THE AGE OF EMPIRE
1861-1914

VOLUME IV OF AN ESSAY IN UNIVERSAL HISTORY
From an Orthodox Christian Point of View

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The pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ, but he is Jesus Christ Himself, hidden under the veil of the flesh.

The future Pope Pius X (1895).

When I consent to be a Republican, I do evil, knowing that’s what I do... I say Long live Revolution! As I would say Long live Destruction! Long live Expiation! Long live Punishment! Long live Death!

Charles Baudelaire (1866).

European politics in the nineteenth century fed on the French Revolution. No idea, no dream, no fear, no conflict appeared which had not been worked through in that fateful decade: democracy and socialism, reaction, dictatorship, nationalism, imperialism, pacifism.


The Messianism of the new era must arise and develop; the Jerusalem of the New World Order, which is established in holiness between the East and Asia, must occupy the place of two forces: the kings and the popes... Nationality must disappear. Religion must cease to exist. Only Israel will not cease to exist, since this little people is chosen by God.

Albert Crémieux (1861).

The Lord and Master of the money markets of the world, and of course virtually Lord and Master of everything else. He literally held the revenues of Southern Italy in pawn, and Monarchs and Ministers of all countries courted his advice and were guided by his suggestions.

Benjamin Disraeli on Nathan Mayer Rothschild.

The Jewish people has rejected Christ, the true Mediator and Messiah, and therefore has excluded itself from history. Instead the Germans have become God’s chosen people.

Constantin Frantz (1870s).

[The Jews] are at the root of the revolutionary socialist movement and of regicide, they own the periodical press, they have in their hands the financial markets; the people as a whole fall into financial slavery to them; they even control the principles of contemporary science and strive to place it outside of Christianity.

K.P. Pobedonostsev to F.M. Dostoyevsky (1879).

This is the final struggle. Let us come together and tomorrow the International will be the human race. There are no supreme redeemers, no god, no Caesar, no tribune. Workers, let us make our own salvation.

Eugène Pottier, *L’Internationale*.

Not through speeches and majority decisions will the great questions of the day be decided, but by Iron and Blood.

Otto von Bismarck.
It is neither blindness nor ignorance that ruins nations and states. Not for long do they ignore where they are heading. But deep inside them is a force at work, favoured by nature and reinforced through habit, that drives them forward irresistibly as long as there is still any energy in them. Divine is he who controls himself. Most humans recognize their ruin, but they carry on regardless...

Leopold von Ranke.

If they dare to come out in the open field and defend the gold standard as a good thing, we shall fight them to the uttermost, having behind us the producing masses of the nation and the world. Having behind us the commercial interests and the laboring interests and all the toiling masses, we shall answer their demands for a gold standard by saying to them, you shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns. You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold.

William Jennings Bryan (1896).

When the missionaries arrived, the Africans had the land and the missionaries had the Bible. They taught us how to pray with our eyes closed. When we opened them, they had the land and we had the Bible.

Jomo Kenyatta.

Aesthetics are higher than ethics. They belong to a more spiritual sphere.

Oscar Wilde, “The Critic as Artist” (1891).

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.

John Maynard Keynes, A Tract on Monetary Reform (1923).

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 intelligenty 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.


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-spreading fire consuming all.

Alexander Blok.
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INTRODUCTION

This is the fourth volume in my series An Essay in Universal History. The previous volume were: volume 1: The Age of Faith (to 1453), volume 2: The Age of Reason (1453-1789), and volume 3: The Age of Revolution (1789-1861). This fourth volume, subtitled “The Age of Empire”, takes the story from the emergence of the world’s first modern empire in the American Civil War of 1861-65 to the zenith of the old empires of Europe to the eve of the great cataclysm of imperialism – the First World War in 1914.

Empires have, of course, existed since ancient times, but the term “imperialism” came into vogue only in the 1860s. It acquired an increasingly negative connotation as it was deemed to clash with the values of other modern belief-systems. In this volume, considerable attention is devoted to how the major new belief-systems of Liberalism, Socialism, Nationalism, Darwinism, Freemasonry, Freudianism and Nietzscheanism interacted with each other, with Imperialism itself, and with that unique kind of empire, the Orthodox Autocracy in its Russian incarnation. The major theme in this volume is the undermining of the old belief-system of the Orthodox Autocracy by the new ones coming from the West before the catastrophe of 1914.

My debts are very many, and are detailed in the footnotes. Especially important to me have been the writings of the Russian Orthodox monarchists: St. Philaret of Moscow, St. Ignaty (Brianchaninov), St. Theophan the Recluse, St. Ambrose of Optina, Lev Alexandrovich Tikhomirov, St. John of Kronstadt, Constantine Pobedonostsev, St. John Maximovich, Archbishop Averky of Jordanville and Archpriest Lev Lebedev. Among western historians I have particularly benefited from the writings of Robert Tombs, A.N. Wilson, Philip Bobbitt, Bernard Simms, Paul Johnson, Niall Ferguson, Norman Davies, Sir Isaiah Berlin, Sir Geoffrey Hosking, Misha Glenny, Miranda Carter, Serhii Plokhy, Dominic Lieven, Christopher Clark, Henry Kissinger, Sir Richard Evans and Sir Noel Malcolm.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us! Amen.
I. THE WEST: THE MASTER RACES (1861-1894)
1. IMPERIALISM, NATIONALISM AND RACISM

The half-century or so between the Crimean War and the First World War constituted the zenith of western civilization, when the political, economic and ideological power of the West European nations spread all round the world. The only serious rivals to western power were the Ottoman Empire – which, however, was in financial submission to the western banks and was not without reason called “the sick man of Europe” – and the Russian Empire. Also of increasing importance was the United States, a state of the western type which, however, did not reach its zenith until later, after the Second World War.

What had changed since the previous inter-war period – that is the period between the Napoleonic Wars and the Crimean War? First of all, the anti-revolutionary Triple Alliance of Monarchical Powers – Russia, Austria and Prussia – had collapsed, as Austria refused to back Russia in the Crimean War, and Prussia under Bismarck began its nation-building rise to imperial status. Secondly, the former antagonists Britain and France drew closer together as France followed Britain along the path of what we may call “liberal imperialism”, a path soon to be entered on also by the United States. Thirdly and probably most importantly, Germany was unified and emerged as the most powerful nation-state in Europe in 1871. Adopting a more conservative model of imperialism, it was about to become a serious rival both in Europe and around the world to the old imperial powers of Britain, France and Russia.

Thus “in little over two decades,” writes Sir Richard Evans, “from 1848 to 1871, Europe had been transformed. Both Italy and Germany, despite the dashing of the nationalists’ hopes in 1848-9, had been united, though on the basis of a conservatively designed constitutional monarchy rather than a democratic republic. In Germany’s case the liberals had to make do with a parliamentary system in which the powers of the monarchy and the army were far greater than they had wished them to be. Universal male suffrage was also very far from what the moderate liberals wanted; they were more comfortable with the situation in Italy, where a limited property franchise still applied. Gambling on the loyalty and conservatism of the rural masses, bold and imaginative statesmen like Napoleon III, Bismarck and Disraeli had sought to outflank the liberals and deliver mass support to their new conservative ideology. Reaction, rampant almost everywhere in 1850, had failed by the end of the decade, even in Russia, despite its attempts to adapt to the new circumstances of the post-revolutionary era. The Vienna Settlement had been torn up, Metternich’s immobile conservatism brushed aside, and a new political order born. It was to last, though with perceptible shifts and changes, almost all the way to 1914. After a short burst of rapid boundary changes and the formation of new geopolitical entities, the major states of Europe – Britain, France, Germany, Austro-Hungary, Russia, the Ottoman Empire – and many of the minor ones, from the Balkans to Scandinavia, remained within more or less stable borders for over four decades after 1870.
“The dramatic changes of the 1850s and 1860s were set in motion by the 1848 Revolution, even if they were not exactly what any of the revolutionaries had envisaged. The year 1848 put a whole range of political forces on the European agenda, from constitutional monarchy to democratic republicanism. From 1848 onwards, nationalism was a major driving force in European politics. The old world of the secret societies and Jacobin-style revolutionary clubs gave way almost everywhere, though not in Russia, Poland, or the Balkans, to the new world of organized political parties, the political press (used by government as well as by opposition), single-issue pressure groups, and increasingly as time went on, mass communications. Revolutionary activists bifurcated into organized Marxist movements on the one hand, and increasingly violent anarchist plots on the other. The old politics of Metternich’s stubborn resistance to the forces of change was superseded by a new, more flexible politics espoused by conservative statesmen who saw that these forces had to be embraced and turned to their own advantage if the society they wished to preserve could be saved. Even the most reactionary regimes of the 1850s recognized the need for economic deregulation, educational improvement and judicial reform, all of which can be counted major results of the 1848 Revolutions. The relations of governments with the public everywhere, even in Russia, were no longer shrouded in secrecy and mystery or dependent on assumed habits of deference, but were based far more on an openly propagandistic appeal to the loyalty of the masses. In many respects it makes sense to see the whole period from 1848 to 1871 as a single period of revolutionary change, rather than focusing individually on each of the short-term upheavals that followed one another with such breathtaking speed during these years…”

Almost the only state that did not suffer from Germany’s meteoric rise, at least in the short to medium term, was Britain. After Waterloo, writes Robert Tombs, “Britain exercised a quasi-protectorate over Western Europe and the Mediterranean, which persisted, unevenly, until the Second World War. Countries think twice about – or do not think at all about – challenging the hegemonic power and tend to adopt policies that it favours. They may request more protection than the protector wants to give. The Portuguese government repeatedly asked for British assistance against internal enemies, and the Swedes asked for patrols in the Baltic in the 1860s. Britain discouraged Russia and Prussia from intervention in France at the time of the 1830 and 1848 revolutions. It helped to bring about Greek independence from Turkey in the 1830s and [with Russia] guaranteed its future independence. It protected newly independent Belgium during the 1830s and 1840s, though with limited success, and restrained French interference. It promoted Italian independence and unification in the 1850s and 1860s. It repeatedly defended the Ottoman Empire from France, Egypt,

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Austria and Russia. Britain used its influence to restrain Scandinavian quarrels and was ready in 1864 to send a fleet to counter Prussian and Austrian moves into Denmark. Overt influence was most easily exercised where seapower could disrupt economic activity by blockade, prevent or facilitate the transport of troops, or even take direct action by bombardment or amphibious landing. Even the hint of these possibilities might be effective. Muhammed Ali, the ambitious ruler of Egypt in the early nineteenth century, thought that ‘with the English for my friends I can do anything, without their friendship I can do nothing.’ In Europe and the Mediterranean, by means of diplomatic pressure, investments or loans, and occasionally military force, Britain favoured, and sometimes protected, representative governments, economic development and trade. Western Europe, with misgivings, followed its lead.

“Britain – considered by Gladstone to be ‘the course of the moral, social, and political power of the world’ – had other kinds of influence on Europe too. We can detect its ‘soft power’ in the near universalization of English styles of men’s clothing, of social customs such as clubs and sports, of English literature and increasingly the English language, which began to rival French. As John Bright declared in 1865, ‘England is the mother of parliaments,’ for the two-chamber parliament became the standard form. So did constitutional monarchy, the accountability of ministers to parliament, parliamentary control of the national budget, collective Cabinet responsibility, freedom of expression, legal political parties, trial by jury and independence of judges. It was impossible to copy exactly a system that was as idiosyncratic, uncodified and rapidly evolving as that of democracy or egalitarianism – those on the left continued to take inspiration from the French Revolution. But France itself, in its constitutional Charters (1814 and 1830) and, after a painful interval, in its Third Republic (1875) came as close as possible to the arcana of Westminster. Belgium (1832), the Netherlands (1848), Denmark (1848), Italy (1860), Sweden (1867) and Spain (1874) also tried English-style systems. Absolutist states such as Austria and Russia eventually found a House of Lords a useful device for neutralizing even a timid elected chamber.

“English economic developments too provided the model to be followed with enthusiasm or trepidation. Technology, institutions and legislation were copied – railways, steam power, machinery, stocks and shares, limited-liability companies, factory acts. Manchester and Birmingham were visited by foreign industrialists, who bought English machines, raised English capital, and hired English workers – sometimes with alarming results when they got drunk, demanded wage increases, and caused trouble with the locals. After 1860 the British creed of free trade inspired the first short-lived European common market. But jealousy of English economic dominance, and revulsion at the social and political consequences of industrialization – cities, smoke, nouveau riche
vulgarities, working-class assertiveness, social change, visible poverty – were as marked as admiration of the wealth and power it yielded. ‘The English’ pronounced the French novelist Théophile Gautier in 1856, ‘can forge iron, harness steam, twist matter in every way, invent frighteningly powerful machines: [but] despite their stupendous material advances, they are only polished barbarians.’…”

British Imperialism, writes Evans, “continued an ideology of improvement, summed up in 1899 in a famous poem by Rudyard Kipling urging colonizers to:

Take up the White Man’s burden –  
Send forth the best ye breed –  
Go bind your sons to exile  
To serve your captives’ need.

To administer the colonies, educated clerks and administrators were required, and given the numbers that were necessary, this meant educating a select number of the colonized. This in turn, whether it involved local education or education in Britain or other European countries, began to create new indigenous elites that imbibed European notions of nationalism, democracy and liberal values. In some colonies, including Burma, a sense of national identity pre-dated colonization. In others national identity required the language of European liberalism to find its articulation, and the model of European political parties in the age of mass democracy in the late nineteenth century to find institutional expression.

“As these developments took hold on the subcontinent, 1885 saw the formation of the Indian National Congress, based at first on the ideas of the Theosophical Movement, and involving English people as well as Indians. The aim of the Indian National Congress at first was to exert pressure for educated Indians to take a greater part in government and administration, but soon it gained widespread support among Indian elites and began to exert pressure on the government. In 1892 the Raj conceded the Indian Councils Act, allowing corporations to nominate educated Indians to legislative councils, and in 1909 it permitted them to stand for election. The British had been able to take advantage of the break-up of the Mughal Empire and the ensuing disunity to take over one Indian state after another, or play them off against each other. But by uniting India themselves and binding it together with a unitary system of administration and communications, the British had created the potential for a new united nationalist movement. The Raj had on the other hand fastened onto traditional Indian institutions from the land tax to the maharajas and princely states, and to the new educated elite these were beginning to seem like an obstacle to progress. It was indeed possible to take an altogether different view of the ‘white man’s burden’, one in which the imperialist was imposing a burden on the colonized, not the other way round…”

3 Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 669.
Pride in being the citizen of a great empire was fostered by governments in order to restrain discontent in the lower classes, according to Eric Hobsbawm:

“Ever since the great imperialist Cecil Rhodes observed in 1895 that if one wanted to avoid civil war one must become imperialist, most observers have been aware of so-called ‘social imperialism’, i.e. of the attempt to use imperial expansion to diminish discontent by economic improvements or social reform or in other ways. There is no doubt at all that politicians were perfectly aware of the potential benefits of imperialism. In some cases – notably Germany – the rise of imperialism has been explained primarily in terms of ‘the primacy of domestic politics’…

“… Imperialism encouraged the masses, and especially the potentially discontented, to identify themselves with the imperial state and nation, and thus unconsciously to endow the social and political system represented by that state with justification and legitimacy. And in an era of mass politics… even old systems required new legitimacy. Here again, contemporaries were quite clear about this. The British coronation ceremony of 1902, carefully restyled, was praised because it was designed to express ‘the recognition, by a free democracy, of a hereditary crown, as a symbol of the world-wide dominion of their race’ (my emphasis). In short, empire made good ideological content.”

Paradoxically, therefore, the economic motivation of imperialism had beneficial social, political and cultural side-effects, in that the colonies provided the emotional sop of “glory” to the discontented masses, which in turn had the effect of giving a belated boost to the now distinctly “old-fashioned” ideas of empire, dominion and hierarchy. Of course, the power of some of these European monarchs and emperors was at least partially subject to parliaments and so, as Hobsbawm says, symbolical. Nevertheless, there is power in symbols, especially if the symbols are persons who seem to justify themselves by continuing in power for long periods (Queen Victoria reigned for 64 years)…

And so the combination of the welfare state plus the “glory” of belonging to a powerful nation-state-empire helped to keep the revolution at bay for perhaps another generation. Indeed, the last decades before 1914 can be seen as a kind of “Indian summer” of the monarchical principle, when most European states, in spite of their democratic principles, were headed by monarchs, mostly German and mostly related in one way or another to Queen Victoria, the matriarch of Europe. This may be seen as a cultural plus of imperialism. And yet the service that imperialism rendered in keeping alive the hierarchical principle in the imperial nation must be set against the disservice it did by encouraging racism…

The last phase of this European conquest of the world that ended in 1914 was marked especially by the “Scramble for Africa”, “a spreading of European power into the non-European world unrivalled in extent and pace since the sixteenth-century Spanish conquests in the Americas. Outside Algeria or South Africa, for

most of the nineteenth century only a little of Africa behind a few coastal enclaves had been in European hands. In 1879 the arrival of a British army in Egypt registered yet another setback for the Ottoman empire, of which that country remained formally a part, and also a change in the continent’s fate; to the south, even before the century ended, Anglo-Egyptian rule had been pushed deep into the Sudan. Elsewhere, southwards from Morocco round to the Cape of Good Hope, the African coastline was by the beginning of the twentieth century entirely divided between Europeans (British, French, Germans, Spanish, Portuguese and Belgians) with the exception of the isolated black republic of Liberia. The empty wastes of the Sahara and Sahel became nominally French, Tunisia was a French protectorate. The Belgian king enjoyed as a personal estate (and his agents acted atrociously) most of the rest of the Congo, which was soon to prove some of the richest mineral-bearing land in Africa; the Belgian state was to take over responsibility from him for what was called the ‘Congo Free State’ in 1906. Further east, apart from the Boer republics of Transvaal and Orange Free State over which the British government claimed suzerainty, British territories ran almost continuously from the Cape of Good Hope up to the Rhodesias, which were hemmed in by the Belgian Congo and German and Portuguese East Africa (Tanganyika and Mozambique). The last two cut them off from the sea, but further north, from Mombasa, Kenya’s port, a belt of British territory stretched throughout Uganda to the borders of the Sudan and the headwaters of the Nile. Somalia (divided between the British, Italian and French) and Italian Eritrea isolated Ethiopia, the only African country other than Liberia still to escape European domination. This ancient Christian [Monophysite] polity was ruled by the only African monarch of the nineteenth century to avert the European threat by a military success, the annihilation of an Italian army at Adowa in 1896. Other Africans could not prevail, as the Anglo-Egyptian conquest of the Sudan in 1898, and, in the next century, the Portuguese mastery (with some difficulty) of insurrection in Angola in 1902, the British destruction of the Zulu and Matabele in 1907, and, most bloodily, the German quelling of Tanganyika in 1907 and massacre of the Herrero of south-west Africa in the same year, were to show.”

Most of these imperial ventures were sponsored, not by states but by individual adventurers. That is why they did not lead to European wars. Only occasionally were major interests involved. Thus the British and the French nearly fought over Egypt, with its vital strategic asset of the Suez Canal, and the British did fight the Boers over the diamond-rich Transvaal. But of course native, as opposed to European, interests were always involved: when Cecil Rhodes wanted to build a railway across the whole continent from South Africa to Egypt, he came up against the opposition of King Kharma III of Bechuanaland (the modern Botswana), who, with two other regional kings, went to England and persuaded the Queen to stop a project which would have been so damaging to his people and his nation’s independence. This was a rare victory of African diplomacy over British colonialism.

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But the Marxist prediction that European imperialism would lead to European war was not fulfilled – even in 1914. For the main threat to the European empires came, not from class antagonism, but from *ethnic nationalism*, which, as Dominic Lieven writes, “played a big role in undermining all the great empires that existed in 1900 both inside and outside Europe.” By then, “nationalism had become a nearly universal phenomenon in Europe. Nationalist movements spread to subject peoples of the Russian, Austrian and Ottoman empires, including not just ‘historical’ people such as the Poles but also groups such as the Armenians, Bulgarians, Ukrainians and Czechs who had not enjoyed independent statehood for centuries, if at all. Irish nationalism was the precursor of these movements, drawing on historical myths and memories, hatred of the rule of alien landlords and governments, and questions of religion, language, and ethnicity. In Ireland as elsewhere, the sense of commitment, sacrifice, and intransigence that these issues evoked made many observers equate nationalism with a new form of religion. To short and humdrum individual lives, the nationalist faith could add a touch of the heroic and a sense that one belonged not to just a community but also in meaningful terms to the sweep of history. To be sure, in much of Europe even in 1900 nationalism had little hold beyond the educated classes. Nor was intelligentsia nationalism by any means always committed to independent statehood in Ireland or elsewhere. Nevertheless, the Irish example was telling. The hold of nationalism appeared to strengthen as societies modernized. It was the product of civil society, mass literacy, and urbanization…” 6

“Big-nation nationalism” not only kept the workers loyal, but also kept “small-nation nationalism” in check. Thus in 1894 Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India, dedicated a book called *Problems of the Far East* “to those who believe that the British Empire is, under Providence, the greatest instrument for good the world has seen”. 7

Again, A.N. Wilson writes of Cecil Rhodes that he “first sailed for Africa – the east coast – when he was seventeen, in 1870. It was in the fates that he would give his name to two great African countries, Northern and Southern Rhodesia (now Zambia and Zimbabwe). Whether he actually placed his hand on the map of Africa and said, ‘That is my dream – all British’ – or in another version, ‘all red’ – he certainly believed that in an ideal universe, Britain would hold dominion not merely over the Dark Continent, but over the world itself. In his ‘Confession’, written when he was a very young man, Rhodes even dreamed of the readmission of the United States to the Empire. True, ‘without the low-class Irish and German emigrants’ that great nation would be a greater asset. ‘If we had retained America there would… be millions more of English living… Since


we are the finest race in the world and that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race.”8

Again, take the British in Ireland. “Eighteenth-century Ireland’s British rulers had known that they were hated by the native Irish. Having destroyed the old Catholic landowning class and replaced it with a Protestant Anglo-Irish elite, London was nevertheless confident that nothing short of a major French invasion could shake its hold on Ireland. In the nineteenth century, the modernization of Ireland’s economy and the emergence of a vibrant Irish civil society transformed the situation. British policy in nineteenth-century Ireland often combined repression and concession in intelligent fashion. It never attempted to simply ignore and repress the political implications of modernization. It compromised with the Catholic Church, handed over local government to the new Catholic middle classes, and bought out the Protestant landowning class, which was only possible because in that era Britain had the richest taxpayers in the world. But British policy could not head off ever-growing demands for Irish autonomy. From the mid-1880s, the two main British parties – Liberals and Conservatives – were divided on how to respond to this demand. Liberals argued that ‘home rule’ would satisfy Irish aspirations, not least because most Catholic Irishmen of the professional classes welcomed Ireland’s connection to the world’s greatest empire; their Conservative and Unionist opponents insisted that it would give power, confidence, and patronage in Ireland to a movement that was driven by deep cultural and historical enmity toward England and that would never be satisfied with anything less than independence. Similar debates about whether devolution and federalism would strengthen or weaken imperial unity were to occur in other empires in the twentieth century…”9

The Irish question would come to hit the British hard during the Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916. The rising was suppressed. But the fierce retribution set Irish against English and against each other for the rest of the century...

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“The new attitude to empire,” writes Evans, “contained a strong element of racism and the denigration of other cultures and civilizations. British schoolbooks now dismissed oriental culture as ornamental rather than useful, and told their readers, of monuments like the Taj Mahal, that ‘it might be supposed that they had originally been erected to commemorate the virtues of some great benefactor of our species, instead of being the whim of some prince who dawdled away his years in indolence or pleasure’. Different races were no longer depicted as equal in the sight of God, sharing a common humanity, if at an earlier stage of development than that of the Victorian Englishman. Instead, textbooks now emphasized racial difference and the alleged racial inferiority of subject peoples: ‘The Australian natives are an ugly, unprepossessing people,


with degrading and filthy habits’, as one geography textbook put it: ‘Like beasts of prey... the Malays are always on the watch, to assuage their thirst of blood and plunder’; ‘The tribes [of Nigeria]... are extremely savage, practicing horrible forms of religion, accompanied by human sacrifices.’ In such circumstances, it now seemed to be agreed, rule by the British was morally justifiable as well as politically necessary.

“The British, indeed, were, in the view of the imperialists of the 1880s and 1890s, destined not only to rule inferior races but also to lead the entire world into the future. As Joseph Chamberlain declared in 1895: ‘I believe in this race, the greatest governing race the world has ever seen; in this Anglo-Saxon race, so proud, tenacious, self-confident and determined, this race which neither climate nor change can degenerate, which will infallibly be the predominant force of future history and universal civilization.’ Belief in racial hierarchies based on descent had become more widespread once it had become possible to lend it scientific legitimacy. This was not least a product of the growing influence of Darwinism in the second half of the century. In the hands of the biologist and anthropologist Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), who coined the phrase ‘the survival of the fittest’, Darwinism became a harsh creed of competition, and phrases such as ‘the struggle for existence’ and ‘the strongest prevail’ soon became part of what has been termed ‘social Darwinism’, the application of Darwin’s ideas, or a version of them, to human society.

“Social Darwinism’s influence spread across Europe in the late nineteenth century. It had a progressive version, which laid on the state the duty to improve the face by better housing, hygiene and nutrition. The German zoologist Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919) popularized Darwin’s ideas in his best-selling book The Riddle of the Universe (1901), though he gave them a twist by arguing that human characteristics could be acquired by adaptation to the environment as well as being inherited. He divided humanity into ten, or, including their subdivisions, thirty-two races, of which the ‘Caucasian’ was in his view the most advance. Africans he considered close to the apes, and he concluded that no ‘woolly-haired’ person had ever contributed anything to human civilization. Haeckel believed that criminals were racially degenerate and should be executed to prevent them passing on their criminal characteristics to the next generation: ‘rendering incorrigible offenders harmless’ would have ‘a directly beneficial effect as a selection process’. The same would be desirable for the mentally ill and handicapped. Children’s diseases, he thought, should be left untreated so that the weak could be weeded out from the chain of heredity by natural causes, leaving only the strong to propagate the race. Haeckel also believed, however, that war was eugenically counter-productive since it eliminated the best and bravest young men of every generation, so his self-styled Monist League (1906) campaigned vigorously in the cause of pacifism, leading the German authorities to keep it under close surveillance during the First World War…”

These pseudo-scientific theories helped imperialists justify their dominance over others. As Dominic Lieven writes, “An autocrat or even an aristocracy could

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10 Evans, op. cit., pp. 683-684.
rule over ethnically different peoples citing the same justifications of divine appointment, prescription or superior culture that they used to legitimise their governing of peoples of their own ethnicity. But a sovereign democratic nation could only justify its rule over other peoples in the long run by doctrines of innate racial superiority.”

For the late nineteenth century was an age, on the one hand, of empire, and on the other of popular democracy, which on the face of it were incompatible concepts. And so a new justification of empire was needed, a justification that would justify the imperial people as well as the imperial dynasty - and that justification was provided by racism.

“To some,” writes Diana Preston, “Darwinism seemed to legitimize distinctions between races and between individuals, and to justify the existence of social hierarchies and of rich and poor – indeed, of pecking orders of all sorts. Looking back over the nineteenth century, the well-known British journalist William Thomas Stead, later to go down with the Titanic, wrote: ‘The doctrine of evolution… may be regarded as the master dogma of the century. Its subtle influence is to be felt in every department of life. It has profoundly modified our conceptions of creation, and it is every day influencing more and more our ideas of morality. Men are asking, Why hesitate in consigning to a lethal chamber all idiots, lunatics and hopeless incurables? And in the larger field of national politics, why should we show any mercy to the weak? Might becomes right… Wars of extermination seem to receive the approbation of nature.’

