaging, still worse the reverberations that rippled from the defeat.

“The significance of the 1894 Sino-Japanese War transcended the defeat of China – it signaled the end of the great Chinese Empire. China lost not only Korea but all its other tributary states (fānsù) as well, which promptly became the targets of acquisition by the imperialist powers.

“There were other reverberations still. By this time, the Qing dynasty was bankrupt – its treasury depleted by wars and indemnities, internal rebellions, and efforts at reform. For its indemnity to Japan, the dynasty turned to borrowing from the Western powers: from France and Russia a combined loan of 400 million francs; from Britain, two loans totaling 20 million pounds; and from Germany, two loans totaling 17 million pounds. In return for the loans, each lender obtained special concessions from a supine China. Between 1895 to 1898, the Western powers carved out their respective ‘spheres of influence’: areas in China that were proto-colonies in intention and effect, in which the lending country enjoyed exclusive economic rights and privileges, including those of trade, mining, and railroad construction. France obtained Yunnan province as a sphere, as well as a 99-year lease of Guangzhouwan (harbor) in southern Guangdong; northern Manchuria became Russia’s sphere of
influence through the extension of the trans-Siberian railway to Vladivostok (Haisanwei) and a 25-year lease of Port Arthur (Luda or Dairen) and Dairen Bay; Germany acquired a 99-year lease over Shandong peninsula; and Britain obtained as its sphere the lower Yangzi River area, as well as a 99-year lease of the New Territories.

“Were it not for the diplomatic initiative of the United States – its proposal in 1899-1900 to the Great Powers to maintain an ‘open door’ to China by preserving its ‘territorial and administrative integrity’ – China would probably have been partitioned among the colonial powers like a lamb before the slaughter. A Chinese official at the time described the imperialist powers as ‘glaring at China like tigers’, seeking ‘to find a plump spot to bite into us’. The U.S. Open Door policy succeeded in convincing the Great Powers in China to refrain from actual colonization⁹⁴, so that China was saved from political extinction. Aside from that, little else that was good came from the Open Door initiative. Once again, the moribund Qing dynasty was preserved, too weak either to reform itself or resist imperialist predations.

“The 1894 Sino-Japanese War was a turning point: From there, China rapidly descended into disarray. In 1898, a last-gasp effort at reform by constitutional monarchists around young Emperor Guangxu (born in 1871, he reigned from 1875 to his death in 1908) was sabotaged by the aged Dowager Empress Cixi and court conservatives. As it turned out, the aborted Hundred Days’ Reform was China’s last chance at peaceful change.

“Though not an actual colony, China had become instead a ‘hypocolony’: a country that suffered from all the ills and disabilities of colonialism without being formally colonized. By the beginning of the twentieth century, not only had China lost all its vassal states, it had ceded to the various imperialist powers Macao, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the Penghu Islands; leased off Kowloon, New Territories, Jiazhou Bay, Lushun, Dalian, Weihaiwei, and Guangzhou Bay; opened 82 coastal and inland ports to foreign trade; and marked off areas in 16 cities as concessions. Through their spheres of influence, the Great Powers in China enjoyed all the privileges and perquisites of colonizers without any of the attendant obligations and responsibilities, setting up instead ‘a many-tiered structure of exploitation to fleece the Chinese people.’

“As expressed by Zeng Guofan in 1867: ‘Since the hostilities, the Chinese people have been for a long time in deep suffering, and as if immersed in water or fire.’ The treaty ports along the coast and the Yangzi River had made their livelihood more and more difficult. ‘The common people are impoverished, have no tone to appeal to, and are as oppressed as if they were hanging upside down.’ As V.G. Kiernan put it, ‘Chinas misery was great,’ and although some of it had been self-inflicted, Western imperialism significantly contributed to the fact that far more Chinese than ever before in history were struggling for bare existence. To assuage themselves of complicity in China’s emiseration, Westerners advanced the curious notion that the Chinese were a unique people impervious to pain. Just as ‘Anglers like to suppose that fish have no feelings,’ Westerns managed to convince themselves that Chinese

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⁹⁴ The policy proposed the principle of equality of access for goods and capital but without annexation of territory. (V.M.)
people’s physical sensations was ‘mercifully blunted’ because they had been ‘schooled by aeons of suffering’, their ‘absence of nerves’ accounting for their indifference to comfort and convenience.

“Anticipated as early as 1867 by Zeng, who predicted that ‘millions of the common people of China when pushed to extremity would think of revolt and would regard [foreigners] as enemies,’ the emiseration of the Chinese masses exploded in 1900 in xenophobic violence against Westerners, particularly missionaries and their Chinese converts. Originating in Shandong Province, the Boxer Rebellion rapidly advanced upon Beijing, setting fire to churches and the British legation, and killing Christians [including 222 Chinese Orthodox Christians] and foreign diplomats. The Great Powers retaliated with an allied force that eventually suppressed the uprising. Beijing was sacked and a severely punitive settlement forced upon the Qing government. The Boxer Protocol of September 1901 demanded China’s apology and expiation, banned the importation of arms and ammunition into China for five years, razed all forts from Beijing to the coast, and required that China pay an indemnity of 67 million pounds over a period of 39 years. The amortization of the indemnity and its accrued interest came to 20 million pounds a year. Until the indemnity was fully paid, the Powers would hold as collateral China’s maritime and internal customs, together with the revenue generated from its salt tax. The Qing government sought recourse to usurious taxation, almost quadrupling its revenue from 1901 to 1910. New taxes were piled on old under a variety of names, promoting corruption by provincial officials, who increased taxes at every level until they were ten or more times what the government itself had authorized.

“Japan’s defeat of China and the aborted Hundred Days’ Reform made it clear to some of China’s most enlightened intellectuals that unless drastic changes were undertaken, the very survival of the country was in peril. China’s only hope lay in nothing less than the overthrow of the Qing dynasty and the thorough reform of the entire society.”

Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925) was the most prominent of these intellectuals, a believer in science and westernization. In 1894 he “petitioned the Qing authorities for reform, but was rebuffed. Losing all hope for peaceful change, he turned to revolution and established his first revolutionary organization, the Society to Revive China (Xingzhong hui) in Honolulu, with overseas Chinese expatriates his first supporters. Beginning in 1894, Sun’s followers martyred themselves in a series of failed uprisings in China. In 1905, in Tokyo, Sun gathered Chinese students in Japan to form a successor organization, the Alliance Society (Tongmen hui).

“Sun’s followers’ efforts eventually culminated in a revolution in 1911 [the headquarters of the revolution were in Hankow] that ended the rule of the Qing dynasty. A new government of the Republic of China was installed; an effort was made to introduce representative government. Beyond that, Sun enjoyed very little more in the way of success. He discovered that neither he nor the fledgling government commanded the authority and power to rule over the country. Without an army, the revolutionaries lacked the coercive means for credible power; lacking a
national consensus on its ideological program, the new government could not wield effective authority…"95

Like Lenin, Sun was abroad at the time of the revolution. Again, like the Russian revolution the Chinese one was decided by the defection of the military commanders. “The most important of these was Yuan Shih-k’ai; when he turned on the Manchus, the dynasty was lost. The Mandate of Heaven had been withdrawn until on 12 February 1912 the last and six-year-old Manchu emperor abdicated. A republic had already been proclaimed, with Sun Yat-sen its president, and a new nationalist party soon appeared behind him. In March he resigned the presidency to Yan Shih-k’ai; thus acknowledging where power really lay in the new Republic and inaugurating a new phase of Chinese government, in which an ineffective constitutional regime at Peking disputed the practical government of China by warlords. This meant that China had still a long way to travel before she would be a modern nation-state. None the less, she had begun the half-century’s march which would recover for her an independence lost in the nineteenth century to foreigners.”96

The fall of the Chinese empire is – understandably from a western point of view – given less attention by historians than the fall of the Russian empire six years later. And yet there is no way that the end of the longest-lasting dynastic empire in history, presiding over the world’s most populous nation, could be anything except extremely important. One thing is clear: it marks the end of old-style, pagan despotism and imperialism. Moreover, looking back at the Russian and Chinese revolutions from a hundred years later, we can see that they were closely linked in the Providence of God. The democratic Chinese revolution of 1911 laid the foundations for the more radical, communist revolution of 1949, giving birth to the one state that seems capable, not only of supplanting the Soviet Union as the world’s premier communist regime, but also of avenging its evil in the way that Assyria and Babylon avenged the evil of apostate Israel…

42. GERMANY ON THE ROAD TO WAR

In 1888 Wilhelm II became emperor of Germany. Despising the liberalism of his father and mother, he hankered after the Prussian militarism of his grandfather. But in 1890 he sacked Bismarck, his grandfather’s and father’s iron chancellor, and his own childhood hero, and decided to rule himself… And so from the late 1890s Bismarck’s policy of exclusive concentration on Europe was abandoned in favour of a policy known as Weltpolitik, or “World Policy”. And not surprisingly, for much had changed in Germany since Bismarck’s heyday. As Dominic Lieven writes, “the Germany created by Bismarck in 1871 had a population of forty million. By 1925, it was estimated that the population would probably reach eighty million. When the German Empire was founded, it was self-sufficient as regards food production. By the first decade of the twentieth century, much of its food and essential raw materials for its industry came from abroad. The present and, even more, the future prosperity of the German people depended on their industrial exports and on global trade networks. If these networks were broken for any length of time, ‘the consequences would be unthinkable… [A]lmost every branch of the German economy would be dragged into a catastrophe, which would entail extreme privation for half the population.’ Germans therefore could not longer afford to think in purely European terms. They and their government had to think globally and have a ‘world policy’. The term ‘world policy’ in Germany became as fashionable as and even more ill-defined than our own contemporary references to globalization. In fact, the terms ‘world policy’ then and ‘globalization’ now reflected a similar reality. Since the mid-nineteenth century, there had been a vast growth in commercial, financial, and intellectual linkages binding the major nations of the world together far more tightly than before. Germans in the early twentieth century lived to what one could describe as the first phase of modern globalization, whose hub was London, from where so many of the financial, shipping, and other services underpinning the global economy were coordinated. Almost destroyed by two world wars and the 1930s Great Depression, globalization reemerged after 1945 in its second phase under new American leadership but based on many of the same liberal and Anglo-Saxon principles and mechanisms that had operated before 1914…”

As David Stevenson writes: “Continental security was now no longer enough, and [Kaiser] Wilhelm and his advisers ostentatiously asserted Germany’s right to a voice in the Ottoman Empire (where he claimed to be the protector of the Muslims), in China (where Germany took a lease on the port of Jiaozhou), and South Africa (where Wilhelm supported the Afrikaners against British attempts to control them, sending a telegram of support to the president of the Transvaal, Paul Kruger, in 1896). Weltpolitik’s most substantial manifestation, however, was the Navy Laws of 1898 and 1900. With Reichstag approval Wilhelm’s navy secretary, Alfred von Tirpitz, began building a new fleet of short-range battleships configured for action in the North Sea. Wilhelm, Tirpitz, and Bernhard von Bülow (chancellor from 1900 to 1909) did not intend to fight Britain but rather to apply leverage that would encourage it to come to terms and make concessions in a future crisis. Internally, they hoped the naval programme would rally the right-wing parties, the princely states, and the middle classes in support of monarchical authority.

97 Lieven, Towards the Flame. Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia, London: Allen Lane, 2015, p. 28.
“This reasoning was plausible at the turn of the century, when Britain was at odds with Russia and France and an economic boom swelled tax revenues and made naval expansion affordable. Yet Weltpolitik’s eventual impact on Germany’s external security and domestic stability – and by extension on European peace – was disastrous. It antagonized London rather than intimidating it, and isolated Germany rather than Britain...”

It was in rivalry with Britain that German militarism particularly manifested itself. Hatred of Britain was a defining quality of the German officer class, and through it of most of the civilian population. And yet, as we see especially in the Kaiser himself, hatred was combined with a kind of love and even admiration based on a sense of shared values. “A yearning to emulate the British was,” writes Lieven, “combined with a sense that in terms of economic power and successful modernity Germany was quickly overtaking its rival. British and German male elites had very similar conceptions of personal honour and of service to the nation; indeed, the cult of manly and patriotic heroism gripped male elites across Europe as a whole. If the British upper class’s traditions were somewhat less military than those of the Prussian Junkers, the ethos of elite British public schools in 1900 was still much closer to the regiment than to the countinghouse.”

Indeed, it was not at all obvious why Britain and Germany should be such implacable opponents. The two countries had never fought against each other: Britain’s traditional rival was France, more recently Russia; and Germany feared above all the powerful nations to the west and east of her – the same France and Russia – who by this time had formed a military alliance. It was in fact more logical, from a geopolitical point of view, for the two Protestant nations of Britain and Germany, linked as they were by race, by religion and even by dynasty (Queen Victoria was the Kaiser’s grandmother, and Edward VII – his uncle), to unite against the two other powers.

Nor were their interests in other respects divergent. True, there were commercial rivalries – but not so fierce as to be likely to lead to war. True, Britain had a vast colonial empire overseas, whereas Germany had almost nothing, and the British had the annoying habit of claiming that only their colonial claims were moral while those of other nations were dictated by greed and ambition. But Bismarck had set the

99 Lieven, op. cit., p. 29.
100 Margaret Macmillan writes: “In the nineteenth century, Britain had the world’s largest empire and dominated the seas and world trade. Understandably, perhaps, it showed little sympathy for the aspirations and concerns of other nations. As Winston Churchill, always a statesman with a strong sense of history, wrote shortly before the Great War: ‘We have engrossed in ourselves, in a time when other powerful nations were paralysed by barbarism or internal war, an altogether disproportionate share of the wealth and traffic of the world. We have got all we want in territory, and our claim to be left in the unmolested enjoyment of vast and splendid possessions, mainly acquired by violence, largely maintained by violence, often seems less reasonable to others than to us.’

“Moreover, Britain frequently irritated the other European powers with its confident assumption of superiority, for example, to the institutions and politics on the Continent, by its reluctance to uphold the Concert of Europe, and the way in which it carefully intervened in conflicts only when it saw a clear gain for itself. In the scramble for colonies, British statesmen tended to claim that they were taking on more territory merely for the security of their existing possession or perhaps out of
general direction of German expansion: not overseas, but overland. While Britain would built her power on her maritime strength and overseas empire, Germany would build up her army on land and satisfy her Lebensraum by looking to the east – an enterprise that Britain, with her morbid antipathy to Russia, was unlikely to oppose.

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However, Germany’s Weltpolitik so disposed events as to lead Britain away from her natural ally and closer to her former rivals. The Germans were acquiring colonies in Tanganyika and South-West Africa, and therefore took a close interest in the Boer War of 1899-1902, which took place near their own colonies. They were rooting for their cousins, the Boers, and noted, as did the rest of the world, how the British were fighting for purely avaricious ends (the acquisition of the diamond mines), and with considerable cruelty to the Boers, whose lands were destroyed and whose women and children were herded into concentration camps – the first of their kind in history.

The Russians were no less critical of the British campaign than the Germans; and the general furore led the British gradually to abandon their policy of “splendid isolation” and seek allies on the continent – including states such as France and Russia, which had been their traditional enemies.101

According to Henry Kissinger, this was a fateful development, because it meant that the last element of flexibility in the diplomatic system was lost. And although the abandonment of splendid isolation was done “not formally but de facto via staff talks”, it created “a moral obligation to fight at the side of the counterpart countries. Britain set aside its settled policy of acting as balancer”102 – which made the whole system of international relations less balanced.

The second event that alienated the two countries was a joint naval action of British and German naval forces against Venezuela in 1902. The aim was to punish the Venezuelans for reneging on their debts; but the methods used, against an almost defenceless people, caused revulsion – and it was the actions of the German vessels that seemed especially repellent. Thus in New York the Evening Post sneered: “As a method of maintaining German prestige the attack upon a mud fort and a collection of naked fishermen must be regarded as a failure.”

Chancellor Bernhardt von Bülow claimed that “no American or British admiral would have done otherwise.” But the damage to German prestige was done; and resentment against the Anglo-Saxons was aroused. As Anthony Delano writes, “after the Venezuela adventure, the Kaiser was later to say, relations between Britain and Germany were never the same.”103

benevolence towards the subject people, while other nations were motivated entirely by greed” (The War that Ended the Peace, London: Profile, 2014, p. 54).
A third factor pushing the two nations apart we have already mentioned: the naval arms race. In 1898, the Navy League had been founded by the arms manufacturer Krupp with a view to catching up with Britain on the seas. “Within a decade,” writes Richard Evans, “it was dwarfing the other nationalist groups, with a membership totalling well over 300,000 if affiliated organizations were counted as well. By contrast, the other nationalist pressure-groups were seldom able to exceed a membership of around 50,000, and the Pan-Germans seemed to be permanently stuck below the 20,000 mark.”

In 1906 the British responded to the challenge of the German Navy League by launching the Dreadnought, a huge new kind of warship that threatened to make the German navy obsolete. The Germans responded with a vast increase in military expenditure – 43% of the Reich budget in 1909. However, on the seas, at any rate, the Germans decided that they could not afford to keep up, and by 1912 had given up this particular arms race...

Also in 1906, at a Great Power conference in Algeciras Germany suffered a major diplomatic defeat as Britain and Russia backed France’s claim for domination over Morocco. The Anglo-French Entente was now stronger than ever; the “encirclement” by France and Russia that German diplomats feared appeared closer to reality. “After Algeciras,” writes Miranda Carter, “the German government seemed to be pulled in two directions: on the one hand, there were those who accepted that sabre-rattling hadn’t worked, and that something needed to be done to defuse the tensions the conference had produced; and on the other, there was a feeling that Germany hadn’t played hard enough, that the government had pusillanimously shied away from the logical consequence of its policy – war with France. [Most senior ministers] were in the first camp; many of the German officer class were in the second. After fifteen years under the command of General Alfred von Schlieffen, the senior army staff constituted of a small Junker elite obsessed with its own privileges and superiority, fearing and fending off dilution by the middle classes, utterly opposed to socialism which it regarded as degenerate, saturated in the ideas of the nationalist historian Treitschke – who saw Europe as a Hobbesian battlefield where might was everything and the Slav the enemy – actively welcoming war as a force that would cleanse Germany inside out. Wilhelm had just replaced the retiring Schlieffen – the appointment was entirely in his gift – with Helmuth von Moltke, who was the nephew of the elder Moltke who had delivered the Prussian victories of the 1860s. Within the army Moltke was regarded as a controversial choice: not quite tough enough, and a little too arty – he played the cello, liked to paint and read Goethe. In other respects he was absolutely a product of the solipsistic world of the German General Staff; different only in that he didn’t welcome the European war that he thought was inevitable.”

Germany was becoming more and more isolated internationally – and the fault was almost entirely hers, as her highly aggressive, provocative yet inconsistent and ill-thought-out policies alarmed her neighbours and drew them closer together.

106 Carter, op. cit., p. 373.
This is not to say that the Tsar, always a peacemaker, was not open to suggestions from the Germans. In July, 1905 he met the Kaiser in secret at Björkö in the Gulf of Finland, and signed a treaty with him. However, when his advisers saw it, they persuaded him to make changes to it and therefore in effect abandon it on the not unreasonable grounds that, although the treaty was a defensive one, it would be bound to look different to the French – and the alliance with France was too important to endanger.

In 1907 Britain and Russia, fearing German expansion and the beginnings of its colonial empire, in spite of many misgivings on both sides signed a convention delineating their respective “spheres of influence” in the Middle and Far East. This was a very limited agreement; but it greatly reduced the sources of tension between two countries. The Russians thought they now had in their traditional enemy, Britain, an ally in their claim for free passage through the Straits, and they sought a stronger, military alliance with her in order to defend themselves against their new enemy, Germany, thereby creating, in effect, a defensive Triple Alliance of Russia, France and Britain against Germany and Austria (and, possibly, Italy).

In 1908 Austria annexed Bosnia with its large Serbian population. The shock in Serbia and Russia was immense, and their feelings were exacerbated when the Germans intervened on the Austrian side in a particularly blunt and offensive manner. Although the Russians were too weak, so soon after the Russo-Japanese war and the 1905 revolution, to take decisive action at this point, their humiliation strengthened their determination not to allow the Austrians to get away with it next time. And so this event, more than any other, made eventual war between the Germanic and Slavic nations not simply possible but probable.

The next international incident took place in July, 1911. “Germany sent a gunboat, the Panther, to the port of Agadir, in Morocco, where the French had recently and illegally sent troops claiming they were needed to quell a local rebellion. By the terms of the Algeciras conference, Germany was entitled to compensation if the French changed the nature of their presence in Morocco. With the Panther… positioned threateningly on the coast, the Germany Foreign Office demanded the French hand over the whole of the French Congo, adding that if they did not respond positively Germany might be forced to extreme measures.”

The British saw this as a threat to their naval supremacy, and reacted strongly. Eventually, the Germans backed down and were given a small part of the Congolese jungle in compensation. But the blow to their pride, and to the reputation of the Kaiser, was considerable. “Senior German army officers sighed that the All Highest was so pusillanimous about taking supreme measures – Moltke had privately hoped for a ‘reckoning with the English’. The German colonial minister resigned…”

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109 Carter, op. cit., p. 393.
Meanwhile, “British attitudes to Russia had shifted. By 1912 the country had become fascinated by its would-be ally. In January 1912 The Times published a ‘Russian number’, and a group of liberal MPs visited Russia, a trip which Sir Charles Hardinge described as ‘the pilgrimage of love’. Russian literature was everywhere – not just Tolstoy but Dostoevsky, Chekhov and Turgenev had all been recently translated into English. Beef Stroganov had insinuated itself on to fashionable British menus. The Ballets Russes had brought a fantasy of Russian exoticism, wildness and modernity to London; [King] George went to see them on the eve of his coronation in 1911. But cultural fascination was not matched by political sympathy…”

The reason for the lack of political, as opposed to cultural sympathy was twofold: first, the increasing democratization of British society, as witnessed by the huge struggle for Lords reform, and secondly, the wildly inaccurate reporting of Russian affairs by the Jewish press inside Russia and their western followers. In particular, the myth that the Jews were being foully and unjustly persecuted in Russia, was firmly believed throughout the West. The vast wave of anti-Russian pogroms, with thousands of Jewish political murders (the most damaging was the shooting of Prime Minister Stolypin by the Jew Bogrov in the presence of the Tsar in 1911) was not reported objectively. All this would bear evil fruit in the future. However, for the time being common interests drew the rival empires together. The Russians sought a stronger, military alliance with their traditional enemy in order to defend themselves against their new enemy. And the British were not unwilling; for, as Prime Minister Herbert Asquith said, after Bosnia, “incredible as it might seem, the Government could form no theory of German policy which fitted all the known facts, except that they wanted war…”

Personal sympathies at the highest level helped: the Tsar and Tsarina, who spoke English between themselves, not Russian or German, got on much better with their English relatives than with their German ones. And the English ambassador, Sir George Buchanan, was “wonderfully devoted” to the tsar, declaring that “His Majesty had such a wonderful charm of manner that when he received me in audience he almost made me feel that it was as a friend, and not the Emperor, with whom I was talking. There was, if I may say so without presumption, what amounted to a feeling of mutual sympathy between us.”

And yet it was precisely Sir George’s embassy that would turn out to be the nest of the February revolution. For cultural fascination and personal sympathies were swept away by ideological differences, the fundamental collision between True, that is, Orthodox Christianity and the democratic-socialist revolution.

Germany was by now completely isolated diplomatically; she could look only to Turkey, traumatized by the Balkan Wars, as a potential ally. Moreover, her sabre-rattling and armaments build-up had only encouraged the Entente to respond in kind. “In 1913, Britain, France and Russia spent in total more than twice as much on armaments as Germany…”

110 Carter, op. cit., p. 401.
111 Carter, op. cit., p. 372.
112 Carter, op. cit., p. 402.
113 Simms, op. cit., p. 294.
Also in 1913, writes J.M. Roberts, "the Kaiser confided to the Austrian chief of staff that he was no longer against a great war (by which he meant one between several powers) in principle. One of his ministers even felt able to talk to members of parliament of the 'coming world War'. In an atmosphere of excited patriotism (it was the centenary of the so-called 'War of Liberation' with Napoleonic France) a special army bill was introduced that year into the Reichstag. The Russian modernization and rearmament programme (to be completed by 1917) had certainly alarmed the German soldiers. But by itself this can hardly explain the psychological deterioration in Germany that had brought about so dangerous a transformation of German policy as the acceptance of the inevitability of conflict with Russia - and therefore with France - if Germany's due weight in Europe was to be assured.

"Many Germans felt that 'encirclement' frustrated the exercise of German power, and should be broken, if only for reasons of prestige, and that such a step must involve a confrontation - though not necessarily war - with Great Britain. But this was not all that was happening in Germany in the decade before 1914. There had been a major inflation of nationalist (and conservative) thinking and agitation in those years. It showed in the growth of societies and pressure-groups with different aims - safeguarding of the social hierarchy, anti-Semitism, patriotic support for armaments - but all contributing to a xenophobic and authoritarian atmosphere. Some Germans thought positively of possible territorial and material gains in the east and brooded on a supposed historic mission of Teuton to dominate over Slav. Some were troubled by the colonial questions that had been so contentious and prickly before 1900 (yet colonies had proved disappointing and colonial rivalry played virtually no part in the final approach to war). Germany was dangerously ready psychologically for conflict, even if, when war came at last, it was to find its detonator in the South Slav lands..." 114

Lieven points out that "whereas German discussions of American or British power were expressed in the coolly rational language of political economy and academic history, where Russia was concerned a much more vivid and sometimes even an apocalyptic tone was often present. This derived partly from a long-standing German sense of cultural superiority but also fear about a more primitive people who were often defined as semi-European at best. Most western Europeans shared the cultural arrogance but were less fearful than the Germans for the simple reason that Russian power lay further from their borders.

"Dislike of Russia was reinforced in the nineteenth century by liberal and socialist Germany’s distaste for the tsarist regime. The German Jews had a particular dislike for the land of the pogrom, but German émigrés in Berlin from Russia’s Baltic Provinces (today’s Estonia and Latvia) probably had a bigger overall impact on German perceptions of Russia. They brought to Germany a vision of racial conflict between Slavs and Germans that could then be applied to struggles between the German and the Slav peoples of the Austrian monarchy as well. This played a big role in pan-German thinking but had an influence beyond their ranks. Paul Rohrbach was a key ‘public intellectual’ of Baltic origin who strongly influenced German

opinion about international relations and Russia. He disliked both tsarism and Russians. He stressed the glaring weaknesses of the Russian economy and society and argued that an aggressive foreign policy was almost the only means for the regime to cling to its fading legitimacy. But although he expected major convulsions in the near future in Russia, he did not doubt that in the longer run the country would be a formidable world power, noting that on current projections by the second half of the twentieth century Germany would face an eastern neighbour with a population of more than 300 million...”

That from an Anglo-Russian historian, and there is undoubtedly truth in his judgement. But there is also truth in the superficially very different judgement of the German historian Golo Mann, who considered that by 1914, there was really only one enemy for the Germans: England. Mann writes: “The question which the Germans were soon asking themselves was who was their chief enemy. Hardly France; only for the older generation who remembered 1870. Russia? That was the view of the German left, of all those whose thinking was inspired by the tradition of 1848, who saw despotic Russia as the enemy of a progressive, democratic ‘greater’ Germany. Or Britain? That was soon the most widely and ardently held belief. The belief of the pan-Germans, of the navy, of the patriotic professors, of the right in general, and then, under the impression of the blockade, probably also the mass of the people. The war, which the Germans had imagined as a continental war in the style of Moltke, was transformed by Britain into a world war; it deprived the German victories on land of their importance by isolating them. Britain brought into play the full strength of its national character, the whole force of its world-wide organizations and connections, of its dominions overseas; it was the bridge to America, and the channel through which all essential war material reached Germany’s enemies in an uninterrupted stream. France and Russia had both been defeated more than once in modern times and had adapted themselves to defeat; Britain never. That was its glory, and its efforts were correspondingly great. Seen from that angle Britain was the fiercest of Germany’s enemies. As Germany had nothing that Britain could want and as even the pan-Germans did not intend to make conquests at Britain’s expense, it followed that the struggle between Britain and Germany was one of life and death. It was not a question of this or that possession but of survival. As the Germans saw it Britain envied Germany its new splendour, its industry, its trade, its power in Europe and over Europe; there were pre-war quotations from the British press to prove the point. Quietly, busily Britain had spun the poisonous web of the coalition; with unctuous words Lügen-Grey (liar Grey [the British Foreign Secretary]) had drawn it tight at the opportune moment.

“[As the German song put it:] ‘What do we care about Russians and Frenchies; we repay shot with shot and blow with blow. We fight with bronze and with steel, and some day we shall make peace. But you we shall hate with lasting hatred and we shall not relent; hatred on the seas and hatred on land, hatred of the mind and hatred of the hand, hatred of the hammer and hatred of the crowns, strangling hatred of seventy millions. United in love and united in hatred they have only one enemy: ENGLAND.””

115 Lieven, op. cit., p. 29.
But how did such a civilized nation as Germany reach such a paroxysm of hatred, which played such a major role in the destruction of the old world? Archimandrite Cyril (Govorun) provides us with part of the answer: ‘One of the most vivid commanders of the German empire and its co-founder was Field-Marshal Helmut von Moltke (1800-1891). Once he expressed himself as follows: ‘Eternal peace is a dream, and not the most beautiful of dreams. War is part of the Divine world-order. In it we find the development of the best human virtues: courage, self-abnegation, faithfulness to duty and the readiness to offer one’s own life in sacrifice. Without war the world would descend into the abyss of materialism.’ This expresses the quintessence of the development of one of the directions of German idealism and German theology, which turned out to be very much in demand in the circle of German actors to which von Moltke belonged. Two basic postulates of this direction were, first, that war has its justification and is even necessary, if it is undertaken for the sake of lofty goals. And secondly, the most lofty goal is the struggle against the errors of the neighbouring peoples in their insufficient ‘spirituality’ – faithfulness to the Spirit (der Geist).

“For Germany, such a nation was first of all France, which had been infected, in the opinion of the Germans, by the virus of republicanism – ‘democratism’. The victory of Prussia in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71 became for her a sign of election – of God’s having predestined her to be ‘God’s hammer’ in history, placing her in the centre of ‘the history of the salvation’ of the European peoples. This victory allowed Germany to accomplish, in the expression of the German history Martin Greschat, ‘a quantum jump’ from the soulless ‘national industry of war’ (that was how Count Mirabeau put it about Prussia in the 18th century) to a messianic state. In this state the life of each citizen and his rights were subject to a higher goal, and the state was the incarnation of this goal and the fullest manifestation of what Hegel had called Zeitgeist.

“In the self-consciousness of this state it was surrounded by enemies who could not understand it or accept its lofty mission because of its corruption, and for that reason the given state had to count only on its army and fleet. At the slightest opportunity this state considered that it had the right to violate international agreements, insofar as it had a higher goal and higher authorization – God.

“The Churches of Germany in every way supported this ‘self-consciousness’ of the German people. By 1914 what Karl Hammer called ‘the German theology of war’ (Deutsche Kriegstheologie) had been formed. In the opinion of the investigator John Moses, the majority of German theologians before 1914 supported the military messianism, including such authorities as Albrecht Richl and Adolf von Harnak. Several generations of theologians, beginning with Friedrich Schleiermacher, who thought that in the war with Napoleon God had been on the side of Prussia, developed the thought that the German nation was chosen by God (Ausgewähltheit). From Schleiermacher’s idea that God was with the Germans at the loftiest moments of their history, the theologians passed to the conviction that the German state was itself a Divine institution.
“Patriotism as an unconditional justification of the state became practically a religious postulate. In 1902 the Kiel theologian Otto Baumgarten published a sermon that immediately became exceptionally popular: *Jesu Patriotismus*. In it he tried to prove that the religious duty of every person should become higher than his individual interests and that he should be ready to give everything for the homeland. His colleagues in every way supported the Weltpolitik – the colonial and imperialist strivings – of Kaiser Wilhelm and the growth, for the sake of this, of the military and naval might of Germany. Some, for example Friedrich Naumann (1860-1919), tried to unite the ideas of German nationalism and socialism. Naumann supposed that Germany’s struggle to acquire a leading position in the world in the conditions of imperial competition had to have its value and justification, der Ethisierung der Machtkämpfe.

“One other authoritative theologian of the time, Ferdinand Kattenbusch (1851-1935), in his pamphlet *Das sittliche Recht des Kreiges* (The Moral Right to go to War), suggest, for the sake of justifying German imperialism, an idiosyncratic interpretation of the words of Christ on love for one’s neighbour. In his words, individual people living in this world cannot fully carry out the commandment on love. Nevertheless, to the degree accessible to each the spirit of love for one’s neighbour could be realized by the Christian in his desire to correct his neighbour. And this it was possible to do through compulsion. If it was necessary to correct one’s neighbours in large numbers, then one could and should apply military force. Military force applied for the sake of correcting the infirmities and sins of one’s neighbour, according to Kattenbusch, is the fulfilment of Christ’s commandment on love. Kattenbusch believed that nations each have their soul. In some nations their soul is infected by vice, and so they need military intervention for the sake of their own correction. But the German soul was the purest and most radiant of all the European souls and for that reason had the right to judge who needed correction, including through military chastisement.

“As Klaus Fondung concludes in his very interesting study, *Deutsche Apokalypse 1914*: ‘At the centre of the ‘German Apocalypse’ of the 1914 vintage lay a conception of war as the tribunal of the world (Weltgericht) – a tribunal at which God judged Germany’s enemies. How God judged we know from the following sequence of events. The world paid too high a price for the path to ‘the tribunal over Germany’s enemies’ until the ‘Nuremburg tribunal’…”

Also very important in creating the bellicose and bombastic spirit of Germany in the pre-war generation was the huge influence exerted by Nietzsche, and especially his idea of the Superman. Peter Watson writes: “Throughout the nineteenth century there had been endless arguments about what actually was and was not German (its borders did keep changing), and Nietzsche was press ganged into this debate. During the 1890s and thereafter more and more people began to adapt his Germanness and the Nietzsche-German relationship into an ideology. By this account, Germanness was an exclusive precondition for truly understanding him and what he was saying. Here, for example, is Oswald Spengler on Nietzsche:

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“Goethe’s life was a full life, and that means it brought something to completion. Countless Germans will honour Goethe, live with him, and seek his support; but he can never transform them. Nietzsche’s effect is a transformation, for the melody of his vision did not end with his death... His work is not a part of our past to be enjoyed; it is a task that makes servants of us all... In an age that does not tolerate otherworldly ideals... when the only thing of recognizable value is the kind of ruthless action that Nietzsche baptized with the name of Cesare Borgia – in such an age, unless we learn to act as real history wants us to act, we will cease to exist as a people. We cannot live without a form that does not merely console in difficult situations, but helps one get out of them. This kind of hard wisdom made its first appearance in German thought with Nietzsche.’

“Carl Jung was no less impressed. He viewed Nietzsche as a development beyond Protestantism, just as Protestantism was itself an outgrowth beyond Catholicism. Nietzsche’s idea of the Superman was, he believed, ‘the thing in man that takes the place of the God.’

“Notwithstanding the enthusiasm of these and other luminaries, it was the youth and avant-garde of the 1890s who made up the bulk of Nietzsche’s followers. This had a lot to do with the state of the Kaiserreich, which was perceived then to be both spiritually and politically mediocre. To these people, Nietzsche was seen as a pivotal, turn-of-the-century figure, ‘a man whose stature was comparable only to Buddha, Zarathustra or Jesus Christ.’ Even his madness was endowed by supporters with a spiritual quality. For here was Nietzsche like the madman in his own story, someone who had been driven crazy by his vision and the alienation of a society not yet able to comprehend him. The German Expressionists had a fascination with madness for its allegedly liberating qualities, as they did for all extreme forms of life, and they identified Nietzsche as both a spokesman and an exemplar. Opponents dismissed him, quite wrongly as it turned out, as a ‘degenerate’ who would ‘rave for a season, and then perish’.

“Despite the divisions he aroused, his popularity grew. Novels and plays tried to capture and dramatize his already dramatic ideas. People all over Europe started to have ‘intoxicating’ Zarathustra experiences. Le Corbusier had a Zarathustra-Erlebnis (a Zarathustra ‘experience’ or ‘insight’) in 1908. Nietzschean concepts like the will to power and Übermensch entered the vocabulary. Richard Strauss’s tone poem, Also Sprach Zarathustra was premiered in Frankfurt-am-Main in November 1896, the most famous but not the only major artwork stimulated by Nietzsche – Mahler’s Third Symphony was another, originally entitled The Gay Science.

“The glossy illustrated magazine Pan featured Nietzschean poems in his honor but also printed drawings and sculptures of him, seemingly whenever they got the chance. Between 1890 and 1914 his portrait was everywhere, his bushy mustache becoming a widespread visual symbol, making his face as famous as his aphorisms. From the mid-1890s, encouraged by the Nietzsche archives (under the control of his sister), ‘Nietzsche-cult products’ were made available in generous amounts, a move that would certainly have maddened him had he been capable of such feelings. Hermann Hesse was just one well-known writer who had two images of Nietzsche
on his study wall in Tübingen. His face was also a popular device on bookplates, one image showing him as a latter-day Christ, with a crown of thorns. The working-class press appropriated his image as a familiar and succinct way to mock the capitalist commercialization of culture.

“Some even adopted what they called Nietzschean ‘lifestyles’, the most striking example being the designer/architect Peter Behrens. Behrens designed his own ‘Zarathustrian’ villa as a centrepiece of the experimental Darmstadt artists’ colony. The house was adorned with symbols such as the eagle, and Zarathustra’s diamond, which radiated ‘the virtues of a world that is not yet here’. Behrens surpassed even this in the German pavilion he designed for the Turin 1902 Exposition. In a surreal cavern, light flooded the interior in which the industrial might of the Second Reich was on display. Zarathustra, cited explicitly, progresses toward the light.

“Bruno Taut (1880-1938), an Expressionist architect, became a prominent exponent of a cult of mountains that emerged and was associated with Nietzsche. Taut’s ‘Alpine Architecture’ attempted to envision an entire chain of mountains transformed into ‘landscapes of Grail-shrines and crystal-lined caves’, so that, in the end, whole continents would be covered with ‘glass and precious stones in the form of “ray-domes” and sparkling palaces.’

“In a similar vein was the Zarathustrian cult of Bergeinsamkeit, ‘the longing to escape the crowded cities and to feel the pristine mountain air’. Giovanni Segantini, a painter and another enthusiastic Nietzschean, specialized in views of the Engadine, the mountain region that inspired Nietzsche when he was writing Also Sprach Zarathustra. So popular did his work prove that pilgrims and tourists flocked to these mountains: ‘The Einsamkeitserlebnis – the experience of being alone – was transferred into a mass business!’ The flourishing of a Nietzschean-kitsch industry, which would have horrified Nietzsche himself, was another ironic indication of his popularity among the ‘philistines’. Paul Friedrich’s play The Third Reich was one of several that put Zarathustra onstage, in this case clad in a silver-and-gold costume flung insouciantly over his shoulder. At times, people worried that the Nietzsche cult was outdoing Nietzsche himself. In 1893, Max Nordau wrote about the Nietzsche Jügend – the Nietzsche youth – as if they were an identifiable group.

“As time went by it became increasingly clear that Germany, and to a lesser extent the rest of Europe, was now populated by Nietzsche generations – in the plural. Thomas Mann was one who recognized this:

“‘We who were born around 1870 are too close to Nietzsche, we participate too directly in his tragedy, his personal fate (perhaps the most terrible, most awe-inspiring fate in intellectual history). Our Nietzsche is Nietzsche militant. Nietzsche triumphant belongs to those born fifteen years after us. We have from him our psychological sensitivity, our lyrical criticism, the experience of Wagner, the experience of Christianity, the experience of ‘modernity’ – experiences from which we shall never completely break free... They are too precious for that, too profound, too fruitful.’
“Nietzsche was in particular looked upon as a new type of challenge, paradoxically akin to the forces of socialism, a modern ‘seducer’, whose advocacy was even more persuasive than the ‘odious equalizing of social democracy’. Georg Tantzsch er thought Nietzscheanism fitted needly the needs of the free-floating intelligentsia, trapped as they were ‘between isolation and a sense of mission, the drive to withdraw from society and the drive to lead it.’ In his 1897 book on the Nietzsche cult, the sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies accused Nietzscheanism of being ‘pseudo-liberational’. People, he said, ‘were captivated by the promise of the release of creative powers, the appeal to overcome narrow-minded authority and conventional opinions, and free self-expression.’ But he condemned Nietzscheanism as superficial, serving elitist, conservative and ‘laissez-faire functions’ that went quite against the social-democratic spirit of the age.

“A little later, in 1908, in The Nietzsche Cult: A Chapter in the History of the Aberrations of the Human Spirit, the philosopher Wolfgang Becker also appeared puzzled that so many ‘cultured luminaries’ were attracted to the Nietzschean message, but he agreed with Mann that it meant different things to different people. To the young, Nietzsche’s analysis seemed ‘deep’; but the German colonial officials in Africa employed his Herrenmoral ideal practically every day, as they felt it was suited perfectly to ‘the colonial mode of rule’.

“The sociologist and philosopher Georg Simmel also took his color from Nietzsche. His central concept, Vornehmheit, the ideal of ‘distinction’, owed everything to Nietzsche. Simmel looked upon Vornehmheit as the defining quality by which individuals ‘could be separated from the crowd and endowed with “nobility”. For Simmel, this was a new ideal stemming from the dilemma of how to create personal values in a money economy. Nietzsche had encouraged the pursuit of specific values – Vornehmheit, beauty, strength – each of which he said enhanced life and which, ‘far from encouraging egoism, demanded greater self-control’.

“Marxists thought that Nietzscheanism nakedly served capitalism, imperialism and afterward fascism, and that Nietzscheans were no more than the ultimate in bourgeois pseudo-radicalism, never touching on the underlying exploitation, and leaving the socioeconomic class structure intact.

“People liked to observe the irony that Nietzsche was dead long before God, but Aschheim maintains that he was simply ‘unburiable’. ‘Nietzsche was not a piece of learning,’ wrote Franz Servis in 1895, but a part of life, ‘the reddest blood of our time’. He has not died: ‘Oh, we shall all still have to drink of his blood! Not one of us will be spared that.’...

“Even the choice of Weimar as the location of the Nietzsche archive was intended to emulate – if not surpass – the similar shrine of that other self-styled protector of Germany spirituality, at Bayreuth. Nietzsche’s sister, Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche, and her colleagues played a deliberate role in the monumentalization and mythologizing of the philosopher. For example, his sister sought to create an ‘authorized’ Nietzsche, her main object being to ‘depathologize’ her brother, and in so doing remove the subversive from his ideas, making him – as she thought – ‘respectable’.
“The most grandiose and monumental of plans – much more so than the archive – came from the more enlightened and cosmopolitan adherents. In 1911, for instance, Harry Graf Kessler, the Anglo-German patron of the arts and author of Berlin in Lights, envisaged building a huge festival area as a memorial, comprising a temple, a large stadium and an enormous sculpture of Apollo. In this space, intended to hold thousands, art, dance, theatre and sports competitions would be combined into a ‘Nietzschean totality’. Aristide Maillol agreed to build the statue, using none other than Vaslav Nijinsky as the model. André Gide, Anatole France, Walther Rathenau, Gabriele d’Annunzio, Gilbert Murray and H.G. Wells joined the fund-raising committee. The project failed only when Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche withdrew her support in 1913.

“Until the First World War, Nietzsche exerted a wide influence on the arts. However, the Great War... totally changed public attitudes toward Nietzsche and the impact of his ideas.

“Probably, Nietzsche’s most explosive and enduring impact was on the intellectual, artistic and literary avang-garde – his invitation ‘to be something new, to signify something new, to represent new values’ was emblematic of what Steven Aschheim also calls the ‘Nietzschean generation’. Nietzsche gave point to the avant garde’s alienation from the high culture of the establishment. The two forces he favoured were radical, secular self-creation and the Dionysian imperative of self-submersion. This led to several attempts to fuse the individualist impulse within a search for new forms of ‘total’ community, the redemptive community...

“While Nietzsche’s identification of the nihilist predicament was a starting point, people swiftly moved on They sought a transformed civilization that encouraged and reflected a new übermenschlich type, creating excitement, authenticity, intensity, and in all ways superior to what had gone before. ‘What I was engaged in,’ recalled Ernst Blass, the Expressionist poet, referring to café life in imperial Berlin, was ‘a war on the gigantic philistinism of those days... What was in the air? Above all Van Gogh, Nietzsche, Freud too, and Wedeking. What was wanted was a post-rational Dionysos.’

“Freud and Nietzsche had in common that both sought to remove the metaphysical explanation of experience, and both stressed ‘self-creation’ as the central meaningful activity of life. While Freud strained for respectability, Nietzscheanism reveled in notoriety; but in most ways they were compatible, being stridently... anti-rationalist; and, with its Dionysian rhetoric, the artistic production of the Nietzscheans sought to unlock the wild reaches of the unconscious. Übermensch strongmen feature prominently in the novels of Gabriele d’Annunzio and Hermann Conrad, where the characters are involved in often brutal searches for innocence and authenticity, as often as not destroying in order to create...”

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In 1914, continues Watson, “knowing what we know now, it is hard to credit the way people greeted war. There are two elements that concern us. One is illustrated by the fact that a London bookseller denounced the war as ‘the Euro-Nietzschean war’. He was referring to the (for him) surprising fact that the outbreak of war saw a marked rise in the sale of works by Nietzsche. This was partly because many of Germany’s enemies thought that the German philosopher was the chief villain, the man most to blame for the war in the first place, and the individual responsible, as time wore on, for its brutalities.

“In his book Nietzsche and the Ideals of Germany, H.I. Stewart, a Canadian professor of philosophy, describes the Great War as a battle between ‘an unscrupulous Nietzschean immoralism’ and ‘the cherished principles of Christian restraint’. Thomas Hardy was similarly incensed, complaining to several British newspapers: ‘I should think there is no instance since history began of a country being so demoralized by a single writer’. Germany was seen as a nation of would-be supermen who, in Romain Rolland’s words, had become a ‘scourge of God’. To many it seemed as if the abyss had been plumbed, that the death of God, so loudly advertised by Nietzsche, had finally brought about the apocalypse many had predicted.

“In Germany, the theologian and historian Theodor Kappstein admitted that Nietzsche was the philosopher of the world war because he had educated a whole generation toward ‘a life-endangering honesty, towards a contempt for death... to a sacrifice on the altar of the whole, towards heroism and quiet, joyful greatness.’ Even Max Schuler, a better-known philosopher (and later a favourite of Pope John Paul II), in The Genius of War and the German War (1915) praised the ‘ennobling’ aspects of conflict. He welcomed the war as a return to ‘the organic roots of human existence... We were no longer what we had been – alone! The sundered living contact between the series individual-people-nation-world-God was restored in an instant.’ The communal ‘we’, Schuler said, ‘is in our consciousness before the individualized self’, the latter ‘an artificial product of cultured tradition and a historic process’.

“Though the claims – both for and against Nietzsche’s influence – may have been overblown, they were not without foundation. In Germany, together with Goethe’s Faust and the New Testament, Thus Spake Zarathustra was the most popular work that literate soldiers took into battle, ‘for inspiration and consolation’. More than that, according to Steven Aschheim, 150,000 copies of a specially durable wartime edition were distributed to the troops. Even one or two literate non-German soldiers took the book with them, notably Robert Graves and Gabriele d’Annunzio. Nor should we forget that the assassin of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, Gavrilo Princip, whose action precipitated the crisis of 1914, was fond of reciting Nietzsche’s poem Ecce Homo: ‘Insatiable as a flame, I burn and consume myself.’

“What we make of all that, the second point still takes some getting used to. This is the fact that in 1914 so many people welcomed the war. This, too, had certain Nietzschean overtones, in that war was seen as the ultimate test of one’s heroic qualities, a test of will and an unrivalled opportunity for ecstatic experience. But it was more than that – far more. For many, the war was seen as redemptive.
“But redemption from what? One might ask. In fact, there was no shortage of candidates. Before 1914, the very appeal of Nietzsche lay in his widespread critique of the decadence people saw everywhere about them. Stefan George... argued in Der Stern des Bundes that a war would ‘purify’ a spiritually moribund society, while the German dramaturge Edwin Piscator agreed, claiming that the generation that went to war was ‘spiritually bankrupt’. Stefan Zweig saw the conflict as some kind of spiritual safety valve, referring to Freud’s argument that the release of ‘the instinctual’ could not be contained by reason alone. Typically, the Expressionists looke forward to the death of bourgeois society, ‘from whose ashes a nobler world would arise’.” 119

The paradox is that much was correct in this analysis. Western society was indeed spiritually moribund, and the war was indeed a watershed which did reduce the West to ashes. But out of those ashes there arose, not a nobler world, but an even more savage one. For the soldiers had to make a choice between the two books they took with them into battle: the New Testament or Also Sprach Zarathustra. And the tragedy was that, apart from some Orthodox soldiers on the Eastern front, it was the latter, antichristian work that triumphed in the minds of most, thereby making the age that followed a truly post-Christian and antichristian age...

IV. THE EAST: SOWING THE WIND (1894-1914)
44. TSAR NICHOLAS II

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

Since Tsar Nicholas has probably been more slandered and misunderstood than any ruler in history, it is necessary to begin with a characterization of him.

“Nicholas Alexandrovich,” writes Archpriest Lev Lebedev, “was born on May 6/19, 1868 on the day of the memorial of Job the Much-Suffering. Later he used to say that it was not by chance that his reign and his suffering would become much-suffering. In complete accordance with the will of his father, Nicholas Alexandrovich grew up ‘as a normal, healthy Russian person’... From childhood he was able first of all ‘to pray well to God’. His biographer would unanimously note that faith in God was the living condition of his soul. He did not make a single important decision without fervent prayer! At the same time, being a young man and not yet Tsar, Nicholas Alexandrovich externally lived in the same way that almost all worldly young people of his time and his level of education. He loved sport, games, military activities, and acquired a fashionable for that time habit of smoking. He had an affair with the ballerina Kshesinskaya – which, however, he decisively cut short after an open and firm explanation with his father. He read a great deal, both spiritual and scientific and artistic literature (he loved L. Tolstoy’s War and Peace), he loved amateur dramatics and various ‘shows’ in the circle of his family and friends, he was keen on amusing tricks. But all this was to a degree, without extremes, and never going to the service of the passions. He had a strong will, and with the help of God and his parents he was able to control and rule himself. In sum, he preserved a wonderful clarity, integrity and purity of soul. The direct gaze of his deep, grey-blue eyes, which often flashed with welcoming humour, penetrated into the very soul of his interlocuters, completely captivating people who had not yet lost the good, but he was unendurable for the evil. Later, when his relations with the Tsar were already hostile, Count S.Yu. Witte wrote: ‘I have never met a more educated person in my life than the presently reigning Emperor Nicholas II’. Nicholas Alexandrovich was distinguished by a noble combination of a feeling of dignity with meekness (at times even shyness), extreme delicacy and attentiveness in talking with people. He was sincerely and unhypocritically simple in his relations with everybody, from the courtier to the peasant. He was organically repelled by any self-advertisement, loud phrases or put-on poses. He could not endure artificiality, theatricality and the desire ‘to make an impression’. He never considered it possible for him to show to any but the very closest people his experiences, sorrows and griefs. It was not cunning, calculated concealment, but precisely humility and the loftiest feeling of personal responsibility before God for his decisions and acts that led him to share his thoughts with almost nobody until they had matured to a point close to decision. Moreover,
like his father, he put these decisions into effect in a quiet, unnoticed manner, through his ministers and courtiers, so that it seemed as if they were not his decisions... Later only his wife, Tsarina Alexandra Fyodorovna, knew the hidden life of his soul, knew him to the end. But for others, and especially for ‘society’, Nicholas Alexandrovich, like his crown-bear ing forbear, Alexander I, was and remained an enigma, ‘a sphinx’. It would not have been difficult to decipher this enigma if there had been the desire, if people had looked at his deeds and judged him from them. But ‘educated’ society did not have this desire (there is almost none even now!). However, there was a great desire to represent him as ‘the all-Russian despot’, ‘the tyrant’ in the most unflattering light. And so sometimes spontaneously, at other times deliberately, a slanderous, completely distorted image of Tsar Nicholas II was created, in which by no means the least important place was occupied by malicious talk of the ‘weakness’ of his will, his submission to influences, his ‘limitations’, ‘greyness’, etc. One could test the Russian intelligentsia, as if by litmus paper, by their attitude to the personality of Nicholas Alexandrovich. And the testing almost always confirmed the already clearly established truth that in the whole world it was impossible to find a more despicable ‘cultural intelligentsia’ in its poverty and primitiveness than the Russian!... However, the personality of Nicholas II was not badly seen and understood by those representatives of the West who were duty-bound to understand it! The German chargé in Russia, Count Rechts, reported to his government in 1893: ‘... I consider Emperor Nicholas to be a spiritually gifted man, with a noble turn of mind, circumspect and tactful. His manners are so meek, and he displays so little external decisiveness, that one could easily come to the conclusion that he does not have a strong will, but the people around him assure me that he has a very definite will, which he is able to effect in life in the quietest manner.’ The report was accurate. Later the West would more than once become convinced that the Tsar had an exceptionally strong will. President Emile Lubet of France witnessed in 1910: ‘They say about the Russian Tsar that he is accessible to various influences. This is profoundly untrue. The Russian Emperor himself puts his ideas into effect. His plans are maturely conceived and thoroughly worked out. He works unceasingly on their realization.’ Winston Churchill, who knew what he was talking about when it came to rulers, had a very high opinion of the statesmanship abilities of Nicholas II. The Tsar received a very broad higher juridical and military education. His teachers were outstanding university professors, including... K.P. Pobedonostsev and the most eminent generals of the Russian army. Nicholas Alexandrovich took systematic part in State affairs, and was president of various committees (including the Great Siberian railway), sitting in the State Council and the Committee of Ministers. He spoke English, French and German fluently. He had an adequate knowledge of Orthodox theology...”

From a material point of view, Russia prospered greatly under the last tsar. General V.N. Voeikov writes: “In order to understand how Russia flourished in the last twenty years before the war, we must turn to statistics. From 1892 to 1913 the harvest of breads increased by 78%; the quantity of horned cattle increased between 1896 and 1914 by 63.5%; the mining of coal increased from 1891 to 1914 by 300%; oil industrialization – by 65%. At the same time the state budget provided the possibility of increasing its contribution to popular education to the Ministry of Popular

120 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1997, pp. 377-379.
Education alone by 628% from 1894 to 1914; while the railway network increased in length from 1895 to 1915 by 103%, etc."\(^{121}\)

In an age when family life, especially among the nobility, was being undermined, the family of Tsar Nicholas presented an icon, as it were, of what Christian family life should be. Love, obedience and humility were at the root of all their relations. It was fitting, therefore, that the family as a whole should receive the crown on martyrdom in 1918... The Tsar was unparalleled in Russian history for his mercifulness. He pardoned criminals, even revolutionaries, and gave away vast quantities of his own land and money to alleviate the plight of the peasants. It is believed that he gave away the last of his personal wealth during the Great War, to support the war effort. Even as a child he often wore patched clothing while spending his personal allowance to help poor students to pay for their tuition.

The reign of the meek and gentle Tsar Nicholas II gave an unparalleled opportunity to tens of millions of people both within and outside the Russian empire to come to a knowledge of the truth and be saved. Moreover, the strength of the Russian Empire protected and sustained Orthodoxy in other parts of the world, such as the Balkans and the Middle East, as well as the missionary territories of Japan, China, Alaska and Persia. The Tsar considered it his sacred duty to restore to Russia her ancient traditional culture, which had been abandoned by many of the "educated" classes in favour of modern, Western styles. He encouraged the building of churches and the painting of icons in the traditional Byzantine and Old Russian styles. In the words of Archpriest Michael Polsky, "In the person of the Emperor Nicholas II the believers had the best and most worthy representative of the Church, truly 'The Most Pious' as he was referred to in church services. He was a true patron of the Church, and a solicitor of all her blessings."\(^{122}\)

During the reign of Nicholas II, the Church reached her fullest development and power. “By the outbreak of revolution in 1917... it had between 115 and 125 million adherents (about 70 per cent of the population), around 120,000 priests, deacons and other clergy, 130 bishops, 78,000 churches [up by 10,000], 1,253 monasteries [up by 250], 57 seminaries and four ecclesiastical academies.”\(^{123}\)

Traditional church arts were encouraged, and old churches were renovated. The Emperor himself took part in the laying of the first cornerstones and the consecration of many churches. He visited churches and monasteries in all parts of the country, venerating their saints. Moreover, he took a very active part in the glorification of new ones, sometimes urging on an unwilling Holy Synod. Among those glorified during his reign were: St. Theodosius of Chernigov (in 1896), St. Isidore of Yuriev (1897), St. Seraphim of Sarov (1903), St. Euphrosyne of Polotsk (1909), St. Anna of

\(^{121}\) Voeikov, *So Tsarem i Bez Tsaria* (With and Without the Tsar), Moscow, 1995, p. 271. For more statistics, see Arsène de Goulevitch, *Czarism and Revolution*, Hawthorne, Ca., 1962.


Kashin (1910), St. Joasaph of Belgorod (1911), St. Hermogenes of Moscow (1913), St. Pitirim of Tambov (1914), St. John (Maximovich) of Tobolsk (1916) and St. Paul of Tobolsk (1917).

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

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

It has been argued – or rather, not argued, but simply stated – by many western historians that Tsar Nicholas II was a weak man, pushed around by circumstances and the people closest to him. A close study of his reign does not confirm his estimate; nor was it shared by several of the politicians and statesmen who knew him well. Moreover, it must be remembered that although he was an autocrat, he lived in an era when monarchy was already falling out of fashion and it was no longer possible, as it had been (almost) in the time of Louis XIV or Peter the Great, for one man to impose his will on a whole nation.

In this connection the words on autocracy of Catherine the Great, one of the most powerful monarchs in history, are worth remembering: “It is not as easy as you think... In the first place my orders would not be carried out unless they were the kind of orders which could be carried out; you know with what prudence and circumspection I act in the promulgation of my laws. I examine the circumstances, I take advice, I consult the enlightened part of the people, and in this way I find out what sort of effect my law will have. And when I am already convinced in advance of general approval, then I issue my orders, and have the pleasure of observing what you call blind obedience. And that is the foundation of unlimited power. But believe me, they will not obey blindly when orders are not adapted to the customs, to the opinion of the people, and if I were to follow only my own wishes not thinking of the consequences...”

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If we take into account the extraordinarily difficult circumstances of his reign, the multitude of enemies he encountered from both within and without, and the paucity of real friends and allies he had, we must conclude that Tsar Nicholas accomplished much, very much, and that he crowned a righteous life with a truly martyric death, fully deserving to be considered as, in the words of Blessed Pasha of Sarov, “the greatest of the Tsars”…
The two most important decisions of Russian foreign policy around the turn of the century were the alliance with France in 1894, and the turning towards the Far East. The former clearly strengthened both France and Russia against the most dynamic power in Europe, Germany, although it increased the risk of conflict with Germany insofar as it divided Europe into two systems of alliances.

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

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

“At the beginning of 1904 L’Acacia published an article by Limousène entitled ‘The Question of Alsace-Lorraine. Germany, France, Russia and Masonry’, whose central thesis was that the reconciliation of the first two countries would have to come one day ‘because of the necessity of agreeing for the sake of joint resistance to the Russian invasion’, for the State structures of Russia and France were ‘socially incompatible’. In the words of the author, the French were sympathetic only to the representatives of the Russian ‘intelligentsia and revolutionaries’. Moreover, [the Russians] have, he said, a different mentality from ours, conditioned by life in ‘the conditions of the most terrible and despotic regime, which is without any intellectual culture and unusually corrupted’. Moreover, even the Russians who are close [to us] in spirit believe in the inevitability of revolution, which will engender still more serious excesses and internal struggle than the revolution in France in 1789. In the end reaction will gain the upper hand thanks to ‘the masses of muzhiks’ – after all, the village population of Russia is much more backward than the French at the end of the 18th century. The result will be the expansion of Russia into Western Europe. But so far France helps Russia materially in the capacity of a friend and ally, which has allowed Moscow to build strategic railways while modernizing her weapons. There followed leisurely reflections on the striving of Russia to realize ‘the dream of world hegemony that was cherished already by Peter I’.

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

However, France was not reconciled with Germany. And in spite of an almost entirely Masonic cabinet at the beginning of World War I, nationalist passions continued to keep not only the two governments, but even their Masonic lodges, at loggerheads. In other respects, though, the article was remarkably farsighted, from the future dominance of Russia (albeit Soviet, not Tsarist Russia) to the importance of that quintessentially Masonic project, the United States of Europe. In one important respect, however, the article was quite wrong: in its estimate of the character of Tsar Nicholas II. He was neither weak-willed nor a war-monger nor a despot. But he was absolutely determined to uphold the traditional Orthodox world-view and bring it unharmed into the twentieth century. The Grand Orient knew that, and was determined to stop him. That is why the alliance between the Russian autocracy and the French republic was indeed unnatural. Nevertheless, it endured, largely because of the aggressive behaviour of the most powerful state in Europe – Germany.

Moreover, there were important economic reasons for the alliance with France. “As the new century dawned,” writes Niall Ferguson, “no diplomatic relationship was more solidly founded than the Franco-Russian alliance. It remains the classic illustration of an international combination based on credit and debit. French loans to Russia by 1914 totalled more than 3 billion roubles, 80 per cent of the country’s total external debt. Nearly 28 per cent of all French overseas investment was in Russia, nearly all of it in state bonds.

“Economic historians used to be critical of the Russian government’s strategy of borrowing abroad to finance industrialization at home. But it is very hard to find fault with the results. There is no question that the Russian economy industrialized with extraordinary speed in the three decades before 1914. According to Gregory’s figures, net national product grew at an average rate of 3.3 per cent between 1885 and 1913. Annual investment rose from 8 per cent of national income to 10 per cent. Between 1890 and 1913 per capita capital formation rose 55 per cent. Industrial output grew at an annual rate of 4-5 per cent. In the period 1898-1913 pig iron production rose by more than 100 per cent; the railway network increased in size by some 57 per cent; and raw cotton consumption increased by 82 per cent. In the countryside too there was progress. Between 1860 and 1914 agricultural output grew at an average annual rate of 2 per cent. That was significantly faster than the rate of

125 Soloviev, op. cit., pp. 41-42.
growth of population (1.5 per cent per annum). The population grew by around 10 per cent between 1900 and 1913; but total national income very nearly doubled...

Nevertheless, the Russians had no wish to antagonize Germany, with which they had important trade relations and a similar respect for monarchist institutions. Moreover, there was always a significant faction in the Foreign Ministry that valued friendship with Germany above the alliance with France. The potential for conflict between Russia and the German-Austrian alliance had been dramatically decreased by the agreement made with Austria in 1897 to preserve the status quo in the Balkans. And in 1899 the Tsar made it clear to the German Foreign Minister, von Bulow, that there was no reason for conflict between the two countries if Russia’s interest in the Balkans was respected: “There is no problem that finds the interests of Germany and Russia in conflict. There is only one area in which you must recognize Russian traditions and take care to respect them, and that is the Near East. You must not create the impression that you intend to oust Russia politically and economically from the East, to which we have been linked for centuries by numerous national and religious ties. Even if I myself handle these matters with somewhat more scepticism and indifference, I still would have to support Russia’s traditional interests in the East. In this regard I am unable to go against the heritage and aspirations of my people.”

Russia’s second major foreign-policy decision was to expand in the Far East, showing that her priorities now lay as much in Asia as in Europe... But why was Russia so interested in the Far East? The highest motive, Christian mission, certainly played a part. Russia had been baptizing the Asiatic peoples within and beyond her frontiers for some centuries. And among the greatest achievements of the late Russian Empire were the missions of St. Macarius (Nevsky) of the Altai, St. Nicholas of Japan, and St. Innocent of Alaska. Nor was this ideal confined to churchmen. As Oliver Figes points out, Dostoevsky had spoken of Russia’s “civilizing mission in Asia”: “Inspired by the conquest of Central Asia, Dostoevsky, too, advanced the notion that Russia’s destiny was not in Europe, as had so long been supposed, but rather in the East. In 1881 he told the readers of his Writer’s Diary:

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

127 Tsar Nicholas, in Lieven, Nicholas II, p. 94.
mission in Asia will encourage our spirit and draw us on; the movement needs only to be started.’ This quotation is a perfect illustration of the Russians’ tendency to define their relations with the East in reaction to their self-esteem and status in the West. Dostoevsky was not actually arguing that Russia is an Asiatic culture; only that the Europeans thought of it as so. And likewise, his argument that Russia should embrace the East was not that it should seek to be an Asiatic force: but, on the contrary, that only in Asia could it find new energy to reassert its Europeanness. The root of Dostoevsky’s turning to the East was the bitter resentment which he, like many Russians, felt at the West’s betrayal of Russia’s Christian cause in the Crimean War, when France and Britain had sided with the Ottomans against Russia to defend their own imperial interests. In the only published very he ever wrote (and the qualities of ‘On the European Events of 1854’ are such that one can see why this was so) Dostoevsky portrayed the Crimean War as the ‘crucifixion of the Russian Christ’. But, as he warned the Western readers of his poem, Russia would arise and, when she did so, she would turn toward the East in her providential mission to Christianize the world.

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

Tsar Nicholas, writes Sebastian Sebag Montefiore, “saw the East as ripe for Russian expansion in the race for empire. China was disintegrating – though, locally, a resurgent Japan was keen to win its own empire. Just after Nicky’s accession, Japan had defeated China in the First Sino-Japanese War. In one of his earliest decisions, Nicky, advised by Prince Alexei Lobanov-Rostovsky, the elderly grand seigneur who became foreign minister after Giers died, helped force Japan to give up some of its gains.

“Kaiser Wilhelm encouraged Nicky ‘to cultivate the Asian Continent and defend Europe from the inroads of the Great Yellow Race’, while both power would seize Chinese ports. Soon afterwards, Will sent Nicky his sketch showing Christian warriors fighting ‘the Yellow Peril’.

“Finance Minister [Count Sergius] Witte, already the maestro of the Trans-Siberian Railway, planned to expand into Manchuria in northern China through his policy of penetration pacifique: he persuaded and bribed the Chinese to let Russia build an Eastern Chinese Railway into Manchuria. At almost the same time, Lobanov agreed with Japan to share influence in Korea…”

However, Witte, a man of talent and energy, was distrusted by the conservatives. Thus N.V. Muraviev, the Minister of Justice said that Witte, “thanks to his wife Matilda, a pure-blooded Jewess, has concluded a close union with the Jews and is confusing Russia… In his hands are special organs of his secret police… He is preparing, if there were to be a change of reign, to take power into his own hands. He

128 Figes, Natasha’s Dance, pp. 415-416.
Witte’s foreign policy was frankly secular and imperialist, being closer to that of General A.A. Kireev: “We, like any powerful nation, strive to expand our territory, our ‘legitimate’ moral, economic and political influence. This is in the order of things…”

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

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

Witte succeeded in persuading the Tsar to his point of view. Thus “before 1904,” writes Dominic Lieven, “Nicholas’s priorities in terms of foreign policy were clear. Unlike Russians of so-called pan-Slav sympathy, he did not believe that his country’s manifest destiny lay in the Balkans, nor did he feel that Petersburg must necessarily support the Balkan Slavs just because they were people of the same race and religion. The Emperor was determined that, should the Ottoman Empire collapse, no other power must steal Constantinople, thereby barring Russia’s route out of the Black Sea and assuming a dominant position in Asia Minor. To avoid such a possibility in 1896-7 he was even willing to contemplate very dangerous military action. But, above all, Nicholas was intent on developing Russia’s position in Siberia and the Far East. Particularly after 1900, his personal imprint on Russia’s Far Eastern policy became very important.”

Up to this time, Russia’s eastward expansion had been largely peaceful, and had been accompanied by the one true justification of imperialism – missionary work. However, already before 1900 Russia had begun to act in relation to Far Eastern races in a similar spirit to the other imperialist western powers. Thus at the railway station

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130 Vladimir Gubanov (ed.), Nikolai II-i i Novie Mucheniki (Nicholas II and the New Martyrs), St. Petersburg, 2000, p. 705.
133 Lieven, op. cit., p. 94.
in Khabarovsk, on the Siberian-Chinese border, “foreign visitors were reminded of British India: ‘Instead, however, of British officers walking up and down with the confident stride of superiority while the Hindus … give way… there were Russian officers clean and smart promenading while the… cowering and cringing… Koreans made room for them… The Russian… is the white, civilized Westerner, whose stride is that of the conqueror.’

“Chinese workers were indispensable when it came to the bigger jobs too, not least railway construction and shipbuilding. In 1900 nine out of ten workers in the Vladivostok shipyards were Chinese. Yet Russian administrators felt no compunction about expelling surplus Asians in order to maintain Russian dominance… As Nikolai Gondatti, the governor of Tomsk, explained in 1911: ‘My task is to make sure that there are lots of Russians and few yellows here…”

Russia was now caught up in imperialist rivalry with other western powers. Thus when Germany took Kiaochow from China in 1898 (formally speaking, it was leased from China, but in effect this was a land grab), the Russians were furious. “Military action against Germany, the Russian government admitted to itself, was not really an option. The new foreign minister, Muraviev, proposed that instead Russia send warships to take over the nearby Chinese port of Port Arthur. Witte opposed the idea; sending ships and troops ran absolutely counter to his plan to create a sphere of influence in Manchuria by promising friendly diplomatic support and loans. It made his previous inroads look dishonest, it would be expensive, and it would instantly alert the British to Russia’s intentions. Initially Nicholas listened to Witte. But Muraviev went behind Witte’s back, asked for a private audience and convinced the emperor to send the ships because the ‘yellow races’ understood only force. The Russians sailed into Port Arthur weeks later. ‘Thank God we managed to occupy Port Arthur… without blood, quietly and almost amicably!’ Nicholas wrote to his brother George. ‘Of course, it was risky, but had we missed those docks now, it would be impossible later to kick out the English or the Japanese without a war. Yes, one has to look sharp, there on the Pacific Ocean lies the whole future of the development of Russia and at last we have a fully open warm water port…”

Retribution for the unlawful seizure of Port Arthur would come only a few years later…

Meanwhile, in 1900, the Boxer Uprising against western influence broke out in China. Among the victims of the Uprising were 222 Chinese Orthodox from the Russian Spiritual Mission in Peking were martyred. To some, the preaching of the Gospel in the greatest and most inaccessible of the pagan empires, China, and its first-fruits in the form of the Chinese martyrs, indicated that the end was coming, in fulfillment of the Lord’s words: “This Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, and then the end will come (Matthew 24.14)…”

134 Ferguson, op. cit., pp. 49-50.
135 Carter, op. cit., p. 209.
The Boxers, backed by Chinese troops, “besieged the embassies in Peking and then spread along Russia’s Manchurian Railway. Nicky joined Germany, Britain, America and Japan in sending an expeditionary force to relieve the embassies, but he was quick to withdraw. ‘The happiest day of my life will be when we leave Peking and get out of that mess.’ Yet it was just starting: he had to protect ‘Witte’s kingdom’ and railway in Manchuria. Now the Boxers attacked the Russian headquarters in Harbin. In June, Nicholas sent 170,000 troops into Manchuria - the end of Witte’s penetration pacifique. ‘I’m glad,’ wrote [War Minister Alexei Nikolayevich] Kuropatkin, ‘this will give us an excuse for seizing Manchuria.’\footnote{137}

“This run of opportunistic successes - intervention against Japan in 1895, annexation of Port Arthur and now expansion into Manchuria - encouraged the imperial ambitions of Nicholas, who forced the Chinese to sign over Manchuria for many years and planned to seize Korea as well. ‘I don’t want Korea for myself,’ he explained, ‘but neither can I countenance the Japanese setting foot there. Were they to try, that would be a casus belli.

“These adventures, Witte rudely told the tsar, were ‘child’s play which will end disastrously’. Nicholas resented him and made his own private plans. As he told his secret adviser, his father’s friend Prince Meshchersky: ‘I’m coming to believe in myself.’\footnote{138}

That Russia’s conquest of Manchuria was pure commercial imperialism is affirmed by Lieven: Russia poured troops into Manchuria “to protect Witte’s precious railway. Once in possession of Manchuria Petersburg was disinclined to retreat, at least until absolute security could be guaranteed to its railway and the Chinese would concede Russia’s economic domination of the province. This Peking was unwilling to do. Its stand was strongly backed by Britain, the USA and Japan, all of which demanded free access for foreign trade to Manchuria. The signatories of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, clearly directed against Russia, in January 1902 further stiffened Chinese resolve.”\footnote{139}

And so Russia entered the twentieth century dangerously isolated in the Far East.

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

\footnote{137}On July 11, 1900, the Russian government warned the Chinese ambassador in St. Petersburg that troops would have to be sent into Manchuria to protect Russian assets in the area. Three days later, hostilities broke out when the Russians ignored a Chinese threat to fire on any troopships that sailed down the River Amur. Within three months, all Manchuria was in the hands of 100,000 Russian troops. ‘We cannot stop halfway,’ wrote the Tsar. ‘Manchuria must be covered with our troops from the North to the South.’ Kuropatkin agreed: Manchuria must become ‘Russian property’.’ (Ferguson, op. cit., pp. 50-51). (V.M.)
\footnote{138}Montefiore, op. cit., p. 505.
\footnote{139}Lieven, op. cit., p. 97.
The Church now began to speak out. Thus Bishop Anthony (Khраповитскиy), although a monarchist, “was profoundly saddened by this event and foretold that it was precisely there, in the Far East, that we were bound to await the special punishment of God. The text of this prophecy has unfortunately not been found, but Vladyka Anthony himself spoke about it in his sermon before the service at the conclusion of peace with Japan [in 1905]. Pointing to the fact that the unsuccessful war with Japan was God’s punishment for the apostasy of Russian society from the age-old foundations of Russian life, Vladyka Anthony said: ‘... I will speak about the fact that it is not only the traitors of the fatherland that are guilty before God, I will say what I said five years ago, when I foretold that it would be precisely there, in the Far East, that we had to expect a particular punishment of God. But I will speak not with evil joy, as do our enemies, but with sadness and with shame, as a Christian and a Russian priest. In Blagoveschensk, on the Amur, five years ago, we permitted a cruel action to take place. Several thousand Chinese, who were in service to Russian citizens, for the general security of the latter, were deceitfully led out of the city and forced into the river, where they found inescapable death... It was not for this that the Lord opened up before us the confines of the Far East, from the Volga to the sea of Okhotsk, so that we amazed the foreigners by our heartlessness. On the contrary, it is there, in the East, and not in the West, that lies the missionary and even messianic calling of our people. Russians did not want to understand this calling – not simple people, of course, but people who consider themselves enlightened, who, following the example of their western enlighteners, would not allow themselves the slightest rudeness in relation to any European rascal, but do not consider humble, straightforward and industrious inhabitants of the East even to be people. We were bound to reveal to them Christ, we were bound to show them the Russian breadth of spirit, Russian love of man, Russian trustingness, but we showed them only animal self-preservation that does not stop before anything. This is our first guilt, for God even in the Old Testament imputed the sinful fall of a people’s military commanders to the whole people.’”140

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

The Tsar’s proposal was well-timed; for powerful peace movements were developing in many countries, and the burden of military expenditure was indeed

140 Archbishop Nicon (Rklitsky), Zhizneopisanie Blazhenneyshago Antonia, Mitropolita Kievskago i Galitskago, volume 2, New York, 1957, pp. 140-141.
increasing. So the Hague Peace Conference was convened on May 18, 1899, and was attended by representatives of 26 nations. Several useful resolutions were passed.

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

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

141 “’I’ll go along with the conference comedy,’ said the Kaiser, ‘but I’ll keep my dagger at my side during the waltz.’ For once his uncle in Britain agreed with him. ‘It is the greatest nonsense and rubbish I ever heard of,’ said Edward. Germany went to the conference intending to wreck it if it could do so without taking all the blame. Its delegation was headed by Georg zu Münster, the German ambassador to Paris, who strongly disliked the whole idea of the conference, and included Karl von Stengel, a professor from Munich, who published a pamphlet shortly before the proceedings started in which he condemned disarmament, arbitration and the whole peace movement. The directions that Holstein in the German Foreign Office gave the delegates said: ‘For the state there is aim superior to the protection of its interests… In the case of great powers these will not necessarily be identical with the maintenance of peace, but rather with the violation of the enemy and competitor by an appropriately combined group of stronger states.’

“One member of the German delegation, a military officer, made an unfortunate impression when he gave an exceedingly belligerent speech in which he boasted that his country could easily afford its defence expenditure and that furthermore every German saw military service ‘as a sacred and patriotic duty, to the performance of which he owes his existence, his prosperity, his future.”’ (Margaret Macmillan, The War that Ended Peace, London: Profile, 2014, pp. 279-280, 281) (V.M.)

142 Soloviev, op. cit., pp. 33-34.
The example provided by the Tsar at The Hague was infectious. Thus “in 1907, on the initiative of the President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, a conference of the world’s then forty-four nations, including all the great empires, met to discuss outlawing aerial bombardment. Twenty-seven of the nations agreed, including the United States and Britain. Germany was one of the seventeen that wanted to retain the right to make war from the air. All forty-four powers did agree, however, to limit aerial bombardment to military targets. These were defined as mostly naval dockyards and military installations. By implication, residential and built-up areas would not be bombed...”

The Tsar’s initiative was a noble one, as the American President Warren Harding officially acknowledged in 1921; and it was not without long-term consequences that are discernible today. Nevertheless, the fact was that there was no way in which the two great opposing ideological forces of Europe – Russian Orthodox Tsarism and Continental Freemasonry – could work together for long. The idea of a League of Nations was essentially a way of limiting the power of sovereign nations, and this could not be in the long-term interests of Russia – or of the world as a whole, insofar as such a League was in essence the embryo of a world government which the Freemasons with their anti-monarchist and anti-Christian ideology would have a much better chance of controlling than Russia.

Already in 1899, the tsar found himself having to fend off some undesirable suggestions on arms limitation, and within six months he had evidently cooled towards the idea of arbitration – he sent large numbers of troops into Manchuria without presenting his dispute with China to the court. Nor did the British think of arbitration before launching their war against the Boers. The fact was, “no European government would accept the idea of arms reduction.”

It was not only the nationalists that hindered the attempts of tsars and statesmen to stop the arms race and prevent war. Socialist workers also consistently placed national pride above the international solidarity of the working class. Thus the Second International’s numerous attempts to force governments to reduce armaments and stop fighting were undermined by the conflicting nationalisms of French and German workers, Bulgarian and Serb workers, Austrian and Italian and Czech workers.

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144 Thus Miranda Carter writes: “When, a couple of months before the Hague peace conference took place in May 1899, the British ambassador in St. Petersburg raised the issue of the four new battleships Russia had commissioned, Nicholas replied that it wasn’t the right moment for ‘exchanging views about a mutual curtailment of naval programmes’. By then, the tsar’s enthusiasm had waned when, according to the British Russia expert Donald Mackenzie Wallace, it had been pointed out to him that the proposed alternative to war – an arbitration court – would undermine the intrinsic superiority of the Great Powers, since small countries would have just as much muscle as big ones; and that there were thirty outstanding disputes with other Asian powers which Russia would almost certainly lose in arbitration. Nor did he like being hailed as a hero by European socialists” (The Three Emperors, London: Penguin, 2010, p. 252).
145 Ibid.
146 Macmillan, op. cit., chapter 10.
Only the Russian socialists appeared to have no difficulty in placing class above nation – perhaps, paradoxically, because so many of them were Jews... On the eve of the First World War, the assassination of the great French socialist and internationalist Jean Jaurès symbolised the failure of socialism in the face of nationalism. But when the nationalists had exhausted themselves, the path would be open for the only completely consistent internationalist – because he hated all nations equally – Vladimir Lenin....
46. THE LIBERATION MOVEMENT

In 1897 the “Universal Jewish Workers’ Union in Russia, Poland and Lithuania”, otherwise known as the Bund, was founded. In the spring of the next year the Russian Social-Democratic Party, from which came both the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, was founded with the active participation of the Bund. The Russian-Jewish revolutionary underground had received its first organizational impulse...

However, even more significant at this stage was the liberal agitation among the higher classes of Russian society...

Since the reign of Tsar Alexander II, the Russian government had encouraged, within limits, the development of local government in the towns and countryside. But the zemstva, as these organs of local government were called, were infected with the virus of liberal constitutionalism. And from the beginning of the twentieth century this constitutionalism began to develop into something more serious in the form of what known as the “Liberation Movement”...

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

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

Although the authorities’ fear of the influence of the zemstvo was well founded, they did not always treat them with discretion. Thus “in February 1895 a polite zemstvo delegation from the province of Tver petitioned the tsar that ‘the expression of the needs and thought not only of the administration but of the Russian people may reach to the height of the throne’. The British ambassador in St. Petersburg noted that their words had been ‘couched in the most loyal language and merely expressed the hope that the zemstvo might prove the means of direct communication between His Majesty and the People’. But the minister of the interior had told the tsar that it was an infringement of his prerogatives and an implied criticism of his father’s policies. Nicholas decided it represented a dangerous precedent, an attempt to take part in government. Replying to the zemstvo’s petition, he dismissed it as ‘senseless dreams’. ‘I shall maintain the principle of autocracy just as firmly and unflinchingly...

147 V.F. Ivanov, Russkaia Intelligentsia i Masonstvo ot Petra I do nashikh dnej (The Russian Intelligentsia from Peter I to our days), Moscow, 1997, p. 363.
as it was preserved by my unforgettable dead father,' he added. In government circles it was understood that the speech had been written by Alexander III’s most reactionary adviser, Pobedonostsev. ‘The speech had created a most unfavourable impression,’ the British ambassador wrote; ‘the most distressing impression,’ echoed a senior Russian diplomat.”

In 1899 zemstvo leaders formed a discussion group called Beseda (Symposium). The next year the government ordered the dismissal of those zemstvo deputies who were becoming involved in political questions. In 1901 in Germany a confidential memorandum by Witte calling for the abolition of the zemstva as being incompatible with autocracy was published. In 1902, also in Germany, the author of the founding manifesto of the Social-Democratic Party, Peter Struve, founded the journal Osvobozhdenie (Liberation), and in 1904 some of his supporters founded the Union of Liberation (Soiuz Osvobozhdeniia) to promote constitutionalism and civil rights. The “liberationists”, though more moderate than the Social-Democrats, who refused to cooperate with them, nevertheless sowed considerable discontent with the government among the people.

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Liberationist agitation in the upper classes of society quickly communicated itself downwards, first to the liberals’ children of student age, and then to other classes of society.

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

It is significant that this disorder should have begun with those who had not yet completed their education and had not yet received the wisdom that experience of life gives. There is much in the revolution that resembles the rebellion of an adolescent against his parents. In a healthy society such a rebellion is frowned upon and checked; for it overturns the normal order. The tragedy of these years was that the elders followed the younger, not daring to seem “behind the times”, to resist “progress”.

Thus Oldenburg writes: “Society did not respond in any way to his Majesty’s reconciliatory moves [towards the students]. It continued to sympathize with the strike. Only the editor of New Times, A.S. Suvorov, was bold enough to write against

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it: ‘If the government had let the young people’s strike take its natural course, that is, if it had said, ‘If you don’t want to study, then don’t study’, then it would not have harmed itself in its higher education, but would have put the young students in a difficult position, leaving them without education and without the support of the field of social activity which they were counting on.’ Almost the whole of the rest of the press hurled itself at *New Times* for these lines…”

The Tsar himself, after receiving a report on the strikes, apportioned blame both to the students and to the police and to the university administrators. And he did not forget the role that society had played: “To our sorrow, during the disturbances that have taken place, local society has not only not supported the efforts of the state authorities,… but in many instances has assisted the disorders, stirring up the excited youths with their approval and permitting themselves to interfere in an inappropriate way in the sphere of state directives. Such disturbances cannot be tolerated in the future and must be put down without any weakening by strict government measures.” However, the pattern was set of agitators being supported by the press and society. From now on, the Tsar had increasingly to govern without the support of the newspaper-reading public.

The universities now became hot-houses of revolutionary agitation to such an extent that many students were no longer interested in academic studies but only in politics.

An important role in teaching the young to rebel was played by foreign revolutionaries. As General V.N. Voeikov writes: “In his *Notes of a Revolutionary*, Prince Kropotkin gives a completely clear indication under whose direction ‘developed’ our Russian youth abroad. Thanks to his sincerity, we can form an accurate picture of who in Switzerland worked on the leaders of our revolutionary movement: the centre of the Internationale was Geneva. The Geneva sections gathered in a huge Masonic temple ‘Temple Unique’. During the large meetings the spacious hall accommodated more than two thousand people, which served as an indicator of the quantity of young people thirsting for enlightenment. The French émigré-communards taught the workers for free; they went on courses in history, physics, mechanics, etc. Time was also given to participation in sections that sat during the evenings in side-rooms of this temple of science.”

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We have seen that sons of priests formed the largest section in the university student population; and the strong representation from the priestly caste in the revolutionary movement was a striking, even apocalyptic phenomenon. Chernyshevsky, Dobroliubov and Nechaiev were early examples. Joseph Stalin was the most famous example of all…

In 1894, as Alan Bullock writes, Stalin became “one of the 600 students at the Russian Orthodox theological seminary in Tiflis. The Tsarist authorities had refused

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150 Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
151 Tsar Nicholas, in Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, p. 149.
152 Voeikov, *So Tsarem i Bez Tsaria* (With and Without the Tsar), Moscow, 1995, p. 127.
to allow a university to be opened in the Caucasus, fearing that it would become a centre for nationalist and radical agitation. The Tiflis seminary served as a substitute, and was attended by many young men who had no intention of entering the priesthood…

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

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

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

“One form which Stalin’s rebellion took was spending as much time as possible reading illicit books obtained from a lending library in the town and smuggled into the seminary. Besides Western literature in translation, and the Russian classics – also forbidden – Stalin became acquainted with radical and positivist ideas which he is said to have picked up from reading translations of Darwin, Comte and Marx, as well as Plekhanov, the first Russian Marxist.

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

One member of Stalin’s group was Lado Ketshoveli, who was a ringleader in the revolt that led to the closing down of the seminary, founded the first underground Marxist press in Transcaucasia, and in 1902 was arrested and shot dead by guards after shouting from his cell window: “Down with the autocracy! Long live freedom! Long live socialism!” “To Stalin he still remained, many years afterwards, the exemplar of a revolutionary fighter and his influence no doubt helped to precipitate

Stalin’s break with the seminary. By his fifth year the school authorities regarded Stalin as a hardened troublemaker, and he was expelled in May 1899 on the ground that ‘for unknown reasons’ he failed to appear for the end-of-year examinations. Iremashvili, who had accompanied him to the seminary, wrote later that he took with him ‘a grim and bitter hatred against the school administration, the bourgeoisie and everything in the country that represented Tsarism’.”

It is obviously dangerous and unjust to draw any general conclusions about the nature of seminary education from Stalin’s example alone. Nevertheless, the fact that so many former seminarians, sons of priests and even priests joined the revolutionary movement – another important example is Gapon in the 1905 revolution - indicated that something was wrong in the Church. The seminaries themselves – especially Pskov, Volhynia and Tambov – became regular trouble-spots throughout the first decade of the century, with strikes, violence and even some shootings of teachers.

Could the radicalism at the bottom of the hierarchy have had something to do with liberalism at the top? Could the lack of zeal of the leaders of the Church be influencing the followers to look for certainty elsewhere? If so, then only a revival of zeal for the truth of Christianity would be able to quench zeal for the falsehood of the revolution...


155 See the diary entries of the future hieromartyr, Bishop Arseny, in Pis’ma Vladyki Germana (The Letters of Vladyka Herman), Moscow: St. Tikhon’s Theological Institute, 2004, pp. 17-23.
Greece after its liberation from the Turks was in a sorry state spiritually speaking. As Sotos Chondropoulos writes, "the new Bavarian king's court corrupted the traditional Orthodox values. This confusion greatly affected the priests, who struggled to lead the nation in its newly found freedom, just as they had during the hard years of Turkish oppression. Now, however, their values were steadily becoming more secular. The priesthood had become, in fact, nothing more than a routine vocation with many despots. The laity, in its instinctive wisdom, was aware of this but could do nothing since it was bound by politicians, scholars, and demagogues. So it turned satirical towards everything, including the church. Indeed, what a sad state of affairs it is when people mock their religious leaders."\textsuperscript{156}

Men arose from within the Church who combatted these tendencies. However, they were not all of the same quality. Perhaps the finest was St. Nectarios of Pentapolis, who by his holy life and God-inspired writings showed that the great hierarchs of the patristic period had found a worthy successor. But he was little understood by his fellow hierarchs, and ended his earthly life in 1920 in virtual exile on the island of Aegina.

Another striking figure was the layman Apostolos Makrakis. He wrote openly against Freemasonry, which won him the approval of the hierarchy, and then against simony - which did not. Although he spoke eloquently against foreign influences and heresies, he was himself not pure in his teaching, and in 1878 the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece condemned him for teaching the tripartite composition of the soul and that Christ was perfected at His Baptism in the Jordan.

No less concerned about westernizing tendencies in the Church was the famous novelist Alexandros Papadiamandis, sometimes known as "Greece's Dostoyevsky". But he believed that the Church's condemnation of Makrakis should be obeyed, and he was critical of the religious brotherhoods that grew up in the wake of Makrakis' "School of the Word". "In the first place," as Anestis Keselopoulos interprets his thought, "the brotherhoods transfer the center of the Church's life and worship from the parish and the church to the auditorium. Secondly, the lay theologians in the brotherhoods of his day present an easy, fashionable Christianity. In their sermons, they hesitate or are ashamed to speak of the Saints and miracles, of fasting and asceticism, of the battle against the passions and evil spirits. Thirdly, Papadiamandis takes issue with the type of religious man that the piety of the brotherhoods fashions and the pride and hypocrisy that the moralistic one-sidedness of the religious unions cultivate."\textsuperscript{157}

Papadiamandis entered into conflict with the Makrakians, and called Makrakis himself a "dangerous and much more unremitting opponent" than even "the cosmopolitan modernists and the atheist Kleona Ragavis."\textsuperscript{158}

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\textsuperscript{158} Keselopoulos, op. cit., p. 88.
While closer to the hierarchy than Makrakis, Papadiamandis was not afraid to criticise the hierarchs, especially in their too-close relationship with the State. "Papadiamandis believes that 'the Church should be far from every governmental dependence and imposition'. He argues that 'the Church is victorious in the world without the slightest cooperation of the State; in fact, on the contrary, the Church has been much persecuted and exhausted by the State. Today, the Church can be victorious over every persecution when its leaders, having the consciousness of their high calling, seek the good of the Church in every way. Papadiamandis insists that the Church must not only distance itself from politics but also from the State in general. The Church must be particularly strict when a corrupt State asks Her, not only for small compromises but to commit sins on its behalf. He believes that the Church must be managed by the faithful themselves and not from the outside. In particular, the election and ordination of clergy must take place according to purely ecclesiastical criteria and procedures, and the Church should not be forced to accept the 'swarm of priests, boors and philistines that corrupt politics have many times imposed upon the eminent hierarchs to ordain.'\(^{159}\)

Turning from Free Greece to Greece under the Turks - that is, to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, we see that piety was in general higher, especially in the country districts of Anatolia, where holy priests such as St. Arsenius of Cappadocia (+1924) struggled. However, the capital suffered from various heterodox influences - not only the Islam of the Ottoman rulers, but also the Catholicism and Protestantism of the western powers.

Also beginning at this time were ecumenical relations between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the other major Christian confession in the Turkish empire, the Armenians. Hieromonk Enoch writes: “The heresy of ecumenism extends back into the mid 19th century. The Ecumenical Patriarchate engaged in negotiations with the Armenian Monophysite Church in the 19th century, and, in the documents for establishment of a ‘communion agreement’, state that they ‘recognize’ the priesthood and mysteries of the Armenian Monophysites. This eventually led to a decision, sometime in between 1879-1885, by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, apparently, allowing Armenian Monophysites to take Communion from Orthodox priests if they didn’t have access to their own clergy! As always, it seems the Protestant English Establishment (Anglicans), were involved in this somewhere.”\(^{160}\)

They were indeed. In fact, both the Catholics and the Anglicans were adopting a more "eirenical", ecumenist approach to inter-Church relations at this time. Pope Leo XIII had already shown himself a liberal in political terms, striving to come closer to the republican government of France, the Kaiser's Germany and even the

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159 Keselopoulos, op. cit., p. 91.
revolutionary movement. He brought the Vatican into the world of stock-market speculation, and founded the first Vatican bank. Then, on June 20, 1894, he issued an encyclical on the union of the Churches "addressed," in the words of Patriarch Anthimius' encyclical in reply dated August, 1895, "to the sovereigns and peoples of the whole world, in which he also called on our Orthodox, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ to unite with the throne of the Pope, understanding this union in the sense that we should recognize him as the supreme pontiff and the highest spiritual and secular head of the whole Church scattered throughout the earth and the only deputy of Christ on earth and distributor of all grace".

The patriarch replied, listing all the heresies of the papacy and calls on it to return to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic church. For "truly," continues the encyclical, "every Christian heart must be filled with the desire for the union of the Churches, especially the union of the whole Orthodox world... Therefore in her public prayers [the Orthodox Church] prays for the union of all those who are dispersed and for the return of all those who erred to the correct path of the truth, which alone can lead to the Life of all that exists, the Only-Begotten Son and Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ..."

The Catholic writer Adrian Fortescue finds this worthy reply "unpardonably offensive". In revenge, as it were, he mocks the internal divisions within the patriarchate in a manner that is tendentious but which nevertheless is worth quoting as demonstrating how the undeniably scandalous state of the patriarchate was perceived by the outside world: "In 1894 [Ecumenical Patriarch] Lord Neophytos VIII occupied the see. He was a prelate who really cared for the dignity and independence of his Church, and by way of restoring them he ventured on a feeble attempt at resisting the tyranny of the Porte [the Ottoman government] in canonical matters. But when he asked the other Orthodox Churches to help him (Russia could have claimed almost anything as the acknowledged protector of all Orthodox Rayahs), their jealousy of the Phanar was so much greater than their zeal for ecclesiastical independence that no one would do anything. The Bulgarian trouble, to which of course he could not put an end, alienated his own friends - they always seem to accuse the perfectly helpless Patriarch when the Bulgars become specially unbearable - so the Porte had no difficulty in making them depose him. On October 25 (O.S.), 1894, the synod and the mixed council agreed that he must resign, and a deputation of five members waited on him to inform him of their unanimous decision. So Neophytos VIII had to go back to private life in his house on the Antigone island. Having got rid of the Patriarch, the synod and the mixed council quarrelled so badly about his successor that their members excommunicated each other, and things came to an absolute block, till the Minister of Religions, Riza Pasha, wrote to say that he had annulled all their acts, and that they were to elect a new Patriarch at once. In defiance of the law the Porte struck off seven names from the first list of twenty-eight candidates which was sent up; one of these names was that of Germanos of Heraclea, who would otherwise almost certainly have been chosen. The popular candidate was the ex-Patriarch, Joachim III (1878-1884), but (it was said at the time) Germanos managed to get his name struck off too; so at last Anthimios VII (Metropolitan of Leros and Kalymnos) was elected. There was a tumult at his enthronement; the people wanted Joachim, and would cry 'Unworthy' (Ἀνθίμος ἀνόητος) instead of the proper
form. Germanos had prudently retired to Vienna. However, Lord Anthimos began the reign in which he chiefly distinguished himself by his unpardonably offensive answer to the Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII. In two years the popular party succeeded in having him deposed. The immediate reason was the affair of Ambrose of Uskub [Skopje], in which he was accused of betraying the cause of Hellas. No accusation could have been more unjust. The cause of Hellas is the one thing no Ecumenical Patriarch ever betrays; he was only helpless before the Porte and the Russians. He did his best to keep his see. As soon as he heard that the synod wanted him to retire he suspended the leaders of the opposition and ordered them to go back to their dioceses. Of course they refused to obey. Poor Anthimos did all a man could. He went to the Yildiz-Kiösk and implored the Sultan to protect him, but the Sultan had other things to think about, and, on February 8, 1897, he went to swell the number of ex-Patriarchs, who wait in hope of being some day re-elected. There were now three - Joachim III, Neophytos VIII, and Anthimos VII. Constantine V (Valiades) was elected Patriarch in April. Lord Constantine seems to have been one of the best of all the later Ecumenical Patriarchs. He set about reforming the education of priests, insisted that the services of the Church should be celebrated with proper reverence, and modified some of the incredibly pretentious etiquette which his court had inherited from the days of the Old Empire. There seemed no possible reason why he should be deposed, except that the parties of the ex-Patriarchs wanted their candidates to have another chance. In the spring of 1901 it was first rumoured that Lord Constantine V was shaking on his throne. Twelve metropolitans of his synod and six laymen in the mixed council voted for his resignation. The rich bankers and merchants of the Phanar were all in favour of Germanos Karavangelis, of Pera. Constantine tried to remove that danger by sending him to be Metropolitan of Kastoria, a long way off in Macedonia. Nevertheless, on April 9th, Constantine's resignation was demanded by both synod and mixed council. But he did not want to resign, and for a time the Porte supported him. The Greek paper Anatolia, strongly partisan of the ex-Patriarch, Joachim III, all too hurriedly announced that Constantine had ceased to reign. It was immediately suppressed by the Government, and its proprietor was put in prison. The free Greeks of the kingdom were all for Constantine. But in Holy Week his metropolitans again waited on him with the demand that he should resign. He was naturally indignant that they should disturb him during these august days, and he declared that his health was perfectly good and that he intended to go on presiding over the Orthodox Church. Four metropolitans were on his side. He celebrated the services of Holy Week surrounded by these four, but boycotted by all the rest of his synod. The opposition then sent an order to the four, forbidding them to communicate with the deposed one, and they besieged the Minister of Religions, Abdurrahman, with petitions for his removal. The Porte tried to save him as long as it could, but the opposition was too strong. Again there was an absolute block at the Phanar. The synod refused to sit under Constantine; and so he fell. He retired to Chalki, and Joachim III was re-elected. Lord Joachim, the reigning Patriarch, had already occupied the throne of Constantinople from 1878 to 1884. Since then he had been an ex-Patriarch with a strong party demanding his re-election. On Friday, June 7 (O.S.), 1901, after the fall of Constantine V, he was chosen by eight-three votes, and the Porte then gave him his berat.\textsuperscript{161}

\textsuperscript{161} Fortescue, The Orthodox Eastern Church, London: Catholic Truth Society, 1920, pp. 342-345.
Joachim III introduced a period of relative stability into the patriarchate. But it was precisely in this period that the influence of Anglican ecumenism came most strongly to bear. This may have had something to do with the fact that Joachim himself was a Freemason...

Thus according to the leading organ of the patriarchate, "the first impulse towards official communion between the two Churches (Orthodox and Protestant) was provided by the Lambeth conference of July, 1897, in which 194 bishops from the whole Anglican communion came together and unanimously voted for action aimed at the union of the Churches... After this, in February, 1898, Archbishop Friedrich of Canterbury sent letters to the Patriarchs of the East and the Archbishop of Cyprus with copies of the decisions of the conference with regard to the union of the Churches... He asked the Orthodox Church to accept the baptism of the Anglicans and allow her priests to give the Divine Gifts to dying Anglicans in places where they did not have their own priests... In September, 1899, in a letter to Patriarch Constantine V the Archbishop of Canterbury expressed the burning desire of the English for clearer understanding and the establishment of closer relations, declaring that it would be difficult to set out the details of such a course and that the longed-for communion should proceed with ever-increasing depth insofar as the determination of some kind of programme towards this end had been shown to be difficult... He pointed out that the communion of the two Churches would become surer through the cessation of proselytism, through visits of Orthodox clergy to London and of the Archbishop of Canterbury and English priests to the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople on the great feasts and other official days, and through each Church telling the other of important changes taking place in her... On the basis of an agreement on these points by both sides, mutual correspondence began in December, 1900 and continued. After this various other events took place demonstrating the friendly relations between the two Churches..."

The first such "demonstration of friendly relations" was Patriarch Joachim's declaring, in 1902, that Papism and Protestantism were "great ramifications (αναδεννώμενος) of Christianity". However, before embarking on an ecumenist course, he wisely decided to issue an encyclical asking all the other Orthodox Churches (except Antioch and Bulgaria, whose hierarchies, for different reasons, he did not recognise) to express their opinions on union with the western churches. He also asked their opinion on the proposed change to the new, Gregorian calendar. This was related to the ecumenical venture, because the difference between the old, Julian calendar used in the Orthodox East and the new, Gregorian calendar used in the Catholic-Protestant West was the first obstacle to the practical implementation of ecumenism - celebrating the major Christian feasts together.

The Local Orthodox Churches were unanimous in their rejection of the new calendar (Alexandria and strife-torn Cyprus did not reply). As for ecumenism, it is instructive to read the summary of the Churches' replies by a Fortescue: "His Holiness [Joachim III] speaks of the Latins with every possible charity, moderation, and courtesy, and hopes for reunion with us. Which hope may God fulfill. The difference of his tone from that of Anthimos VII, in the famous answer to Pope Leo

162 Ekklesiastiki Alitheia (Ecclesiastical Truth), 1920; in Monk Pavlos, Neoverologitismos Oikoumenismos (Newcalendarism Ecumenism), Athens, 1982, pp. 17-19
XIII, is very remarkable. The answers of the sister-Churches, however, show how little they are disposed to listen to the voice of their honorary chief...

"Jerusalem answered cordially and sympathetically. Patriarch Damianos said that it is unhappily hopeless to think of reunion with Latins or Protestants as long as they go on proselytising in the East. But union with the Anglicans is possible and very desirable... Athens answered that no union is possible, least of all with the Old Catholics, who will not give a plain account of what they do or do not believe. Bucharest said that the only union possible would be the conversion of the Latin and Protestant heretics to the one true Orthodox Church; the Old Catholics are specially hopeless, because they have given up confession and fasting, try to unite with the Anglicans, and do not know what they themselves believe. Belgrade likes the idea of union with the Old Catholics especially. Russia answered at great length and very offensively [sic]. What, said the Holy Russian Synod, is the good of talking about reunion with other bodies when we are in such a state of disorder ourselves? It went on to draw up a list of their domestic quarrels, and hinted plainly that they were all the fault of the Phanar. For the rest, union with the Latins is impossible, because of the unquenchable ambitions of the See of Rome, which long ago led her to her fall. As for the Anglicans, the Church of Russia has always been well disposed towards them: 'We show every possible condescension to their perplexities, which are only natural after so long a separation. But we must loudly proclaim the truth of our Church and her office as the one and only heir of Christ, and the only ark of salvation left to men by God's grace.'" 163

When Patriarch Joachim had received all the replies, he published a second encyclical in 1904 which expressed his own opinions, both about ecumenism and about the first major step necessary in order to implement ecumenism - the change from the traditional Orthodox Julian calendar to the papal Gregorian calendar that was in use throughout the West: "The Church is one, in identity of faith and similarity of habits and customs, in accordance with the decisions of the Seven Ecumenical Councils; and one it must be, and not many and diverse, differing from each other both in dogmas and in the basic principles of Church government.

"This is our opinion concerning the calendar: the Paschalion is venerable and immovable, having been fixed already centuries ago and sanctioned by the constant practice of the Church. In accordance with it, we have been taught to celebrate the radiant Resurrection of the Lord on the first Sunday after the full moon of the spring equinox, or on the Sunday following; and we are not allowed to make innovations in this. And it is mindless and pointless for those who are lying in wait to ambush our immovable Julian calendar by jumping only 13 days, so that our menologia and those of the followers of the other calendar should coincide. On the one hand, there is no compelling reason to omit all these days; such an act has no ecclesiastical or scientific justification. And on the other hand, the coincidence of the menologia will be only temporary, viz., until the year 2100, when there will again begin to be a difference of one day." 164

This was followed by a further bout of infighting among the hierarchs. Thus Fortescue continues: “So far then Lord Joachim III has shown himself a wise and admirable Patriarch. Alas! He has one fault, and that is an unpardonable one. He has already reigned five years, and the rival parties think it is quite time for him to retire, so as to give their favourites another chance. Already the opposition to him in his synod has declared itself. In January, 1905, there was a scene. Lord Prokopios of Durazzo led the anti-Joachimite side, and in a long speech attacked a number of the Patriarch’s actions. ‘Holy man of Durazzo,’ said Joachim angrily, ‘thou hast learnt thy lesson well. These are the plots brewed in the conventicles of the holy man of Ephesus.’ ‘All holy one,’ said Joachim of Ephesus, ‘there are no conventicles held in my house.’ Then he, too, made a list of accusations, and eight metropolitans ranged themselves on his side. The Patriarch tried the old and always hopeless expedient of forbidding Prokopios to attend the meetings of the synod. That only brought matters to a climax. The eight members at once deposed Joachim and telegraphed the news to Petersburg, Bucharest, Athens, Belgrade, etc. Then, as usual, both sides appealed to the Sultan. Abdulhamid once more had the exquisite pleasure of lecturing them on charity and concord. ‘Patriarch Effendi,’ says he, ‘you are breaking the laws of the Church. You have no right to exclude Prokopios, and you must make it up with the eight metropolitans.’ Then he sent for the eight. ‘My metropolitans, what right have you to depose the Patriarch? It is not right. You must make it up with Lord Joachim.’ He further hinted that if the precepts of their own Prophet are not enough to control their passions and to make them live in peace, he would have to refer the matter to the invincible Ottoman Police. Eventually the Minister of Religions, our inimitable friend Abdurrahman, last November, sent a note to Joachim, telling him his duty and the Canons of the Orthodox Church, and exhorting him to be a good Patriarch; but so far the Porte is for him and he still reigns. However, the opposition is by no means dead, and we may hear any day that he has gone the weary way to Chalki once more, and that a new bishop rules over the Great Church.”

That should have been the end of the matter as far as the Orthodox Church was concerned. However, the tide of western pressure continued to rise. This came particularly from the Anglicans. The "High Church" wing took particular interest in the Russian Church, whose highly traditional ethos and status as a local national Church seemed to them to be a model of what the Anglican Church should be.

Unfortunately, the sincere interest of some Anglicans in Russian Orthodoxy did not go so far as to see in Orthodoxy the One True Church; and the rapprochement between the two Churches turned out to be more of a danger to the Russians than an opportunity to the Anglicans. In 1908 the Anglican Bishop of Gibraltar reported that a recent synod of the Anglican Church had decided that the Anglican Churches could baptize the children of Orthodox coming to Anglican priests in places where there were no Orthodox priests, but only on condition that this baptism was not repeated by Orthodox clergy. Then, in 1910, the first “World Missionary Conference” was convened in Edinburgh. This is considered by some to mark the historical beginning of the ecumenical movement. Its president, John Mott, was the first to introduce the terms “Ecumenism” and “ecumenical” into common currency.

In 1914 the “World Congress for International Friendship through the Churches”. This led to the creation of the “Life and Work” Movement, which later combined with the “Faith and Order” Movement to form the World Council of Churches in 1948. However, the outbreak of the First World War put a temporary halt to these developments…

The Slavs were not unaffected by the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s “proto-ecumenism”, and there were cases of concelebration between Slavic hierarchs and the Anglicans. Thus the famous Serbian theologian Fr. Nikolai Velimirovich studied for several postgraduate degrees in western universities, and served with Anglicans in London after the outbreak of war in 1914. Later, he later turned away from ecumenism, and became a great confessor.167

Again, Archbishop Tikhon, the future patriarch of Moscow and hieromartyr, served with Anglicans in America...

The official service-books of the Russian Church reveal an unclear attitude towards the sacraments of the heterodox. Thus in the Book of Needs, we read: “Know this also, that a schismatic baptism, and a heretical one, by those who believe in the Holy Indivisible Trinity, in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Church determines to be ultimately acceptable in every way.” Again, Bulgakov’s Handbook for Clergy, explains that Roman Catholics, if they have been baptised and confirmed, should be received by the “Third Rite”, that is, renunciation of heresies and repentance. If they have not been confirmed, they must be chrismated. They must never be baptised. “Recognising Baptism as a requirement for becoming a member of her, [the Russian Orthodox Church] accepts Jews, Muslims, pagans and those sectarians who distort the fundamental dogmas of the Orthodox Church through Baptism; Protestants are accepted through Chrismation; and those Catholics, Armenians and members of the Anglican Church who have not received Chrismation or Confirmation, and also those who have fallen away from Orthodoxy, she accepts through the Third Rite, through Repentance, repudiation of errors and Communion of the Holy Mysteries.”168

168 S.V. Bulgakov, Nastol’naia Kniga sviaschennogo-tserkovno-sluzhitelei (Handbook for Church Servers), Kharkov, 1900, p. 928. In a footnote Bulgakov writes: “Accepting confirmed Anglicans [and Catholics] by the ‘Third Rite’ could be permitted only under the condition of recognition that the Anglican Church has a completely legitimate hierarchy, truly having preserved the grace of the priesthood in unbroken succession from the Apostles.” In line with this acceptance of Anglican order, Bishop Tikhon of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands, the future Martyr-Patriarch, attended the consecration of Reginald Weller as Episcopal Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin in 1900” (The Living Church, November 17, 1900). In his diary under December 16/29, 1900, Archbishop Nicholas (Kasatkin) of Japan mentions this fact with some annoyance: “Why did Tikhon worm himself in there in a hierarchical mantia?”

With regard to the Syro-Chaldean Nestorians, the position of the Church of Russia was expressed in a Synodal ukaz dated March 17-21, 1898, N 1017, which stated that in accordance with the 95th Canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council they were to be received according to the Third Rite, and that their clergy had be received in full ecclesiastical rank, with no re-ordination.
The 1903 Epistle of the Holy Synod of the Russian Church to the Patriarch of Constantinople expressed firm opposition to union with the heretics. The hierarchs were “unchangeably convinced… that our Eastern Orthodox Church, which has inviolably preserved the complete deposit of Christ, is alone at the present time the Oecumenical Church”. “As regards our relations with the two great ramifications of Christianity, the Latins and the Protestants, the Russian Church, together with all the autocephalous Churches, ever prays, awaits, and fervently desires that those who in times of old were children of Mother Church and sheep of the one flock of Christ, but who now have been torn away by the envy of the foe and are wandering astray, ‘should repent and come to the knowledge of the truth’, that they should once more return to the bosom of the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, to their one Shepherd. We believe in the sincerity of their faith in the All-Holy and Life-Originating Trinity, and on that account we accept the baptism of both the one and the other. We respect the Apostolic Succession of the Latin hierarchy, and those of their clergy who join our Church we accept in the Orders which they then possess, just as we do in the case of Armenians, Copts, Nestorians and other bodies that have not lost Apostolic Succession. ‘Our heart is enlarged’ (II Corinthians 6.11), and we are ready to do all that is possible in order to promote the establishment upon earth of the unity which we so much desire. But, to our great regret and to the common grief of all true children of the Church, at the present time we are obliged to think, not so much of softening our relations towards Western Christians, and of a love-abounding drawing of their communities into union with us, as of the unwearying and ever-watchful defence of the rational sheep committed to our charge from unceasing attacks and multiform seductions on the part of the Latins and the Protestants.”

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

The “proto-ecumenism” of the Russian Church in this period came primarily from the tsars. Thus in 1847 Emperor Nicholas I concluded a concordat with Pope Gregory XVI which envisaged that the Russian Orthodox Church would carry out all the sacraments and needs for those who turned to her with such requests from the Catholics exiled for their participation in the Polish rebellions against Russia, if they were living in places where there were no Catholic churches or Catholic clergy. In accordance with the meaning of this concordat and the order of the Emperor, the Synod then issued the corresponding command, which was obligatory for the Russian Orthodox clergy, to satisfy the requests of exiled Catholics, if such requests came from them.

Again, as the Russian empire had expanded, so had the number of subjects of other, non-Orthodox faiths, to the extent that by the late imperial period, as Igor Smolich says, it was no longer a “confessionally united kingdom”, but an “interconfessional empire”. Thus, as Archimandrite Macarius (Veretennikov) writes, commenting on Smolich’s work, “Tsar Alexander III, for example, visited Buddhist temples and attended their services; [and] Tsar Nicholas II also (for example, during the world war) visited Catholic churches, Jewish synagogues and Muslim mosques, attended their services, and kissed the Catholic cross. From a purely ecclesiastical-formal point of view the Orthodox tsar should not have done that, but as the head of a super-confessional empire, as emperor, he was forced to it.”

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

However, this movement was opposed by Pobedonostsev, who feared that a reform of Church-State relations, even if desirable in itself from a canonical point of view, might lead to Church-State *separation* and the gradual dechristianisation of society. Sergei Firsov writes: “Pobedonostsev saw and understood better than many that the demolishing of the Petrine Synodal system in Russian conditions would not lead to the recreation of correct mutual relations between the Church and the State, but would only strengthen anti-government forces. To represent the Church and the kingdom as existing in isolation from each other was psychologically impossible, while any changes in the ecclesiastical structure could be understood by ‘the simple people’ only as the abolition of the previous Church-State relationship [because ‘for our peasant form is everything’]. It was not by chance that Pobedonostsev, while talking with General A.A. Kireev about Church problems and ‘about learning’, declared that what he feared above all was a new schism: ‘It’s fine for you, but where shall we go with our darkness, with the peasant. I fear a schism, that’s what I fear!’”

It is not clear whether he meant a Church schism, or a schism between the peasants and the State. In either case, the peasant uprisings of 1905 showed that the venerable old man had a point… However, there was a contradiction in Pobedonostsev’s position. On the one hand, he sincerely believed that the Church was the soul of the State and the people, and should be its teacher, corrector and inspirer. On the other hand, he acted as if he did not believe this, but rather that the Church should be tutored and disciplined by the State, and that he himself, as the representative of the State, should act as the task-master of the Church hierarchy…

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

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

“Sergius,” writes G.M. Soldatov, “was popular in circles waiting for the introduction of ‘democratic’ reforms in the State. In his sermons and speeches he criticized the relationship between the ecclesiastical and state authorities in the Russian Empire.” This would have been a risky subject to raise only ten years earlier; but times were changing rapidly, and Sergius, as his future career proved, was always sensitive to how the times were changing, and accommodated himself to them accordingly...

At the same time he did make a fair point in the eighth of the religio-philosophical meetings, arguing that only if the State ceased to use the Church as a weapon would it become possible “to raise the question of freedom of conscience. Otherwise it will be only by virtue of indifferentism that the State can give freedom to the sects along with the Church”. But “Russian State power cannot be indifferent or atheist if it does not want to renounce itself”. In other words: if the State was truly the defender of Orthodoxy, as it claimed, it should free the Church from political tasks that were alien to her nature. Otherwise, freedom would simply help the sectarians and atheists to fight against the Church, while she remained unable to defend herself freely. Thus the questions of Church reform and freedom were inescapably linked...

172 Madame Blavatsky wrote that “that which the clergy of every dogmatic religion – pre-eminently the Christian – points out as Satan, the enemy of God, is in reality, the highest divine Spirit – (occult Wisdom on Earth) – in its naturally antagonistic character to every worldly, evanescent illusion, dogmatic or ecclesiastical religions included.” (The Secret Doctrine, London, 1888, vol. 2, p. 377; quoted in Maria Carlson, “No Religion Higher than Truth”, Princeton University Press, 1993, p. 124). Theosophy influenced many Russian intelligentsy, as was recognised by such philosophers as Vladimir Soloviev and Nicholas Berdiaev (L. Perepelkina, Ecumenism: A Path to Perdition, St. Petersburg, 1999, chapter 9).
173 Soldatov, “Tolstoj i Sergij: Iude Podobnie” (Tolstoy and Sergius: Images of Judas), Nasha Strana (Our Country), N 2786; Vernosti’ (Fidelity), N 32, January 1/14, 2006
174 Firsov, op. cit., p. 117.
It was not only liberals like Sergius who favoured Church reform. The former revolutionary-turned-monarchist L.A. Tikhomirov published an article arguing that the State should “give the Church independence and the possibility of being the kind of organization she must be in accordance with her own laws, while remaining in union with her”. The problem was that both conservatives and liberals could argue for Church reform, but for completely different motives. Tikhomirov wrote as one who had seen the revolution from within, and turned away from it with all his heart, acknowledging the only true defence against it to be the strengthening of Church consciousness among the people. The liberals, on the other hand, were motivated, not by a desire to see the Church free and therefore able to exert a more powerful influence on society, but rather the opposite: a desire to humble the State and destroy the Church’s influence once and for all. As for the liberal bishops such as Sergius, they leapt onto the band-wagon of the reform of Church-State relations, and of what later came to be called renovationism, in order to further their own careers…

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Another liberal-renovationist cause that Bishop Sergius espoused during the religio-philosophical meetings was that of the novelist Leo Tolstoy. As we have seen, Tolstoy was in essence a radical Protestant, who stood for a Christianity reduced to “pure” morality without the Church, dogmas, miracles or sacraments. His teaching became very popular both at home and abroad (especially in England), both among the educated and the peasants. Soon his followers, although not organized into any “Church”, were rivalling other sects such as the Baptists, the Stundists, the Molokans and the Dukhobors in numbers and influence.

L. Solonevich points out that for centuries the Russian Empire had lived out of necessity in the conditions of a military camp. Such conditions required obedience and discipline, but “this obedience and this discipline were not particularly sweet. In the last one hundred years Russia has experienced, so to speak, a permanent revolution. A permanent rebellion against the authorities and against discipline. This rebellion took the most various forms – from Pugachevschina to Tolstoyism. And if we take our greatest writer as an example, we can now, after our ‘great and bloodless’ [revolution of 1917], value his deeds more or less in accordance with their merits. The Tolstoyan rebellion did very much both for the undermining of the Russian monarchy (‘I cannot keep silent’) and for the undermining of Russian Orthodoxy (‘The Gospel of Tolstoy’) and for the undermining of the Russian family (‘The Kreutzer Sonata’), and even for the undermining of the Russian courts, which in Resurrection are portrayed as a talentless and feelingless machine – while the Russian courts were the most merciful and conscientious in the world.”

Indeed, it was the publishing of Resurrection in 1899 that was the last straw for the Church. The novel, which sold more copies than any of his earlier works, portrayed a society so rotten and oppressive that revolution was inevitable. It also subjected the teaching and sacraments of the Orthodox Church to ridicule. If the government felt

175 Tikhomirov, “Gosudarstvennost’ i religia” (Statehood and religion), Moskovskie Vedomosti (Moscow Gazette), March, 1903, p. 3; in Firsov, op. cit., p. 137.
176 Solonevich, “Etiudy Optimizma” (Studies in Optimism), in Rossia i Revoliutsia (Russia and the Revolution), Moscow, 2007, p. 59.
that it could not censor Tolstoy and thereby make a political martyr out of him, the Church, spurred on by Pobedonostsev, felt otherwise…

On February 24, 1901 the Holy Synod anathematised him, declaring: “Well known to the world as a writer, Russian by birth, Orthodox by baptism and education, Count Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy, seduced by intellectual pride, has arrogantly risen against the Lord and His Christ and His Holy heritage, and has plainly in the sight of all repudiated his Orthodox Mother Church which reared and educated him and has dedicated his literary activity and the talent given to him by God to disseminating among the people teachings opposed to Christ and the Church, and to destroying in the minds and hearts of people their national faith, that Orthodox faith which has been confirmed by the Universe and in which our forefathers lived and were saved, and to which Holy Russia until now has clung and in which it has been strong…

“In his writings Count Lev Tolstoy has blasphemed against the holy sacraments, denying their grace-filled character, has not venerated the Orthodox Church as his Church, has spoken evil of the clergy, has said that he considers that to venerate Christ and worship Him as God is blasphemy, while saying of himself, by contrast: ‘I am in God, and God in me’. It is not the Church that has rejected him, casting him off from herself, but he himself has rejected the Church: Lev himself has of his own will fallen away from the Church and is no longer a son of the Church, but is hostile to her. All attempts of the clergy to admonish the prodigal have failed to produce the desired fruits: in his pride he has considered himself cleverer than all, less fallible than all and the judge of all, and the Church has made a declaration about the falling away of Count Lev Tolstoy from the Russian Orthodox Church.” 177

Tolstoy was opposed especially by the extraordinary priest St. John of Kronstadt, who demonstrated by his wonderful life abounding in good works and extraordinary miracles, that Christianity “does not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God” (I Corinthians 2.5). He wrote of Tolstoy that he had “made himself into a complete savage with regards to the faith and the Church.” He called him not only a heretic, but also an antichrist, and refused to receive honorary membership of Yuriev university if Tolstoy was to receive the same honour. 178 St. John lamented that “the Church of God on earth, the beloved bride, is impoverished, she suffers from the savage attacks on her from the atheist Leo Tolstoy…”

For Tolstoy, wrote St. John, “there is no supreme spiritual perfection in the sense of the achievements of Christian virtues – simplicity, humility, purity of heart, chastity, repentance, faith, hope, love in the Christian sense; he does not recognize Christian endeavours; he laughs at holiness and sacred things – it is himself he adores, and he bows down before himself, like an idol, like a superman; I, and no one else but me, muses Tolstoy. You are all wrong; I have revealed the truth and am teaching everyone the truth! The Gospel according to Tolstoy is an invention and a fairy tale. So, Orthodox people, who is Lev Tolstoy? He is a lion roaring [Lev

177 Gubanov, op. cit., p. 701; Wilson, op. cit., p. 460.
178 V.F. Ivanov, Russkáia Intelligéntsa i Masyonstvo ot Petra I do nashikh dney (The Russian Intellectualia from Peter I to our days), Moscow, 1997, p. 379.
rykayushchy], looking for someone to devour [1 Peter 5.8]. And how many he has devoured with his flattering pages! Watch out for him.”

St. John was a fervent monarchist. “With our our heart,” he said, “we shall thank God that He gave and up to the present day still gives us autocratic and monarchical tsars in accordance with His heart, preserving the succession of the Romanov dynasty and the spirit of Orthodox in them, for the magnification of the Faith and the Church of the Orthodoxy and of the Russian state. Our Tsar [Nicholas II] is a righteous man of pious life. God has sent him a heavy cross of sufferings as to His chosen one and beloved child. Remember: if there will be no monarchy, there will be no Russia. Only the monarchical order gives stability to Russia; under a constitution it will all split up into pieces.”

And he foretold cruel overseers and terrible sufferings for the people if the autocracy were to be overthrown…

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

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

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

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John], who was put forward by the Providence of God to oppose the heretic Tolstoy."182

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

Nevertheless, Fr. John continued to speak out boldly against the liberals, “those monsters of cruelty, those people whose aim is to live for themselves and for their own pleasure, not for the cause – those egotists, who do not empathize with their brethren… The mind works in them without the heart. Their hearts are not warmed by love for God and man, and they deny the existence of God, the foundations and bases of our common holy life, the rules of morality. Here is your education, students! This is because of your stupid education, Messrs. Pedagogues!”183

183 Kizenko, op. cit., p. 88.
THE NATIONALITIES POLICY

In a multi-national empire such as Russia the spread of nationalism in the nineteenth century could not fail to be a major concern of the authorities. Alexander III’s answer, which was followed by his son, Nicholas II, was to introduce the policy known to historians as “Russification”, a well-meaning attempt to unite the empire around the language and culture of the dominant imperial nation. Let us see how that was applied in the different regions.

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

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

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

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

184 This “produced absurd situations, such as Polish students being forced to read their own literature in Russian translation” (Margaret Macmillan, The War that Ended Peace, London: Profile, 2014, p. 475). (V.M.)
186 Hosking, op. cit., p. 378.
True; and yet Russia’s failure in Poland cannot be blamed entirely on the policy of russification. The root problem was the implacable opposition of Polish Catholicism to Russian Orthodoxy. As long as the combination of Catholicism and fervent nationalism prevailed, there was no hope, not only of assimilation, but even of peaceful relations between the two peoples. Catherine II’s conquest of Poland, while it had certain geopolitical advantages, proved in the long run to have created the Achilles heel of the Russian empire, in that it included into the empire two peoples – the Poles and the Jews – whose opposition to Russia remained implacable to the end.

2. Ukraine and Belorussia. If Poland was to Russia what Ireland was to England, then Ukraine and Belorussia were to Russia what Scotland and Wales were to England. In the latter comparison, a common faith – Orthodoxy in the case of Russia, Ukraine and Belorussia, Protestantism in the case of England, Scotland and Wales – made coexistence easier. Even so, in an age of increasing nationalism there were bound to be centripetal pressures; and, to use a useful distinction between “civilization” and “culture”, even where there was considerable identity of civilization – in the sense of “ideas and traditions... inherited from the ancient world and from Christianity”, it was the cultural difference – that is, idiosyncracies of speech, folklore, dress and everyday life187 - that tended to be emphasised. But underlining cultural differences could lead to a betrayal of the deeper civilizational traditions of the nation seeking to distinguish itself.

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

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

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

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

And yet here was the rub: that the ruling civilization (and culture) of most of Russia’s ruling elites was no longer the Orthodox Christianity that had united all the Eastern Slavic peoples in the past: it was the civilization of contemporary Western Europe. So “Russification” in practice often meant Westernization with a Russian tinge and in the Russian language.

189 Hosking, op. cit., p. 379.
A better policy, surely, would have been for the government to emphasise the “civilizational”, that is, in essence, religious - unity between the three peoples without trying to deny their cultural – especially linguistic - differences. For among the peasants, if not for the intelligentsia, civilizational, religious unity was still strong – and stronger than any nationalist passion.

As Figes writes, “in Belorussia and the northern Ukraine there was so much ethnic and religious intermingling – in an area the size of Cambridgeshire there might be a mixture of Belorussian, Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, Jewish and Lithuanian settlements – that it was difficult for anything more than a localized form of ethnic identity to take root in the popular consciousness. One British diplomat… concluded that this was still the case as late as 1918: ‘Were one to ask the average peasant in the Ukraine his nationality he would answer that he is Greek Orthodox; if pressed to say whether he is a Great Russian, a Pole, or an Ukrainian, he would probably reply that he is a peasant; and if one insisted on knowing what language he spoke, he would say that he talked ‘the local tongue’…”

3. Finland. Lieven writes: “Conquered in 1809, the Grand Duchy of Finland enjoyed a high degree of autonomy throughout the nineteenth century. In Russian terms its status was anomalous, not only because it was uniquely free of Petersburg’s control but also because it possessed representative institutions and a secure rule of law. In the last two decades of the nineteenth century pressure increased from Petersburg to bring parts of Finnish law and administration into line with Russian norms. It stuck in Russian gullets, for instance, that Russians resident in Finland enjoyed fewer rights than ethnic Finns, something that was not true of Finns living in Russia. With Russo-German antagonism growing and Sweden a very possible ally of Germany in any future war, the extent to which Helsinki was almost completely free from Petersburg’s supervision also caused worry. So long as Finland was governed by Count N.V. Adlerberg (1866-81) and then Count F.L. Heiden (1881-98) the very sensible rule prevailed that infringements on Finnish autonomy must be kept to the strictly necessary minimum. When General N.I. Bobrikov was appointed Governor-General in 1898, however, not only did he arrive with sweeping plans to increase Petersburg’s control, he also implemented this policy with a tactless, ham-fisted brutality which turned Finland into a hotbed of opposition.

“Real trouble with Finland began when Petersburg imposed its own military conscription system on the Finns and sought to unify the Russian and Finnish armies. Though this scheme had been in the making for a number of years, it was pushed hard by the new Minister of War, Aleksei Kuropatkin, who was appointed in 1898. The majority of Russian senior officials opposed Kuropatkin’s conscription law in the belief that it would needlessly antagonize the Finns and it was actually voted down in the State Council, the body of senior statesmen who advised the Tsar on legislation. As was his right, however, Nicholas overrode the council and

191 Figes, op. cit., pp. 75-76.
192 Hosking writes: “Its parliament, the Diet, began to meet regularly after 1863, and passed a number of measures which underlined Finland’s distinctive status within the empire: the spread of education, consolidation of freedom of worship, the issue of a separate currency and the establishment of a Finnish army.” (op. cit., p. 380). (V.M.)
Kuropatkin’s conscription law went into effect. In the Emperor’s defence it could be argued that had he failed to back up his new Minister of War the latter’s authority would have been fatally damaged. Moreover, the government’s case vis-à-vis Finland was not entirely unjustified, its fears for the security of Petersburg, very close to the Finnish border, causing it particular alarm. In terms of political wisdom and tact, however, Kuropatkin’s law, not to mention Bobrikov’s antics, were a disaster. The government, which had hoped to play off the ethnic Finnish majority against the country’s Swedish elite, quickly united the whole country against itself. Among those who protested to Nicholas about Bobrikov’s policy was his mother, herself a Scandinavian princess. In what was, coming from her, an extremely angry letter, she accused her son of going back on his promise to her that Bobrikov would be reined in and commented that ‘all that has been and is being done in Finland is based on lies and deceit and leads straight to revolution’. Apart from asserting that the Finns would come round if the government showed itself resolute, Nicholas’s reply to his mother skated around the main issue at stake. Seen from the Russian perspective this issue was, in Kireev’s words, that ‘thanks to Bobrikov and his system we have created a new Poland at the gates of Saint Petersburg! And it would have been easy to avoid this.’

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

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

193 Lieven, Nicholas II, pp. 86-87.
“The first Russian statesman to attack the German domination in the Baltic was Iurii Samarin, who was sent to Riga as a senatorial inspector in 1849. He regarded the German urban guilds and the Ritterschaften as corrupt relics of an antiquated system which prevented the monarch from acting as the protector of ordinary people and obstructed Russians from exercising their legitimate authority in the Russian Empire. ‘We Russians claim the right to be in Russia what the French are in France and the English throughout the British dominions.’ At this stage, before the drive to national homogenization had gripped the authorities, such views were unwelcome to the Tsar: Nicholas ordered that Samarin be detained in the Peter-Paul Fortress for twelve days and personally rebuked him. ‘Your attack is aimed at the government: what you really meant was that since the reign of the Emperor Peter we have been surrounded by Germans and have ourselves become Germanised.’

“By the 1870s, however, different views prevailed in St. Petersburg. Reform had come to Russia, rendering Tsars more reluctant to acknowledge intermediate authorities between themselves and their subjects. Besides, the unification of Germany naturally reinforced the ethnic identification of Baltic Germans, especially those in the towns. Ivan Aksakov had warned of this danger in 1862, when he complained that the Baltic Germans, ‘though devoted to the Russian throne, preach war to the death against the Russian nationality; faithful servants of the Russian state, they care not a fig for the Russian Land’. Alexander III took a symbolically important decision when, on his accession to the throne in 1881, he declined to confirm the privileges of the Ritterschaften, as all his successors had done since Peter the Great.

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

“In religious matters there was a return to the policy of forbidding Estonians and Latvians who had converted – usually under threat - to Orthodoxy to return to the Lutheran faith. Those who had done so now found that their marriages were declared invalid, while pastors who had celebrated them were suspended
investigation. Some 120 suffered this fate before the policy was abandoned in 1894…”194

Here Hosking distorts the evidence. There was a genuine, unforced movement of Latvians towards Orthodoxy, of which the most famous product was the future hieromartyr Archbishop John (Pommer) of Riga, who was devoted to Russia and Orthodoxy. The Latvian peasants of his region had begun to show an interest in Orthodoxy in the middle of the nineteenth century, thanks to preaching of the faith in their native language; and Hieromartyr John’s great-grandfather had been one of the first to accept Orthodoxy in the region, for which he was subjected to persecution by the local German landowners. If there was persecution, it was much more likely to be by Lutherans against the Orthodox. Thus when St. John’s great-grandfather died he was buried outside the bounds of the local Lutheran cemetery (there were no Orthodox cemeteries at that time) as the leader of the “rebels”. The native peasants raised a mound over the place of his burial and put an eight-pointed star on top of it, but both the mound and the cross were removed by the Lutheran authorities.195

Nevertheless, the russification policy in the Baltic states, though less disastrous than in Finland, did not achieve its purpose. As Miranda Carter writes, “émigré German Balts had become… at the forefront of anti-Slavic Pan-Germanism”.196

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

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

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

195 Lyudmilla Koeller, St. Ioann (Pommer), Arkhiiepiskop Rizhskij i Latvijskij (St. John (Pommer), Archbishop of Riga and Latvia), Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1984. (V.M.)
In 1798, Irakly II died and was succeeded by his son, King George XII. Fearing the Persian threat, King George suggested to Empress Catherine’s son and successor, Tsar Paul I, that he incorporate Georgia into the Russian Empire while allowing the Bagrations to continue to bear the title of King… At first, Emperor Paul agreed, but in the end he simply seized the country, putting an end to the long reign of the Bagrations."

The annexation of Georgia was proclaimed by Paul I on December 18, 1800, and was reaffirmed by his successor, Alexander I, on September 12, 1801. On the whole Georgia benefited from being part of the Russian empire – she would not have survived against the Muslims on her own. And Georgian saints, such as Elder Ilarion of Mount Athos, could be sincerely, even fiercely pro-Russian.

However, the price was high. “Within ten years,” writes Lado Mirianashvili, “the Russian authorities had abolished the Georgian monarchy, the Church’s autocephaly, and the patriarchal throne – all of which had withstood the Turks, the Mongols, and the Persians. During the subsequent 106 years, nineteen exarchs of the Russian Synod ruled the Georgian Church. Church services in Georgian were terminated, frescoes were whitewashed, and ancient Georgian icons and manuscripts were either sold or destroyed.

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

Although Georgian nationalism was essentially Christian in nature, harking back nostalgically to the medieval Christian kingdom, according to Hosking it had “an anti-capitalist colouring, owing to the competition with the Armenians”, who dominated banking and commerce in the towns. “They also considered that, as a small nation, their interests were best protected by internationalism, or more specifically, by membership of a democratic multi-national federation formed on the framework of the Russian Empire. Two of the leading Georgian radicals, Noa Zhordania and Filip Makharadze, studied in Warsaw, where they became convinced that Poles and Georgians, for all their differences, were conducting a common struggle against the autocratic empire, and must work together. Marxism fulfilled both the internationalist and the anti-capitalist requirements. The Georgians became

197 Sargis, *The Romanoffs and the Bagrations*, 1996; quoted by Brien Horan, “The Russian Imperial Succession”, [http://www.chivalricorders.org/royalty/gotha/russuclw.htm](http://www.chivalricorders.org/royalty/gotha/russuclw.htm). The smaller Georgian kingdoms of Samegrelo and Imereti (western Georgia) were annexed in 1803 and 1804, respectively.


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perhaps the most sophisticated Marxists in the empire, taking over from the Austrian Marxists the notion of individual cultural autonomy as the best way of making possible inter-ethnic cooperation in a multi-national state. They also adapted their original agrarian programme so that it met the demands of peasants, and in that way were able to make themselves the leading political force in the countryside as well as the towns.”

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

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

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

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

199 Hosking, op. cit., pp. 385-386.
200 Figes, op. cit., p. 75.
We may conclude that Russification was not a success in any of the regions of the Russian empire where it was applied, even in those, such as Ukraine and Belorussia, where religious, linguistic and cultural similarities were greatest. Nevertheless, it is an exaggeration to call this policy one of oppression and tyranny (we shall deal with the special case of the Jews later). And the epithet of “the prison of the peoples” given to Russia by her enemies was by no means just. In general, Russia coped remarkably well with the extraordinary diversity of peoples and traditions within her borders. Thus what subordinate people anywhere had more freedom than the Finns, the Muslims of Central Asia or the pagans of Siberia?

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

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

203 Lieven, Empire, p. 275.
204 Lieven, Empire, p. 276.
Here we come to the hub of the matter: Russification was of little value if the Russia it propagated was not Orthodoxy, the root of Russian culture and the one thing that could truly unite its peoples at a deep level. But the Russian government, while generously supporting Orthodox missions to pagan peoples, and in general supporting Orthodoxy everywhere, did not always see its nationalities policy in terms of the spreading of Orthodoxy.

There were several reasons for this. First, the actual preaching of Orthodoxy is a task of the Church, not the State – and the Church was barely able to cope with the task of preaching the Gospel to the Russians themselves. (Thus St. John of Kronstadt had wanted to preach Christ to the Alaskan Indians, but decided to stay in Russia, where so many baptised people were still in need of conversion to True Christianity.) Secondly, the principles of religious tolerance and religious indifferentism had let down deep roots into the culture of the elites, who, if they had to preach or impose something, preferred that it would not be a dogmatic religion. And thirdly and most importantly, as Lieven points out, the dominant culture and religion of the Russian elites was no longer Orthodoxy, but West European liberalism, which led naturally to socialism, anti-tsarism and anti-Russianism.

And so if the Russians were going to draw the peoples of the empire away from nationalism and towards universalism, it would be unlikely to be to the universalist civilization or “high culture” of Orthodox Christianity, the official religion of the empire, but to the quite different “high culture” of West European liberalism. What actually happened was a kind of bifurcation. Orthodoxy continued to be preached, with positive results, to the pagans and to the peasants, but the intelligentsia also continued to preach their gospel, the gospel of westernism, constitutionalism and ecumenism, with the most catastrophic results for the whole world…

Figes makes the important observation that it was not the liberals with their emphasis on individual human rights who exploited the nationalist unrest among the empire’s non-Russian peoples, but the socialists. “This socialistic aspect of the nationalist movements is worth underlining. For the late twentieth-century reader might be tempted to assume, on the basis of the collapse of Communism and the rise of nationalism in Eastern Europe, that they must have been opposed to socialist goals. What is striking about the nationalist movements within the Russian Empire is that their most successful political variants were nearly always socialist in form: Joseph Pilsudski’s Polish Socialist Party led the national movement in Poland; the Socialist Party became the national party of the Finns; the Baltic movements were led by socialists; the Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionaries were the leading Ukrainian national party; the Mensheviks led the Georgian national movement; and the Dashnak socialists the Armenian one. This was in part because the main ethnic conflict also tended to run along social lines: Estonian and Latvian peasants against German landlords and merchants; Ukrainian peasants against Polish or Russian landlords and officials; Azeri workers, or Georgian peasants, against the Armenian bourgeoisie; Kazakh and Kirghiz pastoralists against Russian farmers; and so on. Parties which appealed exclusively to nationalism effectively deprived themselves of mass support; whereas those which successfully combined the national with the social struggle had an almost unstoppable democratic force…”

205 Figes, op. cit., p. 71.
Russia at the turn of the century was a country of enormous size, population and contrasting social classes. Three of the biggest and most important classes were the nobility, the revolutionary Jews and the Christian peasantry. All three drew attention to themselves in the year 1903.

The nobility, writes Douglas Smith, comprised almost 1.9 million people, about 1.5 percent of the entire population of the Russian Empire. They were a diverse group, divided by nationality (Russians, Poles, Georgians, Baltic Germans [and Tatars]), religion (Russian Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Lutheranism), education and wealth (from a great deal of both to little of either), and political outlook (from reactionaries to revolutionaries). There were hereditary nobles, whose privileged status passed to their offspring, and personal nobles, whose did not. So great was the diversity among the empire’s nobility that historians continue to debate whether it even deserves to be considered a distinct social class. If there was one thing that defined a noble, it was, as a commentator wrote in ‘The Tasks of the Nobility’ in 1895, a certain quality ‘of being among the chosen, of being privileged, of not being the same as all other people’. The Russian nobility was never, however, a class of idle rich. Rather, it had always been a service class that initially derived its privileges and then increasingly its own identity from serving the grand princes of Muscovy and later the tsars of imperial Russia whether at court, in the military, or in the administration.