“Both Britons and Americans saw the Anglo-Saxon race as pre-eminent among the white races, which, in turn, rightly dominated the rest. One writer thought the Anglo-Saxons ‘in perfect accord with the characteristic conditions of modern life.’ The Anglo-Saxon focused on physical interests and material possession and consequently triumphed in world markets ‘because he has supreme gifts as an inventor of material things which appeal to the average man of democracy.’ His success in driving self-interest and ethical standards in double harness marked him out from others, but the writer believed the Anglo-Saxon to be ‘supremely unconscious of this duality in his nature’, concluding smugly that ‘there is a psychological difference between English-speaking men and others, which makes that which would be hypocrisy in others not hypocrisy in them. They are sentimentalists, and, as sentimentalists, not the best analysts of their motive and impulses.’

The British were particularly interested in such ideas, for on the one hand, theirs was the largest of the European empires, and on the other, they saw themselves as the standard-bearers of democracy, having “the mother of parliaments” and a tradition of freedom since the time of Magna Carta. They concluded that it was the greater innate intelligence and superior character of the British that made them into the world’s most powerful nation, and gave them a right to rule the less genetically endowed nations of Africa and Asia.


So the British never tried to make the black and brown peoples of their overseas colonies British: the perceived difference was simply too great. This was in contrast to the French, who tried to make Algerians, for example, into Frenchmen. The British even made a significant contribution to the rise of German racism in the person of Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855-1927), an Englishman resident in Germany and Wagner’s son-in-law, who regarded the master race as being, not the Whites, but the Aryans or Teutons. “True history,” he wrote, “begins from the moment the German with mighty hand seizes the inheritance of antiquity.”

As Niall Ferguson writes: “If the British were, as Chamberlain and Milner believed, the master race, with a God-given right to rule the world, it seemed to follow logically that those they fought against were their natural-born inferiors. Was this not the conclusion drawn by Science itself – increasingly regarded as the ultimate authority in such matters?

“In 1863 Dr. James Hunt had dismayed his audience at a meeting in Newcastle of the British Association for the Advancement of Science by asserting that the ‘Negro’ was a separate species of human being, half way between the ape and ‘European man’. In Hunt’s view the ‘Negro’ became ‘more humanized when in his natural subordination to the European’, but he regretfully concluded that ‘European civilization [was] not suited to the Negro’s requirements or character’. According to one eyewitness, the African traveller Winwood Reade, Hunt’s lecture went down badly, eliciting hisses from some members of the audience. Yet within a generation such views had become the conventional wisdom. Influenced by, but distorting beyond recognition, the work of Darwin, nineteenth-century pseudo-scientists divided humanity into ‘races’ on the basis of external physical features, ranking them according to inherited differences not just in physique but also in character. Anglo-Saxons were self-evidently at the top, Africans at the bottom. The work of George Combe, author of A System of Phrenology (1825), was typical in two respects – the derogatory way in which it portrayed racial differences and the fraudulent way in which it sought to explain them: ‘When we regard the different quarters of the globe [wrote Combe], we are struck with the extreme dissimilarity in the attainments of the varieties of men who inhabit them… The history of Africa, so far as Africa can be said to have a history… exhibit[s] one unbroken scene of moral and intellectual desolation… ‘The Negro, easily excitable, is in the highest degree susceptible to all the passions… To the Negro, remove only pain and hunger, and it is naturally in a state of enjoyment. As soon as his toils are suspended for a moment, he sings, seizes a fiddle, he dances.’ The explanation for this backwardness, according to Combe, was the peculiar shape of ‘the skull of the Negro’: ‘The organs of Veneration, Wonder and Hope… are considerable in size. The greatest deficiencies lie in Conscientiousness, Cautiousness, Ideality and Reflection.’ Such ideas were influential. The idea of an ineradicable ‘race instinct’ became a staple of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century writing…

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“Phrenology was only one of a number of bogus disciplines tending to legitimise the assumptions about racial difference that had long been current among white colonists. Even more insidious, because intellectually more rigorous, was the scientific snake-oil known as ‘eugenics’. It was the mathematician Francis Galton who, in his book Hereditary Genius (1869), pioneered the ideas that a ‘man’s natural abilities are derived by inheritance’; that ‘out of two varieties of any race of animal who are equally endowed in other respects, the most intelligent variety is sure to prevail in the battle of life’; and that on a sixteen-point scale of racial intelligence, a ‘Negro’ is two grades below an Englishman. Galton sought to validate his theories by using composite photography to distinguish criminal and other degenerate types. However, a more systematic development was undertaken by Karl Pearson, another Cambridge-trained mathematician, who in 1911 became the first Galton Professor of Eugenics at University College London. A brilliant mathematician, Pearson became convinced that his statistical techniques (which he called ‘biometry’) could be used to demonstrate the danger posed to the Empire by racial degeneration. The problem was that improved welfare provision and health care at home were interfering with the natural selection process, allowing genetically inferior individuals to survive – and ‘propagate their unfitness’. ‘The right to live does not connote the right of each man to reproduce his kind,’ he argued in Darwinism, Medical Progress and Parentage (1912). ‘As we lessen the stringency of natural selection, and more and more of the weaklings and the unfit survive, we must increase the standard, mental and physical, of parentage.’

“There was, however, one alternative to state intervention in reproductive choices: war. For Pearson, as for many other Social Darwinists, life was struggle, and war was more than just a game – it was a form of natural selection. As he put it, ‘National progress depends on racial fitness and the supreme test of this fitness was war. When wars cease mankind will no longer progress for there will be nothing to check the fertility of inferior stock.’

“Needless to say, this made pacifism a particularly wicked creed. But fortunately, with an ever-expanding empire, there was no shortage of jolly little wars to be waged against racially inferior opponents. It was gratifying to think that in massacring them with their Maxim guns, the British were contributing to the progress of mankind.”

Racist ideas based on pseudo-science underpinned other colonial empires: in the terrible exploitation of the Congo by the Belgian King Leopold after 1886 and in the genocide of the Hereros by the Germans in 1904. “The proportion of the population estimated to have been killed in the Congo under Belgian rule may have been as high as a fifth. The estimated mortality rate in the Herero War was higher still… Colonial authorities were encouraged to treat subject peoples as ‘subhuman’.”


The Germans killed 80% of the eighty thousand Herero. “The Great General of the mighty Kaiser, von Trotha” declared his intention publicly: “The Herero people will have to leave the country. Otherwise I shall force them to do so by means of guns. Within the German boundaries, every Herero, whether found armed or unarmed, with or without cattle, will be shot. I shall not accept any more women and children. I shall drive them back to their people – otherwise I shall order shots to be fired at them. These are my words to the Herero people.”

But it was in the Congo that the greatest slaughter took place. Andre C. James writes: “King Leopold II of Belgium was responsible for the deaths and mutilation of 10 million Congolese Africans during the late 1800’s… The 905,000 square miles (76 times larger than Belgium) of African rainforest held a vast fortune in rubber plantations, a commodity in high demand in late 19th century industrial Europe.

“In 1876, Leopold formed the philanthropic organisation ‘Association Internationale Africaine’ (International African Association) and became its single shareholder. Under the guise of missionary work and westernisation of African peoples, Leopold II used the International African Association to further his ambitions of empire building in the hope if bringing international prestige to relatively small Belgium. In reality, the International African Association was a vehicle to enslave the people of the Congo River Basin and enrich Leopold II.

“In the 23 years (1885-1908) Leopold II ruled the Congo he massacred 10 million Africans by cutting off their hands and genitals, flogging them to death, starving them into forced labour, holding children ransom and burning villages. The ironic part of this story is that Leopold II committed these atrocities by not even setting foot in the Congo.”

“These atrocities,” writes Evans, “soon reached the notice of critics of colonialism in Europe and the United States… King Leopold was forced to hand over control of the Congo to the Belgian government not long before his death in 1909. . The state administrators began to replace wild-rubber collecting with the planting of rubber trees. However, the campaign against the atrocities in the Congo did not touch the French Congo, where similar outrages took place. A study of one French trading post showed that the fluctuations in rubber production correlated statistically with the number of bullets used by company police between 1904 and 1907, and one estimate puts the population loss in the French Congolese rainforest area at 50 per cent as well. Inequality was built into

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the French colonies, with rare exceptions. Apart from Algeria, where European settlement was on a large scale in the north, this meant that the colonies were run in an authoritarian fashion by local administrators. Earlier in the century the French had still believed in the ‘civilizing mission’, or in other words spreading the benefits of the French Revolution, liberty, equality and fraternity, across the globe, but despite the continuing power of this ideology, the experience of colonization forced a partial retreat from this lofty principle. When indigenous kingdoms like Dahomey, whose female soldiers and customs of mass human sacrifice fascinated and horrified Europeans, were taken over, it was thought that their inhabitants could not be turned into French men and women; it would simply cost too much in money and lives. As a book by the French doctor and explorer Jules Harmand (1845-1921), *Domination and Colonization*, concluded in 1910, it was necessary to ‘better the lot of the aborigine in all ways, but only in directions that are profitable to him – by letting him evolve in his own way… by indirect rule, with a conservation… of the institutions of the subject people…’"18

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2. THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

The Age of Empire, as we have seen, was a racist age, when theories of a master-race - White or Aryan - were developed in order to justify European imperialism over the Asian and African races. However, it began with a war that was in part a war against racism, the American Civil War between the Northern and Southern States of the United States of America. And, although, as we shall see, there was much more to the war than a struggle against racism, there is no doubt that, in spite of the shining exceptions of some individuals, the Southern States were racist in their official theory and practice.

Now the United States had agreed to abolition in 1838, “in accordance,” writes Bernard Simms, “with the constitutional agreement of 1787 to end the trade after twenty years, and banned the carriage of slaves under its own flag. This marked the beginning of a subversive new abolitionist geopolitics, based on the coercive power of the Royal Navy… The issue of slavery [had become] increasingly contentious in domestic and foreign policy, at the very moment when the new cotton economy was taking off in the South. In January 1820, the Missouri Compromise determined that – with the exception of the state of Missouri itself – there should be no slavery north of the 36°30’ parallel, but this agreement was under attack from both sides of the divide. William Lloyd Garrison founded his abolitionist newspaper, The Liberator, in 1831. Public opinion in the Northern states became more and more radical in opposition if not to slavery in the South, then at least to its extension to the west. Southerners, for their part, eyed not only the domestic but also the international scene with misgivings. Further west, French influence in Mexico was on the rise, reflected in their temporary occupation of Veracruz, ostensibly in order to enforce the payment of Mexico’s international debt; they were also active in California. It was clear that if the United States did not move into the vacuum to her west and south, another power would. And yet, so long as slavery divided North and South, no domestic consensus on expansion was possible. The inexorable westwards march of the United States therefore ground to a twenty-year halt.”

The main justification for the American Civil War of 1861-65 from the North's point of view was, of course, the existence of slavery in the South. "Most Northerners," writes David Reynolds, "were not passionate to abolish slavery itself, but there was widespread opposition to slavery's extension into the western lands because that would undercut free labour and increase the South's influence in Washington."20

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Not even Abraham Lincoln was an abolitionist at first. In his inaugural address in March, 1861 he declared: "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists." And again he said: "If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that." However, the proclamation of emancipation on New Year's Day 1863 - designed mainly to attract blacks into the Northern Armies - changed the nature of the war, in Yankee eyes, from one of unification (of North and South) into one of liberation (of the black slaves).

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

"Most Southerners held an exactly contrary view and believed that unless the inequality of blacks was legally enforced, their own way of life would be overthrown. Some Southern ideologues argued fervently that slavery was a guarantee of freedom, not only the freedom of the whites to live as they did and to organise the Southern states as they were organised but the freedom of the blacks also, since slavery protected the blacks from the economic harshness suffered by the labouring poor in the Northern factory system. Books were written to argue and demonstrate the case, and Southern polemicists advocated unashamedly with their Northern opponents. There is no doubt that it was believed also, since the spectacle of happy blacks living under paternal care on well-run plantations did seem to support the idea of slavery as a sort of welfare system."\(^{21}\)

Thus Senator James Hammond of South Carolina... said that the "difference between us is that our slaves are hired for life and well compensated, there is no starvation, no begging, no want of employment among our people, and not too much employment either. Yours are hired by the day, not cared for, and scantily compensated, which may be proved in the most painful manner, at any hour in any street in any of your large towns. Why you meet more beggars in one day, on any single street of the city of New York, than you would meet in a lifetime in the whole South."\(^{22}\)

\(^{22}\) Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 175.
Hammond had a point, and other observers favourably compared the situation of black slaves in America to that of English workers of the time. Thus Robert Owen noted: "Bad and unwise as American slavery is and must continue to be, the white slavery in the manufactories of England was at this unrestricted period far worse than the house slaves which I afterwards saw in the West Indies and in the United States, and in many respects, especially as regards health, food and clothing, the latter were much better provided for than were those oppressed and degraded children and work-people in the home manufactories of Great Britain." Nevertheless, there were real abuses in the South - for example, the very liberal use of the whip by slave-owners, their sexual abuse of black slave women, and the fact that they had the power to break up slave families by selling the breadwinner alone and keeping his family (this was the theme of the famous novel of the time, Uncle Tom's Cabin).

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

“In 1850 Frederick Douglass also claimed that masters had unlimited power over the bodies of slaves. Slaves’ names were ‘impiously inserted in a master’s

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23 Owen, in A.N. Wilson, The Victorians, p. 89.
leger with horses, sheep and swine’ and that master could ‘work him, flog him, hire him out, sell him, and in certain circumstances kill him, with perfect impunity. The slave is a human being, divested of all rights – reduced to the level of a brute – a mere “chattel” in the eyes of the law – placed beyond the circle of human brotherhood [sic].’ This was not strictly accurate. Slaves were not simply ‘things’ in law. Rather, they were carefully constructed quasi-legal persons. Because they were ‘property’, they could be harshly punished by their masters. But they were categorized as ‘persons’ when it came to serious crimes. They could not be murdered (‘unnecessarily’) and they could be indicted and punished for murder. Thus, in Cresswell’s Executor v. Walker (1861), slaves were held to have ‘no legal mind, no will which the law can recognize’ so far as civil acts were concerned. As soon as they committed a crime, however, they were ascribed personhood. A similar point was intriguingly argued in 1857, the first time a slave stood as a defendant in a US court. This was the federal prosecution of ‘Amy’, who had been convicted for stealing a letter from the post office in violation of federal law. Her defence attorney argued that she was not a legal person. Because she was a slave, she could not be indicted under an Act of Congress that forbade ‘any person’ to steal a letter from the United States mail. The prosecutor’s response to this ingenious defence was blunt: ‘I cannot prove more plainly that the prisoner is a person, a natural person,’ he exclaimed, ‘than to ask your honors to look at her. There she is.’

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

Annette Gordon-Reed writes: “The founding documents of the Confederacy [the Southern States], under which the purported citizens of that entity lived, just as Americans live under the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, announced that African slavery would form the ‘cornerstone’ of the country they would create after winning the Civil War. In 1861, a few weeks before the war began, Alexander Stephens, the vice president of the Confederacy, put things plainly: ‘The new constitution has put at rest, forever, all the agitating questions relating to our peculiar institution – African slavery as it exists amongst us – the proper status of the negro in our form of civilization. This was the immediate cause of the late rupture and present revolution. Jefferson in his forecast had anticipated this and as the “rock upon which the old Union would split.” He was right... The prevailing ideas entertained by him and most of the leading statesmen of the time of the formation of the old constitution, were that the enslavement of the African was in violation of the laws of nature; that it was wrong in principle, socially, morally, and politically... Those ideas, however, were fundamentally wrong. They rested upon the assumption of the equality of races. This was an error.

“Our new government is founded exactly the opposite idea; its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery – subordination to the superior race – is his natural and normal condition.”25

This war was not unexpected. As early as 1787 Alexander Hamilton "had made a prediction: The newly created federal government would either 'triumph altogether over the state governments and reduce them to an entire subordination,' he surmised, or 'in the course of a few years the contests about the boundaries of power between the particular governments and the general government will produce a dissolution of the Union."26

However, Hamilton’s words related to statehood and revolution, not slavery. And that was the other great issue in 1861. The Civil War was not only about slavery: it was also, and perhaps primarily, about the nature of the state... States can create nations, just as nations - states. As Norman Davies writes, in the nineteenth century nationalism "came in two opposing variants. One of them, state or civil nationalism, was sponsored by the ruling establishments of existing states. The other, popular or ethnic nationalism, was driven by the demands of communities living within those states and against the policy of those


governments. There are as many theories on the essence of nations as there are theorists. But the essential qualities would seem to be spiritual in nature. The nation is a soul,' wrote Renan, 'a spiritual principle. [It] consists of two things. One is the common legacy of rich memories from the past. The other is the present consensus, the will to live together."27

In 1924 the Scottish writer John Buchan wrote that for the South "the vital thing, the thing with which all its affections and sentiments were intertwined, was the State. The North, on the other hand, had for its main conception the larger civic organism, the Nation."28

And yet what was "the Nation'? The 1848 revolution in Europe had shown how difficult it was to define a nation, and how people of the same nation according to theories of language or blood nevertheless preferred to remain citizens of States ruled by other nations rather than go to war for the sake of reuniting the "nation" in a single, ethnically homogeneous state. Clearly, there was much uniting North and South in terms of language, culture, religion and race. In his famous Gettysburg Address Abraham Lincoln emphasized that the United States was a single nation, using the word "nation" five times.29 But if one group of people feels itself to constitute a different nation from another group, this psychological fact alone creates an important difference. Thus insofar as the Southerners felt themselves to be a different nation, they were - up to a point - a different nation. And so, if the revolution of 1776 had been justified in the name of the liberty of the new nation called America, although it had previously been one nation with Britain, then that of the Southerners in 1861 was no less justified - not least because, as they argued, the Constitution of the United States permitted the secession of individual States.30

"Each side," writes J.M. Roberts, "accused the other of revolutionary designs and behaviour. It is very difficult not to agree with both of them. The heart of the Northern position, as Lincoln saw, was that democracy should prevail, a claim assuredly of potentially limitless revolutionary implication. In the end, what the North achieved was indeed a social revolution in the South. On the other side, what the South was asserting in 1861 (and three more states joined the Confederacy after the first shots were fired) was that it had the same right to organize its life as had, say, revolutionary Poles or Italians in Europe."31

27 Davies, Europe, pp. 812, 813.


29 Reynolds, op. cit. p. 205


The war arose because of a quarrel over the status of the new western states: should they be allowed to have slaves or not. Ian Rimmer writes: “After the war with Mexico ended in 1848, the borders of the American Republic became finalized. Expansion into the new territories to the west began, but disputes about whether they should become free or slave were fierce, and at times violent. Various compromises and short-term fixes gave some stability but the ultimate problem was crystallised by a speech on 16 June 1858 in Springfield, Illinois. It was given by the newly formed Republican Party’s candidate for the Illinois senate seat. He argued: ‘A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently, half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved. I do not expect this house to fall. But I do expect it will ceased to be divided.’ The candidate’s name was Abraham Lincoln.”\(^{32}\)

According to Rimmer, in 1862, Lincoln, now President, “seized the opportunity to confront the issue of slavery. At war’s onset he had maintained its purpose was to save the Union and pledged to leave the institution of slavery unaffected in the Southern States. Lincoln believed he wasn’t able to challenge state-sanctioned servitude under the Constitution, which kept the important border slave states of Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland and Delaware loyal to the Union.

“However, as the war unfolded, slavery’s effects couldn’t be ignored, as they were damaging the Union campaign. Slaves were used to construct defences for the Confederate armies, while slave work on farms and plantations kept the South’s economy going, allowing more of the white population to fight. Determined to affect the balance of the war, Lincoln issued the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation in September 1862.”\(^{33}\)

On January 1, 1863, nearly two years into the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln as president signed an Emancipation Declaration freeing four million black slaves…

Michael Hutcheson argues that Lincoln was not a real abolitionist, but simply a good politician: “In his first inaugural address, Lincoln stated clearly that (1) he had no legal authority to interfere with slavery where it existed, (2) that he had no inclination or intention to do so even if he had the legal authority, (3) that he would enforce the Fugitive Slave Act, returning runaway slaves escaping to the North to their masters in the South, and (4) that he fully supported the Thirteenth Amendment then being debated in Congress which would protect slavery in perpetuity and was irrevocable. He later famously stated, ‘Do not paint me with the Abolitionist brush.’

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33 Rimmer, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
“Although there was some opposition to slavery in the country, the government was willing to concede everything the South wanted regarding slavery to keep it in the Union. Given all these facts, the idea that the South seceded to protect slavery is as absurd as the idea that Lincoln fought the war to end slavery. Lincoln himself said in a famous letter after the war began that his sole purpose was to save the Union, and not to either save or end slavery; that if he could save the Union without freeing a single slave, he would. Nothing could be clearer.

“For decades before the war, the South, through harsh tariffs, had been supplying about 85% of the country’s revenue, nearly all of which was being spent in the North to boost its economy, build manufacturing, infrastructure, railroads, canals, etc. With the passage of the 47% Morrill Tariff the final nail was in the coffin. The South did not secede to protect slavery, although certainly they wished to protect it; they seceded over a dispute about unfair taxation, an oppressive Federal government, and the right to separate from that oppression and be governed ‘by consent’, exactly the same issues over which the Founding Fathers fought the Revolutionary War. When a member of Lincoln’s cabinet suggested he let the South go in peace, Lincoln famously replied, ‘Let the South go? Where, then, would we get our revenue?’ He then launched a brutal, empirical war to keep the free and sovereign states, by force of arms, in the Union they had created and voluntarily joined, and then voluntarily left. This began his reign of terror.

“Only after the Union had suffered two years of crushing defeats in battle did Lincoln resolve to ‘emancipate’ the slaves, and only as a war measure, a military tactic, not for moral or humanitarian purposes. He admitted this, remarking, ‘We must change tactics or lose the game.’ He was hoping, as his original draft of the document shows, that a slave uprising would occur, making it harder for Southerners to continue the war. His only interest in freeing the slaves was in forcing the South to remain in the Union. His Emancipation Proclamation was denounced by Northerners, Southerners and Europeans alike for its absurdity and hypocrisy; for, it only ‘freed’ the slaves in the seceded states—where he could not reach them—and kept slavery intact in the North and the border states—where he could have freed them at once.”

“The real question” about American slavery, writes Eric Hobsbawm, “is why it should have led to secession and civil war, rather than to some sort of formula of coexistence. After all, though no doubt most people in the North detested slavery, militant abolitionism alone was never strong enough to determine the Union’s policy. And Northern capitalism, whatever the private views of businessmen, might well have found it as possible and convenient to come to terms with and exploit a slave South as international business has with the 'apartheid' of South Africa.

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"Of course slave societies, including that of the South, were doomed. None of them survived the period from 1848 to 1890 - not even Cuba and Brazil. They were already isolated both physically, by the abolition of the African slave-trade, which was pretty effective by the 1850s, and, as it were, morally, by the overwhelming consensus of bourgeois liberalism which regarded them as contrary to history's march, morally undesirable and economically inefficient. It is difficult to envisage the survival of the South as a slave society into the twentieth century, any more than the survival of serfdom in Eastern Europe, even if (like some schools of historians) we consider both economically viable as systems of production. But what brought the South to the point of crisis in the 1850s was a more specific problem: the difficulty of coexisting with a dynamic northern capitalism and a flood of migration into the West.

"In purely economic terms, the North was not much worried about the South, an agrarian region hardly involved in industrialisation. Time, population, resources and production were on its side. The main stumbling-blocks were political. The South, a virtual semi-colony of the British to whom it supplied the bulk of their raw cotton, found free trade advantageous, whereas the Northern industry had long been firmly and militantly committed to protective tariffs, which it was unable to impose sufficiently for its desires because of the political leverage of the Southern states (who represented, it must be recalled, almost half the total number of states in 1850). Northern industry was certainly more worried about a nation half-free trading and half-protectionist than about one half-slave and half-free. What was equally to the point, the South did its best to offset the advantages of the North by cutting it off from its hinterland, attempting to establish a trading and communications area facing south and based on the Mississippi river system rather than facing east to the Atlantic, and so far as possible pre-empting the expansion to the West. This was natural enough since its poor whites had long explored and opened the West.

"But the very economic superiority of the North meant that the South had to insist with increasing stubbornness on its political force - to stake its claims in the most formal terms (e.g. by insisting on the official acceptance of slavery in new western territories), to stress the autonomy of states ('states' rights) against the national government, to exercise its veto over national policies, to discourage northern economic developments, etc. In effect it had to be an obstacle to the North while pursuing its expansionist policy in the West. Its only assets were political. For (given that it could not or would not beat the North at its own game of capitalist development) the currents of history ran dead against it. Every improvement in transport strengthened the links of the West with the Atlantic. Basically the railroad system ran from east to west with hardly any long lines from north to south. Moreover, the men who peopled the West, whether they came from North or South, were not slave-owners but poor, white and free, attracted by free soil or gold or adventure. The formal extension of slavery to new territories and states was therefore crucial to the South, and the increasingly embittered conflicts of the two sides during the 1850s turned mainly on this question. At the same time slavery was irrelevant to the West, and indeed
western expansion might actually weaken the slave system. It provided no such reinforcement as that which Southern leaders hoped for when envisaging the annexation of Cuba and the creation of a Southern-Caribbean plantation empire. In brief, the North was in a position to unify the continent and the South was not. Aggressive in posture, its real recourse was to abandon the struggle and secede from the Union, and this is what it did when the election of Abraham Lincoln from Illinois in 1860 demonstrated that it had lost the 'Middle West'.

"For four years civil war raged. In terms of casualties and destruction it was by far the greatest war in which any 'developed' country was involved in our period, though relatively it pales beside the more or less contemporary Paraguayan War in South America, and absolutely beside the Taiping Wars in China. The Northern states, though notably inferior in military performance, eventually won because of their vast preponderance of manpower, productive capacity and technology. After all, they contained over 70 per cent of the total population of the United States, over 80 per cent of the men of military age, and over 90 per cent of its industrial production. Their triumph was also that of American capitalism and of the modern United States. But, though slavery was abolished, it was not the triumph of the Negro, slave or free. After a few years of 'Reconstruction' (i.e. forced democratisation) the South reverted to the control of conservative white Southerners, i.e. racists. Northern occupying troops were finally withdrawn in 1877. In one sense it achieved its object: the Northern Republicans (who retained the presidency for most of the time from 1860 to 1932) could not break into the solidly Democratic South, which therefore retained substantial autonomy. The South, in turn, through its block vote, could exercise some national influence, since its support was essential for the success of the other great party, the Democrats. In fact, it remained agrarian, poor, backward and resentful; the whites resented the never-forgotten defeat, the blacks the disfranchisement and ruthless subordination re-imposed by the whites."35

Even the Northerners complained. Thus "the lawmakers of Illinois - the president's home state - called the Proclamation [of Emancipation in 1863] 'a gigantic usurpation at once converting the war professedly commenced by the Administration for the vindication of the authority of the Constitution into the crusade for the sudden, unconditional and violent liberation of 3 million negro slaves, a result which would not only be a total subversion of the Federal Union but a revolution in the social organization of the Southern States the present and far-reaching consequences of which to both races cannot be contemplated without the most dismal foreboding of horror and dismay.'"36

"In a sense," writes Roberts, "there had been no colour problem while slavery existed. Servile status was the barrier separating the overwhelming majority of blacks (there had always been a few free among them) from whites, and it was


36 Reynolds, op. cit., p. 199.
upheld by legal sanction. Emancipation swept away the framework of legal inferiority and replaced this with a framework, or myth, of democratic equality when very few Americans were ready to give this social reality. Millions of blacks in the South were suddenly free. They were also for the most part uneducated, largely untrained except for field labour, and virtually without leadership of their own race. For a little while in the Southern states they leant for support on the occupying armies of the Union; when this prop was removed blacks disappeared from legislatures and public offices of the Southern states to which they had briefly aspired. In some areas they disappeared from the polling-booths, too. Legal disabilities were replaced by a social and physical coercion which was sometimes harsher than the old regime of slavery. The slave at least had the value to his master of being an investment of capital; he was protected like other property and was usually ensured a minimum of security and maintenance. Competition in a free labour market at a moment when the economy of large areas of the South was in ruins, with impoverished whites struggling for subsistence, was disastrous for the black. By the end of the century he had been driven by a poor white population bitterly resentful of defeat and emancipation into social subordination and economic deprivation."