“At the top of the nobility was the aristocratic elite, roughly a hundred or so families with great landed wealth dating back to at least the eighteenth century. These nobles often held high positions at court or in the government. The aristocracy was typically old, titled, and rich. It intermarried and had a sense of itself as a self-defined group. Aristocrats belonged to the same clubs and salons, and the young men served in the elite imperial guards regiments like the Chevaliers Gardes, the Horse Guard, and the Emperor’s Life Guard Hussars. Part of the aristocracy (including the Golitsyns, Gagarins, Dolgorukys, and Volkonskys) descended from the ancient princely dynasties of Riurik and Gedymin; others came from the nontitled boyar families of the Muscovite court, most notably the Naryshkins and the Sheremetevs, a branch of which acquired the title of count under Peter the Great; or from other old noble families that had served in the cavalry units, such as the Shuvalovs, Vorontsovs, and Orlovs.”

“‘Petersburg society’,“ writes Montefiore, “was not as important as it liked to think it was. This was the beginning of the Silver Age of poetry and art (following the Golden Age earlier in the century) in which, dissatisfied by Orthodox religion, Victorian morality and scientific rationalism, and exhiliarted by the rush of the modern, the avant-garde tested the meaning of art, faith and pleasure by experimenting with imagery, language and dance, as well as sexual adventurism, necromancy and narcotics. While a powerful mercantile class of textile and railway tycoons emerged in the cities, the nobility was mortgaging its estates, a retreat before the energy of the merchants as played out in Anton Chekhov’s The Cherry Orchard.”

The aristocratic elite displayed itself particularly during the pre-lenten balls in the Winter Palace. “The Ball of 1903 was to be imperial Russia’s last great ball. What made it so spectacular and unusual was in large part its special theme. Although held on the two-hundredth-year anniversary of the capital’s founding by Peter the Great, [Tsar] Nicholas chose as the theme for the ball the reign of Peter’s father, Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich, and all the guests were instructed to come in costumes from the seventeenth century. Such was the excitement that vast sums of money were spent on designers and the finest tailors to create exquisite outfits of fancy brocades, silks, and satin decorated with gold, pearls, and diamonds. The men came attired as boyars, gunners, falconers, and Cossack hetmans; the ladies, as boyarinas, peasants (elaborately costumed ones anyway), and Muscovite ladies of the court. Some dressed as concrete historical figures. Count Sergei Sheremetev, for example, came as Field Marshal Count Boris Sheremetev, his great-great-grandfather. The emperor came as Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich, and Empress Alexandra, wearing a costume estimated at a million rubles, as Tsaritsa Maria Ilinichna. So enormous was its effect that the ball was repeated shortly thereafter at the home of Count Alexander Sheremetev.”

The ball left Grand Duke Alexander “with a bad feeling. He recalled an evening like it some twenty-five years earlier under Alexander II, but the times had changed. ‘A new and hostile Russia glaring through the large windows of the palace,’ he wrote. ‘This magnificent pageant of the seventeenth century must have made a strange impression on the foreign ambassadors; while we danced, the workers were striking and the clouds in the Far East were hanging dangerously low...’”

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The contrast between the world of the aristocratic elite and that of the striking workers and their Jewish revolutionary leaders could hardly have been greater. The Jews were murdering thousands of government officials – these were the real “pogroms” of the period. But the world chose to concentrate on the “counter-pogroms” of the Orthodox Christian peasantry.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn writes: “Jewish pogroms were stirred up at all times and only in the South-West of Russia (as also was the case in 1881).” And on April 6, 1903 – the last day of the Jewish Pascha and the first day of the Orthodox Pascha – a pogrom broke out in Kishinev, capital of the province of Moldavia in South-West Russia. According to the official figures drawn up in the indictment by the procurator of the local court, V.N. Goremykin, it began with “the usual clashes between Jews and Christians which have always taken place in recent years at Pascha” and with “the hostility of the local Christian population towards the Jews”. And then “two weeks before Pascha... rumours began to circulate in Kishinev that there would be a slaughter of Jews in the forthcoming feast”. A particularly inflammatory role was played here by the newspaper Bessarabets, whose editor, Pavolachi Krushevan, also published The Protocols of the Elders of Zion.

208 Smith, op. cit., pp. 52-53.  
The Protocols purported to be the minutes of a meeting of Jewish elders somewhere in the West, but are in fact largely plagiarized from Maurice Joly’s Dialogue aux Enfers entre Montesquieu et Machiavel, published in 1864. When the forgery was demonstrated to Tsar Nicholas II, he said: “Drop the Protocols. One cannot defend a pure cause by dirty methods.”210 Krushevans Bessarabets printed “from day to day sharp articles of an anti-Jewish tendency, which did not fail to leave a trace… among the salesmen and petty scribes, etc. of the uneducated people of Bessarabia. The latest provocative articles of Bessarabets contained communications about the murder in Dubossary of a Christian child supposedly carried out by Jews by ritual means…”211

The pogrom began after the murder of a Russian man and the death of a Russian girl in the local Jewish hospital.212 According to the indictment, 42 people were killed, including 38 Jews, and about 500 Jewish shop fronts were destroyed. By April 9, 816 people had been arrested, of whom 664 were charged with crimes.

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

“And they were not unearthed by any subsequent investigation.

“But in spite of this, the Jewish ‘Bureau of Defence’ (with the participation of the very influential M. Vinaver, G. Sliozberg, L. Bramson, M. Kulisher, A. Braudo, S. Pozner and M. Krol), had no sooner heard about the pogrom in Petersburg than they excluded from the beginning any other causes of it than a tsarist plot: ‘Who gave the order for the organization of the pogrom, who directed the dark forces that carried it out?’ – ‘Immediately we learned under what circumstances the Kishinev slaughter took place, it became clear for us that this diabolic undertaking would never have taken place… if it had not been thought up in the Department of Police and carried out in fulfilment of orders from there’. Although, of course, writes the same M. Krol in the 40s of the 20th century, ‘the scoundrels organized the Kishinev pogrom in strict secrecy, we are profoundly convinced that the Kishinev slaughter was organized from above, with the knowledge, and perhaps even on the initiative of Plehve. Only if we had the most indisputable evidence against them could we tear the mask from these highly-placed murderers and place them in a fitting light before the whole world. Therefore we decided to send the well-known lawyer Zarudny to Kishinev.’ ‘He was the most suitable person to carry out the mission that we had laid on him’, he ‘took it upon himself to discover the hidden springs of the Kishinev slaughter’, after which the police ‘to make a diversion arrested some tens of robbers and thieves’. (Let us recall that on the day after the pogrom 816 were arrested.) – Zarudny collected and took away from Kishinev ‘exceptionally important material’, that is to say: ‘that the main culprit and organizer of the pogrom was the chief of the Kishinev garrison Levendal’“.213

211 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 322.
213 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 327-328.
This “exceptionally important material” was never published anywhere. Goremykin looked into the accusations against Levendal and found them baseless. But Krushevan, whose inflammatory articles had indeed helped the pogrom on arriving in Petersburg two months later, was attacked and wounded with a knife by Pinkhas Dashevsky... The government sacked the governor of Bessarabia, while Plehve issued a circular to all governors, city bosses and heads of police expressing disturbance at the inactivity of the Kishinev authorities and calling for decisive action to cut of violence.

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

The Jews and radicals inside Russia, and the European and American press outside Russia, were loud in their accusations that the Russian government was responsible for the Kishinev pogrom. The newspaper magnate William Hurst even used the fateful word “holocaust”... On May 18 The Times of London published a letter of a “completely secret letter” of Plehve to the Kishinev governor von Raaben in which Plehve supposedly asked the governor not to put down any disturbances against the Jews but only to inform him about them. The letter turned out to be a forgery, as even pro-Semitic sources accept. However, this did not prevent the 1996 edition of The Jewish Encyclopaedia from reiterating the accusation as if it were fact...

Far from the superficial glitter of Petersburg, and the bloody violence of Kishinev, a truly holy feast was celebrated in August, 1903 in the monastery of Sarov, deep in patriarchal Russia. The occasion was the glorification – on the initiative of the Tsar - of St. Seraphim of Sarov (+1832), perhaps the greatest saint of the Petersburg period of Russian history.

The Russian Church had undertaken few glorifications of saints during the St. Petersburg period of her history. However, early in his reign Tsar Nicholas II initiated no less than six. As Tikhon Sisoev writes, the most important of these was that of St. Seraphim on July 19, 1903: “The question of the canonization of the Sarov ascetic was first rasied in 1883. At that time the leader of the Moscow women gymnasia, Viktorov, wrote a letter to the over-procurator, Konstantin Pobedonostsev,
suggesting that ‘the beginning of the reign of the emperor [Alexander III] should be marked by the uncovering of the relics of the pious God-pleaser who was honoured throughout Russia. However, there was no reply. Later other private suggestions were rejected.

“In 1894 on the initiative of Igumen Raphael (Trukhin), the superior of the Sarov monastery, a detailed life of Seraphim of Sarov was composed in which confirmed testimonies of 94 miracles from the life of the ascetic were documented. The Synod acted in an ambiguous way: they refused the canonization, but continued to gather information. Thus the just-started process of glorification hung in the air, and it is not known how long the silence of the Synod would have continued if it had not been for the ‘cunning’ of Archimandrite Seraphim (Chichagov)

“... Archimandrite Seraphim was an energetic man. Having obtained access to the archives of the Diveyevo monastery, he assembled a whole complex of various information about the life and miracles of Seraphim of Sarov, which he systematized in chronological order. As a result of this investigation, a book was published, The Chronicle of the Seraphimo-Diveyevo Monastery, which the archimandrite, bypassing the Synod, handed to Nicholas II after a personal audience with his Majesty. We find evidence of this in the diary entries of General Alexander Kireev, who points out that the procurator Pobedonostsev afterwards called Archimandrite Seraphim ‘a great scoundrel and rogue’. The question of the canonization began moving from stationary.

“In the spring of 1902 the over-procurator was invited by the emperor to a family breakfast at which Nicholas II suggested providing – already within a few days – a decree on the glorification of Seraphim of Sarov. Pobedonostsev objected that such haste seemed to him inappropriate when it was a matter of glorifying a man. The empress cut in: “His Majesty can do anything.” The suggestion became an order.

“Why did the Royal Family adopt such unbending determination? There were various reasons for this. The Sarov ascetic had already been venerated for a long time in the Romanov family. Thanks to the prayers of Seraphim of Sarov, it was thought, the seven-year-old daughter of Alexander II had been healed. Empress Alexandra Fyodorovna believed that it was precisely through his prayers that a boy – the future heir to the throne - would finally be born in the family. But apart from his personal veneration for the saint, Nicholas II was seeking in the canonization of Seraphim the resolution of profound internal political problems. In the opinion of many historians, his Majesty in the course of the first half of his reign was trying to come closer to the people. “Noble Russia” since 1861 [the emancipation of the serfs] had been inexorably falling apart,’ writes G.P. Fedorov, the Russian historian and philosopher. ‘The Autocracy did not have the strength to tear itself away from its noble roots and would perish together with it. Russia, which had been frozen for twenty years by Pobedonostsev, was clearly rottning under the snow.’ It was precisely the widespread veneration of Seraphim of Sarov among the people that, in the eyes of the emperor
himself, provided an opportunity to find a point of contact between the simple people, the intelligentsia and the nobility.

“One way or another, Pobedonostsev submitted, and the Church Gazette of July, 1902 announced the beginning of the preparation of the official canonization. In the same month the empress sent gifts to Sarov Desert: a lampada and church vestments. It seemed that the glorification of Seraphim of Sarov was an accomplished fact. But new hindrances arose...

“On January 11, 1903, a commission headed by Metropolitan Vladimir of Moscow arrived in Sarov to unearth and examine the relics of Seraphim of Sarov. Metropolitan Benjamin (Fedchenko) remembered: “The body of the saint had been subject to corruption, but the bones, which were in a perfect state of preservation, were laid out correctly. The hairs of the head and beard had also been preserved; they were of a grayish-ginger colour. The results of the commission were handed to the Most Holy Synod. ‘Why did they go off into some wood to find only some bones?’ said one of the members of the Synod. Everybody was disturbed – if the body had been corrupted, it meant that Seraphim was not a saint.

“The point was that during the Synodal period the idea had become embedded in the people’s and clergy’s consciousness that the holiness of a reposed man was witnessed not only by his life and miracles, but also by the incorruption of his relics. In order to refute this non-obligatory condition of canonization, a whole theological investigation was required. Its results were published in the declaration of Metropolitan Anthony (Vadkovsky): ‘Incorruption of relics is by no means considered to be a sign of the glorification of the holy God-pleasers. When there is incorruption of relics, this is a miracles, but only in addition to those miracles which are worked through their mediation.’ The doubts had been dispelled.

“After this the Synod declared themselves satisfied with the results of the inspection of the relics and prepared a report for the emperor in which they expressed their agreement with the canonization of Seraphim of Sarov. Having read the report, Nicholas II placed the following resolution on it: ‘I have read this with a feeling of true joy and deep emotion’.

“A colossal amount of work was carried out in connection with the organization of the coming festivity in the short period from the beginning of 1903: special ‘missionary’ trains were sent to Sarov, new hotels were built, medical care points were organized. By July [17/30] about 300,000 pilgrims and more than 500 clergy had arrived in the town. That evening his Majesty himself arrived. Prince Vladimir Volkonsky, who also came to Sarov, recalled: ‘There was a real unity. Not seeming, but sincere and complete, involving the whole assembled people, every person, of whatever class he was. Such a tenderness and kindness reigned over the whole of Sarov and over all who had come under its shade.’ We find the same impression in
the diary of Nicholas II: ‘A huge exaltation of spirit both from the triumphal event and from the amazing mood of the people.’”219

“The Royal Family,” writes Archpriest Lev Lebedev, “had known about the great Wonderworker of the Russian Land for a long time. But a particular impression was made on the Tsar and Tsarina by the book A Chronicle of the Seraphimo-Diveyevo Women’s Monastery, written and given personally to Nicholas II by Archimandrite Seraphim (Chichagov) – a scion of a noble family, one of the most educated and talented representatives of the nobility, who wanted to exchange a military career for monastic asceticism... In the Chronicle there were so many teachings, words of the holy elder of Sarov, prophecies, information about his miracles that the Royal Family was inspired with great faith in him! The triumphant glorification of Seraphim of Sarov, who had already been widely venerated in the people for a long time, was appointed from July 17-20, 1903. The Tsar came to Sarov with his whole family, his mother, the widowed Empress Maria Fyodorovna, his brothers, the Great Princes, other members of the Imperial House, and his suite. The Royal Family had never undertaken such a pilgrimage before. It was unlike any of the other journeys undertaken by the Tsar and Tsaritsa to holy places. Up to 300,000 worshippers from every corner of Russia assembled in Sarov for those days. Nicholas II tried to be present at all the long, almost unending services. The peak of the festivities was the transfer of the relics of St. Seraphim from the monastery’s hospital church of SS. Zosimas and Sabbatius, where he had been buried, into the Dormition cathedral of the Sarov community on July 18. The coffin with the relics was borne on their shoulders by the Tsar, the Great Princes and the hierarchs, tightly surrounded by a sea of people.”220

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

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


220 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 388-389.
“The Sarov days of 1903 became a key event in the whole reign. During the festivities the Tsar received from the widow of P.A. Motovilov a letter of St. Seraphim of Sarov addressed precisely to him, Nicholas II [‘to the Tsar in whose reign I shall be glorified’], sealed (but never opened!) with the soft part of a piece of bread. The Tsar read the letter and his face changed, and after reading it... he wept... To this day nobody knows what was in the letter. We can guess that it contained some kind of prophecy about his destiny, or the destiny of Russia. In the same period Nicholas II visited the fool-for-Christ Pasha of Sarov... She symbolically (by means of a doll) foretold to the Tsar the birth of a son, and spoke much with him in figurative language. The Tsar left amazed and joyful: ‘I have travelled across the whole of Russia and have not met such a saint. Everyone has received me as Tsar, but she as a simple person,’ he said. Pasha placed the portrait of Nicholas II in her prayer corner and made many prostrations to the earth in front of it, which greatly exhausted her cell-attendants who used to lift and lower Pasha since she could not make prostrations herself because of illness. ‘Matushka, why are you praying to the Tsar?!’ they asked. ‘You know nothing,’ replied the blessed one. ‘He will be higher than all the Tsars.’ When war began in 1914 Pasha, covered in tears, began to kiss the feet of the Tsar on the portrait, saying: ‘Dear one, it is already near the end,’ and sent him the message: ‘Your Majesty, come down from the Throne yourself’...

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

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

The Sarov days were like a last warm glow from the fading fire of Holy Rus’. They demonstrated that the ideal of a nation united by the Orthodox faith and in submission to a benevolent Tsar-Father was still a living reality. And indeed, there were many great saints still living in Russia at that time, such as the Optina Elders and St. John of Kronstadt, and many hundreds of thousands more who would suffer martyrdom during the Soviet period. These holy people were the fruit of Holy Russia, and its justification. And this holy fruit ripened under the protection of the tsarist regime and with its active support, the proof of which would be the holiness of the Tsar-Martyr himself and his martyred family...

Dominic Lieven writes: "Between 1895 and 1901 the Empress had given birth to four daughters: Olga, Tatiana, Marie and Anastasia. The four little girls were beautiful, healthy and lively children who were greatly loved by their parents. Nicholas was a fine father and the family circle was full of love, warmth and trust. If the Emperor had a favourite it was probably Tatiana, whose personality came closest to that of her mother. Olga, his eldest daughter, was the most thoughtful, sensitive and intelligent of the four. Marie, the third, with huge grey eyes and a warm-hearted,

221 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 390.
simple, friendly manner, was always the easiest to get on with at first acquaintance. Anastasia, born in 1901, was notorious as the family's comedian. Under Russian law, however, no woman could inherit the crown. Had Nicholas died before 1904, the throne would have gone to his kind-hearted but weak-willed younger brother, the Grand Duke Michael. Since Michael was a bachelor in 1904 and subsequently contracted an illegal and morganatic marriage, the Romanov inheritance would then have passed to a younger brother of Alexander III, the Grand Duke Vladimir, and his descendants. Tension and mutual dislike between the 'Vladimir branch' and the imperial couple were never far below the surface in the twentieth century. Much therefore hung on the life of the little boy born in August, 1904. All the more horrifying was the discovery that the child had haemophilia.

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

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

In spite of the joyous Sarov Days, which demonstrated the survival of true faith among the people, the fact was that on the whole the Russian people were falling away from the faith and their loyalty to the Autocracy. And not only among the westernized educated classes. The peasants, too - that class that the tsars believed was most devoted to Altar and Throne - were losing their zeal.

Thus “according to an analysis of the Church’s books of registration of confession, it was quite usual for Russian peasants at the end of the 19th century not to confess their sins and not to partake of Holy Communion for several years. Only around 20 per cent of the peasants per year in Central Russia used to go to confession.” It was this fact that, more than any other, pointed to the fall of Holy Russia…

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

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51. PEASANTS AND SOLDIERS

“At the turn of the century,” writes Dominic Lieven, “the government was less scared by working-class militancy than by growing evidence of peasant discontent. In June 1901 A.A. Polovtsov wrote: ‘after the students’ disorders there have followed strikes and factor workers’ battles with the police. Next the peasant mass will rise up with a demand for land. Today’s militia [the conscript army], torn away from this very land for a short period, will not use its weapons to curb these appetites, which it itself shares. This will be the end of the Russia which we know.’ Nine months later, when a wave of arson and rioting swept the countryside in Poltava and Kharkov provinces, Polovtsov’s prediction seemed amply justified. In the wake of these agrarian troubles the Secretary to the Committee of Ministers, Anatol Kulomzin, sought to reassure his wife. There had always, he wrote, been agrarian riots of this kind in Russia, during which peasants customarily paid back stewards and foremen for a multitude of old scores and minor injustices. Troops had refused to open fire on only one occasion, and even then out of simple dislike for he officer who gave the order. Alexander Kireev had less reason to hide his fears since his comments were confined to his private diary. ‘I think we can cope with the students and co. without difficulty, but millions of peasants… that’s a completely different matter.’

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

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

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

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

“But since the abolition of serfdom in 1861, indeed to some extent even before that, the commune had been the most important institution in Russian rural life. The peasant community, which was usually but not always made up of inhabitants of a single village, administered and judged by its own members through officials elected by itself. It also bore collective responsibility for paying the state’s taxes. Although in principle the administrative, judicial and fiscal institutions of the village were distinct from the community’s collective ownership of the land, in practice the power of the commune was enormously enhanced by the fact that it controlled, and in many cases periodically redistributed, the villagers’ basic source of wealth.

“Defenders of the commune believed it was a form of social welfare, which would ensure that no peasant would go without the means of survival. They felt that at least
until the capitalist economy had developed to the point where millions of secure jobs existed in the cities, the only way to avoid pauperization was to ensure that any peasant, even if he was temporarily resident in a town, would have a plot of land on which to fall back. Because the masses would not be destitute and would have rights to the use of property, it was believed that they would be more immune to radical and socialist propaganda than urban workers and landless agricultural labourers in the West. Not even the most ardent defenders of the commune would probably have argued that, from the narrow perspective of agricultural modernization, it was the best form of landownership; they did deny, and probably rightly, that it was as serious an obstacle to technical improvement as its enemies suggested. The fact that the commune was seen to be an old Russian institution which would preserve the country from the perils that had attended modernization in the West also added to its appeal. Anatol Kulomzin, for instance, was very much on the liberal and Westernizing wing of the ruling elite. He wrote, however, that even he swallowed whole the Russian nationalist view of the commune, so flattering to patriotic pride, and ‘only troubles of 1905-6 which pointed to the socialist spirit which the commune had bred in the life of the peasantry finally sobered me.’”224

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

Now the commune and “peasant socialism” was doomed in Russia from the moment that Alexander II decided, after the defeat in the Crimean War, to enter upon the path of industrialization. For industrialization required industrial workers living near industrial centres, which meant that peasants had to be free to sell up and move – in other words, they had to be free citizens in relation to their noble owners and free landholders in relation to their communes. The problem was that, while emancipation had made them citizens and freed them from the bonds of the landowner, it had not made them truly independent of the commune and therefore truly independent landholders. In fact, since emancipation had made many nobles poorer, persuading them, too, - seven out of ten of them225 - to move to the cities, the communes had become even stronger, moving into the cultural void left by the nobility and controlling more land that used to belong to the nobility. (This was in contrast to, for example, Britain, where the landowning nobility remained powerful in the countryside long into the industrial age.) And so, though doomed in the longer term, peasant socialism for a time became more powerful and more aggressive.

Pipes writes: “The muzhik had no notion of property rights in the Roman sense of absolute dominion over things. According to one authority, Russian peasants did not even have a word for landed property (zemel’naia sobstvennost’): they only spoke of possession (vladenie), which in their mind was indissolubly bound up with physical labor. Indeed, the muzhik was not even able clearly to distinguish the land to which

224 Lieven, Tsar Nicholas II, pp. 80-83.
225 Pipes, op. cit., p. 112.
he held legal title by virtue of purchase from his communal allotment and from the
land which he leased, all of which he called ‘our land’: ‘The expression “our land” in
the mouth of the peasant includes indiscriminately the whole land he occupies for
the time being, the land which is his private property…the land held in common by
the village (which is therefore only in temporary possession of each household), and
also the land rented by the village from neighbouring landlords.’ The muzhik’s
whole attitude toward landed property derived from a collective memory of
centuries of nomadic agriculture, when land was as abundant as water in the sea and
available to all. The ‘slash-and-burn’ method of cultivating virgin forest had gone out
of use in most of Russia in the late Middle Ages, but the recollection of the time when
peasants roamed the forest, felling trees and cultivating the ash-covered clearings,
remained very much alive. Labor and labor alone transformed res nullius into
possession: because virgin soil was not touched by labor, it could not be owned. To
the peasant’s mind, appropriation of lumber was a crime, because it was the product
of labor, whereas felling trees was not. Similarly, peasants believed that ‘he who cuts
down a tree with a beehive in it is a thief, because he appropriates human labor; he
who cuts down a forest which no one has planted benefits from God’s gift, which is
as free as water and air.’ Such a viewpoint, of course, had nothing in common with
the rights of property as upheld in Russia’s courts. No wonder that a high proportion
of the criminal offenses for which peasants were convicted had to do with illegal
cutting of trees. This attitude was not motivated by class antagonism: it applied as
much to land and forest owned by fellow peasants. The belief that the expenditure of
manual labor alone justified wealth was a fundamental article of faith of the Russian
peasantry, and for this reason it despised landlords, bureaucrats, industrial workers,
priests, and intellectuals as ‘idlers’. Radical intellectuals exploited this attitude to
denigrate businessmen and officials.”

Pipes probably exaggerates the contempt of the ordinary peasant for non-peasants
here, and in particular for priests. The priest was often as poor as himself, and had to
work his own allotment in order to survive. The period after the revolution showed
that the solidarity between priest and peasant was still a powerful bond in many
villages. In general, however, there can be no question but that a different attitude to
landownership put many peasants at odds not only with the property-
owning
classes, officials and businessmen, but also with the Tsar and the Church, which
upheld the traditional – that is to say, the Roman – concept of ownership.

Pipes continues: “Such thinking underlay the universal belief of the Russian
peasantry after Emancipation in the inevitable advent of a nationwide repartition of
private land. In 1861, the liberated serfs could not understand why approximately
one-half of the land which they had previously tilled was given to the landlords. At
first, they refused to believe in the genuineness of such an absurd law. Later, after
they had reconciled themselves to it, they decided that it was a temporary
arrangement, soon to be annulled by a new law that would turn over to them, for
communal distribution, all privately held land, including that of other peasants.
Legends circulating in the villages had as one of their recurrent themes the prediction
of the imminent appearance of a ‘Savior’ who would make all of Russia into a land of
communes. ‘The peasants believe,’ according to A.N. Engelgardt, who spent many
years living in their midst and wrote what is possibly the best book on their habits

and mentality, ‘that after the passage of some time, in the course of census-taking, there will take place a general levelling of all the land throughout Russia, just as presently, in every commune, at certain intervals, there takes place a repartitioning of the land among its members, each being allotted as much as he can manage. This completely idiosyncratic conception derives directly from the totality of peasant agrarian relations. In the communes, after a lapse of time, there takes place a redistribution of land, an equalization among its members. Under the [anticipated] general repartition, all the land will be repartitioned, and the communes will be equalized. The issue here is not simply the seizure of landlord land, as the journalists would have it, but the equalization of all the land, including that which belongs to peasants. Peasants who have purchased land as property, or, as they put it, ‘for eternity’, talk exactly as do all the other peasants, and have no doubt whatever that the ‘lands to which they hold legal title’ can be taken away from their rightful owners and given to others.’ The soundness of this insight would be demonstrated in 1917-18.

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

“Such thinking meant that the Russian village was forever poised to attack private (non-communal) properties: it was kept in check only by fear. This produced a most unhealthy situation. The revolutionary potential was an ever-present reality, in spite of the peasant’s anti-revolutionary, pro-monarchist sentiments. But then his radicalism was not inspired by political or even class animus. (When asked what should happen to landlords who had been evicted from their lands in consequence of the ‘Black Repartition’, some peasants would suggest they be place on a government salary.) Tolstoy put his finger on the crux of the problem when shortly after Emancipation he wrote: ‘The Russian revolution will not be against the Tsar and despotism but against landed property. It will say: from me, the human being, take what you want, but leave us all the land.’

“In the late nineteenth century, the peasant assumed that the nationwide repartition would be ordered by the Tsar: in peasant legends of the time, the ‘Savior’, the ‘Great Leveller’, was invariably the ‘true tsar’. The belief fortified the peasantry’s instinctive monarchism. Accustomed to the authority of the bol’shak in the household, by analogy it viewed the Tsar as the bol’shak or master (khoziain) of the
country. The peasant ‘saw in the Tsar the actual owner and father of Russia, who directly managed his immense household’ – a primitive version of the patrimonial principle underlying Russian political culture. The reason why the peasant felt so confident that the Tsar would sooner or later order a general partition of the land was that, as he saw it, it lay in the monarch’s interest to have all the lands justly distributed and properly cultivated.

“Such attitudes provide the background to the peasant’s political philosophy, which, for all its apparent contradictions, had a certain logic. To the peasant, government was a power that compelled obedience: its main attribute was the ability to coerce people to do things which, left to themselves, they would never do, such as pay taxes, serve in the army, and respect private property in land. By this definition, a weak government was no government. The epithet Groznyi applied to the mentally unbalanced and sadistic Ivan IV, usually rendered in English as ‘Terrible’, actually meant ‘Awesome’ and carried no pejorative meaning. Persons who possessed vlast’ (authority) and did not exercise it in an ‘awe-inspiring’ manner could be ignored. Observance of laws for the peasant invariably represented submission to a force majeure, to the will of someone stronger, not the recognition of some commonly shared principle or interest. ‘Today, as in the days of serfdom,’ wrote the Slavophile Iurii Samarin, ‘the peasant knows no other sure pledge of the genuineness of imperial commands than the display of armed force: a round of musketry still is to him the only authentic confirmation of the imperial commands.’ In this conception, moral judgement of governments or their actions was as irrelevant as approval or condemnation of the vagaries of nature. There were no ‘good’ or ‘bad’ governments: there were only strong and weak ones, and strong ones were always preferable to weak ones. (Similarly, serfs used to prefer cruel but efficient masters to kindly but ineffective ones.) Weak rulers made it possible to return to primitive freedom or volia, understood as license to do whatever one wanted, unrestrained by man-made law. Russian governments took account of these attitudes and went to great lengths to impress on the country the image of boundless power. Experienced bureaucrats opposed freedom of the press and parliamentary government in good part because they feared that the existence of an overt, legitimized opposition would be interpreted by the peasantry as a sign of weakness and a signal to rebel.”

Again, we may suspect Pipes of some exaggeration here. The large-scale peasant rebellions against Soviet power in Tambov province and Siberia in 1920-21, and still more the rebellion against collectivization in the Black Earth region in the late 1920s and early 1930s, show that large numbers of peasants did know the difference between a “good” and “bad” power, and by no means always identified might with right. Moreover, the rebellion in the Black Earth region was closely linked with the True Orthodox Church and a specifically Orthodox Christian doctrine of political legitimacy: that for Orthodox Russians only the Orthodox tsar could be a legitimate, God-established authority, and that the “authority” that overthrew him could only be an “anti-authority”, established not by God but by the devil (Revelation 13.2).

Nevertheless, this traditional teaching came to the fore again in the peasantry only as a result of the fiery trial of the revolution, when the terrible sufferings caused by the new “authority” had forced the peasants to rethink their assumptions about

power and return to the traditional teaching of the Church (especially the commandments on stealing, killing and envy). The very success of the revolution, and the rapidity with which all forms of deference to authority collapsed in 1917, witnesses to the truth of Pipes’ thesis for the majority of the peasants. And therefore the traditional hypothesis of right-wing historians and publicists that the revolution was caused mainly by the ideas of westernizing intellectuals needs to be modified at any rate to this extent: that if Westerners and westernizing ideas started and led the revolution, its success was guaranteed by the support it received from peasants who were scarcely touched by western ideas, but who had fallen away from the traditional teaching of the Orthodox Church in other ways...

And yet, as the Russian proverb goes, “the fish rots from the head”: once the head has rotted, there are few obstacles to the rest of the body undergoing the same corrupting process. Ultimately, the gradual alienation of the peasantry from its Orthodox roots must be attributed to the failure of its teachers, the nobility, the intellectuals and even the clergy, to provide right teaching in word and deed. The close unity of upper and lower classes that we observe in medieval Russia was ruptured by the eighteenth-century tsars and nobility, and while the nineteenth-century tsars were much more pious, they were unable to do more than slow down, but not reverse, the destructive process their predecessors had initiated.

Pipes continues: “At the turn of the century, observers noted subtle changes in the attitudes of the peasantry, particularly the younger generation. They were religiously less observant, less respectful of tradition and authority, restless, and somehow disaffected not only over land but over life in general.

“The authorities were especially perturbed by the behaviour of those who moved into the cities and industrial centers. Such peasants were no longer intimidated by uniformed representatives of authority and were said to act ‘insolently’. When they returned to the village, permanently or to help out with the field work, they spread the virus of discontent. The Ministry of the Interior, observing this development, objected, on security grounds, to further industrialization and excessive rural mobility, but, for reasons previously stated, it had little success.

“One of the causes of changes in the mood of the peasantry seems to have been the spread of literacy, actively promoted by the authorities. The 1897 census revealed a very low level of literacy for the Russian Empire as a whole: only one in five (21 percent) of the inhabitants could read and write. But disaggregated the statistics looked considerably better. As a result of the combined efforts of rural schools and private associations, literacy showed a dramatic spurt among the young, especially males: in 1897, 45 percent of the Empire’s male inhabitants aged ten to twenty-nine were recorded as literate. At this rate, the population of the Empire could have been expected to attain universal literacy by 1925.

“Literate peasants and workers read most of all religious books (the gospels and lives of saints) followed by cheap escapist literature, the Russian equivalent of ‘penny dreadfuls’ – a situation not unlike that observed in England half a century earlier...
“Growing literacy, unaccompanied by proportionately expanding opportunities to apply the knowledge acquired from reading, probably contributed to the restlessness of the lower classes. It has been noted in other regions of the world that schooling and the spread of literacy often produce unsettling effects. African natives educated in missionary schools, as compared with untutored ones, have been observed to develop a different mentality, expressed in an unwillingness to perform monotonous work and in lower levels of honesty and truthfulness. Similar trends were noted among young Russian peasants exposed to urban culture, who also seemed less ready to acquiesce to the routine of rural work and lived in a state of powerful, if unfocused expectations aroused by reading about unfamiliar worlds.”

Orlando Figes points out that “the growth of the cities far outstripped the pace of church-building in them, with the result that millions of new workers, having been uprooted from the village with its church, were consigned to live in a state of Godlessness. The industrial suburb of Orekhovo-Zuevo, just outside Moscow, for example, had only one church for 40,000 residents at the turn of the century. Iuzovka, the mining capital of the Donbass, today called Donetsk, had only two for 20,000.”

Of course, industrial workers were still half-peasants, and often used to return to their villages at harvest time. But there, instead of recovering their Church consciousness in the more godly atmosphere of the village, they tended to infect the villagers with their own corrupt urban ways. This tendency was accentuated with time, as the older, more godly generation died off, and the younger, revolutionary generation took its place.

Moreover, continues Figes, “the traditional extended peasant family began to break up as the younger and more literate peasants struggled to throw off the patriarchal tyranny [sic] of the village and set up households of their own. They looked towards the city and its cultural values as a route to independence and self-worth. Virtually any urban job seemed desirable compared with the hardships and dull routines of peasant life. A survey of rural schoolchildren in the early 1900s found that half of them wanted to pursue an ‘educated profession’ in the city, whereas less than 2 per cent held any desire to follow in the footsteps of their peasant parents. ‘I want to be a shop assistant,’ said one schoolboy, ‘because I do not like to walk in the mud. I want to be like those people who are cleanly dressed and work as shop assistants.’ Educators were alarmed that, once they had learned to read, many peasant boys, in particular, turned their backs on agricultural work and set themselves above the other peasants by swaggering around in raffish city clothes. Such boys, wrote a villager, ‘would run away to Moscow and take any job’. They looked back on the village as a ‘dark’ and ‘backward’ world of superstition and crippling poverty - a world Trotsky would describe as the Russia of ‘icons and cockroaches’ - and they idealized the city as a force of social progress and enlightenment. Here was the basis of the cultural revolution on which Bolshevism would be built. For the Party rank and file was recruited in the main from peasant boys like these; and its ideology was a science of contempt for the peasant world. The revolution would sweep it all away…”

228 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 119-120.
In addition to the Church and the peasantry there was a third major mainstay of the Tsarist regime: the army. The army had to defend the borders of the largest state in the world and double up as a police force in times of emergency. And so, “in 1900, according to one estimate, the Russian government was spending ten times more on its army than on education and the navy received more than the key ministries of Agriculture and Justice.”

The Tsar particularly valued and loved the army; he loved nothing more than marching with it or inspecting it. However, as Margaret Macmillan writes, “the newly emerging political class [i.e. the liberals] saw the army as an army of the absolutist regime, its officers drawn from a narrow segment of society. Russian public opinion and Russian intellectuals did not take pride in colonial conquest or past military victories because such things seemed to have little to do with them. ‘In 1905, while the Russo-Japanese War still went on, Alexander Kuprin enjoyed great success with his novel, The Duel, which showed army officers as, among other things, drunken, dissolute, venal, lazy, bored, and brutal.”

Foreigners recognized that the ordinary Russian soldier was brave and patient, but they were more sceptical about his superiors. As Max Hastings writes, “after attending Russian manoeuvres, the British military attaché wrote: ‘we saw much martial spectacle, but very little serious training for modern war’. France’s Gen. Joseph Joffre, invited to inspect Nicholas’s forces in August 1913, agreed… The Russian army was burdened with weak leaders and chronic factionalism; one historian has written that it retained ‘some of the characteristics of a dynastic bodyguard’. Its ethos was defined by brutal discipline rather than skill or motivation…”

Figes writes: “The patrimonial principle survived longer in the army than in any other institution of the Russian state. Nothing was closer to the Romanov court or more important to it than the military. The power of the Empire was founded on it, and the needs of the army and the navy always took precedence in the formulation of tsarist policies. All the most important reforms in Russian history had been motivated by the need to catch up and compete in war with the Empire’s rivals in the west and south: Peter the Great’s reforms had been brought about by the wars with Sweden and the Ottomans; those of Alexander II by military defeat in the Crimea…

“Many historians have depicted the army as a stalwart buttress of the tsarist regime. That was also the view of most observers until the revolution. Major Von Tettau from the German General Staff wrote in 1903, for example, that the Russian soldier ‘is full of selflessness and loyalty to his duty’ in a way ‘that is scarcely to be found in any other army of the world’. He did ‘everything with a will’ and was always ‘unassuming, satisfied and jolly – even after labour and deprivation’. But in

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fact there were growing tensions between the military – in every rank – and the Romanov regime.

“For the country’s military leaders the root of the problem lay in the army’s dismal record in the nineteenth century, which many of them came to blame on the policies of the government. Defeat in the Crimean War (1853-6), followed by a costly campaign against Turkey (1877-8), and then the humiliation of defeat by the Japanese – the first time a major European power had lost to an Asian country – in 1904-5, left the army and the navy demoralized. The causes of Russia’s military weakness were partly economic: her industrial resources failed to match up to her military commitments in an age of increasing competition between empires. But this incompetence also had a political source: during the later nineteenth century the army had gradually lost its place at the top of government spending priorities. The Crimean defeat had discredited the armed services and highlighted the need to divert resources from the military to the modernization of the economy. The Ministry of War lost the favoured position it had held in the government system of Nicholas I (1825-55) and became overshadowed by the Ministries of Finance and the Interior, which from this point on received between them the lion’s share of state expenditure. Between 1881 and 1902 the military’s share of the budget dropped from 30 per cent to 18 per cent. Ten years before the First World War the Russian army was spending only 57 per cent of the amount spent on each soldier in the German army, and only 63 per cent of that spent in the Austrian. In short, the Russian soldier went to war worse trained, worse equipped and more poorly serviced than his enemy. The army was so short of cash that it relied largely on its own internal economy to clothe and feed itself. Soldiers grew their own food and tobacco, and repaired their own uniforms and boots. They even earned money for the regiment by going off to work as seasonal labourers on landed estates, in factories and mines near their garrisons. Many soldiers spent more time growing vegetables or repairing boots than they did learning how to handle their guns. By reducing the military budget, the tsarist regime created an army of farmers and cloggers.

“The demoralization of the army was also connected to its increasing role in the suppression of civilian protests. The Russian Empire was covered with a network of garrisons. Their job was to provide more or less instant military assistance for the provincial governors or the police to deal with unrest. Between 1883 and 1903 the troops were called out nearly 1,500 times. Officers complained bitterly that this police duty was beneath the dignity of a professional soldier, and that it distracted the army from its proper military purpose. They also warned of the damaging effect it was likely to have on the army’s discipline. History proved them right. The vast majority of the private soldiers were peasants, and their morale was heavily influenced by the news they received from their villages. When the army was called out to put down the peasant uprisings of 1905-6 many of the units, especially in the peasant-dominated infantry, refused to obey and mutinied in support of the revolution. There were over 400 mutinies between the autumn of 1905 and the summer of 1906. The army was brought to the brink of collapse, and it took years to restore a semblance of order.

“Many of these mutinies were part of a general protest against the feudal conditions prevailing in the army. Tolstoy, who had served as an army officer in the
Crimean War, described them in his last novel *Hadji-Murad*. The peasant soldiers, in particular, objected to the way their officers addressed them with the familiar ‘your’ (tyi) – normally used for animals and children – rather than the polite ‘you’ (vyi). It was how the masters had once addressed their serfs; and since most of the officers were nobles, and most of the soldiers were sons of former serfs, this mode of address symbolized the continuation of the old feudal world inside the army. The first thing a recruit did on joining the army was to learn the different titles of his officers: ‘Your Honour’ up to the rank of colonel; ‘Your Excellency’ for generals; and ‘Your Radiance’ or ‘Most High Radiance’ for titled officers. Colonels and generals were to be greeted not just with the simple hand salute but by halting and standing sideways to attention while the officer passed by for a strictly prescribed number of paces. The soldier was trained to answer his superiors in regulation phrases of deference: ‘Not at all, Your Honour’; ‘Happy to serve you, Your Excellency’. Any deviations were likely to be punished. Soldiers would expect to be punched in the face, hit in the mouth with the butt of a rifle and sometimes even flogged for relatively minor misdemeanours. Officers were allowed to use a wide range of abusive terms – such as ‘scum’ and ‘scoundrel’ – to humiliate their soldiers and keep them in their place. Even whilst off-duty the common soldier was deprived of the rights of a normal citizen. He could not smoke in public places, go to restaurants or theatres, ride in trams, or occupy a seat in a first- or second-class railway carriage. Civic parks displayed the sign: DOGS AND SOLDIERS FORBIDDEN TO ENTER. The determination of the soldiery to throw off this ‘army serfdom’ and gain the dignity of citizenship was to become a major story of the revolution.

“It was not just the peasant infantry who joined the mutinies after 1905. Even some of the Cossack cavalry – who since the start of the nineteenth century had been a model of loyalty to the Tsar – joined the rebellions. The Cossacks had specific grievances. Since the sixteenth century they had developed as an elite military caste, which in the nineteenth century came under the control of the Ministry of War. In exchange for their military service, the Cossacks were granted generous tracts of fertile land – mainly on the southern borders they were to defend (the Don and Kuban) and the eastern steppes – as well as considerable political freedom for their self-governing communities (voiskos, from the word for ‘war’). However, during the last decades of the nineteenth century the costs of equipping themselves for the cavalry, of buying saddles, harnesses and military-grade horses, as they were obliged to in the charters of their estate, became increasingly burdensome. Many Cossack farmers, already struggling in the depression, had to sell part of their livestock to meet their obligations and equip their sons to join. The voiskos demanded more and more concessions – both economic and political – as the price of their military service. They began to raise the flag of ‘Cossack nationalism’...

“The government’s treatment of the army provoked growing resentment among Russia’s military elite. The fiercest opposition came from the new generation of so-called military professions emerging within the officer corps and the Ministry of War itself during the last decades of the old regime. Many of them were graduates from the Junker military schools, which had been opened up and revitalized in the wake of the Crimean defeat to provide a means for the sons of non-nobles to rise to the senior ranks. Career officials dedicated to the modernization of the armed services, they were bitterly critical of the archaic military doctrines of the elite academies and the
General Staff. To them the main priorities of the court seemed to be the appointment of aristocrats loyal to the Tsar to the top command posts and the pouring of resources into what had become in the modern age a largely ornamental cavalry. They argued, by contrast, that more attention needed to be paid to the new technologies – heavy artillery, machine-guns, motor transportation, trench design and aviation – which were bound to be decisive in coming wars. The strains of modernization on the politics of the autocracy were just as apparent in the military as they were in all the other institutions of the old regime.”

There were similar problems in the Navy, in spite of the particular emphasis the tsar made on Navy funding after the 1905 war. The chief of the Naval General Staff, Vice-Admiral Prince Alexander Lieven was quite open about it. “Although most naval officers preferred to debate technical and strategic issues, in reality, wrote Lieven, the question of personnel was the most important and most dangerous problem facing the navy, as the mutinies during the 1905 revolution had shown. Lieven was under no illusion that relations between officers and sailors could be divorced from class conflict in the broader society. Between officers and men, he wrote, ‘there exists an abyss from birth which it is difficult to cross from either side. Recently under the influence of agitation there has even been created a directly hostile attitude among peasants towards the lords. But even without this, the intellectual and moral level of the two sides to so different that it is difficult for them to understand each other.’…”

In the end the army proved to be one of the Empire’s critical weak points. In 1905 it wavered in its loyalty. And in 1917 it was the open treason of the generals that forced the Tsar to abdicate from the throne...

52. THE KOSOVAN AND MACEDONIAN QUESTIONS

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the Balkan states faced two intractable problems. The first was that the peasantry, the majority of the population in all countries, being no less oppressed by heavy taxes and indebtedness under the national regimes than it had been under the Turks, was becoming desperately poor. This led to peasant rebellions in several countries: in Serbia in 1883, in Bulgaria in 1899 and, most seriously, in Romania in 1907, where 120,000 troops were called out and 10,000 peasants were killed.\(^{236}\) There was simply not enough land to support a rising population, and many thousands of able-bodied men - men who were greatly needed at home - were forced to emigrate, especially from Greece and Montenegro.

A second problem was increased nationalist passions throughout the region, and especially in Kosovo and Macedonia...

Now strong national feeling had served the Orthodox Balkan nations well in preserving their integrity during the centuries of the Ottoman yoke; but it served them less well when that yoke was crumbling and patriotism turned into revanchism, hatred of neighbouring nations - and, worst of all, neighbouring Orthodox nations.

By the 1870s the proportion of Muslims (including some Muslim Slavs) to non-Muslims (mainly Orthodox Serbs, but including about 11,000 Catholics) in Kosovo was about 60:40.\(^{237}\) As a result of the Slav-Ottoman war of 1876-78, Serbia extended her territory to include the Niš region. But also in 1878 the Albanians formed the League of Prizren, the beginning of an all-Albanian independence movement (although that was not their aim at the beginning). However, in 1881 the League army was crushed by the Turks, and conditions in Kosovo descended into squalor, with deteriorating relations between the Kosovans and the Turkish administrators.\(^{238}\)

At this point, when Serbs and Albanians might have been expected to unite against the Turks, a major deterioration in relations between the Serbs and Albanians of Kosovo took place. “The prime cause of this,” writes Noel Malcolm, “was the mass expulsion of Muslims from the lands taken over by Serbia, Bulgaria and Montenegro in 1877-78. Almost all the Muslims... were expelled from the Morava valley region: there had been hundreds of Albanian villages there, and significant Albanian populations in towns such as Prokuplje, Leskovac and Vranje. A Serbian schoolmaster in Leskovac later recalled that the Muslims had been driven out in December 1877 at a time of extreme cold: ‘By the roadside, in the Gudelica gorge and as far as Vranje and Kumanovo, you could see the abandoned corpses of children, and old men frozen to death.’ Precise figures are lacking, but one modern study concludes that the whole region contained more than 110,000 Albanians. By the end of 1878 Western officials were reporting that there were 60,000 families of Muslim refugees in Macedonia, ‘in a state of extreme destitution’, and 60-70,000 Albanian refugees from Serbia ‘scattered’ over the vilayet of Kosovo. Albanian merchants who tried to stay on in Nish were subjected to a campaign of murders,

\(^{238}\) Malcolm, *op. cit.*, pp. 219-228.
and the property of those who left was sold off at one per cent of its value. In a petition of 1879 a group of Albanian refugees from the Leskovac area complained that their houses, mills, mosques and tekkes had all been demolished, and that ‘The material arising from these demolitions, such as masonry and wood, has been sold, so that if we go back to our hearths we shall find no shelter.’

“This was not, it should be said, a matter of spontaneous hostility by local Serbs. Even one of the Serbian army commanders had been reluctant to expel the Albanians from Vranje, on the grounds that they were a quiet and peaceful people. But the orders came from the highest levels in Belgrade: it was Serbian state policy to create an ethnically ‘clean’ territory…”239

Hardly surprisingly, the Muslim refugee victims of Serbian ethnic cleansing, on arriving in Kosovo, were hostile to the local Serbs; and now for the first time the Albanians began to believe “that Serbia – and the Serbs of Kosovo who were claimed as an ‘unredeemed’ part of the Serbian population – represented a threat to their existence”.240 So Serbs began to emigrate from the province. By 1912 the Serbian proportion of the population had dropped to about 25% or less...241

Meanwhile, the Kosovo myth in its modern, revanchist form was being born in Serbia. From about the 1860s Serbian poets and politicians began to put forward the ideology of a Greater Serbia, a unitary state that included all the lands populated by Serbs, even if they were in a minority. In their sights were Kosovo, on the one hand, and the Serb-populated lands of Austro-Hungary, on the other.

Not in vain did a Habsburg diplomatic circular of 1853 declare: “The claim to set up new states according to the limits of nationality is the most dangerous of schemes. To put forward such a pretension is to break with history; and to carry it into execution in any part of Europe is to shake to its foundations the firmly organized order of states, and to threaten the Continent with subversion and chaos…”

In 1889, on the five-hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo, Serbia’s foreign minister, Čedomil Mijatovic, told the Royal Academy that "an inexhaustible source of national pride was discovered on Kosovo. More important than language and stronger than the Church, this pride unites all Serbs in a single nation..."242

That national pride should be considered "stronger than the Church" was a danger sign. Nothing on earth is stronger than the Divine-human institution of the Church, which, as the Lord says, "will prevail against the gates of hell", whereas national pride can be crushed, and nations themselves can disappear completely... To say that any person or nation or institution is “stronger than the Church” is equivalent to idolatry...

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240 Malcolm, op. cit., p. xlvi.
242 Jelavich, op. cit., p. 21.
As for Macedonia, according to Stevan K. Pavlowitch, it "has always been the centre of the Balkans which neighbouring states, and foreign powers interested in the peninsula, have vied with one another in trying to control. In modern times [the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries], it was the region that remained longest in Turkish hands. Serbs, Bulgars and Greeks had their various aspirations for its largely undifferentiated slavophone population. Out of this rivalry - at once nationalistic, cultural and ecclesiastical, as always in the Balkans - slowly began to emerge a separate Macedonian consciousness, recognised by none of the three contending nation-states, who were busy serbianising, bulgarianising and hellenising their outlying Macedonian territories."243

So who did the inhabitants of Macedonia think they were?

Misha Glenny writes: "The question of the origins of the modern Macedonians, who feel themselves categorically to be a Slav people [with a large Albanian minority] distinct from Serbs or Bulgars, provokes more intellectual fanaticism than any other in the southern Balkans. One scholar, let us say from Skopje, will assume that this nation has existed for over a thousand years; the next, perhaps a well-meaning westerner, will claim that Macedonians first developed a separate identity from Bulgaria about one hundred years ago; a third, for the sake of argument a Serb, will swear that the Macedonians only emerged as a nation at the end of the Second World War; and a fourth, probably a Greek or Bulgarian, will maintain doggedly that they do not exist and have never done so...

"... In contested regions like Macedonia, national identity or identities do not remain stable. They change over a few generations; they mutate during the course of a war; they are reinvented following the break-up of a large empire or state; and they emerge anew during the construction of new states. Balkan nationalism evokes such ferocious passions because, paradoxically, it is so labile..."244

We must also not forget the Romanians, who from the beginning of the century "began to show a great interest in the Vlach population, which spoke a Romance language and was scattered throughout the area. Although Romania obviously could not advance claims for Macedonian territory, the issue could be used to gain compensation elsewhere. The Albanian position received very little recognition..."245

"The Greek national leaders had long expected eventually to absorb the entire area. Their arguments were based chiefly on the historical association of Greece, both classical and Byzantine, with the region. In a time before serious ethnographic studies were made, these leaders could sincerely believe that the population was indeed Greek. Certainly, Greeks and Muslim Turks formed the majority of the city inhabitants. The ecclesiastical jurisdiction exercised by the Constantinople Patriarchate after the abolition of the Peć and Ohrid authorities in the eighteenth centuries had given the Greeks control over cultural as well as religious matters.

244 Glenny, op. cit., p. 158.
245 Jelavich, op. cit., p. 91.
They thereafter tended to count all the Orthodox who were under the control of the Patriarchate as Greeks.... The establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchate [in 1870] was bitterly resented, because it ended the advantages previously held by the Greek churches. Even after it became apparent that the majority of the Christian people were Slavic, the Greek leaders continued to claim the area on a national basis; they argued that many of the inhabitants were what they called Slavophone Greeks, that is, individuals who were Slavic in language, but Greek in national sentiment.

"The Greek fears concerning the Exarchate were soon fully justified. Wherever two-thirds of a district voted for it, the Orthodox population could join this organization. This possibility naturally appealed to many Slavic-speaking people, for whom the attractions of a service in Church Slavic were much greater than those of one in Greek. The areas under the jurisdiction of the Exarchate thus expanded rapidly; the San Stefano boundaries [i.e. those marked out by the Treaty of San Stefano between the Russians and the Turks in 1878] were not greatly different from the lines of this religious authority. In the 1890s the Exarchate was able to add more districts. If nationality was to be used as the basis assigning ownership, Bulgaria had the advantage at the end of the century. Most Bulgarian leaders and the Bulgarian people were passionately convinced Macedonia was indeed rightfully theirs.

"Of the major rivals, Serbia was in the weakest position. Until 1878 its chief attention had been directed toward Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Old Serbia, which covered part of the Kosovo vilayet. After the Habsburg occupation of the two provinces, Serbia could expand only southward. In the agreement of 1881 with Vienna, [King] Milan had received assurances of support for such a move. Serbia thus entered with enthusiasm into the struggle for Macedonian lands, and exerted great efforts to demonstrate that the Macedonian Slavs were Serbs. Studies were made of the local languages and customs, and statistics were collected. Serbia opened consulates in 1887 in Thessaloniki and Skopje, and soon afterward in Bitola and Priatina. A major propaganda campaign was launched inside Macedonia. From the beginning the efforts of the Serbs were hindered by their lack of an ecclesiastical organization equal to that of the Patriarchate and the Exarchate. They nevertheless made considerable advances before 1912."246

"It has been argued that if the Serbs, too, like the Bulgars, had separated themselves from the Greek-dominated patriarchate of Constantinople at that time, they could have achieved considerable success in those areas where Macedonian Slavs had not yet taken sides. For it was not all that difficult to give inchoate national traits a definite mould with the systematic action of church and school.

"At first, the authorities of the autonomous principality of Serbia sympathised with Bulgarian aspirations. But they increasingly took fright after 1870 when, according to the statute granted to it, the autonomous Bulgarian Church began to expand. The sultan's firman established the authority of the Bulgarian exarch over a millet that was both territorial and ethnic. Broadly speaking, the dioceses of norther Bulgaria came within its jurisdiction, but upwards of two-thirds of the Orthodox Christian inhabitants of any other district could vote to join the exarchate. The

246 Jelavich, op. cit., pp. 92-93.
principle of one territorial bishop thus came to be infringed occasionally, with a patriarchal and an exarchal bishop residing in the same see...

"... [The exarchate] thrived as a legal institution for Bulgarian national aspirations, and it sent out its priests and teachers to proselytise the slavophones of Macedonia. As a result it came to control territories that were to become Serbian in 1878... The reaction to these successes took the form of occasional calls for a separate archbishopric of Ohrid, but especially of Serbian government efforts to join forces with the Greeks. The idea was to convince the patriarchate that it was in its own interest to take into account the feelings of a majority of the faithful in making appointments to European sees, and to appoint ethnic Serbs where appropriate. Such efforts were at first hampered by the Serbo-Turkish wars of 1876-8 and the subsequent unpopularity of the Serbs with the Porte. It was not until the 1880s that Serbia entered the fray in Macedonia, with a proselytising programme of its own.

"By 1885, the ecumenical patriarchate had accepted the principle of sending ethnic Serbs to certain dioceses, provided they were Ottoman citizens, politically loyal to the Porte, and properly qualified canonically. But such candidates were not available at first, and it would take another eleven years before diplomatic pressure got the patriarchate to accept, but also the Porte to agree to, the first such Serbian bishop (Raaka-Prizren, 1896), with two more by 1910 (Skopje, Veles-Debar). In these years at the turn of the century, with another set of slavophone bishops and priests who, furthermore, were fully canonical, whole districts chose to return from the exarchate to the patriarchate..."

The tragedy of Macedonia consisted in the fact that it was as much a civil war among the Orthodox Christians as a war between the Orthodox and the Muslims. Moreover, even Orthodox clergy joined in the armed struggle. Thus the Kresna uprising against the Turks in 1878, which took place on the new frontier between Bulgaria and Macedonia, was led by a Bulgarian or Macedonian priest, Pop Georgievski-Berovski. This rebellion was quickly crushed, and for some years the Ottomans were able to restore peace to the region. However, open warfare was now replaced by the building up of secret societies in both Bulgaria and Greece. At least three different Bulgarian societies fought with each other for leadership of the Macedonian struggle for independence. They also fought with the Bulgarian government, trying to persuade or force it into entering into a war of liberation in Macedonia. The Bulgarian Prime Minister Stambulov tried to resist their influence, but in 1895 he was killed by members of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (VMRO). A reign of terror followed in which Macedonian terrorists threatened to overthrow the Bulgarian State...

Meanwhile, in 1895 a Greek secret society called Ethniki Etairia tried to revive the traditions of the Philiki Etairia. "Just as VMRO was preparing to destabilize Bulgaria, so did the Etairia become a virtual state within the Greek state. The Etairia included many Greek Macedonian émigrés in its ranks, but the main focus of its aspirations was Crete..."

247 Pavlowitch, op. cit., pp. 43-44.  
In 1896 the Cretans, whose slogan was "Freedom or Death!", rebelled against the Ottomans and called on the Free Greeks on the mainland to support them. They responded by landing an army onto the island. "The great powers, smelling another Eastern Crisis, attempted to mediate between Turkey and Greece by suggesting that Istanbul offer Crete autonomy. By the middle of 1897, the Greeks were still procrastinating and so the Sultan decided to declare war on Greece. Turkish troops massed in Epirus on Greece’s northern border and soon put the Greeks to flight. Before long the Ottoman troops were marching on an open road to Athens. Once again the great powers stepped into the breach and imposed a peace-deal on the two sides.

"The outcome was at first glance advantageous to the Greeks, as Crete was at last given extensive autonomy. But this apparent victory masked hidden dangers. The Greek army had suffered a great setback at Epirus. The Athenian coffers were empty; and the state had incurred an enormous debt. As part of the peace treaty, Athens was forced to hand over control of its budget to a great powere commission. Furthermore, its network of agents in Macedonia had been destroyed.

"King George of Greece (1863-1913) had justified the military intervention in Crete by pointing out that 'Britain... had seized Cyprus; Germany had taken Schleswig-Holstein; Austria had laid claim to Bosnia and Herzegovina; surely Greece had a better right to Crete!' The argument was not unreasonable, but had the Etairia and King George reasoned more soberly they would have concluded that the Ottoman Empire would be forced to relinquish control of Crete at some future date. By succumbing to the romantic movement for the liberation of Crete and finding itself at war with the Ottoman Empire, Greece was too weak at the end of the nineteenth century to combat the influence of VMRO in Macedonia, and unable to respond when the Ottoman Empire allowed the Bulgarian Exarchate to establish three new bishoprics in Debar, Monastir (Bitola) and Strumitsa. This area extended like a long hand across the middle of Macedonia, marking out the dark shadows of a near future when the Greek Patriarchists and Bulgarian Exarchists would do battle for the souls of the villages...

"Conversions of whole villages were common. Sometimes they took place at the end of a gun barrel, sometimes there were compelling economic reasons, as H.N. Brailsford discovered at the time. 'I was talking to a wealthy peasant who came in from a neighbouring village to Monastir market. He spoke Greek well, but hardly like a native. "Is your village Greek," I asked him, "or Bulgarian?" "Well," he replied, "it is Bulgarian now, but four years ago it was Greek." The answer seemed to him entirely natural and commonplace. "How," I asked in some bewilderment, "did that miracle come about?" "Why," said he, "we are all poor men, but we want to have our own school and a priest who will look after us properly. We used to have a Greek teacher. We paid him £5 a year and his bread, while the Greek consul paid him another £5; but we had no priest of our own. We shared a priest with several other villages, but he was very unpunctual and remiss. We went to the Greek Bishop to complain, but he refused to do anything for us. The Bulgarians heard of this and they came and made us an offer. They said they would give us a priest who would live in
the village and a teacher to whom we need pay nothing. Well, sirs, ours is a poor village, and so of course we became Bulgarian.'...

The situation gradually descended into chaos. In March, 1903 the Austrian consul in Monastir reported: "The Committee [VMRO] is extorting money from Bulgarians, Greeks, Vlachs, Christians and Muslims, with indescribable arrogance. Christians who don't pay are murdered while the Muslim landowners must reckon with arson attacks on all their property...

"The longing for order among these unbearable circumstances and for a new, strong administration is becoming ever more intense... people do not want reforms, autonomy or whatever - the majority of Macedonians want nothing more than... the same fate as Bosnia [i.e. occupation by Austria-Hungary].

"Punitive executions continue to comprise standard fare of the guerrilla band activities. In the last 14 days alone, there has been a revenge murder of the Greek priest in Zelenic, the death of the teacher from Strebeno, and of a Patriarch supporter from Ajtos... [then] the Serbian priest from Vrbjani and an Albanian landowner from Lenista... whose throat was slit."250

During the spring of 1903 the village of Krusevo, whose 10,000 inhabitants were almost all Orthodox - Vlach, Greek and Slav, anticipating an attack by VMRO, approached the Ottoman authorities and requested that they strengthen their garrison. Sure enough, on August 2, "Ilinden" (St. Elijah's day), 300 guerrillas assaulted Krusevo. Having killed the whole garrison, they occupied the town and proclaimed it a republic... The revenge of the Turks was terrible. The town was bombed and gutted. Irregulars and bashi-bazooks then went on a spree. "In addition to the thousands of murdered civilians and rape victims, 119 villages were burnt to the ground, 8,400 houses were destroyed, forcing 50,000 refugees to flee into the mountains, where many more died during the bitter winter that followed. Both the IO and the EO [other Macedonian revolutionary organizations] were almost obliterated and, after watching the Slav cetas intimidate Greek villages, the Greek andartes swept through western Macedonia forcing the reconversion of Exarchate communities to the Patriarchate.

"The andartes now administered solace to those Patriarchate villages which had courageously resisted VMRO during the uprising. However, in the villages genuinely committed to the Exarchate or VMRO, the Greeks behaved like vengeful bullies, executing suspected renegades and holding the Patriarchate version of the Mass [Divine Liturgy] at gunpoint if the priest or townspeople were unwilling to perform the service. This Greek backlash was orchestrated by the gun-toting bishop of Kastoria, Germanos Karavangelis. This extraordinary figure who roamed the countryside in a dark English raincoat with a black scarf wrapped around his priest's hat, 'had a Männlicher slung over one shoulder, a bandolier over the other, a belt round the middle from which hung his holster carrying a large pistol and a knife.' Karavangelis appeared consciously to cultivate an image of threatening romanticism.

The bishop considered Bulgarian influence in the region to be the greatest threat to Greek national interests. He therefore advocated close friendship and cooperation between the Greeks and Turks of Macedonia, but only as an expedient. Karavangelis admitted openly that the only issue in Macedonia was the future contours of the Balkan states once the Turks had been thrown out.

"As VMRO's influence shrivelled and almost died, Karavangelis and his colleagues began to receive more money, weapons and men from the Greek Kingdom. This renewed Greek activity and the retreat of Bulgarian aspirations hastened a change in Serbian policy, too. Nikola Pašić, the old Radical leader and now Prime Minister, had long given up hope that his ideal of a federal solution for the Macedonian Question might be realized. Serbia would now be fighting for clerical and territorial influence not just against Greeks and Bulgarians, but also against the Turks and Albanians. Demonstrating again that neither Greeks, Serbs nor Bulgarians have natural allies, Pašić issued an order to Serbia's diplomatic representative: 'to protect our compatriots from the damaging consequences of the monopoly of Patriarchate organs which have placed themselves in the service of Hellenism to the detriment of the non-Greek adherents to the Patriarchate church; and to counter the activity of Exarchate agents whose Committees are appearing with weapons in those areas of eminent interest to us: Porec, Kisevo, Drimkol, Dibra, Köprülü.' The suppression of Ilinden had therefore failed to crush the nationalist struggle. On the contrary, it had made it worse. The struggle was spreading, but the balance of forces had changed. Like Bishop Karavangelis, the government of Istanbul considered the Bulgarian insurgency the most threatening. The Greek and Serbian guerrillas concentrated their efforts on expunging Bulgarian or Albanian influence on each other's - they proved less of a nuisance for the Ottoman forces. Indeed, the Christian guerrillas had to an extent assumed the state's role of policing the territory."251

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In 1897 Russia and Austria-Hungary had come to an agreement to preserve the status quo in the Balkans. However, this agreement came under threat in 1903, when a group of military conspirators, upset at King Alexander of Serbia’s pro-Austrian orientation and proposed cuts to the military budget, killed him and Queen Draga in Belgrade. This murder brought the Karadjordjević dynasty back to power in the person of King Peter I, who had been in exile in France and Switzerland since 1858.

The reaction of the Serbs to the murder of the Lord’s Anointed was extraordinarily indifferent. The day after the murder was celebrated as a holiday; the streets were decorated with flags. The conspirators were not only not prosecuted, but feted. They filled the senior posts in the new government, and their leader, “Apis” Dragutin Dmitrijević, was even thanked for his work by the parliament and became a national hero. The leader of the largest, Radical Party, Nikola Pašić, wanted to limit the influence of the regicides; but even he was forced to recognize the legitimacy of the coup and oppose efforts to bring the regicides to trial.

In fact, the murder, and the shameless reaction to it, was a symptom of a wider revolutionary malaise in contemporary Orthodox Christendom as a whole. This malaise took on a predominantly nationalist character in the Balkans, and an internationalist character in Russia. Soon it was soon to bring down upon it the wrath of God and the end of the whole “Sardian” period of the Orthodox Christian Empire from St. Constantine the Great to Tsar Nicholas II... For, as Rebecca West writes, “when Alexander and Draga fell from that balcony the whole of the modern world fell with them. It took some time to reach the ground and break its neck, but its fall started then...”254 The shots in Belgrade in 1903 led to the shots at Sarajevo in 1914, which led to the First World War and the Russian revolution. For God is not mocked; He does not allow anyone to touch His anointed.

The new King was surrounded by conspirators. Even if he had wanted to resist the irredentist mood in Serbia— it is doubtful that he could have done so. For he was not only surrounded by a nationalist coterie: he reigned but did not rule in a country ruled, not by the king, but by elected politicians. This was evident from the very first day of his reign, when the Prime Minister Avvakumović pointedly introduced him to the Russian minister before the Austrian minister. "That formally signified," wrote the Belgrade Daily Chronicle, "that Austria-Hungary has no relations with the present cabinet."256 This was because under the old Obrenović dynasty Serbia had been in a subservient position to Austria, an economic colony of the great Catholic empire of

255 “The assassination not only set Serbia on a new path of confrontation with Austria-Hungary, it helped to build the chain of events which led to the summer of 1914” (Margaret MacMillan, The War that Ended Peace, London: Profile Books, 2014, p. 388)
the West. But introducing the king first to the Russian minister was equivalent to saying that the old pro-Austrian orientation of Serbian foreign policy was over, and that Serbia's Great-Power patron was now the great Orthodox empire of the East. And this in turn signified that Serbia was no longer going to take such a passive attitude towards Austria's occupation of Bosnia with its large Serb population...

The next day the king swore an oath to "maintain inviolate the Constitution". And on June 25 he made a proclamation peppered with references to the Constitution: "I will be a true constitutional King of Serbia. For me all constitutional guarantees of freedom and popular rights, which are the basis of all regular and prosperous development as well as of all national progress and constitutional life, are sacred trusts which I will always carefully respect and guard. I expect everyone to do the same." 257 This meant that the real rulers of Serbia would remain the elected politicians... Then he went on: "Imbued with these sentiments, to the past I consign the past, and I leave it to history to judge each according to his deeds..." In other words, the murderers of the King Alexander would not be threatened by him. Nor would he undermine the policy of trying to gather all Serbs under one political roof...

Under the Obrenovićes a secret treaty had given Austria-Hungary a virtual veto over Serbian foreign policy. But now Serbia became more independent both politically and economically of her Catholic neighbour. Thus in 1904 Serbia signed a secret treaty on customs with Bulgaria whose contents were communicated to the Russians, but not the Austrians, who "suspected the two Balkan powers were moving towards a union". 258

Again, as Clark writes, "after the regicide of 1903, Belgrade stepped up the pace of irredentist activity within the [Austrian] empire, focusing in particular on Bosnia-Herzegovina. In February 1906, the Austrian military attaché in Belgrade, Pomiankowski, summarized the problem in a letter to the chief of the General Staff. It was certain, Pomiankowski declared, that Serbia would number among the empire's enemies in the event of a future military conflict. The problem was less the attitude of the government as such than the ultra-nationalist orientation of the political culture as a whole: even if a 'sensible' government were at the helm, Pomiankowski warned, it would be in no position to prevent the 'all-powerful radical chauvinists' from launching 'an adventure'. More dangerous, however, than Serbia's 'open enmity and its miserable army' was the 'fifth-column work of the [Serbian] Radicals in peacetime, which systematically poisons the attitude of our South Slav population and could, if the worst came to the worst, create very serious difficulties for our army..." 259

"During 1905-6, a crisis unfolded in which trade policy, armaments orders, high finance and geopolitics were closely intertwined. Vienna pursed a threefold

257 Loring and Page, op. cit., p. 62. Evidence of this irredentist, revanchist mood is provided by Edith Durham, who records the following conversation among her companions in a railway carriage in December, 1903. Her companions "were all Serbs, young and aflame with patriotism... Talk all ran on unredeemed Serbia and King Peter who is to realise the national ideal. 'Now we have a King who is as good as yours,' they said, 'and Serbia will have her own again.' " (The Burden of the Balkans, London, 1905, p. 86).
259 Clark, op. cit., p. 82.
objective: to secure a commercial treaty with Serbia, to ensure that Serbian armaments orders would continue to be placed with Austrian firms, and to contract a major loan to Belgrade.

“The failure to achieve agreement on any of these questions produced a drastic cooling of relations between the two neighbours, and the outcome was an unmitigated disaster for Vienna. The Serbian armaments orders went to the French firm Schneider-Creusot instead of to the Austrian rival, Škoda of Bohemia. The Austrians reacted by closing the border to Serbian pork, triggering a customs conflict that came to be known as the ‘pig war’ (1906-9). But this was a counter-productive measure, since Serbia quickly found other export markets (especially in Germany, France and Belgium) and at last began to build slaughterhouses on a substantial scale, thus emancipating itself from its long-standing dependence on Austro-Hungarian processing facilities. Finally, Belgrade secured a major loan against not from Vienna, but from Paris (offered in return for the placement of armaments orders with French firms).”  

As nationalist passions mounted in Serbia, the question arose: in their quest for a Greater Serbia on whom could they rely among the Great Powers now that Austria was no longer an ally? Possibly France, with whom the Serbs were now closely linked financially and militarily. Obviously Russia...

And yet there were two major problems with regard to Russia. First, Russia’s main client in the Balkans was Bulgaria, which she had liberated in 1877-78 – and the Bulgars were the Serbs’ fierce rivals for control over Macedonia, a situation not changed fundamentally by the secret treaty of 1904. Secondly, the Russians, always more conscious of the wider geopolitical picture than the other Orthodox states, did not support Serbia’s nationalist irredentism, which had its roots, not in Orthodoxy or Slavdom, but in the French revolution, and was abhorrent to the Tsar. As the leader of a multi-national empire, he resisted nationalism and irredentism both within Russia’s borders and outside them. The suspicion was, therefore, that Serbia now, under the Karadjeordjevićes, would not so much follow Russia as the leader of the Orthodox world as use her to protect herself when her aggressive foreign policy would bring her into inevitable conflict with the more powerful states of Austria-Hungary or Ottoman Turkey...

260 Clark, op. cit., p. 29.
54. THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

“In November 1902,” writes Richard Pipes, “high-ranking Russian officials held a secret conference in Yalta to discuss China’s complaints about Russia’s treaty violations and the problems caused by the reluctance of foreigners to invest in Russia’s Far Eastern ventures. It was agreed that Russia could attain her economic objectives in Manchuria only by intense colonization; but for Russians to settle there, the regime needed to tighten its hold on the area. It was the unanimous opinion of the participants, Witte included, that Russia had to annex Manchuria, or, at the very least, bring it under closer control. In the months that followed, the Minister of War, A.N. Kuropatkin, urged aggressive action to protect the Trans-Siberian Railroad: in his view, unless Russia was prepared to annex Manchuria she should withdraw from there. In February 1903, Nicholas agreed to annexation.”

Another bone of contention was Korea. “The ruler of Korea,” writes J.M. Roberts, “had only taken his title of emperor in 1897; only in 1901 did his government first decide to send representatives to foreign countries (even the Chinese had already done this). Several nations had interests in Korea: the Americans and British had long encouraged the ‘opening’ of the country to trade and reform (as they saw it), the Russians and the Japanese competed there for political supremacy and possible territorial aggrandizement, and (in theory as the suzerain power but actually increasingly powerless in Korean affairs) the Chinese went on claiming that Korea was a dependency of the Middle Kingdom. This was one reason for the Japanese (who had successfully occupied Seoul in the 1890s during a war against China) to promote ‘westernizing’ influences in the court and among officials.”

“I do not want to take Korea for myself,” said the Tsar in October, 1901, “but in no way can I allow the Japanese to become firmly established there. This would be a casus belli. A conflict is inevitable, but I hope that it will not take place earlier than in four years’ time – then we will have dominance at sea. This is our main interest. The Siberia railway will be finished in five to six years’ time.”

“Russia’s main interest in Korea,” writes Dominic Lieven, “lay in the proximity of that country’s northern border to Vladivostok, which made domination of the whole country by another great power worrying. In addition, the Russian navy lusted after a Korean port and feared that if the Japanese controlled both sides of the Straits of Tsushima they could easily cut communications between Vladivostok and Port Arthur. The Koreans themselves looked to Russia for protection from Japan, which was clearly the greatest threat to their independence, and offered Russia many inducements to occupy itself in their affairs. But the greatest single complicating factor in Russia’s relations with Korea was the large timber concession which a number of aristocrats close to Nicholas had secured on the river Yalu, with the aim of building up a Russian bridgehead in northern Korea.”

“The leaders in the Yalu enterprise were A.M. Bezobrazov and V.M. Vonlyarlyarsky. Both came from prominent families of the Russian aristocracy and were former officers of the Chevaliers Gardes, the most exclusive regiment in the Russian army. Bezobrazov gained access to Nicholas II through the former Minister of the Imperial Court, Count I.I. Vorontsov-Dashkov. Neither Bezobrazov nor Vonlyarlyarsky were interested in the Yalu enterprise for the sake of personal gain. They saw their company as a means by which non-official patriots could outmanoeuvre bureaucratic caution and push forward Russia’s cause in the East. There was to be a latter-day version of Britain’s East India Company but without its initially commercial priorities. The whole scheme bore the stamp of aristocratic arrogance and amateurism. Its leaders were convinced of their own innate superiority to mere bureaucrats. Without knowing the East, they nevertheless urged on Nicholas the belief that the Orientals would back down in the face of a confident show of Russian power. There was more than a touch of opera to the Bezobrazov affair. Rather typical was the fact that at one point secret correspondence between Bezobrazov and Nicholas II was sent through their respective batmen so that the ministers should be kept in the dark about it. But there was nothing funny in the effect of Bezobrazov’s influence, which was both to increase Nicholas’s distrust of his official advisers and to encourage him to take a tougher and more intransigent line with the Japanese and Chinese governments. In October 1901, for instance, the Emperor told Prince Henry of Prussia that ‘I do not want to seize Korea – but under no circumstances can I allow the Japanese to become firmly established there. That would be a casus belli.’ Here was the voice of Bezobrazov not of Nicholas’s ministerial advisers, whose position on Korea was much less bellicose.

“Bezobrazov, Vonlyarlyarsky and their supporters in particular urged on Nicholas two ideas to which he was very inclined to listen. They told him that Russia was a proud and mighty country which should speak in a strong voice and take no cheek from foreigners, least of all Orientals. This Guards officers’ patriotism was music to his ears. His aristocratic advisers, loathing the bureaucracy and above all Witte, also told Nicholas that he was the captive of his ministers, who colluded in keeping information from him, imposing their own views and sabotaging his instructions when they conflicted with their own interests. By 1900 Nicholas felt this to be true, not merely as regards Far Eastern policy but across the whole range of government business. Frustrated by his seeming powerlessness and aware of mounting criticism of his rule, he turned more and more to unofficial advisers in an effort to secure alternative sources of information and greater freedom from ministerial control. Among these advisers Bezobrazov was typical in his aristocratic control. Among these advisers Bezobrazov was typical in his aristocratic origins and in his appeal to Nicholas’s patriotic and anti-bureaucratic instincts. In July 1901 Alexander Polovtsov commented that ‘in no field of policy is there a principled, well considered and firmly directed course of action. Everything is done in bursts, haphazardly, under the influence of the moment, according to the demands of this or that person and the intercessions emerging from various corners. The young Tsar feels more and more contempt for the organs of his own power and begins to believe in the beneficial strength of his own autocracy, which he manifests sporadically, without preliminary discussion and without any link to the overall course of policy.’
“As in his domestic policy Nicholas sought to balance between his groups of advisers, drawing information from both and thereby seeking a basis on which he could determine policy for himself. This had a disastrous impact on Russia’s Far Eastern policy in 1902-3 and on the way it was perceived by foreigners, above all the Japanese. It was not merely that Bezobrazov’s advice was dangerous and mistaken. Outsiders did not know what Petersburg’s policy was. Faced by criticism that divisions between ministers and unofficial advisers were causing government policy in East Asia to be incoherent and uncoordinated, in August 1903 Nicholas appointed Admiral Alekseev Viceroy of the Far East and subordinated to him all responsibility not only for civil and military affairs but also for diplomatic relations with Tokyo and Peking. This was to make a bad situation worse. Alekseev was a sailor, not a diplomat or a statesman. By definition neither he nor other officials in the East could have a balanced overall grasp of the Empire’s many interests for they were committed to pursuing a forward policy in their own bailiwick.

“The Japanese now had to deal with Alekseev in Port Arthur but they knew, of course, that the Viceroy’s decisions would have to be ratified by the Tsar, and therefore by those high officials to whom he chose to listen, in Petersburg. Confusion was compounded by the fact that during the critical period between August and November 1903 Nicholas II was seldom in his capital, spending most of his time on official and private visits to Western Europe. Though Japanese counsels were themselves divided, had Russia consistently stood out for a free hand for herself in Manchuria in return for Japanese control over Korea, Tokyo would almost certainly have agreed in the end. The demilitarization of northern Korea could have been obtained through such a deal had Petersburg offered some concessions in southern Manchuria. But the Russians overestimated the strength of their position, and the incoherence and delay in their responses to Tokyo convinced the Japanese that Petersburg was simply prevaricating. Nicholas’s own statements betrayed his uncertainty and miscalculations. In October 1903 he telegraphed to Alekseev: ‘I do not want war between Russia and Japan and will not permit this war. Take all measures so that there is no war.’ In late December, however, he commented that the situation reminded him of the 1895 crisis when Japan backed down under firm Russian pressure and surrendered Port Arthur. Referring to Japan, Nicholas remarked: ‘all the same it is a barbarian country. Which is better: to risk war or to continue with concessions?’ In February 1904 the Japanese permitted Russia no more wavering and attacked Port Arthur.”

At first, the whole country united behind the Tsar in a war that everybody assumed Russia would win. But the “barbarian” Japanese provided a crushing antidote to this pride. In April they crossed the Yalu River into Russian-occupied Manchuria, forcing the Russians back into Port Arthur. After a long and heroic siege Port Arthur surrendered in January, 1905.

On land, two armies of over 600,000 men now each faced each other in some of the biggest battles in history. Although the Russians won some battles, at Mukden in Manchuria they were defeated and retreated. The Russians lost 89,500 in killed and

prisoners, and the Japanese – 67,500. Finally, in May, Admiral Rozhdestvensky’s Baltic fleet, which had sailed all the way around the world to the Korean bay of Tsushima, was annihilated. The Russians lost 5000 sailors killed with 6000 captured, while only 117 Japanese sailors died.

The Russo-Japanese war is the first instance of a phenomenon that was to be of major importance in 1917: the financing of Russia’s enemies by American Jews. Archpriest Lev Lebedev asserts that “at the end of 1903 the American Jewish banker Jacob Schiff, Morgan and also ‘First National Bank’ and ‘National City Bank’ loaned Japan 30 million dollars so that she should attack Russia.” The Japanese information services were actively helped by the Jews. Some of them acted as spies in the Russian army, others tried to demoralize it, which is witnessed by the commander-in-chief of the armies in the Far East, General Kuropatkin. In 1906 the well-known journalist M.O. Menshikov wrote in Novoe Vremia: ‘The [enemy in the] last terrible war… was armed with the most active participation of the Jews. In order to thrust Japan against Russia, it was necessary to arrange for Japan not only external loans, but also the most ardent sympathy [for Japan] in America and England. This sympathy, as has now been established beyond doubt, was artificially stirred up in the American press, which was almost completely in Jewish hands. In the course of a whole series of years an army of Jewish hacks has slandered Russia, poured an unbelievably dirty torrent of abuse on her, and stirred people up to hate and despise everything Russian. As a result public opinion, and not only in America, was confused. The huge reading world was pitifully deceived…” At the height of the war the Paris newspaper Presse noted: ‘Japan has not been waging war against Russia alone. She has a powerful ally – Jewry.’…”

Undoubtedly the Jews’ support for the revolution at home and for the Japanese abroad was an important factor in the Russian defeat. But ultimately the Russians could blame only themselves. According to St. John of Kronstadt, the real cause of the defeat was the leaders’ negligent attitude towards Orthodoxy. The theft of Russia’s greatest holy thing, the wonderworking Kazan icon of the Mother of God, on June 29, 1904 indicated that the Mother of God had withdrawn her protection from Russia. For “not in vain”, wrote Archbishop Nikon (Rozhdestvensky), “has there long been the belief in the people that as long as this holy icon is intact, and stands guard between Christian Europe and the heterodox, pagan-Muslim world of Asia, we can be calm. But if she, our fervent Intercessor, leaves her place, then woes and misfortunes threaten us, and we shall remain defenceless…”

265 Oldenburg, op. cit., p. 274.


267 In all Schiff loaned $200 million to Japan during the war, while preventing other firms from lending to Russia (A. Solzhenitsyn, Dvesti let vmesste (Two Hundred Years Together), Moscow, 2001, p. 347). (V.M.)

268 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 417-418.

269 “The leader of our army A.N. Kuropatkin left all the icons given to him in captivity with the Japanese pagans, while he took all the secular things. What an attitude to the faith and the holy things of the Church! It was for this that the Lord is not blessing our arms and the enemies are conquering us” (in S. Fomin & T. Fomina, Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem (Russia before the Second Coming), Sergiev Posad, 1998, vol. 1, p. 373).

Although many experts still thought that Russia could win the war if she continued, she sued for peace. In September, 1905, at Portsmouth, U.S.A., thanks to the very tough negotiating stance of Tsar Nicholas, skilfully carried out by Witte, favourable terms were won for Russia. She did not have to pay an indemnity, and lost only Port Arthur and the south of Sakhalin. Japan was given a free hand in Korea. Nevertheless, the loss of prestige was great, and gave renewed encouragement to the revolutionaries.

During the war, “the revolutionary newspaper Liberation, which was published abroad, counted up the forces of the ‘liberation movement’ and gave, with some exaggeration, the following reply to the question: ‘What do we have?’: ‘The whole of the intelligentsia and part of the people; all the zemstva, the whole of the press, a part of the city Dumas, all the corporations (jurists, doctors, etc.)... The socialist parties have promised their support... The whole of Finland is with us... Oppressed Poland and the Jewish population languishing within the Pale of Settlement are for us.’ But the same newspaper did not hide its fears: ‘If the Russian armies defeat the Japanese... then freedom will be quietly strangled under the cries of “Hurrah!” and the tolling of the bells of the triumphant empire.’”

In the end, Russia lost because “a house that is divided against itself cannot stand” (Mark 3.25). Thus “at the end of 1904, on the eve of the preparation of a general attack against the Japanese army near Lyaodun, strikes began in the major Russian military factories and on the railways, which left the Russian army without ammunition and food and allowed the Japanese to take back the initiative. The first defeats of the Russian army elicited the genuine joy of the liberals and a flow of congratulations on this score to the emperor of Japan... With regard to the surrender to the Japanese of Port Arthur his Majesty Emperor Nicholas II organized a government judicial inquiry, since there were no military reasons for the capitulation...”

In spite of that, “the Russian army conducted its retreat in good order, and its losses in manpower turned out to be almost two times fewer than those of the Japanese... The experience of the war of 1904-1905 allowed Russia in the next three to four years to carry out a military reform and modernize her armaments, munitions and technical equipment in all sections of the army. In spite of colossal credits by the standards of those times from England and the USA, and the participation of Germany in the technical fitting out of the army and fleet, Japan was so exhausted by this military encounter that it was only fourteen years later, at the very end of the First World War, that she was able to re-establish her pre-war military potential and join the Entente.”

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273 Lebedev, op. cit.

The war with Japan caused particular problems for the Russian Orthodox Mission in Japan, headed by Archbishop Nicholas (Kasatkin). A peasant from Smolensk province, St. Nicholas first went to Japan in 1861. Encouraged to learn Japanese by St. Innocent, enlightener of Alaska, he began an astonishingly successful mission that brought tens of thousands of native Japanese to the faith and aroused the admiration of all, including the Japanese. In July, 1882 he presided over the first All-Japanese Orthodox Council. A delegation from Peking was also present, including several churchmen who were later martyred during the Boxer Uprising in 1900.275

On the eve of the Russo-Japanese war, “alarmed by the possibility of war with their co-religionists, the Orthodox Japanese turned to their bishop. He replied that they, like all Japanese, were obliged by their oath to carry out their military duty, but to fight was not at all the same as to hate one’s enemy, but meant to defend one’s fatherland. The Saviour Himself bequeathed patriotism to us when He sorrowed over the lot of Jerusalem.276 The archpastor himself decided to stay in Japan with his flock, even if there was a war…

“It began in February 1904. Then Bishop Nicholas handed over all ecclesiastical affairs to the council of priests, and himself served his last liturgy before the war. At the end of the service in his farewell sermon to his flock he called on it to pray for victory for their fatherland, but he, as a subject of the Russian Emperor, could not take part in the common service; but he would be happy to see his flock carrying out their duty. In his encyclical of February 11, 1904, Bishop Nicholas blessed the Japanese to carry out their duty, not sparing their lives, but reminded them that our fatherland is the Church, where all Christians constitute one family; he told them to pray for the re-establishment of peace and asked for mercy to prisoners of war.277 After this he shut himself away and gave himself over to exploits of prayer…

“Nobody in Russia understood the hierarch of Japan as well as Emperor Nicholas II. At the end of the war the Tsar wrote to him: ‘You have shown before all that the Orthodox Church of Christ is foreign to worldly dominion and every tribal hatred, and embraces all tribes and languages with her love. In the difficult time of the war, when the weapons of battle destroy peaceful relations between peoples and rulers, you, in accordance with the command of Christ, did not leave the flock entrusted to you, and the grace of love and faith gave you strength to endure the fiery trial and
amidst the hostility of war to keep the peace of faith and love in the Church created by your labours…

St. Nicholas made some penetrating remarks on the course of the war and its spiritual causes. Thus on July 19 / August 1, 1904 he wrote: “The Japanese are beating us, all the peoples hate us, it seems as if the Lord God has poured out His wrath upon us. And how could it be otherwise? Why should we be loved and pitied? Our nobility has been corrupted over the centuries by serfdom and has become debauched to the marrow of its bones. The simple people has been oppressed over the centuries by the same serfdom and has become ignorant and crude to the highest degree; the service class and the bureaucrats have lived through bribery and stealing from the State and now at all levels of service, wherever it is possible to steal, there is the most shameless and universal stealing from the State. The upper class is a collection of monkeys; they are imitators and worshippers, now of France, now England, now Germany and of every other thing that is foreign. The clergy, oppressed by poverty, can hardly repeat the catechism – are they capable of developing Christian ideals and sanctifying themselves and others through them?... And with all that we have the very highest opinion of ourselves: we only are true Christians, we only have real enlightenment, while there we see only darkness and corruption... No, it is not for nothing that the present woes have overwhelmed Russia – she herself has drawn them upon herself. Only work it, O Lord God, that this may be the punishing staff of Thy love! Do not allow, O Lord, that my poor Homeland should be destroyed to the end! Save and have pity!”

Again, on May 20 / June 2, 1905 he wrote: “Russia is not a naval power. God gave her land covering one sixth of the world and stretching without interruption across the continent, without any islands. And she could have taken possession of it peacefully, exploiting its wealth and converting it to the good of her people; she could have take care of the material and spiritual well-being of her citizens. But all this was not enough for the Russian government; it is expanding its possessions more and more; and by what means! Is it really a good thing to attempt to conquer Manchuria and take it from China?

“'We need a warm-water port.’ Why? To give our sailors something to boast about? Well, let them now boast in the unheard-of shame of their defeat [at Tsushima]. It is obvious that God was not with us, because we destroyed His righteousness.

“'Russia has no outlet to the ocean.’ What for? Do we have trade here? None at all. The fleet had done a good job defending a handful of Germans who are conducting their German trade here... All we needed were a few ships to catch those who are stealing from our fishermen, and a few fortresses on the coast; in the event of war these same fortresses would defend the ships and would not allow the enemy to take control of the coast.

“'Why do you need Korea?’ I once asked Admiral Dubasov. ‘It should be ours by natural right,’ he replied. ‘When a man stretches out his legs, he is chained down by

278 Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’ (Orthodox Life), 1982; in Fomin and Formina, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 372.
what is on his legs; we are growing and stretching our legs. Korea is on our legs, we cannot stop stretching out to the sea and making Korea ours. ’So that’s what they did! They cut off our legs!

“And God is not defending His people because it has done unrighteousness. The God-Man wept over Judaea, but did not defend it from the Romans. I used to say to the Japanese: ‘We will always be friends with you, because we cannot bump into each other: we are a continental power, you are a naval power; we can help each other, supplement each other, but there will never be a reason for enmity.’ I always said this boldly right up to our taking Port Arthur from the Japanese after the Chinese-Japanese war. ‘God, what have they done now!’ were my first words and groan when I heard about this unclean act of the Russian government. Now we can see to what misfortune it has brought Russia.

“... It was not need for a fleet that created the Russian fleet, but vainglory; while lack of talent prevented us from arming it properly, which is why everything ended in dust. Will Russia at least now renounced the role of a great sea power that does not belong to her? Or will she continue in her blindness and try again to creat a fleet, exhausting her resources, which are very much needed for more vital, truly vital things, like the education of the people, the exploitation of her internal resources and such like? She will be unprecedentedly powerful if she firmly and clearly recognizes herself to be a continental power, but fragile and weak – like a weak hermaphrodite – if she again begins to see herself as also a great sea power which must therefore have a big fleet, which in such a case will always be the prey of her enemies and the source of shame for herself. Help her, O Lord, to become cleverer and more honourable!... My soul is in torment for my dear Fatherland, which its ruling class has made stupid and dishonourable...

Archbishop Nicholas may have been a sharp critic of his Homeland, but his noble affirmation, in word and deed, of the primacy of faith over politics did not go unappreciated. After the war he was awarded the Order of St. Alexander Nevsky by the Tsar, and the Holy Synod raised him to the rank of archbishop. His death in 1912 was covered by all the newspapers of Japan. His life witnessed vividly to the fact that Christianity, while supporting true patriotism, is a universalist religion which always places the universalist message of the Gospel above the interests of any individual State or nation.
The Press and the Liberals

We have noted that one of the causes of the defeat of the Russians in the war with Japan was the defeatist attitude of the liberals in the rear, which was magnified by the diatribes of the largely Jewish-controlled press. Now the press had emerged as an important factor in international relations for the first time in the Crimean War, when reports in the British press of military incompetence and insanitary conditions in the hospitals, together with photographs from the battlefield, had had an important influence on public opinion, and thence on the government. It became even more important in the Balkan crises of the 1870s when reports of Turkish atrocities in The Daily Telegraph and The Manchester Guardian were an important ally to Gladstone in his campaign to jolt Disraeli’s government out of its pro-Turkish indifference. By the 1890s all the major powers had reason to fear the press. In Britain the press was largely uncensored; even in monarchical Germany and Russia it was beginning to flex its muscles...

“Already in the 70s,” writes Solzhenitsyn, “the ‘unbridledness of the Russian press’ had been noted more than once by Dostoyevsky. In relation to the State it displayed itself even at the conference of March 8, 1881 under the just-crowned Alexander III, and more than once after that: the journalists behaved like self-willed representatives of society.

“The expression: ‘Three hostile newspapers are more dangerous than 100,000 hostile soldiers’ has been ascribed to Napoleon. This phrase became very applicable to the Russo-Japanese war. The Russian press was openly defeatist throughout the war, in each of its battles. And, still more important: it did not hide its sympathy for terrorism and revolution…”

On August 25, 1904 the Tsar made his first significant concession to the views of the newspaper publishers and their readership by appointing Prince P.S. Sviatopolk-Mirsky, a liberal conservative, as Minister of the Interior in place of the murdered Plehve. As Alexander Bokhanov writes, “the minister gave several interviews to the newspapers, met with representatives of liberal circles and popularized his political programme, whose main points were: religious tolerance, the broadening of local self-government, the provision of great rights to the press, a change in policy in relation to the border regions, an allowance of workers’ meetings for the discussion of economic questions. These declarations produced a sensation.

“Political activists of a liberal persuasion were very sceptical about them. They were convinced that the time of the autocracy was drawing to an end, and did not want to bind themselves with any obligations to the ‘departing authorities’. One of the most well-known activists among the liberals, Paul Nikolayevich Miliukov, wrote in the summer of 1904 on the pages of the illegal newspaper Liberation: ‘We shall be patriots for ourselves and for a future Russia, we shall remain faithful to the old ‘people’s proverb’ – ‘Down with the autocracy!’ This is also patriotic, and at the same time guarantees us freedom from the danger of being in the bad company of reactionaries.’

279 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 428.
“At the very height of the ‘Sviatopolk spring’, at the end of September and beginning of October, 1904, a leading group of Russian liberals grouped around the newspaper Liberation, which had been published since 1902 under the editorship of P.B. Struve, first in Stuttgart, then in Paris, conducted a congress of opposition parties in Paris. Various liberal and radical unions took part in it. Of the most significant only RSDRP [the Russian Social Democrat Party] was absent. This meeting unanimously approved a resolution on the liquidation of the autocracy and replacing it with ‘a free democratic structure on the basis of universal suffrage’ and on the right of ‘national self-determination of the peoples of Russia’.

“At the congress was present the flower of the Russian liberal intelligentsia, which later formed the core of the most powerful liberal party in Russia – the constitutional-democratic party (‘the cadets’). These gentlemen, fighters for freedom and ‘European rules’ considered it appropriate to define common actions with the extreme tendencies and groups that had stained themselves with bloody murders, for example, the party of the social revolutionaries (‘S-Rs’), which emerged in 1902 and placed terror at the head of the corner of its ‘strategy and tactics’.

“Already after the revolution, when all the noble-hearted liberal word-mongers had been scattered by the crude reality of Russian life, some of them came to their senses and confessed their criminal lightmindedness. In the emigration at the beginning of the 1930s the well-known cadet V.A. Maklakov wrote about the notorious Paris congress: ‘On the part of liberalism, this agreement was a union with the revolution that threatened it. The salvation of Russia was possible only through the reconciliation of the historical authority with liberalism, that is, the sincere transformation of the autocracy into a constitutional monarchy. By instead concluding this union with the revolution, the liberalism of Liberation lost this exit; it preferred to serve the triumph of the revolution.’

“Mirsky’s proclaimed ‘epoch of trust’ very soon began to demonstrate its hopelessness. It turned out that it was easy to make promises, but very difficult to fulfil them. In particular, right in the centre of the discussions and debates was the old and painful question of the creation of a pan-Russian representative organ, its competency and the path to its formation. It immediately came up against the problem of the unassailability of the monarch’s prerogatives. Prince N.D. Sviatopolk-Mirsky was convinced that the autocracy and representation were compatible, but many others in the ruling circles did not share this position. They feared that the creation of any unappointed, elected organ would inevitably generate confusion in the administration and would contribute to the paralysis of power, which the enemies of the throne and the dynasty would unfailingly use. At the end of 1904 there were more and more reasons for such fears.

“Passions fired up especially during and after the congress of zemstvo activists, which took place in Petersburg from November 7 to 9, 1904. The minister of the interior allowed the congress, but asked the participants to occupy themselves with ‘practical questions of zemstvo life’. However, in the atmosphere of social tension
and of the sharp politicization of the whole of public life, the practical realization of such a direction was impossible.

“The zemstvo deputies discussed some of their specific questions briefly, but the centre of their attention was in the stream of general political problems. It was accepted that the convening of a ‘national representation’ was necessary, that a political amnesty should be introduced, that ‘administrative arbitrariness’ should be stopped, that the ‘decrees on intensified guard’ should be rescinded, that personal inviolability should be guaranteed, and that religious tolerance should be affirmed. Although those assembled left for the authorities the initiative in carrying out transformations and rejected the calls of some participants to support the demand for the convening of a Constituent Assembly, nevertheless the event that took place was unprecedented. For the first time subjects of the tsar, gathered together in the capital of the empire, did not petition the monarch on personal matters, but spoke out with demands of a political character.

“The most blatant was one very important demand-resolution, ‘point ten’, which declared that only a constitutional order, limiting autocratic power, could satisfy public opinion and give Russia ‘peaceful development of state life’.

“This thesis elicited sharp objections from the moderate participants in the congress led by the well-known liberal zemstvo activist D.N. Shipov, who categorically declared that he did not share the constitutionalist point of view. In his lengthy speech he defended the old Slavophile thesis: ‘The people has its opinions, the tsar makes the decisions’, and did not allow any written agreements and guarantees between the authorities and the people, considering that their relations were built, not on juridical formal principles, but on unassailable moral principles. This reasoning was not influential, and during the voting the majority cast their votes for a constitution.

“The decisions of the zemstvo congress aroused considerable interest and became the subject of lively discussion in the press and in private gatherings. At first it was supposed that the deputation of zemstvo activists would be received by the Interior minister and the tsar, which would be seen as a turning of the authorities towards constitutionalism. The conservative traditionalists were angry. Great-Prince Sergius Alexandrovich wrote in his diary on November 10: ‘I heard about the details of the zemstvo congress in St. Petersburg: they voted for a constitution!! A deputation of zemstvo activists has been received by Mirsky, and will be received by the Tsar!! (It was not – A.B.) Unhappy man,” and he added: ‘It sometimes seems to me that I’m going out of my mind.’

“The authorities were shocked: it could not satisfy such extreme demands, since this de facto meant the self-liquidation of the historical power. But they could not leave things as they were before. At the beginning of December 1904 meetings of high officials of the empire took place in Tsarskoe Selo, at which urgent measures to transform the inner structure were discussed.
“At the centre of the discussions was a programme put forward by the Interior minister. The special attention of the participants was drawn to the point about elected representatives in the State Council (until then all members had been appointed personally by the monarch). The majority of those assembled expressed themselves against this. The over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod, C.P. Pobedonostsev, entreated the tsar in the name of God not to limit the autocracy, and this position was supported by the minister of finances V.N. Kokovtsov, the president of the Committee of ministers, S.Yu. Witte and most of the others. The tsar wavered at the beginning, but soon unambiguously spoke for keeping the authority inviolable.

“At the end of the Tsarskoe Selo meetings, a decree of the Senate was issued containing resolutions on the broadening local self-government, on reviewing resolutions on the press and confirming the necessity of establishing religious toleration. The point about elected representatives was missing. But the liberals hoped that the elective principle would be specified there. However, the tsar considered that it was not yet time for sharp changes…”

The press, which had done so much to stir up this constitutionalist mania, continued unchecked in 1905. Solzhenitsyn writes that it “was seen during the Duma period as, in the words of Witte, mainly ‘Jewish’ or ‘half-Jewish’: more precisely, with a predominance of leftist or radical Jews in the key correspondent and editors’ posts. In November, 1905 D.I. Pikhno, the editor of the Russian national newspaper Kievlianin, who had already been in this post for 25 years and studied the Russian press, wrote: ‘Jewry… has placed huge stakes on the card of the Russian revolution… The serious part of Russian society had understood that at such moments the press is a force, but it did not have this power – it was in the hands of its opponents, who spoke in its name throughout Russia and forced themselves to be read, because there were no other publications, and you can’t create them in one day… and [society] was lost in the multitude of lies in which it could not find its way.’

“L. Tikhomirov saw nothing national in this, but in 1910 he made the following comments on the character of the Russian press: ‘Tearing on the nerves… One-sidedness… They don’t want decency, gentlemanliness… They have no ideal, and have no understanding of it.’ And the public brought up by this press ‘demands glibness and hooliganism, it cannot value knowledge, and does not notice ignorance’.

“And, from completely the opposite political extreme, a Bolshevik publicist [M. Lemke], expressed himself as follows on the character of this press: ‘In our post-reformation era ideas have become cheap, while information, sensation and unabashed authoritarian ignorance fill the press.’

“Speaking, more specifically, about culture, Andrew Bely complained in 1909, although he was by no means a rightist or ‘chauvinist’: ‘The leaders of national culture turn out to be people who are foreign to this culture… Look at the lists of those working on the newspapers and journals of Russia: who are the musical and literary critics of these journals? You will see almost exclusively Jewish names:

among these critics there are some talented and acute people, there are some among
them who understand the tasks of a national culture, perhaps, more profoundly than
the Russians: but they are exceptions. The general mass of Jewish critics are
completely foreign to Russian art. They write in an Esperanto jargon and terrorize
every attempt to deepen and enrich the Russian language.’

“In those same years the far-sighted Zionists Vl. Zhabotinsky complained about
the ‘leading newspapers sustained on Jewish money and filled with Jewish workers’
and warned: ‘When the Jews hurled themselves en masse to create Russian politics,
we foretold them that nothing good would come out of it, neither for Russian
politics, nor for Jewish.’

“The Russian press played a decisive role in the pre-revolutionary Cadet-
revolutionary storming of the government: its mood was powerfully picked up and
expressed by Duma deputy A.I. Shingarev: ‘Let this power sink! We will not cast this
power even a bit of rope!’ It is appropriate to mention here that the First Duma stood
up in memory of the victims of the Belostok pogrom (not agreeing… that this was an
armed battle between anarchists and soldiers); the Second Duma – in honour of the
murdered terrorist Iollos. But when Purishkevich suggested standing in honour of
those killed at their posts as policemen and soldiers, he was forbidden to speak and
excluded from the session: at that time it seemed unthinkable to the enflamed
parliamentarians to sympathize with those who kept simple order in the State, which
was necessary for all of them, and for a generally quiet life.

“A member of the Union of [Jewish] Complete Equality, A. Kulisher, drew the
truthful conclusion – but late, looking back at the past in the émigré Jewish Tribune in
1923: ‘In Russian-Jewish society before the revolution there really were people and
whole groups whose activity can be characterized precisely as… the absence of a
feeling of responsibility for the turmoil in the minds of Russian Jewry… the
spreading of an indefinite and light-minded ‘revolutionism’… The whole essence of
their politics consisted in being more leftist than anyone else. Always remaining in
the role of irresponsible critics, never going to the end, they saw their purpose in
saying: ‘Not enough!’… These people were ‘democrats’… But there were also
democrats who called themselves ‘The Jewish Democratic Group’ who attached this
adjective to every unsuitable noun, composing an intolerable Talmud of
democratism… They created around themselves an irresponsible mood of
groundless maximalism, with no precise limit to their demands. This mood
manifested itself with destructive consequences in the revolution.’ The
destructiveness proceeding from this press was indeed one of the weakest, most
vulnerable points in the Russian State by 1914 and 1917…”

Indeed, the stream of slander turned out by the Jewish-controlled press against the
Tsar was one of the major causes of the revolution… In her press, we see how Russia
was a microcosm, as it were, of one of the main problems of modern civilization…
No ruler now, however powerful or autocratic, could afford to ignore the opinions,
however misguided, of “the common man” – or, more commonly, of that relatively
small group of newspaper owners who presumed to speak in his name…

57. BLOODY SUNDAY

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

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

“Those with the greatest interest in throwing the masses ‘into a muddle’ were of course the revolutionary socialist parties. Russian revolutionary socialism in the early twentieth century was divided into two currents, one Marxist, the other not. The former strand was represented by the Social Democrats, who in 1903 split into two factions, Menshevik and Bolshevik.282 The non-Marxist strand comprised the Socialist Revolutionary Party, formally constituted only in 1901, but deriving its ideas, traditions and older cadres from the nineteenth-century Russian socialist movement. In terms of ideas, the greatest distinction between the two was that the Marxists believed that the urban workers would spearhead the socialist revolution, which could only occur after capitalism had fully developed. The Socialist Revolutionary Party, on the other hand, claimed that a coalition of peasants, workers and poorer members of the intelligentsia and lower-middle class would achieve the socialist

282 The Bolsheviks were led by Lenin, and the Mensheviks by Martov (Tsederbaum). Trotsky belonged to the Mensheviks at that time, but changed sides in time for the 1905 revolution. The difference between the two parties was that the Bolsheviks wanted a more tightly organized and centralized party, whereas the Mensheviks wanted a more loosely organized party on the western model that could, however, attract more people. (V.M.)
revolution, which could come immediately if the revolutionary parties pursued the proper tactics and exploited their opportunities.

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

Russian educated society now took a decisive turn to the left. “The whole of Russian educated society, with very few exceptions, was in a state of sharp, irreconcilable, blind opposition to the authorities. It was in these years that the short, categorical and martial phrase ‘Down with the autocracy!’ was put forward and became a popular phrase…”

We have seen how the war with Japan exarcebated revolutionary sentiment. The war was far from over when, on January [9/]22, 1905 some hundreds of demonstrating workers were killed by tsarist troops in St. Petersburg - a tragic event that was used by the intelligency and revolutionaries as an excuse to undermine faith in the Tsar among the masses.

The first myth that needs to be dispelled is that the Tsar was heartless towards the condition of the workers. Of course, conditions for workers in Russia, as in every other industrialized country of the time, were harsh. But it needs to be borne in mind, as Nicholas Kazantsev writes, that “before ‘Bloody Sunday’ special laws had been issued to secure the safety of workers in mining and factory industries, on the railways and in enterprises that were dangerous for their life and health, as for example in munitions factories, etc.

“Child labour until the age of 12 was forbidden, while adolescents and women could not be employed in factory work between 9 in the evening and 5 in the morning. Fines deducted from pay packets could not exceed one third of the packet,
moreover every fine had to be confirmed by the factory inspector. Money from fines went into a special fund designed to satisfy the needs of the workers themselves.

“In 1903 workers’ wardens elected by the factory workers on the corresponding sections were introduced. Moreover, in Tsarist Russia – again, before ‘Bloody Sunday’ - it was possible to resort to strikes. In factories controlled by the Labour Inspectorate there were 68 strikes in 1893, 118 in 1896, 145 in 1897, 189 in 1899 and 125 in 1900. While in 1912 social insurance was established.

“At that time the emperor’s social legislation was undoubtedly the most progressive in the world. This caused Taft, the president of the United States at the time to declare publicly two years before the First World War in the presence of some high-ranking Russians: ‘Your Emperor has created such a perfect workers’ legislation as not one democratic state can boast of.’”

However, the demonstration was not really about workers’ conditions. In the petition composed by the demonstration’s leader, the priest Fr. George Gapon, together with his revolutionary friends, demanded, among other things: an amnesty for political prisoners, the convening of a Constituent Assembly, a government responsible to the people, the separation of the Church and State, a progressive income tax, the abolition of redemption payments from the peasants, an end to the war, the creation of elected trade unions and the abolition of the factory inspectorate.

“From this it was evident,” writes Kazantsev, “that Gapon was completely led by the revolutionaries. But the masses went behind the former Gapon, who had organized his workers’ movement under the protection of the over-procurator of the Synod, Pobedonostsev.

“They went towards the Tsar with by no means a peaceful request, as D. Zubov affirms, but with an ultimatum. Gapon went round the crowd of workers and said everywhere: ‘If the Tsar refuses us, then we have no Tsar.’ The crowd, as if enthralled, repeated his words and cried out: ‘We shall die!’… Fine ‘monarchical sentiments’…

“N. Varnashev, the closest fellow-struggler of the provocateur, tells us that Gapon was warning those close to him: ‘I will have two flags with me – a white and a red; flying the white flag will mean that the tsar accepts our demands, but flying the red will be a signal for revolutionary actions’… While the active participant in Gapon’s organization, I. Pavlov, cites the boastful declaration of Gapon: ‘We shall disarm the whole of the Petersburg police in ten minutes’… That’s a ‘Workers’ movement free of politics’ for you!...”

“Mirsky and the police panicked. Instead of using Cossacks, whose charges were terrifying and whips painful but rarely fatal, the garrison’s infantry under Uncle

286 Kazantsev, op. cit.
Vladimir, untrained for crowd control.” But figures of those killed have been exaggerated: probably no more than a few hundreds were killed on Bloody Sunday. The Tsar sacked the commander responsible for disobeying orders. Then, on January 11, he “received a deputation of workers who repented to him that they had allowed themselves to be drawn into an anti-government provocation. His Majesty mercifully forgave them all and gave to each family of those who suffered an allowance equivalent to half a year’s pay of a highly qualified worker. The police measures of the governments of the western countries, and especially the USA, at the beginning of the 20th century, to break up strikes and demonstrations led to far larger numbers of victims. It is sufficient to recall the shooting of the First of May strikers in Chicago and other cities in America, but democratically-inclined journalists prefer to keep silent about these facts.”

“The information on the events of January 9, 1905 in St. Petersburg is filled with lies and unfounded attacks on his August Majesty. The organizers of the demonstration to the Winter Palace headed by the defrocked priest George Gapon well knew that the tsar was not in St. Petersburg, but in his residence in Tsarkoe Selo and was not intending to go to the capital. The city authorities issued a ban on the 200,000-strong crowd of demonstrators going into the centre of the city and stopped all eleven columns at the places where they were assembling. The opposition of the demonstrators and soldiers soon turned to gunfire from the crowd. The first victims turned out to be soldiers. A part of the armed force returned fire on the provocateurs…”

In the febrile atmosphere that followed Bloody Sunday, on February 4, 1905, Great Prince Sergius Alexandrovich Romanov, the uncle of the Tsar, governor of Moscow and one of the foremost pillars of the regime, was killed by a bomb that exploded almost at the doorstep of the palace that he and his wife, Grand-Duchess Elizabeth - the sister of the Tsaritsa, and, like her, a convert from Lutheranism - inhabited in the Kremlin. At that moment the grand duchess was leaving for her workshops. She was alarmed by the sound of an exploding bomb nearby. Hurrying toward the place (near the Chudov monastery in the Kremlin), she saw a soldier stretching his military overcoat over the maimed body of her husband. The soldier tried to hide the horrible sight from the eyes of the unfortunate wife. But the grand duchess dropped to her knees, on the street, and put her arms out trying to embrace the torn remains of her husband. The bomb had shattered his body to such an extent that fingers of the great prince were found, still in their gloves, on the roof of the neighbouring building.

The lofty spirit in which the Grand Duchess took the tragedy astounded everyone; she had the moral strength even to visit in prison her husband’s assassin, Kaliayev, hoping to soften his heart with her Christian forgiveness.

"Who are you?" he asked upon meeting her.

287 Montefiore, op. cit., p. 521.
288 Kazantsev, op. cit.
"I am his widow," she replied, "Why did you kill him?"

"I did not want to kill you," he said. "I saw him several times before when I had the bomb with me, but you were with him and I could not bring myself to touch him."

"You did not understand that by killing him you were killing me," she said.

Then she began to talk to him of the horror of his crime before God. The Gospel was in her hands and she begged the criminal to read it and left it in his cell. Leaving the prison, the Grand Duchess said:

"My attempt was unsuccessful, but, who knows, perhaps at the last minute he will understand his sin and repent."

She then besought the tsar for clemency for him. And the emperor was ready to bestow it provided the bomber did not refuse it. He refused it...

On the memorial cross erected upon the site of her husband's death, the grand-duchess inscribed the Gospel words: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do..." After some years she became a nun and founded the monastery of Saints Mary and Martha in Moscow. The transformation of this scion of royalty and renowned beauty into a strict ascetic astounded and intrigued high society...
The Tsar was deeply interested in the project of the convening of a Church Council for the first time since 1682 that would reform Church-State relations and restore the patriarchate that had been abolished by Peter the Great. He had even suggested, shortly after the birth of the Tsarevich, and probably on December 17, 1904, his own candidature to the post of patriarch!

According to the account of Archbishop Anthony (Khраповитский), “the senior hierarchs, including myself, were summoned to his Majesty. At that time, in accordance with the will of the Tsar, preparatory work was being conducted for the convening of a Council at which the restoration of the Patriarchate in Russia was to take place. And his Majesty, following the course of the matter, wanted to see us. When we assembled in the palace, the Tsar asked us whether we had chosen a candidate. We glanced at each other and were silent. Each of us was probably thinking about himself as the most fitting Patriarch. After quite a long pause we replied: ‘No, your Majesty.’ A short period ensued; the Tsar again summoned us to himself, and put the same question to us. In our embarrassment we were forced, as before, to give a negative answer. Then the Tsar, after looking at us in silence, fell into thought. Some moments passed. The Tsar again began to speak: ‘If you have not found a candidate, then I have someone in mind.’ We all listened attentively, waiting to see which one of us the Tsar would point to. But what was our amazement when the Tsar declared to us: ‘I myself am a candidate’. Stunned, we could not even find anything to say in reply. And the Tsar continued: ‘The heir to the throne has been born. When he has grown up a little, Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich will become the regent. The Empress has agreed to go into a monastery. And I will be tonsured.’”

The process that led to this discussion had begun a little earlier, in November, 1904, when a report sponsored by the Minister of the Interior Prince P.D. Sviatopolk-Mirsky was completed envisaging important changes in a liberal direction in both Church and State. This led to the convening of an important conference on December 2 that included all the government ministers and four of the Tsar’s uncles. An ukaz called “On Plans for the Perfecting of State Order” was signed on December 12. The sixth point of this ukaz spoke of the sovereign’s unbending desire to grant tolerance to schismatics and non-Orthodox confessions in the empire. The question this immediately raised was: how would this affect the interests of the dominant confession of the empire, the Orthodox Church? In order to answer this question, a note entitled “On the Contemporary Situation of the Orthodox Church” was composed by professors of the theological academies in the capital for the president of the council of ministers, Count Witte.

Sergei Firsov writes: “The note said that while externally free and protected by the State, the Orthodox Church was weighed down by heavy chains. The expulsion of the principle of sobornost’ from Church life had led to a change in her spirit. The main cause of the disorders was recognized to be Peter’s Church reform, as a result

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290 Archbishop Anthony, in Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., p. 394.
of which the Church’s administration had turned into one of the ‘numerous wheels of the complex machine of State’. The secular bureaucratic element was called a constant barrier between the Church and the people, as also between the Church and the State, while the only way to excite life from the dead was to return to the former, canonical norms of administration.

“Witte also subjected the contemporary situation of the Orthodox parish to sharp criticism; ‘only the name remained’ from it. The reasons for the fall of the parish were attributed by the authors of the note to the development of State centralization and the intensification of serfdom in Russia in the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries; the imposition of police duties on the clergy, as a consequence of which it was separated from its flock; the caste alienation of the clergy, and the payments it demanded for the carrying out of needs. But the autonomous re-establishment of small ecclesiastical units, which is what the parishes were, would not attain its aim if a general reform of the Church administration were not carried out: the parishes had to be linked by spiritual communion and pour into the community of the diocese, while ‘diocesan assemblies’ having Local Councils as their model should be convened periodically in parallel with the parish meetings.

“Later the note touched on the problem of the alienation from the Church of a significant part of the intelligentsia. Only the Church herself could resolve this problem and overcome the ‘spiritual schism’. The problem of the theological school was also raised; it was declared to be a task of the whole State, ‘for the degree of the influence of religion on the people depends completely on its organization’. The union of Church and State was wholeheartedly approved, while the ‘self-governing activity’ of the ecclesiastical and state organism, in the opinion of the authors, had to achieve the equilibrium destroyed by Peter the Great. With this aim it was necessary to convene a Local Council in which both white clergy and laity would participate. ‘In view of the present undeniable signs of a certain inner shaking both of society and of the masses of the people,” pointed out Witte, ‘it would be dangerous to wait. Religion constitutes the main foundation of the popular spirit, and through it the Russian land has stood and been strong up to now.’

“And so in S.Yu. Witte’s note the question was posed not about particular changes, but about a general ecclesiastical reform, which would lead to a strengthening of the independence of the Orthodox Church and would sharply reduce the privileges of the over-procurator’s authority. After all, it was a secret to nobody that in speaking about ‘dry bureaucratic principles’, the president of the Committee of Ministers had in mind the rules that found their completed expression in the activity of the department of the Orthodox confession.

“It was at about the same time, in February, that another note appeared expressing the opinion of the capital’s Metropolitan Anthony: ‘Questions relating to desirable transformations in the position of our Orthodox Church’. Vladyka reviewed concrete questions of the reform of the ecclesiastical administration that demanded a very speedy resolution. Referring to the discussions on religious toleration that had taken place in the Committee of Ministers, he noted: the authorities are opening to those who have separated from the Orthodox Church (the Old Ritualists, sectarians and
others) ‘a definite position in the State’ without touching their inner church life, at the same time that the ‘ruling’ Church is deprived of such freedom. Citing the Popovtsi Old Ritualists who had accepted ‘the Austrian hierarchs’ as an example, Metropolitan Anthony warned: ‘The danger may occur that this community will be turned into the people’s Church while the Orthodox Church will remain only the State Church’.

“In pointing to the Church’s position within the State, Vladyka placed before the authorities a question of principle: had not the moment come to weaken the control of the secular authorities over the life of the Church? Other questions followed logically from that: should not the Church be given a greater freedom in the administration of her internal affairs? Should Orthodox priests also have the right to be permanent members of social-state institutions having their place in the parishes? After this it was natural to pose the further question on the desirability of providing the Church hierarchy with the right to participate in the sessions of the State Council, the Committee of Ministers and other higher state institutions with the right to vote in them.

“The note undoubtedly touched on the privileges of the over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod. After all, if the desires expressed by the metropolitan were to be satisfied, the Orthodox episcopate would receive the possibility of independently, with the mediation of the State, influencing legislative proposals touching the Church, that is, it would have the right of a political voice in the empire. It is understandable that K.P. Pobedonostsev could not welcome such self-will, the more so in that, besides questions on the position of the Orthodox Church in Russia, the metropolitan gave reasons for the need to review the structure of the Church and some aspects of the Church’s administration, and spoke about the particular importance of recognizing the parish as a legal person and on the desirability of reviewing the laws that regulated the right of the Church to own, acquire and use property…”

This debate highlighted two paradoxes within the present position of religion in the Russian empire, paradoxes that could be removed only simultaneously or not at all. The first paradox was that the 44th and 45th articles of the Basic Laws of the Empire guaranteed freedom of religion - but the Emperor had to be Orthodox and was obliged both to watch over the purity of the Orthodox Faith and to protect the Orthodox population of the empire from threats presented by schisms and heresies. And the second paradox was that the Orthodox Church was the dominant confession of the empire - but, since it was also a department of State, it was less, rather than more free in relation to the State than the other confessions. Increasing freedom of religion in the sense, not simply of allowing freedom to practise religious rites (which already existed), but of creating real equality between the religions from the point of view of the State (which did not yet exist) would have the effect of abolishing the first paradox – but only by removing the Emperor’s role as guardian of the Orthodox faith and substantially increasing the threat to Orthodoxy from certain confessions in certain regions (for example, Catholicism in the west). This could be compensated

291 Firsov, Russkaia Tserkov’ nakanune peremen (konets 1890-kh – 1918 g.) (The Russian Church on the Eve of the Changes (the end of the 1890s to 1918), Moscow, 2002, pp. 149-153.
for, in the view of the hierarchs, only by abolishing the second paradox at the same time – that is, by giving the Church a free hand to defend herself from the competition of other confessions without interference from the State.

Pobedonostsev suspected that Witte and Metropolitan Anthony were in league against him, and mounted a vigorous campaign to stop the projected reforms, defending the Petrine system. On March 13 he succeeded in persuading the emperor to remove the question of Church reforms from the competence of the Conferences of Ministers and Heads of State Departments and place it before the Holy Synod. However, this was only a seeming victory: the Holy Synod was no less in favour of the reforms than was Witte and the State. On March 17 the Synod recognized the necessity of reviewing the present situation of the Church vis-à-vis the State “in view of the changed situation of the heterodox confessions, the so-called Old Ritualists and sectarians, and transform the Church’s administration”. The restoration of the patriarchate was deemed desirable “for the sake of the honour of the Russian State”, and it was suggested that a Local Council be convened in Moscow composed of the diocesan bishops and their representatives. On March 22 the seven members of the Synod signed an appeal to the Tsar to convene a Council “at the appropriate time” in Moscow, at which a patriarch would be elected and a series of major questions of Church life would be discussed.\(^{292}\)

However, as Oldenburg writes, “protests against this plan came not only from those close to the over-procurator, but also from eminent theologian, convinced supporters of the restoration of parish self-government. ‘The Church must be regenerated. But this regeneration must be conducted in the correct way, without repeating the self-willed methods of action of 1721 [i.e. of Peter the Great’s Spiritual Regulation],’ wrote M.A. Novoselov. Criticizing the Synod, he added: ‘The haste is truly striking. It recalls the spectacle of the so-called St. Vitus’ dance rather than a serious discussion of a holy and great work!’”\(^{293}\)

Once again, on March 31, Pobedonostsev succeeded in persuading the Tsar to put off the Synod’s project, and to postpone giving Metropolitan Anthony an audience “for a certain time”. As the Tsar wrote on the Synod’s appeal: “I admit the impossibility of accomplishing, in the anxious times we are living through, such a great work requiring both calm and careful thought as the convening of a Local Council. I reserve for myself, when the fitting time for this will come, in accordance with the ancient examples of the Orthodox Emperors, the task of giving this work momentum and convening a Council of the All-Russian Church for the canonical discussion of matters of faith and Church administration.”

However, Pobedonostsev’s victory could only be temporary: society’s interest in the reforms was increasing, and even V.M. Skvortsov in the conservative journal Missionerskoe Obozrenie [Missionary Review], after pointing out that the martyred Great Prince Sergius Alexandrovich had been in favour of the reforms, expressed the opinion that “the reform of the administration of the dominant Church has appeared as the logical end and natural consequence of the confessional reform which was so quickly

\(^{292}\) Firsov, op. cit., p. 163.
\(^{293}\) Oldenburg, op. cit., p. 276.
and decisively pushed through by S.Yu. Witte and a special Conference of the Committee of Ministers”.\(^{294}\)

On May 5, the Tsar consented to see the metropolitan, who explained that to delay the reform was neither possible nor desirable. “But as long as Pobedonostsev is alive,” he said, “we cannot expect much.” On May 18 the Tsar officially thanked the Synod for the icon and the report that had been composed two months before, thereby indicating that Pobedonostsev’s bid to keep the Petrine system untouched had failed...

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Meanwhile, on April 17, the Sunday of Pascha, 1905, a decree “On the Strengthening of the Principles of Religious Toleration” was published, abolishing the last significant discrimination against non-Orthodox religion. Such a decree had been dear to the heart of the Tsar since his early years, but he had desisted out of respect for his teacher, Pobedonostsev.

St. John of Kronstadt, among others, was critical of the decree, seeing it as yet another product of the revolutionary unrest: “Look at what is happening in this kingdom at the present time: everywhere students and workers are on strike; everywhere there is the noise of parties who have as their goal the overthrowing of the true monarchical order established by God, everywhere the dissemination of insolent, senseless proclamations, disrespect for the authority of the ruling powers established by God, for ‘there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God’: children and young people imagine that they are the masters and commanders of their own fates; marriage has lost all meaning for many and divorces at will have multiplied endlessly; many children are left to the whims of fate by unfaithful spouses; some kind of senselessness and arbitrariness rule... Finally, an unpunished conversion from Orthodoxy into any faith whatever is allowed [the Decree of April 17, 1905], even though the same Lord Whom we confess designated death in the Old Testament for those denying the law of Moses.

“If matters continue like this in Russia and the atheists and crazy anarchists are not subjected to the righteous retribution of the law, and if Russia is not cleansed of its many tares, then it will become desolate like the ancient kingdoms and cities wiped out by God’s righteous judgement from the face of the earth for their godliness and their wickedness: Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, Greece-Macedonia. Hold fast, then, Russia, to your faith, and your Church, and to the Orthodox Tsar if you do not wish to be shaken by people of unbelief and lawlessness and if you do not wish to be deprived of your Kingdom and the Orthodox Tsar. But if you fall away from your faith, as many inteligenty have fallen away, then you will no longer by Russia or Holy Rus’, but a rabble of all kinds of other faiths that wish to destroy one another...”\(^{295}\)

\(^{294}\)Skvortsov, in Firsov, op. cit., p. 172.

\(^{295}\)St. John of Kronstadt, in Kizenko, op. cit., pp. 247-248. At about the same time, St. John’s friend and fellow-wonderworker, Protopriest Valentine Amphiteatrov said: “Pray well for the Sovereign. He is a martyr. Without him the whole of Russia will perish...” (Protopriest Valentine, in “Zhizneopisanie
Immediately after the publication of the decree on religious toleration, tens of thousands of uniates in the western regions, who had been Orthodox only formally, returned to uniatism\(^{296}\), and the Orthodox began to suffer persecution. Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Volhynia addressed this problem in his report to the Pre-Conciliar Convention of 1906 entitled “On Freedom of Confession”:

“Freedom of confession (not ‘freedom of conscience’: that is a senseless expression),” he said, “must of course be preserved in the State: there is no point in keeping anybody by force in the ruling Church; it is also necessary to excommunicate from the Church those who declare themselves to be outside her confession after exhorting them twice. But this is quite another matter than freedom of religious propaganda…

“Orthodoxy has very little to fear from the preaching of foreign religious dogmas, and hardly any religion would decide to address Orthodox listeners with such preaching; this would mean hoping to draw people from the light of the sun to a dim kerosene lamp. The propaganda of heterodoxy is possible only through cunning, deception and violence. Who does not know by what means the Latins drew to themselves 200,000 Orthodox Christians last year? They persistently spread the rumour that the Royal Family and even St. John of Kronstadt was joining their heresy, assuring the people that supposedly all Catholics would be re-ascribed to the Polish gentry and be given lands, while the Orthodox would be returned to the status of serfs. But that was still only half the sorrow. Representing in themselves almost the whole of the landowning class in the western and south-western region, the Polish gentry and counts are oppressing the Orthodox in their factories… The peasants there are completely in the hands of these contemporary feudal lords, and when they meet them they kiss their feet.

“And so even now, when there is not yet equality of religious confessions, they are bestowing on the renegades from Orthodoxy both money and forests and lands, while the faithful sons of the Church are being insulted, deprived of employment and expelled together with their earnings from the factories. What will the situation be when there is equality of confessions?

“The Protestants are acting by the same means in the north-western region, as are various sects in the Crimea and New Russia. Orthodoxy and the Orthodox, by contrast, despise such ways of acting. The Muslim or Jew, on accepting holy baptism, is often immediately lynched, that is, killed by his former co-religionists… Can the government leave them defenceless? Thousands of Christians have fallen into Mohammedanism in the last year; even several purely Russian families in Orenburg diocese have done so, having been subjected to threats, bribes and absurd rumours about the imminent re-establishment of the Kirghiz kingdom with its hereditary dynasty, together with expulsion and even the beating up of all Christians.

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\(^{296}\) Oldenburg, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 276-277.
“If the governments of all cultured countries punish falsification in trade, as well as the spreading of sensational false rumours and deliberate slander, etc., then our government, too, if it is to remain consistent, must protect the Orthodox people from the deceit, blackmail and economic and physical violence of the heterodox. They are able to act only by these means, as did the Catholics during the time of the Polish kingdom, when they seduced the Orthodox into the unia.

“Let us remember one more important circumstance that is completely ignored when talking about religious toleration.

“If our flock were catechized both in the truths of the faith and in how they should look on various faiths, peoples and estates, it would be possible to present them to themselves and to the spiritual influence of their pastors in the struggle for faith and nationality.

“But our government – more precisely, our State – has been attracted since the time of Peter and after by the aims of purely cultural and state centralization, constricting, distorting and even half eclipsing the religious consciousness and religious life of the Orthodox people. In the 17th century the latter had nothing to fear from any propaganda (except that of the Old Ritualists, of course), because, if not each peasant family, at any rate every village had its own teachers of dogmas, who lived the same peasant life as all the other village dwellers. Moreover, discipline in Church and everyday life was as strong as among the Jewish hassidim or, to take a closer example, our contemporary Yedinovertsy, to whom also, thanks to their conditions of life, no propaganda presented any danger.

“But the government of the 18th century tore away the clergy from the people, driving the former into the ranks of a separate caste, and educating it, not in the concepts and everyday discipline of popular Orthodoxy, but in the traditions of the Latin school and scholastic theological theory. The people was further and further estranged from Church literature and Church services, and which is still more sad, remained alone in its religious way of life, in its fasts, its prayers, its pilgrimages. The clergy became more and more learned and cultured, while the people became more and more ignorant and less steeped in Orthodox discipline. That is what happened with the Great Russian people, which was Orthodox from ages past. But what are we to say about the down-trodden, enslaved Western Little Russians and Belorussians, or about the descendants of the formerly baptized non-Russian peoples beyond the Volga and in Siberia?

“All these people, abandoned as regards spiritual development, chained to the land, had, willingly or unwillingly, to be reconciled to the thought that the Tsar, the lords, the bishops and the priests were reading sacred books and studying the holy faith for them, while they themselves would listen to them – learned people who could find the leisure and the means to read.

“The grey village hardly distinguishes between spiritual bosses and secular ones, spiritual books and science from secular ones. Everything that comes from the legislative authorities comes from God; everything that is published in the
newspapers comes from the Tsar and the bishops. Look at what views on life our poor people has come up against: the mountains of proclamations, the blasphemous brochures, the caricatures of August Personages and Fr. John of Kronstadt and all the rest with which yester-year’s enlighteners have blessed their homeland.

“This is the clue how the people can believe the Catholic proclamations about his Majesty accepting this religion, and the revolutionary proclamations to the effect that the Tsar has supposedly ordered the landowners to be robbed, etc. And so, having taken into its hand the people’s conscience, can the Russian government renounce Orthodoxy before the people has been catechized in it consciously? If it would like to take an extra-confessional stance, then let it first return to the people the confessional conscience it leased from it, let it give out millions over several years for the establishment of catechists – at least one for every 300 people (now there is one priest for every 2000 Orthodox Christians). But until then it is obliged to protect the Orthodox people from violent deception, from economic compulsion to apostasy.

“We said that an elective authority will not dare to violate the people’s will, but it must get to know it and obey it. Government authority has, of course, lofty privileges, but it too is obliged to go in agreement, if not with everything that is contemporary, but in any case with the historically unchanged will of the people. It is in it that Russia, as a growing collective organism, as a nation, as an idea pouring out in history, is recognized. And what is this people in its history and its present? Is it an ethnographical group or a group, first of all, of self-defence at the level of the state? No, the Russians define themselves as a religious group, as a confessional group, including in this concept both the Georgians and the Greeks who cannot even speak Russian. According to the completely just definition of K. Aksakov and other Slavophiles, the Russian people thinks of itself as the flock of God, the Church, a society of people that accomplished their salvation with the guidance of its faith and through prayer and labour. The people looks on its life as a cross given it by God, and the whole of its earthly state prosperity it has entrusted to the Tsar. Let the Tsar with his boyars and warriors repel the enemies of his Orthodox country, let him take taxes and recruits for this end, let the Tsar judge his servants and punish thieves, robbers and other evil-doers; all this is of little interest to the Russian man, his work is to struggle in labour and prayer, and to learn virtue from the people of God. And let the Tsar and his warriors take care that nobody hinders him in this.

“True, in this country there are many people who are foreign to the aim of life that is embraced by the whole people, that is, salvation. But they do not hinder Russian people in this, let them without hindrance live in accordance with their ‘pagan habits’ and pray to their gods, until they recognize the true faith. But, of course, not only the personal life of each man, but also the mission of the whole Orthodox country is seen by each Russian as consisting in exalting the light of Orthodoxy both among his own ‘heathen’, and beyond the frontiers of his native land, as is proved for us by the constant missionary colonization by Russians of the East and the North, beginning from the 9th century, and their constant consciousness of their historical duty to liberate their co-religionists from under the Turk and bring down his ‘God-hated kingdom’, for which a litany is raised at the New Year moleben since the days of Ivan III to the days of Nicholas II.
“To renounce this task, which the people has considered for nine centuries to be its most important work, and to establish equality of rights for all faiths in the Russian state – this means annihilating Russia as an historical fact, as an historical force; it means carrying out a great violation on the thousand-year-old people than the Tatar khans or the usurpers of the Time of Troubles carried out…”

59. THE 1905 REVOLUTION

The defeat of the Russian navy at Tsushima in May, 1905 increased the political tensions in Russia. A meeting in Moscow of representatives from the zemstva, the nobility and the municipal councils called for the convocation of a national representative body elected on a secret, equal, universal and direct ballot. On June 6 a delegation from the meeting led by Prince Sergius Trubetskoj was received by the Tsar, and on August 6 what became known as the Bulygin Constitution was published: a proposal for a consultative parliamentary body called the Duma.

Now the Tsar was never against consultative bodies. He welcomed every opportunity to find out more about the opinions and attitudes of his subjects. But he said: “I shall never in any circumstances agree to a representative form of government, for I consider it harmful for the people entrusted to me by God”. The Bulygin Constitution was far from being a representative form of government in the full western sense: its powers were limited, and “the inviolability of autocratic power” was retained. Nevertheless, it was seen as a major concession by the government to the liberal opposition.

On August 27 the government made another unexpected concession: university faculties were allowed to elect rectors and students to hold assemblies. Moreover, the police were told to keep out of the universities, making them in effect “no-go” areas. Soon workers and other non-students joined the student meetings, and, as Richard Pipes writes, “academic work became impossible as institutions of higher learning turned into ‘political clubs’: non-conforming professors and students were subjected to intimidation and harassment... In Witte’s view, the university regulations of August 27 were a disaster: ‘It was the first breach through which the Revolution, which had ripened underground, emerged into the open.’”

At the end of September a wave of strikes, economic in origin, but politicised by the Union of Unions and the radical students, hit Central Russia. They culminated in a vast general strike in mid-October - the country was descending into anarchy. Both Witte and D.F. Trepov, the Governor-General of St. Petersburg, were in favour of the creation of a constitutional monarchy along the lines of the resolution of the Zemstvo Congress held in Moscow the month before. The Tsar was not convinced. He saw himself as having to choose between two courses: the first was to “appoint an energetic military man and try by all means to suppress the rebellion; then there would be a pause, and again in a few months one would have to act by force again; but this would mean torrents of blood and in the end would lead to the present situation, that is, the authority of the power would have been demonstrated, but the result would remain the same... The other path is to present the population with civil rights... Among other things, that would imply the obligation of passing every bill through the State Duma. This, in essence, is a constitution.”

299 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 36-37.
300 Oldenburg, op. cit., pp. 312-313.
These words of the Tsar would seem to indicate that he did not believe in the use of force to suppress the rebellion. Nevertheless, he did think of making the reliable and loyal Trepov a kind of military dictator. However, “to the question whether he [Trepov] could restore order in the capital without risking a massacre, he answered that ‘he could give no such guarantee either now or in the future: rebellion [kramola] has attained a level at which it is doubtful whether [bloodshed] could be avoided. All that remains is faith in the mercy of God.’

“Still unconvinced, Nicholas asked Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich to assume dictatorial powers. The Grand Duke is said to have responded that the forces for a military dictatorship were unavailable and that unless the Tsar signed the manifesto he would shoot himself…”

With “Nikolasha’s” rejection, the Tsar gave in: if he could not impose a dictatorship, he would have to allow a constitution.

In his Manifesto of October 17, 1905, which was entitled “On the Improvement of Order in the State”, the Tsar declared: “The disturbances and unrest in St Petersburg, Moscow and in many other parts of our Empire have filled Our heart with great and profound sorrow. The welfare of the Russian Sovereign and His people is inseparable and national sorrow is His too. The present disturbances could give rise to national instability and present a threat to the unity of Our State. The oath which We took as Tsar compels Us to use all Our strength, intelligence and power to put a speedy end to this unrest which is so dangerous for the State. The relevant authorities have been ordered to take measures to deal with direct outbreaks of disorder and violence and to protect people who only want to go about their daily business in peace. However, in view of the need to speedily implement earlier measures to pacify the country, we have decided that the work of the government must be unified. We have therefore ordered the government to take the following measures in fulfilment of our unbending will:

1. Fundamental civil freedoms will be granted to the population, including real personal inviolability, freedom of conscience, speech, assembly and association.
2. Participation in the Duma will be granted to those classes of the population which are at present deprived of voting powers, insofar as is possible in the short period before the convocation of the Duma, and this will lead to the development of a universal franchise. There will be no delay to the Duma elect already been organized.
3. It is established as an unshakeable rule that no law can come into force without its approval by the State Duma and representatives of the people will be given the opportunity to take real part in the supervision of the legality of government bodies.

301 Pipes, op. cit., p. 43.
We call on all true sons of Russia to remember the homeland, to help put a stop to this unprecedented unrest and, together with this, to devote all their strength to the restoration of peace to their native land.”

The revolutionaries saw the Manifesto as a capitulation to their demands – and continued with their revolution. However, the attitude of most people in the provinces was: “Thank God, now there will be an end to the strikes and disturbances – ‘the Tsar has given liberty’, there is nothing more to demand. This liberty was understood in different ways, and in a very woolly way: but the popular masses came out onto the streets with portraits of the Tsar and national flags; they celebrated the publication of the manifesto and did not protest against it.”

Witte was invited to chair the Council of Ministers, whom he, and not the Tsar, now selected. His position under the constitution was now critical – and critically ambiguous. Was he still primarily a servant of the Tsar - or a lackey of the Masons in the Duma?