When the famous southern general Robert E. Lee was faced with the North’s intention to destroy the South, he recommended resistance to the Confederate Congress. "Considering the relation of master and slave, controlled by humane laws and influenced by Christianity and an enlightened public sentiment, as the best that can exist between the white and black races while intermingled as at present in the country, I would deprecate any sudden disturbance of that relation unless it be necessary to avert a greater calamity to both." But, he went on, in the present crisis, "I think we must decide whether slavery shall be extinguished by our enemies and the slaves be used against us, or use them ourselves at the rise of the effects that may be produced on our social institutions. My own opinion is that we should employ them without delay," and the "best means of securing the efficiency and fidelity of this auxiliary force would be to accompany the measures with a well-digested plan of gradual and general emancipation."38

Fr. Steven Allen writes: “Many Southerners, including Robert E. Lee, believed in gradual emancipation, in which owners would receive compensation, the freed slaves would receive land to farm, and a peaceful transition could be made to an all-free society. They never had a chance to try it, because the federal government sent an army to destroy the South and turn the black people loose with no land, no education, and no help. It was their old masters who took them in, gave them work, and fed them. Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy, had an adopted black son whom Union soldiers cruelly tore away from his family in order to "liberate" him.”39


38 Reynolds, op. cit., p. 211.

“This is what William Mack Lee the body Servant of General Robert E. Lee said about Lee and slavery. He stayed with General Lee throughout the war and until the day Lee died in 1870. Mack said of General Lee after his death ‘I was raised by one of the greatest men in the world. There was never one born of a woman greater than General Robert E. Lee, according to my judgment. All of his servants were set free ten years before the war, but all remained on the plantation until after the surrender.’ General Lee left Mack $360 in his will, which Mack used to go to school and started 14 churches.”

Another example was General "Stonewall" Jackson, the South's best general and, in the opinion of Lord Roberts, commander-in-chief of the British armies early in the twentieth century, "one of the greatest natural military geniuses the world ever saw". As James I. Robertson Jr. writes, he was a profoundly religious man, who deeply loved his two wives. "He owned two slaves, both of whom had asked him to purchase them after the deaths of their masters. Anna Morrison [his second wife] brought three slaves to the marriage. Jackson viewed human bondage with typical simplicity. God had established slavery for reasons man could not and should not challenge. A good Christian had the twin responsibilities of treating slaves with paternal affection and of introducing them to the promises of God as found in Holy Scriptures. To that end, Jackson taught a Sunday afternoon Bible class for all slaves and freedmen in Lexington.

"Jackson and the VMI [Virginia Military Institute] corps of cadets served as gallows guard in December 1859, when the abolitionist John Brown was executed for treason and murder having seized the government arsenal at Harpers Ferry. As war clouds thickened in the months thereafter, Jackson remained calm. The dissolution of the Union, he told a minister, 'can come only by God's permission, and will only be permitted if for His people's good.'

"Civil war exploded in mid-April 1861, and Jackson promptly offered his sword to his native state. Virginia's close ties with the South, and its opposition to the federal government using troops to coerce a state, were the leading issues behind Virginia's secession. The state regarded as unacceptable the idea of

40 Rene Morgan, on Facebook. Indeed, many Northerners, including famous generals, had slaves. Thus “William T. Sherman had many slaves that served him until well after the war was over and did not free them until late in 1865. U.S. Grant also had several slaves, who were only freed after the 13th amendment in December of 1865. When asked why he didn't free his slaves earlier, Grant stated: 'Good help is so hard to come by these days.' Contrarily, Confederate General Robert E. Lee freed his slaves (which he never purchased - they were inherited) in 1862!!! Lee freed his slaves several years before the war was over, and considerably earlier than his Northern counterparts. And during the fierce early days of the war when the South was obliterating the Yankee armies! Lastly, and most importantly, why did NORTHERN States outlaw slavery only AFTER the war was over? The so-called ‘Emancipation Proclamation’ of Lincoln only gave freedom to slaves in the SOUTH! NOT in the North! This pecksniffery even went so far as to find the state of Delaware rejecting the 13th Amendment in December of 1865 and did not ratify it... until 1901!" ("Confederate History – Dispelling the Myths")
federal troops marching through Virginia to wage war on other states. The nation was still so young that the rights of states remains strongly ingrained in political thinking. Jackson had been a strong believer in the union until Virginia left it. When this happened Jackson felt the same as thousands of his neighbours: Virginia, the Old Dominion, had been in existence for 180 years before a 'United States' was established. The roots of families like the Lees and Jacksons ran deep within Virginia's soil. In 1861 an American's birthright and heritage was his state, not a federation which, during the last fifteen of its seventy-four years, had been in turmoil over the slavery question."41

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The Civil War had consequences for America’s relations with other powers. Thus, as Protopresbyter James Thornton writes, “the government of Abraham Lincoln was particularly vigorous in its attempts to keep the European powers from interfering in the War Between the States. Britain and France were both warned that formal recognition of the Confederacy by them would mean war with the United States. Whether the United States would actually have declared war as a result of recognition is another matter.

“War between the United States and Britain nearly erupted as a result of what is known as the Trent Affair. On November 8, 1861, the USS San Jacinto stopped the British mail steamer HMS Trent as she was sailing toward the Caribbean island of St. Thomas (then a Danish possession). On board were two Confederate diplomats, James Mason and John Slidell, on their way to Europe for discussions with British and French authorities. The U.S. captain, Charles Wilkes, arrested the two diplomats, declaring them ‘contraband of war’; removed them to the San Jacinto; and transported them to Boston, where they were held as prisoners. While many people in the North were delighted with the seizure of the Confederates, a careful review of maritime law brought forth serious doubts about the legality of the action. In Britain, news of the seizure, seen as a flagrant insult to the British flag, brought an explosion of outrage. London demanded an apology and the immediate release of the Confederate diplomats. Meanwhile, British troops were dispatched to Canada in case war broke out. Though initially reluctant to back down, Lincoln ultimately acquiesced to the British demands, realizing that were Britain to declare war at the same time the war with the Confederacy was being fought, the United States would be hard pressed to prevail.”42

The cost of the civil war was horrific: 600,000 died on both sides, more than all the Americans who died in the two world wars (520,000). Many thousands refused to join the Northern armies and draconian measures were applied to fill the draft. Brutalities were committed on both sides, but more on the side of the


"liberators", and nostalgia for the Old South has lasted to the present day. The southern General Robert E. Lee said bitterly: “Any army that wars against defenseless civilians, no matter its excuse, is no army, but barbarians unworthy of the name of Christian.”

The slaves were freed, to enjoy unemployment, continued poverty and the continued oppression of the whites. "The slaves were freed," writes Reynolds, "but they did not become equal citizens. The twelve-year Northern occupation of the South from 1865 to 1877, known as Reconstruction, was too short and not radical enough to reconstruct Southern ways; in fact, the South defiantly romanticized the pre-war order as part of its separate identity. From the perspective of civil rights, Reconstruction was therefore a tragic missed opportunity - not rectified until the so-called Second Reconstruction of the 1960s, which depended on an assertion of federal power inconceivable to the still essentially states' rights mentality of the 1860s. In any case, most Northerners of the late nineteenth century were just as Negrophobe as their Southern counterparts; they had little inclination to force on the South racial policies they rejected for themselves. So, instead of slave and free, the great divide in American society became the one between white and black…

"Freedom is heady stuff but it does not fill stomachs. Frederick Douglass, the Northern Black leader, noted that many a freed slave, after a lifetime of dependence, lacked the means or training to set up on his own. Now 'he must make his own way in the world, or as the slang phrase has it, 'Root, pig, or die'; yet he had none of the conditions of self-preservation or self-protection. He was free from the individual master but the slave of society. He had neither money, property, nor friends. He was free from the old plantation' - but was turned loose 'naked, hungry and destitute to the open sky'. And there were 4 million freed slaves across the South in 1865."44

For “as is always the case,” writes Dominic Lieven, “military victory needed to be reinforced by a political settlement, and in the American case this meant accepting a wide degree of autonomy for the South within the Union, thereby abandoning the Southern blacks. White racism helped to make this settlement acceptable to the great majority of Northerners.”45

Of course, the United States remained a land with religious and political freedom. But as a result of the war the power of the State was vastly increased, in both North and South. States can truly liberate their subjects, as Tsar Alexander II did in Russia in 1861; but as often as not liberation by the State leads to greater subjection to the State.

43 The state of Mississippi did not formally revoke slavery until 1995, and its decision was not entered into the Federal register until 2012 (https://lenta.ru/news/2013/02/19/mississippi/).

44 Reynolds, op. cit., pp. 218, 219-220.

45 Lieven, Towards the Flame. Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia, London: Allen Lane, 2015, pp. 22-23.
And this was perhaps the main lesson of the American Civil War for future generations: that the attempt to force freedom as often as not leads to still greater slavery. Thus Woodrow Wilson, who became President of the United States in 1913, was a famous southerner who saw the evil effects of Reconstruction at first hand. These influenced his vaunted neutrality between the Entente and Axis Powers in the First World War (until 1918), his refusal to take sides and advocacy of “peace without victory”.

For, as Adam Tooze writes, “one of Wilson’s earliest memories of childhood in Virginia was of hearing the news of Lincoln’s election and the rumours of a coming civil war. Growing up in Augusta, Georgia, in the 1860s – what he would describe to Lloyd George at Versailles as a ‘conquered and devastated country’ – he experienced from the side of the vanquished the bitter consequences of a just war, fought to its ultimate conclusion. It left him deeply suspicious of any crusading rhetoric. Nor was it just the Civil War that scarred Wilson. The peace that followed was, if anything, even more traumatic. Throughout his life he would denounce the Reconstruction era that followed, the effort made by the North to impose a new order on the South that enfranchised the freed black population. In Wilson’s view it had taken America more than a generation to recover. Only in the 1890s had something like reconciliation been achieved...”

The victory of the North meant no liberation for the American Indians. “In December 1868,” writes Simms, “President Johnson told Congress that ‘Comprehensive national policy would seem to sanction the acquisition and incorporation into our federal union of the several adjacent continental and insular communities.’ All this was bad news for the Indians who inhabited the great space between the core area of the Union and its outliers on the Pacific Ocean. Over the next thirty years, they were progressively expropriated, marginalized and in many cases simply killed, as the Union moved westwards in a cascade of new states...”

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Let us look briefly at the attitude of the European nations to the American Civil War.

“The French,” writes Tombs, “wanted to profit from the American Civil War... to secure Mexico [where they had installed a puppet government under the Habsburg Archduke Maximilian] by agreement with the Confederacy, the rebellious slave-owning Southern states...”

47 Simms, op. cit, p. 237.
48 Tombs, op. cit, p. 575.
As for Britain, anti-slavery feeling was strong there. “Harriet Beecher Stowe’s anti-slavery novel Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1852), also produced as a stage play, had had a stunning emotional impact on working-class audiences. So there was potential sympathy in England for the Northern states, and certainly reluctance to give active help to the South. President Abraham Lincoln, however, repeatedly declared that he was not fighting to end slavery, but to preserve the Union, and this confused matters for the British government and public. If they condemned slavery, they also had mixed feelings about the Union – not least because of the threat its expansion posed to Canada – and thought that perhaps the Confederate states had the right of self-determination. The Southern states, moreover, were the main suppliers of raw material to England’s huge cotton industry. Disruption of the supply by a Northern naval blockade of the South caused social and economic damage, especially in Lancashire, where it caused mass unemployment; consequently, the labour press (such as Reynold’s News and The Working Man) sided with the South. Volunteers from England and other European countries, whether as adventurers or idealists, fought on both sides in the war, which some saw as having parallels with social and political divisions at home. As a Stockport weaver who fought for the North put it, ‘I detested slavery of every kind whether among the white factory operatives at home or among the negroes of America. I always wet with the dog that was down.’

“With opinion thus divided, there was a possibility that Britain might recognize the Confederacy and sweep away the Union blockade, allowing the South to equip itself freely from European shipyards and arsenals, and cotton supplies to flow. Palmerston, now Prime Minister, was, however, cautious: as he observed to the Foreign Secretary, Lord John Russell, ‘They who in quarrels interpose, Will often get a bloody nose.’ But a serious dispute with Washington in 1861 might easily have tipped the balance towards intervention. In November, a British ship, the Trent, was stopped on the high seas by a Federal warship and two Confederate diplomats on their way to Britain were arrested. In Friedrich Engels’s view, as he wrote to Karl Marx, ‘To take political prisoners by force on a foreign ship is the clearest casus belli there can be. The fellows must be sheer fools to land themselves in a war with England.’ Prince Albert helped to calm down the British government’s response – the last official act of his life – and Abraham Lincoln’s government sensibly backed down and handed the diplomats over.

“Then, in the summer of 1862, with North and South deadlocked in an increasingly bloody and destructive struggle, Napoleon III suggested joint mediation by France, Britain and Russia to end the war, which could have resulted in a break-up of the United States. Gladstone, Chancellor of the Exchequer, reflected in September that: ‘the case of Lancashire is deplorable, but this is a trifle… compared with the wholesale slaughter that is going on, and its thoroughly purposeless character, since it has long been (I think) clear enough that Secession is virtually an established fact, & that Jeff. Davis [the Confederate president] & his comrades have made a nation.’ – an opinion he later repeated in a sensational speech in November, and later still regarded as a grave error. Abolitionists strongly disagreed with Gladstone, whose views the leading Liberal
John Bright explained as due to the ‘taint’ of coming from a slave-owning family. But part of the public, including many suffering Lancashire workers, thought Gladstone might be right. Palmerston, as well as being cautious, was, as we have seen, strongly opposed to slavery and considered that ‘slavery... was from the beginning the obvious difficulty in our way as mediators’. To impose a two-state settlement would mean giving ‘the guarantee of England’ to the perpetuation of Southern slavery, which was unthinkable. The Cabinet decided for the time being against mediation. Lincoln’s sudden cooperation with London in 1862 over suppressing the slave trade, his belated proclamation of abolition in January 1863 – though many thought this was mere opportunism – and a change in the military situation marked by a Union victory at the bloody battle of Gettysburg in July decided the issue. Without Britain, France could not act. British reluctance to support the Confederacy caused disappointment and anger in the South, and attempt to foment conflict between Britain and the North, including by minor violations of Canadian neutrality...

“As well as the economic effects on Lancashire, the American Civil War also hit Jamaica, sparking one of the most notorious episodes in colonial history, the Morant Bay rebellion of October 1865. The former slave population was impoverished and dependent on a white and mixed-race landowning class. Protest, articulated by revivalist Baptist preachers, led to a small uprising in which twenty people were killed and several plantations looted. The leaders insisted on their loyalty to Queen Victoria and hope that she would send ‘fresh gentlemen from England and we and those gentlemen will quite agree’. But there was panic among the white and mixed-race minorities, and rumours of atrocities. The governor was Edward Eyre, the son of a clergyman, who had previously been a humane and successful Protector of Aborigines in South Australia. He saw Jamaica very differently and declared martial law. This permitted local militia and regular British and West Indian troops and sailors to go on a looting and killing spree. Houses were burned and people were shot, flogged and hanged indiscriminately or after derisory courts-martial. Nearly 500 were killed. They included a prominent local politician and a Baptist minister. A senior official wrote to the Colonial Secretary: ‘No one will ever believe the things that were done here in that mad, bad time. And very few will hear of the tenth part of them – including some of the worst.’ There was an outcry in England, led by the Anti-Slavery Society, and Eyre was removed. He was prosecuted, unsuccessfully, for murder and abuse of power by a committee led by John Stuart Mill and supported by Charles Darwin. But another committee supported Eyre, and included Thomas Carlyle, Charles Dickens, John Ruskin, Charles Kingsley and Alfred Tennyson. These advocates of progress and civilization identified it with the imposition of imperial rule, however brutal the means...”

Tsar Alexander II sympathized with Lincoln, although the tsar’s own liberation of his serfs, as we shall see, was achieved at nothing like the cost in blood and destruction that Lincoln’s emancipation required. When the American president appealed to the Russian tsar for help, the latter “immediately, in great secrecy, sent to America two squadrons of military vessels under the command

49 Tombs, op. cit., pp. 574-577.
of Admiral Leskovsky, who occupied the ports of New York and San Francisco. This unexpected help shocked the whole of Europe, and England refrained from intervention, which guaranteed the victory of Lincoln…”

The Ecumenical Patriarch, Joachim II, also supported the North. At the close of 1862, he wrote: “The United States of America, after many years of union and peace, after gigantic material and moral development, are separated into two hostile camps. The Northern States, guided by true reason and evangelical principles, persistently seek the abolition of the slavery of the blacks. The Southern States, blinded by a badly understood material interest, obstinately and anti-Christianly seek the perpetuation of slavery. This war of ideas and physical interests is prosecuted to desperation. Bloody battles are delivered, but victory until the present is doubtful, and the return of peace does not seem near. But if we cast a careful eye upon the wonderful events of this age, we shall be inclined to believe that those who contend so nobly for the most unquestionable and humane rights, will, God helping them, reach the object of their desires.”

Against this, however, should be weighed the fact, if it is a fact, that on the day following the assassination, April 15, Nicholas Motovilov wrote to the Tsar informing him that he had received the following revelation from St. Seraphim of Sarov on April 1 about the death of Abraham Lincoln: "The Lord and the Mother of God not only do not like the terrible oppression, destruction and unrighteous humiliation that is being wrought everywhere with us in Russia by the Decembrists and raging abolitionists: the goodness of God is also thoroughly displeased by the offences caused by Lincoln and the North Americans to the slave-owners of the Southern States, and so Batiushka Father Seraphim has ordered that the image of the Mother of God the Joy of all who Sorrow should be sent to the President of the Southern - that is, precisely the slave-owning States. And he has ordered that the inscription be attached to it: TO THE COMPLETE DESTRUCTION OF LINCOLN.”

Although Lincoln, as we have seen, was not a fanatical abolitionist, and was motivated above all by a desire to preserve the Union intact, it is difficult to resist the thought that in his death he received retribution for the evil deed of the Civil War, the successful attempt to overthrow the patriarchal society of the South and replace its slavery by the slavery of being at the bottom of the wage-labour industrial system...


For, as Archbishop Averky of Jordanville (+1966) writes: "The epistle to Philemon vividly witnesses to the fact that the Church of Christ, in liberating man from sin, does not at the same time produce a forcible rupture in the established inter-relationships of people, and does not encroach on the civil and state order, waiting patiently for an improvement in the social order, under the influence of Christian ideas. Not only from this epistle, but also from others, it is evident that the Church, while unable, of course, to sympathize with slavery, at the same time did not abolish it, and even told slaves to obey their masters. Therefore here the conversion of Onesimus to Christianity, which made him free from sin and a son of the Kingdom of God, did not, however, liberate him, as a slave, from the authority of his master. Onesimus had to return to Philemon, in spite of the fact that the Apostle loved him as a son, and needed his services, since he was in prison in Rome. The Apostle's respect for civil rights tells also in the fact that he could order Philemon to forgive Onesimus, but, recognizing Philemon's right as master, begs him to forgive his guilty and penitent slave. The words of the Apostle: 'Without your agreement I want to do nothing' clearly indicate that Christianity really leads mankind to personal perfection and the improvement of the social legal order on the basis of fraternity, equality and freedom, but not by way of violent actions and revolutions, but by the way of peaceful persuasion and moral influence.'\textsuperscript{53}

3. NAPOLEON III, PALMERSON AND ITALIAN INDEPENDENCE

In December, 1851 Louis Napoleon staged a coup d'état in Paris, and, somewhat surprisingly, the leadership of the Grand Orient (in spite of resistance by some radical Freemasons, such as Ledru-Rollin, who with Marx and Herzen marched against him) decided to support him in the plebiscite that elected him President of the Republic. Napoleon was now indebted to the Masons. Therefore, bowing to their pressure, he began to support the Italian revolution and turn against the same Pope whom he had rescued during the 1848 revolution.\(^{54}\)

He may also have been influenced by a close personal shave. “On 14 January 1858,” writes Robert Tombs, “Italian nationalists threw bombs at Napoleon III in Paris, leaving him unscathed but killing or injuring over 150 people. When it became known that bombs and bombers had come from England, there was a furious reaction in France. The British ambassador in France urged with timeless political wisdom that it did not matter ‘what is done provided something is done,’ so the government introduced a Conspiracy to Murder Bill. But this aroused a public outcry and was defeated in the Commons, forcing Palmerston to resign again, though he returned to office the following year. When one of the conspirators was put on trial in London, his defence counsel urged the jury to defend the ‘cause of freedom and civilization throughout Europe… though 600,000 French bayonets glitter in your sight,’ and they duly acquitted the accused. There was another French invasion scare, and even fears that India might have to be abandoned and troops brought home. But Napoleon did not want war and late in 1858 invited Victoria and Albert to the gala opening of a naval base at Cherbourg – an ambiguous compliment, as it would be the naval base for any invasion, a knife pointing directly at Britain’s jugular.

“Napoleon III did plan war, but against Austria, to destroy its power over the various states of Italy…”\(^{55}\)

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

"Fighting broke out in April, most of the warfare taking place between French and Austrian forces. The battles of Magenta and Solferino were actually French


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

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

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

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

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

Napoleon’s victory over the Austrians “was a climactic moment for Victorian liberalism. Italians were seen as engaged in an epoch-making struggle for liberty against political and religious oppression. ‘I side with those who are at war with Russia and Rome, with earthly and spiritual despotisms,’ wrote one of Gladstone’s friends. The Royal Navy did nothing to hamper the transport of French troops to Genoa…”

But perhaps Napoleon, in spite of his traditional friendliness towards the English, was becoming the new European hegemon? And so “when in 1860 France launched the world’s most powerful warship, the ironclad Gloire, Britain prepared for the worst. Huge fortifications – ‘Palmerston’s follies’ – were hastily built to defend England and the empire, with the biggest forts protecting Portsmouth and Plymouth in case of a surprise French invasion. An even bigger warship than the Gloire, HMS Warrior, was quickly launched, the first large warship to be built wholly of iron, and a naval arms race began….

“London did not want to see Napoleon dominant in Italy, so in August 1860 the Royal Navy permitted Garibaldi to land a tiny army in Sicily, and then invade Naples. There were some English volunteers with him – merely tourists visiting Mt. Etna – announced Palmerston with characteristic effrontery. The small Italian states collapsed, and the British encouraged the Sardinian government, under King Victor Emmanuel and his liberal and pro-British prime minister, Cavour, to unite the whole peninsula as a single kingdom of Italy. This was a cheap success for Britain and a boost to its people’s self-confidence; a popular cause had triumphed and the possibility of French dominion had receded, with Britain using only diplomatic influence and a peaceful naval presence. Garibaldi declared that ‘England was the representative of God’ in the battle against ‘tyranny and evil priests.’ Italy, said Gladstone, had adopted ‘the English way’. The English reciprocated enthusiastically. Garibaldi visited England in 1864, and was feted by all parties and sections of the population. Thomas Cook began taking tourist parties to Italy. Both the Foreign Office in Whitehall and the Free Trade Hall in Manchester was built in Italianate style…”

Britain was continuing to pursue its balance-of-power politics, acting to stop any single power gaining predominance in Continental Europe. But since 1848, and especially since the Crimean War, it had become dangerously prone to supporting revolutionary powers (like Garibaldi’s). Was it on the way to becoming a revolutionary power itself?...

57 Tombs, op. cit., p. 571.
Bobbitt continues: "Italian unification was not quite complete. French troops remained in Rome, kept there by conservative pressure on Napoleon III, and it was not until the German victory at Sedan in 1870 that they were finally withdrawn. Nevertheless, without French determination to drive Austria from Italy, unification would not have happened at this time. Whether it was wise of Napoleon III to accomplish this is open to question; by weakening Austria, he removed the strongest check on Prussian ambitions to unify Germany, a development that could only threaten France in the long run..."\(^{59}\)

As his political power crumbled during the course of the revolution, Pius IX sought to compensate for it by asserting his spiritual power in a shriller and more maniacal manner than ever, by increased repression within his kingdom, and by inventing new dogmas that the Catholics were now compelled to believe. The process had begun in 1854, when, with the support of five hundred Italian, Spanish and Portuguese bishops, many of whom he had appointed to newly created dioceses, he proclaimed the doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin - that is, her freedom from original sin - while in exile in Gaeta. His personal secretary, Monsignor Talbot, said at that time: "You see, the most important thing is not the new dogma but the way it is proclaimed." In other words, the important thing was not whether the dogma was true or not, but the fact that the Pope was asserting his power.

“If ambition and pride were the internal motives of the proclamation, then the external one was a vision seen by ‘Bernadette Soubirous (1844-79) in the Pyrenaean mountain village of Lourdes, who saw the Virgin Mary in a local grotto. ‘I am the Immaculate Conception,’ the Virgin announced. Sick people began to make their way to the grotto and, later, the chapel she had instructed Bernadette to build on the site, seeking cures. Many of them claimed to have recovered from their illness following their visit. In 1862, after a thorough investigation in which Bernadette, a simple, illiterate and obviously pious girl, stuck to her story, the Church declared her visions genuine."\(^{60}\)

In 1864 Pius issued Quanta Cura, which condemned a whole "Syllabus" of Errors, including modern heresies such as liberalism and socialism, and reasserted the papacy's supremacy over all secular powers. Some of these condemned propositions were: "Every man is free to embrace and profess that religion which, guided by the light of reason, he shall consider true... In the present day it is no longer expedient that the Catholic religion should be the only religion of the state, to the exclusion of all other forms of worship... The Roman pontiff can and should reconcile himself, and come to terms with progress, liberalism and modern civilization."\(^{61}\)

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59 Bobbitt, op. cit., p. 183.

60 Evans, op. cit., p. 455.
Then, in December, 1869 he convened the First Vatican Council. Two and a half months into the Council, the question of papal infallibility was raised. In his constitution *Pastor Aeternus*, the Pope declared his own infallibility on matters of faith and morals when speaking *ex cathedra* thus: “1. If anyone will say that the blessed Apostle Peter was not placed by Christ the Lord as prince of all the apostles and the visible head of the whole of the Church militant, or that he did not receive, directly and without mediation, from our same Lord Jesus Christ only the pre-eminence of honour, and not the true and genuine pre-eminence of power, let him be anathema.

“2. If anyone will say that the blessed Peter in his pre-eminence over the whole Church does not have an unbroken line of successors, or that the Roman high priest is not the successor of the blessed Peter in this pre-eminence, let him be anathema.