Fr. Lev Lebedev writes: “When some time had passed, Witte began to praise his Majesty with sweet words for ‘the people’s representation’ in which the Tsar would find support. Nicholas II interrupted him: ‘Sergius Yulyevich: I very well understand that I am creating for myself not a helper, but an enemy, but I comfort myself with the thought that I will succeed in bringing up a state force which will turn out to be useful for providing Russia in the future with a path of peaceful development, without sharp undermining of those supports on which she has lived for so long.’ In the new order the old State Council, composed of high-ranking dignitaries appointed by the Tsar was preserved, as a kind of ‘higher chamber’. However, all this together with the Duma was not a parliament, since his Majesty was not intending to renounce his autocratic power. He made a public declaration about this during a reception of a monarchist organization: ‘The reforms I announced on October 17 will be real, and the freedoms given by me in the same way to the whole of the population are inalienable. But my Autocracy will remained what it was of old.’…”

But could the Autocracy remain what it was when there was now a mainly liberal Duma with not merely consultative, but also legislative powers? Although the Manifesto made no mention of the word “constitution”, many thought that the Tsar had committed himself to a constitution that permanently limited his autocratic powers. Of course, the Tsar’s power was not unlimited in an absolute sense – as Protopriest John Vostorgov said, “The supreme power in a pure, true monarchy is unlimited, but not absolute, for it is limited morally by the content of its ideal” – which is the Law of God.

It was because he always saw himself as under God’s law that when the Tsar came to review the Basic Laws of the Empire in April, 1906, he removed the word

303 Oldenburg, op. cit., p. 315.
305 Vostorgov, in Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., p. 403.
“unlimited” from Article 1 to describe the nature of his power, while retaining the word “autocratic”. However, the Tsar remained above all human (as opposed to Divine, Church) laws in his realm, since he was the source of them, so that if he bestowed a law, or manifesto, or even a constitution, he was entitled to change it or remove it altogether. Moreover, his subjects were bound by their oath of allegiance to accept such a change, whatever they might think privately of the Tsar’s inconsistency. As N. Rodzevich wrote in Moskovskie Vedomosti: “Let us assume that the Tsar is not knowledgeable on military affairs. Well, he selects an experienced general and declares that without the agreement of this general no military question may be decided. A time comes and the Tsar realizes that the general selected by him gives bad advice; can he really not change his previous order and dismiss the general? Of course he may do so. Similarly, if the Duma does not warrant the Tsar’s confidence, would he not be justified in dissolving the Duma and then creating a new one or refusing to convocate one at all? This depends on the Autocrat’s will.”

This was true. And yet we must remember that the date of the October Manifesto, October 17, was also the date of the creation of the St. Petersburg Soviet, or “the Soviet of Workers’ Deputies” to give it its official name, which was controlled by the socialists (they had twenty-one out of fifty seats on the Executive Committee). In other words, whatever kind of state Russia remained in theory, in practice a great change had taken place – the public creation of a revolutionary institution inexorably opposed both to God and the Autocracy that would have been unthinkable in an earlier age. And if this revolution was eventually crushed, it left a general feeling of malaise in the people, and a weakness and uncertainty in state administration (in spite of the efforts of the excellent prime minister, Peter Arkadievich Stolypin), that made 1917 inevitable.

And so if the revolution was born in October, 1917, it was conceived twelve years before, in 1905…

The Manifesto, far from calming political passions, excited them to the utmost. Anarchy increased as young revolutionaries rampaged in the cities, the press, freed from all restraints and almost exclusively owned by Jews, raged against the government, and the police, overstretched and unsure of their rights under the new constitution, hesitated to apply strong measures. However, in Petersburg there was a new phenomenon: demonstrations in favour of the Tsar, the so-called “Black Hundreds”, or monarchist counter-revolution...

1905 is famous particularly for its pogroms. But the truth was different from the view generally accepted in the West that the “Black Hundreds” simply slaughtered masses of Jews. The general pattern was as follows. First the revolutionaries, usually led by young Jews, would call on the population to strike and free prisoners from the prisons, and would themselves tear down the symbols of tsarist authority, although “undoubtedly both Russians and Jews took part in the destruction of portraits and

monograms”. Then, a day or two later, when it was clear that the authorities were unwilling or unable to restore order, the anti-Jewish pogrom would begin.

Thus in Kiev the pogrom began on October 18. “A crowd of Jews seized the building of the City Duma, tore down national flags and mocked the portraits of the Tsar. One of the Jews cut the head out of a portrait [of the Tsar], put his own [in the hole] and shouted: ‘Now I’m the Tsar!’ Others declared to the stunned Kievans: ‘Soon your St. Sophia cathedral will become our synagogue!’”

“‘In its initial stage the pogrom undoubtedly had the character of revenge taken for the offence to national feeling. Subjecting the Jews they met on the street to blows, smashing shops and trampling the goods they took out of them into the dirt, the pogromists would say: “There’s your freedom, there’s your constitution and revolution; there are your tsarist portraits and crown”. And then on the following morning, the 19th, a thousand-strong crowd made its way from the Duma to St. Sophia square carrying the empty frames from the broken portraits of the tsar, the tsarist monogram and smashed mirrors. They went to the university, repaired the damaged portraits and served a moleben, while ‘Metropolitan Flavian exhorted the crowd not to behave badly and to disperse to their homes’. ‘But at the same time that the people constituting the centre of the patriotic demonstration… maintained exemplary order in it, people joining it from the street allowed themselves to commit all kinds of violence in relation to the Jews they met and to people wearing the uniforms of academic institutions [students].’ Then the demonstrators were joined by ‘black workers, homeless inhabitants of the flea market and bare-footed people from the river-bank’, ‘groups of pogromists smashed up Jewish flats and stalls and threw out property and goods onto the street. Then they would be partly destroyed and partly stolen.’… The pogromists passed by the stalls of the Karaite Jews without touching them, and also ‘those Jewish flats where they were shown portraits of the emperor’. [On the 19th the wealthiest Jewish shops in the centre were looted.] Proceeding from the fact that ‘almost two thirds of all the trade in the city was in the hands of the Jews’, [Senator] Turau calculates the losses, including the homes of the rich, ‘at several million roubles’. They set out to destroy not only Jewish houses, but also the flats of well-known liberal social activists…

“In all during the days of the pogrom, according to the approximate estimate of the police (some of those who suffered were taken away by the crowd), 47 people were killed, including 12 Jews, while 205 were wounded, one third of them Jews.

“Turau concludes his report with the conclusion that ‘the main cause of the Jewish pogrom in Kiev was the long-existing enmity between the Little Russian and Jewish population, based on the difference in their world-views. The immediate cause was the insult to national feeling by the revolutionary manifestations, in which a prominent role belonged to Jewish youth.’ The simple people saw ‘the Jews alone as being to blame for the insults and imprecations against everything that was holy and dear to it. It could not understand the revolutionary movement after the concessions given it, and explained it by the striving of the Jews to gain “their own Yiddish

307 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 375.
308 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 428.
freedom’. ‘The failures of the war, at which Jewish youth always openly expressed its most lively joy, their avoidance of military service, their participation in the revolutionary movement, in a series of violent acts and murders of high-ranking people, and undoubtedly the irritation of the simple people against the Jews – that is why there were incidents in Kiev when many Russians openly gave refuge in their houses to poor Jews hiding from the violence, while sharply refusing to give it to young Jews.’

“The newspaper Kievlianin also wrote about this. ‘Unfortunate Jews! What were these thousands of families guilty of?… To their own woe and misfortune the Jews have not been able to restrain their madmen… But, you know, there are madmen among us Russians, too, and we have not been able to restrain them.’

“The revolutionary youth went mad – and it was the elderly and peaceful Jews who had to pay for it…”

Indeed, the older generation of Jewry did not support the young. “Orthodoxy was in a struggle, not always open, but hidden, against the Jewish intelligentsia. It was clear that orthodoxy, in condemning the liberation movement in Jewry, was striving to win the goodwill of the government.’ But it was already late. By 1905 the autocracy had generally lost control in the country. While traditional Jewry by that year had completely lost a whole, and already not the first, generation, which had departed into Zionism, into secular liberalism, rarely into enlightened conservatism, and – the most significant in its consequences – into the revolutionary movement.”

“It is not surprising,” continues Solzhenitsyn, “that ‘in many places… an active struggle of prosperous religious elements in Jewry against the revolution was noticed. They helped the police to catch Jewish revolutionaries, and to break up demonstrations, strikes, etc.’ Not that it was nice for them to be on the side of the government. But… they not want to accept the revolutionary law, for they honoured their own. While for many young revolutionaries the religious ‘Union of the Jews’ in Bialystok and other places was ‘Blackhundredist’.”

It must also be emphasized that the main motivation for this flood of Jews into the revolutionary movement was not the restrictions placed by the government on the civil rights of Jewry (which were in any case being quickly whittled down), but infection with the same liberal and revolutionary ideas as infected so many contemporary Russians. “The participation of Jews in the general Russian revolutionary movement can only to a very small degree be explained by their inequality… The Jews only shared the general mood’ of the struggle against the autocracy. Is that to be wondered at? The young members of intelligenty families, both Russian and Jewish, had for years heard at home [such phrases as]: ‘the crimes of the authorities’, ‘a government of murderers’. They then rushed into revolutionary action with all their energy and ardour.”

310 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 358.
312 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 361.
In Odessa, the Manifesto was published on the 17th. The next day, “General Kauldbars, the commander of the Odessa military district, in order to ‘give the population the unhindered opportunity to use the freedom given by the Manifesto in all its forms’, ordered all the soldiers not to appear on the streets, ‘so as not to spoil the joyful mood in the population’. However, ‘this mood did not last for long. From all sides individual groups, mainly of Jews and young students, streamed towards the centre of the city’ with red flags of shouts of “Down with the autocracy!” and “Down with the police!” And orators summoned them to the revolution. From a metallic image on the Duma of the words ‘God save the Tsar!’ the first two words were broken off. They rushed into the Duma hall, ‘a huge portrait of his Majesty the Emperor was torn to pieces, while in the Duma the national flag was replaced with the red flag. They removed the hats from a protopriest, deacon and reader who were passing by in a cab to a pannikhida, and then later at the burial they stopped the procession ‘and interrupted the singing of “Holy God” with shouts of “Hurrah!”’. They dragged along a dead cat and a scarecrow without its head and with the inscription “This is the autocracy”, and collected money on the spot “for killing the Tsar” or “for the death of Nicholas”. The young people, and especially the Jews, with an evident consciousness of their superiority began to point out to the Russians that freedom had not been given voluntarily, but had been snatchred away from the government by the Jews... They openly said to the Russians: “Now we will rule you”, and also: ‘We gave you God, we will also give you a tsar’. Prophetic words when we remember that it was little more than twelve years to the Jewish Soviet “tsardom”...

Soon the students were forcing workers to take off their hats in front of the red flag. When the workers refused, they were shot at. But though unarmed, they succeeded in dispersing the crowd. Then, however, another thousand-strong crowd of Jews began to fire at the workers, killing four. Thus “in various places there began fights and armed confrontations between Russians and Jews: Russian workers and people without fixed occupations, the so-called hooligans, began to catch and beat up Jews. They went on to break into and destroy Jewish houses, flats and stalls.”

The next day the “counter-pogrom” of the Russians against the Jews began in earnest. Crowds of Russians of all classes carrying icons and portraits of the tsar, and singing “Save, O Lord, Thy people” marched into the centre of the town. There the revolutionaries shot at them, a boy carrying an icon was killed, bombs were thrown...

Open warfare between Jews and Russians now began.

“On October 31 [21?] a crowd of Jews destroyed state emblems and seized the Duma, proclaiming a ‘Danubian-Black Sea Republic’ headed by the Jew Pergament. It was suggested that the Don and Kuban lands should be ‘cleansed’ of Cossacks and handed over to Jewish settlers. Moreover, Jewish organizations armed from four to five thousand warriors, and not a little blood was shed in conflicts with soldiers. All

314 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 393.
this was described by the correspondent of the [London] *Times*, who was a witness of the events, in an article entitled ‘A Regime of Terror’ (Jewish terror was meant). Then in London the chief rabbi of the Spanish communities Gasper came out in print denying *everything* (‘Not one Jew insulted the Majesty of the Tsar) and affirming that that Tsarist troops and police had killed four thousand completely innocent Jews! The *Times* correspondent from Odessa refuted this fabrication: in general there had not been thousands of Jews killed. During the Odessa disorders only 293 Jews had been buried, of whom many died a natural death.315 The Englishman also pointed out that the provocation had been arranged by the ‘central Jewish organization in Switzerland which sent its emissaries from Poland to Odessa’. He quoted L.Ya. Rabinovich on how the transfer of arms had taken place. But such witnesses from objective foreign observers were extremely rare! On the other hand, the whole of the world’s press was filled with descriptions of the horrors of the Jewish pogroms, which rolled in an especially powerful wave from October 18 to 21 in the cities of Orel, Kursk, Simferopol, Rostov-on-Don, Ryazan, Velikie Luki, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Kaluga, Kazan, Novgorod, Smolensk, Tula, Ufa, Tomsk, Warsaw, many others and in all the cities of the ‘Pale of Settlement’. Of course, nothing was said about how these pogroms had been *provoked by the Jews themselves* (especially often by firing at Russians from the windows of *well-known Jewish houses*). In our days it has become clearer that at that time *social-democratic* organizations led by Jews deliberately spread leaflets among the people calling on them to [start] *Jewish pogroms.*”316

The wrath of the people was directed not only against the Jews but against leftists generally. Thus in Tver a crowd set fire to the theatre in which the leftists were sitting – 200 perished. Another crowd threatened to do the same thing in Balashov, but thanks to the courageous actions of the governor, Peter Arkadyevich Stolypin, there were no victims.

And yet, considering the scale of the disturbances, there were far fewer victims than might have been expected – 1000 dead and several thousand wounded, according to one Jewish source. Again, the Jew G. Sliozberg, a contemporary witness who was in possession of all the information, wrote: "Fortunately, all these hundreds of pogroms did not bring in their wake significant violence against the persons of Jews, and in the vast majority of places the pogroms were not accompanied by murders.”317

For in 1905 faith and morality still held the great majority of the Orthodox people back from taking revenge against their persecutors. It would be a different story during the Civil War...

On October 27 the Tsar wrote to his mother “that the pogromshchiki represented ‘a whole mass of loyal people’, reacting angrily to ‘the impertinence of the Socialists and revolutionaries… and, because nine-tenths of the trouble-makers are Jews, the

315 “According to information provided by the police, those killed numbered more than 500, of whom 400 were Jews, while the wounded registered by the police numbered 289… of whom 237 were Jews”(Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 397). (V.M.).
317 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 401.
People’s whole anger turned against them.’ This analysis was accepted by many foreign observers, notably British diplomats like the ambassador at St. Petersburg, Sir Charles Hardinge, his councillor, Cecil Spring Rice, and the Consul-General in Moscow, Alexander Murray.’

This analysis was also supported by Senator Kuzminsky, who concluded that “the October disturbances and disorders [in Odessa] were caused by factors of an undeniably revolutionary character and were crowned by a pogrom of Jews exclusively as a result of the fact that it was the representatives of this nationality who took the dominant part in the revolutionary movement”.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn has shown by extensive quotations from Jewish sources that the Jews were well aware of the true state of affairs. Even the more honest Jews had to admit that 1905 was in essence “a Jewish revolution”. “Thus in November, 1905 a certain Jacob de Haas in an article entitled ‘The Jewish Revolution’ in the London Zionist journal Maccabee wrote directly: ‘The revolution in Russia is a Jewish revolution, for it is the turning point in Jewish history. This situation stems from the fact that Russia is the fatherland of about half of the overall number of Jews inhabiting the world…”

What part did the Church play in the disturbances? There were some lower clergy who expressed themselves against the Tsar. But the great majority of the clergy were patriots. The bishops conducted themselves in general with great distinction.

Thus, as we have seen, Metropolitan Flavian tried to restrain the patriotic crowds in Kiev. Other Kievan clergy were similarly brave. Thus Protopriest Michael Yedlinsky, the future catacomb hieromartyr, in full vestments, together with his clerics, choir and banners, headed a procession in the direction of the Kontaktovi Square and Gostini Place, where some Jewish shops were located. The procession moved along the boulevard, cutting off the rioters from Gostini Place. People in the crowd removed their hats out of respect. When Batyushka turned to the rioters admonishing them, many of them calmed down and began to disperse, even more so because a squadron of cavalrymen began to move onto the square from Alexander Street.

Another hero was Archbishop Platon, the future Metropolitan of North America. Charles Johnston writes: “On October 22, 1905… a huge throng of wildly excited townsman assembled, inflamed by stories and rumors of misdoings, determined to raid the Jewish quarter [of Kiev]. Their pretext was that a Jew had cursed the Emperor and spat upon his portrait.

320 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 421.
“When the multitude assembled Archbishop Platon was in his own church in full canonicals, with his miter upon his head. He heard the angry storming of the crowd without and realized its meaning and purpose. Instantly he came to a decision, and in robes and miter went forth to meet the multitude. Of the church attendants only two accompanied him. So the tumultuous throng came on, crying for vengeance upon the Jews, and Archbishop Platon went to meet them. It had rained heavily all night and was raining still. Paying no heed to the pools of water and mud that covered the street, the Archbishop, seeing that there was but one way to check the hysterically excited mob, knelt down in the street immediately in the path of the turbulently advancing throng and began to pray.

“The profound love and veneration for the Church which is at the center of every Russian heart was touched, and the multitude wavered, halted, grew suddenly silent. Those who were in front checked those who were behind, and a whisper ran through the crowd carrying word that the Archbishop was kneeling in the street praying, in spite of the mud and rain.

“After he had prayed Archbishop Platon rose and confronted the huge throng.

“He spoke, and his fiery words so dominated the multitude that he led the turbulent thousands to the church and made them promise, calling God to witness, that they would leave the Jews unharmed and return quietly to their homes. Thus the multitude was checked and the work of destruction was prevented by the great churchman’s fearless devotion.

“The impression which this exhibition of devoted valor made on the public of Kieff was immediate and profound. The Jews especially were full of gratitude...”

* 

As the disturbances spread through the country and the regions, the government under Witte, to the Tsar’s disgust, showed itself completely devoid of courage and ideas, and of necessity it was the Tsar himself who reassumed power and gradually reintroduced order. He decided to make concessions in Finland, restoring the old constitution there. But in Poland and the Baltic region he imposed martial law, and he sent loyal troops to quell disturbances in many other parts of the country.

“The peasantry,” writes Pipes, “completely misunderstood the October Manifesto, interpreting it in its own manner as giving the communes licence to take over the countryside. Some rural disorders occurred in the spring of 1905, more in the summer, but they exploded only after October 17. Hearing of strikes and pogroms [both anti-Christian and anti-Jewish] in the cities going unpunished, the peasants drew their own conclusions. Beginning on October 23, when large-scale disorders broke out in Chernigov province, the wave of rural disorders kept on swelling until the onset of winters, re-emerging in the spring of 1906 on an even vaster scale. It would fully subside only in 1908 following the adoption of repressive measures by Prime Minister Stolypin.

“… The principal aim of the jacquerie was neither inflicting physical harm nor even appropriating land, but depriving landlords and other non-peasant landowners of the opportunity to earn a livelihood in the countryside – ‘smoking them out’, as the saying went. In the words of one observer: ‘The [peasant] movement was directed almost exclusively against landed properties and not against the landlord: the peasants had no use whatever for landlords but they did need the land.’ The notion was simple: force the landlords to abandon the countryside and to sell their land at bargain prices. To this end, the peasants cut down the landlord’s forests, sent cattle to graze on his pasture, smashed his machinery, and refused to pay rent. In some places, manors were set on fire…

“In an effort to stem the agrarian unrest, the government in early November reduced the due instalments of the redemption payments (payments for the land given the emancipated serfs in 1861) and promised to abolish them altogether in January 1907, but these measures did little to calm the rural districts.

“In 1905 and 1906 peasants by and large refrained from seizing the land they coveted from fear that they would not be allowed to keep it. They still expected a grand national repartition of all the non-communal land, but whereas previously they had looked to the Tsar to order it, they now pinned their hopes on the Duma. The quicker they drove the landlords out, they reasoned, the sooner the repartition would take place…

“The government faced one more trial of strength, this time with the radical left. In this conflict, there was no room for compromises, for the socialists would be satisfied with nothing less than a political and social revolution.

“The authorities tolerated the St. Petersburg Soviet, which continued to sit in session although it no longer had a clear purpose. On November 26, they order the arrest of Nosar, its chairman. A three-man Presidium (one of whose members was Leon Trotsky) which replaced Nosar resolved to respond with an armed uprising. The first act, which it was hoped would bring about a financial collapse, was an appeal to the people (the so-called Financial Manifesto), issued on December 2, urging them to withhold payments to the Treasury, to withdraw money from savings accounts, and to accept only bullion or foreign currency. The next day, [the Interior Minister] Durnovo arrested the Soviet, putting some 260 deputies (about one-half of its membership) behind bars. Following these arrests a surrogate Soviet assembled under the chairmanship of Alexander Helphand (Parvus), the theoretician of ‘permanent revolution’. On December 6, the St. Petersburg Soviet issued a call for a general strike to being two days later. The call went unheeded, even though the Union of Unions gave it its blessing.

“The socialists were more successful in Moscow. The Moscow Soviet, formed only on November 21 by intellectuals of the three principal socialist parties, decided to press the revolution beyond its ‘bourgeois’ phase. Their followers consisted of semi-
skilled workers, many of them employed in the textile industry, professionally and culturally less mature than their counterparts in the capital. The principal force behind this effort was the Moscow Bolshevik Committee. The Moscow rising was the first occasion in the 1905 Revolution when the socialists took the lead. On December 6, the Moscow Soviet voted to begin the following day an armed insurrection for the purpose of overthrowing the tsarist government, convoking a Constituent Assembly, and proclaiming a democratic republic.

“On December 7, Moscow was paralyzed: the strike was enforced by Soviet agents who threatened with violence anyone who refused to cooperate. Two days later, government forces launched an attack on the insurgents; the latter responded with urban guerilla tactics. The arrival of the Semeonovskii Regiment, which used artillery to disperse the rioters, settled the issue. On December 18 the Executive Committee of the Moscow Soviet capitulated. Over 1,000 people lost their lives in the uprising and whole areas of the ancient capital were gutted…”

In Moscow an important role was played by the future hieromartyr Metropolitan Vladimir, who powerfully raised his archpastoral voice, rebuking the rebels and exposing the essence of the revolution. Thus on October 16, after the liturgy in the Kremlin Dormition cathedral, he said: “The heart bleeds when you see what is happening around us... It is no longer the Poles, or external enemies, but our own Russian people, who, having lost the fear of God, have trusted the rebels and are holding our first capital as it were in a siege. Even without this we have been having a hard time because of our sins: first harvest failures [in 1891, 1897, 1898 and 1901], then illnesses, then an unsuccessful war [the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05], and now something unheard of is taking place in Rus’: it is as if God has deprived Russian people of their minds. By order of underground revolutionaries, strikes have begun everywhere, in the factories, in the schools, on the railways... Oh if only our unfortunate workers knew who is ruling them, who is sending them trouble-maker-agitators, then they would have turned from them in horror as from poisonous snakes! You know these are the so-called social-democrats, these are the revolutionaries, who have long ago renounced God in their works. They have renounced Him, and yet it may be that they have never known the Christian faith.

The textile industry was virtually founded by the freed serf Savva Morozov in the Orekhovo-Zuevo district near Moscow during the Napoleonic Wars. The Morozov family soon became rich, and in the 1850s Savva employed more than 1000 workers. His son Timothy took over the business, but was very cruel to the workers, which led in 1885 to the first organized workers’ strike in Russian history. Savva junior took over after his father’s death, and, as Valentine Tschebotariev Bill writes, “decided to build new, light, and airy living quarters for the workmen and their families. Savva improved medical care with remarkable efficiency and reduced the accident rate. And most important of all, he did away with the system of fines.” However, Savva admired Maxim Gorky, and gave large sums to the Social Democratic Party. Early in 1905, his mother heard of this and promptly removed him from the management of the firm. A few weeks later, on May 13, Savva Morozov shot himself. As Bill writes, the history of the Morozovs “is typical of the times and the development of the Russian bourgeoisie: the painful efforts of the first generation to extricate themselves from the burden of servitude, the coldblooded, uncompromising tyranny displayed by the second generation, and the rising tide of revolution which confronted the third.” It is thought that Gorky’s novel The Artamanov Business is based on the history of the Morozov family. A comparison between the fortunes of the Morozovs and the Artamanovs discloses a number of interesting parallels (“The Morozovs”, The Russian Review) (V.M.)

324 The textile industry was virtually founded by the freed serf Savva Morozov in the Orekhovo-Zuevo district near Moscow during the Napoleonic Wars. The Morozov family soon became rich, and in the 1850s Savva employed more than 1000 workers. His son Timothy took over the business, but was very cruel to the workers, which led in 1885 to the first organized workers’ strike in Russian history. Savva junior took over after his father’s death, and, as Valentine Tschebotariev Bill writes, “decided to build new, light, and airy living quarters for the workmen and their families. Savva improved medical care with remarkable efficiency and reduced the accident rate. And most important of all, he did away with the system of fines.” However, Savva admired Maxim Gorky, and gave large sums to the Social Democratic Party. Early in 1905, his mother heard of this and promptly removed him from the management of the firm. A few weeks later, on May 13, Savva Morozov shot himself. As Bill writes, the history of the Morozovs “is typical of the times and the development of the Russian bourgeoisie: the painful efforts of the first generation to extricate themselves from the burden of servitude, the coldblooded, uncompromising tyranny displayed by the second generation, and the rising tide of revolution which confronted the third.” It is thought that Gorky’s novel The Artamanov Business is based on the history of the Morozov family. A comparison between the fortunes of the Morozovs and the Artamanovs discloses a number of interesting parallels (“The Morozovs”, The Russian Review) (V.M.)

They denounce her servants, her rites, they mock her holy things. Their main nest is abroad: they are dreaming of subduing the whole world to themselves; in their secret protocols they call us, the Christians, animals, to whom God, they say, has given a human face only in order that it should not be repulsive to them, His chosen ones, to use our services... With satanic cunning they catch light-minded people in their nets, promising them paradise on earth, but they carefully hide from them their secret aims, their criminal dreams. Having deceived the unfortunate, they drag him to the most terrible crimes, as if for the sake of the common good, and, in fact they make him into an obedient slave. They try in every way to cast out of his soul, or at any rate to distort, the teaching of Christ. Thus the commandments of Christ say: do not steal, do not covet what belongs to another, but they say: everything is common, take from the rich man everything you like. The commandments of Christ say: share your last morsel, your last kopeck with your neighbour, but they teach: take from others everything that you need. The commandments of Christ say: give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, fear God, venerate the Tsar, but they say: we don’t need any Tsar, the Tsar is a tyrant... The commandments of God say: in patience possess your souls, but they say: in struggle acquire your rights. The commandment of Christ orders us to lay down our souls for our friends, but they teach to destroy people who are completely innocent, to kill them only for the fact they do not agree with them, and do not embark on robbery, but just want to work honourably and are ready to stand for the law, for the Tsar, for the Church of God...”

“The sermon of Metropolitan Vladimir elicited the annoyance of the liberal-democratic press, and also of the liberal clergy. The latter either read the sermon in a shortened version, or did not read it at all. In the leftist newspaper Russkoe Slovo 76 priests published a declaration regarding their ‘complete non-solidarity’ with ‘the “Word” of Metropolitan Vladimir...’

“As a result of the actions of the priests quarrels also arose amidst their flock. The Synod, in response to this, unfortunately saw in the epistle of Metropolitan Vladimir, not a call to defend the Faith and the Fatherland, but ‘a call to the local population to defend themselves in the sphere of political convictions’, and in their ‘Resolution of October 22, 1905 № 150’ instructed the diocesan bishops and the clergy subject to them to make efforts ‘to remove quarrels in the population’, which, to a large extent, were continuing because of the opposition of the liberal priests to their metropolitan.

“But nothing could devalue or undermine the influence of the epistle of Metropolitan Vladimir on the Muscovites, and the true Russian people responded to it. The day after the publication of the ‘Word’, the workers began to serve molebens and return to work; the city water-supply began to work, the trams began to run, etc. Metropolitan Vladimir himself went to the factories and, after prayer, conducted archpastoral discussions with the workers.

”Later, in evaluating the labours of the holy hierarch Vladimir in overcoming the disturbances of 1905, Metropolitan Anthony (Khраповицкий) said the following notable words about him: ‘Meek and humble, never seeking anything for himself, honourable and a lover of righteousness, Владыка Владимир gradually and quietly ascended the hierarchical ladder and was immediately exalted by his authority,
drawing the hearts of ecclesiastical and patriotic Russia to himself during the days of general instability and treachery, when there were few who remained faithful to their duty and their oath, firm in the defence of the Orthodox Church, the Tsar-Autocrat and the Homeland... when everything began to shake in our Rus', and many pillars began to waver...’ (speech of Archbishop Anthony of Zhitomir and Volhynia at the triumphal dinner given by Metropolitan Vladimir in honour of Patriarch Gregory of Antioch who was visiting Russia, 22 February, 1913).

“By ‘pillars’ Vladyka Anthony probably had in mind the liberal members of the Most Holy Synod, who did not support their brother, Metropolitan Vladimir...”326

Another great champion of the Tsarism who emerged into the spotlight at this time was the missionary, future hieromartyr and great friend of St. John of Kronstadt, Fr. John Vostorgov. On Great Friday, March 31, 1906 he said the following in the cathedral of Christ the Saviour: "Our homeland has entered upon a new path of life, before and ahead of us is - a new Russia.

"Forgive us, forgive us, old, thousand-year-old Russia! Before our eyes they have judged you, condemned you and sentenced you to death... Threatening and merciless judges have spat in your face and have found nothing good in you. The judgement was strict, implacable and merciless. Everything has merged into the cry: 'Take her, crucify her!'

"We also know that nothing human was alien to you; we know that you had many faults. But we also know and see that you made Russia holy, and her people - a God-bearing people, if not in actuality, at any rate in the eternal, undying ideal of the people's soul; you gave birth to and raised a mighty people, preserving it in its bitter fate, in the crucible of its historical trials through a whole series of centuries; you gave birth to and raised an array of saints and righteous ones; you did not perish under the blows, the heavy blows of destiny, but became stronger under them, strong in faith; with this faith, this great power of spirit, you endured all the burdens, and yet you created, and entrusted to us and left behind, a great kingdom. For all this we bow down to the earth in gratitude..."

326 Riasophor-Monk Anempodist, “Sviashchennomuchenik mitropolit Vladimir (Bogoiaevlenskij) i bor’ba s revolutsii" (Hieromartyr Metropolitan Vladimir (Bogoiaevlensky) and the struggle against the revolution), Prawoslavniaia Zhizn‘ (Orthodox Life), 53, № 1 (636), January, 2003, pp. 2-10.

Metropolitan Vladimir’s strong monarchist convictions were apparent already at his ordination, when he said: “A priest who is not a monarchist is unworthy to stand at the Holy Altar. A priest who is republican is always of little faith. A monarch is consecrated to his power by God, a president receives power from the pride of the people; a monarch is powerful through his carrying out of the commandments of God, a president holds on to power by pleasing the mob; a monarch leads his faithful subjects to God, a president leads them away from God.” (Valentina Sologub, Kto Gospoden – Ko Mne! (He who is the Lord’s – Come to me!), Moscow, 2007, p. 45)
60. THE STOLYPIN REFORMS

The restoration of order in Russia after the 1905 revolution was accomplished largely through the efforts of one of the great servants of the tsarist regime, the Interior Minister and later Prime Minister Peter Arkadyevich Stolypin. He introduced military field tribunals, which decreed - with the full support of the Tsar - capital punishment for convicted revolutionaries. These were often criticized. But he replied to one of his critics: “Learn to distinguish the blood on the hands of a doctor from the blood on the hands of an executioner…” And to the Duma he said on May 10, 1907: “The opponents of statehood would like to take the path of radicalism, the path of liberation from the historical path of Russia, of liberation from cultural traditions. They need great upheavals, we need a great Russia!”

“I can’t tell you,’ Nicky told his mother on 11 October 1906, ‘how much I’ve come to like and respect Stolypin.’ On 20 February 1907, when the second Duma assembled, it was much more radical than the first, containing 118 socialists, in the wake of the decision by Lenin and Martov to allow their parties to participate. Stolypin and Nicholas immediately started to consider its dissolution, ‘but it’s too early for that’, the tsar told his mother; ‘one must let them do something manifestly stupid… Then slap! And they are gone!’ The radicals demanded the confiscation of land, a measure which neither tsar nor premier would consider. On 6 March, Stolypin defied them in a virtuoso performance. ‘Such attacks to the authorities – “Hands up!”’ he proclaimed. ‘To these two words, gentlemen: “Not Afraid!”’ Nicholas was impressed.

“Once they had decided to dissolve the Duma, Stolypin planned a political coup d’état to change the electoral law. ‘I waited all day long with impatience for notification from you,’ Nicholas wrote to Stolypin. ‘Things are being dragged out. The Duma must be dissolved tomorrow. No delay. Not one moment of hesitation.’

“On 1 June, Stolypin told the Duma to expel its extremists. When the Duma refused, he went into actin. On the 3rd, police surrounded the Taurida Palace, arresting many of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. Holding new Ththird Duma dominated by noblemen and businessmen in which the party of 17 October known as ‘Octobrists’, who supported the semi-constitutional autocracy, held a majority. Yet the old convergence between Romanovs and the nobility was long since ruptured: the third Duma lasted for five years, but much of its opposition now came from the gentry. Even this ‘king’s parliament’ defied Stolypin...

“The revolutionary parties were broken. While there had been 150,000 Social-Democrats in 1907, there would soon be fewer than 10,000. Many Bolsheviks quietly retired into normal life and got jobs or went into exile to fulminate and feud, like Lenin in Switzerland and Austria…”

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Nevertheless, the election of the Third Duma was the signal for a significant shift to the right in society as a whole: terrorist acts continued around the country, but for the time being the wind had been taken out of the sails of the revolutionaries…

But Stolypin was a great reformer as well as a stern disciplinarian and great parliamentarian. He succeeded, writes S.S. Oldenburg, “in squaring the circle. Until then, the carrying out of reforms had unfailingly been accompanied by a weakening of the authorities, while the application of severe measures meant a refusal to carry out transformations. Now a government had been found that combined the two tasks; and broad sections of society were found that understood the necessity of this…”

Using the 87th Article of the Basic Laws, which allowed the government to carry out urgent measures in the intervals between sessions of the Duma, Stolypin introduced a whole series of liberal measures that put into effect the promises made by the Tsar in his October manifesto.

But his most important achievement was the land reforms designed to relieve the crushing poverty in the countryside, break the power of the commune over the individual peasant and create a strong, independent peasant class. As we have seen, much of the groundwork for reform in the countryside had already been carried out before 1904 - but the revolution had prevented its realization. Now, with the coming of relative peace, Stolypin went ahead…

Through his agrarian reforms, besides strengthening the economy of the whole country, Stolypin was also attempting to achieve the maturing of the peasant to the point where he could take a considered, independent part in civil and political life. “First of all it is necessary to create the citizen,” he said in a newspaper interview, “the peasant-house-owner, the petty landowner, and when this task has been accomplished - citizenship itself will reign in Russia. First the citizen, and then citizenship…”

As Archpriest Lev Lebedev writes, the land reforms were essentially the brain-child of the Tsar himself: “Immersing himself in a study of the matter, his Majesty departed more and more both from his teachers and from the politics of his father, and even from ‘society’. They were all unanimous in striving to preserve the commune, although for various reasons (some of the liberals and democrats considered it [following Herzen] to be ‘embryonic socialism’). Finally, having thought it all through, his Majesty came to the thought of the necessity of abolishing the village commune altogether. The more so, in that the majority of provincial committees created to discuss the land question had expressed themselves in one way or another against the preservation of the commune. He entrusted the carrying out of this idea to a man exceptionally well chosen – P.A. Stolypin, who was appointed President of the Council of Ministers. Stolypin carried out the reforms in constant consultation with his Majesty, from which they received their name, ‘The

Stolypin Reforms’. They began with the law of November 9, 1906, which allowed the peasants *freely to leave the commune…* and to have their own private agriculture. Immediately two-and-a-half million petitions to leave were submitted. In order to carry out the exit, 483 special commissions and seven thousand land-surveyors were mobilized. Redemption payments were rescinded. At the same time a new impulse was given to *the resettlement movement* of peasants in the East. Those who wanted were given plots in Siberia, in the Altai and in the Far East at fifteen hectares per person (45 per family), with each family being offered a mortgage at 200 roubles with the opportunity of moving with all their possessions to the new lands *at state expense*. In Siberia previously prepared warehouses of agricultural instruments awaited the re-settlers. They were sold at extremely low prices. For a long time the re-settlers *were freed from all taxes*. His Majesty personally owned forty million desyatins of land in Siberia. All these lands Nicholas II handed into the land fund for free, he simply *gave them away* to the Russian peasantry! Especially valuable gifts were the very extensive fertile lands of the Altai, which had formerly been exclusively the property of the Emperor. In these former possessions of his given away to the peasants his Majesty *at his own expense* constructed new roads, schools, hospitals and churches… Finally, the third component of the reforms were *the enterprises of the State Peasant Bank*, which began to snap up landowners’ lands and sell them to the peasants on extremely advantageous conditions for the peasants. The bank offered them up to 90% of the value of the bought land in credit at a rate of 4.5% at huge instalments. In sum, by 1917 100% of the arable land in the Asiatic part of Russia, and about 90% of it in the European part was either owned or rented by peasants. By 1914 almost all the commune lands had passed into private peasant ownership. The results of the reforms exceeded all expectations. The harvest sharply increased, so that Russia exported up to a quarter of its bread abroad and became the main supplier of bread to Europe. The wheat harvest rose from about two billion poods in 1894 to four billion in 1913 and 1914. In 1913 the wheat harvest in Russia was about one third higher than those in Argentina, Canada and the USA put together! In 1908 a little more than 858 million poods of wheat and flour were exported to England alone, and in 1910 – about three billion. The production of rye rose from two billion poods in 1894 to four billion in 1913. Also *doubled* in this period was the production of cotton, the consumption of sugar and tea per head of population, and other products. *Half* the world’s trade in eggs belonged to Russia. She possessed 80% of the world’s output of flax. Russia had not known such a rapid rise in agriculture as took place from 1907 to 1911 in connection with the reforms, throughout the whole period of her history. ‘Give us twenty more years of internal and external peace,’ said P.A. Stolypin, ‘and you will not know the present Russia!’ By 1914 the country was already unrecognizable in many things…”

Both friends and foes tended to agree with Stolypin. The Germans certainly did – fear of Russian growth was their main motive for starting World War One. The French economist Edmond Thierry was of the same opinion. In 1914 he published a detailed report for the French ministers that concluded: “If the affairs of the European nations continue in the same way from 1912 to 1950 as they have done

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332 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 403-405.
from 1900 to 1912, then Russia by the middle of the present century will dominate Europe, both in the political and in the economic and financial spheres.”

Lenin, plotting the revolution from his Swiss hideaway, also agreed; he later calculated that if Stolypin’s plans for the creation of an independent peasantry had been given some more years in which to come to fruition, thereby reducing the flow of poor, discontented peasants into the cities, the revolution would not have taken place. Even so, enough progress had been made to create one of the toughest nuts for the revolution to crack. The peasants – and especially those who had acquired lands in Siberia under Stolypin – rose up in several vast rebellions in the early years of the revolution, and were finally crushed only by the horrors of dekulakization and collectivization in the 1930s...

As I.P. Yakoby wrote: “In the course of half a century, through a series of measures undertaken by the state, there was completed a painless transition of lands to those who in reality worked them. Thus the peasants, who during the emancipation of the serfs, owned about 120 million desyatins, acquired, before the war, by means of state agrarian banks, 100 million more, while at the same time the area of privately owned lands was reduced from 100 million to 56 million desyatins. Through the continuation of this policy, fifty years on, almost the whole reserve of exploited lands would undoubtedly have passed to the peasants, and with this every chance of agrarian disturbances would have disappeared. Thus for the revolution there remained only the hope of an unsuccessful war…”

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In 1911 an interesting debate took place between the revolutionary-turned-monarchist Lev Alexandrovich Tikhomirov and Stolypin. Tikhomirov considered the new order in Russia after 1906 to be “unprincipled” and “neither monarchy nor democracy” “Being ambiguous in concept and deviating from a clear attitude to any Supreme Power, it was formed in such a way that in it everyone can get in everyone else’s way but there is no one who could force the institutions of state to collaborate. His Majesty the Emperor himself can independently only not allow a law to be enforced, but he cannot independently create a law that is necessary for the country. But... the state, on the contrary, has the task of working, and especially in a country that has been so disturbed during the preceding years of woes and troubles.

“This order, which is extremely bad from the point of view of its apparatus, is, in addition to that, complete antinational, that is, it does not correspond either to the character of the nation or to the conditions of the general situation of the Empire. As a result of this, disorganization in the country is being engendered on all sides. Unifying elements are weakening. A friable, bored, discontented mood has appeared. The Russians are losing their spirit, their faith in themselves, they are not inspired by patriotism. Moreover, class and inter-racial quarrels are necessarily becoming sharper.

334 Yakobi, Imperator Nikolaj II i revoliutsia (Emperor Nicholas II and the Revolution), Moscow, 2010, p. 73.
“Russia constitutes a nation and a state that are great in instincts and means, but also surrounded by great dangers. It was created by Russians and is preserved only by Russians. Only Russian power brings the remaining elements to some solidarity amongst themselves and with the Empire. ... We have a huge non-Russian population... The strongest of the other races are foreign to our patriotism. They are eternally quarrelling amongst themselves, but are inclined to rebel against the dominion of the Russians. The unifying element, the general bond is we, the Russians. Without us the Empire will disintegrate, and these other races will perish. Therefore we must remember our mission and support the conditions of our strength. We must remember that our state is a matter not simply of national egoism, but a global duty. We occupy a post that is necessary for all. But in order to keep this post we need a one-person Supreme Power, that is, the Tsar, not as the adornment of a pediment, but as a real state power.

“No combinations of popular representation or elective laws can guarantee the supremacy of the Russians. We must understand ourselves. As a people that is essentially statist, the Russians are not suited to petty political struggles, they can do politics only wholesale, not retail, by contrast with the Poles, the Jews, etc. The aims of the supremacy of such a people (as with the Romans) are attainable only by a one-person Supreme Power that realizes its ideals. With such a power we become stronger and more skilful than all, for no Poles can compare with the Russians in the capacity for discipline and solidarity around a one-person power endowed with a moral character.

“But if it has no centre of unity, the Russian people loses its head and particularist peoples begin to obstruct it. Historical practice has created a Supreme Power in accordance with the Russian character. The Russian people has grown for itself a Tsar in union with the Church. [But] since 1906 that which was proper to the people has been undermined, and it is being forced to live in a way that it is not able to and does not want. This was undoubtedly a huge constitutional mistake, for whatever theoretical preferences there may be, practically speaking state reason requires institutions that conform to the character of the people and the general conditions of its supremacy. In destroying that, 1906 deprived us of that without which the Empire cannot exist – the possibility of creating a dictatorship immediately. Such a possibility was given first of all by the presence of a Tsar having the right to engage in the situation with all his unlimited Supreme Power.

“The consciousness alone of the possibility of an immediate concentration [of power] filled the Russians with confidence in their strength, while inspiring our rivals with fear and dread. Now that has been taken away. And without our watchfulness there is nobody to keep the remaining races in unity...”335

Stolypin replied on July 9: “All these fine theoretical considerations would in practice have turned out to be a malicious provocation and the beginning of a new revolution...”336

336 Oldenburg, op. cit. vol. II, p. 76.
Both men were right. Tikhomirov was right that the post-1906 order in Russia was no longer a true autocracy in the full sense, and that it contained within itself the seeds of its own destruction. But Stolypin was right that there was no real practical alternative, and that through him and his government the Tsar could at any rate carry out part of his autocratic will.

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But that presupposed that it was indeed the Tsar’s will that Stolypin was fulfilling, and not his own...

Now Stolypin was a landowner from Kovno, and took a particular interest in his native land and in the difficult situation of the Russian peasantry there. For in Belorussia especially, although there was a governor appointed from St. Petersburg, political and cultural power belonged to the Poles, and economic power – to the Jews.

“The political balance of forces in pre-war Belorussia,” wrote the émigré Belorussian writer Ivan Solonevich, “was as follows. The region had been comparatively recently joined to the Empire and was populated by Russian peasants. Besides the peasants, there were almost no Russians. Our Belorussian nobles very easily betrayed both the faith of their fathers and the language of their people and the interests of Russia. The Tyshkeviches, the Mitskeviches and the Senkeviches were all approximately as Belorussian as I. But they were traitors. The people remained without a governing class. Without intelligentsia, without bourgeoisie, without aristocracy, even without a proletariat and without craftsmen. The path to economic advancement was simply blocked by the Jews of the cities and hamlets. Count Muraviev… opened for the Belorussian peasant the path at any rate into the lower levels of the intelligentsia. Our newspaper [financed by Stolypin] depended on these intelligentsy, so to speak, on the Belorussian staff-captains of the time: popular teachers, volost scribes, village priests, doctors, low-ranking officials. Then, as now, we had to fight on two fronts. This mass of people was inclined towards revolution. We had to prove to them that it could defend its political, economic and every other form of life only in a struggle against the Jews and Polonization. The struggle was very difficult. It was very difficult to prove to the readers of Chernyshevsky, Dobroliubov, and the venerated of Aladin, Rodichev and Miliukov the completely obvious fact that if the monarchy retreated, they, these readers, would be eaten up by the Jews and Poles. And that it was only within the bounds of the empire and the monarchy that these people could defend their national being…."

In the autumn Stolypin moved to strengthen this movement by introducing a bill for the introduction of self-governing zemstva in the provinces of Vitebsk, Minsk, Mogilev, Kiev, Volhynia and Podolsk, where the Russian element was stronger than the Polish or Jewish, but not yet in Kovno, Vilna and Grodno, where the Russian element was weaker. However, the bill was fiercely criticized in both the State Council and the State Duma on the grounds that it would violate racial equality in

337 Solonevich, “Puti, Oshibki i Itogi” (Ways, Mistakes and Conclusions), in Rossia i Revoliutsia (Russia and the Revolution), Moscow, 2007, p. 98.
the region. This was doubly ironical, in that Stolypin both wanted to bring the position of the Russian peasant to a position of equality with his Jewish and Polish neighbours, and was in favour of removing many of the restrictions on the Jews in the region of the Pale. For, on the one hand, these restrictions were extremely complex, sometimes contradictory and difficult to enforce. And on the other hand, the lack of full equality of rights for the Jews gave them and their supporters in the Duma and the press a powerful weapon with which to beat the government...

However, the bill to broaden the rights of the Jews was attacked in the rightist press and vetoed by the Tsar. As for the bill to introduce zemstva in the western regions, in May, 1910 the Duma accepted it, but only with significant corrections that modified its anti-Polish character. In spite of these, the bill was rejected by the Duma by 165 to 139 votes; and in February the State Council, too, rejected it. Moreover, among those who voted against were P.N. Durnovo and V.F. Trepov, rightists of impeccably monarchical principles who were close to the Tsar.

Stolypin immediately left the session of the State Council, suspecting a plot against himself. On March 5, he saw the Tsar and offered his resignation. The Tsar, stunned, asked him to reconsider. Stolypin then suggested suspending both the State Council and the Duma for several days while the law on the western zemstva was passed in accordance with Article 87 of the Basic Laws. He also asked that the Tsar condemn Durnovo and Trepov and order them to leave St. Petersburg and their work in the State Council for a time. The Tsar was doubtful about these measures, and thought about them for several days. Finally, on March 12, he accepted Stolypin’s conditions. This was a vivid witness to how much he valued Stolypin; he agreed to measures of dubious legality and justice for the sake of keeping him as Prime Minister.

But Stolypin had misjudged the situation, and almost everybody, including the State Council and Duma, condemned him. The law on the western zemstva went through, but it did not give the expected results in the summer elections – the majority of those elected did not belong to any Russian bloc, but were non-party figures. Stolypin now felt himself to be in a position of “semi-retirement”, and went to his daughter’s estate for most of the summer...

At the end of August Stolypin went to Kiev on the occasion of the opening of a monument to Tsar Alexander II in the present of the Tsar and leading government officials. On September 1 he was present with the Tsar at a performance of the opera, “A Life for the Tsar”. That evening, between the acts of the opera, Stolypin gave his life for the Tsar, being shot by the Jew Bogrov. As he fell, he slowly made the sign of the Cross in the direction of the Tsar (his right hand had been shot through), and as he was being carried out of the theatre, he said: “Tell his Majesty that I am glad to die for him and for the Homeland”. He died a few days later.

For five critical years, Stolypin had steered his country out of the storm of revolution and into the relatively calmer water of the Duma Monarchy, at the same time significantly increasing the prosperity and stability of the country. His greatness was generally recognized. The Tsar would never again find a minister like him, and
after his death the country again began to turn towards the left and the revolutionary activity of the liberal Masons increased…

61. THE PRECONCILIAR CONVENTION AND GEORGIAN AUTOCEPHALY

As the political situation began to stabilize towards the end of 1905, write E.E. Alferev, the Tsar “addressed a rescript to Metropolitan Anthony of St. Petersburg in which he wrote: ‘I now recognize that the time is quite right to carry out certain transformations in the structure of our native Church… I suggest that you determine the time for the convening of this Council.’

“On the basis of this rescript a Pre-Conciliar Convention was formed for the preparation of the convening of a Council, which soon set about its work. The convention carried out exceptionally important and valuable work demanding much time and labour, but the world war that broke out hindered the convening of the Council during the reign of Emperor Nicholas II. Instead of the peaceful situation which the Sovereign considered necessary for the introduction of such important reforms, it was convened in very unfavourable circumstances, during a terrible war, after the overthrow of the historical state structure of Russia, when the country was seized by revolutionary madness, and its most important decisions were taken to the sound of cannons during the beginning of the civil war.”

The Pre-Conciliar Convention gathered detailed responses from the bishops and leading theologians on the main issues which were to dominate the history of the Orthodox Church in the coming century. The debates during the Convention brought to the fore several of those churchmen who would play such important roles, both for good and for ill, in the coming struggle with the revolution: on the one side, men such as Metropolitan Vladimir (Bogoyavlensky), Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), Archbishop Theophan (Bystrov) of Poltava, Archbishop Tikhon (Bellavin) and Bishop Arsenius (Stadnitsky) of Pskov, and on the other, Bishop Antoninus (Granovsky), Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) and Bishop Eulogius (Georgievsky). Thus among the suggestions made to the Convention we find the following one from Archbishop Sergius on January 18, which clearly looks forward to the renovationist movement of the 1920s:

On the reform of the liturgical language: the future Council must debate the question of the simplification of the language of the Church, Slavonic, and the right accorded to the parish that wants it to serve the Divine offices in that language.

(i) It must think of abbreviating and simplifying the Typicon, and suppressing certain ritual actions, such as the breathing and spitting during the sacrament of baptism.

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(ii) It must think of abolishing the multiple repetitions of the same litanies during the same service, and replacing them by reading aloud the secret prayers during the Liturgy.

(iii) It must think of giving priests [who have been widowed before the age of 45] the right to remarry."

The first section of the Convention studied the questions of the composition of the future Council and the transformation of the central administration of the Church. The second section studied the question of the division of Russia into metropolitan districts and the transformation of the local Church administration. In June, the question of Georgian autocephaly also began to be discussed by this section. The third section studied Church courts and reviewed the laws of marriage, divorce and mixed marriages. The fourth section studied the questions of the parish, church schools, church property, diocesan congresses and the participation of clergy in public institutions. The fifth section studied the question of the transformation of spiritual-academic institutions. The sixth section studied the questions of the yedinoverie, the Old Ritualists and some other issues. The seventh section analyzed measures necessary “for the protection of the Orthodox Faith and Christian piety from wrong teachings and interpretations in view of the strengthening of the principles of religious toleration in the empire”.

In May, 1906 a general assembly of the Convention decided that the future Council should be composed of clergy and laity, with a bishop, a priest and a layman being elected from each diocese. But while the clergy and laity were given the right to discuss all questions discussed in Council, the right to compose and confirm conciliar decisions was reserved for the bishops alone. This became the basis of the composition of the Council in 1917-18. However, few other recommendations of the sections were put into practice, and the Convention itself came to an end in December amidst a general waning of interest in it. In fact, according to F.D. Samarin, the results of the colossal amount of work put into the Convention amounted to nothing. There followed a decade in which the wounds of the Church continued to fester, and the authority of both Church and State continued to decline. In the end the much needed Local Council was convened, in accordance with Divine Providence, only when the Tsar himself had been swept away…

One of the problems addressed by the Pre-Conciliar Convention was that of the restoration of the autocephaly of the Georgian State. As we have seen, a movement to preserve the nation’s heritage and promote the cause of Georgian state independence and ecclesiastical autocephaly came into being under the leadership of the poet, historian and philosopher Ilia Chavchavadze, who was assassinated by revolutionaries in 1907. Georgian State independence could not be considered then, since at a time of increasing nationalist and tension, it would only undermine the whole empire. However, Church autocephaly was a different matter in view of the undisputed fact that the Georgian Church had once been autocephalous. And on

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June 2, 1906 this question was reviewed in the Alexander Nevsky Lavra in St. Petersburg during the sessions of the second section of the Preconciliar Convention.

Eugene Pavlenko writes: “The majority of those who spoke supported the state principle of Church division [that is, in one state there should be only one Church administration], but the minority insisted on a national or ethnic point of view. In winding up the second section of the Preconciliar Convention, participants accepted one of the two projects of Protopriest I. Vostorgov on giving the Georgian Church greater independence in the sphere of the use of the Georgian liturgical language, of the appointment of national Georgian clergy, etc., but the project for Georgian autocephaly was rejected.”

The argument between the two sides is important and its conclusions applicable in other Churches striving for autocephaly or autonomy. So we shall follow it in Pavlenko’s exposition: “The most completely phyletistic [nationalistic] argumentation of the supporters of the idea of Georgian autocephaly at the Preconciliar Consistory was sounded in the report of Bishop Kirion [Sadzagelov, of Sukhumi], ‘The National Principle in the Church’.

This report began by proclaiming the principle of nationality in the Church and by affirming its antiquity. In the opinion of the Bishop, Georgia ‘has the right to the independent existence of her national Church on the basis of the principle of nationality in the Church proclaimed at the beginning of the Christian faith.’ What does principle consist of, and when was it proclaimed? ‘It is sufficient to remember,’ writes Bishop Kirion, ‘the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles, who immediately began to glorify God in various languages and then preached the Gospel to the pagans, each in their native language.’ But in our [Pavlenko’s] view, references to the preaching of the apostles in connection with the affirmation of the national principle in the Church have no firm foundation. The preaching of the apostles in various languages was necessary in order to unite the peoples in the Truth of Christ, and not in order to disunite them in accordance with the national principle. That is, the principle of nationality is precisely that which Christianity has to overcome, and not that on which the Church must be founded. Since the Bulgarian schism phyletist argumentation has characteristically sought support in references to the 34th Apostolic canon. ‘The basic canonical rule,’ writes Bishop Kirion, ‘by which the significance of nationality in relation to Church administration is recognized, is the 34th Apostolic canon which is so well known to canonists… According to the direct meaning of this canon in the Orthodox Church, every nationality must have its first hierarch.’ But the 34th Apostolic canon… has in view ‘bishops of every territory’ and not ‘bishops of every people’. The word ethnos, which is employed in this canon in the ancient language and in the language of Christian antiquity, is translated in the dictionary of Liddell and Scott first of all as ‘a number of people accustomed to live together’, and only then as ‘a nation’. It is precisely the first sense indicated here that points to the territorial meaning of the Apostolic canon. So references to its national meaning are groundless.

“An incorrect understanding and use of the principle of conciliarity – which phyletism has in common with ecumenism – sometimes brings them closer... to the point of being completely indistinguishable. For the supporters of the division of the Church along tribal lines the principle of conciliarity is only a convenient federal form for the development by each people of its nationality idiosyncracy. ‘... The federal system,’ in the opinion of Bishop Kirion, ‘gave our Eastern Church significant advantages from a national point of view.’ And the preservation of this idiosyncracy – in his opinion – is prescribed by conciliar decisions (cf. the 39th canon of the Council in Trullo), and acquires a very important significance from the point of view of Church freedom.’ But in the 39th canon of the Council in Trullo not a word is said about ‘national religious-everyday and individual particularities’ and the like, but there is mention of the rights of first-hierarchs over bishops and their appointment. ‘Let the customs of each [autocephalous] Church be observed,’ it says in this canon, ‘so that the bishop of each district should be subject to his president, and that he, in his turn, should be appointed from his bishops, according to the ancient custom.’ The émigré Church of Cyprus, of which mention is made in this canon, did not become the national Church of the Cypriots, but took into herself all the peoples of the Hellespont district where they emigrated. Where is mention made here of a conciliar sanction for the preservation of ‘local ecclesiastical traditions’ with the aid of administrative isolation?

‘Ecclesiastically speaking,’ thinks Bishop Kirion, ‘each people must make use of the freedom of self-determination’ and ‘possesses the right to develop according to the laws of its own national spirit.’ The extent to which the Bishop sees the development of each Church possible ‘according to the laws of its own national spirit’ becomes clear from the following quotation cited by him: ‘The Bulgarian Church, after a period of difficult trials and struggle, is near to the realisation of its age-old strivings without disrupting Christian peace and love. The enslaved Syro-Arabic Church is declaring its rights to national idiosyncrasy more and more persistently. The Armenian, Syro-Jacobite and Perso-Chaldean Churches, which have, because of regrettable circumstances, been separated from ecumenical unity for a long time, are also seeking reunion, but without the disruption of their national rights which have come into being historically.’ By ‘regrettable circumstances’ Professor Kavalnitsky and Bishop Kirion who quotes him apparently have in mind the Council of Chalcedon, which condemned the monophysite heretics. While by ‘reunion’ they have in mind, as becomes clear from the following sentence, the following: ‘Unity between the Churches must take place on the principle of equality, and not of absorption.’ Thus both in the schism of the Bulgarians, and in the heresy of monophysitism, there is nothing to prevent union with them, but only, in the opinion of Bishop Kirion, ‘the religious variety of the Christian peoples’! Before our eyes, Bishop Kirion, a defender of Georgian autocephaly at the beginning of the century, is making a path from phyletism to ecumenism, the union of which we have already distinctly observed at the end of the century. This is the classical ‘branch theory’ in action. ‘The peoples who accepted Christianity did not all assimilate its lofty teaching in the same way; each took from it only those elements of Christian life

342 Professor M.G. Kovalnitsky. On the Significance of the National Element in the Historical Development of Christianity, Kiev, 1880, pp. 3-4.
343 Journals and Protocols, p. 56.
which it was able to in accordance with its intellectual and moral character. The Latin nations (the Catholics) developed a strict ecclesiastical organization and created architecture of high artistic value. The Greeks, who were experienced in dialectical subtleties, worked out a complex and firmly based dogmatic system. The Russians, on accepting Christianity, mainly developed discipline and church rubrics, bringing external beauty to a high level of development. But the Georgians, having christianised their age-old national beliefs [giving their paganism a Christian form? – the author] and being completely penetrated with the spirit of Christianity, attached to it the sympathetic traits of their own character: meekness, simplicity, warmth, self-sacrifice, freedom from malice and persistence. Although all the nations did not receive Christianity, in the sense of assimilate the height and fullness of its heavenly teaching, in the same way, nevertheless, enlightened by Christianity, as members of the one Body of Christ [one must suppose that Latins and Monophysites are included in this number – the author], strive for the one aim that is common to Christian humanity – the realization of the kingdom of God on earth (?!). The idea of chiliasm – ‘the kingdom of God on earth’ – is a worthy crown of this union of phyletism and ecumenism. Fitting for a report at the assembly of the World Council of Churches, whose members are expecting the coming of ‘the new era of the Holy Spirit’?

“From Bishop Kirion’s report it is clearly evident that the idea of the national Church, beginning with the division of the Church on national lines, leads to her ‘union’, not on the basis of the patristic faith, but on the basis of the idea of abstract ‘equality’ of separate, including heretical, churches, and through this to the idea of the coming earthly kingdom of the antichrist…”

There are stronger arguments to be made for Georgian autocephaly than those put forward by Bishop Kirion. However, Pavlenko is right to reject his essentially phyletist argument: one (ethnic) nation – one Church. From the earliest times, the Orthodox Church has been organized on a territorial basis, following the demarcation of states rather than ethnic groups. In more recent centuries state boundaries have tended to correspond more and more closely to ethnic boundaries, so that we now talk of the Greek Church, the Russian Church, the Serbian Church, etc., as if we are talking about the Churches of the ethnic Greeks, Russians and Serbs exclusively. But this is a misleading way of speaking, and does not alter the essential principle, confirmed both in Holy Scripture and in Canon Law, that a local Church is the Church of all the people, of all nationalities, gathered together on one territory.

The attempt to substitute the ethnic principle for the territorial principle led, as we have seen, to a schism between the Greek and the Bulgarian Churches in 1872. It would lead to a schism between the Russian and the Georgian Churches in 1917, when Bishop Kirion and a Council of the Georgian Church re-established Georgian Church autocephaly on the basis of the ethnic principle. It would thereby divide the two Churches at precisely the moment when unity between Orthodox Christians of all races was vital in the face of the international communist revolution...

62. THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION

And so the 1905 revolution was crushed. But the revolutionary spirit remained alive, and the country remained divided. The Empire had struck back; but the bell was tolling for the Empire...

The disturbances, particularly in the countryside, continued well into 1906, and only gradually died down thereafter. Thus in January the Tsar was forced to emphasize to a peasant delegation from Kursk province that the private property of the landlords, no less than that of the peasants themselves, was inviolable. And “between January 1908 and May 1910, 19,957 terrorist attacks and revolutionary robberies were recorded; 732 government officials and 3,052 private citizens were killed, and nearly another 4,000 wounded.” The revolutionary parties disappeared temporarily into the underground. But the liberals formed a new political party, the Constitutional Democrats, or Cadets, and in the elections to the first Duma in March, they triumphed convincingly over their more rightist opponents.

The Duma simply continued the revolution by other means. After the Tsar had opened its first session with a fine speech on April 27, the deputies began fiercely attacking him and his ministers, and voted to give an amnesty to all political prisoners, “punishing them by forgiveness” in the words of F.I. Rodichev. The deputies also made political demands: the formation of a ministry responsible to themselves and not to the Tsar and the abrogation of the State Senate. They voted for the forcible appropriation of the estates of the landowners – a measure that only incited the peasants to further violence. But at the same time they voted to reduce credit for the starving from 50 million rubles to 15 million!

On July 8 the Tsar dissolved the Duma on the grounds of its open call to disobey the authorities. The deputies were caught by surprise, and many of them travelled to Vyborg in Finland, where they issued an openly revolutionary declaration, calling on the people not to pay taxes, to refuse military service and not to recognize loans concluded with the government during the conflict. However, the governor of Vyborg asked them to cut short their session, fearing that it would lead to restrictions

346 Douglas Smith, Former People: The Last Days of the Russian Aristocracy, London: Macmillan, 2012, p. 58. Fr. Raphael Johnston writes: “Alexander III came to the throne over the corpse of his father. The revolutionaries, emboldened, as they always are, by liberal pacification, the communist and other far left groups were becoming increasingly violent. From the reign of Alexander II to 1905, the total number of people — both innocent civilians and government officials (including lowly bureaucratic clerks) — murdered by the Herzenian “New Men” came roughly to 12,000. From 1906-1908, it rose by 4,742 additional, with 9,424 attempts to murder. On the other hand, the Russian government’s attitude towards the “New Men” was mixed. Generally, the monarchy was lenient. Exile to Siberia was often not a punishment. Siberia is not entirely a massive, frozen wasteland, but is possessed of great natural beauty, mountains and rivers. It is cold, but it is not the locale of the popular imagination. Local people, not knowing who the deportees were, received them with hospitality; they became part of town life, and the deportees were given much personal freedom. This sort of ‘imprisonment’ was far superior to the American penal system, which can be — at its maximum security level — considered merely a gang war between various minority groups.” (The Third Rome)
347 Oldenburg, op. cit, p. 349.
348 Oldenburg, op. cit, p. 355.
on Finland’s autonomy. The deputies returned to Petersburg having achieved nothing; nobody paid any attention to them... On June 3, 1907 the Second Duma was dissolved and a new electoral law introduced. The Third Duma that resulted was much more rightist, with an important role being played by the “Octobrists” under Guchkov, who decided to work with the government. This was the signal for a significant shift to the right in society as a whole: terrorist acts continued around the country, but for the time being the wind had been taken out of the sails of the revolutionaries...

So great was the change in mood that a conference of the Cadets in Helsingfors at the end of September even decided to abandon the Vyborg manifesto. The students returned to their studies. The revolutionaries ceased to be lionized...

Although the revolution had been crushed, monarchist thinkers felt that the concessions that the Tsar had given in his October Manifesto should be rescinded. True, in his new version of the Basic Laws published on April 23, 1906, just before the opening of the First Duma, the Tsar appeared to claw back some power: “4. The All-Russian Emperor possesses the supreme autocratic power. Not only fear and conscience, but God himself, commands obedience to his authority... 8. The sovereign emperor possesses the initiative in all legislative matters. The Fundamental Laws may be subject to revision in the State Council and State Duma only on His initiative. The sovereign emperor ratifies the laws. No law can come into force without his approval. . . 9. The Sovereign Emperor approves laws; and without his approval no legislative measure can become law.”

However, there were other parts of the law that suggested that the Duma still had considerable power: “7. The sovereign emperor exercises power in conjunction with the State Council and the State Duma... 86. No new law can come into force without the approval of the State Council and State Duma and the ratification of the sovereign emperor.”349

In any case, even if it was conceded that the Tsar had surrendered some of his autocratic powers to the Duma, he was clearly not going to take them back again. So what was to be done? The answer, in the minds of many monarchists, was the creation of a grass-roots monarchist party - “The Union of the Russian People”, or “the Black Hundreds”, as it was called by its opponents, who reviled it as being the mainstay, not only of monarchism, but also of “anti-semitism” in the Russian people. The Unions first became an important force during the government’s counter-revolution of 1906-07, when they had about 11,000 local sections, and their members comprised several hundreds of thousands of people from all walks of life.350 They continued to be important in the following period. They were not so much anti-semitic as anti-Judaist, anti-revolutionary and, of course, pro-monarchical.351

351 It is ironic that the “anti-semites” were helped in these years by a large loan secured in France by Witte through the mediation of one of the Rothschilds – for which the Alliance Israélite Universelle labelled Rothschild a traitor.
“The monarchist Unions,” wrote Fr. John Vostorgov, “appeared not long ago. Some of them no more than two or three years ago and that in the capitals; they foresaw the terrible dangers that threatened the Russian religious and popular-state structure and way of life. Others arose in their hundreds after the danger had already appeared, so as to protect the religious and state ideals of Russia and defend the integrity and indivisibility of Russia. Their essence consists in the fact that they are a storehouse of the religiosity and patriotism of the Russian people. At a fateful moment of history, when the ship of the Russian State was listing so far to the left that disaster seemed inevitable, the monarchist patriotic Unions leaned with all their strength to the right side of the ship and saved it from capsizing. The distinguished activists of the right-wing Unions came out onto the field of public work at a time when they could expect nothing except bullets and bombs, killings from round the corner, persecutions from the newspapers, mockery and disdain from the disoriented intelligentsia and even the government itself – that of Witte of sorrowful memory and his comrades and helpers…”

In 1906–07 the higher ranks of the clergy were divided about the Union. Thus Metropolitan Anthony (Vadkovsky) of St. Petersburg opposed it. But Metropolitan Vladimir of Moscow, Archbishop Tikhon (Bellavin) of Yaroslavl, Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Volhynia, Bishop Hermogen of Saratov, St. John of Kronstadt, Elder Theodosius of Minvody, Fr. John Vostorgov and many others joined it without doubting. St. John of Kronstadt, who did not get on well with the metropolitan, became a member of the Union of the Russian People (no. 200787) and blessed its standards, saying: “As a body without a soul is dead, so Russia without her all-enlightening Autocratic Power is dead”. In his telegram to the Congress of monarchist-black hundredists, he wrote: “I follow with rapture the speeches and actions of the Congress and with all my heart thank the Lord Who has had mercy on Russia and assembled around the cradle of Russian Christianity His faithful children for the unanimous defence of Faith, Tsar and Fatherland.”

Again St. John said: “O Russia, hold firmly onto your faith and Church and Orthodox Tsar, is you want to be unshaken by the people of unbelief and anarchy

353 Monk Anempodist writes: “Metropolitan Vladimir went on to take part in the movement of the right conservative forces of Russia that was being formed. Thus in 1907 he took part in the work of the All-Russian congress of ‘The Union of the Russian People’. In 1909, while taking part in the work of the First Monarchist congress of Russian People, Metropolitan Vladimir was counted worthy of the honour of passing on a greeting to the congress from his Majesty the Emperor Nicholas II in the following telegram: ‘To his Eminence Vladimir, Metropolitan of Moscow. I entrust to you, Vladyko, to pass on to all those assembled in the first capital at the congress of Russian people and members of the Moscow Patriotic Union My gratitude for their loyal feelings. I know their readiness faithfully and honourably to serve Me and the homeland, in strict observance of lawfulness and order. St. Petersburg. 30 September. Nicholas.’” Riasophor-Monk Anempodist, “Sviashchennomuchenik mitropolit Vladimir (Bogoavlenskij) i bor'ba s revoliutsii” (Hieromartyr Metropolitan Vladimir (Bogoavlensky) and the struggle against the revolution), Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’ (Orthodox Life), 53, N 1 (636), January, 2003, pp. 2-10.
and do not want to be deprived of the kingdom and the Orthodox Tsar. But you do fall away from your faith, as many intelligently have already fallen away, then you will no longer be Russia or Holy Rus’, but a mix of all kinds of heterodox striving to exterminate each other. And there will be no repentance in the Russian people, the end of the world is near. God will take away from them their pious Tsar and will send them a whip in the persons of impious, cruel, self-appointed rulers who will drown the whole earth in blood and tears.”

Archbishop Makary (Parvitsky-Nevsky) of Tomsk explained the nature of the struggle: “‘For Faith, Tsar and Fatherland!’ – that is the inscription on the banner of the Union of the Russian People. It calls, evidently, for Russian people to be united, so as to stand up for the foundations of the Russian Land. But the banner of unification has at the same time become a banner of altercation. Against the band standing with the banner ‘For Faith, Tsar and Fatherland!’ there stands a horde of people with the red banner, on which is written: ‘Freedom, Equality, Brotherhood’. On this latter banner there remain traces of blood, blood that has already darkened with time. This is not our Russian banner, but has been brought from another country, where it was once steeped in blood. It appeared amongst us only recently. With its inscription, which speaks of freedom, equality and brotherhood, it has drawn the attention of many, not only foreigners who live in the Russian Land, but also Russians, who have not suspected that under this visible inscription there is hidden another meaning, that by this freedom we must understand violence, by equality – slavery, and by pan-brotherhood – fratricide. Between the horde of freedom, equality and brotherhood and the band for Faith, Tsar and Fatherland a struggle for dominance is taking place.”

In general, however, the Union was plagued by schisms and by poor leadership that gave it a bad name. The “Union of the Archangel Michael”, led by the deputy V.M. Purishkevich, separated from the “Union of the Russian People” led by A. Dubronin. Another major problem was that the monarchist parties turned out to be “more royal than the king”: in the provinces they often criticized the governors for being liberal, while in the Duma they remained in opposition to the government of Stolypin – who, of course, had the confidence of the Tsar.

Dubronin was only superficially Orthodox. Thus he was for the tsar - but against hierarchy! And he wanted to rid the empire of “the Germans”, that is, that highly efficient top layer of the administration which proved itself as loyal to the empire as any other section of the population. When interviewed years later by the Cheka, Dubronin declared: “By conviction I am a communist monarchist, that is, [I want] there to be monarchist government under which those forms of government [will flourish] which could bring the people an increase in prosperity. For me all kinds of cooperatives, associations, etc. are sacred.”

354 Tatiana Groyan, Tsariu Nebesnomu i Zemnomu Vernij (Faithful to the Heavenly and Earthly Kings), Moscow, 1996, p. CXI.
Fr. John Vostorgov, one of the founders of the Union, considered Dubronin an enemy of the truth... He stressed that true patriotism can only be founded on true faith and morality. “Where the faith has fallen,” he said, “and where morality has fallen, there can be no place for patriotism, there is nothing for it to hold on to, for everything that is the most precious in the homeland then ceases to be precious.”

The major problem for the monarchists was the paradoxicality of the idea of a monarchical party within a monarchy. The Tsar was seen as standing above party and class interests, reconciling them all in obedience to himself. But the October manifesto appeared to many to divide power between the Tsar and the Duma. And this made party politics inevitable. So the monarchists were forced to conduct party politics in favour of the idea that the state should not be the product of party politics, but incarnate in the tsar who was above all party politics...

In spite of these contradictions, the monarchist parties played an essential role in shoring up support for the Tsar and Tsarism at a critical time. And that is why the best churchmen of the time supported them, entering into open battle with the leftists. For there could be no real unity between those who ascribed ultimate power to the Tsar and those who ascribed it to the Duma. Moreover, the struggle between the “reds” and the “blacks” was not simply a struggle between different interpretations of the October manifesto, or between monarchists and constitutionalists, but between two fundamentally incompatible world-views - the Orthodox Christian and the Masonic-Liberal-Ecumenist. It was a struggle between two fundamentally opposed views of where true authority comes from – God or the people.

As Bishop Andronicus, the future hieromartyr, wrote: “It is not a question of the struggle between two administrative regimes, but of a struggle between faith and unbelief, between Christianity and antichristianity. The ancient antichristian plot, which was begun by those who shouted furiously to Pilate about Jesus Christ: ‘Crucify Him, crucify Him: His blood be on us and on our children’ - continued in various branches and secret societies. In the 16th century it poured into the special secret antichristian order of the Templars, and in the 18th century it became more definite in the Illuminati, the Roscrucians and, finally, in Freemasonry it merged into a universal Jewish organization. And now, having gathered strength to the point where France is completely in the hands of the Masons, it - Masonry - already openly persecutes Christianity out of existence there. In the end Masonry will be poured out into one man of iniquity, the son of destruction – the Antichrist (II Thessalonians 2). In this resides the solution of the riddle of our most recent freedoms: their aim is the destruction of Christianity in Rus’. That is why what used to be the French word ‘liberal’, which meant among the Masons a ‘generous’ contributor to the Masonic aims, and then received the meaning of ‘freedom-loving’ with regard to questions of faith, has now already passed openly over to antichristianity. In this resides the solution of the riddle of that stubborn battle for control of the school, which is being waged in the zemstvo and the State Duma: if the liberal tendency gains control of the school, the success of antichristianity is guaranteed. In this resides the solution of the riddle of the sympathy of liberals for all

356 Vostorgov, in Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., p. 400.
kinds of sects in Christianity and non-Christian religions. And the sectarians have not been slumbering – they have now set about attacking the little children... And when your children grow up and enter university – there Milyukov and co. will juggle with the facts and deceive them, teaching them that science has proved man's origin from the apes. And they will really make our children into beasts, with just this difference, that the ape is a humble and obedient animal whereas these men-beasts will be proud, bold, cruel and unclean."

Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) put the monarchist case in February, 1907 as follows: “Perhaps there are countries which are best ruled not by tsars, but by many leaders. But our kingdom, which consists of a multitude of races, various faiths and customs that are hostile to each other, can stand only when at its head there stands one Anointed of God, who gives account to nobody except God and His commandments. Otherwise all the races that inhabit the Russian land would go against each other with knives, and would not be pacified until they had themselves destroyed each other, or had submitted to the power of the enemies of Russia. Only the White Tsar is venerated by all the peoples of Russia; for his sake they obey the civil laws, go into the army and pay their taxes. Our tsars are the friends of the people and preservers of the holy faith, and the present Sovereign Nicholas Alexandrovich is the meekest and quietest of all the kings of the whole world. He is the crown of our devotion to our native land and you must stand for him to your last drop of blood, not allowing anybody to diminish his sacred power, for with the fall of this power, Russia also will fall...

“Russian man, lend your ear to your native land: what does it tell you? 'From the righteous Princess Olga, from the equal-to-the-apostles Vladimir until the days of Seraphim of Sarov and to the present day and to future ages all the wise leaders of my people think and say the same,' that is what the land will reply to you... 'They taught their contemporaries and their descendants one and the same thing: both the princes, and the tsars, and the hierarchs who sat on the Church sees, and the hermits who hid amidst the forest and on the islands of the sea, and the military commanders, and the warriors, and the boyars, and the simple people: they all taught to look on this life as the entrance courtyard into the future life, they all taught to use it in such a way as not to console the flesh, but to raise the soul to evangelical virtue, to preserve the apostolic faith unharmed, to keep the purity of morals and truthfulness of speech, to honour the tsars and those placed in authority by them, to listen to and venerate the sacred monastic order, not to envy the rich, but to compete with the righteous ones, to love to work the land as indicated by God to our race through Adam and Noah, and to turn to other crafts only out of necessity or because of a special talent; not to borrow the corrupt habits of foreigners, their proud, lying and adulterous morals, but to preserve the order of the fatherland, which is fulfilled through chastity, simplicity and evangelical love; to stand fearlessly for your native land on the field of battle and to study the law of God in the sacred books.' That is what our land teaches us, that is what the wise men and righteous ones of all epochs of our history entrusted to us, in which there was no disagreement between them,

357 Bishop Andronicus, “Russkij grazhdanskij stroj zhizni pered sudom khristianina” (The Russian civil order before the judgement of the Christian), Fryazino, 1995, pp. 24-25). In 1918 Bishop Andronicus would suffer martyrdom at the hands of these men-beasts by being buried alive...
but complete unanimity. The whole of Rus’ thinks in the same way. But she knows that only the Anointed of God must preserve this spirit and defend it from enemies visible and invisible by his mighty right hand. And look he hardly stepped back from life when his popular privileges were snatched from him by deception and violence by his enemies and the enemies of the people. Yes, the Russian people thinks and feels one thing: in its eyes public life is a general exploit of virtue, and not the realm of secular pleasures, it is the laborious increase of the Kingdom of God amongst us ourselves and its implanting in the unenlightened tribes, and not the equalisation of all faiths and superstitions. The Orthodox people knows and feels this. It feels that without one ruling royal right hand it is impossible for our land of many tribes to exist. In it are 102 different faiths, 102 tribes that will now nourish malicious enmity against each other immediately they cease to feel the ruling right hand of the White Tsar above them. Let him hear out the reports of the people’s delegates, let him allow them to express their opinions on various matters of the kingdom. But the final decision will be made by him himself, and he will give an account for this only through his conscience before the Lord God. One only submission, one only limitation of his power is necessary to the people: that openly on the day of his crowning he should confess his Orthodox faith to God and the people in accordance with the Symbol of the Fatherland – so that he should not have human arbitrariness, but the evangelical law of God as his unfailing guide in his sovereign decisions and undertakings. That is the kingdom we need, and this is understood not only by Russian people, but also by people other faiths who live in our land with a healthy people’s reasoning, and not through lies and deceit: both Tatars and Kirgiz and the old Jews who believe in their own way, and the distant Tunguz. All of them know that shaking the Tsar’s Autocracy means beginning the destruction of the whole of Russia, which has been confirmed in the last three years...

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In 1911 an interesting debate took place between the revolutionary-turned-monarchist Lev Tikhomirov and Prime Minister Stolypin. Tikhomirov considered the new order in Russia after 1906 to be “unprincipled” and “neither monarchy nor democracy” “Being ambiguous in concept and deviating from a clear attitude to any Supreme Power, it was formed in such a way that in it everyone can get in everyone else’s way but there is no one who could force the institutions of state to collaborate. His Majesty the Emperor himself can independently only not allow a law to be enforced, but he cannot independently create a law that is necessary for the country. But… the state, on the contrary, has the task of working, and especially in a country that has been so disturbed during the preceding years of woes and troubles.

“This order, which is extremely bad from the point of view of its apparatus, is, in addition to that, complete antinational, that is, it does not correspond either to the character of the nation or to the conditions of the general situation of the Empire. As a result of this, disorganization in the country is being engendered on all sides. Unifying elements are weakening. A friable, bored, discontented mood has appeared. The Russians are losing their spirit, their faith in themselves, they are not inspired by

patriotism. Moreover, class and inter-racial quarrels are necessarily becoming sharper.

“Russia constitutes a nation and a state that are great in instincts and means, but also surrounded by great dangers. It was created by Russians and is preserved only by Russians. Only Russian power brings the remaining elements to some solidarity amongst themselves and with the Empire. … We have a huge non-Russian population… The strongest of the other races are foreign to our patriotism. They are eternally quarrelling amongst themselves, but are inclined to rebel against the dominion of the Russians. The unifying element, the general bond is we, the Russians. Without us the Empire will disintegrate, and these other races will perish. Therefore we must remember our mission and support the conditions of our strength. We must remember that our state is a matter not simply of national egoism, but a global duty. We occupy a post that is necessary for all. But in order to keep this post we need a one-person Supreme Power, that is, the Tsar, not as the adornment of a pediment, but as a real state power.

“No combinations of popular representation or elective laws can guarantee the supremacy of the Russians. We must understand ourselves. As a people that is essentially statist, the Russians are not suited to petty political struggles, they can do politics only wholesale, not retail, by contrast with the Poles, the Jews, etc. The aims of the supremacy of such a people (as with the Romans) are attainable only by a one-person Supreme Power that realizes its ideals. With such a power we become stronger and more skillful than all, for no Poles can compare with the Russians in the capacity for discipline and solidarity around a one-person power endowed with a moral character.

“But if it has no centre of unity, the Russian people loses its head and particularist peoples begin to obstruct it. Historical practice has created a Supreme Power in accordance with the Russian character. The Russian people has grown for itself a Tsar in union with the Church. [But] since 1906 that which was proper to the people has been undermined, and it is being forced to live in a way that it is not able to and does not want. This was undoubtedly a huge constitutional mistake, for whatever theoretical preferences there may be, practically speaking state reason requires institutions that conform to the character of the people and the general conditions of its supremacy. In destroying that, 1906 deprived us of that without which the Empire cannot exist – the possibility of creating a dictatorship immediately. Such a possibility was given first of all by the presence of a Tsar having the right to engage in the situation with all his unlimited Supreme Power.

“The consciousness alone of the possibility of an immediate concentration [of power] filled the Russians with confidence in their strength, while inspiring our rivals with fear and dread. Now that has been taken away. And without our watchfulness there is nobody to keep the remaining races in unity…”359

Stolypin replied on July 9: “All these fine theoretical considerations would in practice have turned out to be a malicious provocation and the beginning of a new revolution...”

Both men were right. Tikhomirov was right that the post-1906 order in Russia was no longer a true autocracy in the full sense, and that it contained within itself the seeds of its own destruction. But Stolypin was right that there was no real practical alternative, and that through him and his government the Tsar could at any rate carry out part of his autocratic will.

1911 was the year of important revolutions in China and Mexico. This shows that the general tendency in world politics was still towards the left. While the tsar and Stolypin had successfully crushed the 1905 revolution, they could not resist the general tendency indefinitely – especially after Stolypin was killed in September, 1911...

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The year 1908 was a critical year because of two events: the revolution of the Young Turks in the Ottoman empire, and the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary. With the benefit of hindsight, we can see that these two revolutionary events effectively cancelled the good work of the Russian counter-revolution and made world war much more likely. If the internationalist revolution had been checked, its terrible twin, the nationalist revolution, was now on the cusp of victory against the forces of law and order.

Important changes were taking place in the dominant great power in the Balkans – Turkey, where the old system of Islamic Sharia law combined with the Sultan’s personal decrees was being undermined by a new liberal legal system, introduced under pressure from the Western powers, whose main idea was the equality of all citizens, both Muslim and Christian. The liberal legislation, which was incorporated into the Constitution in 1876, was displeasing to Muslims and Christians alike. For, on the one hand, the Muslims felt that they were losing their superiority to the “infidel”. And on the other hand, the Christians were worried about losing some of the exemptions they enjoyed under the old millet system.

For “in some ways,” as Taner Akçam writes, “Christians were better off than the average Turkish peasant, given their exemption from military service, and often the support of a foreign consulate, which excluded them from Ottoman courts, protected their homes from being searched by the authorities and freed them from Ottoman taxes. ‘The maligned Turkish peasant, at the other end of the social scale, was generally no better off than the ordinary non-Muslim and as much oppressed by maladministration... He was as much in need of reformed government as the Church, but [h]e had neither treaty, foreign power, nor patriarch to protect him, and his lot was generally unknown in Europe.’”

Defeat at the hands of Russia in 1877-78, and the gradual liberation of their European Christian subjects, increased the sense of grievance and frustration among the Turks. Massacres of Christians began, notably of Armenians (200,000 in 1894-96, nearly two million in 1915). And a new nationalist ideology began to be worked out on the basis of the empire’s Muslim Turks being the “millet-i Hakime”, or “ruling nation”.

In 1908 a modernizing group called “The Committee for Union and Progress” (CUP), or “The Young Turks”, seized power in Constantinople. The CUP’s stronghold was the Army in Macedonia, which had learned much from the discipline and conspiratorial techniques of the Bulgarian and Macedonian guerrillas. In fact, some of the rebel soldiers in Macedonia formed pacts with the Albanians, and with the Bulgarian and Serbian guerrillas they were supposed to be fighting.

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Glenny, op. cit., p. 215.
The result was a stunning victory for the revolution. The new government was Masonic, but at the same time nationalist at heart. Thus they declared: “We can compromise with the Christians only when they accept our position of dominance.” One of their leaders, Namik Kemal, spoke of the Turks as “occupying the pre-eminent position in the Ottoman collective... on account of their great numbers and abilities, excellent and meritorious qualities such as ‘breadth of intelligence’, ‘cool-headedness’, ‘tolerance and repose’”. Another leader, Ali Suavi, declared that “the Turkish race [is] older and superior... on account of its military, civilizing and political roles”. However, at first they renounced nationalism so as to bring as many members of other nationalities of the multi-national empire onto its side. Similarly, they were secularists at heart, but concealed this in order not to alienate the Turkish masses, who were fervently religious.

And so in Constantinople Muslims joined with Armenians in requiem services for the massacres of 1896. Again, on July 23, 1908, “Salonika’s gendarmerie commander observed how ‘[o]n the balcony of the Konak [town hall], Greek and Bulgarian bishops and the mufti shook hands and then in the name of fraternity, they invited their co-religionists to follow suit... A cry of joy burst from every lung in the crowd and you could see Muslims, Greeks and Bulgarians, the old mortal enemies, falling into one another’s arms. An indescribable delirium ensued as the reconciliation of the races and religions was consecrated underneath an immense flag emblazoned with the words ‘Long Live the Constitution’...”

It was indeed an extraordinary moment, comparable only to the frenzied joy that accompanied the overthrow of the Tsar only nine years later in Petrograd. Like Herod and Pilate, bitter rivals abandoned their enmity in joy at the overthrow of their common enemy – one-man-rule that recognized its authority as coming, not from men, but from the One God. Instead, a new god, “the Constitution”, was erected and worshipped by all. Meanwhile, the priests of the new religion, the Masons, took over the reins of government – men such as Mehemet Talaat Pasha, Grand Master of the Turkish Grand Orient, and Kemal Ataturk, who had been initiated into an Italian lodge in Macedonia. On July 23, 1908, the same day as the celebrations in Salonika,

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363 Akçam, op. cit., p. 39.
364 Glenny, op. cit., p. 216.
365 Some words on the origin of Masonry in the Ottoman empire. As the Ottoman empire declined in power, it became more and more cosmopolitan, liberal and ecumenist, at least in the capital; and Freemasonry played no small part in this process. Thus Philip Mansel writes: “From 1884 the Cercle d’Orient, one of the main centres of news and gambling in the city, was housed in a magnificent building on the Grande Rue de Pera. It was open to men of every race and religion, and viziers were members ex officio. Freemasons had existed in Constantinople since the eighteenth century; the Bektashki order had remarkable, and remarked on, similarities with the Masons, perhaps due to contacts with France through Bonneval Pasha. The masonic message of universal fraternity and abolition of religious and national differences seemed especially appropriate to the Ottoman Empire. The lodge Le Progrès, founded in 1868, held meetings in Ottoman and Greek. It was joined by men of different religions... In another lodge called the Union d’Orient, in 1866, a French atheist cried, perhaps for the first time in Constantinople: ‘God does not exist! He has never existed.’” (Constantinople, London: Penguin, 1995, p. 293)

An important member of Le Progrès was the wealthy Greek banker and believer in the Ottoman Empire Cleanti Scalieris (Kleanti Skalyeri in Turkish), who was born into a noble family in Constantinople in 1833. According to Jasper Ridley, he was “initiated in 1863 into a lodge which had been established in Constantinople by the French Grand Orient. He was friendly with Midhat Pasha, a
they restored the Midhat constitution on the empire. In 1909 the Sultan was deposed and became a constitutional monarch. And by 1913 the government had come under the complete control of the Committee of Union and Progress.

However, it was not long before the new government cast off its liberal and cosmopolitan mask. “Over three years of counterrevolution and restoration, revolutionary idealism turned into a regime whose brutality surpassed that of [Sultan] Abdulhamid. ‘The old espionage had returned, the extortion had never ceased, the oppression against non-Moslems had now acquired a fresher and more sinister vigour, for the measure of freedom that each nationality had once enjoyed was now being ruthlessly crushed by a heretofore unknown chauvinism.‘” 366

“Ottomanization” in effect meant “Turkification”, including the imposition of Turkish as the single official language throughout the empire. This was an important stimulus to the rise of Arab nationalism (few Arabs understood Turkish), and the Arab rising against Ottoman power in the First World War.

As for the Christians, in a secret speech to the Salonika CUP in 1910, one of the three leaders of the Young Turks, Talaat Bey, “said that, while the constitution provided for equality of ‘Mussulman and Ghiaur [i.e. non-Muslims]’, they all knew that this was an unrealizable ideal. ‘The Sheriat [i.e. sharia], our whole past history and the sentiments of hundreds of thousands of Mussulmans and even the sentiments of the Ghiaurs themselves, who stubbornly resist every attempt to ottomanize them, present an impenetrable barrier to the establishment of real equality. We have made unsuccessful attempts to convert the Ghiaur into a loyal Ottoman and all such efforts must inevitably fail, as long as the small independent States in the Balkan Peninsula remain in a position to propagate ideas of separatism among the inhabitants of Macedonia...’” 367

366 Glenny, op. cit., p. 218.
For, as Glenny writes, “while the Young Turk revolution had temporarily spread the gospel of harmony among the Empire’s constituent peoples, it had had no such effect on Macedonia’s neighbours in the Balkans – Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia. On the contrary, they saw the success of the revolution as a sign of the Empire’s extreme weakness and it galvanized their expansionist ambitions. “The most immediate blow to the movement for reconciliation in the Ottoman Empire was delivered by Bulgaria, Austria-Hungary and Greece. In October, Prince Ferdinand exploited the political chaos in the Ottoman Empire by declaring Bulgaria fully independent – until then it had been nominally under the suzerainty of the Empire. Within days, Austria-Hungary followed suit by announcing the full annexation of the occupied territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina and before long Greece proclaimed enosis with Crete. These events, in particular Vienna’s annexation of Bosnia, set alarm bells ringing in the Ottoman military barracks, the real power behind the CUP. Henceforth, any Christian demands which smacked of secessionism would be rejected. In response, the guerrillas in Macedonia – Serb, Bulgarian, Greek and, significantly, Albanian – took to the hills once more. The military establishments of Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire had taken their first steps along the road that ended with the First and Second Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913.”

Tsar Nicholas II knew better than anyone the true significance of the events of 1908, and the great danger they posed for the whole of Orthodoxy. Basically, the whole vast region of the Ottoman Empire had fallen under the power of Orthodoxy’s greatest enemy, the revolution, albeit in its nationalist rather than internationalist form. The Serbs, the Bulgarians and the Greeks, in spite of their recent rejoicing with the Turks over their revolution, were now gripped by a mad enthusiasm for war against Turkey that might well trigger a far wider war between the great powers.

The Tsar wanted to work with Austria in order to cool passions and avert world war; but his situation was made the more difficult in that Austria’s annexation of Bosnia had involved a trick played by the Austrian Foreign Minister, Baron Aerenthal, on the Russian Foreign Minister, A.P. Izvolsky, that humiliated Russia and stirred Serbian and Russian public opinion to a frenzy of anti-Germanism.

The story is told by S.S. Oldenburg:- “On September 3/16, in Buchlow castle, A.P. Izvolsvky met Baron Aerenthal. There are various versions of the details of this meeting. The German State-Secretary for Foreign Relations, von Schen, referring to the conversation with A.P. Izvolsky, wrote to Bülow on September 13/26 that in Buchlow Aerenthal had put forward the following plan: Austria would limit herself to annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina, but would forbear from moving on Salonika and would take her armies out of the Novi-Pazar Şandjak and would support Russia’s demand that her fleet be given free passage through the Straits. At the same time Turkey’s sovereignty over Bulgaria, which had for long been a pure formality, would be proclaimed to be annulled.

"Izvolsky evidently approved this plan in its general form. We have to bear in mind that already in 1876, at the Reichstag agreement, and then in a special clause of the Austro-German-Russian agreement of June 18, 1881, Russia had declared her consent to the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina: 'Austro-Hungary,' declared this clause, 'retains for herself the right to annex both these provinces at a time when she considers it necessary'. So the hands of the Russian minister were tied, and it was a matter only of this or that compensation. A.P. Izvolsky thought that Austria’s renunciation of the Šandjak, the freedom of travel through the Straits for Russia and the independence of Bulgaria (together with a profitable trade agreement for Serbia) represented enough compensation. Evidently he also counted on these changes to the Berlin congress agreement being accepted at the same time – perhaps with the help of a new international conference.

“But already on September 24 / October 7 Baron Aerenthal told the delegations of the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, explaining this step on the grounds of the necessity of giving these provinces representative organs, so that the local population should not turn out to be at a disadvantage by comparison with the Turkish domains.

“At the same time, Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria proclaimed the complete independence of Bulgaria and took the title of tsar.

“Both these acts were undoubtedly a rejection of the obligations undertaken at the Berlin congress, although in essence they only confirmed a situation that had existed de facto for a long time.

“In international relations, ‘c'est le ton qui fait la musique', and public opinion in Russia and especially in Serbia reacted badly to these steps. In Belgrade they deemed Austria’s declaration as the first step towards the establishment of her hegemony in the Balkans. Bulgaria’s decision was seen as ‘the acceptance of independence from the hands of Austria', while the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina – as Austria’s self-willed appropriation of Slavic lands".

“Since these two formally Ottoman provinces,” writes Clark, “had been under Austrian occupation for thirty years and there had never been any question of an alteration of this arrangement, it might seem that the nominal change from occupation to outright annexation ought to have been a matter of indifference. The Serbian public took a different view. The announcement created an ‘unparalleled outburst of resentment and national enthusiasm’, both in Belgrade and in the provinces… The Russian liberal Pavel Miliukov, who visited Serbia in 1908, was shocked by the intensity of the public emotion. The anticipation of war with Austria, he recalled, became ‘a readiness to fight, and victory seemed both easy and certain’. These views were universal and so unquestioned that ‘to get into an argument over [them] would have been totally useless.’

369 Oldenburg, Tsarstvovanie Imperatora Nikolaia II (The Reign of Emperor Nicholas II), Belgrade, 1939, vol. 2, pp. 36-37.
“The mental maps that informed elite and popular understandings of Serbia’s policy and purpose were once again in evidence. The only way to understand the intensity of the feeling aroused in Serbia by the annexation, the British minister in Belgrade explained in a report of 27 April 1909, was to recall that ‘Every patriotic Servian who takes any interest or active part in politics, thinks of the Servian nation not as merely including the subjects of King Peter, but as consisting of all those who are akin to them in race and language. He looks forward, consequently, to the eventual creation of a Greater Servia, which shall bring into one fold all the different sections of the nation, at present divided under Austrian, Hungarian and Turkish dominion... From his point of view, Bosnia is both geographically and ethnographically the heart of Great Servia.’

“In an almost contemporary tract on the crisis, the celebrated ethnographer Jovan Cvijic, Nikola Pašić’s most influential adviser on the nationality question, observed that ‘it [was] plain that Bosnia and Herzegovina, by... their central position in the ethnographical mass of the Serbo-Croat race,... hold the key to the Serb problem. Without them, there can be no Great Serb state’. From the perspective of pan-Serb publicists, Bosnia-Herzegovina belonged to the ‘Serb lands under foreign domination’ – its population was ‘entirely Servian in face and language’, consisting of Serbs, Serbo-Croats and ‘Serb-Mohammedans’, except, of course, for the minority of ‘temporary inhabitants’ and ‘exploiters’ installed by the Austrians over the previous thirty years.”370

It is striking that Orthodox Christianity here does not count as one of the criteria of Serbness, only race and language... This demonstrates the secularism of Serbian nationalism of the time.

Tsar Nicholas asked the Germans to mediate in the dispute. The Germans refused in a particularly blunt and offensive manner that stirred up a huge wave of anti-German feeling in the two Slavic countries. Although the Russians were too weak, so soon after the Russo-Japanese war and the 1905 revolution, to take decisive action at this point, their humiliation strengthened their determination not to allow the Austrians to get away with it next time... Nevertheless, the Russians, while sharing the Serbs’ frustration with Austria, did not share their nationalist frenzy. The Serbian minister in St. Petersburg was warned that they should in no way mobilize against Austria because nobody would help them – the world wanted peace, not war.371

The Serbs paid no attention. On March 31, 1909 the government was forced by the Great Powers officially to renounce her claims on Bosnia-Herzegovina. But that was only the official position. A new nationalist organization, Srpska Narodna Odbrana (Serbian National Defence), also known as “Black Hand”, sprang up with hundreds of committees throughout Serbia and a network of auxiliaries within Bosnia and Herzegovina. Then, in March 1911 a group of seven veterans from the Macedonian struggle, five of whom were officer-regicides founded a new secret organization under the leadership of Apis. “The constitution of Ujedinjenje ili smrt! [Union or Death!] opened with the unsurprising declaration that the aim of the new association

370 Clark, op. cit., pp. 33-35.
371 Clark, op. cit., p. 36.
was the ‘unification of Serbdom’. Further articles stated that the members must strive to influence the government to adopt the idea that Serbia was the ‘Piedmont’ of the Serbs, and indeed of all the South Slav peoples – the journal founded to expound the ideals of Ujedinjenje ili smrt! duly bore the title Pijemont. The new movement assumed an encompassing and hegemonic concept of Serbdom – Black Hand propaganda did not acknowledge the separate identity of Bosnian Muslims and flatly denied the existence of Croats. In order to prepare Serbdom for what would be a violent struggle for unity, the society would undertake revolutionary work in all territories inhabited by Serbs. Outside the borders of the Serbian state, the society would also combat by all means available the enemies of the Serbian idea.

“In their work for the ‘national cause’ these men increasingly saw themselves as enemies of the democratic parliamentary system in Serbia and especially of the Radical Party, whose leaders they denounced as traitors to the nation…

“The movement thrived on a cult of secrecy. Members were inducted by means of a ceremony devised by Jovanović-Čupa, a member of the founding council and a freemason. New recruits swore and oath before a hooded figure in a darkened room pledging absolute obedience to the organization on pain of death…”

“Within Bosnia and Herzegovina, the networks of Ujedinjenje ili smrt! and Narodna Odbrana became interwoven with local groups of pan-Serb activists, of which the most important was Mlada Bosna (‘Young Bosnia’). Mlada Bosna was not a unified organization, but rather an aggregation of groups and cells of revolutionary youth operating across the province from around 1904; its focus was less narrowly Serbian than that of the Black Hand or of Narodna Odbrana. Since they were operating under the eyes of the Austrian police, the Young Bosnians adopted a decentralised, flexible structure based on small ‘circles’ (kruzki), linked only by designated intermediaries. Young Bosnia’s great hour arrived in 1910, when one of their number launched a suicide attack on the Austrian governor of Bosnia. On 3 June 1910, on the occasion of the opening of the Bosnian parliament, Bogdan Žerajić, a Serbian student from Herzegovina, fired five shots at Governor Marijan Varešanin. When all his bullets went wide, Žerajić emptied the sixth and last round into his own head. He was buried anonymously in a section of Sarajevo cemetery reserved from criminals and suicides, but his grave soon became a shrine for the Serb underground movement and his deed was celebrated by the nationalist press in Belgrade…”

At the same time, Greece proclaimed her annexation (enosis) of Crete. So in a very short time the status quo in the Balkans which Russia and Austria had pledged to preserve in 1897 had been blown apart. And now, with the prospect of a further disintegration of Turkish rule in the Balkans, the three Orthodox States of Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece began rapidly rearming themselves, as a result of which all were deeply in debt to western arms manufacturers - the Serbs to French ones, the Bulgarians to German ones.

373 Clark, op. cit., p. 41.
The Bosnian crisis strengthened the alliance between Russia and France; for both countries were now more determined than ever to oppose any further gains for Austria in the Balkans. This in turn brought the British, who in 1904 had signed an Entente with the French, closer to the Russians. For since the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05 and the abortive revolution of 1905, the Russian bear no longer looked so menacing to the British, whereas the Germans now came into the picture as their main rivals. Liberal England, strongly supported by Republican France, now sought closer relations with Autocratic Russia; and in 1907 the two countries signed an agreement on their respective spheres of influence in Tibet, Afghanistan and Persia. The agreement was sealed by a meeting in 1908 between King Edward VII and Tsar Nicholas in Revel and by visits to England by a parliamentary delegation and then the Tsar himself in 1909. Although this was not a formal alliance, it had an important psychological and political effect; people now saw Europe as divided into two alliance systems, with the central powers of Germany, Austria and (possibly) Italy on the one side, and England, France and Russia on the other…
64. NAME-WORSHIPPERS, SYMBOLISTS AND FUTURISTS

The last years before the Great War were a period of revolutionary change, not only in political ideas, but also in art, science and philosophy. In Russia, this revolutionary spirit took a particular form, often religious and esoteric.

In 1907, a Russian Athonite, Schema-monk Hilarion, published a book on the Jesus prayer entitled *On the Mountains of the Caucasus*. This book was at first well-received and passed the spiritual censor; but later its claim that the name of God is God - more precisely, that the Name of God as uttered in the Jesus prayer is not only holy and filled with the grace of God, but is holy *in and of itself*, being God Himself - elicited criticism. Soon monastic opinion in Russia was polarised between those who, like the monks of the Kiev Caves Lavra, approved of the book and its name-worshipping thesis (*imiabozhie* in Russian), and those, like the monks of the Pochaev Lavra and the Optina Desert, who rejected it. The heresy was condemned by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1912 and 1913, and by the Russian Holy Synod in 1913.374 The Russian Athonite Monastery of St. Panteleimon, where the heresy first arose, also renounced their own heretical brethren.375

However, as Gubanov writes, “the illiterate G.E. Rasputin interceded for the heretical name-worshippers and even tried to incite the empress to attack the fighters against the heresy of name-worshipping.”376 In 1914 the leading name-worshippers, including Hieroschemamonk Anthony (Bulatovich), author of *An Apology of Faith in the Name of God and the Name of Jesus* (1913), were justified by the Moscow Diocesan Court, which declared: “… The Synodal Office has found that in the confessions of faith in God and in the Name of God coming from the named monks, in the words, ‘I repeat that in naming the Name of God and the Name of Jesus as God and God Himself, I reject both the veneration of the Name of God as His Essence, and the veneration of the Name of God separately from God Himself as some kind of special Divinity, as well as any deification of the very letters and sounds and any chance thoughts about God’ – there is contained information allowing us to conclude that in them there is no basis for leaving the Orthodox Church for the sake of the teaching on the Names of God.’” Of course, this decree did not constitute a “justification” of the name-worshippers’ teaching, especially in view of the fact that on the same day the Office, led by Metropolitan Macarius, affirmed that name-worshipping – “the new false-teachings on the names of God proclaimed by Schema-Monk Hilarion and Anthony Bulatovich” – was a heresy. Moreover, in rejecting “any deification of the very letters and sounds and any chance thoughts about God”, Bulatovich was obliged also to renounce his words in the *Apology*: “Every mental representation of a named property of God is the Name of God [and therefore, according to the name-worshippers, God Himself]”, “the contemplation of the His name is God Himself”, “the conscious naming of God is God Himself”, “Every idea about God is God Himself”, “we call the very idea of God – God”.

376 Gubanov, op. cit, p. 770.
Unfortunately, the repentance of the name-worshippers turned out to be fictional. Bulatovich concealed his heresy behind ambiguous words and phrases. Thus on May 18, 1914, in a letter to Metropolitan Macarius, Bulatovich thanked him for his “justification”, and nobly deigned to declare that he was now ready to return into communion with the Orthodox Church (!). And he added: “Concerning the Name of God and the Name of Jesus Christ, we, in accordance with the teaching of the Holy Fathers, confessed and confess the Divinity and the Divine Power of the Name of the Lord, but we do not raise this teaching to the level of a dogma, for it has not yet been formulated and dogmatised in council, but we expect that at the forthcoming Council it will be formulated and dogmatised. Therefore we, in accordance with the teaching of the Holy Fathers, in the words of the ever-memorable Father John of Kronstadt said and say that the Name of God is God Himself, and the Name of the Lord Jesus is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, understanding this not in the sense of a deification of the created name, but understanding it spiritually, in the sense of the inseparability of the God-revealed Truth, Which is the Action of the Divinity.” These words of Bulatovich show that he was not sincere in his signature below his Confession, but deceived Metropolitan Macarius (who was probably under pressure from the Over-Procurator Sabler, who was in turn under pressure from the fervent name-worshipper Gregory Rasputin). “Mixing truth with unrighteousness” (Rom. 1.18), Bulatovich mixed Orthodoxy with heresy. Thus Orthodoxy recognises that there is a “Divine Power” in the name of Jesus, but does not recognise that it is “Divinity”. Again, Orthodoxy recognises that in prayer the name of God is indeed inseparable from God, but it does not confuse the two, as does Bulatovich. For while a shadow is inseparable from the body that casts it, this is not to say that the shadow is the body. Finally, Bulatovich’s “dogma” is still not “formulated and dogmatised in council” – because it is not a dogma, but heresy!

The Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church accepted that Bulatovich and his fellows had not really repented, so they set aside the decree of the Moscow Synodal Office, and confirmed the sentences against the name-worshippers, which confirmation was again confirmed in 1916. “In this decree of the Most Holy Synod,” wrote the future Hieromartyr Bishop Basil (Zelentsov), “we find a confirmation of the basic rule that the name-worshippers must be received into ecclesiastical communion and admitted to the sacraments of the Church only on the unfailing condition that they reject the false teaching of name-worshipping and witness to their faithfulness to the dogmas and teaching of the Church and to their obedience to Church authority.”

Although name-worshipping was on the agenda of the 1917-18 Council and a subcommission to study it under the leadership of Archbishop Theophan of Poltava and Fr. Sergius Bulgakov was formed, the subcommission did not have time to complete its work before the Council was terminated by the Bolsheviks. However, on October 8/21, 1918, Patriarch Tikhon and the Most Holy Synod declared: “The Most Holy Synod does not change its former judgement on the error itself [of name-worshipping]... and has in no way changed its general rule, according to which the name-worshippers, as having been condemned by the Church authorities, can be received into Church communion... only after they have renounced name-
worshipping and have declared their submission to the Holy Church... The petition of Hieroschemamonk Anthony to allow him to serve is to be recognised as not worthy of being satisfied so long as he continues to disobey Church authority and spread his musings which have been condemned by the Church hierarchy to the harm of the Church”.

After this decision, the leading name-worshipper, Anthony Bulatovich, broke communion for the second time with the Russian Church and was shortly afterwards killed by robbers.

The name-worshipping movement survived in the Caucasus and South Russian region (where the Tsar had transported the rebellious monks); and the sophianist heretics Florensky and Bulgakov also confessed name-worshiping in the inter-war period. In modern times the heresy has enjoyed a revival in intellectualist circles in Russia, especially in the works of Hieromunk Gregory (Lourié), who supports the heretical views of Bulatovich, considers him to be a saint, and those who oppose his ideas, including several hieromartyrs of the Russian Church to be “enemies of the Name”!

Reasons for the failure to stamp out the heresy included the comparatively weak defence of the truth produced by the Greek and Russian theologians\textsuperscript{377}, the aura of martyrdom which was attached to the name-worshippers as a result of their forcible expulsion from Mount Athos to Russia on a Russian cruiser, and the fact that the heresy coincided with the end of the Balkan wars and the transfer of Mount Athos from Turkish to Greek dominion after the Treaty of Bucharest, which meant that mutual suspicions between the Greeks and the Russians concerning the status of Athos hindered a united and thorough approach to the problem. Many took up the cause of the name-worshippers as part of their general attack on the “paralytical” Russian Holy Synod. Soon the debate acquired political overtones: democrats and socialists generally took the side of the name-worshippers, and the monarchists – that of the Orthodox.\textsuperscript{378} Bulatovich himself was a left social revolutionary.\textsuperscript{379}

In 1918 Patriarch Tikhon indicated that the controversy needed further study “in essence” at a future Pan-Russian (or Ecumenical) Council. But this did not mean, as some have claimed, that the Church had not delivered her verdict on the question. She has done so: but the reasons for that verdict need to be more extensively elaborated, and the “positive” teaching of the Church on the relationship between the uncreated and the created in prayer needs to be expounded still more clearly and thoroughly.\textsuperscript{380}

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{377} The best effort was by S. Troitsky in one of the three reports attached by the Russian Holy Synod to their decision of 1913: “Afonskaia Smuta”, Tserkovnie Vedomosti, N 20, 1913, pp. 882-909.
\textsuperscript{378} Constantine Papoulides, Oi Rossoi onomolatroi tou Agiou Orous, (The Russian Name-Worshippers of Mount Athos), Thessaloniki, 1977 (in Greek).
\textsuperscript{379} “Kratkoe opisanie biografii menie nyedostojnago skhiepiskopa Piotra Ladygina” (MS written in Bishop Peter's own hand, 1948); Tserkovnaia Zhizn’, NN 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 1984; NN 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 1985.
\end{footnotes}
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Just as the ascetic name-worshippers of Mount Athos wished to identify the Divinity with a created name, so the decadent artists of the Symbolist movement in Russia wanted to capture the Divinity in artistic symbols. For them, symbolism took the place of religion; it was a new kind of religion, the religion of symbol-worshipping. “In the Symbolist aesthetic,” as J.W. Burrow writes, “the intense focusing on the thing taken as a symbol, the perception of its numinous aura, gave access to another, as it were, parallel, invisible world of light and ecstasy.” 381

This “parallel, invisible world of light and ecstasy” was demonic. Thus the Symbolist painter Michael Vrubel achieved fame with a large mosaic-like canvas called “Seated Demon” (1890), and went mad while working on the dynamic and sinister “Demon Downcast” (1902). 382

Symbolist ideas are most vividly expressed in the music and thought of the composer Alexander Scriabin, who in his First Symphony praised art as a kind of religion. Le Divin Poème (1902-1904) sought to express the evolution of the human spirit from pantheism to unity with the universe. Poème de l’extase (1908) was accompanied by the elaborately selected colour projections on a screen. In Scriabin’s synthetic performances music, poetry, dancing, colours, and scents were used so as to bring about supreme, final ecstasy. In 1909, after a spell in Paris with the impresario Diaghilev, Scriabin returned to Russia permanently, where he continued to compose, working on increasingly grandiose projects. For some time before his death he had planned a multi-media work to be performed in the Himalayas, that would bring about Armageddon, “a grandiose religious synthesis of all arts which would herald the birth of a new world.” 383

Similar ideas to Scriabin’s on the stage fusion of all arts were elaborated by the poet Andrej Bely and the painter Vassily Kandinsky, who, like so many creative artists of the time, was a Theosophist. 384

Another of Diaghilev’s composer-protégés, Sergei Prokofiev, was also influenced by Symbolism - and Mary Baker Eddy’s Christian Science. Among the propositions of his theory of creative action were: “1. I am the expression of Life, i.e. of divine activity. 2. I am the expression of spirit, which gives me power to resist what is unlike spirit… 9. I am the expression of perfection, and this leads me to the perfect use of my time…” 385

These strivings for mangodhood – in defiance of the only God-Man - among Russia’s creative intelligentsia were associated by them with a revolutionary future that rejected the past more or less totally. Hence the brief fashion for the European movement of Futurism with its radical rejection of the past and all past and present

ideas of what is beautiful and tasteful and its glorification of war. “War,” said the Italian Futurist and future fascist Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, “is the sole hygiene of the world.”

The futurist obsession with the imagery of restless, continual movement was akin to Trotsky’s idea of permanent revolution - early Soviet culture was similarly obsessed with machine imagery. As Nicholas Berdiaev wrote: “Just as pious mystics once strove to make themselves into an image of God, and finally to become absorbed in Him, so now the modern ecstacies of rationalism labour to become like the machine and finally to be absorbed into bliss in a structure of driving belts, pistons, valves and fly-wheels…” Fr. George Florovsky described this aesthetic-revolutionary experience as utopian and a kind of “cosmic possession”: “The feelings of unqualified dependence, of complete determination from without and full immersion and inclusion into the universal order define utopianism’s estimate of itself and the world. Man feels himself to be an ‘organic pin’, a link in some all-embracing chain – he feels unambiguously, irretrievably forged into one whole with the cosmos… From an actor and creator, consciously willing and choosing, and for that reason bearing the risk of responsibility for his self-definition, man is turned into a thing, into a needle, by which someone sews something. In the organic all-unity there is no place for action – here only movement is possible.”

In reality, however, these strivings were as unoriginal as the revolution itself proved to be. They were rather a sign that Russia’s future would consist, not in producing a radically new civilization, but in a catastrophic regression to her pre-Christian, pagan past. Indeed, some Russian Futurists, such as Vladimir Mayakovsky and Kazimir Malevich, joined Soviet Agritprop after the revolution.

The pagan essence of Futurism is most evident in perhaps the most shocking of all the works of Russian art in the period: Igor Stravinsky’s ballet, The Rite of Spring. As Oliver Figes writes, “the idea of the ballet was originally conceived by the painter Nikolai Roerich… a painter of the prehistoric Slavs and an accomplished archaeologist in his own right. He was absorbed in the rituals of neolithic Russia, which he idealized as a pantheistic realm of spiritual beauty where life and art were one, and man and nature lived in harmony. Stravinsky approach Roerich for a theme and he came to visit him at the artists’ colony of Talashkino, where the two men worked together on the scenario of ‘The Great Sacrifice’, as The Rite of Spring was originally called. The ballet was conceived as a re-creation of the ancient pagan rite of

386 As Rosamund Bartlett writes, in 1913 “the Futurists declared in their manifesto A Slap in the Face of Public Taste that they wished to throw ‘Pushkin, Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy etc. etc.’ overboard from the ship of modernity” (Tolstoy, A Russian Life, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011, p. 374).
391 Exactly 100 years later, the Mariinsky Theatre Ballet under Valery Gergiev recreated Nijinsky’s notorious production of 1913 in the same location, Paris. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BryIIC9QpXwI.
human sacrifice. It was meant to be that rite – not to tell the story of the ritual but (short of actual murder) to re-create that ritual on the stage and thus communicate in the most immediate way the ecstasy and terror of the human sacrifice...

“Artistically, the ballet strived for ethnographic authenticity. Roerich’s costumes were drawn from peasant clothes in Tenisheva’s collection at Talashkino. His primitivist sets were based on archaeology. Then there was Nijinsky’s shocking choreography - the real scandal of the ballet’s infamous Paris première at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées on 29 May 1913. For the music was barely heard at all in the commotion, the shouting and the fighting, which broke out in the auditorium when the curtain first went up. Nijinsky had choreographed movements which were ugly and angular. Everything about the dancers’ movements emphasized their weight instead of their lightness, as demanded by the principles of classical ballet. Rejecting all the basic positions, the ritual dancers had their feet turned inwards, elbows clutched to the sides of their body and their palms held flat, like the wooden dolls that were so prominent in Roerich’s mythic paintings of Scythian Russia. They were orchestrated, not by steps and notes, as in conventional ballets, but rather moved as one collective mass to the violent off-beat rhythms of the orchestra. The dancers pounded their feet on the stage, building up a static energy which finally exploded, with electrifying force, in the sacrificial dance. This rhythmic violence was the vital innovation of Stravinsky’s score. Like most of the ballet’s themes, it was taken from the music of the peasantry. There was nothing like these rhythms in Western art music (Stravinsky said that he did not really known how to notate or bar them) – a convulsive pounding of irregular downbeats, requiring constant changes in the metric signature with almost every bar so that the conductor of the orchestra must throw himself about and wave his arms in jerky motions, as if performing a shamanic dance. In these explosive rhythms it is possible to hear the terrifying beat of the Great War and the Revolution of 1917…”392

In 1911, a Christian boy, Andrew Yuschinsky, was killed in Kiev. In connection with this, the trial took place, in 1913, of a Jew named Beilis, which became an international cause célèbre. The verdict of the court was that the boy had been ritually murdered. However, Beilis himself was acquitted (because witnesses and jurors were suborned, according to many). In order to understand the significance of this trial, it is necessary briefly to review the roots of “the Jewish question” in Russia and of the so-called Jewish “blood libel”.

By 1914 there were about seven million Jews in the Russian empire – the largest non-Slavic ethnic minority. Most of them lived in the Pale of Settlement, a very large area in the west of Russia approximately the size of France and Germany combined. Russian law, very loosely observed, confined them to this area, but on religious, not racial grounds - the sacred book of the Jews, the Talmud, is so hostile to Christ and Christians that those who follow it were deemed to be a threat to the lives and livelihoods of Christians. That these restrictions were indeed religious and not racial is proved by the fact that the Karaite Jews, who did not accept the Talmud, the Mountain Jews of the Caucasus, who were strongly tainted with paganism, and Jews who became Christians of any denomination, were given equal rights with the rest of the population.

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

In spite of the considerable opportunities thus presented to Jews in the Russian Empire, the traditionalist, rabbi-dominated Talmudic Jews of the Pale continued to think of Christians and Christian society as unclean and despicable. “The eminent Jewish-Russian lawyer, Genrikh Sliozberg," write Kyril Fitzlyon and Tatiana Browning, "never forgot the 'real grief' of his family and relations when they discovered that his father had sent him to a Russian grammar school. His school uniform they found particularly irritating, sinful even. It was, they thought, 'an apostate's garb', and his mother and grandmother cried bitterly every time they saw him in it.' Again, 'the Russian-Jewish revolutionary, Lev Deutsch, writing in 1923, clearly remembered the time when the Jews 'considered it sinful to learn Russian,

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393 See M.V. Danilushkin, *Istoria Russkoj Prawoslavnoj Tserkvi, 1917-70* (A History of the Russian Orthodox Church, 1917-70, St. Petersburg, 1997, vol. 1, pp. 784-793; Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *Dvesti let vnesto* (Two Hundred Years Together) (1795-1995), part 1, Moscow: “Russkij Put’”, 2001, pp. 444-451. 394 “Let us remember,” writes Solzhenitsyn: “the legal restrictions on the Jews in Russia were never racial [as they were in Western Europe]. They were applied neither to the Karaites [who rejected the Talmud], nor to the mountain Jews, nor to the Central Asian Jews.” (op. cit., p. 292).
and its use was allowed only if absolutely essential and, of course, only for speaking to Christians (the *goyim*).\(^{395}\)

It was in this fanatical atmosphere that both Communist and Zionist propaganda made inroads into Jewish youth. As Chaim Weitzmann recalled in his *Autobiography*, zealots of both types were to be found in his own family, being united only in their hatred of Orthodox Russia.\(^{396}\) Such sentiments were bound to lead to a reaction on the part of the surrounding population. Moreover, Jewish money-lenders exploited Russian peasants who wished to buy their freedom after Alexander II’s emancipation of the serfs in 1861. The government tried to help with generous, low-interest loans, and on several occasions cancelled the debts outright; but the remaining need was filled by less generous Jews, who stepped in with much tougher, high-interest loans.

The pogroms of the oppressed Ukrainian peasantry against the oppressor Jewish money-lenders provided the excuse which international Jewry, together with its “Christian” front, the secularised intelligentsia of Russia and the West, needed. Soon a vast campaign was being whipped up against “the sick man of Europe”, the so-called “prison of the peoples”. Jewish and Socialist propaganda distorted the significance of these events, obscuring their causes, hiding the extremely provocative behaviour of Jewish gangs, and quite unjustly accusing the Church and the State, and in particular the Tsar, of complicity in these crimes.

The innocence of the government and Tsar is illustrated by their reaction to the assassination by the Jewish revolutionary Bogrov of Prime Minister A.A. Stolypin in Kiev Opera House in 1911. Robert Massie writes: “Because Bogrov was a Jew, the Orthodox population was noisily preparing a retaliatory pogrom. Frantic with fear, the city’s Jewish population spent the night packing their belongings. The first light of the following day found the square before the railway station jammed with carts and people trying to squeeze themselves on to departing trains. Even as they waited, the terrified people heard the clatter of hoofs. An endless stream of Cossacks, their long lances dark against the dawn sky, rode past. On his own, Kokovtsev had ordered three full regiments of Cossacks into the city to prevent violence. Asked on what authority he had issued the command, Kokovtsov replied: ‘As head of the government.’ Later, a local official came up to the Finance Minister to complain, ‘Well, Your Excellency, by calling in the troops you have missed a fine chance to answer Bogrov’s shot with a nice Jewish pogrom.’ Kokovtsov was indignant, but, he added, ‘his sally suggested to me that the measures which I had taken at Kiev were not sufficient… therefore I sent an open telegram to all governors of the region demanding that they use every possible means – force if necessary – to prevent possible pogroms. When I submitted this telegram to the Tsar, he expressed his approval of it and of the measure I had taken in Kiev.’”\(^{397}\)

In 1906 the future Hieromartyr Fr. John Vostorgov said: “The Jews are restricted in their rights of residence not as a confessional unit, but as a predatory tribe that is dangerous in the midst of the peaceful population because of its exploitative

inclinations, which... have found a religious sanction and support in the Talmud... Can such a confession be tolerated in the State, when it allows its followers to practise hatred and all kinds of deceit and harm towards other confessions, and especially Christians? ... The establishment of the Pale of Settlement is the softest of all possible measures in relation to such a confession. Moreover, is it possible in this case not to take account of the mood of the masses? But this mood cannot be changed only by issuing a law on the complete equality of rights of the Jews. On the contrary, this can only strengthen the embitterment of the people.”

Now stories of ritual murder of Christian children by Jews have surfaced in many countries in many ages, leading to many formal trials and convictions. These are completely dismissed by western authors, who speak about the “blood libel” against the Jews. However, in 2007 the Israelite Professor Ariel Toaff, the son of the Chief Rabbi of Rome, published Confirming Judaic Ritual Murder, in which he confirms the practice in medieval Italy. Moreover, the Orthodox Church has canonized at least one victim of such a murder, Child-Martyr Gabriel of Zverki, Belorussia, to whom Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) wrote a service in 1908.

In 1855 Bishop Porphyrius (Uspensky) of Chigirinsk wrote to the director of the Department of foreign confessions, Khruschev: “Just as the Christian peoples have

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399 http://www.revisionisthistory.org/page10.page10.html. Lisa Palmieri-Billig (“Historian gives credence to blood libel”, The Jerusalem Post, February 7 and 8, 2007) writes: “An Israeli historian of Italian origin has revived ‘blood libel’ in an historical study set to hit Italian bookstores on Thursday. Ariel Toaff, son of Rabbi Elio Toaff, claims that there is some historic truth in the accusation that for centuries provided incentives for pogroms against Jews throughout Europe.

“...Toaff’s tome, Bloody Passovers: The Jews of Europe of Ritual Murders, received high praise from another Italian Jewish historian, Sergio Luzzatto, in an article in the Corriere della Serra entitled ‘Those Bloody Passovers’.

“Luzzatto describes Toaff’s work as a ‘magnificent book of history... Toaff holds that from 1100 to about 1500... several crucifixions of Christian children really happened, bringing about retaliations against entire Jewish communities – punitive massacres of men, women, children. Neither in Trent in 1475 nor in other areas of Europe in the late Middle Ages were Jews always innocent victims.’

‘...A minority of fundamentalist Ashkenazis... carried out human sacrifices,’ Luzzatto continued.

“...Toaff offers as an example the case of Saint Simonino of Trent in March 1475, shortly after a child’s body was found in a canal near the Jewish area of Trent, the city’s Jews were accused of murdering Simonino and using his blood to make mazot.

“After a medieval trial in which confessions were extracted by torture, 16 members of Trent’s Jewish community were hanged.

“...Toaff reveals that the accusations against the Jews of Trent ‘might have been true’.

“...Toaff refers to kabbalistic descriptions of the therapeutic uses of blood and asserts that ‘a black market flourished on both sides of the Alps, with Jewish merchants selling human blood, complete with rabbinic certification of the product – kosher blood.’

400 S.V. Bulgakov, Nastol’naia Kniga dlya Sovashchenno-Tserkovno-Sluzhitelia (Handbook for Church Servers), Kharkov, 1900, p. 143. It is significant that in 1919 the Bolsheviks banned the chanting of hymns to the Child-Martyr Gabriel, whose relics reposed in the church of St. Basil the Blessed on Red Square (Vladimir Rusak, Pir Satany (Satan’s Feast), London, Ontario: Zarya, 1991, p. 13).

For ritual murders demonstrated in court, see Dal’, V. Rozyskanie o ubytienii evreev khristianskich mladentsev i upotrebenii krovi ikh (Investigation into the Killing by Jews of Christian Children and the Use of their Blood), St. Petersburg, 1844; Rozanov, V. Oboniatel’noe i osyazatel’noe otnoshenie evreev k krovi (The Senses of Smell and Touch of the Jews towards Blood), St. Petersburg, 1913; O. Platonov, Ternovij venets Rossii (Russia’s Crown of Thorns), Moscow, 1998.
retained many pagan superstitions, so the Jews – it goes without saying, not all of them – continue to shed the blood of children and youths who are not of their tribe according to very ancient tradition, which points to the redemption of their whole race in a bloody human sacrifice… In the East everyone is convinced that the killing of Christian boys by the Jews is ordered in such a way that this evil is accomplished in one year in Thessalonica, for example, in another in Damascus, in a third in Spain, or Russia, or Wallachia, etc., and that the towels soaked in the blood of the unfortunate victim are burned, and their ashes are scattered to all the synagogues so that they can be baked into the paschal bread… Judge, after this, how difficult it is to catch the terrible crime… I sorrow over the existence of such a horror among the Jews… And Jews have penetrated onto Athos, and one of them in the rank of hieromonk and spiritual father killed monks coming to him for confession, and hid their corpses under his floor…”

It is the tendency of pro-semitic authors to dismiss all this as “anti-semitic lies”. However, even if all the historical evidence of Jewish atrocities could be dismissed, it would be surprising indeed if a religion steeped in such hatred against Christ and Christians as Talmudic Judaism did not produce acts of hatred. As long as incitement to such acts exists in the “sacred” book of the Judaistic religion, there must be a presumption that some of its followers may be tempted to carry them out.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that Christians also acted with hatred and committed atrocities, as in the pogroms in the Rhineland in 1096 or in Spain leading to the expulsion of all the Jews from Spain in 1492, or in Russia before the revolution. Hatred of enemies is forbidden by the Gospel of Christ; so such acts, whether or not they were provoked by hatred on the Jews’ side, cannot be condoned. But the justified horror at Christian antisemitism which has become so de rigeur in the modern world, must always be balanced by a similar horror at the antigentilism and antichristianity of the Talmud, the most hateful of all “sacred” books.

Over a hundred well-documented cases of the murder of Christian children by the Jews for ritual purposes in various countries are cited by Oleg Platonov. Especially important is the evidence of Monk Neophytus, who was until the age of 38 a Jewish rabbi but then joined the Greek Church. He exposed, not only the real existence of this horrific practice, but also the religious rationale behind it. His book, entitled A Refutation of the Religion of the Jews and their Rites from the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, originally appeared in Moldavian in 1803 and was translated into Russian in 1913, the year of the Beilis trial:–

“The secret use of blood, which the Jews collect from Christians killed by them is a rite which they consider to have been commanded by God Himself and indicated in certain mysterious expressions in the Scriptures.

“Many scholars have written works aimed at proving, with the help of the Bible, the appearance of the true Messiah promised by God to our fathers, Who is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the All-Pure Virgin Mary. An innumerable quantity of works have also been written to refute the superstitious beliefs of the Jews and their false beliefs...”

teachings. Many of these authors were native Jews who converted to the Christian Faith. Meanwhile, nobody has yet published anything serious concerning this barbaric mystery of blood, which is kept and used by the synagogue. If some book hinting at this mystery happens to fall into the hands of Christians, and they make reference to it, the Jews never reply in any other way than with feigned mockery or evasions, like the following: ‘But how would we kill Christians if the law forbids us to eat blood?’

“In my opinion, the reason preventing the Jews, even those converted to Christianity, from clearly exposing this is hidden either in the fact that they really were not initiated into the mystery, or in the fact that they still foolishly pity our unfortunate people, and fear to attract to it the powerful vengeance of the Christian peoples.

“But I, having by the mercy of God received Holy Baptism and monasticism, have no fear, in the interest of Christians, to declare everything that I know about these rites, which I myself zealously carried out and kept in the strictest secrecy all the time that I was a haham, or rabbi.

“But first of all it is necessary to explain that the mystery of blood is not known to all Jews, but only to the hahams, or rabbis, the scribes, or Pharisees, who for that reason are called the keepers of the mystery of the blood – a mystery which, moreover, is not contained in clear words in any of their books and which they pass on exclusively by oral tradition.

“The fathers of families initiated into the mystery pass it on only to that one of their sons whose secrecy they have tested. Also, they insist that he is obliged to pass on the mystery only under those condition and in that form, and that he should never disclose it to a Christian, even in the cruellest woes, and even for the saving of life. This revelation is accompanied by the most terrifying curses on anyone who gives away the secret. Here, for example, is how I was initiated into it myself.

“When I reached the age of thirteen, the age at which the Jews have the custom of laying a wreath called the wreath of glory on the heads of their sons, my father went apart with me and had a long talk with me, instilling hatred for the Christians into me as a duty laid down by God. This hatred was to go as far as killing them. Then he told me of the custom of collecting the blood of the murdered, and he added, embracing me: ‘So, my son, in this way I have made you confidant and as it were my second I.’ Then he put the wreath on my head and in great detail explained to me the mystery of the blood as the holiest of the holies and the important rite of the Jewish religion. ‘My son,’ he continued, ‘I adjure you by all the elements of heaven and earth always to keep this secret in your heart and not to entrust it to anyone, neither your brothers, nor your sisters, not your mother, nor, later, your wife, - not to any mortal, and especially women. If God gives you even eleven grown sons, do not reveal the secret to all of them, but only to one – the one whom you recognise to be the cleverest and the most capable of keeping the secret, just as I am now acting with you. You must take great car that this son of yours should be devoted and zealous for our faith. Once more I adjure you: beware of trusting women, even your daughters, your
wife and your mother, but trust only the son whom you consider worthy of trust.’ ‘O my son,’ he cried finally, ‘may the whole earth refuse to accept your corpse and thrust you out from its depths, if, even in conditions of the most extreme necessity, you reveal this secret of blood to anyone besides him of whom I have spoken. Even if you become a Christian for the sake of profit or for other reasons. See that you do not betray your father by giving away this divine secret which I have revealed to you today. Otherwise may my curse strike you at the very hour at which you sin, and may it accompany you all the days of your life until death and to the ages of ages.’

“May the Father Whom I have acquired in heaven and Who is the Lord Jesus Christ turn away these curses from the head of him who writes exclusively for the sake of the benefit of the Church and the triumph of the Truth.

“The bases of this barbaric custom are the following: 1) hatred for Christians, 2) superstition, and 3) faith in the spiritual reality of Christian blood. I shall explain each of these points.

“On the first reason, which is hatred for Christians.

“The Jews as it were from their mother’s breast instil hatred of Christianity into their sons from the earliest childhood. On receiving these convictions from their fathers over a whole series of generations, they are really and sincerely convinced that to despise Christians and even to kill them is very pleasing to God, thereby exactly justifying the words of Divine redemption: ‘everyone who kills you will think that he is thereby serving God’ (John 16.20).

“On the second reason, which is superstition.

“The second reason is based on the superstitious beliefs which the Jews hold and which relate to the sphere of magic, sorcery, the kabbala and other mysterious rites. They believe that Christian blood is necessary for these diabolical operations. Out of all these superstitions I will indicate only one, which concerns the curse of God that fell on the unhappy people of Israel and which was prophesied by Moses himself in the following expressions: ‘the Lord will strike you with Egyptian leprosy… a foul leprosy on the knees and shins from which you will not be able to be healed’ (Deuteronomy 28.27, 35).

“This terrible illness always was and is very common among the Jews – much more common than they think... And when the haham visits the sick who have been struck down by it, and gives them medicines, he at the same time sprinkles them with Christian blood, if he has any, as the only means of healing...

“On the third and principal reason, which is the faith of the Jews in the spiritual reality of Christian blood.

“The main reason which compels the Jews to kill Christians and collect their blood is the faith, secretly preserved especially by the hahams, or rabbis, that Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary from Nazareth, who was condemned by our ancestors to death on
the Cross, is, in all probability, the true Messiah who was for so long expected and invoked by the patriarchs and prophets. There are enough prophecies to convince them of this; especially important is the passage from Jeremiah: ‘Be amazed, O heavens, tremble and be seized with horror, says the Lord, for two evils have My people committed: they have abandoned Me, the source of living water, and have cut out for themselves broken cisterns which cannot hold water’ (Jeremiah 2.12,13).

“This prophecy is well-known and is understood in its true meaning by many rabbis, as it was very well known by Annas and Caiaphas. But, like them, from pride and hardness of heart, the rabbis do not want to recognise it, and therefore, resorting to pitiful interpretations, they have composed new rules – a real parody on the most important mysteries of the Church, so as to be saved by Christian blood, in which they see the blood of the Messiah Himself.

“In consequence of their conviction... the Jews use Christian blood at circumcision, which represents baptism; at marriage, which corresponds to this mystery among the Christians; in the unleavened bread of Pascha, which represents the Eucharist; at burials, imitating holy unction; in their lament over the destruction of Jerusalem, which represents the mystery of repentance. This is the basis of the secret, which I knew and sometimes applied with extraordinary zeal. I shall stop on each of these explanations.

“Marriage. When a marriage is concluded between Jews, the bride and bridegroom prepare for it with a strict fast for 24 hours, abstaining even from water until the setting of the sun. It is then that the rabbi appears. He takes a just-boiled egg, removes the shell and divides it in half. Then he sprinkles it, not with salt, but with a special ash, which I will say more about later. He gives half of this sprinkled egg to each spouse.

“Let us now say what this ash is. It is used not instead of salt, but instead of fresh Christian blood, being in actual fact changed Christian blood. It is precisely with the blood left over from the sacrifices carried out for the feast of unleavened bread, the more the better, that the rabbis infuse a corresponding quantity of flax or cotton thread, then they dry it and burn it. The ash is kept in bottles that are carefully sealed and given to the synagogue’s treasurer. The latter distributes it gradually to the rabbis who ask for it, or for their own use, or for sending to those countries where it is impossible to obtain Christian blood, whether because there are no Christians there or because the police have been roused to be more watchful and the Christians more careful.

“In any case, fresh blood is always preferable, but it is necessary only for the unleavened bread, and in the case of insurmountable obstacles the indicated dark ash represents an acceptable substitute.

“Circumcision. A rabbi also appears for the circumcision of children on the eighth day after birth. He puts into a cup some of the best wine he can get hold of and pours one drop of Christian blood into it. It has been collected from torture, but if that is not available, some of the above-mentioned ash is used, into which a drop of the blood of
the circumcised child is added. When this is well mixed with the wine, the rabbi immerses the finger of the child into the cup and says: ‘I declare to you, child: your life is in your blood.’ And he twice repeats this rite and these words.

“Here is a superstitious explanation which the rabbis give for this ceremony amongst themselves. The Prophet Ezekiel twice said: “‘Live in your blood!’” Thus I say to you: “Live in your blood!”’ (Ezekiel 16.6). By these words the prophet perhaps wanted to indicate the blood of Jesus Christ, Who freed from bonds the souls of the holy fathers who did not receive a water baptism; and in such a case the souls of the Jews, although also themselves deprived of the water of baptism, will be saved by the blood of a Christian baptised in water. But one of the reasons why this blood must be collected amidst the cruel sufferings of the victim is precisely the necessity of representing thereby the Passion of Christ. On the contrary, if the Prophet Ezekiel wanted to speak only about every man’s blood of circumcision, then the Jewish child will be saved by the power of the single drop of blood mixed by the rabbi in the wine with the Christian blood. What a pitiful nation!

“The anniversary of the taking of Jerusalem. The Jews again use the ash of which I have spoken on the ninth day of July, when they weep over the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. On this anniversary they use it in two ways: first, they wipe their forehead with it, which they thought would be unseemly to do with fresh blood, and secondly, they sprinkle an egg with it, and on that day every son of Israel without exception must eat a hard-boiled egg sprinkled with this ash...

“Death. A haham immediately goes to the house of him of whose death he just learned. He takes the white of an egg, mixes into it some Christian blood and a little ash and puts this mixture into the breast of the corpse, uttering the supposed words of Ezekiel: ‘I shall sprinkle you with pure blood and you will be cleansed from all your filthiness’ (Ezekiel 36.25). Ezekiel, it is true, said, not ‘pure blood’, but ‘pure water’… But by dint of this corruption of the text the Jews convince themselves that the dead man will undoubtedly be admitted to paradise.

“The feasts of Pascha and Purim. These two feasts demand the same blood ritual.

“On paschal days the Jews must eat unleavened bread, small breads prepared only by hahams, into which Christian blood has been poured. Everyone, nobles and simple people, young and old, even those without teeth, must taste of this bread, even if it only a crumb the size of an olive...

“The feast of Purim was established in memory of the deliverance from the dominion of Haman by means of Esther and Mordecai, as this is recounted in the book of Esther. As is known, this feast comes in February. The initiated Jews are then occupied, wherever they can, with seizing as many Christians as possible, especially children. However, in this night they sacrifice only one, reproducing the torments of Haman. But for this reason, while the body is hanging, all those present cover it with thousands of insults, as if they were addressing Haman himself. The collected blood is poured out by the rabbi into flour that has already been dissolved with honey, from which he then makes small breads in the form of a triangle for the sake of
ridiculing the mystery of the Holy Trinity. These breads are meant, not for the Jews, but through boundless cunning they are distributed to the most eminent families, which must give them away - and these gifts are considered the height of kindness - to their friends from among the Christians. This rite is called the Bread of Purim.

“We should note that this rite does not require the application of too heavy tortures to the victim precisely because the collected blood does not have any other purpose than the one I have indicated.

“The rest of kidnapped Christians, however, are kept in secret hiding-places until the day of Pascha, which comes shortly after Purim. At this time they are all offered in sacrifice in the cruellest and most barbaric manner, and they collect their blood partly for the unleavened bread and partly for other necessities which come up in the course of the year and have been indicated above. These torments at Pascha have a definite aim - to renew the sufferings of Christ, and for that reason they must be carried out mainly on children who through their innocence and virginity better symbolise the Saviour.