“3. If anyone will say that the Roman high priest has only the privilege of supervising or directing, and not complete or supreme jurisdiction in the Universal Church not only in matters that relate to faith and morals, but even also in those which relate to discipline and the administration of the Church, which is spread throughout the whole world; or that he has only the most important parts, but not the whole fullness of this supreme power; or that this power is not ordinary and immediate, both over each and every church, and over each and every pastor and member of the faithful, let him be anathema.

“4. Faithfully following the tradition received from the beginning of the Christian faith, we teach and define that the following dogma belongs to the truths of Divine revelation. The Pope of Rome, when he speaks from his see (*ex cathedra*), that is when, while fulfilling his duties as teacher and pastor of all Christians, who defines, by dint of his supreme apostolic power, that a certain teaching on questions of the faith and morals must be accepted by the Church, he enjoys the Divine help promised to him in the person of St. Peter, that infallibility which the Divine Redeemer deigned to bestow on His Church, when it defines teaching on questions of faith and morality. Consequently, these definitions of the Pope of Rome are indisputable in and of themselves, and not because of the agreement of the Church. If anyone were to have the self-opinion, which is not pleasing to God, to condemn this, he must be consigned to anathema.”

This heretical decree was in direct contradiction with the tradition of the true – that is, the Orthodox Church – and even of some Catholic “saints” such as Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621), who wrote: "A pope who is a manifest heretic automatically (per se) ceases to be pope and head, just as he ceases automatically to be a Christian and a member of the Church. Wherefore, he can be judged and punished by the Church. This is the teaching of the ancient Fathers who teach that manifest heretics immediately lose all jurisdiction."

62 Bellarmine, *De Romano Pontifice*, II.30.
It is interesting to note that in the last sentence of this decree the Pope admitted the possibility that in his definitions of the faith he might be right and the Church wrong. But in general he denied St. Paul's words that it is precisely the Church, and not any individual man, that is "the pillar and foundation of the truth" (I Timothy 3.15).

The new dogma was a complete surprise to all the assembled bishops except those belonging to the Inquisition; and at first only 50 out of the 1,084 eligible to attend and vote were in favour of it. However, Pius now proceeded to apply threats and intimidation. And so "by the time it came to a vote, the Papacy's strong-arm tactics had tipped the balance decisively. In the first vote, on 13 July 1870, 451 declared themselves in favour and eighty-four opposed. Four days later, on 17 July, fifty-five bishops officially stated their opposition but declared that, out of reverence for the Pope, they would abstain from the vote scheduled for the following day. All of them then left Rome, as a good many others had already done. The second and final vote occurred on 18 July. The number of those supporting the Papacy's position increased to 535. Only two voted against, one of them Bishop Edward Fitzgerald of Little Rock, Arkansas. Of the 1,084 bishops eligible to vote on the issue of Papal infallibility, a total of 535 had finally endorsed it - a 'majority' of just over 49 per cent. By virtue of this 'majority', the Pope, on 18 July 1870, was formally declared infallible in his own right and 'not as a result of the consent of the Church'. As one commentator has observed, 'this removed all conciliarist interpretations of the role of the Papacy.'

And so the Council finally surrendered, declaring: "The Pope is a divine man and a human god... The Pope is the light of faith and reflection of truth"... And yet, if the Pope was infallible, what was the point of the Council? For, as Fr. Sergius Bulgakov wrote, "how could a Council be expected to pass the resolution if it has no power to decide anything on which the Pope alone has the right of final judgement? How could the Council have consented even to debate such an absurdity? It can, of course, be argued that the Vatican Council had to carry out the Pope's behest from obedience, regardless of content. But even as infallible, the Pope cannot do meaningless and self-contradictory things, such as submitting to a Council's decision a motion when the power to decide belongs not to it, but to him."

The Croatian Bishop Strossmayer was one of those opposed to the new dogma. "In 1871," writes Fr. Alexey Young, "he wrote to a friend that he would rather die than accept this false teaching, adding: 'Better to be exposed to every humiliation than to bend my knee to Baal, to arrogance incarnate.' But

63 Baigent and Leigh, op. cit., p. 205.
apparently the humiliations and threats imposed on him by Rome proved, after ten long years, too much to oppose. He finally submitted to the new teaching in 1881.\textsuperscript{65}

“In Italy,” writes John Cornwell, “processions and outdoor services were banned, communities of religious dispersed, Church property confiscated, priests conscripted into the army. A catalogue of measures, understandably deemed anti-Catholic by the Holy See, streamed from the new capital: divorce legislation, secularization of the schools, the dissolution of numerous holy days.

“In Germany, partly in response to the ‘divisive’ dogma of infallibility, Bismarck began his Kulturkampf (‘culture struggle’), a policy of persecution against Catholicism. Religious instruction came under state control and religious orders were forbidden to teach; the Jesuits were banished; seminaries were subjected to state interference; Church property came under the control of lay committees; civil marriage was introduced in Prussia. Bishops and clergy resisting Kulturkampf legislation were fined, imprisoned, exiled. In many parts of Europe, it was the same: in Belgium, Catholics were ousted from the teaching profession; in Switzerland, religious orders were banned; in Austria, traditionally a Catholic country, the state took over schools and passed legislation to secularize marriage; in France, there was a new wave of anticlericalism…”\textsuperscript{66}

De Rosa writes: "The English-speaking world, too, was far from unanimous in accepting papal infallibility. In 1822, Bishop Barnes, the English Vicar Apostolic, said: 'Bellarmine and other divines, chiefly Italian, have believed the pope infallible when proposing \textit{ex cathedra} an article of faith. But in England and Ireland I do not believe \textit{any} Catholic maintains the infallibility of the pope.' Later still, Cardinal Wiseman, who in 1850 headed the restored hierarchy of England and Wales, said: 'The Catholic church holds a dogma often proclaimed that, in defining matters of faith, \textit{she} (that is, the church, not the pope) is infallible.' He went on: 'All agree that infallibility resides in the unanimous suffrage of the church.' John Henry Newman, a convert and the greatest theologian of the nineteenth century, said two years before Vatican I: 'I hold the pope’s infallibility, but as a theological opinion; that is, not as a certainty but as a probability.'

“In the United States, prior to Vatican I, there was in print the Reverend Stephen Keenan’s very popular \textit{Controversial Catechism}. It bore the \textit{Imprimatur} of Archbishop Hughes of New York. Here is one extract. ‘Question: Must not Catholics believe the pope himself to be infallible? Answer: This is a Protestant invention, it is no article of the Catholic faith; no decision of his can bind on pain of heresy, unless it be received and enforced by the teaching body, that is, the bishops of the church.’ It was somewhat embarrassing when, in 1870, a


‘Protestant invention’ became defined Catholic faith. The next edition of the Catechism withdrew this question and answer without a word of explanation."67

"In the face of such reactions, the Papacy simply became more aggressive. All bishops were ordered to submit in writing to the new dogma; and those who refused were penalised or removed from their posts. So, too, were rebellious teachers and professors of theology. Papal nuncios were instructed to denounce defiant ecclesiastics and scholars as heretics. All books and articles challenging, or even questioning, the dogma of Papal infallibility were automatically placed on the Index. On at least one occasion, attempts were made to suppress a hostile book through bribery. Many records of the Council itself were confiscated, sequestered, censored or destroyed. One opponent of the new dogma, for example, Archbishop Vicenzo Tizzani, Professor of Church History at the Papal University of Rome, wrote a detailed account of the proceedings. Immediately after his death, his manuscript was purchased by the Vatican and has been kept locked away ever since."68

Archimandrite Justin (Popovich) wrote: "Through the dogma of infallibility the pope usurped for himself, that is for man, the entire jurisdiction and all the prerogatives which belong only to the Lord God-man. He effectively proclaimed himself as the Church, the papal church, and he has become in her the be-all and end-all, the self-proclaimed ruler of everything. In this way the dogma of the infallibility of the pope has been elevated to the central dogma (vsedogmat) of the papacy. And the pope cannot deny this in any way as long as he remains pope of a humanistic papacy. In the history of the human race there have been three principal falls: that of Adam, that of Judas, and that of the pope."69

Again, Archimandrite Charalampos Vasilopoulos writes, "Papism substituted the God-man Christ with the man Pope! And whereas Christ was incarnate, the Pope deincarnated him and expelled Him to heaven. He turned the Church into a worldly kingdom. He made it like an earthly state... He turned the Kingdom of God into the kingdom of this world."70 Indeed, although the Pope calls himself "the vicar of Christ", we should rather say, writes Nikolas Vasileiades, "that the Pope is Christ's representative on earth and Christ... the Pope's representative in heaven".71


70 Vasilopoulos, O Oikoumenismos khoris maska (Ecumenism unmasked), Athens, 1988, p. 34.

European individualism since Gregory VII has been of three distinct types: papist individualism which ascribes maximum rights and knowledge to one person, the Pope; liberal individualism, which ascribes them to every person; and nationalist individualism, which ascribes them to one nation or every nation. Papist individualism had tended to recede into the background as first liberal individualism, and then nationalist individualism caught the imagination of the European and American continents. But now, having already anathematized the main propositions of liberalism in his *Syllabus of Errors* of 1864, and having stubbornly resisted the triumph of nationalism in his native Italy, the Papacy reiterated with extra force and fanaticism its own variant of the fundamental European heresy - the original variant, and the maddest of them all. For is it not madness to regard oneself, a mortal and sinner and as in need of redemption as any other man, as the sole depository and arbiter of absolute truth?!

However, Divine retribution was swift. On the very day after the decree on Papal infallibility, July 19, the papacy's protector, Emperor Napoleon III, declared war on Prussia and withdrew his troops from Rome, “leaving it prey,” as Brian Plumb writes, “to Garibaldi and his redshirts who seized their opportunity. Rome was occupied on the 20th September bringing an end to 1500 years of papal monarchy, so long known and so jealously guarded as the Temporal Power. Pius IX and his four immediate successors became voluntary prisoners of the Vatican, an arrangement that satisfied few and was only resolved with the Lateran Treaty of 1929.”

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In the same month of September, Napoleon III’s army was defeated by the Prussians at Sedan and he was forced to abdicate, in spite of the fact that he had won a resounding victory in a plebiscite only four months before.

With the French no longer able to support the Papacy, as Christopher Duggan writes, “there was little to stop the Italian government seizing the historic capital. On 20 September, less than three weeks after the Battle of Sedan, Italian troops blew a hole in the Leonine walls at Porta Pia and marched into the city. Pius IX was left with the small enclave of the Vatican. A law was passed in May 1871 that guaranteed the safety of the pope, provided him with an annual grant, and gave him the full dignities and privileges of a sovereign; but Pius IX rejected it out of hand. The rift between the liberal state and the Church was now broader and deeper than ever.”

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72 "In 1867, with Garibaldi’s small force in premature action only fifteen miles from the Vatican, the pope, still defiant, said: 'Yes, I hear them coming.' Pointing to the Crucifix: 'This will be my artillery'" (De Rosa, op. cit., p. 148).


With the exception of the Vatican, the unification of Italy was now complete. W.M. Spellmann writes: "Under the terms of the first constitution (one actually issued in 1848 by Victor Emmanuel's father Charles Albert to his subjects in Piedmont-Sardinia) the monarch ruled 'by the grace of God' as well as 'by the will of the people'. A bicameral assembly was established with members of the upper house chosen by the king and the lower house elected on the basis of a very restricted franchise..."

The nationalists were disgusted, writes Adam Zamoyski, that "the process... hailed as the Risorgimento, the national resurgence,... was nothing of the sort: a handful of patriots had been manipulated by a jackal monarchy and its pragmatic ministers. And the last act of 1870 had been the most opportunistic of all."

Thus "it was a different Italy that I had dreamed of all my life," said Garibaldi a couple of years before his death. "I had hoped to evoke the soul of Italy," wrote Mazzini from exile, "and instead find merely her inanimate corpse." As was written on his tombstone: O Italia, Quanta Gloria e Quanta Bassezza

And yet they had gained not only the unification of Italy but also the humiliation of the Papacy, of which Machiavelli had said: "The nearer people are to the Church of Rome, which is the head of our religion, the less religious they are... Her ruin and chastisement is near at hand... We Italians owe to the Church of Rome and to her priests our having become irreligious and bad; but we owe her a still greater debt, and one that will be the cause of our ruin, namely that the Church has kept and still keeps our country divided."

To others, however, and not only Papists, the "ruin and chastisement" of the Church of Rome was no cause of rejoicing. Thus the Russian diplomat, Constantine Nikolaevich Leontiev, lamented: The Pope a prisoner! The first man of France [President Carnot] not baptized!

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76 Zamoyski, Holy Madness, p. 444.
78 Leontiev, "Natsional'naia politika kak orudie vsemirnoi revoliutsii" (National politics as a weapon of universal revolution), Vostok, Rossia i Slavianstvo (The East, Russia and Slavdom), Moscow, 1996, p. 526. Leontiev also wrote: If I were in Rome, I should not hesitate to kiss not only the hand but also the slipper of Leo XIII... Roman Catholicism suits my unabashed taste for despotism, my tendency to spiritual authority, and attracts my heart and mind for many other reasons' (op. cit., p. 529). "An interesting ecumenical remark for an Orthodox," comments Wil van den Bercken (Holy Russia and Christian Europe, London: SCM Press, 1999, p. 213), "but it is not meant that way." That is, he admired the papacy for its authoritarianism without sharing its religious errors.
The reason for his alarm was not far to find: for all its vices, and its newest heresies, the papacy was still one of the main forces in the West restraining the liberal-socialist revolution as it descended ever more rapidly down the slippery slope towards atheism. And yet another Russian, the poet and diplomat, Fyodor Tyutchev, prophesied: “His undoing will not be the earthly sword which he possessed for so many years, but the fatal saying that 'Freedom of conscience is a delirium’.

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Pius IX died in 1878 died in self-imposed exile, having refused to set foot on Italian soil. And in 1881, as he was being carried to his burial-place, mobs gathered and yelled: "Long Live Italy! Death to the Pope!'...”

In spite of the enormous blow dealt to the power and prestige of the papacy, its megalomaniac delusions continued. Thus in 1895 the Patriarch of Venice and future Pope Pius X, wrote: “The pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ, but he is Jesus Christ Himself, hidden under the veil of the flesh. Does the pope speak? It is Jesus Christ who speaks. Does the pope accord a favour or pronounce an anathema? It is Jesus Christ who accords the favour or pronounces that anathema. So that when the pope speaks we have no business to examine…”

Pagan man-worship was now enthroned at the heart of Catholic Europe, and no amount of Christian symbolism and verbiage could hide that fact. Meanwhile, Protestant Europe was fast descending into an abyss of naturalism and atheism, as Dostoyevsky had prophesied. In the twentieth century all of Europe, both Catholic and Protestant, would reap the bitter fruits of this apostasy.

79 Baigent and Leigh, op. cit., p. 208.

80 Pope Pius X; quoted in Catholique Nationale, July 13, 1895, Paris.
4. BISMARCK AND THE UNIFICATION OF GERMANY

In spite of the failure of the 1848 revolution in Germany, liberalism made great strides in the following few years. As Sir Richard Evans writes, “Far from being a complete return to the old order, the post-revolutionary settlement had sought to appease many of the liberals’ demands while stopping short of granting either national unification or parliamentary soveriegnty. Trial by jury in open court, equality before the law, freedom of business enterprise, abolition of the most objectionable forms of state censorship of literature and the press, the right of assembly and association, and much more, were in place almost everywhere in Germany by the end of the 1860s. And, crucially, many states had instituted representative assemblies in which elected deputies had freedom of debate and enjoyed at least some rights over legislation and the raising of state revenues.

"It was precisely the last right that the resurgent liberals used in Prussia in 1862 to block the raising of taxes until the army was brought under the control of the legislature, as it had, fatally, not been in 1848. This posed a serious threat to the funding of the Prussian military machine. In order to deal with the crisis, the Prussian King appointed the man who was to become the dominant figure in German politics for the next thirty years - Otto von Bismarck. By this time, the liberals had correctly decided that there was no chance of Germany uniting, as in 1848, in a nation-state that included German-speaking Austria. That would have meant the break-up of the Habsburg monarchy, which included huge swathes of territory, from Hungary to Northern Italy, that lay outside the boundaries of the German Confederation, and included many millions of people who spoke languages other than German. But the liberals also considered that following the unification of Italy in 1859-60, their time had come. If the Italians had managed to create their own nation-state, then surely the Germans would be able to do so as well.

"Bismarck belonged to a generation of European politicians, like Benjamin Disraeli in Britain, Napoleon III in France or Camillo Cavour in Italy, who were prepared to use radical, even revolutionary means to achieve fundamentally conservative ends. He recognized that the forces of nationalism were not to be gainsaid. But he also saw that after the frustrations of 1848, many liberals would be prepared to sacrifice at least some of their liberal principles on the altar of national unity to get what they wanted. In a series of swift and ruthless moves, Bismarck allied with the Austrians to seize the disputed duchies of Schleswig-Holstein from the Kingdom of Denmark, then engineered a war over their administration between Prussia and Austria which ended in complete victory for the Prussian forces. The German Confederation collapsed, to be followed by the creation of a successor institution without the Austrians or their south German allies, named by Bismarck for want of a more imaginative term the North German

81 Lord Palmerston joked that “only three people have ever really understood the Schleswig-Holstein business - the Prince Consort, who is dead, a German professor, who has gone mad, and I, who have forgotten all about it.” (V.M.)
82 At Königgrätz in 1866. (V.M.)
Confederation. Immediately, the majority of the Prussian liberals, sensing that the establishment of a nation-state was just around the corner, forgave Bismarck for his policy (pursued with sublime disdain for parliamentary rights over the previous four years) of collecting taxes and funding the army without parliamentary approval."

Although, as noted above, Bismarck tended to see politics in terms of the traditional territorial state rather than the nation, there were definite pan-German tendencies in his thought which were to have bitter consequences not so long after his death. It was obvious that Prussian leadership in Germany could lead eventually, after Bismarck, to moves to unite the whole German nation, including Austria, under Berlin.

Bernard Simms shows that the seeds of this were already in Bismarck’s mind in the 1850s: “‘There is nothing more German’, Bismarck observed in 1858, ‘than Prussian particularism properly understood.’ Bismarck also believed that Prussia could only survive if it secured ‘safe borders’, either through leading a reformed German Confederation, or through straightforward territorial annexation. In 1859 he described these ‘natural frontiers of Prussia’ as nothing less than the Baltic, the North Sea, the Rhine, the Alps and the Lake of Constance. This was a programme for Prussian dominance which would bring the independence of the Third Germany to an abrupt end. It could only be achieved if Bismarck could secure the acceptance of the other powers to a massive change in the European territorial order, to isolate those who objected; sideline or at least gain parity with Austria; win over Third Germany, or crush those elements who refused to cooperate; co-opt the German national movement; and either persuade or bypass the liberals in the Landtag, in order to secure the funds to pay for the necessary military action. A few months before taking office as Prussian chancellor in late September 1862, Bismarck announced privately that ‘My first care will be to reorganize the army, with or without the help of the Landtag... As soon as the army shall have been brought into such a condition as to inspire respect, I shall seize the first best pretext to declare war against Austria, dissolve the German Diet, subdue the minor states and give national unity to Germany under Prussian leadership.’ His interlocutor, the future British prime minister Benjamin Disraeli, afterwards remarked to the Austrian ambassador: ‘Take care of that man; he means what he says.’" It was good advice. “Highly strung, grotesquely malicious and hypochondriacal, thin-skinned yet tough as a rhinoceros, this instinctive risk-taker, ingenious improviser and cunning conspirator saw a solution to Prussia’s domestic problems in an aggressive foreign policy that would use the kingdom’s superb army to unite Germany, challenge the France of Napoleon III and harness nationalism in the service of the monarchy. As envoy

83 Evans, op. cit., pp. 5-6. As Bismarck said in January, 1862: "The Prussian monarchy has not yet completed its mission; it is not yet ready to become a purely ornamental decoration of your constitutional Parliament; not yet ready to be manipulated as a piece of lifeless machinery of parliamentary government." (Cohen and Major, op. cit., p. 674) (V.M.).

84 Simms, op. cit., p. 229.
to Alexander II, he had realized all this was possible because of Russian hatred for Austria after the defeat of the Crimean War."\(^85\)

In 1862 Bismarck declared: "Prussia's frontiers as laid down by the Vienna treaties are not conducive to a healthy national life; it is not by means of speeches and majority resolutions that the great issues of the day will be decided - that was the great mistake of 1848 and 1849 - but by iron and blood." The liberals were won over. Only the socialists remained obdurate. As the German socialist leader Wilhelm Liebknecht remarked: "The oppressors of yesterday are the saviours of today; right has become wrong and wrong right. Blood appears, indeed, to be a special elixir, for the angel of darkness has become the angel of light before whom the people lie in the dust and adore."\(^86\)

Nevertheless, Bismarck was no lover of war for its own sake. In his treatise *On War* (1832) the Prussian general Karl von Clausewitz had famously declared that "war is the continuation of politics by other means". But Bismarck was less belligerent, defining politics as "the art of the possible": "For heaven's sake no sentimental alliances in which the consciousness of having performed a good deed furnishes the sole reward for our sacrifice... The only healthy basis of policy for a great power... is egotism and not romanticism... Gratitude and confidence will not bring a single man into the field on our side; only fear will do that, if we use it cautiously and skillfully... Policy is the art of the possible, the science of the relative".\(^87\) He certainly used war à la Clausewitz to further his political ends, inciting it first with Austria, and then with France. But he also knew when to stop and what boundaries he should not cross.

Bismarck looked neither for Hitlerian Lebensraum in the East nor for influence in the Balkans - influence there, he said, was "not worth the bones of a Pomeranian grenadier". That meant that he tried hard not to come into conflict with Russia, signing a reinsurance treaty with her. Nor did he join in the general European scramble for colonies overseas.

Moreover, even if he did dream about pan-German unification, he renounced the idea of a "greater Germany" that included Austria, which would really have destroyed the balance of power and created the political revolution Disraeli feared. In any case, not having Austria was no disadvantage in terms of power. For Prussia without Austria was so much more powerful than all the other German princes put together that the new state, in spite of the resentment of its junior members at the preponderance of Prussia, was never in danger of disintegration in the way that Austria-Hungary continued to be.


\(^{86}\) Liebknecht, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 674.

For with her complex mixture of nationalities, Germanic, Hungarian, Slav and Latin, Austria was weak; and it was not in her ally Germany’s interests that she should be dissolved into her constituent nationalities, thereby creating conflicts and involving the great powers on different sides of the conflicts. Therefore Bismarck did not encourage Austria’s forays into the Balkans, which might have involved Russia on the side of the Slavs and Germany on the side of Austria - which is precisely what happened in 1914... For all these reasons, it was not likely, while Bismarck was at the helm of the German state, that she would engage in rash military enterprises, but only such as were manageable with clear political objectives and an exit strategy.

It was Bismarck who provided the essential link between the first step toward Germany unity in the Zollverein of 1833 and its full realization after the defeat of France in 1871. For in 1871, writes Yanis Varoufakis, “the centralizing process that Metternich had so feared gave rise to the German empire, complete with a central bank (the Reichsbank), a single currency (the Reichsmark) linked to the gold standard and a common parliament (the Bundesrat) dominated by the Iron Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck. Prussia had only seventeen votes out of fifty-eight in the Bundesrat but by that stage enjoyed full control with the assistance of the votes of the representatives of the smaller states that since 1833 had fallen within the Prussian zone of influence.”

5. THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN EMPIRE

John Stuart Mill declared in his Representative Government that it was "in general a necessary condition of free institutions that the boundaries of government should coincide in the main with those of nationalities." This early statement of the principle of the self-determination of nations was not generally accepted in the age of empire, - or in any earlier age, for that matter; it was expected, by contrast, that small nations would be absorbed into larger imperial structures. And the most striking defiance of the principle was to be found in the Austro-Hungarian empire.

Austria-Hungary, ruled by the Emperor Franz Joseph, was the most multinational of multinational empires. This fact alone softened its previous hostile relationship to the Orthodox Christians within its borders (although there were important exceptions, as we shall see). As Simon Winder writes, the Habsburgs “came to stand – against their will – as champions of tolerance in a nineteenth-century Europe driven made by ethnic nationalism.”

For the balance between the 17 official nationalities in the empire was so fine that the Habsburg dynasty was forced to concede a very considerable degree of freedom to each of them. Nevertheless, all the nations of the empire were still discontented - and not least the Austrians themselves. For the Germans had solved the question of their national unification only by violently excluding the Austrian Germans from their state. The situation of these Austrian Germans was now weaker than ever, for on the one hand, they could not stake out an independent state for themselves on the grounds of race since the State of Germany already existed, but on the other hand the other nations of the empire were demanding independence for themselves. As the Viennese dramatist Franz Grillparzer said to the Germans: "You believe that you have given birth to an empire, but you have only destroyed a people!"

Michael Biddis writes: "Bismarck himself had been reluctant to encourage Magyar or Slav nationalism by any additional encroachment on Habsburg sovereignty. 'Whatever,' he asked, 'can fill the place in Europe that has hitherto been filled by the Austrian state from Tyrol to Bukovina? Any rearrangement in this area could only be of a permanently revolutionary nature.' Yet Bismarck's refusal to risk international destabilization by further expansion of Germany within Europe was increasingly challenged. In essence, the critics were willing to applaud his version of unification, but not as a finalization of territorial fulfillment; rather as a milestone on a longer path to greater destinies. Those to whom the nation-state meant some form of Grossdeutschland could only be unsatisfied by the 'little Germany' or 'great Prussia' of 1870-1."


Well before the events of 1870-1, the Austrians were being forced to retreat, both in their external war against the Italians, and in their internal relations with the Hungarians. After their defeat at the hands of the Prussians at Königgrätz in 1866, writes Evans, “the Austrians realized that they could not continue to fight the Italians, despite the victory of Custoza, and capitulated, leaving the peace settlement to cede the rest of northern Italy to the Italian state – an outcome which led to the jibe of a Russian diplomat at a peace conference later in the century, that since the Italian were demanding more territory, he supposed they must have lost another battle. The Habsburg monarchy was thrown into a deep crisis. The deposed Emperor Ferdinand is said to have remarked: ‘I don’t know why they appointed Franz Joseph; I could have been just as good at losing battles.’ There was immediate trouble from the Hungarians. The Diet elected in 1865 had a majority of moderate liberal nationalities, led by Ferenc Deák. Assured by Count Gyula Andrassy, recently returned from exile under an amnesty, Deák seized the opportunity provided by the monarchy’s expulsion from the now-defunct German Confederation and the consequent change in the balance of forces within the Habsburg domains. Concerned that moves towards complete independence would encourage other nationalities, notably the Slavs, to follow suit, the Hungarians began to negotiate with Franz Joseph for the restructuring of the empire as a Dual Monarchy, divided into an Austrian and a Hungarian half, each with its own government, legislature, laws and administration.

“The deal reserved control over the armed forces and foreign policy and their finances to the central authority in Vienna, and put it into the hands of common ministers, though each half of the Monarchy had to be consulted on major actions such as the conclusion of international treaties. The respective Austrian and Hungarian legislatures were to negotiate via ‘delegations’, with the final power resting in the Monarch. Franz Joseph was crowned King of Hungary on 8 June 1867 and signed the law, known as the Ausgleich or Compromise, on 28 July. The Czech nationalists led by František Palacký objected and boycotted the Austrian legislature, under whose purview they fell, for eight years. The Croations were appeased by the concession of the use of Serbo-Croat as an official language and generous provisions for the retention of tax revenues. Other nationalities – Slovaks, Serbs, Romanians, Italians, Saxons – were covered by a Nationalities Law passed in 1865 with significant concessions on the use of their languages in schools. The monarchy, now in control of a central administration named kaiserlich and königlich, ‘Imperial and Royal’, for the two halves of the Dual Monarchy, retained most of its key powers. The fact that these arrangements lasted for another half a century demonstrates that they were a reasonably effective solution to the problems that had been dogging the Habsburgs since 1848.”

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91 Evans, op. cit., pp. 259-260.
Dominic Lieven writes: "Francis Joseph divided his empire in two for most purposes. He handed over to the Magyar elite almost complete control over the internal affairs of the Kingdom of Hungary, more than half of whose population was not ethnic Hungarians. In return the emperor secured the - albeit equivocal - support of the Magyar elite for his empire, a considerable Hungarian contribution to sustain the imperial armed forces, and recognition that foreign and defence policy would remain the almost exclusive concern of the monarch and those officials to whom he chose to turn for advice. The 1867 Compromise was the decisive event in late Habsburg history. It determined much of the empire's domestic policy and some of its foreign policy down to the Monarchy's demise in 1918. Cold and, in the long run, dubious calculations of power drove the emperor to adopt the Compromise. As he wrote to his daughter, 'I do not conceal from myself that the Slav peoples of the monarchy may look on the new policies with distrust, but the government will never be able to satisfy every national group. This is why we much rely on those which are the strongest - that is, the Germans and the Hungarians.' Relying on 'the strongest' would bring domestic political stability, at least in the short run. Above all, it would allow the emperor the time and resources to renew his challenge to the Prussians, which would make it possible to reverse Austria's humiliating defeat at Königgrätz in 1866 and to ensure that the independent South German States did not fall under Prussian rule. Only with Prussia's defeat of France in 1870-71 and her absorption of the remaining German states did Austria's hopes of revenge disappear."

As Simon Winder writes, “the two halves of the Empire carried on in parallel, held together by Franz Joseph’s startling longevity. Both halves boomed, being immeasurably richer by the beginning of the twentieth century. Austria had been neutered and infantilized by its defeat by Prussia – when the new united Germany emerged in 1871 it became Franz Joseph’s central aim in life never to be alienated from Berlin again. It became axiomatic that Imperial security could only be guaranteed by holding Bismarck in a clingy embrace. Hungary was even further neutered and infantilized politically by being in Vienna’s shadow and using the security guarantee provided by their association to underfinance its own armed forces. This Berlin-Vienna-Budapest axis now settled in, and of course with no sense at all of what a bitter future generation would owe to it…”

Meanwhile, nationalism flourished within the multi-national empire, buoyed up by folklore, linguistic studies and music... It could flourish because of the Empire’s necessarily tolerant attitude to it. But, as the emperor had feared, the Czechs, Italians and Ruthenians in the Austrian monarchy, and the Slovaks, Slovenes and Romanians in the Hungarian, still felt oppressed. "In practice, the three 'master races' - the Germans, the Magyars, and the Galician Poles - were encouraged to lord it over the others. The administrative structures were so tailored that the German minority in Bohemia could hold down the Czechs, the Magyars in Hungary could hold down the Slovaks, Romanians, and Croats,


93 Winder, op. cit., p. 370.
and the Poles in Galicia could hold down the Ruthenians (Ukrainians). So pressures mounted as each of the excluded nationalities fell prey to the charms of nationalism."94

The most important pressure was exerted by the Czechs on the Germans. The Czechs were enjoying a national revival, but the Germans were doing badly in both halves of the empire. In Hungary, they were few (1.95 million in 1880) and oppressed. Lieven writes that "the German community in Hungary, abandoned to its fate by the imperial government, was one of the major victims of Magyarization, even if in some cases its assimilation of Hungarian language and culture was voluntary. By 1900-14 even the absolute number of Germans in Hungary was in decline owing to assimilation and emigration. Meanwhile, in the non-Hungarian half of the Monarchy (usually referred to by the shorthand name Cisleithenia) the Germans were also under pressure. They were still much the richest group in the region. On the eve of the First World War they comprised 35.8 per cent of Cisleithenia's population and paid 63 per cent of its direct taxes. But they were losing, or had lost, control over many towns and even whole crownlands which they had traditionally dominated. Prague was a good case in point. Traditionally a German town in language, appearance and culture, it was increasingly swamped by Czech immigrants in the second half of the nineteenth century. By 1910 there was not a single German left on the city council. Not surprisingly, the German community's politics, especially in mixed nationality crownlands, was often an unlovely combination of traditional cultural arrogance with hysteria about the threat to its identity and status offered by Slav numbers, migration and increasing self-confidence.

"Not at all surprisingly, many Austrian Germans were enthusiastic about the new German Reich. In 1871, noting this fact, Count Andrassy warned Francis Joseph that it would be fatal to pursue internal policies in Cisleithenia which further antagonized the Austrian Germans. If this were done, 'the Austro-Germans would then turn to the forces of German democracy, which would tear the national banner out of the hands of Prince Bismarck and carry it forward until the whole German race was united.' Andrassy's comments were not those of a neutral observer. The Magyar elite, of which he was a leading representative, saw German domination of Cisleithenia as essential to keeping the Monarchy's Slavs in their place. In particular, plans for 'trialism', in other words for giving the Crown of St. Wenceslas (i.e. Bohemia and Moravia) the same sort of autonomy as the Crown of St. Stephen, were anathema to the Hungarians since they would dilute their influence in Vienna (one out of three territories rather than one out of two) and would set very dangerous precedents for the Hungarian Kingdom's Slav minority. Nevertheless, in the end Andrassy's prediction, a logical one in a nationalist and increasingly democratic era, was to come true in Hitlerian form."95

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94 Davies, op. cit., p. 829.

Dynasticism, writes W.H. Spellman, "was the only variable linking a host of peoples who shared no racial, linguistic, social or historical cohesion. Austria-Hungary was an empire consisting entirely of minorities, a holdover from the medieval imperial idea of allegiance to crown and dynasty, not to abstract nation. The only bond between the far-flung and varied provinces of the empire was the monarch himself, whose 68-year reign overlapped the decades when nationalism was becoming the strongest factor in the political life of Europe. Thus it should not surprise us that the principal powers enjoyed by the emperor, control over foreign affairs and the military, were constantly employed in the service of obstructing the realization of the nationalist agenda. In the view of one observer, 'foreign policy was the justification of the monarchy; almost every important change within the Habsburg lands for a century or more had been the result of a need to meet a new crisis in foreign affairs.'

"And during the last 40 years of the monarchy's existence, questions of national rivalry within Habsburg-controlled lands constituted the key challenge to the ruler and his ministers. The ageing emperor felt a deep personal responsibility for the well-being and territorial integrity of his multi-ethnic inheritance. Unfortunately, concessions made to one group invariably spurred demands from another. What held the monarchical model intact into the twentieth century was, more than anything else, the sense of continuity represented by Europe's oldest dynastic house. Thus the celebration of the emperor's eightieth birthday in 1910 was every bit as significant for the empire as Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee had been for the British in 1897. The Habsburgs were associated in the minds of their subjects with the tradition of transnational Roman authority, the bold defence of Europe against the incursions of the Turk, and an almost exceptional sense of antiparochialism. The emperor was the heir of Charles V, apostolic king of Hungary and successor of St. Stephen. Tradition still counted for something in this polyglot empire.

"There were representative assemblies in both Austria and Hungary, and by the 1880s Austrians enjoyed freedom of religion, equality before the law and the protection of civil rights. In 1907 the parliament was elected on the basis of universal manhood suffrage, and a multi-party system was put in place. But government ministers were servants of the crown and not responsible to parliamentary control. Supported by an expanding civil service, army and Church, Francis Joseph was not a man predisposed to initiate change conducive to either a nationalist or constitutionalist agenda. The emperor did encourage state investment in certain infrastructure sectors like the railroad, and economic growth was led by industrial centres like Vienna and Prague. But raised in the intellectual climate of Metternich's Europe, and chastened as a young emperor by the memory of the 1848 liberal revolutions, the monarch placed the survival of the transnational dynasty above all other personal or political considerations. On the eve of the First World War few of the king-emperor's subjects would have proposed the dissolution of the monarchy."

However, transnationalism was an increasingly difficult ideal to maintain as “ethnomania” spread from West to East and began to infect the smaller nations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire – and of the Ottoman Empire beyond it. For, as a Habsburg diplomatic circular of the year 1853 had correctly noted: “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...”
6. THE BATTLE OF SEDAN AND THE PARIS COMMUNE

Napoleon III’s Second French Empire, born as a result of the 1848 revolution, had greatly increased the prosperity of its bourgeois citizens while increasing the poverty of the proletariat. Not that the emperor did not want to help the poor: he tried to introduce various reforms, which, however, were ineffective; hence his nickname, “the Well-Intentioned”. As he told Richard Cobden, “It is very difficult in France to make reforms; we make revolutions in France, not reforms”.

And yet in the fate ful year of 1870 Napoleon’s popularity and his future seemed assured. In a plebiscite, as Roger Price writes, ‘7,350,000 voters registered their approval, 1,538,000 voted 'no', and a further 1,900,000 abstained. To one senior official it represented 'a new baptism of the Napoleonic dynasty'. It had escaped from the threat of political isolation. The liberal empire offered greater political liberty but also order and renewed prosperity. It had considerable appeal. The centres of opposition remained the cities, with 59 per cent of the votes in Paris negative and this rising to over 70 per cent in the predominantly workers arrondissements of the north-east. In comparison with the 1869 elections, however, opposition appeared to be waning. Republicans were bitterly disappointed. Even Gambetta felt bound to admit that 'the empire is stronger than ever'. The only viable prospect seemed to be a long campaign to persuade the middle classes and peasants that the republic did not mean revolution.

However, another revolution was in the offing. For the Grand Orient of France decided to overthrow him. The reason for this may have been the fact that Napoleon’s troops in Rome had protected the papacy from final destruction...

“In Germany,” writes Evans, “the Prussian victory [over the Austrians in 1866] marginalized the separatist politicians of the south German states, led by Bavaria, where the National Liberals were now generating an almost unstoppable enthusiasm for a final act of unification through the extension of the North German Confederation to the south. But France stood in the way. Following the Prussian victory, Napoleon III began to search for ways of limiting the threat to France that he saw in the emergence of a new strong power on the right bank of the Rhine. But he was unable to find any new allies to back him up; the Italians were irritated by the continuing French military defence of the Pope’s remaining territories in and around Rome, Britain stood aloof, and Russia still valued the Prussians’ role in Poland. Nevertheless, war fever began to grip the French political elite. As early as February 1869 the Minister of War told the Council of Ministers in Paris that ‘war with Prussia is inevitable and imminent. We are armed as never before.’ Thus the French emperor felt unable to remain inactive when on 2 July 1870 a member of a cadet branch of the Prussian royal family, Prince Leopold of Hohenzollem-Sigmaringen (1835-1905), was offered


the throne of Spain, which had become vacant through the enforced abdication of Queen Isabella. France considered Spain part of its own sphere of influence, and thought that Bismarck and Wilhelm were behind the candidacy. The result, French public opinion feared, would be a Prussian threat from the south as well as the east.

“Bismarck won international sympathy by claiming at the time, and later, that Prince Leopold’s candidature had come as a complete surprise to him. It was not until after the Second World War that documents from the Sigmaringen archive came to light showing that Leopold’s father had consulted Wilhelm I as soon as the first tentative approach was made from Spain, and that Bismarck had advised the king to encourage the candidacy. This was not because Bismarck wanted a war; it was for him just another lever of diplomatic pressure. Indeed, when the French ambassador Count Vincent Benedetti (1817-1900) met Wilhelm at his spa retreat in Bad Ems, the king agreed to withdraw his support for Leopold, who retired to his estate and never did become a monarch, although his brother and his son both became rulers of Romania. The matter seemed to be settled. However, the Prussian king was waylaid by the French ambassador during a walk and confronted with fresh demands. Wilhelm ‘sternly’ rejected Benedetti’s ‘importunate’ demand that France should support a candidature like Leopold’s neither in the present nor at any time in the future, and he sent his aide-de-camp to tell Benedetti that he was not willing to receive him again. Wilhelm’s staff sent a telegram to Bismarck reporting the outcome. Bismarck’s published brief summary of the telegram left out the polite phrases with which Wilhelm had gilded his conversation with Benedetti. But the key lay in the mistranslation of the French term aide-de-camp as ‘adjutant of the day’, which made it seem as if a very lowly non-commissioned officer, not a close personal assistant, had been sent to give Benedetti the brush-off. This apparent insult was enough for Napoleon III, already seeking another foreign success to bolster his fading popularity, to issue a declaration of war.”

And so French national vanity in relation to the “barbaric” Germans, combined with Bismarckian cunning and German military superiority, led to a war in which the Germans decisively defeated the French at Sedan, laying the foundations for the unification of Germany and the Second German Reich – and that Franco-German hatred which led to the First World War.

“Seeing that the game was up,” writes Evans, “Napoleon III sent a message of surrender to Wilhelm, Moltke and Bismarck. Offered a flask of brandy, Bismarck toasted everyone in English, ‘Here’s to the unification of Germany’, and drank the entire flask. In an attempt to gain mild terms, Napoleon III rode out in person

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100 Cf. Victor Hugo: “It is in Paris that the beating of Europe's heart is felt. Paris is the city of cities. Paris is the city of men. There has been an Athens, there has been a Rome, and now there is Paris... Is the nineteenth century to witness this frightful phenomenon? A nation fallen from polity, to barbarism, abolishing the city of nations; Germans extinguishing Paris... Can you give this spectacle to the world?” (in Horne, op. cit., p. 287).
from Sedan, and was met by Bismarck, who sat him down on a bench by an inn. The conversation was held in the German the emperor had learned as a child. Bismarck informed Napoleon that the entire French army would be taken into captivity, and the siege of Metz would continue. ‘Then everything is lost,’ the emperor mumbled. ‘Yes, quite right,’ replied Bismarck brutally: ‘everything really is lost’. Some 100,000 French troops were made to lay down their arms and were taken to prison camps. As the news reached Paris, on 3 September 1870, riots broke out. About 60,000 people gathered on the Place de la Concorde, shouting ‘Death to the Bonapartes! Long live the nation!’ On 4 September the Assembly proclaimed the deposition of the dynasty and the creation of the Third Republic. Napoleon III was taken to Kassel, where he was eventually allowed to into exile in England.”

Napoleon’s sudden fall from grace was caused by a sudden withdrawal of support by the Freemasons. Thus Archpriest Lev Lebedev writes: ‘N[icholas] K[arlovich] Gris, who was at that time Russian consul in Berne (Switzerland), and later minister of foreign affairs (chancellor) of Alexander III, in accordance with the duties of his office observed and carefully studied the activity of the Masonic centre in Berne. To it came encoded dispatches from French Masons with exact dates about the movements, deployment and military plans of the French armies. These were immediately transferred through Masonic channels to the Prussian command. The information came from Masonic officers of the French army. And so France was doomed! No strategy and tactics, no military heroism could save her. It turned out that international Masonry had 'sentenced' France to defeat beforehand, and that the French 'brother-stone-masons' had obediently carried out the sentence on their own country (fatherland!). Here is a vivid example of Masonic cooperation with the defeat of their own government with the aim of overthrowing it and establishing an authority pleasing to the Masons.”

Sedan was an historic milestone in more ways than one. Not only did it reverse the decision and the result of the French victory over the Prussians at Valmy in 1792, when the Masons had supported the French against the Prussians. The protector-client relationship between France and the Roman papacy, which had begun when Pope Stephen had crossed the Alps to seek to anoint the Frankish King Pippin in the eighth century, and which had been profoundly shaken by the first Napoleon, was also now coming to an end...

As the victorious Germans closed in on Paris,” writes Mark Almond, “The Third Republic, proclaimed on 4 September, tried to rally the defence of France, looking back to the example of the First Republic, eighty years earlier: ‘The Republic was victorious over the invasion of 1793. The Republic is declared.’ But the dearth of trained soldiers and equipment made resistance to the Germans... 

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101 Evans, op. cit., p. 263.
very difficult, and by 19 September the German army had surrounded and laid siege to Paris.

"The siege was the essential ingredient in the radicalisation of the city's population. The famine and other burdens reduced many of the recently prosperous to penury, even prostitution...

"Some 350,000 men formed a National Guard to defend the city; most of them depended on their soldier's pay for their livelihood because the economy had collapsed during the siege. Attempts to break out of the city failed on 27 October 1870 and 19 January 1871, and provoked demonstrations at the Hôtel de Ville. Already the suspicion was spreading that politicians outside Paris were less devoted to resistance than the people of the capital...

"Despite the efforts of the Parisians to hold out against the besieging army, the French government felt it was futile to continue the war and signed an armistice with Germany on 28 January 1871. This treaty brought an end to the siege but imposed humiliating terms on France, including the surrender of Alsace-Lorraine and a crippling war indemnity of 5 million francs.

"France went to the polls on 8 February to vote for a new government that would (in accordance with the armistice) take responsibility for accepting or rejecting Germany's terms for peace. The results revealed how different Paris was from the rest of France. Paris elected a group of radicals to the Assembly, while monarchists dominated the elections elsewhere. The monarchist majority wanted peace with the Germans, whatever the humiliation.

"To achieve this peace, the Prime Minister, Thiers, had to disarm the National Guard in Paris. He ordered the Guard to hand over its artillery to the regular army on 18 March 1871. But he had already antagonised the Guard by cutting its pay, which hit the poor much as the abolition of national workshops had done in 1848. The poor had also been hit when the new National Assembly voted to end the wartime moratorium on debts and rents. Thus the people of Montmartre, especially the women, rallied to stop their cannons being hauled away. Bloody clashes occurred between the army and the people. The mayor of Montmartre, Georges Clemenceau, was shocked by the violence of the outburst: 'The mob which filled the courtyard burst into the street in the grip of some kind of frenzy. Amongst them were chasseurs, soldiers of the line, National Guards, women and children. All were shrieking like wild beasts without realizing what they were doing. I observed then that pathological phenomenon which might be called blood lust. A breath of madness seemed to have passed over this mob...'

"Several hours of fighting and rioting followed, at the end of which the government troops appeared to be no nearer to capturing the guns of Montmartre. Thiers decided to withdraw his forces and remove the Government from the capital city to Versailles. The rebels in Paris, meanwhile, voted to revive the Commune (on the model of 1792) in defiance of the government.
"Only four members of the Commune represented the recently founded Marxist Workingman's International. Twenty-five out of the Commune's ninety members worked with their hands, but mainly as skilled artisans. They were outnumbered by professionals, such as journalists, radical doctors and teachers. But two-thirds or more of the Commune's members would have described themselves as the heirs of the Jacobins of 1793. Karl Marx himself did not at first recognise the Communards as the proletarian revolutionaries of his future Communist society, but his sympathy with their struggle against the French bourgeoisie encouraged the romanticization of the Communard as a premature Communist revolutionary...

"Nationalism and popular local government rather than social revolution were the rallying cries of the Commune, but the flight from Paris of Thiers' government and most of the wealthy members of society created a new social situation. In the absence of many of the bourgeois elite, Paris fell into the hands of members of the lower orders, who had little experience of administration. Marx noted that the Communards lacked effective leadership. 'They should at once have marched on Versailles,' he wrote, before Thiers had time to complete amassing his army. But the Communards' revolutionary hostility to rank meant that their forces lacked an effective commander-in-chief who might have seized the moment. Spontaneity without strategy was bound to fail.

"From March 1871, two rival authorities existed in France, the national government at Versailles and the Commune in Paris, each with its own armed force and each jockeying for political power. Half-hearted negotiations between the two authorities did take place, but when these broke down Thiers decided to attempt once more to retake the capital. He brought up an army of provincial Frenchmen, suspicious and resentful of what they saw as arrogant Parisians trying to dictate politics to France as so often before. Naturally the Germans looked favourably on any blood-letting among the French that would weaken them further.

"On 2 April, government troops seized Courbevoie, a suburb of Paris, and began a new siege of Paris. For several weeks Government troops bombarded the fortresses protecting the capital, taking them one by one, and by 21 May the army was able to force its way into Paris through an undefended point to the south-west of the city. Over the next seven days, known as the 'bloody week', the army methodically re-conquered the capital from west to east. Each quartier defended itself, giving the army the opportunity to pick off district after district. In the course of the struggle, the Communards set fire to ancient buildings like the Tuileries and the Hôtel de Ville. They also shot their hostages, including the Archbishop of Paris, Georges Darboy. Given the anti-clerical tradition of revolution in France he might have seemed an ideal reactionary scapegoat, but Darboy himself was disliked by French conservatives: he had voted against Papal Infallibility at the Vatican Council two years earlier and was something of a liberal. The Communards ensured that Paris would not have another liberal archbishop for almost a century...
"As many as 20,000 Communards - including women and children - were killed as the army fought its way forward through the streets of Paris, while another 40,000 insurgents were taken prisoner. About half of these were released soon enough, but 10,000 were transported to the colonies, including the remote New Caledonia in the South Pacific."\textsuperscript{103}

"The lead in the revolt," writes E.P. Thompson, "with its echoes of 1793 and 1848, was taken by the few thousand followers of the veteran revolutionary, Auguste Blanqui, idol of the Paris underworld of conspirators... But it was neither a mainly communist and Marxist movement, nor even closely connected with the recently formed First International. It was a peculiarly French and Parisian revolt, the apotheosis of the long French revolutionary tradition and an outburst of local pride and distress, fiercely patriotic and anti-German."\textsuperscript{104}

"These startling events, which brought an oriental barbarism into the most civilized and cosmopolitan capital of Europe, had decisive consequences for nascent socialism. Marx wrote his pamphlet on \textit{The Civil War in France}, which hailed the Commune as the dawn of a new era of direct proletarian revolutionary action and a triumph for his own followers and for the International. Frightened property-owning classes everywhere in Europe took him at his word, and saw in the Commune the beginning of a fresh revolutionary menace. Even a confusion of words contributed to this widespread misinterpretation of the Commune. Communards were assumed to be \textit{communists}. Capitulards (as the rebels called Thiers and his ministers who 'capitulated' and made peace with Germany) were confused with \textit{capitalists}. The Marxist analysis of the event as a landmark in the class war was made to fit only by a distortion of both facts and words. It can be regarded more accurately as the last dying flicker of an old tradition, the tradition of the barricades of 1789 and 1848, rather than as the beginning of a new. Never again was Paris to impose her will upon the rest of France, as she had done before 1871. The aftermath of the Commune and of its repression was the exile or imprisonment of all the more revolutionary elements in France; and the new parliamentary republic was erected during their elimination from the scene. It was only after 1879, when the republican parties gained full control of the Republic, that amnesties were granted and more active socialist movements could again operate freely in France."\textsuperscript{105}

"All Europe," writes Jacques Barzun, "including many liberals and socialists disavowed the Commune, which was the name chosen by the insurgents to show their organic bond as citizens of the municipality. But Karl Marx in London, seeing the chance for a political stroke, and perhaps also the value of that name, issued a pamphlet that represented the insurgents as a foretaste of the class war to come - the proletariat aroused and about to establish Communism. This was a piece of big-lie propaganda. The Communards were neither proletariat nor


\textsuperscript{105} Thompson, op. cit., pp. 395-396.
Communists. The 'municipal republics' they wanted to set up in the rest of France were the opposite of the central dictatorship of Marx's program. But Marx had rightly judged that the event had given worldwide notoriety to workingmen in arms. The image could be a vivid myth for the Idea of the next revolution."

In view of the strong influence exerted by Freemasonry on the Franco-Prussian war, it may be asked whether it exerted a similar influence on the struggle between the Third Republic and the Paris Commune that followed it... The evidence is ambiguous. According to Jasper Ridley, "several of the leaders of the Paris Commune were Freemasons. Benoit Halon, who was a member of Marx's International Working Men's Association (later known as the First International); Felix Pyat; the songwriter Jean Baptiste Clément, who wrote the song 'Le Temps des Cerises' (Cherry Time) about the Commune; Zéphian Camélinat, who survived to become a member of the Communist Party in 1920; and another songwriter, Eugène Pottier, who wrote, among other poems and songs, the words of L'Internationale. But there were Freemasons on the other side. Louis Blanc condemned the Paris Commune, and remained in the National Assembly at Versailles; and from Italy Mazzini strongly condemned the Commune, though Garibaldi supported it.

"On 29 April 1871 some Paris Freemasons set out from Paris to go to Versailles to discuss with [the non-masonic] Thiers ways of ending the civil war between the government and the Commune. They carried their Masonic banners as they walked through the Porte Maillot. On this section of the battlefront the government army was commanded by General Montaudon, who was a Freemason. He ordered a ceasefire to allow the Freemasons from Paris to pass through his lines. They went on to Versailles, where their Masonic brother, Jules Simon, took them to see Thiers; but Thiers insisted that Paris must submit unconditionally to the government at Versailles."107

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The events of 1870 are a vivid example of the power of Freemasonry, both in the overthrow of Napoleon III and in the inspiration of the Commune. However, the Commune itself was divided between radicals and moderates, as the original French revolution had been in 1789-93. This is a phenomenon that we find in most revolutions: while the Masons may be in favour of the idea of revolution as such, when it comes to the actual bloody reality, in which they are likely to lose property if not their own lives, many of them hang back...

And yet it is precisely at this time that we find the leading Masons of the world trying to create a unifying centre. Thus on January 22, 1870 Mazzini wrote to the famous American Mason Albert Pike: “We have to found a Super-Circle which must remain in complete secrecy and to which we will summon the Masons of the higher degrees at our own choice. Regarding our brothers, we

have to bind these people by oath in the strictest secrecy. By means of this highest circle, we shall control all the movements of the Freemasons: it will become an international centre which will be the more powerful the fewer people know who rules it.” For Mazzini, in fact, the unification of Italy had never been his main aim, “but only the means to attaining world power”. In reply, on September 20, 1870 Pike signed an agreement with Mazzini, according to which the Supreme Masonic cult, uniting all the Masons of the world, between thirty and forty million throughout the world, would be established in Rome.”

For Rome now, thanks to the overthrow of Napoleon, was in the hands of the revolution...

The career of Napoleon III, and his sudden, totally unexpected fall in 1870, is a vivid demonstration not only of the fragility of political power in general, but also of that specific form of power known as Bonapartism, which is brought to power by the revolution and supposedly accepts its ideals, but then attempts to ride the tiger of the revolution in a despotic manner. Some accuse the present President of France, Emmanuel Macron, of being a Bonapartist; a more convincing example is Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin in Russia...

The end of Bonapartism is always the same. Having suffered defeat (usually of a military kind), the despot finds that the popularity he courted so assiduously deserts him in a moment. For when asked to choose between an unanointed despot they themselves have put in power and the survival of the nation, the people always choose the nation. As they shouted in 1870: “Death to the Bonapartes! Long live the nation!”