“In these depressing pourings out of blood the words of Jeremiah written in prophecy about the Jews are justified: ‘Even on the hems of your clothes is found the blood of poor innocent people’ (Jeremiah 2.34), and still better the words of Ezekiel: ‘You eat with blood... and shed blood’ (Ezekiel 33.25). In consequence of these innumerable murders Israel was expelled from various states, in particular from Spain, thereby justifying another prophecy of Ezekiel: ‘Blood calls you to court’ (Ezekiel 30.6).”

Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky)'s attitude to Jewish blood rituals in general, and the Beilis trial in particular, was expressed in an interview he gave to A. Chizhevsky. After reminding his readers of how, at the request of Rabbi Skomorovsky, he had twice, in 1903 and 1905, spoken up against the antisemite pogroms in Zhitomir, he went on: “But in both of the above-mentioned cases of my conversation with the rabbi, I decisively refused to say that I did not recognize the existence of ritual murders carried out by Jews, but on the contrary I expressed to my interlocutor my conviction that these murders exist, perhaps as belonging to one or another sect of the Jewish religion, perhaps as a secret of the highest spiritual government of the Jews, but there undoubtedly have been cases of ritual murders both in recent times and in antiquity.

“When my Jewish academic acquaintances pointed to the fact that Jewish law forbids the drinking of the blood even of animals, so that the thought of their mixing Christian blood with the paschal matza was absurd, I replied that what seemed more probable to me was the link between the ritual killings and, not the Jewish feast of Pascha, but the feast that precedes it of ‘Purim’, in which the story of Esther, Haman and Mordecai is remembered, when the Persian king, having executed the enemy of the Jews, Haman, allowed them, who had not long before been condemned to general killing, to kill their enemies themselves. Purim in 1911 [the year of the ritual

402 Platonov, op. cit, pp. 748-754.
killing of Andrew Yuschinsky] took place on March 14 and 15, while the Jewish Pascha was from March 15-18…

“Already in deep antiquity the Jews were causing various disorders against various symbols hostile to them during this feast. Thus in 408 and 412 the Byzantine emperor issued two special decrees forbidding the Jews from celebrating Purim and mocking Christian crosses instead of Haman. I think that Christian children were also killed on this feast...” 403

The Beilis trial polarized Russian society and, through the Jewish press, had international ramifications. Liberal opinion throughout the world pilloried Russia, which was now the country, supposedly, not only of the cruellest tyranny and retrograde religion, but also of systematic persecution and slander of the Jews. Unfortunately, these criticisms, though unjust 404, helped to create the very phenomenon they decried. Racial anti-semitism, as opposed to religious anti-Judaism and anti-Talmudism, had been rare in Russia – rarer than in most western countries. But in the decade that followed the Beilis trial, under the stress of war and revolution and the undoubted fact that the revolution was led mainly by Jews, real anti-semitism took root in Russia during the Civil War, with massacres far exceeding anything seen in the times of the tsars...

403 Archbishop Anthony, in Zhizn’ Volynii (The Life of Volhynia), N 221, 2 September, 1913.
404 As regards freedom, it is a paradoxical but true fact that Russia in the last decades before the revolution was one of the freest countries in the world. Thus Duma deputy Baron A.D. Meyendorff admitted: “The Russian Empire was the most democratic monarchy in the world” (Lebedev, op. cit., p. 405). This view was echoed by foreign observers, such as Sir Maurice Baring: “There is no country in the world, where the individual enjoys so great a measure of personal liberty, where the ‘liberté de moeurs’ is so great, as in Russia; where the individual man can do as he pleases with so little interference or criticism on the part of his neighbours, where there is so little moral censorship, where liberty of abstract thought or aesthetic production is so great.” (in Eugene Lyons, Our Secret Allies, 1953).
Let us look more closely at the philosophy of the radical intelligentsia. And let us begin by examining a definition of socialism. Richard Pipes writes: “Socialism is commonly thought of as a theory which aims at a fairer distribution of wealth for the ultimate purpose of creating a free and just society. Indisputably this is the stated program of socialists. But behind this program lurks an even more ambitious goal, which is creating a new type of human being. The underlying premise is the idea of Helvétius that by establishing an environment which makes social behaviour a natural instinct, socialism will enable man to realize his potential to the fullest. This, in turn, will make it possible, ultimately, to dispense with the state and the compulsion which is said to be its principal attribute. All socialist doctrines, from the most moderate to the most extreme, assume that human beings are infinitely malleable because their personality is the product of the economic environment: a change in that environment must, therefore, alter them as well as their behaviour.

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

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

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

But where does this hatred come from? Further insight into this question is gained by studying a collection of articles written by a group of converts from socialism and published in 1909 under the title Vekhi (Landmarks), which criticized the revolutionary credo of the intelligentsia from several points of view. One of the contributors, the philosopher, Simeon Ludwigovich Frank, wrote: “The Symbol of Faith of the Russian intelligent is the good of the people, the satisfaction of the needs of ‘the majority’. The service of this aim is for him the highest and in general the only duty of man, and what is more than this is of the evil one. It is precisely for this reason that he not only simply denies or does not accept other values – he even directly fears and hates them. One cannot serve two gods at the same time, and if God, as Maxim Gorky had already openly made known, was ‘the essence of the people’s soul’, then all the other gods were false gods, idols or devils. Activity guided by love for science or art, life overshadowed by a religious light in the direct sense, that is, communion with God, all this distracts from service to the people, weakens or destroys moralistic enthusiasm and signifies, from the point of view of the intelligent’s faith, a dangerous hunting after mirages. Therefore all this is rejected, partly as stupidity or ‘superstition’, partly as an immoral direction of the will. This, of course, does not mean that the Russian intelligentsia is in fact alien to scientific, aesthetic and religious interests and experiences. It is impossible to kill the spirit and its inveterate demands, and it is natural that living people who have clothed their soul in the moral uniform of the ‘intelligent’ should retain in themselves all the feelings intrinsic to man. But these feelings live in the soul of the Russian intelligent in approximately the same way as the feeling of pity for an enemy lives in the soul of a warrior, or as the striving for the free play of fantasy in the consciousness of a strictly scientific thinker: they live precisely as an unlawful, albeit ineradicable weakness, as something in the best case merely tolerable. Scientific, aesthetic and religious experiences are always referred here, so to speak, to the private, intimate life of a man; more tolerant people look on them as a luxury, an amusement for hours of leisure, as a sweet eccentricity; the less tolerant condemn them in others and hide them with shame in themselves. But the intelligent, as an intelligent, that is, in his conscious faith and public activity, must be alien to them – his world-view and his ideal are hostile to these sides of human life. From science he takes several popularized, distorted or ad hoc positions, and although he often prides himself in the ‘scientificness’ of his faith, he also rejects scientific criticism with annoyance, as well as all the pure, disinterested work of scientific thought; while aesthetics and religion are completely unnecessary for him. All this – pure science, and art, and religion – is incompatible with moralism, with the service of the people; all this relies on love for objective values and, consequently, is alien, and for that reason also hostile, to that utilitarian faith which the Russian intelligent confesses. The religion of the service of earthly needs and the religion of the service of ideal values strike

405 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 135-137.
against each other, and however complex and varied their irrational psychological interweaving in the soul of the intelligent, in the sphere of the intelligent’s consciousness their conflict leads to the complete annihilation and expulsion of ideal demands in the name of the integrity and purity of the moralistic faith.

“Nihilistic moralism is the fundamental and most profound trait of the spiritual physiognomy of the Russian intelligent: from the denial of objective values there proceeds the deification of the subjective interests of one’s neighbour (‘the people’), hence there follows the recognition that the highest and only task of man is the service of the people, and hence in its turn there follows ascetic hatred for everything that hinders or even merely does not assist the realization of this task. Life has no other objective, inner meaning; its only good is to be materially provided for, to be satisfied in one’s subjective demands; therefore man is bound to devote all his strength to the amelioration of the lot of the majority, and everything that distracts from this is evil and must be mercilessly rooted out – that is the strange, logically badly founded, but psychologically strongly welded together chain of judgements that rules the whole behaviour and all the valuations of the Russian intelligent. Nihilism and moralism, lack of faith and a fanatical severity of moral demands, and a lack of principle in a metaphysical sense – for nihilism is also the denial of principled demands, it is an idiosyncratic, rationally unfathomable and at the same time in real life a strong merging together of antagonistic motives into a powerful psychical force. And it is that frame of mind which we call nihilistic moralism.”

If we look more closely at the nature and origins of this atheistic but moralistic, rationalistic but at the same time quasi-mystic faith of the Russian intelligentsia we may find it in the Jewish chiliasm of the early Christian centuries. Thus Lev Alexandrovich Tikhomirov, who in the 1870s was still a revolutionary, but who later repented and became an ardent monarchist, wrote: “In spite of the seeming irreligiousness of the 19th century, in its most passionate dreams it is reminiscent of a moment not so much of cold unbelief, as of an error of religious thought, Jewish messianism or the Christian chiliasm that was born from it. The idea of earthly all-blessedness, whether it is expressed in the expectation of ‘the sensible kingdom of Christ’ or of a sorrowless ‘future order’ in the most various of philosophies, grows on the soil of one and the same psychology. The new chiliasm has consciously abandoned religion. But this difference is not as decisive as it seems. The very dreams about an earthly blessedness are already a rebuke to the weakness of spiritual feeling. On the other hand, the unconscious feeling which makes our rationally unbelieving revolutionaries, not simple epicureans, but fanatical dreamers about their future sorrowless order, bear unmistakeable signs of the spiritual strivings of an erring religious quest…

“One may even now foresee some features of a future mystical anarchism, which is still thought now by the revolutionaries to be sick and illogical, but – as in Count L. Tolstoy, for example, - is already making itself talked about, and not only in Russia…

406 Frank, “Etika nigilizma” (The Ethics of Nihilism), in Vekhi (Landmarks), Moscow, 1909, pp. 183-185.
“It is not the inadequacies of the old order, but an insuperable dream about the new order that was and will remain the moving power of the revolution…”

“There is nothing that can be done against further corruption until people understand the source of the mistake.

“This mistake consists in the concept of the autonomy of the personality. The false teaching of its supposed autonomy appears first of all as a result of its rebellion against God. Being left without God, and in this condition feeling itself to be autonomous, the personality at first tries to find a full satisfaction of its strivings in this earthly world. But this is impossible. The world is not capable of that. From here there begins the renunciation of the world in the form that it is according to these earthly laws. One after another there appear dreams of ‘the future order’. Trying these orders, the autonomous personality rejects them one after the other, intensifying its rejection of the real world more and more…”407

“Among us revolutionary destruction constitutes the faith, hope and duty of every good radical. Everything that is rebellion, protest, overthrow is looked upon as something useful, containing the seed of progress. Destruction is considered still more useful if it is directed against the preservation of the existing order.”408

Frank also saw the desire for autonomy as lying at the root of the revolution: “Socialism is at the same time the culmination and the overthrow of liberal democracy. It is ruled by the same basic motive that rules the whole modern era: to make man and mankind the true master of his life, to present him with the possibility of ordering his own destiny on his own authority... Socialism is the last stride in the great rebellion of mankind and at the same time the result of its total exhaustion - the complete spiritual impoverishment of the prodigal son in the long centuries of his wandering far from his father's home and wealth."409

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

As Solzhenitsyn has said, “If only it were all so simple! If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the dividing line between

408 Tikhomirov, “Pochemu ia perestal byt’ revoliutsionerom” (Why I ceased to be a Revolutionary), in “Korni zla” (The Roots of Evil), Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia), N 7 (1412), April 1/14, 1990.
good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being, and who is willing to destroy his own heart?” If the line between good and evil passes, not between classes or nations, but down the middle of each human heart, it follows that the triumph of good over evil is possible only through the purification of the human heart, every human heart. And that is a spiritual task which is accomplished by spiritual, not material or political means, by confession of the faith and repentance of sin, not by rebellion against the king and the redistribution of property.

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

“Cosmic possession,” writes Fr. George Florovsky, “is how we can define the utopian experience. The feelings of unqualified dependence, of complete determination from without and full immersion and inclusion into the universal order define utopianism’s estimate of itself and the world. Man feels himself to be an ‘organic pin’, a link in some all-embracing chain – he feels unambiguously, irretrievably forged into one whole with the cosmos... From an actor and creator, consciously willing and choosing, and for that reason bearing the risk of responsibility for his self-definition, man is turned into a thing, into a needle, by which someone sews something. In the organic all-unity there is no place for action – here only movement is possible.”

As another contributor to Vekhi, Nicholas Berdyaev, wrote: “Just as pious mystics once strove to make themselves into an image of God, and finally to become absorbed in Him, so now the modern ecstacies of rationalism labour to become like the machine and finally to be absorbed into bliss in a structure of driving belts, pistons, valves and fly-wheels...”

The arguments of Vekhi had their effect. But still more important in quenching the self-confidence of the intelligentsia was the obvious success of the Tsar’s government, in the last decades before the revolution, in raising Russia’s standard of living and general effectiveness. For example, in St. Petersburg a congress of teachers –

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traditionally among the most revolutionary layers of the population – passed without any political demands or demonstrations. It even became fashionable to love your country and believe in it again...

For “the intelligentsia,” writes S.S. Oldenburg, “had lost faith in their former ideals. They already had doubts about materialism, about the ideas of the 18th and 19th centuries, even about the all-saving significance of the revolution, but they had as it were not decided to admit this to themselves. Moreover, this disillusion went very deep, it was reflected in the younger generation, among the students, even among the adolescents who were only beginning to live consciously. ‘The authority of the older generation has been lowered still more in the eyes of the younger than is usual among fathers and sons...’ wrote Professor V.I. Vernadsky in the Cadet Ezhegodnik of the newspaper Rech’ for 1914.

“The fall of the old intelligenty beliefs engendered, in the period around 1910, a wave of suicides among the young students. This wave then began to fall and be converted into religious searchings. In higher education, where politics had completely died out – not so much because of the energetic repressive measures of L.A. Kasso, but rather as a result of the change in mood among the students themselves, - various religious conversation circles began to appear – a hitherto unheard-of phenomenon...

“Russian society began to depart from the well-beaten track; it no longer preached atheism, materialism and socialism with its former fanatical conviction. But this change did not reach the broad, semi-intellectual masses. There, on the contrary, the sowing of the 19th century had only just put forth shoots; there the old dogmas were still considered unquestionable, and with the growth of literacy they quickly spread among the people...”413

Moreover, there were still many intelligenty who still clung stubbornly to the old, well-beaten track of rationalism. The most famous of these was Lev Tolstoy, who mistranslated the beginning of St. John’s Gospel as: “In the beginning was reasoning...”

In 1910, clinging to false reasoning and abandoning faith, he died, still unreconciled with God and the Church...

To Tolstoy’s sister, who was a nun, his voluntary rejection of the truth was revealed in a vision: “When I returned from the burial of my brother Sergius to my home in the monastery, I had some kind of dream or vision which shook me to the depths of my soul. After I had completed my usual cell rule, I began to doze off, or fell into some kind of special condition between sleep and waking, which we monastics call a light sleep. I dropped off, and beheld... It was night. There was the study of Lev Nikolayevich. On the writing desk stood a lamp with a dark lampshade. Behind the desk, and leaning with his elbows on it, sat Lev Nikolayevich, and on his face there was the mark of such serious thought, and such despair, as I had never

413 Oldenburg, Tsarstvovanie Imperatora Nikolaia II (The Reign of Emperor Nicholas II), Belgrade, 1939, vol. II, 121, 122.
seen in him before... The room was filled with a thick, impenetrable darkness; the only illumination was of that place on the table and on the face of Lev Nikolayevich on which the light of the lamp was falling. The darkness in the room was so thick, so impenetrable, that it even seemed as if it were filled, saturated with some materialisation... And suddenly I saw the ceiling of the study open, and from somewhere in the heights there began to pour such a blindingly wonderful light, the like of which cannot be seen on earth; and in this light there appeared the Lord Jesus Christ, in that form in which He is portrayed in Rome, in the picture of the holy Martyr and Archdeacon Laurence: the all-pure hands of the Saviour were spread out in the air above Lev Nikolayevich, as if removing from invisible executioners the instruments of torture. It looks just like that in the picture. And this ineffable light poured and poured onto Lev Nikolayevich. But it was as if he didn't see it... And I wanted to shout to my brother: Levushka, look, look up!... And suddenly, behind Lev Nikolayevich, - I saw it with terror, - from the very thickness of the darkness I began to make out another figure, a terrifying, cruel figure that made me tremble: and this figure, placing both its hands from behind over the eyes of Lev Nikolayevich, shut out that wonderful light from him. And I saw that my Levushka was making despairing efforts to push away those cruel, merciless hands...

“At this point I came to, and, as I came to, I heard a voice speaking as it were inside me: ‘The Light of Christ enlightens everyone!’”

The murder of Stolypin in September, 1911 introduced a dangerous element of instability and indecision into Russian foreign policy. Stolypin had stood for a policy of avoidance of war and the rapid building up of Russia’s financial and economic resources. His successor as prime minister, Kokovtsov, followed the same line, but lacked Stolypin’s authority in keeping his ministers in order – especially the War Minister Sukhomlinov, who, together with important military figures such as the Tsar’s uncle, Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievich, and some diplomats, advocated a belligerent, anti-German and pro-Serbian foreign policy. The Tsar himself, with his foreign minister Sazonov, wavered between the parties of peace and war (for that is what they amounted to). On the one hand, he recognized the enormous risks of allowing the extreme nationalism of the Balkan Orthodox to express itself unchecked. On the other hand, his sympathies were with Serbia, and the humiliation suffered at the hands of the Austrians in 1908-09 was still fresh in his mind. Indeed, it was just after that humiliation, in 1909, that a passionate nationalist, Nicholas Hartwig, was appointed Russian ambassador in Belgrade. “Hartwig, who was still there in 1914, was both forceful and energetic and rapidly won for himself a position of considerable influence in Serbia which he used to encourage Serbian nationalists in their aspirations to a Greater Serbia…”

Between 1907 and 1914, writes Lieven, “the outlines of a coalition between sections of Russia’s economic, political and intellectual élites based on a combination of liberal and nationalist ideas began to emerge. It encompassed a number of leading Moscow industrialists, some of Russia’s greatest liberal intellectuals and many Duma leaders. By 1914 this shadowy coalition had important friends in both the army and the bureaucracy. Prince Grigori Trubetskoy, who ran the Foreign Ministry’s department of Near Eastern and Balkan affairs, was closely linked to the Moscow industrialists and to Peter Struve, the leading intellectual spokesman for the coalition of the liberal-conservative and nationalist élites. Even Alexander Krivoshein, the Minister of Agriculture, was a potential ally of this coalition. His ministry, and indeed he himself, maintained cordial relations with the Duma and the zemstva. On the whole, they enjoyed a good press. And Krivoshein was not merely inclined towards pro-Slav nationalist sympathies, he had also married a daughter of one of Moscow’s leading industrialist families [the Morozovs]. It needs to be stressed that this coalition was still in embryo in 1907-9 and that Germany’s own aggressive policies played a role in bringing it to life in later years. Nevertheless the Germans were not wrong to watch Russian domestic developments with great concern in the pre-war era. The idea that the liberal-nationalist, anti-German and pro-Slav coalition represented the wave of the future was not unreasonable and was widely believed both in Russia and abroad…”

In the same fateful month of September, 1911 the long-expected carve-up of the Ottoman empire, “the sick man of Europe”, began. Italy, which had resented Austria’s annexation of Bosnia, decided to claim her share by invading Libya and the Dodecanese islands. Encouraged by this, the Balkan Orthodox States began

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416 Lieven, Nicholas II, pp. 191-192
preparing for war by rapidly rearming themselves. As a result, all fell deeply into debt to western arms manufacturers - the Serbs to French ones, the Bulgarians to German ones. They also made several bilateral agreements amongst themselves – first of all, the Serb-Bulgarian alliance of March, 1912.

Insofar as we can speak of a unified Russian foreign policy, we can say that the Russians were prepared to support a defensive alliance among the Balkan states in order to prevent an Austrian advance towards Salonica, and in order to keep the Straits open for the Russian export trade. But they were not prepared to support an offensive alliance that would finally destroy the Ottoman empire and lead, in all probability, to a general European war (and probably a Middle Eastern one as well, if the Arabs also rebelled). The problem was, as Macmillan writes, that “politicians who had ridden to power by playing on nationalism and with promises of national glory found that they were in the grip of forces they could not always control. Secret societies, modelling themselves on an eclectic mix which included Freemasonry, the underground Carbonari, who had worked for Italian unity, the terrorists who more recently had frightened much of Europe, and old-style banditry, proliferated throughout the Balkans, weaving their way into civilian and military institutions of the states. The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation (IMRO) talked about Macedonia for the Macedonians but was widely suspected of working with Bulgarian nationalists for a great Bulgaria which would include Macedonia. In Serbia, the government and the army were riddled with supporters of Narodna Odbrana (National Defence), which had been set up during the Bosnian crisis, and its even more extreme offshoot the Black Hand. In the First Balkan War, officers disobeyed their own government on several occasions, seizing, for example, the town of Monastir (which Serbia had promised to Bulgaria in a secret treaty) in the hopes that it would then be impossible to hand it over. Although the Ottoman and Austrian-Hungarian authorities did their best to suppress all revolutionary and indeed most political activity among their own South Slav or Albanian subjects, they faced an uphill battle, especially since much of the home-grown conspiracies and terrorism were supported from outside…”

Now not only the Balkan Orthodox, but also the Muslim Albanians, stirred by similar nationalist dreams, were in more or less open rebellion against the Turks. Nor did any of the Balkan powers pay much attention to the Great Powers. “Balkan leaders complained openly that they could no longer trust the great powers to protect the Christians under Ottoman rule and hinted that they might have to take action. Why maintain the status quo in the Balkans, a leading politician in Serbia asked Trotsky. ‘Where was the status quo when Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina? Why didn’t the powers defend the status quo when Italy seized Tripoli?’ And why should the Balkan states be treated as though they were somehow not European but like Morocco? There was the chance, the Foreign Minister of Serbia admitted to the British ambassador in Belgrade, that Austria-Hungary would intervene if any of the Balkan nations moved to seize Ottoman territory but, as far as he, Milovan Milovanović, was concerned, it was better for Serbia to die fighting. If

Austria-Hungary itself expanded further southwards into the Balkans, Serbia was finished anyway as an independent kingdom…”

The coolest and wisest heads remained the emperors of the multi-national empires – Tsar Nicholas and Emperor Franz Joseph. On October 8, 1912, the Tsar persuaded all the European Great Powers to send a warning to the Balkan States and Turkey that if war should break out, the Powers would not agree to any change in the territorial status quo. But as if cocking a snoop at all the Great Powers, tiny Montenegro under her warmongering King Nikolai declared war on Turkey the very next day! The Montenegrins invaded Albania, and besieged the fortress of Shkodra (Scutari). Edvard Radzinsky writes: “The tsar understood how that impudent disruption of the status quo in the Balkans would ignite an explosion of indignation among the great powers. The minister of foreign affairs was instructed to persuade Montenegro to end its occupation of the fortress. But [King Nikolai] knew of the bellicose mood in Petersburg and of the support of [his son-in-law] Grand Duke Nikolai, the ‘dread uncle’, and he callously continued the siege of Scutari.”

On October 18, Serbia and Bulgaria entered the war against Turkey; Greece joined them on October 19. The Orthodox forces outnumbered the Turks, and were soon, contrary to expert military opinion, advancing on all fronts. The Greeks got to Salonika before the Bulgarians, but Bulgarian forces were approaching Constantinople… There was wild rejoicing in Russia; the age-old dream that “Constantinople will be ours” and that the Cross would be raised over Hagia Sophia appeared close to fulfilment. There were calls for Russia to enter the war, including from M.V. Rodzianko, the president of the Fourth Duma. On November 10 Grand Duke Nicholas reported excitedly to the tsar in Spala in Russian Poland (where the Tsarevich Alexei was gravely ill). On November 12, Prince Gregory Trubetskoy, head of the Near Eastern department in the Foreign Ministry, issued a detailed memorandum explaining why Russia should take control of Constantinople and the Straits. However, the head of the Navy, Admiral Lieven rejected Trubetskoy’s arguments in a counter-memorandum dated December 8.

But it was the Bulgars, not the Russians, who were now at the gates of Constantinople – and Russia was determined to stop Bulgaria gaining too much. For, as Alexander Bokhanov writes, she “was not interested that Bulgaria, whose ruling classes supported a pro-German orientation, should take control of Stambul and the Black Sea straits. Petersburg demanded from Sophia in harsh expressions that she stop her advance. Austria and Germany, which stood behind her, refused to be reconciled with Serbia’s increased strength, and Austrian armies began to concentrate on the frontier…”

The Serbs, too, were making great gains – but also at great cost to their moral reputation. Misha Glenny writes: “As the Serb soldiery moved to Skopje and beyond,

418 Macmillan, op. cit., p. 441.
419 Radzinsky, The Last Tsar, London: Hodder, 1992, p. 188.
they visited destruction and murder on the local Albanian population. Fired by tales of atrocities committed on Christian peasants during the unrest in the Albanian territories, the Serbs unleashed the full force of nationalist hatred against defenceless villages. A Serb Social Democrat, serving as a reservist, described how ‘the horrors actually began as soon as we crossed the old frontier. By five p.m. we were approaching Kumanovo. The sun had set, it was starting to get dark. But the darker the sky became, the more brightly the fearful illumination of the fires stood out against it. Burning was going on all around us. Entire Albanian villages had been turned into pillars of fire… In all its fiery monotony this picture was repeated the whole way to Skopje… For two days before my arrival in Skopje the inhabitants had woken up in the morning to the sight, under the principal bridge over the Vardar – that is, in the very centre of the town – of heaps of Albanian corpses with severed heads. Some said that these were local Albanians, killed by the komitadjis [četniks], others that the corpses had been brought down to the bridge by the waters of the Vardar. What was clear was that these headless men had not been killed in battle.’ In Skopje, the chief instigator of the massacres was the Black Hand, which set up its headquarters close to the Russian consulate in a building soon known as the Black House. The Black Hand, with its network of agents, had escaped the control of the military authorities and was increasingly assuming the role of an informal government of ‘liberated Old Serbia’. After several weeks, the government in Belgrade started to appoint civilian administrators to these territories, but those who refused to submit to the demands of the Black Hand and the četniks were scared. Branslav Nušić, the writer who had welcomed the war with such enthusiasm, resigned as governor of Bitola in fear and disgust at the activities of these units.”

In mid-November the Bulgarians were halted in their march on Tsargrad by desperate Turkish resistance and dysentery in their own ranks. “The point of crisis,” writes Lieven, now “shifted to the Albanian provinces on the Adriatic coast that the Serbs (and Montenegrins) were determined to seize. In the typical language of prewar Europe, the Serbian premier, Nikola Pašić, claimed that without an Adriatic coastline ‘the country’s existence is unthinkable’. The Austrians, on the other hand, were determined to establish a client Albanian state in their own strategic backyard and to block further Serbian expansion. Some circles in Vienna still hoped to turn Serbia into an economic dependency and saw Serb possession of an Adriatic port as a fatal blow to this goal. The fear existed that a Serbian port ight one day become a Russian naval base. If failure to acquire an Adriatic port encouraged the Serbs to demand more territory in Macedonia and thereby come into conflict with the Bulgarians, Vienna could only rejoiced in having helped to split the hatred Balkan League. Fairly enough, the Austrians took delight in pointing out the fact that Serbian and Montenegrin demands to swallow the Albanian-speaking territories flew in the face of their proclaimed allegiance to the ethno-nationalist principle. Because Serb and Montenegrin troops were committing widely reported and numerous atrocities against Albanian civilians as they marched toward the Adriatic coast, pious claims that the two countries’ constitutions guaranteed the rights of minorities were greeted throughout Europe with what might politely be described as scepticism. The retort by Nikolai Hartwig, the Russian ambassador in Belgrade, that

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the Serbs were behaving no worse than the Greeks and the Bulgarians was probably true but did not help matters.

“Initially, Sazonov backed the Serbian claim at least for a small stretch of the Adriatic coast and a port. Once he realised that not just the Austrians but also the Italians and the Germans flatly opposed this, he changed tack and allowed that secure commercial access through Albanian territory would suffice. In support of his more moderate line, the foreign minister submitted a memorandum to Nicholas II on November 12 pointing out that all members of the Triple Alliance were determined to create an autonomous Albanian polity controlling the whole Adriatic coastline and were willing ‘to defend their point of view by extreme methods’. Because neither the British nor the French would back Serb claims to the hilt, the foreign minister wrote that both and the chairman of the Council of Ministers believed it would be foolish to push further on this issue, in the process ‘sharpening the dispute to a degree that creates the danger of a European war’. As Sazonov’s letter implies, the Balkan crisis had now sucked his premier, Vladimir Kokovtsov, into foreign affairs, and the foreign minister was very happy to seek his support against any impetuous action by the emperor and his military advisers.

“Unfortunately, Nicholas II did not agree, writing on the memorandum, ‘I am against an autonomous Albania’. This goes far to explain why Sazonov’s support for Serbia then stiffened once again, much to the alarm of Austrian and other diplomats. Only when further efforts to secure a compromise more favourable to the Serbs had failed and the danger of war loomed increasingly large did Sazonov revert to his earlier line and attempt again to bring Belgrade to order. Inevitably, his attempts to do so were not aided by his zigzags…”423

On November 20, Austria-Hungary increased its war readiness in Bosnia and Dalmatia, and also on the border with Russia in Galicia. On November 22 Tsar Nicholas responded by ordering mobilisation in the Kiev district and preparations for mobilisation in the Odessa and Warsaw districts. The next day Kokovtsov and Sazonov persuaded him to shelve these plans, but the number of active troops was increased…

The Germans were also threatening the Russians. For, as Hew Strachan writes, they “saw it as a war fought by Russia by proxy, and on 2 December 1912 Bethmann-Hollweg announced in the Reichstag that, if Austria-Hungary was attacked by a third party while pursuing its interests, Germany would support Austria-Hungary and fight to maintain its own position in Europe. Britain responded on the following day: it feared that a Russo-Austrian War would lead to a German attack on France and warned the Germans that if that happened it would not accept a French defeat. The Kaiser was furious, and summoned a meeting of his military and naval chiefs on 8 December. He said that, if Russia came to Serbia’s aid, Germany would fight. He assumed that in such a war Bulgaria, Romania, Albania and Turkey would all side with the Triple Alliance [Germany, Austria and Italy], and take the main role against Serbia, so leaving Austria-Hungary to concentrate against Russia…”424

423 Lieven, Towards the Flame, pp. 256-258.
On December 3, an armistice between the Balkan states and Turkey was agreed; but the situation remained very tense. The British Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey organized a conference of ambassadors in London, which continued until August, 1913. The main result was to legitimize the substantial territorial gains made by the Balkan Orthodox; the Serbs gave up their claim for an Adriatic port, while the Turks remained in control of a small corner of Europe close to Constantinople. As for the other losers, the Albanians, on December 20, the Great Powers, under Austrian pressure, agreed to create an independent principality of Albania. The Russians accepted this only reluctantly, and in exchange secured most of Kosovo and its mixed Serb and Albanian population for Serbia.

But the Montenegrins were refusing to give up their corner of Albania - which placed the whole agreement in jeopardy. “And then,” writes Radzinsky, “the tsar suddenly demonstrated character: he resolutely moved against public opinion. He demanded that the minister of foreign affairs put pressure on Montenegro. And on 21 April 1913 the Montenegrin king, after many hours of persuasion, consented to withdraw from Scutari in return for monetary indemnification. And the Russian foreign minister, Sergius Sazonov, announced with relief, ‘King Nikola was going to set the world on fire to cook his own little omelette.’ This was in reply to the constant reproaches that Russia had once again betrayed its Balkan brothers.”

Radzinsky attributes the tsar’s sudden firmness to the fact that Rasputin and the Empress were against the war. “And the tsar was forced to submit,” he writes. However, we must not forget Sazonov’s tenacious peace-making efforts in the face of a rabidly belligerent press and the open disobedience of his subordinate in Belgrade, Hartwig. His contribution was acknowledged on June 18, 1913, “when an unprecedented official statement by Tsar Nicholas praised Sazonov and stressed the tsar’s grateful public recognition of his minister’s sterling work throughout the Blakan crisis, as well as Nicholas’s strong support for solving all disputes through peaceful compromise with the European great powers.”

In any case, whatever the views and influence of ministers and diplomats, the final decision rested with the tsar, whose final decision in favour of peace – in spite of partial mobilization on the Galician border - was perfectly consistent with his expressed belief that it was not in Russia’s interests to go to war to defend the territorial ambitions of the Balkan Slavs. Only in 1914 would he be forced to submit to the call for war. But the situation then, as we shall see, was different: Russia was not called to help the Serbs in some madcap aggression, but to defend them from annihilation in a just war…

There was another problem... While the Bulgarians had been advancing on Constantinople, the Serbs had taken large areas in Macedonia, including Bitola (Monastir), that had been reserved for the Bulgarians in the secret treaty of 1912. When the Bulgarians asked for these territories back, the Serbs refused. On June 30, 1913 Bulgaria suddenly attacked Greece and Serbia without declaring war. This led

425 Radzinsky, op. cit., p. 189.
426 Lieven, Towards the Flame, p. 263.
to the outbreak of the Second Balkan War, which ended on July 29 with the victory of Greece, Serbia, Romania and Turkey over Bulgaria.

The Treaty of Bucharest brought peace, but Bulgaria remained deeply and dangerously resentful… They had some cause: although they had fought well in the First Balkan War, suffering huge casualties, they ended up with little – thanks to the deception of the Serbs, the fears of the Russians, and the opportunism of the Romanians, their fellow-Orthodox. It has been customary to blame the Second War on the Bulgarian King Ferdinand, a wily and ambitious man, who was heartily disliked by his allies. But these allies must take part of the blame for the desertion of the Bulgarians to the Triple Alliance in the First World War…

Robert Cooper writes that “while the first Balkan war was mostly a military-to-military affair, in the second the target was often the civilian population. If you could establish that a piece of territory was inhabited by your people – Serbs, Bulgarians or Greeks, - then you could claim it as a part of your national territory. This was therefore a war about people as well as territory: whether a village was Serb or Bulgarian might decide whether its inhabitants lived or died…”

As Tim Judah, writes, “ethnic cleansing” was common during the Second War: “The Carnegie Endowment’s account of the crushing of the Albanian revolt in Kosovo is also important because in 1913 as in 1941 or the 1990s it was quite clear to all involved what the purpose of ethnic cleansing was: ‘Houses and whole villages are reduced to ashes, unarmed and innocent populations massacred en masse, incredible acts of violence, pillage and brutality of every kind – such were the means which were employed by the Serbo-Montenegrin soldiery, with a view to the entire transformation of the ethnic character of regions inhabited exclusively by Albanians.

“’We thus arrive at the second characteristic feature of the Balkan wars, a feature which is the necessary correlative of the first. Since the population of the countries about to be occupied knew, by tradition, instinct and experience, what they had to expect from the armies of the enemy and from the neighbouring countries to which these armies belonged, they did not await their arrival, but fled. Thus generally speaking, the army of the enemy found on its way nothing but villages which were either half deserted or entirely abandoned. To execute the orders for extermination, it was only necessary to set fire to them. The population, warned by the glow from these fires, fled all in haste. There followed a veritable migration of peoples, for in Macedonia, as in Thrace, there was hardly a spot which was not, at a given moment, on the line of march of some army or other. The Commission everywhere encountered this second fact. All along the railways interminable trains of carts drawn by oxen followed one another; behind them came emigrant families and, in the neighbourhood of the big towns, bodies of refugees were found encamped.’

427 Barbara Tuchman writes that at the funeral of King Edward VII in 1910 Ferdinand had “annoyed his fellow sovereigns by calling himself Czar and kept in a chest a Byzantine Emperor’s full regalia, acquired from a theatrical costumer, against the day when he should reassemble the Byzantine dominions beneath his sceptre” (The Guns of August, New York: Ballantine Books, 1962, 1994, p. 3).
“Just as conversion had been accepted as a means to escape death in earlier times, in some places it once again became an issue. When the Montenegrins captured the village of Plav, Rebecca West, whose pro-Serbian bent somewhat undermines her otherwise masterly account of Yugoslavia in the 1930s, characteristically dismisses a major massacre as an ‘unfortunate contretemps’. During this little misunderstanding a former Muslim cleric, now converted to Orthodoxy and a major in the Montenegrin Army, demanded that his former congregation convert. They refused and so 500 of them were shot. In another incident, some Macedonian villagers had their church surrounded by Serbian soldiers during the Sunday service. On emerging they found that a table had been set up on which was a piece of paper and a revolver. Either they could sign that they were Serbs rather than Bulgarians – or they could die. They chose the former option.”

This latter incident shows that rivalry and hatred among the Orthodox, especially in Macedonia and especially between Greeks and Bulgarians, had by no means been removed by their alliances against the Turks.

A Carnegie Endowment report describes the hatred between the Greeks and Bulgarians at this time: “Day after day the Bulgarians were represented as a race of monsters, and public feeling was roused to a pitch of chauvinism which made it inevitable that war, when it should come, should be ruthless. In talk and in print one phrase summed up the general feeling of the Greeks towards the Bulgarians. ‘Dhen einai anthropoi!’ (They are not human beings). In their excitement and indignation the Greeks came to think of themselves as the appointed avengers of civilization against a race which stood outside the pale of humanity.

“… Deny that your enemies are men, and presently you will treat them as vermin. Only half realizing the full meaning of what he said, a Greek officer remarked to the writer, ‘When you have to deal with barbarians, you must behave like a barbarian yourself. It is the only thing they understand.’ The Greek army went to war, its mind inflamed with anger and contempt. A gaudily coloured print, which we saw in the streets of Salonika and the Piraeus, eagerly bought by the Greek soldiers returning to their homes, reveals the depth of the brutality to which this race hatred had sunk them. It shows a Greek evzone (highlander) holding a living Bulgarian soldier with both hands, while he gnaws the face of the victim with his teeth, like some beast of prey. It is entitled Bulgarophagos (Bulgar-eater), and is adorned with the following verses:

\[
\text{The sea of fire which boils in my breast} \\
\text{And calls for vengeance with the savage waves of my soul,} \\
\text{Will be quenched when the monster of Sofia is still,} \\
\text{And thy life blood extinguishes my hate."} \]

It is sometimes asserted that the Christian commandment to love our enemies cannot be applied in a war situation. Certainly, it is necessary to obey lawful authorities and fight the enemies of the State. At the same time, personal hatred and

430 Judah, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-85.
unnecessary cruelty are forbidden both in war and peace. Even in the Old Testament, and even in relation to non-Jews, cruelty was forbidden: “You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall not afflict any widow or orphan. If you do afflict them, and they cry out to Me, I will surely hear their cry, and My wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows, and your children fatherless” (Exodus 22.21-24).

In ten weeks’ fighting during the two Balkan wars of 1912-13 about 200,000 soldiers were killed, together with an unknown number of civilians. This constituted a political and military victory for the Balkan Orthodox, but a major spiritual defeat for Orthodoxy. Russia had managed to avoid a world war while not betraying her co-religionists; but internal as well as external factors were making it increasingly difficult for the Tsar to hold the twin monsters of revolutionary nationalism and internationalist revolution at bay.

As Bokhanov writes, “in spite of the fact that the Balkan wars did not grow into a pan-European conflict, the tension in the international arena did not abate. Germany and France had already for several years been carrying out rearmament programmes. Russia was also drawn into this world arms race. Nationalist tendencies increased. In the spring of 1913 the German chancellor Bethmann-Holweg, while arguing in the Reichstag for the necessity of new credits for the army, declared that Germany was threatened by ‘a Slavic wave’. But he was only repeating his Kaiser, who declared after the First Balkan War that he thought ‘a struggle between the Slavs and Germans’ inevitable.

“By contrast with ‘dear Willy’, the Russian tsar was of another opinion and did not consider a large-scale military conflict to be inevitable. In May 1913 Nicholas II arrived in Berlin for the wedding of the Kaiser’s daughter, Princess Victoria-Louise, who was marrying the duke of Braunstein. The tsar was intending to come to an agreement with William II about improving Russian-German relations. He conducted negotiations with the Kaiser and told him that Russia was ready to renounce her claims on the Black Sea straits and agreed to leave Turkey in the role of ‘gate-keeper’ if Germany, on her part, would keep Austria from an expansionist policy in the Balkans. There was no reaction to these suggestions in Berlin, and William confined himself only to talking about generalities…”

The Balkan Wars, writes Niall Ferguson, “had revealed both the strengths and the limits of Balkan nationalism. Its strength lay in its ferocity. Its weakness was its disunity. The violence of the fighting much impressed the young Trotsky, who witnessed it as a correspondent for the newspaper Kievskaia mysl. Even the peace that followed the Balkan Wars was cruel, in a novel manner that would become a recurrent feature of the twentieth century. It no longer sufficed, in the eyes of nationalists, to acquire foreign territory. Now it was peoples as well as borders that had to move. Sometimes these movements were spontaneous. Muslims fled in the direction of Salonika as the Greeks, Serbs and Bulgarians advanced in 1912;

431 Bokhanov, op. cit., p. 321.
Bulgarians fled Macedonia to escape from invading Greek troops in 1913; Greeks chose to leave the Macedonian districts ceded to Bulgaria and Serbia by the Treaty of Bucharest. Sometimes populations were deliberately expelled, as the Greeks were from Western Thrace in 1913 and from parts of Eastern Thrace and Anatolia in 1914. In the wake of the Turkish defeat, there was an agreed population exchange: 48,570 Turks moved one way and 46,764 Bulgarians the other across the new Turkish-Bulgarian border. Such exchanges were designed to transform regions of ethnically mixed settlement into the homogeneous societies that so appealed to the nationalist imagination. The effects on some regions were dramatic. Between 1912 and 1915, the Greek population of (Greek) Macedonia increased by around a third; the Muslim and Bulgarian population declined by 26 and 13 per cent respectively. The Greek population of Western Thrace fell by 80 per cent; the Muslim population of Eastern Thrace rose by a third. The implications were distinctly ominous for the many multi-ethnic communities elsewhere in Europe…”\(^{432}\)

The major political result of the Balkan Wars was that the Balkan Orthodox states now regarded themselves as completely independent of their Russian protector. Formally speaking, this was certainly not envisaged by, for example, the Serbian-Bulgarian Treaty of 1912, which ascribed to Russia the role of arbiter in all disputes.\(^{433}\) But the reality was quite different... As a French diplomat in St. Petersburg put it: “For the first time in the history of the Eastern question the small states have acquired a position of such independence of the Great Powers that they feel able to act completely without them and even to take them in tow...”\(^{434}\) This independence was revealed in the way in which the Serbs remained on Albanian territory for a full six months after agreeing to withdraw from it, leaving only after the Austrians issued an ultimatum on October 17.

But this independence came at a price – a price that would be paid in 1914. For it convinced the Austrians, first, that the only way they could exert any influence over the Serbs was through ultimatums. And secondly, as Clark writes, “that Serbia would only ever ultimately understand force...”\(^{435}\)

Max Hastings writes that “western statesmen regarded [Serbia] with impatience and suspicion. Its self-assertiveness, its popular catchphrase ‘Where a Serb dwells, there is Serbia’, destabilized the Balkans. Europe’s chancelleries were irritated by its ‘little Serbia’, proud-victim culture. Serbs treated their own minority subjects, especially Muslims, with conspicuous and often murderous brutality. Every continental power recognised that the Serbs could achieve their ambition to enfold in their own polity two million brethren still under Habsburg rule only at the cost of bringing down Franz Joseph’s empire.”\(^{436}\)

A certain Bulgarian statesman told the journalist Leon Trotsky soon after the First Balkan War: “We must, of course, say this in all politeness to all the other diplomats

\(^{433}\) Clark, op. cit., p. 298.
\(^{434}\) Macmillan, op. cit., p. 444.
\(^{435}\) Clark, op. cit., p. 288.
from Europe, as they labour in the sweat of their brows for our happiness. ‘Neither honey nor thorns,’ dear sirs! We ourselves will settle with Turkey, without any interference from Europe, and all the more firmly and satisfactorily. Europe puts on an air of being afraid that we shall be excessively demanding. And this from Europe – that is to say, from Austria-Hungary, who annexed Bosnia; from Italy, who seized Tripolitania; from Russia, who never takes her eyes off Constantinople… This is the Europe that comes to us preaching moderation and restraint. Truly, a sight for the gods on Olympus!... Your diplomats are sulking. They would not be averse to freezing the Balkans for another ten years, in expectation of better days sometime. How is it that they cannot understand that less and less is it possible in our epoch to direct the destinies of the Balkans from the outside? We are growing up, gaining confidence, and becoming independent… In the very first years of our present phase of existence as a state, we told our would-be guardians: ‘Bulgaria will follow her own line.’... And so Messrs. Privy Councillors of all the diplomatic chanceries would do well to get used to the idea that the Balkan Peninsula ‘will follow its own line’…”

This was the fundamental problem of Balkan politics, and the reason why it was precisely in the Balkans that the fuse was lit that led to the First World War. The Balkan States of Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria and Romania were Orthodox, but they did not recognize the guidance of Russia, the senior and most powerful Orthodox state. In spite of the fact that Russia, over the centuries, had expended millions of lives and vast financial resources in order to protect and eventually liberate the Balkans from the oppression of Muslim and Catholic powers, they did not feel obliged to show gratitude to “the Third Rome” or submit to her leadership in any way. They were determined to go their own, egotistical ways and expand their territories regardless of the consequences for world peace or the interests of the Orthodox commonwealth as a whole, let alone the interests of the other Orthodox states in the region.

As for the Tsar, in his Divinely-appointed role as Autocrat of the Third Rome and the protector of the whole of Orthodoxy he was bound to have the interests of the Orthodox commonwealth as a whole at heart. But he was faced with a very difficult dilemma. On the one hand, he could not ignore the majority nationalist opinion in Russia, which wanted him to support the Orthodox Balkan states when they came into conflict with Ottoman Turkey or Austria-Hungary. Nor was he personally unsympathetic to this “war party”, which is why he tended to support the Defence Secretary Sukhomlinov in his requests for increased military spending, and was quick to order a partial mobilisation in November, 1912. But on the other hand, he knew that defending the interests of one Balkan state risked alienating another - which is precisely what happened when he came down on the side of Serbia as against Bulgaria. Still more serious, because of the new system of alliances in which the Entente supported Serbia while the Triple Alliance supported Bulgaria, any serious involvement on the side of Serbia threatened to ignite a wider conflict between the two alliance blocs. And this would most likely bring down Russia

438 Clark, op. cit., p. 218.
herself and with her the whole of the Orthodox commonwealth – which, again, is precisely what happened…

The tsar’s dilemma was well understood by the diplomat Alexander Giers, who had first-hand knowledge of the situation through his posting to Montenegro during the Balkan wars and belonged to the “peace party”. According to Dominic Lieven, Giers “wrote in 1913 that the Russian public misled itself about events in the Balkans. It was driven by moods and sentiment, as well as by the distortions of the Russian press. Giers denounced King Nikita of Montenegro, one of the Russian public’s heroes, as a wholly cynical and unreliable partner intent on manipulating Russian public opinion and driven by no higher loyalty than concern to save and promote his own dynasty. Firsthand experience of Montenegro was often a cold shower even for Russians initially sympathetic to the Slav cause. Major General Nikolai Potapov, the long-serving head of Russia’s military mission to the kingdom, wrote that Nikita was shameless, his envoys were usually liars, and the dominant characteristics of Montenegrins were ‘lying, breaking their word, laziness, self-publicity, boasting, greed for money, and arrogance.’ This truly colonialist diatribe was strengthened by Potapov’s opinion that the Montenegrins were savages. The general was a Guards officer, and his reports sometimes reflect the traditional disdain of the old ‘court’ faction for Balkan primitives. They also reflect Potapov’s humanity. He describes the Montenegrins’ mutilation of Turkish prisoners, who were then carefully hidden from visiting Red Cross missionaries, and their ‘barbarous treatment’ even of Orthodox Serb civilians in areas they overran.

“If the Montenegrins and their king were an extreme case, for Giers they were not that untypical of the Balkan peoples. He once wrote to Serge Sazonov that there was little to choose between the Serbs, the Greeks, the Bulgarians, and the Romanians: ‘They all hate each other and show little inclination to settle the accounts accumulated between them over the centuries by means of reasonable compromises.’ In April 1913, he wrote that not merely were the Balkan peoples at each other’s throats as always but their attitude to Russia was also entirely manipulative. They wanted the backing of Russian power but had no genuine loyalty to Russian culture or ideals, let alone any inclination to follow Russian advice. The Serbs were most dangerous because Russia was being pushed into the position of acting as the defender of the Serbian national cause. In Giers’s opinion, the nationalist project of uniting all Serbs, let alone all southern Slavs, was in itself ‘very doubtful’, because even the Serbs in the Habsburg Empire differed substantially from their co-ethnics in the Serbian kingdom. Far greater still was the gap between Belgrade and the Croats, Slovenes, and other Slav subjects of the Habsburgs. It was, however, very dangerous that ‘the Serbs of the kingdom have become convinced in recent times that whatever paths their struggle with Austria might take, they would find in the Russian government both sympathy and support.’ With increasing frequency, Belgrade had sought to draw Russia into Serbia’s struggle with Austria.

“In Giers’s opinion, this was wholly contrary to Russian interests. Austria could be an important ally for Russia in achieving a tolerable compromise on the question of the Straits. Above all, Russia risked being sucked into a European war caused by the Austrian dispute with Serbia. Even in 1911, before the Balkan Wars revealed the full
danger of Austro-Russian confrontation over Serbia, Giers was arguing that it was in neither Russia’s interests nor its power to defend the Serbian cause against Austrian expansion southward. The more Serbs the Habsburgs absorbed into their empire, the less likely it was to become a mere cat’s-paw of Berlin and its Austro-German allies. In Giers’s view, this latter development was the greatest danger both for Russia and for Austria itself. The Habsburg monarchy in his opinion had two options: either it could evolve in the direction of a federation offering Slavs an equal weight to Germans and Magyars, or it could become a mere appendage of greater Germandom and its expansionist ambitions. It was in Russian (and Habsburg) interests that it took the former path. Russia had to back the Austrian Slavs who were in any case far more reasonable and civilized than their Balkan equivalents. Above all else, the Czechs and other Austrian Slavs feared a European war because it would unleash all the pressures for Germanic domination of the empire and of central Europe. Russia had to respect this opinion, which also served its own urgent need for peace. It had to seek to recast its whole relationship with the Habsburg monarchy and in so doing contribute to Europe’s evolution away from an international system divided rigidly into two hostile blocs…”

But this was not to be. No such evolution took place, and God allowed the hubris of the Balkan states to result in nemesis for the Orthodox world as a whole. Judgement was about to descend upon the whole European world, but it would begin at the House of God, the Orthodox Church (I Peter 4.17)…

440 Lieven, Towards the Flame. Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia, London: Allen Lane, 2015, pp. 142-143.
Although Russia’s conflict with Austria-Hungary centred on Serbia, there were other issues between the neighbouring empires that were perhaps even more important, if not quite so acute. After all, Serbia was an independent state with no border contiguous with Russia. But Poland was part of the Russian empire and bordered on Austria-Hungary. And so was the Ukraine. Moreover, there were substantial minorities of Poles and Ukrainians on both sides of the border, making the area fertile ground for nationalist agitation.

From the strategic military point of view, Poland was vital to Russia because it was on the road to Germany; while Ukraine was, if possible, still more important, not only from a military, but also from an economic (as being Russia’s bread-basket) and from a cultural and religious point of view. For the Ukrainians were not only Slavs, but also, unlike the Poles but like the Serbs, Orthodox Slavs. They were Eastern Slav Orthodox, which meant that they were as close as it was possible to be to the Russians themselves – no less than “Little Russians”, as the Great Russians rather condescendingly called them.

There was also an important difference in the way in which Ukraine and Poland became parts of the Russian empire. Ukraine was not “on the periphery” (as its name suggests) of the original Russian state, but at its very core; for St. Vladimir, the Baptizer of Russia and the real founder of the state, ruled from Kiev, simultaneously “the mother of Russian cities” and the capital of Ukraine. Kievan Rus’ at its greatest extent in the twelfth century included the whole of what is now Ukraine, including Galicia in the West.

Poland, on the other hand, was a conquered land – and definitely a foreign one, however Slavophiles or Pan-Slavists might wish to emphasize the Poles’ kinship with the Russians. As Lieven writes, “historically the tsars ruled non-Russians largely by co-opting aristocracies into the imperial ruling elite. The one major failure of this strategy was the Poles. Members of the Polish Catholic nobility were the ancestral enemies of Russia and Orthodoxy. They bore proud memories of their nation’s former power and independence, which only disappeared finally in 1815. In 1830 and 1863, they attempted to regain this independence through widespread rebellions against Russian rule. The revolts were crushed, but right down to 1914 most Russian statesmen were convinced the Poles would seize any moment of Russian weakness to rebel again. Poland’s geographic position across the main invasion routes from the west into the Russian heartland made that fear particularly acute, especially after German unification in 1871 and the Austro-German dual alliance of 1879.

“In 1914, the Poles were still seen in Petersbourg as the most disloyal and dangerous of the empire’s nationalities, apart from the Jews. Because most Jews lived in former Polish territory annexed by Russia, the Polish and Jewish danger overlapped in Petersbourg’s eyes. But in the Russian empire as elsewhere, new nationalisms were emerging among peoples who had in many cases never previously shown any sign of disloyalty. This was happening in Finland, the Baltic Provinces, Ukraine, the Caucasus region, and among many of the tsar’s Muslim
subjects. To be sure, even in 1914 most of these new nationalisms were not yet as developed as in the Habsburg monarchy or western Europe. Russia was less modern, so most of the tsar’s subjects were still semiliterate peasants immune to nationalism’s call. Constraints on civil society and political propaganda also slowed the spread of nationalism. Nevertheless, in Russia as elsewhere, rulers of empire faced the reality that subject populations could no longer be ruled just by co-opting their aristocracies. As societies modernized, the landowning class was losing power to businessmen, professional groups, and intellectuals. The new nationalism often attracted these groups’ support. Concessions to nationalist currents might well take the empire down the road to federalism. Most Russian statesmen believed that this would be an instant recipe for weakening the empire and in time probably dooming it to destruction. They saw Austria’s travails as an example of what happened when the growing weakness of government allowed national conflicts free rein: rulers were paralyzed, an empire’s military power declined, and its many enemies and potential predators began to circles in increasing hope of a kill.

“From the Russian perspective, among the new nationalism the Ukrainian movement was potentially much the most dangerous. This was partly because of the region’s immense economic importance. In 1914, the eight Ukrainian provinces (a smaller area than today’s Ukrainian republic) produced one-third of the empire’s wheat, most of its exported grains, and 80 percent of its sugar. Without this, it would be hard to support the empire’s positive balance of trade on which the government’s strategy of economic development depended. Supplying Russian cities in the much less fertile northern zone would also become a problem. Even more crucial was Ukraine’s role in heavy industry and mining in 1914. 70 percent of the empire’s coal, 68 percent of its cast iron, and 58 percent of its steel came from the region, as did a large share of its engineering products. Until the 1930s, when Stalin developed the Urals and West Siberian industrial region, if Russia had lost Ukraine, it would have ceased to be a great power.

“The idea of a separate Ukrainian national identity also undermined all the calculations on which tsarist nationalities policy was based as well as the way in which educated Russians understood the country they lived in. in 1897, although only 44 percent of the empire’s population was Russian, a further 22.5 percent was at least east Slav – in other words, Ukrainian or Belorussian (White Russian). The great majority of these Ukrainians or Belorussians were Orthodox in religion, which had historically been a much more important marker of identity and political loyalty than questions of language. Ukrainians outnumbered Belorussians by more than four to one, and their region was richer and more developed. There was therefore every chance that if Ukrainian nationalism failed to develop, the same would be true in Belorussia. If Ukrainians and Belorussians could be counted as Russians in political terms, then two-thirds of the empire’s population was ‘Russian’. In this era of high imperialism, it was widely assumed that numerically small peoples could neither defend themselves nor sustain a high culture on their own. Their only choice therefore was between rival empires. The Russian government correctly believed that Georgians, Armenians, and the ‘small peoples’ of the Baltic region would prefer the tsar’s rule to that of the German Kaiser or the Ottoman sultan. Much of the Muslim
population, on the other hand, was deemed too backward to be vulnerable to nationalist ideas.”

But what of a numerically large people such as the Ukrainians? Was it conceivable that they would prefer to be within the German or Austrian rather than the Russian empires? Or even acquire the thirst for complete independence from any empire that was manifest among the neighbouring Poles?

As we have seen, Ukrainian nationalist sentiment was not well developed among the semiliterate peasant masses, being mainly confined to intellectuals. However, the Austrians were stirring up trouble next door... For, as Oliver Figes writes, the Ukrainian nationalists “took inspiration from the Ukrainian national movement in neighbouring Galicia. As part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Galicia had been granted relatively liberal rights of self-government. This had allowed the Ukrainians, or ‘Ruthenians’ (dog-Latin for ‘Russians’) as they were known by the Austrians, to promote their own Ukrainian language in primary schools and public life, to publish native-language newspapers and books, and to advance the study of Ukrainian history and folk culture. Galicia became a sort of ‘Ukrainian Piedmont’ for the rest of the national movement in tsarist Ukraine: a forcing-house of national consciousness and an oasis of freedom for nationalist intellectuals. Lviv, its capital, also known as Lemberg (by the Germans) and as Lvov (by the Russians), was a thriving centre of Ukrainian culture. Although subjects of the Tsar, both the composer Lysenko and the historian Hrushevsky had found their nation in Galicia. The nationalist intellectuals who pioneered the Ukrainian literary language in the middle decades of the nineteenth century all borrowed terms from the Galician dialect, which they considered the most advanced, although later, as they tried to reach the peasantry with newspapers and books, they were forced to base it on the Poltavan folk idiom, which, as the dialect of the central Ukraine, was the most commonly understood. The seminal texts of this national literary renaissance were published by the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius prior to its dissolution by the tsarist authorities in 1847. The romantic poetry of Taras Shevchenko, which played the same role as Mickiewicz’s poetry in Poland in shaping the intelligentsia’s national consciousness, was the most important of these. Ukrainian-language publications continued to appear, despite the legal restrictions on them. Many were published by the Kiev section of the Russian Geographical Society, whose nationalist members devoted themselves to the study of Ukrainian folk culture, language and history.”

Austrian Galicia was a thorn in the side of the Russian empire not only because it was a seedbed of nationalist discontent, but also because it was a centre of Catholic persecution of the Orthodox. Of course, the struggle between Orthodoxy and Catholicism in East-Central Europe was a long-running story. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Catholics, led by the Poles and the Jesuits, had been on the offensive. But as the Russian empire expanded westwards in the nineteenth century, millions of Catholic uniates had returned to the faith of their fathers. The Pochaev Lavra in Galicia had been a stronghold of Orthodoxy in a sea of uniatism.

Now, in the early twentieth century, Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Volhynia was the main defender of Orthodoxy against the Catholic heretics both within his own diocese and also further west, in Austrian Galicia, where the Hungarian government and the uniates tried by all means to prevent the return of the Carpatho-Russians to their ancestral Orthodox faith.

The Tsar’s friend General Vladimir Voeikov wrote: “One of the symptoms for the openly aggressive politics of Austro-Hungary against Russia was the following incident: In the middle of February, 1914, Hieromonk Alexis Kabaliuk was sentenced, according to newspaper reports, by a Marmarosh-Sagetsky court to four and a half years in prison and a fine of a thousand crowns for, in the words of the sentence, spreading Russian Orthodox teaching, praising the Russian tsar and Russia and thereby inciting hatred against the Hungarian authorities, supposedly encroaching on the rights of the Hungarian king.”443 There were even martyrdoms, such as that of the priest Maximus Sandovich, who had been ordained by Vladyka Anthony.

“Vladyka Anthony struggled with the unia and both by the printed word and in his sermons he often addressed this theme. He tried by all means to destroy the incorrect attitude towards the unia which had been established in Russia, according to which it was the same Orthodoxy, only commemorating the Pope of Rome. With profound sorrow and irritation he said: ‘They can in no way accept this simple truth, that the unia is a complete entry into the Roman Catholic church with the recognition of the Orthodox Church as a schism..., with the recognition of all the Latin saints and with a condemnation of the Orthodox saints as having been schismatics outside the true Church…’

“… Vladyka Anthony also laboured much to establish in Russian society an Orthodox attitude towards Catholicism. In educated Russian society and in ecclesiastical circles in the Synodal period of the Russian Church the opinion was widespread that Catholicism was one of the branches of Christianity which, as V.S. Soloviev taught, was bound at the end of time to unite into one Christianity with the other supposed branches - Orthodoxy and Protestantism, about which the holy Church supposedly prayed in her litanies: ‘For the prosperity of the Holy Churches of God and for the union of all’.

“The correct attitude towards Catholicism as an apostate heresy was so shaken that the Holy Synod under the influence of the Emperor Peter I and with the blessing of his favourite, the protestantising Metropolitan Theophan Prokopovich, allowed Swedish prisoners-of-war in Siberia to marry Russian girls without the obligatory conversion to Orthodoxy. Soon this uncanonical practice of mixed marriages became law and spread, especially in the western regions. In his diocese Vladyka Anthony strictly forbade the clergy to celebrate mixed marriages.

“Vladyka Anthony well knew that Catholic influence in the midst of the Russian clergy was introduced through the theological schools: ‘We have lost (an Orthodox attitude towards Catholicism) because those guides by which we studied in school and which constitute the substance of our theological, dogmatic and moral science,

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443 Voeikov, So Tsarem i Bez Tsaria (With and Without the Tsar), Moscow, 1995, p. 41.
are borrowed from the Catholics and Protestants; we are left only with straight heterodox errors which are known to all and have been condemned by ecclesiastical authorities…’

“Seeing the abnormal situation of church life in subjugated Carpathian Rus’, Vladyka Anthony turned to the Ecumenical Patriarch Joachim III with a request to accept the Orthodox Galicians and Carpatho-Russians under his omophorion, since the Russian Synod for political reasons was unable to spread its influence there. The patriarch willingly agreed and appointed Vladyka Anthony as his exarch for Galicia and Carpathian Rus’. The Galicians, after finishing work in the fields and in spite of the great obstacles involved in crossing the border, sometimes with a direct danger to their lives, made pilgrimages in large groups to the Pochaev Lavra. Many Carpatho-Russians and Galicians entered the Volhynia theological seminary.

“Under the influence of all these undertakings, the Orthodox movement in these areas began to grow in an elemental manner with each year that passed. This elicited repressions on the part of the Austro-Hungarian government, which tried to suppress the movement. The persecution grew and soon Vladyka was forced to speak out in defence of the persecuted Christians. In August, 1913 he published an encyclical letter in which he eloquently portrayed all the woes and persecutions of the Orthodox population of the western regions. In going through the various instances of Catholics humiliating Orthodox, he cited the following example of the firmness of the persecuted and the cruelty of the persecutors: ‘Virgins who had gathered together to save their souls in fasting and prayer were stripped in winter and driven out onto a frozen lake, like the 40 martyrs of Sébaste, after which some of them soon died. Thus do they torture our Russians in Hungary and Austria in broad daylight in our civilized age…’

“But when massive arrests and tortures of the Orthodox began, and there was a trial of 94 Orthodox in Sihet, Vladyka Anthony composed a special prayer and petitions in the litanies, which were read in all the churches of the Volhynia diocese in the whole period of the trial, which lasted for two months.

“This was the only voice raised in defence of the persecuted, not only in Russia but also throughout Europe.

“The Austro-Hungarian political circles, in agreement with the Vatican, took decisive measures to suppress the incipient mass return to Orthodoxy of the Carpatho-Russians and Galicians. It seems that they undertook diplomatic negotiations in St. Petersburg in order to remove the main cause of the movement that had arisen, Vladyka Anthony, from his Volhynia see.”444

On May 20, 1914 Archbishop Anthony was duly transferred to Kharkov…

“The Balkan wars of 1912-13,” writes Dominic Lieven, “had greatly enlarged Serbian and Rumanian territory, together with the ambitions and self-confidence of Serbian and Rumanian nationalists. The Habsburg Monarchy contained large and discontented Serbian and Rumanian minorities. In 1914 Vienna feared that it would soon lose all its influence over the independent Balkan states, which in turn would contribute to its inability to control the Slav and Rumanian populations of the Monarchy. In more general terms, the rulers of the Habsburg state believed that a reassertion of the empire’s power and vitality was essential in order to overawe its potential foreign and domestic enemies, and to contradict the widely prevalent assumption that the Monarchy was moribund and doomed to disappear in the era of nationalism and democracy.”

The problem of the persecution of Orthodox minorities in the Hungarian dominions was becoming an important source of tension. Thus the Romanians of the Romanian kingdom complained that the Romanian inhabitants of Transylvania were being maltreated by their Hungarian overlords. “Tisza, the Hungarian Prime Minister, recognised the problem and tried to appease the Rumanian nationalists, who were mainly concentrated in Transylvania, by offering them autonomy in such areas as religion and education but this was not enough for the Rumanians within Hungary and negotiations broke off in February 1914…”

The other hotspot, as we have seen, was Galicia. Providentially, however, the outbreak of the First World War, and the success of the Russian offensive in Galicia in 1915, removed many of the dangers that Archbishop Anthony had warned about. Patriotic emotion and reverence for the Tsar revived, and concern for the fate of the Orthodox Christians in Serbia and Galicia made the struggle, in the minds of many, into a holy war in defence of Orthodoxy against militant Catholicism and Protestantism.

Relations between Vienna and Belgrade continued to be tense. As Clark writes, “Austrian hostility to Belgrade’s triumphant progress was reinforced from the autumn of 1913 by dark tidings from the areas conquered by Serbian forces. From Austrian Consul-General Jehlitschka in Skopje came reports in October 1913 of atrocities against the local inhabitants. One such spoke of the destruction of ten small villages whose entire population had been exterminated. The men were first forced to come out of the village and shot in lines; the houses were then set on fire, and when the women and children fled from the flames, they were killed with bayonets. In general, the consul-general reported, it was the officers who shot the men; the killing of the women and children was left to the enlisted men. Another source described the behaviour of Serbian troops after the taking of Gostivar, one of the towns in an area where there had been an Albanian uprising against the Serbian invaders. Some 300 Gostivar Muslims who had played no role in the uprising were...”

446 Macmillan, op. cit., p. 506.
arrested and taken out of the town during the night in groups of twenty to thirty to be beaten and stabbed to death with rifle butts and bayonets (gunshots would have woken the sleeping inhabitants of the town), before being thrown into a large open grave that had been dug beforehand for that purpose. These were not spontaneous acts of brutality, Jehlitschka concluded, but rather ‘a cold-blooded and systematic elimination or annihilation operation that appeared to have been carried out on orders from above.’

“Such reports, which accord… with those of the British officials in the area, inevitably affected the mood and attitude of the political leadership in Vienna. In May 1914, the Serbian envoy in Vienna, Jovanović, reported that even the French ambassador had complained to him about the behaviour of the Serbs in the new provinces; similar complaints were forthcoming from Greek, Turkish, Bulgarian and Albanian colleagues, and it was to be feared that the damage to Serbia’s reputation could have ‘very bad consequences’. The glib denials of Pašić and his ministers reinforced the impression that the government was either itself behind the atrocities or unwilling to do anything to prevent or investigate them. The Austro-Hungarian minister in Belgrade was amused to see leader articles in the Viennese press advising the Serbian government to go easy on the minorities and win them over by a policy of conciliation. Such advice, he observed in a letter to Berchtold, might well be heeded in ‘civilised states’. But Serbija was a state where ‘murder and killing have been raised to a system’. The impact of these reports on Austrian policy is difficult to measure – they were hardly surprising to those in Vienna who already subscribed to a grossly stereotypical view of Serbia and its culture. At the very least, they underscored in Vienna’s eyes the political illegitimacy of Serbian territorial expansion.

“Nevertheless: a war between Austria and Serbia did not appear likely in the spring and summer of 1914. The mood in Belgrade was relatively calm in the spring of that year, reflecting the exhaustion and sense of satiation that followed the Balkan Wars. The instability of the newly conquered areas and the civil-military crisis that racked Serbia during May gave grounds to suspect that the Belgrade government would be focusing mainly on tasks of domestic consolidation for the foreseeable future. In a report on 24 May 1914, the Austro-Hungarian minister in Belgrade, Baron Giesl, observed that although Serbian troop numbers along the Albanian border remained high, there seemed little reason to fear further incursions. And three weeks later, on 16 June, a dispatch from Gellinek, the military attaché in Belgrade, struck a similarly placed note. It was true that officers on holiday had been recalled, reservists asked not to leave their current addresses and the army was being kept at a heightened state of readiness. But there were no signs of aggressive intentions towards either Austro-Hungary or Albania. All was quiet on the southern front…”

447 Clark, op. cit., pp. 112-114.
and became the trustee of the fulfilment of the Corfu accord. In Russia the Corfu protocol... was known as the 'Epirot-Albanian accord'. That is, the question of Epirus was not reduced to the level of an ‘internal affair’ of the newly created Albania, but was raised to the significance of an international agreement when the Orthodox Greek Epirots and the Mohammedan Albanians were recognized as parties to the agreement having equal rights. Our [Russian] press at that time – Pravitel’stvennij Vestnik, Sankt-Peterburgskia Vedomosti and the conservative Novoe Vremia – looked at the events in Epirus in precisely this way.”

Later, in the spring of 1915 the government of Albania was entrusted to an International Commission of Control. They appointed the German Prince Wilhelm of Wied as ruler. But an uprising by the Muslims of Central Albania drove him out in September...