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Let us now look more closely at the new German empire that was born on January 18, 1871 in the Hall of Mirrors, Versailles, taking the place of the now-defunct North German Confederation. There twenty-three German princes offered the title of emperor to the most powerful amongst them, King Wilhelm I of Prussia, who besides now controlled a large chunk of north-eastern France. Richard Evans writes: "Built by Louis XIV, the 'Sun King', at the height of his power nearly two hundred years before, the palace was now turned into a humiliating symbol of French impotence and defeat. This was a key moment in modern German and indeed European history. To liberals, it seemed the fulfilment of their dreams. But there was a heavy price to pay. Several features of Bismarck's creation had ominous consequences for the future. First of all, the decision to call the new state 'the German Reich' inevitably conjured up memories of its thousand-year predecessor, the dominant power in Europe for so many centuries. Some, indeed, referred to Bismarck's creation as the 'Second Reich'. The use of the word implied, too, that where the First Reich had failed, in the face of French aggression, the Second had succeeded. Among the many aspects of his creation that survived the fall of Bismarck's German Reich in 1918, the continued use of the term 'German Empire', Deutsches Reich, by the Weimar Republic and all its institutions was far from being the least significant. The word 'Reich' conjured up an image among educated Germans that resonated far beyond the institutional structures Bismarck created: the successor to the Roman Empire; the vision of God's Empire here on earth; the universality of its claim to suzerainty; in a more prosaic but no less powerful sense, the concept of a German state that would include all German speakers in Central Europe - 'one People, one Reich, one Leader', as the Nazi slogan was to put it. There always remained those in Germany who thought Bismarck's creation only a partial realization of the idea of a true German Reich. Initially, their voices were drowned by the euphoria of victory. But with time, their number was to grow.

"The constitution which Bismarck devised for the new German Reich in 1871 in many ways fell short of the ideals invoked by the liberals in 1848. Alone of all modern German constitutions, it lacked any declaration of principle about human rights and civic freedoms. Formally speaking, the new Reich was a loose confederation of independent states, much like its predecessor had been. Its titular head was the Emperor or Kaiser, the title taken over from the old head of the Holy Roman Reich and ultimately deriving from the Latin name 'Caesar'. He had wide-ranging powers including the declaration of war and peace. The Reich's institutions were stronger than those of the old, with a nationally elected parliament, the Reichstag - the name, deriving from the Holy Roman Reich, was another survival across the revolutionary divide of 1918 - and a number of central administrative institutions, most notably the Foreign Office, to which more were added as time went on. But the constitution did not accord to the
national parliament the power to elect or dismiss governments and their ministers, and key aspects of political decision-making, above all on matters of war and peace, and on the administration of the army, were reserved to the monarch and his immediate entourage. Government ministers, including the head of the civilian administration, the Reich Chancellor - an office created by Bismarck and held by him for some twenty years - were civil servants, not party politicians, and they were beholden to the Kaiser, and not to the people or to their parliamentary representatives. With time, the influence of the Reichstag grew, though not by very much. With only mild exaggeration, the great revolutionary thinker Karl Marx described the Bismarckian Reich, in a convoluted phrase that captured many of its internal contradictions, as a ‘bureaucratically constructed military despotism, dressed up with parliamentary forms, mixed in with an element of feudalism yet at the same time already influenced by the bourgeoisie’.

Therefore while Germany had a parliament, it could not be called a democracy, nor a constitutional monarchy on the model of Britain; in spite of liberal elements, it remained a monarchy closer in structure and sentiment to Russia and Austro-Hungary.

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According to Dominic Lieven, “Bismarck was determined to restabilize Europe after his wars of 1864-71 and to reassure Germany’s neighbours that Europe’s new potential hegemon was a satiated power with no further territorial ambitions. As one perceptive German observer later commented, this reassurance was necessary. The same historical arguments used to justify the German annexation of Alsace-Lorraine in 1871, for example, could also have justified taking much of Switzerland. In geopolitical terms, the Netherlands were not much more than the estuary of Germany’s most vital artery, the river Rhine. German security in the east might have been served by pushing back the Russian frontier, and German nationalists might have welcomed the annexation of Russia’s Baltic Provinces, whose elites were German and Protestant. Only Bismarck had dissuaded William I and his general from demanding the annexation of the Sudetenland as tribute from Austria for the victory of 1866. As a result of Bismarck’s moderation, commented the writer Paul Rohrbach in 1903, no European government now believed that Germany hankered after its territory or had ambitions to expand within Europe…”

Nevertheless, while Bismarck was no war-monger, his military victories had elicited a change in spirit in Germany that was to have long-term consequences...


On the one hand, Germany's victory over France served to calm the passion of wounded pride elicited by Napoleon I's victories over Prussia. On the other, the victory also had the opposite effect, stoking up national pride in the new, united nation-state and a new belief in its rights in relation to its neighbours. Thus while Germany's problem in 1806 had been defeat in war, and the vengefulness that came from it, the temptation after 1870 was victory and the hubris that came from it. And just as war had humbled the old enemy and united the nation (almost) in 1870, why, thought some, should it not continue to cure the nation's ills?

Now we have seen how Napoleon saw war as essential to maintaining the glory of France. On the German side of the Rhine, nationalist philosophers developed a still more pernicious concept of the necessity of war. The roots of war-worship were to be found in Germany's not-so-distant past. Gradually, from the time of Clausewitz, the idea became entrenched that war is a cleansing process sweeping away the decadence that comes from too much peace. And then there was Hegel's idea that "the German spirit is the spirit of the new world. Its aim is the realization of absolute Truth as the unlimited self-determination of freedom." Clearly war could not be taboo to the advocates of "unlimited self-determination".

As Barbara Ehrenreich writes, "In the opinion of Hegel and the later theorists of nationalism, nations need war – that is, the sacrifice of their citizens – even when they are not being menaced by other nations. The reason is simple. The nation, as a kind of 'organism', exists only through the emotional unity of its citizens, and nothing cements that unity more decisively than war. As Hegel explained, peace saps the strength of nations by allowing the citizens to drift back into their individual concerns: 'In times of peace civil life expands more and more, all the different spheres settle down, and in the long run men sink into corruption, their particularities become more and more fixed and ossified. But health depends upon the unity of the body and if the parts harden, death occurs.' Meaning, of course, the death of the nation, which depends for its life on the willingness of its citizens to face their own deaths. War thus becomes a kind of tonic for nations, reviving that passion for collective defense that alone brings the nation to life in the minds of its citizens. Heinrich von Treitschke, the late-nineteenth-century German Nationalist, put it excitedly: 'One must say in the most decisive manner: "War is the only remedy for ailing nations!" The moment the State calls, "Myself and my existence are at stake!" social self-seeking must fall back and every party hate [partisan hatred?] be silent. The individual must forget his own ego and feel himself a member of the whole... In that very point lies the loftiness of war, that the small man disappears entirely before the great thought of the State.'

"Considered as a living being or 'organism', the nation is clearly both awesome like a deity, and at the same time far less admirable, in the sense of
being constrained by any kind of morality, than the individuals it comprises. Ordinary citizens must refrain from violence, from theft and other crimes, but the nation, acting in an arena of other nations, is governed by no higher law... Citizens who have a dispute to settle must seek the judgement of the courts; nations are more likely to duke it out on the field of battle. Citizens who brawl on the streets are punished; nations that go to war are feared and often respected. If the nation as organism has a personality, it is that of the mounted warrior of old: impetuous, belligerent, touchy about all matters of ‘honor’, and in a state of readiness, at all times, for war...”

The militarist spirit of the Second Reich was a continuation of 18th-century Prussian militarism exacerbated by German Romanticism and the nation-worship of the German Counter-Enlightenment. “It was above all in order to protect the autonomy of the Prussian officer corps from liberal interference that Bismarck was appointed in 1862. He immediately announced that 'the great questions of the day are not decided by speeches and majority resolutions - that was the great mistake of 1848 and 1849 - but by iron and blood'. He was as good as his word. The war of 1866 destroyed the Kingdom of Hanover, incorporating it into Prussia, and expelled Austria and Bohemia from Germany after centuries in which they had played a major part in shaping its destinies, while the war of 1870-71 took away Alsace-Lorraine from France and placed it under the direct suzerainty of the German Empire. It is with some justification that Bismarck has been described as a 'white revolutionary'. Military force and military action created the Reich; and in so doing they swept aside legitimate institutions, redrew state boundaries and overthrew long-established traditions, with a radicalism and a ruthlessness that cast a long shadow over the subsequent development of Germany. They also thereby legitimized the use of force for political ends to a degree well beyond what was common in most other countries except when they contemplated imperial conquests in other parts of the world. Militarism in state and society was to play an important part in undermining German democracy in the 1920s and in the coming of the Third Reich.

"Bismarck saw to it that the army was virtually a state within a state, with its own immediate access to the Kaiser and its own system of self-government. The Reichstag only had the right to approve its budget every seven years, and the Minister of War was responsible to the army rather than to the legislature. Officers enjoyed many social and other privileges and expected the deference of civilians when they met on the street. Not surprisingly, it was the ambition of many a bourgeois professional to be admitted as an officer in the army reserves; while, for the masses, compulsory military service produced familiarity with military codes of conduct and military ideals and values. In times of emergency, the army was entitled to establish martial law and suspend civil liberties, a move considered so frequently during the Wilhelmine period that some historians have with pardonable exaggeration described the politicians and legislators of the time as living under the permanent threat of a coup d'état from above.

111 Ehrenreich, op. cit., pp. 201-203.
"The army impacted on society in a variety of ways, most intensively of all in Prussia, then after 1871 more indirectly, through the Prussian example, in other German states as well. Its prestige, gained in the stunning victories of the wars of unification, was enormous. Non-commissioned officers, that is, those men, who stayed on after their term of compulsory military service was over and served in the army for a number of years, had an automatic right to a job in state employment when they finally left the army. This meant that the vast majority of policemen, postmen, railwaymen and other lower servants of the state were ex-soldiers, who had been socialized in the army and behaved in the military fashion to which they had become accustomed. The rule-book of an institution like the police force concentrated on enforcing military models of behaviour, insisted that the public be kept at arm's length and ensured that, in street marches and mass demonstrations, the crowd would be more likely to be treated like an enemy than an assembly of citizens. Military concepts of honour were pervasive enough to ensure the continued vitality of duelling among civilian men, even amongst the middle classes, though it was also common in Russia and France as well.

"Over time, the identification of the officer corps with the Prussian aristocracy weakened, and aristocratic military codes were augmented by new forms of popular militarism, including in the early 1900s the Navy League and the veterans' clubs. By the time of the First World War, most of the key positions in the officer corps were held by professionals, and the aristocracy was dominant mainly in traditional areas of social prestige and snobbery such as the cavalry and the guards, much as it was in other countries. But the professionalization of the officer corps, hastened by the advent of new military technology from the machine gun and barbed wire to the aeroplane and the tank, did not make it any more democratic. On the contrary, military arrogance was strengthened by the colonial experience, when German armed forces ruthlessly put down rebellion of indigenous peoples such as the Hereros in German South-West Africa (now Namibia). In 1904-07, in an act of deliberate genocide, the German army massacred thousands of Herero men, women and children and drove many more of them into the desert, where they starved. From a population of some 80,000 before the war, the Hereros declined to a mere 15,000 by 1911 as a result of these actions. In an occupied part of the German Empire such as Alsace-Lorraine, annexed from France in 1871, the army frequently behaved like conquerors facing a hostile and refractory population. Some of the most flagrant examples of such behaviour had given rise in 1913 to a heated debate in the Reichstag, in which the deputies passed a vote of no-confidence in the government. This did not of course force the government to resign, but it illustrated none the less the growing polarization of opinion over the role of the army in German society."

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It was Germany more than any other country that used the recent major changes in military strategy, science and technology to increase her power. Even

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112 Evans, op. cit., pp. 8-12.
more important was the German ability to mobilize the whole of society towards the nation’s ends.

Indeed, according to Bobbitt, "the Prussian solution to the requirement of vast numbers of soldiers to exploit the opportunities of decisive battle was to militarize the entire society. After the 1873 depression, the German state nationalized the railroads, introduced compulsory social insurance, and increased its intervention in the economy - in order to maximise the welfare of the nation. Throughout the nineteenth century Britain refused to adopt a mass conscript army; it was Prussia that militarized as it industrialized. The railways, telegraph, and standardization of mechanical tools that industrialization made possible allowed for dizzying increases in the speed and mobility of military dispositions. The use of the telegraph, in concert with the railroad, allowed generals to mass widely dispersed forces quickly and to coordinate their operations over a vast theatre... An entire society could be mobilized for war, replenishing the front when necessary as the conflict progressed. But this was only possible if that entire society could be made a party to the war..."[113]

The new Reich soon had more than military prowess to boast of. Michael Stürmer writes: "Within the lifetime of one generation Germany was able to become the foremost industrial and trading power in Europe. Bismarck's revolution from above unleashed vast energies through the nation state, not entirely unlike events in France eighty years before. Industrial performance was second to none and was accomplished by the birth of the welfare state and democratic institutions and aspirations; of a socialist subculture and an ambitious liberal bourgeoisie unsure of itself but driven by nervous energy and creative unrest. At the turn of the century the language of the sciences was, in many parts of the world, German. A vast number of Nobel prizes went to German scholars, many of them Jews. German big business and banks were probably organised more efficiently than most competitors except for the United States. German universities became the model for many establishments of higher education from Turkey to North America. If the French Impressionists dominated the art world in the nineteenth century, after the turn of the century German art movements became equally important. In literature it was probably the Germany of Gerhard Hauptmann, Thomas Mann or Theodor Mommsen, all of them Nobel-prize winners, that most sensitively expressed the drama and contradictions of industrial society. A letter which appeared in The Times in August, 1914 under the heading 'Scholars' Protest Against War' summed up a widely held view: 'We regard Germany as a nation leading the way in the arts and sciences, and we have all learnt and are learning from German scholars.'"[114]

Thus, as Disraeli rightly pointed out in February, 1871, the Franco-German war amounted to "a German revolution, a greater political event than the French revolution of the last century. I don't say a greater, or as great a social event..."

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Not a single principle in the management of our foreign affairs, accepted by all statesmen for guidance up to six months ago, any longer exists. There is not a diplomatic tradition which has not been swept away... The balance of power has been entirely destroyed, and the country which suffers most, and feels the effects of this great change most, is England..."  

Henry Kissinger comments on Disraeli’s words: “The Westphalian and the Vienna European orders had been based on a divided Central Europe whose competing pressures – between the plethora of German states in the Westphalian settlement, and Austria and Prussia in the Vienna outcome – would balance each other out. What emerged after the unification of Germany was a dominant country, strong enough to defeat each neighbor individually and perhaps all the continental countries together. The bond of legitimacy had disappeared. Everything now depended on calculations of power.”

“After 1871,” writes Bobbitt, “a new society of nation-states gradually emerged. Its mood was one of easily inflamed nationalism and ethnic truculence. This reflected the public mood, excited by the press on a scale impossible before the spread of free compulsory public education and vastly increased literacy. Three new ideas vied in the public mind for attention and allegiance: Darwinism, which had been easily admitted into a social credo of competitiveness and national survivalism; Marxism, with its hostility to the capitalist relationships of the industrial age; and bourgeois parliamentarianism, which promoted the rule of law in a national and an international society that was becoming increasingly credulous about the role that law could play. It was thus an age of faith in law even if the bases for legal consensus were at the time being quickly eroded, an age of anxiety in class relationships, an age of ethnomania within states. The contrast with the world it replaced could not have been greater. One can scarcely imagine a leader of a state-nation speaking as Bismarck did in explaining the new spirit of the age: 'Who rules in France or Sardinia is as matter of indifference to me once the government is recognised and only a question of fact, not of right. [F]or me France will remain France, whether it is governed by Napoleon or St. Louis. I know that you will reply that a properly conceived Prussian policy requires chastity in foreign affairs even from the point of view of utility. I am prepared to discuss the point of utility with you; but if you posit antinomies between right and revolution; Christianity and infidelity; God and the devil; I can argue no longer and can merely say, 'I am not of your opinion and you judge in me what is not yours to judge.'

"This is the authentic voice of the nation-state. Regimes may come and go, but the nation endures. International law conformed itself to this new society; how a government came to power was of no relevance so long as the fact of its control over a nation could be established. Self-determination - the right of nations to have states of their own - became the only principle recognized in international

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115 Disraeli, in Evans, op. cit., p. 265; Stürmer, op. cit., p. 2; Bobbitt, op. cit., p. 201.

116 Kissinger, op. cit., p. 77.
law that detracted from the axiomatic legality of the government that was in control.

"It was obvious at the time that the nation-state bore certain strategic risks that were inherent in the kind of political society on which such a state depends. In his last public statement, in 1890, Moltke issued an ominous and melancholy warning. With such states, the old warrior said, which depended upon and at the same time inflamed popular passions, future wars could last 'seven and perhaps thirty years'." 117

Bobbitt claims that Germany after 1871 was not only the first nation-state, as opposed to state-nation, but also a proto-fascist state. Bismarck's victories over Austria and France "allowed him to place at the apex of the German state a radically conservative, militarist class whose only claim to pan-German legitimacy was that it alone was able to realize the ambitions of national unity. German nationalism - a program that held that a state was legitimated by its service to a pre-eminent ethnic nation - was the prototype for fascism, as its expression in the Constitution of 1871 confirms.

"Bismarck did not so much unify as conquer the other German states and then proceed to transform their politics by delivering German unity under a popular doctrine of militarism and ethnic nationalism. This put fascism on the table as a competitor to the parliamentary systems..." 118

After the first flush of pride in the victory over France in 1870, a general feeling of dissatisfaction set in in Germany. Engels had welcomed Bismarck's success in reducing German "particularism", but "the main disadvantage," he said, "and it is a very big one, is the inevitable swamping of Germany by the Prussian spirit". The liberals were unhappy that Germany was not a fully parliamentary state, but was still largely controlled by the king, the army and the Prussian aristocracy. Antisemites like Paul de Lagarde, on the other hand, were unhappy that Germany was becoming too liberal, and that the new unified German state was the "little" one, excluding Austria - whose inclusion, he believed, justified a great war. The Catholics were unhappy with Bismarck's Kulturkampf legislation for obligatory civil marriage and the prohibition of the Jesuit order, resistance to which caused most Prussian bishops and thousands of priests to be thrown into prison. Over all this was a vaguer feeling that something was rotten in the house of Germany with, in Golo Mann's words, its "hard-boiled Realpolitik and oppressive piety, ostentatious theatrical poses, self-righteous nationalism combined with internal discord, and finally materialism, overwhelmed by the successes of the natural sciences, but yet prepared suddenly to change into cheap mysticism". 119

8. AUSTRO-GERMAN ANTI-SEMITISM

In the course of the nineteenth century most European countries emancipated the Jews; and this fact, combined with the evident power of such Jewish financiers as the Rothschilds, such Jewish politicians as Disraeli, and such Jewish revolutionaries as Marx, began to elicit hostility and feed into the age-old distrust and hatred of Jewry that we know as anti-semitism. This in turn elicited the creation of forgeries, of which the most famous was *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which purported to be the minutes of a meeting of Jewish elders somewhere in the West. In their account of how the Jews could seize power in various spheres, the *Protocols* showed considerable prescience of certain developments, especially in finance, that did actually take place; and because of this prescience, the *Protocols* played an important role in stirring up anti-semitism in Germany, Russia and elsewhere in the decades before and after the First World War. Moreover, many people to this day believe in their authenticity. But in fact the Protocols are largely plagiarized from Maurice Joly’s *Dialogue aux Enfers entre Montesquieu et Machiavel*, published in 1864. When the forgery was demonstrated to Tsar Nicholas II by his Prime Minister, P.A. Stolypin, he said: "Drop the Protocols. One cannot defend a pure cause by dirty methods.”

One of the first well-known anti-semites was Wagner, whose baleful views were founded on the contrast he drew between “good” Greek art and “bad” Jewish art. For, like Nietzsche, Wagner took Greek art as his ideal. Thus in 1849 he wrote: “It is our task to make out of Greek art the completely human art; to remove from it the conditions under which it was precisely a Greek and not a completely human art; to widen the garb of religion, in which alone it was communal Greek art, after the removal of which, as a selfish individual art species, it could not longer fulfill the need of the community, but only that of luxury – however beautiful! - to widen this garb of the specifically Greek religion to the bond of the religion of the future – that of universality – in order to form for ourselves a true conception of the artwork of the future.”

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


Wagner’s views on Jewry became steadily more radical. Indeed, German anti-Semitism can be said to have begun in earnest with Wagner, who, as Paul Johnson writes, "advocated the Untergang (downfall) of the Jews. 'I regard the Jewish race as the born enemy of pure humanity and everything that is noble in it; it is certain that we Germans will go under before them, and perhaps I am the last German who knows how to stand up as an art-loving man against the Judaism that is already getting control of everything.' He wrote this in Religion and Art (1881).... Wagner was particularly influential in intensifying anti-Semitism, especially among the middle and upper classes, not only because of his personal standing but because he repeatedly advanced the argument - with innumerable examples - that the Jews were progressively 'taking over' the citadel of German culture, especially its music. Even their so-called 'geniuses', he insisted - men like Giacomo Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn or Heine himself - were not truly creative, and meanwhile a host of Jewish middlemen were taking over the critical press, publishing, theatres and operas, art galleries and agencies. It was Wagner's writings which provoked the furious outpourings of Eugen Dühring, who throughout the 1880s published a succession of widely read racial attacks on the Jew: the 'Jewish question', he declared, should be 'solved' by 'killing and extirpation'."\(^{123}\)

The term "Antisemitism", writes Evans, was coined at this time by the Austrian Moravian, later Prussian Jewish Orientalist Moritz Steinschneider (1816-1907). However, “It was the German journalist Wilhelm Marr (1819-1904) who popularized the concept in his book The Way to Victory of Jewdom over Germandom (1879). Although he renounced these beliefs at the end of his life, Marr reflected a wider current in right-wing German politics, already begun by the Prussian court preacher Adolf Stöcker (1835-1909), who demanded legal restrictions on the number of practising Jews in the professions as well as reductions of their supposed influence in the world of business. Stöcker’s main concern was founding the Christian Social Party in Germany in 1878 was, however, to wean the workers away from socialism, and in this he met with only very limited success..."\(^{124}\)

Daniel Pipes writes: "Antisemitism, a term coined in 1879 with the founding in Berlin of the Antisemitenliga (Antisemitic League), is a form of anti-Jewish hatred that differs in several ways from what came before: (1) it changes the emphasis from religion to race, (2) it transforms dislike into fear, (3) it turns a bias into an all-encompassing ideology, even way of life, and (4) it replaces the episodic persecution of Jews with a permanent one. Antisemitism moved Jew hatred from the realm of emotions to that of political activism, from defensive to offensive, and from life's sidelines to its core. It also changed the depiction of Jews from heretics into malevolently powerful figures."\(^{125}\)


\(^{124}\) Evans, op. cit., p. 478.

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

Wagner’s later music-dramas, staged in a specially constructed theatre in Bayreuth, provided the kind of “Jew-purged” art that he demanded; they propagated, in Sir Richard Evans’ words, “heroic figures from Nordic legend [that] were to serve as model leaders for the German future” – that is, models of Aryan purity with no admixture of Semitism. But even as early as Judaism in Music he was arguing “that the ‘Jewish spirit’ was inimical to musical profundity. His remedy was for the complete assimilation of Jews into German culture, and the replacement of Jewish religion, indeed all religion, by secular aesthetic impulses of the sort he poured into his own music-dramas. But towards the end of his life his views took on an increasingly racist tone under the influence of his second wife, Cosima, daughter of the composer Franz Liszt. By the end of the 1870s she was recording in her diaries that Wagner, whose outlook on civilization was distinctly pessimistic by this time, had read Wilhelm Marr’s anti-semitic tract of 1873 and broadly agreed with it. As a consequence of this shift in his position, Wagner no longer desired the assimilation of the Jews into German society, but their expulsion from it. In 1881, discussing Lessing’s classic play Nathan the Wise and a disastrous fire in the Vienna Ring Theatre, in which more than four hundred people, many of them Jewish, had died, Cosima noted that her husband said ‘In a vehement quip that all Jews should burn in a performance of Nathan’.

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

126 Solzhenitsyn, Dvesti let vmeste (Two hundred years together), Moscow, 2002, pp. 315-316.
music was of course capable of being interpreted in many other ways as well…”

“In Austria, anti-Semitism was instrumentalized for political purposes by Karl Lueger (1844-1910). As well as being a successful Mayor of Vienna, Lueger was also an unscrupulous political agitator who curried favour with the Viennese lower middle class and the rural peasantry by publicly blaming the Jews for their economic problems. It was Lueger, for example, who coined the term ‘Judapest’ to refer to the Hungarian capital, where there was a high proportion of Jews among the professional classes (the word Fest also meant ‘plague’ in German). Lueger’s anti-Semitic rhetoric did much to make such ideas respectable in Vienna. How sincere his views were is debatable; when a follower upbraided him in a Vienna café for sitting at a table with some Jews, Lueger famously replied: ‘I decide who’s a Jew.’ None of this seemed to put voters off: in 1902 he increased his majority on the council. Lueger was outdone as an anti-Semite by another Austrian, Georg Ritter von Schönerer (1842-1921), son of a railway magnate. In the early 1880s, Schönerer formed a German nationalist association to campaign for the incorporation of Austria into the German Empire, along with Bohemia. Later he renamed his party ‘Pan-German’, and said in the national Parliament that he ‘longed for the day when a German army would march into Austria and destroy it’. It was Schönerer who invented the greeting Heil! in imitation of the supposed Germanic heroes of medieval times. His acolytes also used the title Führer when addressing him. In 1888 with some followers he trashed the offices of a newspaper that had prematurely reported the death of the German Emperor. As a result of these antics Franz Joseph stripped him of his noble title (which he had in any case only been granted in 1880). In 1898, undeterred, Schönerer led the movement Los von Rom (‘Free from Rome’) to convert Austrians to Lutheranism, which annoyed the Church and the emperor still further. Never more than a fringe politician, Schönerer lost his sea in the Reichsrat in 1907. The anti-Semitism of both Schönerer and Lueger was to bear fruit in the later ideology of Adolph Hitler (1889-1945), who lived in Vienna as a young man during these years.

“Politicians such as these built on anti-Semitic theories that propounded the idea that the Jewish spirit, indelibly stamped on the Jewish racial character, was imbued with an unalterable purpose – to undermine social institutions such as the family, subvert the economy, and shatter the patriotic foundations of the nation in the interests of a ‘cosmopolitan’ spirit…”

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9. WAGNER’S RELIGION OF DEATH

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

As Douglas Murray writes, Wagner followed Schopenhauer and Feuerbach in supposing that religion was simply the expression of our innermost desires. “The role of art, he believed, was to ‘save the spirit of religion’. And what he was attempting to speak to, in his music and essays was the source of that other-worldly, subconscious voice that speaks to us, asks questions and seeks answers. From Tannhauser right through to Parsifal, Wagner’s ambition… was to create a kind of religion which could stand up on its own and sustain itself…”129 As such, of course, it was a false religion. Even the pseudo-Christian Parsifal with its Holy Grail and emphasis on love and compassion, is an imitation of Christianity rather than the real thing. And yet it was sufficiently redolent of the faith that the Nazis pronounced it “ideologically unacceptable” in 1933 and banned it completely in 1939.130

It is intriguing to compare Wagner’s attitude to art and religion to that of another contemporary great artist, Lev Tolstoy… Now Tolstoy devoted a whole chapter of his What is Art? to a rejection of Wagner’s music. Rosamund Barrett writes: “Tolstoy had more or less built an entire artistic and religious edifice on the foundation of one aspect of Christianity (the Sermon on the Mount), and although he can be forgiven for not reading Wagner’s ponderous aesthetic writings, here was a classic case of him willfully refusing to consider all the dimensions of a structure in his path that did not conform to his specifications in the rush to tear it down. Although Wagner and Tolstoy were in certain important respects poles apart (the composer’s bombast and love of luxury spring to mind), there are also some intriguing parallels between them. Under


the influence of Schopenhauer both formulated a religious vision based on a highly idiosyncratic theology of redemptive love which had little in common with traditional Christianity. Redemption can be attained only by renouncing eros and practicing compassion or agape, the word for love used in the New Testament: such are the lessons of Wagner’s last work Parsifal and all of Tolstoy’s late works from The Death of Ivan Ilyich onwards. Only love can redeem mankind and bring about a state where human beings can be at peace with themselves and with each other. Thomas Mann was quite correct when he wrote in 1933 that the pattern of Tolstoy’s artistic career was identical to that of Wagner, for in both cases, everything in their later oeuvre was prefigured in their earlier works. For all its enthralling narrative, for example, War and Peace is ultimately about sin (separation from God, and the absence of human relatedness) and redemption (the restoration of love), as can be seen by following Natasha Rostova’s spiritual journey.

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

Let us look more closely at the content of Wagner’s religion. According to Denis de Rougemont, it was a revival, in a romantic, nineteenth-century mode, of the ancient religion of Manichaeism or Catharism. Its main tenet consisted in the assertion that matter and the created universe is evil, and that salvation is to be found only in a complete renunciation of all desire for the created – in a word, in

death. This religion, as we shall see, was thoroughly integrated into his music, especially *Tristan und Isolde* and the last scene of *Gotterdammerung*. And we are tempted to say that it found its political expression in the destruction of the German Reich in 1945…

That Wagner considered the “true religion” to be a form of Manichaeism or Catharism is revealed in the following: “*Religion*, of its very essence, is radically divergent from the State. The religions that have come into the world have been high and pure in direct ratio as they seceded from the State, and in themselves entirely upheaved it. We find State and Religion in complete alliance only where each still stands upon its lowest step of evolution and significance. The primitive Nature-religion subserves no ends but those which Patriotism provides for in the adult State: hence with the full development of patriotic spirit the ancient Nature-religion has always lost its meaning for the State. So long as it flourishes, however, so long do men subsume by their gods their highest practical interest of State; the tribal god is the representative of the tribesman’s solidarity; the remaining Nature-gods become *Penates*, protectors of the home, the town, the fields and flocks. Only in the wholly adult State, where these religions have paled before the full-fledged patriotic duty, and are sinking into inessential forms and ceremonies; only where ‘Fate’ has shown itself to be Political Necessity – could true Religion step into the world. Its basis is a feeling of the unblessedness of human being, of the State’s profound inadequacy to still the purely-human need. Its inmost kernel is denial of the world – i.e. recognition of the world as a fleeting and dreamlike state reposing merely on illusion – and struggle for Redemption from it, prepared for by renunciation, attained by Faith.”

In 1854 Wagner read Schopenhauer’s *The World as Will and Representation* for the first time. “Unlike most German philosophers of the nineteenth century,” writes Stephen Johnson, Schopenhauer “was as fine a writer as he was a thinker, and this would have been part of the attraction. It was, however, Schopenhauer’s vision that turned Wagner’s thinking upside down – yet with it went a peculiar sense of recognition. There was so much in this book that reflected what Wagner already felt, even he had not articulated it consciously. This may seem strange, since Schopenhauer is often presented as philosophy’s great pessimist, and Wagner’s revolutionary theory and talk of the future had been determinedly, if not always convincingly, optimistic. On one crucial point, though Schopenhauer, the Young Germans and Wagner all agreed: the world as it stood was a terrible place. Injustice prevailed; mindless cruelty and pointless suffering were rife. The Young Germans had believed that the world could, indeed would, be changed. Surely the great philosopher Hegel had shown for all time that history itself was

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an unstoppable process of change for the better? Schopenhauer laughed that idea to scorn. If there were an underlying process it was the ‘Will’: the blind, naked craving for life that lay at the heart of nature - in today’s less metaphysically inclined age it might be called ‘the selfish gene’. For Schopenhauer there was no satisfying this craving: it attempts to fulfill itself only created more suffering - for others and, ultimately, for itself. The only way out of suffering was the path undertaken by saints of all the world’s religions: renunciation, reflecting the Will back on itself, saying ‘no’… Here was another possible answer to Wagner’s old yearning for personal redemption and political revolution: forget Utopia, and turn instead toward Nirvana.

“There was another highly relevant message for Wagner in Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung. In his Zurich essays, particularly Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft, Wagner had put forward his idea of an ideal synthesis of the arts, all mutually subservient: the word he used in that essay was Gesamtkunstwerk – the ‘total/unified work of art’ – though it is worth noting that this is his only recorded use of that now-famous term.

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

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

“This would be a tale of two lovers, their desire for one another expressed in music in which sensuous beauty would combine with aching sadness. It would be desire stripped of comforting illusions, a longing that in the end could only find fulfillment in death. Musically this would be expressed by the poignant yearning motif that opens the Tristan Prelude. The motif is founded on a single unresolved dissonance: a dissonance that finds its true tonal resolution only in

133 Johnson, op. cit., pp. 76-78.
the final bars of the opera – namely after the death of both lovers. And yet Wagner’s paradoxical nature declares itself even here. Evidently he had not yet renounced hope of erotic fulfillment through his relationship with Mathilde Wesendonck: the two were spending more and more time in each other’s company, despite the immediate proximity of both Otto [Mathilde’s husband] and Minna [Wagner’s wife]. Some years later, in a letter to Mathilde of December 1858, Wagner said that he had to correct ‘friend Schopenhauer’. There was another way ‘leading to the perfect appeasement of the Will’: a simpler and more direct way than Schopenhauerian renunciation, by which he meant the love that ‘has its roots in sex’. But only a year after this he was writing to another woman friend: ‘Lovingly I turn my eyes toward the land Nirvana. Yet Nirvana always becomes Tristan again.’ Wagner could be accused of simply wanting to have his cake and eat it: to cling to the comforting idea of renunciation while retaining the possibility that he might fulfill his desires after all.

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

Denis de Rougemont develops this thesis in an illuminating way. First, he traces the origin of this religion, in western history, to the emergence of the heresy of Catharism (otherwise known as Albigensianism or Bogomilism) in Southern France in the early twelfth century. The Catharist heretics deliberately cultivated a kind of refined eroticism, but not for overtly sexual or political ends – on the contrary, both sexual intercourse and war were considered to be evil, insofar as the whole created world was considered to be the work of the evil demiurge, - but in order to escape this world entirely and unite with the Light beyond the grave.

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

134 Johnson, op. cit., pp. 78-79. We do not know whether Wagner and Mathilde consummated their passion. But we do know that he and his second wife Cosima had a daughter whom they called Isolde (Johnson, op. cit., p. 95).
The “sacred” symbolic poetry of the troubadours, writes de Rougemont, soon degenerated, in the later Middle Ages and Renaissance, into profane love poetry and tragic dramas (Romeo and Juliet, Phèdre) and the first romantic novels, which instead of symbolizing an essentially religious and other-worldly ideal in the form of courtly love, represented unmistakably profane love under the guise of an irresistible, “divine” passion and with no taboo on sexual consummation. This was, of course, a complete reversal of the original intent of the myth. According to David Starkey, “Romantic Love – with its unrequited passions, its vows, its proposals on bended knee, its exchanges of rings and tokens, its protestations of eternal devotion and its living happily ever after - is an invention of the French Middle Ages. Its key text, all 21,000 lines of it, is the Roman de la Rose, from which the word romantic itself derives…” 135 By the eighteenth century in France, even the “divinity” of this passion had been discarded, and in figures such as Don Juan or the Marquis de Sade only its supposed irresistibility and undoubted incompatibility with conventional Christian morality remained.

However, towards the end of the eighteenth century two events served to resurrect the original myth: the rise of German romanticism and the French revolution. German romanticism once again represented eros as a divine passion that could not be fulfilled in this life, but only in and through death.136

The most important representative of this thinking was Richard Wagner, who combined it with romanticism, nationalism and a kind of pseudo-Christianity in a peculiarly toxic and powerful mixture.

As George L. Mosse writes, “the soul was all-important to him, but he came increasingly to view this soul in terms of Christian love. Lohengrin, Parsifal, and the Flying Dutchman were heroes who had striven for self-realization, a goal only attained through integration with a higher purpose, through Christian love. Indeed, he took as his motto that ‘all understanding is possible only through love’. Wagner, however, shared that pessimism about life so prevalent at the end of the century. True integration through love with a higher purpose could only be achieved in eternity. In this life there was only frustration; death was


136 As Constantine the Serbian poet says in Rebecca West’s Black Lamb and Grey Falcon (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2006, p. 385): “The French make love for the sake of life; and so, like living, it often falls to something less than itself, to a little trivial round. The Germans make love for the sake of death; as they like to put off their civilian clothes and put on uniform, because there is more chance of being killed, so they like to step out of the safe casual relations of society and let loose the destructive forces of sex. So it was with Werther and Elective Affinities, and so it was in the years after the [First World] war, when they were so promiscuous that sex meant nothing at all…” (my italics (V.M.).
necessary for self-realization. With the earlier Romantics such a death as that of the young Werther was a tragedy, but with Wagner death became a logical necessity for self-fulfilment. It was the only way to escape human frailties. Thus the Dutchman was doomed from the start. Tannhauser, an embodiment of human frailty, atoned through Elizabeth’s and his own death, while Brunhilde movingly sings of Siegfried’s ‘shining love, laughing death’. The very fact that the human frailties condemned were the very ones Nietzsche found necessary for life - lust and joy - illuminates the contrast between Dionysian man and Wagner’s hero.

“Renunciation of human desires,” writes Mosse, “was Wagner’s theme. Parsifal possessed titanic powers for resisting temptation, and Lohengrin, in the end, had to renounce earthly happiness. Not only must man fight his inner desires to attain self-realization but the temptation of outward riches and power as well. For Wagner, as for the Romantics in general, materialistic man had lost his ‘soul’. Power itself was derided – ‘they hurry to their end who boast of such great strength’. Siegfried, symbolic of the man of power in the capitalistic epoch, lusted after power and riches, that is, the ring and the gold. But he was doomed, for he who possessed the ring and the gold was forever deprived of love. Brunhilde, realizing the nature of Siegfried’s dilemma, saw clearly that only in eternity would he become a true hero once more. Death was the answer. Love and power cannot be married, for love means renunciation of power and riches, as well as of human desires…

“Romanticism in Wagner had lost its earthly element… It had adopted the Christian element within early romanticism and exalted it as an overriding principle. Where the early Romantics saw a constant conflict between human emotions and the environment, Wagner envisioned a solution to the frustrations of this world. Sentiment had become sentimentalized into chivalrous love; a comforting conclusion to the storms and stresses of the world had been gained. Wagner’s Christianity, however, was combined with a romantic vision of the past. It was harnessed to the old Germanic legends of the Nibelungenlied. The heroes who knew the true Christian love were the epic figures of Germanic myth. In his essay What is German (1865-78) Wagner wrote that to be German was to understand Christianity as a religion of the soul and not of dogma. The characters of the Nibelungen saga could show modern Germans the real meaning of Christianity.

“Nationalism, the vision of the past, and Christian sacrifice through love were intermingled in these musical dramas. No wonder Wagner’s son-in-law, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, believed that the prophet of a German, as opposed to an Oriental, Christianity had arrived. The emphasis on the hero meant stressing the leadership principle within Wagner’s dramatic framework.
Though this hero differed from both Werther and the superman, he had one thing in common with the preoccupation with vice at the end of the century. He derived his strength from his unnatural birth; he was selected in opposition to both human and Divine law. For example, Brunhilde was the child of a union of God and earth, while Siegfried sprang from an incestuous relationship. But this unlawful strength was not used to overcome convention but to reaffirm Christian love and sacrifice. Wagner’s romanticism had, after all, become conventional. His chivalric love, his Germanic religion of the soul, was far from the revolutionary Wagner who had mounted the barricades of Dresden in 1848. This kind of romanticism did not intend a transformation of values. Vice stood at the beginning of the hero’s career but not at the end of it…

“Wagner’s romanticism was one the middle classes could understand. It was not disturbingly revolutionary but soothingly moral. It catered to nationalism and to the longing for group identification. Above all, it put forward a leadership idea: the hero as the redeemer of his people…”

Wagner’s death-wishing romanticism reached its climax in Tristan und Isolde, in which the original myth is represented in music of an originality and power that transformed the later history of opera and music in general.

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

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

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137 Mosse, op. cit., pp. 238-239.
“The second act is the passion song of souls imprisoned in material forms. When every obstacle has been overcome, and the lovers are alone together in the dark, carnal desire still stands between them. They are together, and yet they are two. The ‘und’ of Tristan und Isolde is there to indicate their duality as creatures. Here music alone can convey the certitude and substance of their twin nostalgia for one-ness; music alone can harmonize the plaint of the two voices, and make of it a single plaint in which there is already being sounded the reality of an ineffable other world of expectation. This is why the leitmotif of the love duet is already that of death.

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

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

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

“At the end of the eighteenth century, there occurred the magnification of all that the Tristan myth, and later its literary substitutes, had been intended to

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

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

Eyes with joy are blinded…

I myself am the world.

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

“And nationalist ardour too is a self-elevation, a narcissistic love on the part of the collective Self… And what does the national passion require? The elevation of collective might can only lead to the following dilemma: either the

139 De Rougemont, op. cit., pp. 247-249.
triplym of imperialism – of the ambition to become the equal of the whole world – or the people next door strongly object, and there ensues war. Now it is to be noticed that a nation undergoing the early surges of its passion seldom recoils from war, even if that war must be hopeless. A nation thus unconsciously expresses a readiness to court the risk of death, and even to meet death, rather than surrender its passion. ‘Liberty or death’, the Jacobins yelled, at a time when the forces of the enemy seemed to be twenty times as strong as their own, and when therefore ‘liberty’ and ‘death’ were words very near to having one and the same meaning.

“Thus Nation and War are connected as Love and Death are connected. And from this point onwards nationalism has been the predominant factor in war. ‘Whoever writes upon strategy and tactics should confine himself to expounding a national strategy and tactics, for these alone can be of use to the nation for whom he writes.’ Thus General von der Goltz, a follower of Clausewitz. And Clausewitz constantly asserted that the Prussian theology of war must be based on the experience gained in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic campaigns. The Battle of Valmy was a victory of passion over ‘exact science’. It was to the cry of ‘Long live the Nation!’ that the sans-culottes repulsed an allied army still bent on consolidating operations on ‘classic’ lines. It will be recalled that Goethe, after witnessing the battle, said: ‘On this field and on this day a new era begins in the history of the world.’ To this famous pronouncement Foch adds: ‘Truly enough a new era had begun, the era of national wars that are fought under no restraints whatever, because a nation throws all its resources into the struggle, because the aim of these wars is not to safeguard some dynastic claim, but to defeat or propagate philosophical ideas and intangible advantages, because these wars are staked upon feelings and passions, elemental forces never enlisted before.’”140

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

140 De Rougemont, op. cit., pp. 270-272.
Thus the revolution first presents itself to the people of its own nation in an internationalist form—the slogans of the “freedom, equality and brotherhood” of all people, the principles of universal human rights, etc. Then, having captured the collective of the nation by destroying or neutralizing those members of it that refuse to be possessed by its revolutionary spirit, it proceeds to the nationalist phase of its expression. The revolution is now the work of la grande nation; and all nations that do not want to submit to this Nation must be conquered or destroyed. For, as Metropolitan Anastasy writes: “The nation, this collective organism, is just as inclined to deify itself as the individual man. The madness of pride grows in this case in the same progression, as every passion becomes inflamed in society, being refracted in thousands and millions of souls.”

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

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141 Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky), Besedy s sobstvennym serdtsem (Conversations with my own heart), Jordanville, 1998, p. 33.
Friedrich Nietzsche is a writer we must get to know in order to understand the spirit of our times. Together with Darwin and Freud, he provided the intellectual foundations for the philosophy of nihilism that has conquered the modern world. Let us examine his thought in the context of his time.

Nietzsche came to maturity at the time of the creation of the First German Reich in 1871. But he did not like the new Germany. He spoke of “the bad and dangerous consequences” of the German victory in 1871, and feared “the defeat – yes, the extirpation of the German spirit in favour of the ‘German Reich’.”\(^\text{142}\) He broke with his former idol, Wagner, because the latter rejected his former cosmopolitanism, made peace with the new Reich, and even, in his last opera, *Parsifal*, affected a return to Christianity.

However, Nietzsche was no revolutionary like Marx or Bakunin, and had no specifically political programme. As Golo Mann writes: “Prophesying war and glorifying power as he did, he should have been a supporter of the new Germany; this he was not at all. He loved the old Germany, the Germany of Goethe, not of Bismarck. He thought that the German nation was becoming politically conscious at the expense of its old virtues. ‘The price of coming to power is even greater; power makes people stupid… the Germans – once they were called the nation of thinkers – do they think at all today?’\(^\text{143}\) The Germans are bored by intellect, politics swallow up all their interest in really intellectual matters. Deutschland, Deutschland, über alles, I fear, was the end of German philosophy… “Are there any German philosophers, are there any German poets, are there any good German books?” – I am asked abroad. I blush, but with the bravado which is mine even in desperate circumstances I reply: “Yes, Bismarck.” Elsewhere he says: ‘This is the age of the masses, they kowtow to everything “mass”. This happens also in politicis. A statesman who raises them a new tower of Babel, some monstrosity of an empire and of power is ‘great’ to them. What does it matter that those of us who are more careful and reticent for the time being cling to the old belief that it is only a great idea which lends greatness to an action or a cause. Assuming a statesman were to put his nation in a position where it becomes involved in a grand political game for which it is by nature neither fitted nor prepared, so that it must sacrifice its old and more tested qualities for a new and questionable mediocrity; assuming that a statesman condemned his nation to become politically minded generally, though this nation has so far had better things to do and in its heart of hearts cannot rid itself of a cautious distaste for the restlessness, emptiness and noisy petulance of politically

\(^{142}\) Nietzsche, *David Strauss* (1873), in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, New York: Random House, 2000, p. 136, footnote. In the same year, in the second of his *Untimely Meditations*, he wrote that the German victory “is capable of converting our victory into a complete defeat: the defeat, even the death, of German culture for the benefit of the German Empire”.

\(^{143}\) What Nietzsche prized above all in German culture was “an elevation and divinatory subtlety of the historical sense” (*Beyond Good and Evil*, in *Basic Writings*, p. 312). (V.M.)
minded peoples; assuming that such a statesman whips up the dormant passions and lusts of his people, blames it for its former timidity and wish not to get involved, accuses it of hankering after foreign things and of a secret desire for the infinite, that he makes light of its dearest fancies, warps its conscience and makes it narrow-minded and nationalistic in its tastes – how can a statesman who did all these things, and whom his nation would have to do penance for all eternity, if it has a future at all, how can such a statesman be called great?""144

So Nietzsche would presumably have rejected Hitler as he rejected Bismarck and Kaiser William II. And he rejected antisemitism: “How much mendacity and squalor are needed to raise race questions in today’s hotch-potch Europe.” “Maxim: no social intercourse with anybody involved in the lie of racialism.”145

And yet it is not difficult to see why the founders of Nazism seized upon Nietzsche’s philosophy as confirming their own...

Nietzsche’s political philosophy owed much to Hegel’s critique of Anglo-Saxon liberal democracy. In his early years, Hegel had regarded democracy as the best political system, but for reasons that were subtly and importantly different from those of the Anglo-Saxon theorists. These differences, according to the Harvard political scientist Francis Fukuyama, can be seen more clearly in the context of a comparison of the psychological bases of the two models.

The Anglo-Saxon model is based on Plato’s distinction between three basic elements of human nature: reason, desire and thymos (anger or “spirit”). Reason is the handmaid of desire and thymos; it is that element which distinguishes us from the animals and enables the irrational forces of desire and thymos to be satisfied in the real world. Desire includes the basic needs for food, sleep, shelter and sex. Thymos is usually translated as "anger" or "courage"; but Fukuyama defines it as that desire which "desires the desire of other men, that is, to be recognized".146

Most liberal theorists in the Anglo-Saxon tradition, such as Hobbes and Locke, focused on desire as the fundamental force in human nature because on its satisfaction depends the survival of the human race itself. They saw thymos, or the need for recognition, as an ambiguous force which should rather be suppressed than expressed; for it is thymos that leads to tyrannies, wars and all those conflicts which endanger "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness". The American Constitution with its system of checks and balances was designed above all to prevent the emergence of tyranny, which is the clearest expression of what we may call "megalothymia".


145 Mann, op. cit., p. 240.

Now the early Hegel valued democracy, not simply because it attained the satisfaction of desire better than any other system, but also, and primarily, because it gave expression to thymos in the form of isothymin - that is, it allowed each citizen to express his thymos to an equal degree. For whereas in pre-democratic societies the satisfaction of thymos in one person led to the frustration of thymos for many more, thereby dividing the whole of society into one or a few masters and a great many slaves, as a result of the democratic revolutions of the eighteenth century the slaves overthrew their masters and achieved equal recognition in each other's eyes. Thus through the winning of universal human rights everyone, in effect, became a master.

Hegel's philosophy was an explicit challenge to the Christian view of freedom and slavery, which regarded the latter as a secondary evil that could be turned into a great good if used for spiritual ends. "For he that is called in the Lord," said St. Paul, "being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant" (I Corinthians 7.22). So "live as free men," said St. Peter, "yet without using your freedom as a pretext for evil; but live as servants of God" (I Peter 2.16). But since this doctrine offended Hegel's pride, his thymos, he rejected it as unworthy of the dignity of man. And he rejected Anglo-Saxon liberalism for similar reasons, insofar as he saw liberalism's placing self-preservation as the main aim of life and society as effete and degrading. In fact, towards the end of his life he transferred his political allegiance from democracy to Prussian autocracy...

Nietzsche took Hegel's concept of thymos and gave it a broader meaning, encompassing all human desire. Combining it with the desiring faculty, he called it the will to power, recalling Schopenhauer's very similar concept: "A living thing seeks above all to discharge its strength - life itself is will to power; self-preservation is only one of the indirect and most frequent results." This will to power encompassed "pride, joy, health, sexual love, enmity and war." By subordinating everything to the full expression of this will to power Nietzsche completed a revolution in German philosophy. For Kant had emphasised the "disinterestedness" of the moral and aesthetic ideal, its basis in knowledge and independence from desire. Schopenhauer in The World as Will and Idea had then restored desire (will) to its rightful place in philosophy, and in fact gave precedence to it over knowledge. But his moral ideal was still the ascetic one of abstention from desire and its illusory pleasures. Nietzsche, who admired Schopenhauer but could not accept his attempt to renounce will through asceticism, completed the revolution in German idealism by rejecting asceticism and the whole system of values involved in it.

147 Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, Part I, 13; Basic Writings of Nietzsche, p. 211.

148 Nietzsche admired both Hegel and Schopenhauer, and despised the English philosophers for their absence of an historical sense. As he wrote in Beyond Good and Evil: "They are no philosophical race, these Englishmen: Bacon signifies an attack on the philosophical spirit; Hobbes, Hume, and Locke a debasement and lowering of the value of the concept of 'philosophy' for more than a century. It was against Hume that Kant arose, and rose; it was Locke of whom Schelling said, understandably, 'je méprise Locke'; in their fight against the English-mechanistic
He did this by distinguishing between the morality of the master and the morality of the slave. The morality of the master is the morality of the superman, whose superiority consists in the greater uninhibitedness of his will to power, which impresses itself upon others and forces them to acknowledge it, making them thereby his slaves. He is the aristocrat par excellence, who embraces life in its fullness, and fears neither suffering nor death. Historically speaking, he belongs to the master races that have conquered others – the Romans, the Vikings, the Aryans. “One cannot fail to see at the bottom of all these noble races the beast of prey, the splendid blond beast prowling about avidly in search of spoil and victory…”  

The morality of the slave is a kind of defence mechanism against the morality of the master. Based on ressentiment, that is, vengefulness against his master, the morality of the slave justifies his subservience and allows him to live with it by repressing his will to power or by sublimating it into other channels – Christian good works, for example, or a philosophy of human rights that protects the slave against his master and his fellow-slave. Thus “in every ascetic morality man adores part of himself as God [the inversion or sublimation of the will to power] and to that end needs to diabolicize the rest [the will to power itself].”

And so “’love of the neighbor’ is always something secondary, partly conventional and arbitrary-illusory in relation to fear of the neighbor. After the structure of society is fixed on the whole and seems secure against external dangers, it is this fear of the neighbor that again creates new perspectives of moral valuation. Certain strong and dangerous drives, like an enterprising spirit, foolhardiness, vengefulness, craftiness, rapacity, and the lust to rule, which had so far not merely been honoured insofar as they were socially useful – under different names, to be sure, from those chosen here – but had to be trained and cultivated to make them great (because one constantly needed them in view of the dangers to the whole community, against the enemies of the community), are now experienced as doubly dangerous, since the channels to divert them are lacking, and, step by step, they are branded as immoral and abandoned to slander.

“Now the opposite drives and inclinations receive moral honors; step by step, the herd instinct draws its conclusions. How much or how little is dangerous to the community, dangerous to equality, in an opinion, in a state or affect, in a will,

doltification of the world, Hegel and Schopenhauer were of one mind (with Goethe) – these two hostile brother geniuses in philosophy who strove apart toward opposite poles of the German spirit and in the process wronged each other as only brothers can wrong each other.” (Part VIII, 252; Basic Writings of Nietzsche, p. 379).


150 Nietzsche, Human, All-too Human, 141; Basic Writings of Nietzsche, p. 152.
in a talent – that now constitutes the moral perspective: here, too, fear is again the mother of morals.”¹⁵¹

Historically, the leader in this revanche of the slave against his master was the priest, who “alters the direction of ressentiment”. The first priestly people were the Jews.¹⁵² The Christians followed the Jews and refined the morality of the slave still further, adding to it a whole metaphysics of salvation. “All that has been done on earth against ‘the noble’, ‘the powerful’, ‘the masters’, ‘the rulers’, fades into nothing compared with what the Jews have done against them; the Jews, that priestly people, who in opposing their enemies and conquerors were ultimately satisfied with nothing less than a radical revaluation of their enemies’ values, that is to say, an act of the most spiritual revenge. For this alone was appropriate to a priestly people, the people embodying the most deeply repressed priestly vengefulness. It was the Jews who, with awe-inspiring consistency, dared to invert the aristocratic value-equation (good=noble=powerful=beautiful=happy=God-beloved) and to hang on to this inversion with their teeth, the teeth of the most abysmal hatred (the hatred of impotence), saying ‘the wretched alone are the good; the poor, impotent, lowly alone are the good; the suffering, deprived, sick, ugly alone are pious, alone are blessed by God, blessedness is for them alone – and you, the powerful and noble, are on the contrary the evil, the cruel, the lustful, the insatiable, the godless to all eternity; and you shall be in all eternity the unblessed, accursed and damned!’… One knows who inherited this Jewish revaluation… In connection with the tremendous and most fundamental of all declarations of war, I recall the proposition I arrived at on a previous occasion (Beyond Good and Evil, section 195) – that with the Jews there begins the slave revolt in morality: that revolt which has a history of two thousand years behind it and which we no longer see because it – has been victorious…

“[As for] this Jesus of Nazareth, the incarnate gospel of love, this ‘Redeemer’ who brought blessedness and victory to the poor, the sick, and the sinners – was he not this seduction in its most uncanny and irresistible form, a seduction and bypath to precisely those Jewish values and new ideals? Did Israel not attain the ultimate goal of its sublime vengefulness precisely through the bypath of this ‘Redeemer’, this ostensible opponent and disintegrator of Israel? Was it not part of the secret black art of truly grand politics of revenge, of a farseeing, subterranean, slowly advancing, and premeditated revenge, that Israel must itself deny the real instrument of its revenge before all the world as a mortal enemy and nail it to the cross, so that ‘all the world’, namely all the opponents of Israel, could unhesitatingly swallow just this bait? And could spiritual subtlety imagine any more dangerous bait than this? Anything to equal the enticing, intoxicating, overwhelming, and undermining power of that symbol of the ‘holy cross’, that ghastly paradox of a ‘God on the cross’, that mystery of an unimaginable ultimate cruelty and self-crucifixion of God for the salvation of man?