“Unfortunately,” continues Selischev, “to this day the protocol of Corfu has not been fulfilled and is not being fulfilled by the Albanian side, neither in the part relating to the religious, nor in the part relating to the civil and educational rights of the Greek Epirots. In this sense the unchanging character of Albanian hostility is indicative. In 1914 the Albanian prime-minister Turkhan Pasha declared to the Rome correspondent of Berliner Tageblatt that ‘there can be no discussion’ of the autonomy of Epirus, and ‘for us there are no longer any “Epirots”, but there are only the inhabitants of provinces united to us by the London conference.’ Decades later, in 1967, another Albanian tyrant, Enver Khodja, proclaimed Albania to be the first officially atheist country in the world, where the Orthodox Church was banned and destroyed. The Serbs talk about the destruction of 2000 Orthodox churches.” 448

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For the Russian aristocrats, as Douglas Smith writes, “Nineteen fourteen would prove to be society’s last season and, even if only in retrospect, its brightest. Baroness Meyendorff later recalled that she had seen many sparkling social seasons, but ‘the last one, in 1914, ‘was by far the most brilliant’. Princess Marie Gagarin remembered that last season as one of wild partying. ‘As if foreseeing the approach of catastrophe and striving to stifle a growing apprehension, all Petersburg nervously indulged in amusement and merrymaking.’ It was a time of ‘unprecedented luxury and eloquence’; everywhere were champagne and fresh roses, lilacs and mimosas imported from the south of France. The highlight of the season was the black and white ball at the home of Countess Betsy Shuvalov, with the officers of the Chevaliers Gardes resplendent in their uniforms. Six months later, nearly all these young men lay dead, killed in the first battles of the First World War. Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovich cast these days in florid tones: ‘The gypsies cried, the glasses clinked, and the Romanian violinists, clad in red, hypnotized inebriated men and women into a daring attempt to explore the depths of vice. Hysteria reigned supreme...’”449


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“The atmosphere,” writes Montefiore, “was now overshadowed by a wild foreboding. The poets, playboys, dilettantes and aesthetes of the Silver Age – Blok called them ‘the children of Russia’s dreadful years’ – sensed the coming apocalypse and reacted in doom-laden carnival of reckless if morbid hedonism, seeking the essence of salvation, art and freedom in opium, Satanism and the transformative orgasm. The Symbolish poet-novelist Andrei Belyi warned ‘great will be the strife, strife the likes of which has never been seen in this world. Yellow hordes of Asians… will encrimson the fields of Europe in oceans of blood’, while Petersburg ‘will sink’. As strikes spread and war-clouds darkened, Blok felt the rumblings of a volcano:

And over Russia I see a quiet
Far-spreading fire consume all.”450

But outside the salons, the mood was different. Many informed people understood that nothing good could come from the rapid growth of armaments on all sides. The nationalists wanted war to uphold the power and glory of their nation; while some internationalists wanted it in order to overthrow the thrones of kings and introduce universal democracy…

The mood was particularly belligerent in Berlin, from where President Woodrow Wilson’s emissary, Colonel Edward House, wrote to him: “The situation is extraordinary. It is militarism run stark mad. Unless someone acting for you can bring about a different understanding there is some day to be an awful cataclysm…”451

Indeed, “there is no doubt,” writes Clark, “that, viewed from across the Atlantic, pre-war Europe presented a curious spectacle. Senior statesmen, emperors and kings attended public occasions wearing military uniform; elaborate military reviews were an integral part of the public ceremonial of power; immense illuminated naval displays drew huge crowds and filled the pages of the illustrated journals; conscript armies grew in size until they became male microcosms of the nation; the cult of military display entered the public and the private life of even the smallest communities…”452

There was not only a certain fatalistic acceptance of the probability of war in both Germany and Russia. The Germans had been preparing to start one for a long time. Thus as early as 1905 they had already decided on the Schlieffen campaign plan, involving the violation of Belgium’s neutrality, the conquest of France and then the attack on Russia.

This was a very stupid plan, because the invasion of Belgium was the one event guaranteed to bring Britain into the war against Germany in defence of a country it had a specific defence treaty with.

451 House, in Macmillan, op. cit., p. 509.
As Barbara Tuchman writes, “A hundred years of German philosophy went into the making of this decision in which the seed of self-destruction lay embedded, waiting for its hour. The voice was Schlieffen’s, but the hand was the hand of Fichte who saw the German people chosen by Providence to occupy the supreme place in the history of the universe, of Hegel who saw them leading the world to a glorious destiny of compulsory Kultur, of Nietzsche who told them that Supermen were above ordinary controls, of Treitschke who set the increase of power as the highest moral duty of the state, of the whole German people, who called their temporal ruler the ‘All-Highest’…

“[This] body of accumulated egoism… suckled the German people and created a nation fed on ‘the desperate delusion of the will that deems itself absolute’.”

However, apart from such “desperate delusions”, the Germans had eminently pragmatical reasons for believing that now was the best time to fight Russia; for Russia’s programme of military reconstruction still had three years to run. Moreover, as Stolypin said some years earlier, if Russia were given just twenty years of peace she would become unrecognizable – that is, unrecognizably stronger…

Indeed, seen from Germany’s point of view, the growth in Russia’s military power was both impressive and threatening. As Hew Strachan writes, “between 1908 and 1913 [Russia’s] industrial production increased by 50 per cent, an expansion that was largely fuelled by defence-related output. Russia’s army was already the biggest in Europe. By 1917 it would be three times the size of Germany’s…” That is why the chief of the German general staff, von Moltke, who had a healthy respect for Russia’s improving military capabilities, was in favour of a preventive war against her…

In May, 1914, while the Tsar was visiting Romania, the German Kaiser met the heir to the Austrian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Colonel Vladimir Voeikov, a close friend of the Tsar and commendant of the Guard at Tsarskoye Selo, wrote: “At this meeting, the question was supposedly discussed of the necessity of beginning a war against Russia and the Entente in 1914, on the presupposition that the Russian army would grow significantly with each year and the struggle would become more difficult. They said that the only voice that sounded out against the war at that time belonged to Archduke Franz Ferdinand…”

The Archduke was also against a war against Serbia, which made his murder by Serbian terrorists only a few weeks later both ironic and tragic. He didn’t like the Serbs, and thought that the Austrians could easily defeat them. “But what then?” he asked in 1913. “First of all Europe would fall on us and see us as disturber of the peace. And God help us if we annex Serbia…”

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456 Voeikov, op. cit., p. 62.
The Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 began to look fragile in the period 1912-14. On the one hand, after the Germans threw in the towel in the Naval Arms Race, their perceived threat to the British became smaller, so some in London began to think about a possible alliance with Berlin instead of St. Petersburg. And on the other hand, the Russians began expanding their zones of influence in Persia, in Tibet and on the Russo-Chinese border, which threatened to reignite the fires of Anglo-Russian global rivalry.458

The fragility of the Convention was exposed in a different way in December, 1913, when the Ottomans appointed the German Lieutenant-General Liman von Sanders to oversee the whole of the training of the Ottoman army, and to be in charge of the First Army Corps, making him responsible for the defence of the Straits and of Constantinople itself. The Russians were thoroughly alarmed: free passage through the Straits was a priority of their foreign policy in view of its importance for the vital grain export trade. But neither the French nor the British responded as the Russians had hoped to the appointment of von Sanders. For neither the French, with their huge financial investment in the Ottoman empire, nor the British with their traditional desire to control all major seaways (a British admiral was in charge of the training of the Ottoman navy), wanted to replace the Ottomans with the Russians as the masters of the Straits... 459

So it began to dawn on some of the Russian elite that perhaps a more natural alliance for their country would be with the power they had been in alliance with in the 1870s and 1880s, Germany, rather than perfidious Albion. Thus in February, 1914 the interior minister Peter Nikolayevich Durnovo sent a memorandum to the Tsar in which he feared that the face-off between the two continental blocs could well lead to a war that would certainly not benefit Russia and might well lead to revolution. He counselled an alliance with Germany instead of England, but without breaking the alliance with France.460

However, the French under their hawkish President Poincaré put pressure on the Russians to remain in the Entente, offering the tantalizing bait of generous loans to build strategic railways to the German frontier. (In 1915 the British and French added the promise of the Straits and Constantinople.) And although, according to Witte, 90% of Russians did not want to go to war461, the remaining 10% included most of the decision-making elites. For them, Russia was obliged to intervene on Serbia’s side in any Austro-Serbian war... Durnovo and his like argued that “official policy exaggerated the importance of the Straits and Russia’s supposed ‘mission’ to lead the Slavs at a time when its overriding priorities needed to be peace and good relations with its German and Austrian neighbours. But the options open to Russia were

458 Clark, op. cit., pp. 322-325.
459 Clark, op. cit., pp. 338-345.
461 Clark, op. cit., p. 355.
difficult, and there were powerful and rational arguments to justify the foreign policy adopted by Petersburg.”

So for the time being the unnatural Entente between the most authoritarian and the most democratic of the Great Powers remained in existence. The Russians sought a stronger, military alliance with their traditional enemies, France and Britain, in order to defend themselves against their traditional ally, Germany, whose boorish intervention in the Bosnian crisis was still deeply resented and who would most likely support Austria in any war between Russia and Austria over Serbia. And while the British under their canny Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey never committed themselves to the French and Russians as much as the French and Russians did to each other, there was never any real question about whose side they were on.

The Tsar himself was far from wanting war with Germany, and made several attempts to mend fences with the Emperors of Germany and Austria in the pre-war years. But he was not swayed by Durnovo’s arguments. Especially important for him was the question of the Straits. Turkey, too, was rearming, and Enver Pasha had ordered two new battleships from Germany that would dominate the Black Sea. But “Russia could not risk the choking off of 50 per cent of the exports through the Straits. It had hoped to postpone any action until it was fully rearmed, but time was running out. Enver’s two battleships were about to arrive…”

“In a conversation with [British] Ambassador Buchanan at the beginning of April 1914,” writes Clark, “he observed that ‘it was commonly supposed that there was nothing to keep Germany and Russia apart.’ This, however, ‘was not the case: there was the question of the Dardanelles,’ where the Tsar feared that the Germans were working to shut Russia into the Black Sea. Should Germany attempt such a thing, it was essential that the three powers of the Entente unite together more closely to make it clear to Berlin that ‘all three would fight together against German aggression.’”

Meanwhile, the Masons were preparing to use the coming war to overthrow the dynasty… Now at the beginning of the war national loyalties proved stronger than brotherhood in Masonry. Thus Oleg Platonov points out “that all the main Masonic orders of the warring countries were in favour of war: the Great national lodge of England, the Grand Orient of France, the Grand Orient of the nations of Russia, the Old Prussian lodges and the Great lodge of Hamburg. The latter was the foundation of the Great Serbian lodge, members of which were involved in the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo.”

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463 Carter, *op. cit.*, p. 372. Again, the memory of the Bosnian crisis appears to have been important in this connection. For, as Prime Minister Herbert Asquith said: after Bosnia’s annexation, “incredible as it might seem, the Government could form no theory of German policy which fitted all the known facts, except that they wanted war…”
466 Platonov, *Ternovij Venets Rossii* (Russia’s Crown of Thorns), Moscow, 1998, p. 344. “In the course of the investigation into the case of the murder of the Archduke Ferdinand it emerged that the
However, whatever their personal nationalism, the Masons of different countries were united in their desire to destroy the monarchy in its traditionally Orthodox, autocratic form.

The man to watch here was A.I. Guchkov the Old Ritualist and Masonic leader of the Octobrists. “Armis”, a pseudonym for a Duma delegate and a former friend of Guchkov, wrote: “Already in 1909, in the Commission of State Defence, its president, the well-known political and social activist Guchkov declared that it was necessary to prepare by all means for a future war with Germany.

“In order to characterize this activist it is necessary to say that in order to achieve his ends he was never particularly squeamish about methods and means. In the destruction of Russia he undoubtedly played one of the chief roles.

“In the following year, 1910, the newspaper Novoe Vremia became a joint-stock company, and a little later Guchkov was chosen as president of its editorial committee. From this moment there began on the columns of Novoe Vremia a special campaign against the Germans and the preparation of public opinion for war with Germany.

“Guchkov wrote to the workers of Novoe Vremia, Golos Moskvy and Golos Pravdy, which were unfailingly ruled by his directives:

“’Rattle your sabres a little more, prepare public opinion for war with the Germans. Write articles in such a way that between the lines will already be heard peals of weapon thunder.’

“People who know Guchkov well say that in his flat, together with the well-known A. Ksyunin, he composed articles of the most provocative character in relation to Germany.

“In 1912, during a reception for an English military mission, Guchkov turned to those present with the following toast:

“’Gentlemen! I drink to the health of the English army and fleet, who are not only our friends, but also our allies.’

“And within the close circle of the members of the Commission of State Defence, he declared: ‘Today Germany has suffered a decisive defeat: war is inevitable, if only the Tsar does not stop it.’

assassins Princip and Gabrilovich were Masons. The plan of the assassination was worked out by the political organization, ‘The People’s Defence’. Later, already in 1926, a representative of the Masonic circles of Serbia, Lazarevich, at a masonic banquet in the House of the Serbian Guard in Belgrade, officially recognized that ‘Masonry and “The People’s Defence” are one and the same’ (op. cit., p. 344). See also V.F. Ivanov, Russkaia Intelligentsia i Masonstvo ot Petra I do nashikh dney (The Russian Intelligentsia and Masonry from Peter I to our days), Moscow, 1997, pp. 395-398.
“In March, 1914, Guchkov at one dinner warned his acquaintances that they should not go abroad in the summer, and in particular – not to Germany.

“I don’t advise you to go abroad. War will unfailingly break out this summer: it has been decided. Germany can turn as she wants, but she cannot turn away from war.’ And at these words Guchkov smiled.

“To the question of one of those present: who needed a war?, Guchkov replied:

“‘France must have Alsace-Lorraine and the Rhine; Russia – all the Slavic lands and an exit from the Black Sea; England will lap up the German colonies and take world trade into her hands.’

“To the objection that the Russian and German emperors would hardly enter such a dangerous world war, there followed Guchkov’s bold reply:

“‘We have foreseen this... and we shall arrange it so that both of them will find themselves before a fait accompli.

“Then it was pointed out to Guchkov that the Triple Alliance represented a formidable military power, to which Guchkov objected:

“‘Italy, in accordance with a secret agreement with England, will not be on the side of Germany and Austria, and if the war goes well can stab them in the back. The plan of the future war has already been worked out in detail by our allied staffs (English, French and Russian), and in no way will the war last for more than three months.’

“Then Guchkov was asked: ‘Tell us, Alexander Ivanovich, don’t you think that the war may be prolonged contrary to your expectations? It will require the most colossal exertion of national nerves, and very possibly it will be linked with the danger of popular discontent and a coup d’etat.’

“Smiling, Guchkov replied: ‘In the extreme case, the liquidation of the Dynasty will be the greatest benefit for Russia...’” 467

Guchkov’s prognosis was extraordinarily accurate. This leads us to conclude that war in Europe and revolution in Russia were if not “inevitable”, as many thought, at any rate to a large degree determined by the Masonic solidarity of the elites in all the combatant powers. Only one human actor, as Guchkov admitted, could still say no and stop it – the Tsar; and only the one Divine Actor could prevent it if the peoples were worthy of it – He Who said of Himself: “I am He Who makes peace and creates wars...” (Isaiah 45.7)

70. ORTHODOXY AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR

By the summer of 1914 the Orthodox commonwealth of nations had reached its zenith from an external, political and economic point of view. The great Russian empire, in which the majority of Orthodox Christians lived, stretched from the Baltic to the Pacific, and its influence spread more widely still, from the de facto protectorate it exercised over the Orthodox of the Balkans and the Middle East, to its important ecclesiastical missions in Persia, China, Japan, and the United States. It was making mighty strides economically, and was modernizing and strengthening its military capacity to a significant degree. Meanwhile, the Orthodox Balkan states had just driven the Turks out of Europe (almost), and Serbia, Romania and Greece had reached their greatest territorial extent since their foundation as states in the previous century. Serbia's population growth, in particular, was remarkable: from 2.9 million subjects before the Balkan Wars to 4.4 million after them.

However, this was a bubble that was about to burst. All the Orthodox states had very serious internal problems. Anti-monarchism had taken over the minds and hearts of the wealthier classes in Russia and other Orthodox countries, and western heresies, spiritualism and even atheism were making deep inroads into the Church. In the Balkans, the recent victories over the Turks caused over-confidence and an increase in militarism and nationalism, with the military establishments ascendant over the civil administrations. In Serbia, in particular, the military contested control with the government over the newly-acquired territories in Macedonia, and “Apis”, Colonel Dragutin Dmitrijevich, the leading regicide of 1903 and inspirer of the terrorist “Black Hand” organization, was in charge of military intelligence...

In June, 1914 the Austro-Hungarians were holding military manoeuvres in Bosnia, and Archduke Franz Ferdinand, who in addition to being heir to the Habsburg throne was also Inspector General of the Armed Forces of the Empire, came to observe them with his wife. Ironically, Franz Ferdinand was known for his pro-Slav political views; he wanted to bring the Slav peoples of the Empire into its governing structure as the third main bloc together with the Germans and the Hungarians. This idea was known as “Trialism”.

“His ideas,” writes Simon Winder, “were well known so when he arrived in Bosnia-Herzegovina he was by a long way the most desirable imaginable candidate for assassination for any Serbian nationalist group. This was not just because any day now he could become a harsh, cold and effective Emperor but because Trialism could create a form of Slav solidarity which explicitly excluded the Kingdom of Serbia itself.”

“With overwhelming stupidity,” as Noel Malcolm writes, “his visit to Sarajevo was fixed for 28 June, the anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo and therefore the most sacred day in the mystical calendar of Serb nationalism.”

Christopher Clark writes: “The commemorations across the Serb lands were set to be especially intense in 1914, because this was the first St. Vitus’s Day since the ‘liberation’ of Kosovo during the Second Balkan War in the previous year. ‘The holy flame of Kosovo, which has inspired generations [of Serbs] has now burst into a mighty fire,’ the Black Hand journal Pijemont announced on 28 June 1914. ‘Kosovo is free! Kosovo is avenged!’ For Serb ultra-nationalists, both in Serbia itself and across the Serbian irredentist network in Bosnia, the arrival of the heir apparent in Sarajevo on this of all days was a symbolic affront that demanded a response.”

Seven assassins from Mlada Bosna were waiting for the Archduke and his wife. The first attempt to kill them failed, but the second, by the Nietzschean Gavrilo Princip, was successful. By an extraordinary coincidence, on the very same day Rasputin was stabbed in the stomach by a mad woman and so separated from the Russian Tsar for the rest of the summer. Thus were the two men who might have prevented their respective emperors from going to war removed from the scene. Evidently it was God’s will: exactly one month later, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, followed soon after by Russia’s mobilization in defence of her ally. And a few days after that, all the Great Powers of Europe were at war...

Many thought that war would be averted as it had been averted at similar moments of crisis several times in recent years. But it was different this time, because Austria-Hungary wanted war this time. “In October 1913,” writes Dominic Lieven, “the Austro-Hungarian Common Ministerial Council had agreed that Serbia had to be destroyed as an independent state in order to restore Austria’s position in the Balkans and stop the danger which South Slav nationalism’s undermining Habsburg authority within the empire’s borders. As Berchtold explained at that time, the key difficulty was to obtain German support for this policy. The Austrian premier, Count Karl von Stürgkh, added that the precondition for success had to be ‘that we have been clearly injured by Serbia, because that can lead to a conflict which entails Serbia’s execution’. Without such a pretext and without Berlin’s support, military action against Serbia was impossible, which explains why in early June 1914 the Austrian Foreign Ministry’s key ‘strategy paper’ outlining future short-term policy in the Balkans confined itself to advocating not military but purely diplomatic measures. But the circumstances surrounding Franz Ferdinand’s assassination provided exactly the scenario that the October 1913 ministerial conference had desired…”

As David Stevenson writes: “… Although in summer 1914 international tension was acute, a general war was not inevitable and if one had not broken out then it might not have done so at all. It was the Habsburg monarchy’s response to Sarajevo that caused a crisis. Initially all it seemed to do was order an investigation. But secretly the Austrians obtained a German promise of support for drastic retaliation [on 6 July]. On 23 July they presented an ultimatum to their neighbour, Serbia.

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471 In 2014, the Serbs erected a monument to Princip in Belgrade. On the significance of that event, see Anton Grigoriev, “Stoletinij spor o tom...” (The 100-year quarrel about..), http://anton-grigoriev.livejournal.com/1668823.html?view=17288663#17288663.
472 Lieven, Towards the Flame. Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia, London: Allen Lane, 2015, p. 316.
Princip and his companions were Bosnians (and therefore Habsburg subjects), but the ultimatum alleged they had conceived their plot in Belgrade, that Serbian officers and officials had supplied them with their weapons, and that Serbian frontier authorities had helped them across the border. It called on Serbia to denounce all separatist activities, ban publications and organizations hostile to Austria-Hungary, and co-operate with Habsburg officials in suppressing subversion and conducting a judicial inquiry. The Belgrade government’s reply, delivered just within the forty-eight hours deadline, accepted nearly every demand but consented to Austrian involvement in a judicial inquiry only if that inquiry was subject to Serbia’s constitution and to international law. The Austrian leaders in Vienna seized on this pretext to break off relations immediately, and on 28 July declared war. The ultimatum impressed most European governments by its draconian demands…”

The Serbs had some plausible alibis. Though a Great Serbian nationalist, the Serbian Prime Minister Pašić, as Max Hastings writes, “was an inveterate enemy of Apis, some of whose associates in 1913 discussed murdering him. The prime minister and many of his colleagues regarded the colonel as a threat to the country’s stability and even existence; internal affairs minister Milan Protić spoke of the Black Hand to a visitor on 14 June as ‘a menace to democracy’. But in a society riven by competing interests, the civilian government lacked authority to remove or imprison Apis, who was protected by the patronage of the army chief of staff.”

Although there is evidence that Pašić was trying to control the Black Hand, he had not succeeded by 1914. Moreover, being himself a Great Serbian nationalist, at no point in his career did he make a determined effort to quench that nationalist-revolutionary mentality which ultimately led to the shots in Sarajevo. The very fact that he warned the Austrians about the plot shows that he knew what Apis was planning. As for Apis himself, besides taking part in the regicide of 1903, he confessed to participation in plots to murder King Nicholas of Montenegro, King Constantine of Greece, Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany and King Ferdinand of Bulgaria. That such a murderous fanatic should be in charge of Serbia’s military intelligence tells us much about the influence within Serbia of the nationalist-revolutionary heresy. “In fact,” as Stevenson writes, “Serbia’s army and intelligence service were out of control” – at least until 1917, when Apis was shot…

The terrorists were given four pistols and six bombs by Major Vojin Tankosić of the Black Hand, and were guided into Bosnia by “a Serbian government informer, who passed word about their movements, and about the bombs and pistols in their luggage, to the Interior Ministry in Belgrade. His report, which the prime minister read and summarized in his own hand, made no mention of a plot against Franz Ferdinand. Pašić commissioned an investigation, and gave orders that the movement of weapons from Serbia to Bosnia should be stopped; but he went no further. A Serbian minister later claimed that Pašić told the cabinet at the end of May or the

476 Stevenson, op. cit., p. 12.
beginning of June that some assassins were on their way to Sarajevo to kill Franz Ferdinand. Whether or not this is true – no minutes were taken of cabinet meetings – Pašić appears to have instructed Serbia’s envoy in Vienna to pass on to the Austrian authorities only a vague general warning, perhaps because he was unwilling to provide the Habsburgs with a fresh and extremely serious grievance against his country.”⁴⁷⁷ According to Margaret Macmillan, Pašić “got wind of what was up but was either unable or unwilling to do anything. In any case it was probably too late; the conspirators had arrived safely in Sarajevo and linked up with local terrorists…”⁴⁷⁸

As Malcolm writes, while “many theories still circulate about Apis’s involvement and his possible political motives, … the idea that the Serbian government itself had planned the assassination can be firmly rejected.

“Even the Austro-Hungarian government did not accuse Serbia of direct responsibility for what had happened. Their ultimatum of 23 July complained merely that the Serbian government had ‘tolerated the machinations of various societies and associations directed against the monarchy, unrestrained language on the part of the press, glorification of the perpetrators of outrages, participation of officers and officials in subversive agitation’ – all of which was essentially true.”⁴⁷⁹

The Austrians saw the assassination as a good reason or excuse for dealing with the Serbian problem once and for all. As Stevenson admits, “the summary time limit gave the game away, as did the peremptory rejection of Belgrade’s answer. The ultimatum had been intended to start a showdown…”⁴⁸⁰

“The Serbian evidence,” continues Stevenson, “confirms that Austria-Hungary had good grounds for rigorous demands. But it also shows that the Belgrade government was anxious for a peaceful exit from the crisis whereas the Austrians meant to use it as the pretext for violence. Austria-Hungary’s joint council of ministers decided on 7 July that the ultimatum should be so stringent as to ‘make a refusal almost certain, so that the road to a radical solution by means of a military action should be opened’. On 19 July it agreed to partition Serbia with Bulgaria, Albania, and Greece, leaving only a small residual state under Habsburg economic domination. Yet previously Vienna had been less bellicose: the chief of the general staff, Franz Conrad von Hötzendorff, had pressed for war against Serbia since being appointed in 1906, but his appeals had been rejected. The Emperor Franz Joseph was a cautious and vastly experienced ruler who remembered previous defeats. He and his advisers moved to war only because they believed they faced an intolerable problem for which peaceful remedies were exhausted.”⁴⁸¹

Austria’s aggressiveness was reinforced by Germany; on July 6 the Kaiser gave the Austrians the famous “blank cheque” promising them support whatever they did. As

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⁴⁷⁷ Hastings, op. cit., p. xxxvi.
⁴⁸⁰ Stevenson, op. cit., p. 11.
the German historian Fritz Fischer wrote: “The official documents afford ample proof that during the July crisis the emperor, the German military leaders and the foreign ministry were pressing Austria-Hungary to strike against Serbia without delay, or alternatively agree to the dispatch of an ultimatum to Serbia couched in such sharp terms as to make war between the two countries more than probable, and that in doing so they deliberately took the risk of a continental war against Russia and France.”

On this reading, the primary responsibility for the outbreak of war would seem to belong to the two German-speaking nations, especially Germany. As David Fromkin writes: “The generals in Berlin in the last week of July were agitating for war – not Austria’s war, one aimed at Serbia, but Germany’s war, aimed at Russia… Germany deliberately started a European war to keep from being overtaken by Russia…” Malcolm confirms this verdict: “it is now widely agreed that Germany was pushing hard for a war, in order to put some decisive check on the growing power of Russia”. Again, as J.M. Roberts points out, it was Germany that first declared war on France and Russia when neither country threatened her. And by August 4 Germany had “acquired a third great power [Britain] as an antagonist, while Austria still had none… In the last analysis, the Great War was made in Berlin…”

As for Russia, according to Lieven, her rulers “did not want war. Whatever hankering Nicholas II may ever have had for military glory had been wholly dissipated by the Japanese war. That conflict had taught the whole ruling elite that war and revolution were closely linked. Though war with Germany would be more popular than conflict with Japan had been, its burdens and dangers would also be infinitely greater. Russian generals usually had a deep respect for the German army, to which on the whole they felt their own army to be inferior. Above all, Russian leaders had every reason to feel that time was on their side. In strictly military terms, there was good reason to postpone conflict until the so-called ‘Great Programme’ of armaments was completed in 1917-18. In more general terms, Russia already controlled almost one-sixth of the world’s land surface, whose hitherto largely untapped potential was now beginning to be developed at great speed. It was by no means only Petr Stolypin who believed that, given 20 years of peace, Russia would be transformed as regards its wealth, stability and power. Unfortunately for Russia, both the Germans and the Austrians were well aware of all the above facts. Both in Berlin and Vienna it was widely believed that fear of revolution would stop Russia from responding decisively to the Austro-German challenge: but it was also felt that war now was much preferable to a conflict a decade hence.

“In fact, for the Russian government it was very difficult not to stand up to the Central Powers in July 1914. The regime’s legitimacy was at stake, as were the

482 Fischer, Germany’s Aims in the First World War, 1961, chapter 2.
patriotism, pride and self-esteem of the key decision-makers. Still more to the point was the conviction that weakness would fatally damage Russia’s international position and her security. If Serbia became an Austrian protectorate, that would allow a very significant diversion of Habsburg troops from the southern to the Russian front in the event of a future war. If Russia tamely allowed its Serbian client to be gobbled up by Austria, no other Balkan state would trust its protection against the Central Powers. All would move into the latter’s camp, as probably would the Ottoman Empire. Even France would have doubts about the usefulness of an ally so humiliatingly unable to stand up for its prestige and its vital interests. Above all, international relations in the pre-1914 era were seen to revolve around the willingness and ability of great powers to defend their interests. In the age of imperialism, empires that failed to do this were perceived as moribund and ripe for dismemberment. In the judgement of Russian statesmen, if the Central Powers got away with the abject humiliation of Russia in 1914 their appetites would be whetted rather than assuaged. At some point in the near future vital interest would be threatened for which Russia would have to fight, in which case it made sense to risk fighting now, in the hope that this would deter Berlin and Vienna, but in the certainty that if war ensued Serbia and France would fight beside Russia, and possibly Britain and certain other states as well.”

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Not only most European governments at the time, but also most historians since then, have accepted the account outlined in the last section. But there are some “revisionists” who would spread the blame more evenly. Among these is Professor Christopher Clark (like Dominic Lieven, a historian of Cambridge University), who points out, first, that the news of the assassination of the Archduke was greeted with jubilation in Serbia. Nor did the Serbian government led by Pašić do anything to calm Serbian passions or reassure Austrian opinion – quite the reverse. So whatever judgement one forms of the Austrian actions, there is no doubt that they were sorely provoked… The Russians also incurred guilt at this point in that they did little to rein in the nationalist passions of the Serbs, but rather supported them…

Secondly, Clark argues that the Germans’ famous “blank cheque” of July 6 was a miscalculation based on the false assumption that the Russians would not intervene on the side of the Serbs - first of all, because they were not yet ready for war (their military programme was not due for completion until 1917), and secondly because, as the Kaiser repeatedly said, he could not imagine that the Tsar would side “with the regicides” against two monarchical powers.

The other possibility considered by the Germans was that the Russians wanted to mobilize and start a European war. If that was the case, thought the Germans (there was some evidence for the hypothesis in the French and Russian newspapers), then

so be it - better that the war begin now rather than later, when the advantage would be with the Russians. 489

Thirdly, the Germans blessed the Austrians to invade Serbia - but not start a world war. In fact, both of the German-speaking nations wanted to localize the conflict. This is not to deny the weighty evidence that the German military had been planning a preventive war against Russia and France for years. But in July, 1914, the German civilian leadership, and in particular the Chancellor Bethmann, even the Kaiser himself, were counting on the Austrians dealing with the Serbs and leaving it at that. They wanted them to act quickly in the hope that a quick Austrian victory would present the other Great Powers with a fait accompli that would deter them from further military action. But the Austrians dithered and delayed...

The fact that the Austro-Serbian conflict did not remain localized, but spread to engulf the whole of Europe was the result, according to Clark, of the structure of the alliance between Russia and France, in which an Austrian attack on Serbia was seen as a “tripwire” triggering Russian intervention on the side of Serbia, followed immediately by French intervention on the side of Russia. (Britain was also in alliance with France and Russia, but more loosely. For Britain, as it turned out, the tripwire was not Austria’s invasion of Serbia but Germany’s invasion of Belgium.) Clark produces considerable evidence to show that important figures in both the French, the Russian and the British leadership did not want the conflict to be localized, but wanted the trigger to be pulled because they thought war was inevitable and/or that this was the only way to deal with the perceived threat of German domination of Europe. This was particularly the position of the French President Poincaré, who travelled to Russia in the fourth week of July in order to stiffen the resolve of the Russians, but was also true of Russian Agriculture Minister Krivoshein and British First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill, who rejoiced on hearing that the Austrians had declared war on the Serbs on July 28. 490

Henry Kissinger has pointed to the guilt of all the major players in their commitment to the tripwire scenario – that is what he calls “their system of routinized confrontation”: “None of the leaders foresaw the scope of the looming catastrophe that their system of routinized confrontation backed by modern military machines was making almost certain sooner or later. And they all contributed to it, oblivious to the fact that they were dismantling an international order: France by its implacable commitment to regain Alsace-Lorraine, requiring war; Austria by its ambivalence between its national and its Central European responsibilities; Germany by attempting to overcome its fear of encirclement by serially staring down France and Russia side by side with a build-up of naval forces, seemingly blind to the lessons of history that Britain would surely oppose the largest land power on the Continent if it simultaneously acted as if it meant to threaten Britain’s naval pre-eminence. Russia, by its constant probing in all directions, threatened Austria and the remnants of the Ottoman Empire simultaneously. And Britain, by its ambiguity obscuring the degree of its growing commitment to the Allied side, combined the disadvantage of every course. Its support made France and Russia adamant; its aloof

489 Clark, op. cit., pp. 415-423.
490 Clark, op. cit., p. 552.
posture confused some German leaders into believing that Britain might remain neutral in a European war.”

In fact, Russia was not fully committed to the tripwire scenario. In 1912 Tsar Nicholas had been playing a waiting game – that is, waiting for the death of the Emperor Franz Josef, after which, it was believed, Austrian power would decline. And as recently as October, 1913 “St. Petersburg had been willing to leave Belgrade to its own devices... when the Austrians had issued an ultimatum demanding [the Serbs’] withdrawal from northern Albania.” However, some important personnel changes had taken place in the intervening months. First, Prime Minister Kokovtsov, an opponent of intervention in the Balkans, had been forced out by the nationalists in the government. Then, in January, 1914, when the Tsar offered the vacant post to Pyotr N. Durnovo, - in Clark’s words “a forceful and determined man who was adamantly opposed to Balkan entanglements of any kind” - Durnovo turned it down, and the post passed to Goremykin, a much weaker character. With this change there probably also passed the last chance for the Russian government to abandon the “tripwire” policy of the nationalists.

One could argue that the Tsar should have imposed his will on the foreign policy establishment whether they liked it or not. But times had changed greatly since the reign of the absolutist Tsar Peter the Great. Tsar Nicholas, though far from being the weak man that western historians almost invariably make him out to be, was not in a position simply to ignore what his ministers thought and impose his will on them. Like all European monarchs in this, the beginning of the age of democracy and the common man, he simply could not afford to ignore public opinion.

In any case, he was running out of wise and loyal men to place in the higher reaches of government. As Lieven points out, “he could not find a prime minister competent to do the job who would obey his orders and pursue the line he required. Talented officials were no longer willing to simply assume public responsibility for executing the tsar’s commands.”

The Tsar did not want war, and fully understood that it might destroy Russia in the end - which it did. But he was determined to defend the Serbs, come what may. And the other foreign policy considerations outlined by Lieven above also played their part in his thinking – especially his fears that the Dardanelles could be cut off for the Russian navy and Russian exports (as they had been briefly when Italy invaded Libya)... That is why the Tsar and his cabinet decided to defend the Serbs on July 24, a decision confirmed on July 25, leading to the beginning of preparations for war on July 26...

Evidence that the Tsar’s sincere desire to avert war by all honourable means is contained in the telegrams exchanged between Tsar Nicholas and the Serbian regent, Prince Alexander in the last days before the catastrophe. The prince, who had

492 Clark, op. cit., p. 484.
493 Clark, op. cit., p. 557.
494 Lieven, Towards the Flame, p. 347.
commanded the First Serbian Army in the Balkan wars and later became king, wrote to the Tsar: “The demands of the Austro-Hungarian note unnecessarily represent a humiliation for Serbia and are not in accord with the dignity of an independent state. In a commanding tone it demands that we officially declare in Serbian News, and also issue a royal command to the army, that we ourselves cut off military offensives against Austria and recognize the accusation that we have been engaging in treacherous intrigues as just. They demand that we admit Austrian officials into Serbia, so that together with ours they may conduct the investigation and control the execution of the other demands of the note. We have been given a period of 48 hours to accept everything, otherwise the Austro-Hungarian embassy will leave Belgrade. We are ready to accept the Austro-Hungarian demands that are in accord with the position of an independent state, and also those which would be suggested by Your Majesty; everyone whose participation in the murder is proven will be strictly punished by us. Certain demands cannot be carried out without changing the laws, and for that time is required. We have been given too short a period… They can attack us after the expiry of the period, since Austro-Hungarian armies have assembled on our frontier. It is impossible for us to defend ourselves, and for that reason we beseech Your Majesty to come as soon as possible to our aid…”

To this the Tsar replied on July 27: “In addressing me at such a serious moment, Your Royal Highness has not been mistaken with regard to the feelings which I nourish towards him and to my heart-felt disposition towards the Serbian people. I am studying the present situation with the most serious attention and My government is striving with all its might to overcome the present difficulties. I do not doubt that Your Highness and the royal government will make this task easier by not despising anything that could lead to a decision that would avert the horrors of a new war, while at the same time preserving the dignity of Serbia. All My efforts, as long as there is the slightest hope of averting bloodshed, will be directed to this aim. If, in spite of our most sincere desire, success is not attained, Your Highness can be assured that in no case will Russia remain indifferent to the fate of Serbia.”

Although the Tsar knew that resisting popular national feeling could lead to revolution, as Sazonov warned, he also knew that an unsuccessful war would lead to it still more surely. So the decisive factor in his decision was not popular opinion, but Russia’s ties of faith with Serbia. And if one good thing came out of the First World War it was the strengthening of that religious bond both during and after it. For as Prince Alexander replied to the Tsar: “Difficult times cannot fail to strengthen the bonds of deep attachment that link Serbia with Holy Slavic Rus’, and the feeling of eternal gratitude for the help and defence of Your Majesty will be reverently preserved in the hearts of all Serbs.”

The Tsar proved to be a faithful ally. In 1915, after being defeated by the Germans, the Serbian army was forced to retreat across the mountains to the Albanian coast. Tens of thousands began to die. Their allies looked upon them with indifference from their ships at anchor in the Adriatic. The Tsar informed his allies by telegram that they must immediately evacuate the Serbs, otherwise he would consider the fall of the Serbs as an act of the greatest immorality and he would withdraw from the Alliance. This telegram brought prompt action, and dozens of Italian, French and
English ships set about evacuating the dying army to Corfu, and from there, once they had recovered, to the new front that the Allies were forming in Salonika.

As the Serbian Bishop Nicholas (Velimirovich) wrote: “Great is our debt to Russia. The debt of Serbia to Russia, for help to the Serbs in the war of 1914, is huge – many centuries will not be able to contain it for all following generations. This is the debt of love, which without thinking goes to its death, saving its neighbour. ‘There is no greater love than this, that a man should lay down his life for his neighbour.’ These are the words of Christ. The Russian Tsar and the Russian people, having taken the decision to enter the war for the sake of the defence of Serbia, while being unprepared for it, knew that they were going to certain destruction. The love of the Russians for their Serbian brothers did not fear death, and did not retreat before it. Can we ever forget that the Russian Tsar, in subjecting to danger both his children and millions of his brothers, went to his death for the sake of the Serbian people, for the sake of its salvation? Can we be silent before Heaven and earth about the fact that our freedom and statehood were worth more to Russia than to us ourselves? The Russians in our days repeated the Kosovo tragedy. If the Russian Tsar Nicholas II had been striving for an earthly kingdom, a kingdom of petty personal calculations and egoism, he would be sitting to this day on his throne in Petrograd. But he chose the Heavenly Kingdom, the Kingdom of sacrifice in the name of the Lord, the Kingdom of Gospel spirituality, for which he laid down his own head, for which his children and millions of his subjects laid down their heads…”

The Austrians rejected the Serbs’ reply to their ultimatum on July 25, began mobilization on the same day, and declared war on July 28. On July 29 Russia mobilized the districts adjoining Austria (Odessa, Kiev, Moscow, Kazan). In fact, as Lieven points out, “so long as the Petersb…rg and Warsaw military districts were not mobilized, Russian preparations of war against Germany could not get very far.” But the Germans appeared to pay no attention to this fact – perhaps because their intelligence about Russian troop movements was faulty or confused. In any case, “as early as July 26, the Russian naval attaché in Berlin, Captain Evgenii Behrens, believed that the Germans had gone so far that that it would be impossible for them to withdraw now. Having served in Berlin throughout the Balkan Wars and the Liman von Sanders crisis, he reported that the Germans’ expectation of war was far greater now than at any time in the two previous years.”

There was now only one hope for the prevention of war: that the Emperors of Russia and Germany would get together and work out some compromise. It nearly happened. For in 1914 Europe was a family of nations united by a single dynasty and a cosmopolitan elite confessing what most considered to be a single Christianity, albeit divided into Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant varieties. The European

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495 Victor Salni and Svetlana Avlasovich, “Net bol’she toj liubvi, kak esli kto polozhit dushu svoiu za drugi svoia” (There is no greater love than that a man should lay down his life for his friend), http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page*pid=966.
496 Lieven, Towards the Flame, p. 333.
497 Lieven, Towards the Flame, p. 335.
498 Tsar Nicholas II became the godfather of the future King Edward VIII at his Anglican baptism (Carter, op. cit., p. 137), and in 1904 Kaiser Wilhelm was invited to be godfather of the Tsarevich Alexis (Niall Ferguson, The War of the World, London: Penguin, 2007, p. 100).
royal family was German in origin, being made up of branches of the Saxe-Coburg dynasty.499 Thus even the matriarch of the family, Queen Victoria of England, once told King Leopold of the Belgians: “My heart is so German...”500

For many generations, the Russian tsars and princes had taken brides from German princely families; Nicholas II, though thoroughly Russian in spirit, had much more German blood than Russian in his veins; and the Tsartsa Alexandra and her sister Grand Duchess Elizabeth were Hessian princesses with an English mother.501 However, a disunifying factor within the family was the fact that Alexandra and Minnie, the wives of King Edward VII of England and Tsar Alexander III of Russia, were sisters from the Danish dynasty; for the Danes nurtured an intense dislike of the Prussians, who had invaded their country in 1864, and so moved their husbands, and later their sons, King George V and Tsar Nicholas II, closer to each other and further away from Germany, thereby weakening the traditional hostility that existed between Russia and England and turning them against Germany. Meanwhile, the German Kaiser Wilhelm II reacted strongly against the liberalism of his English mother, and was attracted towards the militarist and fiercely anti-English monarchism of the Prussian aristocracy. In some ways, this also attracted him to autocratic Russia; but the developing alliance between Russia, Britain and France engendered in him and his circle a fear of “encirclement” and hostility against them all.

Nevertheless, in the summer of 1914 many hoped that the family links between the Kaiser and the Tsar would prevent war. For, as the London Standard had observed in 1894, “the influence of the Throne in determining the relations between European Power has never been disputed by those at all familiar with modern politics, it is sometimes lost sight of or ignored by the more flippant order of Democrats...”502 And the emperors did talk, even after the outbreak of war. But in this case the talking was to no avail. For in the last resort family unity (and the avoidance of world war) counted for less for the Kaiser than nationalist pride and solidarity with the Austrians, and less for the Tsar than solidarity in faith and blood with the Serbs...

On the morning of July 29 the Tsar received a telegram from the Kaiser pleading with him not to undertake military measures that would undermine his position as

501 However, as Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky) pointed out, the sisters were more English than German in their tastes and upbringing, taking after their English mother rather than their German father ("Homily on the Seventh Anniversary of the Martyric End of Emperor Nicholas II and the Entire Royal Family", Orthodox Life, vol. 31, no. 4, July-August, 1981).
502 Carter, The Three Emperors, London, 2010, p. 145. As Clark writes, “The European executives were still centred on the thrones and the men or women who sat on them. Ministers in Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia were imperial appointees. The three emperors had unlimited access to state papers. They also exercised formal authority over their respective armed forces. Dynastic institutions and networks structured the communications between states. Ambassadors presented their credentials to the sovereign in person and direct communications and meetings between monarchs continued to take place throughout the pre-war years; indeed, they acquired a heightened importance” (op. cit., p. 170).
mediator with Austria. “Saying ‘I will not be responsible for a monstrous slaughter’, the Tsar insisted that the order [for general mobilization] be cancelled. Yanushkevich [Chief of the Russian General Staff] reached for the phone to stay Dobrorolsky’s hand, and the messenger was sent running to the telegraph to explain that an order for partial mobilization was to be promulgated instead.”

However, as Sazonov hastened to tell the Tsar, the reversal of the previous order was impractical for purely military and logistical reasons. (The Kaiser encountered the same problem when, to the consternation of the German Chief of Staff von Moltke, he tried to reverse German mobilization a few days later; this was the “railway timetables problem.”) Moreover, Sazonov advised the Tsar to undertake a full mobilization because “unless he yielded to the popular demand for war and unsheathed the sword in Serbia’s behalf, he would run the risk of a revolution and perhaps the loss of his throne”.

The Tsar made one last appeal to the Kaiser: “I foresee that very soon I shall be overwhelmed by the pressure brought upon me and forced to take extreme measures which will lead to war.” On July 30 the Kaiser replied that he was neutral in the Serbian question (which he was not). And he reiterated the warning issued by the German Ambassador Pourtalès the previous day to the effect that “Germany favours the unappeasable attitude of Austria”. The Tsar now “abandoned any hope that a deal between the cousins could save peace and returned to the option of general mobilization…”

“The emperor is sometimes accused,” writes Lieven, “of ‘caving in’ to his generals in 1914 and thereby bringing on the descent into war. This is unfair. Nicholas was forced by the united pressure not just of the generals but also of the Foreign Ministry, the de facto head of the domestic government, and the spokesmen of the Duma and public opinion. In many ways, the surprise is that the emperor held out on his own for so long…”

Grand Duchess Elizabeth said that the Tsar had not wanted war. She blamed her cousin, the Kaiser, “who disobeyed the bidding of Frederick the Great and Bismarck to live in peace and friendship with Russia.” However, if Clark is right, the situation was both more complicated and more finely balanced than that. In the last analysis, both monarchs had cold feet about war. But both were pushed into it by the pressure of their subordinates and the logic of the opposing alliances to which they had willingly ascribed, at least to some degree.

This logic had been built up on both sides over the course of generations, and the monarchs were neither solely responsible for it nor able on their own to free themselves from its gravitational force... This is not to equate them from a moral point of view: as we shall see, the Kaiser and the Tsar were far from equal in terms of

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503 Clark, op. cit., p. 521.
504 Clark, op. cit., p. 513.
505 Lieven, Towards the Flame, p. 337.
moral stature. But it does help us to understand a little better why they both acquiesced in a war that was to destroy both their kingdoms and the very foundations of European civilization…

In any case, the die was now cast; war between Russia and Germany could no longer be prevented. The Tsar gave the order for general mobilization on July 31, and the Germans declared war on the next day, August 1, the feast of St. Seraphim of Sarov, the great prophet of the last times…

On that first day, as Lubov Millar writes, “large patriotic crowds gathered before the Winter Palace, and when the Emperor and Empress appeared on the balcony, great and joyful ovations filled the air. When the national anthem was played, the crowds began to sing enthusiastically.

“In a sitting room behind this balcony waited Grand Duchess Elizabeth, dressed in her white habit; her face was aglow, her eyes shining. Perhaps, writes Almedingen, she was thinking, ‘What are revolutionary agents compared with these loyal crowds? They would lay down their lives for Nicky and their faith and will win in the struggle.’ In a state of exaltation she made her way from the Winter Palace to the home of Grand Duke Constantine, where his five sons – already dressed in khaki uniforms – were preparing to leave for the front. These sons piously received Holy Communion and then went to the Romanov tombs and to the grave of Blessed Xenia of Petersburg before joining their troops.”

The great tragedy of the war from the Russian point of view was that the truly patriotic-religious mood prevalent at the beginning did not last, and those who rapturously applauded the Tsar in August, 1914 were baying for his blood less than three years later…

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Turning from the narrow legal question of war guilt to more fundamental moral issues and the overarching role of Divine Providence, we must first acknowledge that the fatal passions of pride and nationalist vainglory were common to all the combatants to some degree. Typical of the spirit of the time were the words of the Austrian chief of staff, Conrad von Hölzendorff, who on hearing of the assassination in Sarajevo said that they now had to fight Serbia (and probably Russia) “since an old monarchy and a glorious army must not perish without glory”. “Bethmann used what was perhaps the most revealing phrase of all when he said that for Germany to back down in the face of its enemies would be an act of self-castration. Such attitudes came in part from the German leaders’ social class and their times but Bismarck, who came out of the same world, had been strong enough to defy its code when he chose. He never allowed war to be forced upon him. It was Germany’s tragedy and that of Europe that his successors were not the man he was…”

507 Millar, op. cit., p. 171.
But important distinctions need to be made between the quality, intensity and consequences of the different nationalisms... Clark summarizes these as follows: “In Austria, the story of a nation of youthful bandits and regicides endlessly provoking and goading a patient elderly neighbour got in the way of a cool-headed assessment of how to manage relations with Belgrade. In Serbia, fantasies of victimhood and oppression by a rapacious, all-powerful Habsburg Empire did the same in reverse. In Germany, a dark vision of future invasions and partitions bedeviled decision-making in the summer of 1914. And the Russian saga of repeated humiliations at the hands of the central powers had a similar impact, at once distorting the past and clarifying the present. Most important of all was the widely trafficked narrative of Austria-Hungary’s historically necessary decline, which, having gradually replaced an older set of assumptions about Austria’s role as a fulcrum of stability in Central and Eastern Europe, disinhibited Vienna’s enemies, undermining the notion that Austria-Hungary, like every other great power, possessed interests that it had the right robustly to defend...”

However, the German variety of nationalism was distinguished from the others by its highly philosophical content that made it more poisonous and dangerous in the long term (that is, the term that ended in 1945). The German variety of the illness had developed over more than a century since the national humiliation suffered at the hands of Napoleon at Jena in 1806. It continued through the German victory over the French at Sedan in 1871 and into the building of the Second Reich. And it was exacerbated by Treitschke’s glorification of war and Nietzsche’s glorification of the Superman, not to mention Hegel’s glorification of the Prussian State as the supreme expression of the World Spirit...

To these false philosophies must be added a belief that was common in the German-speaking countries - Social Darwinism. Thus in 1912 Friedrich von Bernhardi wrote: “Either Germany will go into war now or it will lose any chance to have world supremacy... The law of nature upon which all other laws are based is the struggle for existence. Consequently, war is a biological necessity.” Again, von Hötzendorff considered the struggle for existence to be “the basic principle behind all the events on this earth”. Militarism was the natural consequence of this philosophy (if the philosophy was not an attempt to justify the militarism): “Politics consists precisely of applying war as method”, said von Hötzendorff.

Thus the most fundamental ideological divide, according to Bishop Nicholas Velimirovich, was the struggle between the All-Man, Christ, and the Superman of Nietzsche, between the doctrine that Right is Might and the opposite one that might is right. For German Christianity with its all-devouring scientism and theological scepticism had already surrendered to Nietzscheanism: “I wonder... that Professor Harnack, one of the chief representatives of German Christianity, omitted to see how every hollow that he and his colleagues made in traditional Christianity in Germany was at once filled with the all-conquering Nietzscheanism. And I wonder... whether he is now aware that in the nineteen hundred and fourteenth year of our Lord, when

510 Clark, op. cit., p. 558.
511 Von Bernhardi, Germany and the Next War.
he and other destroyers of the Bible, who proclaimed Christ a dreamy maniac [and]

clothed Christianity in rags, Nietzscheanism arose [as] the real religion of the

German race.”

Nietzsche had been opposed to the new post-1871 Germany. However, many of his

nihilist ideas had penetrated deep into the German consciousness. Not for nothing

were his views on the Superman and the Triumph of the Will seen to foreshadow

and influence the coming of Hitler, who paid a visit to his archive in 1934... What
drove Nietzsche, writes Macmillan, “was a conviction that Western civilization had
gone badly wrong, indeed had been going wrong for the past two millennia, and that

most of the ideas and practices which dominated it were completely wrong.

Humanity, in his view, was doomed unless it made a clear break and started to think
clearly and allow itself to feel deeply. His targets included positivism, bourgeois
conventions, Christianity (his father was a Protestant minister) and indeed all
organized religion, perhaps all organization itself. He was against capitalism and
modern industrial society, and ‘the herd people’ it produced. Humans, Nietzsche
told his readers, had forgotten that life was not orderly and conventional, but vital
and dangerous. To reach the heights of spiritual reawakening it was necessary to
break out of the confines of conventional morality and religion. God, he famously
said, is dead... Those who embraced the challenge Nietzsche was throwing down
would become the Supermen. In the coming century, there would be a ‘new party of
life’ which would take humanity to a higher level, ‘including the merciless
destruction of everything that is degenerate and parasitical’. Life, he said, is
‘appropriation, injury, conquest of the strange and weak, suppression, severity...’
The young Serbian nationalists who carried out the assassination of Archduke Franz
Ferdinand and so precipitated the Great War were deeply impressed by Nietzsche’s
views...”

In another place Bishop Nicholas spread the blame more widely on Europe as a
whole: “The spirit was wrong, and everything became wrong. The spirit of any

civilization is inspired by its religion, but the spirit of modern Europe was not

inspired by Europe’s religion at all. A terrific effort was made in many quarters to

liberate Europe from the spirit of her religion. The effort-makers forgot one thing, i.e.

that no civilization ever was liberated from religion and still lived. Whenever this
liberation seemed to be fulfilled, the respective civilization decayed and died out,
leaving behind barbaric materialism in towns and superstitions in villages. Europe
had to live with Christianity, or to die in barbaric materialism and superstitions
without it. The way to death was chosen. From Continental Europe first the infection
came to the whole white race. It was there that the dangerous formula [of Nietzsche]
was pointed out: ‘Beyond good and evil’. Other parts of the white world followed
slowly, taking first the path between Good and Evil. Good was changed for Power.
Evil was explained away as Biological Necessity. The Christian religion, which

inspired the greatest things that Europe ever possessed in every point of human
activity, was degraded by means of new watchwords: individualism, liberalism,
conservatism, nationalism, imperialism, secularism, which in essence meant nothing

but the de-christianization of European society, or, in other words, the emptiness of European civilization. Europe abandoned the greatest things she possessed and clung to the lower and lowest ones. The greatest thing was – Christ.

“As you cannot imagine Arabic civilization in Spain without Islam, or India’s civilization without Hinduism, or Rome without the Roman Pantheon, so you cannot imagine Europe’s civilization without Christ. Yet some people thought that Christ was not so essentially needed for Europe, and behaved accordingly without Him or against Him. Christ was Europe’s God. When this God was banished from politics, art, science, social life, business, education, everybody consequently asked for a God, and everybody thought himself to be a god… So godless Europe became full of gods!

“Being de-christianized, Europe still thought to be civilized. In reality she was a poor valley full of dry bones. The only thing she had to boast of was her material power. By material power only she impressed and frightened the unchristian (but not antichristian) countries of Central and Eastern Asia, and depraved the rustic tribes in Africa and elsewhere. She went to conquer not by God or for God, but by material power and for material pleasure. Her spirituality did not astonish any of the peoples on earth. Her materialism astonished all of them... What an amazing poverty! She gained the whole world, and when she looked inside herself she could not find her soul. Where has Europe’s soul fled? The present war will give the answer. It is not a war to destroy the world but to show Europe’s poverty and to bring back her soul. It will last as long as Europe remains soulless, Godless, Christless. It will stop when Europe gets the vision of her soul, her only God, her only wealth.”

A disciple of Bishop Nicholas, Archimandrite Justin (Popovich), followed his teacher in attributing the cause of God’s wrath against Christian Europe to its betrayal of the faith and its embracing an antichristian humanistic metaphysics of progress that was in fact regression. The end of such a nihilist metaphysic could only be death, death on a massive scale, death with no redeeming purpose or true glory, no resurrection in Christ: “It is obvious to normal eyes: European humanistic culture systematically blunts man’s sense of immortality, until it is extinguished altogether. The man of European culture affirms, with Nietzsche, that he is flesh and nothing but flesh. And that means: I am mortal, and nothing but mortal. It is thus that humanistic Europe gave itself over to the slogan: man is a mortal being. That is the formula of humanistic man; therein lies the essence of his progress.

“At first subconsciously, then consciously and deliberately, science, philosophy, and culture inculcated in the European man the proposition that man is completely mortal, with nothing else left over... Humanistic man is a devastated creature because the sense of personal immortality has been banished from him. And without that sentiment, can man ever be complete?

“European man is a shrunken dwarf, reduced to a fraction of man’s stature, for he has been emptied of the sense of transcendence. And without the transcendent, can

man exist at all as man? And if he could, would there be any meaning to his existence? Minus that sense of the transcendent, is he not but a dead object among other objects, and a transient species among other animals?

“... [Supposedly] equal to the animals in his origin, why should he not also assimilate their morals? Being part of the animal world of beasts in basic nature, he has also joined them in their morals. Are not sin and crime increasingly regarded by modern jurisprudence as an unavoidable by-product of the social environment and as a natural necessity? Since there is nothing eternal and immortal in man, ethics must, in the final analysis, be reduced to instinctive drives. In his ethics, humanistic man has become equal to his progenitors, monkeys and beasts. And the governing principle of his life has become: homo homini lupus.

“It could not be otherwise. For an ethic that is superior to that of the animals could only be founded on a sentiment of human immortality. If there is no immortality and eternal life, neither within nor around man, then animalistic morals are entirely natural and logical for a bestialized humanity: let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die (cf. I Corinthians 15.32).

“The relativism in the philosophy of European humanistic progress could not but result in an ethical relativism, and relativism is the father of anarchism and nihilism. Wherefore, in the last analysis, the practical ethic of humanistic man is nothing but anarchy and nihilism. For anarchy and nihilism are the unavoidable, final and apocalyptic phase of European progress. Ideological anarchism and nihilism, ideological disintegration, necessarily had to manifest themselves in practical anarchism and nihilism, in the practical disintegration of European humanistic man and his progress. Are we not eyewitneses to the ideological and practical anarchism and nihilism that are devastating the European continent? The addenda of European progress are such that, no matter how they might be computed, their sum is always anarchism and nihilism. The evidence? Two world wars (actually European wars).

“European man is stupid, catastrophically stupid, when, while disbelieving in God and the immortality of the soul, he still professes belief in progress and life’s meaning and acts accordingly. What good is progress, if after it comes death? What use are the world, the stars, and cultures, if behind them lurks death, and ultimately it must conquer me?”

But how different was Slavic Orthodox man from European man at this juncture, and was there any difference in how the First World War affected the Orthodox East by contrast with the heterodox West?

We may agree that the teachings of the Nietzschean Superman or the Darwinian Apeman had not yet penetrated as deeply into the Orthodox East as into the heterodox West. And yet we know that the Bosnian Serb terrorists who fired the

516 Popovich, The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism, Thessaloniki, 1974, translated in Orthodox Life, September-October, 1983, pp. 26-27.
shots at Sarajevo had been infected with Nietzscheanism, and that the mass of the Serbian people applauded their act. Moreover, terrorism of a more openly atheist, internationalist kind had already counted thousands of innocent victims in Russia and would soon produce many millions more.

In accordance with the principle that “to whom much is given, much is asked”, the Orthodox nations to whom had been entrusted the riches of the Orthodox faith must be considered to bear a major share of the responsibility for the catastrophe. Both faith and morals were in sharp decline in the Orthodox countries. Moreover, when war broke out, the Orthodox nations did not form a united front behind the Tsar, the emperor of the Third Rome, in spite of the fact that the defeat of Russia was bound to have catastrophic effects on Orthodoxy. Thus the Bulgarians, who owed their independence almost entirely to the Russians, decided to join the Germans, 517 Again, the Romanians (who resented the Russian takeover of Bessarabia in 1878) and the Greeks (who had a German king) were for the time being neutral...

For all these reasons, the judgement of God fell hardest on the Orthodox, “the household of God”. Thus the Russians, having murmured and plotted against their Tsar, were deprived of victory by revolution from within, and came to almost complete destruction afterwards; the Serbs, whose blind nationalism, as we have seen, was a significant cause of the war, suffered proportionately more than any other country, even though they were on the winning side; the Romanians were crushed by the Germans before also appearing on the winning side; and the Bulgarians, while adding to their huge losses in the Balkan Wars, still appeared on the losing side. Only the Greeks emerged from the war relatively unscathed – but their judgement would come only a few years later, in the Asia Minor catastrophe of 1922-23. So the First World War was a judgement on the whole of European civilization, but first of all on the Orthodox nations who had allowed Europeanism gradually to drive out their God-given inheritance...

The unprecedented destructiveness of the war had been predicted by Engels as early as 1887: “Prussia-Germany can no longer fight any war but a world war; and a war of hitherto unknown dimensions and ferocity. Eight to ten million soldiers will swallow each other up and in doing so eat all Europe more bare than any swarm of locusts. The devastation of the Thirty Years War compressed into the space of three or four years and extending over the whole continent; famine, sickness, want, brutalizing the army and the mass of the population; irrevocable confusion of our

517 Tsar Nicholas wrote on October 6, 1915: “Impossible as it has seemed, but treacherously preparing from the very beginning of the war, Bulgaria has betrayed the Slav cause. The Bulgarian army has attacked Our faithful ally Serbia, [which is already] bleeding profusely in a struggle with a strong enemy. Russia and Our allied Great Powers tried to warn Ferdinand of Coburg against this fatal step. The fulfilment of an age-old aspiration of the Bulgar people – union with Macedonia – has [already] been guaranteed to Bulgaria by a means more in accord with the interests of the Slav world. But appeals by the Germans to secret ambitions and fratricidal enmity against the Serbs prevailed. Bulgaria, whose [Orthodox] faith is the same as Ours, who so recently has been liberated from Turkish slavery by the brotherly love and blood of the Russian people, openly took the side of the enemies of the Christian faith, the Slav world and of Russia. The Russian people react with bitterness to the treachery of a Bulgaria which was so close to them until recently, and draw their swords against her with heavy hearts, leaving the fate of these traitors to the Slav world to God’s just retribution.” (http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/1915/nickbulg.html)
artificial structure of trade, industry and credit, ending in general bankruptcy; collapse of the old states and their traditional statecraft, so that crowns will roll by dozens in the gutter and no one can be found to pick them up. It is absolutely impossible to predict where it will end and who will emerge from the struggle as victor. Only one result is absolutely certain: general exhaustion and the establishment of conditions for the final victory of the working class.”

And truly: after the war, everything was different. The Russian empire was gone, and with its disappearance all the islands of Orthodoxy throughout the world began to tremble and contract within themselves. Also gone were the German and Austrian empires. The very principle of monarchy was fatally undermined, surviving in a feeble, truncated form for a short time only in Orthodox Eastern Europe. Christianity as a whole was on the defensive; in most places it became a minority religion again, and in some it was fiercely persecuted, as if the Edict of Milan had been reversed and a new age of the catacombs had returned. The powerful, if superficial pax Europica had been succeeded by a new age of barbarism, in which nations were divided within and between themselves, and neo-pagan ideologies held sway. The nature of the war itself contributed to this seismic change. It was not like most earlier European wars – short, involving only professional armies, with limited effects on the civilian population. It was (with the possible exception of the Napoleonic wars) the first of the total wars, involving the whole of the people and taking up all its resources, thereby presaging the appearance of the totalitarian age.

The war’s length, the vast numbers of its killed and wounded, the unprecedented sufferings of the civilian populations, and the sheer horror of its front-line combat deprived it, after the patriotic élan of the first few months, of any chivalric, redemptive aspects – at any rate, for all but the minority who consciously fought for God, Tsar and Fatherland. Indeed, the main legacy of the war was simply hatred – hatred of the enemy, hatred of one’s own leaders – a hatred that did not die after the war’s end, but was translated into a kind of universal hatred that presaged still more horrific and total wars to come. Thus the Germans so hated the English that Shakespeare could not be mentioned in Germany. And the English so hated the “Huns” that Beethoven could not be mentioned in England. And the Russians so hated the Germans that the Germanic-sounding “St. Petersburg” had to be changed to the more Slavic “Petrograd”...

Tony Judt points out some of the longer-term consequences of the war: “World War I led to an unprecedented militarization of society, the worship of violence, and a cult of death that long outlasted the war itself and prepared the ground for the political disasters that followed. States and societies seized during and after World War II by Hitler or Stalin (or by both, in sequence) experienced not just occupation and exploitation but degradation and corrosion of the laws and norms of civil society. The very structures of civilized life – regulations, laws, teachers, policemen, judges – disappeared or took on sinister significance: far from guaranteeing security, the state itself became the leading source of insecurity. Reciprocity and trust, whether

in neighbors, colleagues, community, or leaders, collapsed. Behavior that would be aberrant in conventional circumstances – theft, dishonesty, dissemblance, indifference to the misfortune of others, and the opportunistic exploitation of their suffering – became not just normal but sometimes the only way to save family and yourself. Dissent or opposition was stifled by universal fear.

“War, in short, prompted behavior that would have been unthinkable as well as dysfunctional in peacetime. It is war, not racism or ethnic antagonism or religious fervor, that leads to atrocity. War – total war – has been the crucial antecedent condition for mass criminality in the modern era. The first primitive concentration camps were set up by the British during the Boer War of 1899-1902. Without World War I there would have been no Armenian genocide and it is highly unlikely that either Communism or Fascism would have seized hold of modern states. Without World War II there would have been no Holocaust. Absent the forcible involvement of Cambodia in the Vietnam War, we would never have heard of Pol Pot. As for the brutalizing effect of war on ordinary soldiers themselves, this of course has been copiously documented.”

So were there no redeeming features for the Orthodox in this, the great watershed in modern European history? Do not “all things work together for good for those who love God” (Romans 8)? And were there no people who loved God at this time?

One possible reason why Divine Providence should have allowed it is that it was not so much a war between Slavdom and Germandom, as between Orthodoxy and Westernism, on which the future of Orthodoxy depended. Divine Providence allowed it to save the Orthodox, according to this argument, not only from violent conquest by those of another race, but also, and primarily, from peaceful, ecumenist merging with those of another faith. This is how many Russians understood the war. In 1912 the country had celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Borodino, and in 1913 – the three-hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the Romanov dynasty. These were patriotic celebrations, but also religious ones; for both the commemorated events had taken place on the background of great threats to the Orthodox Faith from western nations. So when the Tsar went to war in 1914, this was again seen as the beginning of a great patriotic and religious war. It was not so much Teutonism versus Slavism as Protestantism versus Orthodoxy.

As Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) put it: “Germany and Austria declared war on us, for which the former had already been preparing for forty years, wishing to extend its control to the East. What then? Should we quietly have submitted to the Germans? Should we have imitated their cruel and coarse manners? Planted in our country in place of the holy deeds of Orthodoxy piety the worship of the stomach and the wallet? No! It would be better for the whole nation to die than to be fed with such heretical poison!

“We have swallowed enough of it since the time of Peter the Great! And without that the Germans have torn away from the Russian nation, from Russian history and

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the Orthodox Church its aristocracy and intelligentsia; but in the event of a total submission to the German governmental authority, at last the simple people would have been corrupted. We already have enough renegades from the simple people under the influence of the Germans and of German money. These are above all those same Protestants who so hypocritically cry out for peace. Of course, they were not all conscious traitors and betrayers of their homeland, they did not all share in those 2,000,000 marks which were established by the German government (and a half of it from the personal fortune of the Kaiser) to be spent on the propagation of Protestant chapels in Russia...

Again, a disciple of Archbishop Anthony, Archimandrite Hilarion (Troitsky), regarded the war as “liberational in the broadest meaning of the word”, and called on his students to resist German influence in theology with books and words.

However, there is no doubt that one definitively positive result of the war and of the revolution that followed closely upon it was that it forced many people to reconsider the emptiness of the lives they had been leading and return to God. For while defeat and revolution had a deleterious effect on the external position of the Church, her spiritual condition improved, and her real as opposed to formal membership swelled considerably in the post-war period. The fruits of this were twofold: the spreading of Russian Orthodoxy throughout the world through the emigration, and within Russia - the emergence of a mighty choir of new martyrs.

At the head of this choir stood the Tsar, whose truly self-sacrificial support for Serbia constituted a legacy of love. The intercessions of the Royal Family and of the great choir of holy new martyrs and confessors that followed them to torments and death for Christ constitute the long-term basis for hope in the resurrection of Russia and Orthodoxy as a whole. And it may be hoped that in the grand scheme of Divine Providence this legacy of love and faithfulness will prove stronger than death...

However, if look at 1914 from the perspective of a century later, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the decision to go to war was catastrophic, not only for Russia but for Orthodoxy as a whole and for the whole world. If the Tsar had known its consequences, would he not have regretted his decision, just as he came to regret his decision to abdicate in February, 1917? Perhaps...

And yet “there is a tide in the affairs of men”, and there is no question that the tide in European politics, all over the continent, was towards war. The Tsar might have resisted the tide for a while, as he resisted it in 1912. But it is difficult to avoid the further conclusion that the Tsar felt he had no real alternative but to go to war eventually. The best he could do was choose a time when honour and loyalty (to the Serbs) provided at any rate a certain moral justification for the war. And that time certainly came in July, 1914.

Moreover, the Tsar’s “fatalism” – a better word would be “providentialism”, or simply “faith”, an unwavering belief in God’s omnipotence and complete control of world history - undoubtedly played a part here. He certainly believed in the proverb: “A man’s heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps” (Proverbs 16.9). And even more in the proverb: “The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord. Like the rivers of water, He turns it wherever He wishes” (Proverbs 21.1). The Tsar sincerely wanted peace, knowing the terrible consequences of war. But he also knew that it is God Who controls the destinies of nations. Who was he – who was any man? – to resist the will of God if He wanted to punish His people and all the nations in accordance with His inscrutable judgements?

523 We can more reliably detect fatalism in the attitude of the German chancellor Bethmann at this time, whose acquiescence to the Austrians Lieven finds “bewildering” (Towards the Flame, p. 317). Macmillan writes: “German society, Bethmann felt, was in moral and intellectual decline and the existing political and social order seemed incapable of renewing itself. ‘Everything,’ he said sadly, ‘has become so very old.’” (op. cit., p. 527). And again he said in July, 1914: A leap in the dark has its attractions...