¹⁵¹ Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, Part V, 201; Basic Writings of Nietzsche, p. 303.

¹⁵² Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, Third Essay, 15; Basic Writings of Nietzsche, p. 563.
“What is certain, at least is that sub hoc signo [under the sign of the Cross] Israel, with its vengefulness and revaluation of all values, has hitherto triumphed again and again over all other ideals, over all nobler ideals...”\(^{153}\)

For this reason, Nietzsche was scornful of the Christian position of his contemporary Dostoyevsky, with whom he is often compared: he is much closer to some of Dostoyevsky’s more manic characters than the writer himself. He “held Dostoyevsky in contempt for his ‘morbid moral tortures’, his rejection of ‘proper pride’. He accused him of ‘sinning to enjoy the luxury of confession’, which Nietzsche considered a ‘degrading prostration’. Dostoyevsky was, in Nietzsche’s words, one of the victims of the ‘conscience-vivisection and self-crucifixion of two thousand years’ of Christianity.”\(^{154}\)

The most common form of slave-morality in modern times has been democracy-socialism with its anti-aristocratic, herd-animal ethos: “The democratic movement is the heir of the Christian movement.”\(^{155}\)

“I add immediately,” writes Nietzsche, “that in all the higher and more mixed [i.e. racially mixed] cultures there also appear attempts at mediation between these two moralities, and yet more often the interpretation and mutual misunderstanding of both, and at times they occur directly alongside each other – even in the same human being, within a single soul. The moral discrimination of values has originated either among a ruling group whose consciousness of its difference from the ruled group was accompanied by delight – or among the ruled, the slave and dependents of every degree.

“In the first case, when the ruling group determines what is ‘good’, the exalted, proud states of the soul are experienced as conferring distinction and determining the order of rank. The noble human being separates from himself those in whom the opposite of such exalted, proud states finds expression: he despises them. It should be noted immediately that in this first type of morality the opposition of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ means approximately the same as ‘noble’ and ‘contemptible’. (The opposition of ‘good’ and ‘evil’ has a different origin.) One feels contempt for the cowardly, the anxious, the petty, those intent on narrow utility; also for the suspicious with their unfree glances, those who humble themselves, the doglike people who allow themselves to be maltreated, the begging flatterers, above all the liars: it is part of the fundamental faith of all aristocrats that the common people lie. ‘We truthful ones’ – thus the nobility of ancient Greece referred to itself.

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\(^{155}\) Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Part V, 202; *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, p. 306.
“It is obvious that moral designations were everywhere first applied to human beings and only later, derivatively, to actions. Therefore it is a gross mistake when historians of morality start from such questions as: why was the compassionate act praised? The noble type of man experiences itself as determining values; it does not need approval; it judges, ‘what is harmful to me is harmful in itself; it knows itself to be that which first accords honor to things; it is value-creating. Everything it knows as part of itself it honors: such a morality is self-glorification. In the foreground there is the feeling of fullness, of power that seeks to overflow, the happiness of high tension, the consciousness of wealth that would give and bestow: the noble human being, too, helps the unfortunate, but not, or almost not, from pity, but prompted more by an urge begotten by excess of power. The noble human being honors himself as one who is powerful, also as one who has power over himself, who knows how to speak and be silent, who delights in being severe and hard with himself and respects all severity and hardiness. ‘A hard heart Wotan put in my breast,’ says an old Scandinavian saga: a fitting poetic expression, seeing that it comes from the soul of a proud Viking. Such a type of man is actually proud of the fact that he is not made for pity, and the hero of the saga therefore adds as a warning: ‘If the heart is not hard in youth it will never harden.’ Noble and courageous human beings who think that way are furthest removed from that morality which finds the distinction of morality precisely in pity, or in acting for others, or in désintéressement; faith in oneself, pride in oneself, a fundamental hostility and irony against ‘selflessness’ belong just as definitely to noble morality as does a slight disdain and caution regarding compassionate feelings and a ‘warm heart.”156

However, “the slave’s eye is not favourable to the virtues of the powerful: he is sceptical and suspicious, subtly suspicious, of all the ‘good’ that is honoured there – he would like to persuade himself that even their happiness is not genuine. Conversely, those qualities are brought out and flooded with light which serve to ease existence for those who suffer: here pity, the complaisant and obliging hand, the warm heart, patience, industry, humility, and friendliness are honoured – for here these are the most useful qualities and almost the only means for enduring the pressure of existence. Slave morality is essentially a morality of utility…

“One last fundamental difference: the longing for freedom, the instinct for happiness and the subtleties of the feeling of freedom belong as necessarily to slave morality and morals as artful and enthusiastic reverence and devotion are the regular symptoms of an aristocratic way of thinking and evaluating.”157

However, this pagan aristocratic type which is clearly Nietzsche’s ideal has been gradually worn down into the plebeian democratic and socialist type, partly (since strength or weakness of the will to power is transmitted genetically as well as culturally) by intermarriage between the master and slave races - “the slowly

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156 Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, Part IX, 60, Basic Writings of Nietzsche, pp. 394-395, 397.

157 Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, Part IX, 261; Basic Writings of Nietzsche, pp. 397-398.
arising democratic order of things (and its cause, the intermarriage of masters and slaves)".\textsuperscript{158} - and partly by the overcoming of the masters by the slaves.\textsuperscript{159} This mixing of masters and slaves, those of strong will with those of weak will, has resulted in a sickness of the will which “is spread unevenly over Europe: it appears strongest and most manifold where culture has been at home longest [France]; it disappears to the extent to which the ‘barbarian’ still – or again – claims is rights under the loose garments of Western culture.”\textsuperscript{160}

Intriguingly, Nietzsche found the greatest strength of will in Russia, whose triumph would stimulate Europe’s regeneration and political unification: “The strength of will, and to will something for a long time,… is strongest and most amazing by far in that enormous empire in between, where Europe, as it were, flows back into Asia, in Russia. There the strength to will has long been accumulated and stored up, there the will – uncertain whether as a will to negate or a will to affirm – is waiting menacingly to be discharged, to borrow a pet phrase of our physicists today. It may well take more than Indian wars and complications in Asia to rid Europe of its greatest danger: internal upheavals would be needed, too, the shattering of the empire into small units, and above all the introduction of the parliamentary nonsense, including the obligation for everybody to read his newspaper with his breakfast.

“I do not say this because I want it to happen: the opposite would be rather more after my heart – I mean such an increase in the menace of Russia that Europe would have to resolve to become menacing, too, namely, to acquire one will by means of a new caste that would rule Europe, a long, terrible will of its own that would be able to cast its goals millennia hence – so the long-drawn-out comedy of its many splinter states as well as its dynastic and democratic splinter wills would come to an end. The time for petty politics is over: the very next century will bring the fight for the dominion of the earth – the compulsion to large-scale politics.”\textsuperscript{161}

An important aspect of Nietzsche’s thought was his elevation of the psychological method of argumentation to the front rank in philosophy… Now Nietzsche’s psychological approach to philosophy had both successes and failures. But if we are inclined to dismiss it because of the grossness of its failures

\textsuperscript{158} Nietzsche, \textit{Beyond Good and Evil}, Part IX, 261; Basic Writings of Nietzsche, p. 399.

\textsuperscript{159} “The suppressed race has gradually recovered the upper hand again, in coloring, in shortness of skull, perhaps even in the intellectual and social instincts: who can say whether modern democracy, even more modern anarchism and especially that inclination for “commune”, for the most primitive form of society, which is now shared by all the socialists of Europe, does not signify in the main a tremendous counterattack – and that the conqueror and master race, the Aryan, is not succumbing physiologically, too?” (The Genealogy of Morals, First Essay, Basic Writings of Nietzsche, pp. 466-467).

\textsuperscript{160} Nietzsche, \textit{Beyond Good and Evil}, Part VI, 208; Basic Writings of Nietzsche, p. 320.

\textsuperscript{161} Nietzsche, \textit{Beyond Good and Evil}, Part VI, 208; Basic Writings of Nietzsche, p. 321.
(especially in relation to Christianity), we must nevertheless admit that he anticipated many of the psychoanalytical ideas, such as repression, sublimation and the unconscious, that became part of the furniture of the mind of twentieth-century man. And insofar as the Nietzschean method of psychological reductionism became the stock-in-trade of the twentieth century’s attempts to reduce God and religion to unconscious impulses and fantasies, we may accept that he was right in calling psychology the coming “queen of the sciences”\textsuperscript{162}, taking the place of the former queen, theology, in the same way that the Antichrist takes the place of Christ…

A second important aspect of his thought is his extreme individualism and disgust with mass culture. The morality of the master was the value-system of the proud individual, and that of the slave – of the masses. In essence, therefore, “\textit{Morality in Europe today is herd animal morality}”.\textsuperscript{163}

“That the sociological point of view,” writes Davies, “Nietzsche’s views may be seen as an intellectual’s revulsion against the rise of mass literacy, and of mass culture in general. They were espoused by an international coterie of artists and writers, which wished to strengthen the barriers between so-called ‘high culture’ and ‘low culture’, and hence to preserve the role of the self-appointed aristocracy of ideas. In this, they formed a suitable partner for modernism in the arts, one of whose chief attractions lay in the fact that it was unintelligible to the person in the street. ‘Mass culture generated Nietzsche in opposition to itself,’ writes a recent critic, ‘as its antagonist. The immense popularity of his ideas among early twentieth-century intellectuals suggests the panic that the threat of the masses aroused.’

“In retrospect, it is the virulence with which Nietzsche and his admirers poured contempt on ‘the masses’ that appears most shocking. ‘Many, too many, are born,’ spake Nietzsche’s Zarathustra, ‘and they hand on their branches much too long.’ In \textit{The Will to Power}, Nietzsche called for ‘a declaration of war by higher men on the masses… The great majority of men have no right to existence.’\textsuperscript{164}

\textsuperscript{162} Nietzsche, \textit{Beyond Good and Evil}, Part I, 237, \textit{Basic Writings of Nietzsche}, p. 222.

\textsuperscript{163} Nietzsche, \textit{Beyond Good and Evil}, Part V, 202, \textit{Basic Writings of Nietzsche}, p. 305. Cf. Part VI, 212, pp. 328-329: “Today…, when only the herd animal receives and dispenses honors in Europe, when ‘equality of rights’ could all too easily be changed into equality in violating rights [a prophetic word!] – I mean into a common war on all that is rare, strange, privileged, the higher man, the higher soul, the higher duty, the higher responsibility, and the abundance of creative power and masterfulness – today the concept of greatness entails being noble, wanting to be by oneself, being able to be different, standing alone and having to live independently.”

\textsuperscript{164} In a private letter written in 1908, D.H. Lawrence, who had just discovered Nietzsche in Croydon Public Library, actually imagined a gas chamber for the painless disposal of superfluous people: ‘If I had my way, I would build a lethal chamber as big as the Crystal Palace with a military band playing softly, and a cinematograph working brightly; then I’d go out in the back streets and main streets and bring them in, all the sick, the halt, the maimed; I would lead them
Nietzsche’s extreme individualism is linked to the Nazis’ herd-morality by the fact that the universality of the herd-morality generates an overwhelming need for the heroic individual, the Führer-master, who stands out against the crowd and dominates it. “The appearance of one who commands unconditionally strikes these herd-animal Europeans as an immense comfort and salvation from a gradually intolerable pressure, as was last attested in a major way by the effect of Napoleon’s appearance…”

And if this attitude to the majority is considered cruel, so be it: “Almost everything we call ‘higher culture’ is based on the spiritualization of cruelty, on its becoming more profound: this is my proposition. That ‘savage animal’ has not really been ‘mortified’; it lives and flourishes, it has merely become – divine. What constitutes the painful voluptuousness of tragedy is cruelty; what seems agreeable in so-called tragic pity, and at bottom in everything sublime, up to the highest and most delicate shudders of metaphysics, receives its sweetness solely from the admixture of cruelty. What the Roman in the arena, the Christian in the ecstasies of the cross, the Spaniard at an auto-da-fé or bullfight, the Japanese of today when he flocks to tragedies, the laborer in a Parisian suburb who feels a nostalgia for bloody revolutions, the Wagnerienne who ‘ submits to’ Tristan and Isolde, her will suspended – what all of them enjoy and seek to drink with mysterious ardour are the spicy potions of the great Circe, ‘cruelty’.”

But the most radical aspect of Nietzsche’s thought is his pragmatic and relativistic attitude to truth. Not to say: nihilistic, for he wrote: “That there is no truth; that there is no absolute state of affairs – no ‘thing-in-itself’. This alone is Nihilism, and of the most extreme kind.”

This nihilism was a consequence of the proud individualism we have discussed. For if the master creates his own morality, he must necessarily create his own truth, which is not necessarily truth for anybody else. And certainly not for the slaves, who derive their morality from the herd or their priestly hierarchy. That is why the philosophers of the future, according to Nietzsche, “will certainly not be dogmatists. It must offend their pride, also their taste, if their truth is supposed to be a truth for everyman – which has so far been the secret wish and hidden meaning of all dogmatic aspirations. ‘My judgement is my judgement’: no one else is easily entitled to it – that is what such a philosopher of the future may perhaps say of himself.

gently, and they would smile a weary thanks; and the band would softly bubble out the Hallelujah Chorus.”

165 Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, Part V, 199, Basic Writings of Nietzsche, p. 301.

166 Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, Part VII, 229, Basic Writings of Nietzsche, pp. 348-349.

“One must shed the bad taste of wanting to agree with many. ‘Good’ is no longer good when one’s neighbour mouths it. And how should there be a ‘common good’? The term contradicts itself: whatever can be common always has little value. In the end it must be as it is and always has been: great things remain for the great, abysses for the profound, nuances and shudders for the refined, and, in brief, all that is rare for rare.”

There are no certainties, only probabilities. “In place of fundamental truths I put fundamental possibilities – provisionally assumed guides by which one lives and thinks.”

“The falseness of an opinion is not for us any objection to it... The question is, how far an opinion is life-furthering, life-preserving.”

“There is, according to Nietzsche, no absolute truth. The concept of absolute truth is an invention of philosophers who are dissatisfied with the world of Becoming and seek an abiding world of Being. ‘Truth is that sort of error without which a particular type of living being could not live. The value for life is ultimately decisive.’”

It follows that knowledge can never be completely objective, being the servant of irrationality.

This special Nietzschean attitude to truth has become dominant in recent politics. Thus Peter Osborne writes: “In the summer of 2002 the New York Times writer, Ron Suskind, met a senior adviser at the Bush White House. He was surprised to find that the aide dismissed his remarks: ‘The aide said that guys like me were “in what we call the reality-based community”, which he defined as people who “believe that solutions emerge from your judicious study of discernible reality”. I nodded and murmured something about enlightenment principles and empiricism. He cut me off. “That’s not the way the world really works any more,” he continued. “We’re an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you’re studying that reality – judiciously as you will – we’ll act again, creating other new realities, which you can study too, and that’s how things will sort out.’”

“Hostility to a ‘reality-based’ analysis of events can be traced back to postmodernism, which has become a fashionable orthodoxy among teachers of philosophy, and indeed other academic disciplines. Postmodernism is one modern manifestation of extreme philosophical scepticism, a tradition which can be traced back to the beginnings of thought and the ancient Greek school of Pyrrho. This school despaired of the notion that truth was accessible and deduced that no ultimately stable distinction could be drawn between truth and falsehood.

168 Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, Part II, 43, Basic Writings of Nietzsche, p. 243.

169 Nietzsche, The Joyful Wisdom; cited in Rose, op. cit.

170 Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, 4; in Rose, op. cit, p. 50.

“Postmodernism denies that the truth can ever be known. It holds that words like falsehood, accuracy and deception, at any rate as used in ordinary speech, have no validity. That is because it concerns itself with the competing claims of rival truths. The idea of verifiable reality, so important to the Anglo-American school of empirical philosophy, is dismissed as an absurdity.

“Postmodern thinking grew up in the astonishingly influential school of French philosophy which flourished in the 1970s and 1980s and is perhaps associated in particular with the historian and philosopher Michel Foucault and the philosopher Jacques Derrida. Truth was, for Foucault, no more than an effect of the rules of discourse, itself a highly problematic concept, and for Foucault all discourses were equally valid. Perception and truth were there to be created. Though he was famous for historical studies of sex, madness and prisons, Foucault declared, ‘I am well aware that I have not written anything but fictions.’ Foucault sometimes argued that truth was the effect of power relations, the expression of dominance, whether political, economic or sexual.

“The influential American philosopher Richard Rorty helped take the work of Foucault and Derrida across the Atlantic. Rorty shared the view of the French school that truth claims could never be incontestably grounded, and argued that an alternative way of giving weight to words was to ‘construct’ what he called a ‘narrative’. This has the effect of shifting the emphasis of argument from truths which can be verified to ‘narratives’ that can be manufactured…”

It follows from this attitude to truth that Nietzsche was an atheist and a nihilist. “The greatest event of recent times – that ‘God is dead’, that belief in the Christian God has become unworthy of belief – already begins to cast its first shadows over Europe... At last the horizon lies free before us, even granted that it is not bright; at least the sea, our sea, lies open before us. Perhaps there has never been so open a sea.”

Fr. Seraphim Rose described nihilism as the fundamental philosophy, not only of Nietzsche, but of the modern world as a whole. Its history, according to Rose, has three main historical stages: liberalism, realism and vitalism, which are completed by a final nihilism of destruction. Liberalism is an attitude rather than a belief, an attitude of indifference to questions of absolute truth, or a desire to believe that the answers to such questions, if they exist, are less important than living a pleasant, “civilized” life in this world. Realism is the belief that absolute truth does not exist, and that truth is to be found in science alone without any deeper metaphysical basis. Vitalism is the belief that it is not truth, whether scientific or metaphysical, that matters, but vitality, life, creativity, dynamism. The Nihilism of Destruction is not simply atheistic, but antitheist; it is not content with denying absolute truth, or finding a substitute for it in a vaguely restless dynamism, but seeks to destroy that truth and everything associated with it.

172 Osborne, “What’s truth got to do with it?”, The Spectator, 30 April, 2005, p. 31.

173 Nietzsche, Joyful Wisdom (1882).
“Vitalism,” writes Rose, “in the forms of Symbolism, occultism, artistic Expressionism, and various evolutionary and ‘mystical’ philosophies [including some forms of nationalism], is the most significant intellectual undercurrent throughout the half century after about 1875; and the Nihilism of Destruction, though its intellectual roots lie deep in the preceding century, brings to a grand conclusion, in the public order as well as in many private spheres, the whole century and a quarter of Nihilist development with the concentrated era of destruction of 1914-45.”\footnote{Rose, \textit{Nihilism}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 22.}

For Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich, a large part of the blame for the catastrophe of 1914-45 lay on Nietzsche. It was a struggle between the All-Man, Christ, and the Superman of Nietzsche, between the doctrine that Right is Might and the opposite one that might is right. For German Christianity with its all-devouring scientism and scepticism had already surrendered to Nietzscheanism: “I wonder… that Professor Harnack, one of the chief representatives of German Christianity, omitted to see how every hollow that he and his colleagues made in traditional Christianity in Germany was at once filled with the all-conquering Nietzscheanism. And I wonder… whether he is now aware that in the nineteen hundred and fourteenth year of our Lord, when he and other destroyers of the Bible, who proclaimed Christ a dreamy maniac [and] clothed Christianity in rags, Nietzscheanism grew up [as] the real religion of the German race.”\footnote{Velimirovich, “The Religious Spirit of the Slavs”, in \textit{Sabrana Dela} (Collected Works), volume 3, Khimelstir, 1986, pp. 221-222.}

Rose continues: “Father John of Kronstadt, that holy man of God, has likened the soul of man to an eye, diseased through sin and thus incapable of seeing the spiritual sun. The same likeness can serve to trace the progress of the disease of Nihilism, which is no more than an elaborate mask of sin. The spiritual eye in fallen human nature is not sound, as every Orthodox Christian knows; we see in this life only dimly and require faith and the Grace of God to effect a healing that will enable us, in the future life, to see clearly once more. The first stage of Nihilism, which is Liberalism, is born of the errors of taking out diseased eye for a sound one, of mistaking its impaired vision for a view of the true world, and thus of discharging the physician of the soul, the Church, whose ministrations are not needed by a ‘healthy’ man. In the second stage, Realism, the disease, no longer attended by the necessary physician, begins to grow; vision is narrowed; distant objects, already obscure enough in the ‘natural’ state of impaired vision, become invisible; only the nearest objects are seen distinctly, and the patient becomes convinced no others exist. In the third stage, Vitalism, infection leads to inflammation; even the nearest objects become dim and distorted and there are hallucinations. In the fourth stage, the Nihilism of Destruction, blindness ensues and the disease spreads to the rest of the body, effecting agony, convulsions, and death…”\footnote{Rose, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 57-58.}
Nietzsche despises Liberalism, and has already gone beyond Realism. He is in essence a particularly clear prophet of Vitalism, the “positive” content of nihilism. But we also see in him the totally negative, destructive nihilism that found practical contemporary expression in the anarchist revolutionary activity of Bakunin and the Paris Communards. Nietzsche argues that if God exists, and his commandments are accepted, then it is necessary to reject the world – or at any rate attach only a conditional value to it. ‘The concept of God’, he says in *The Twilight of the Idols*, ‘was up to now the greatest objection against existence.’ And in *The Antichrist* we read that ‘with God war is declared on life, Nature and the will to live! God is the formula for every calumny against this world and for every lie concerning a beyond!’

But Nietzsche wants to embrace the world – in itself, for itself, and with absolutely no reference to any exterior cause, purpose or criterion of its existence, in its “ugliness” as well as its “beauty”, its “evil” as well as its “good”. That is why, in answer to the question: “What does Nihilism mean?” he replies: “That the highest values are losing their value. There is no goal. There is no answer to the question: ‘why?’” For the question “why?” has no answer within the bounds of this world. It points to Him Who exists independently of the world and gives it meaning, whereas in fact there is no thing, nihil, beyond this world.

Fortunately, in Nietzsche’s view, for the majority of his contemporaries “God is dead” – that is, they have lost their faith in God. “We have killed him (God), you and I! We are all his murderers! But how have we done it? How were we able to drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the whole horizon? What did we do when we loosened this earth from its sun? Whither does it move now? Whither do we move? Away from all suns? Do we not dash on unceasingly? Backwards, sideways, forwards, in all directions? Is there still an above and below? Do we now stray, as through infinite nothingness? Does not empty space breathe upon us? Has it not become colder? Does not night come on continually, darker and darker?”

Since men have lost faith in God, they have become, to use Fr. Seraphim Rose’s term, passive nihilists. This is “the Nihilism of the Liberal, the humanist, the agnostic who, agreeing that ‘there is no truth’, no longer ask the ultimate questions.” But passive nihilism, though useful in Nietzsche’s eyes, also disgusts him because of its lack of vitality. He is looking for a “stronger age” than “this decaying, self-doubting present” – an age of active Nihilism. And this active Nihilism is expressed first of all in destruction: “He who wishes to be creative

177 Copleston, op. cit., p. 178.
178 Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*; in Rose, op. cit., pp. 31, 68.
180 Rose, op. cit., pp. 31-32.
must first destroy and smash accepted values.”¹⁸¹ “Nihilism is... not only the belief that everything deserves to perish; but one actually puts one’s shoulder to the plough; one destroys.”¹⁸²

But human nature abhors a vacuum; while creating darkness, it longs for the light. And neither passive nor active Nihilism is the final goal for Nietzsche. Nihilism only clears the ground, as it were, for “anti-nihilism”, a “transvaluation of values”, “a counter-movement” that in some remote future will supersede this perfect Nihilism; but which nevertheless regards it as a necessary step, both logically and psychologically, towards its own advent, and which positively cannot come, except on top of and out of it.”¹⁸³ For, as Rose writes, “the corollary of the Nihilist annihilation of the Old Order is the conception of a ‘new age’ – ‘new’ in an absolute, and not in a relative, sense. The age about to begin is not to be merely the latest, or even the greatest, of a series of ages, but the inauguration of a whole new time; it is set up against all that has hitherto been. ‘It may be,’ said Nietzsche in a letter of 1884, ‘that I am the first to light upon an idea which will divide the history of mankind into two: as the consequence of this idea, ‘all who are born after us belong to a higher history than any history hitherto’.’”¹⁸⁴

The master of this new age will be a man who nurtures in himself to the greatest possible extent the proud, sensual, cruel will to power. This is the true man, the superman. “Dead are all the gods,” says Nietzsche’s Zarathustra: “now do we desire the superman to live.”¹⁸⁵ The superman must live because he is the fittest to live in an almost Darwinian sense (although, as we have seen, Nietzsche did not believe in Darwinism). Contrary, therefore, to Tertullian’s belief that the human soul is by nature Christian, according to Nietzsche it can only be antichristian. For “I call Christianity the one great curse, the one great intrinsic depravity, the one great instinct for revenge for which no expedient is sufficiently poisonous, secret, subterranean, petty – I call it the one immortal blemish of mankind...”¹⁸⁶ The appearance of the Antichrist requires, as Nietzsche writes, “a different kind of spirit from that likely to appear in this present age: spirits strengthened by war and victory, for whom conquest, adventure, danger, and even pain have become needs; it would require habituation to the keen air of the heights, to winter journeys, to ice and mountains in every sense; it would require even a kind of sublime wickedness, an ultimate, supremely self-confident mischievousness in knowledge that goes with great health; it would require, in brief and alas, precisely this great health!

¹⁸¹ Nietzsche, in Rose, op. cit., p. 55.
¹⁸² Nietzsche, The Will to Power; in Rose, op. cit., p. 31.
¹⁸³ Nietzsche, The Will to Power; in Rose, op. cit., p. 91.
¹⁸⁴ Rose, op. cit., p. 92.
¹⁸⁵ Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra; in Rose, op. cit., p. 92.
“Is this possible even today? - But some day, in a stronger age than this decaying, self-doubting present, he must yet come to us, the redeeming man of great love and contempt, the creative spirit whose compelling strength will not let him rest in any aloofness or any beyond, whose isolation is misunderstood by the people as if it were flight from reality – while it is only his absorption, immersion, penetration into reality, so that, when he one day emerges again into the light, he may bring home the redemption of this reality: its redemption from the curse that the hitherto reigning ideal has laid upon it. This man of the future, who will redeem us not only from the hitherto reigning ideal but also from that which was bound to grow out of it, the great nausea, the will to nothingness, nihilism; this bell-stroke of noon and of the great decision that liberates the will again and restores its goal to the earth and his hope to man; this Antichrist and anti-nihilist; this victor over God and nothingness – he must come one day…”

Thus Nietzsche was in a real sense a prophet of the Antichrist – not only of the final Antichrist of Christian prophecy, but also of those forerunners of the Antichrist that were to bedevil the twentieth century. And his own final descent into madness witnessed to the terrible folly of his ideas…

11. MOSES HESS AND THE PROTO-ZIONISTS

Alfred Lilienthal writes: “The early 19th-century Jewish settlements in Palestine were completely non-nationalist in motivation. Political Zionism, spurred by the writings of Moses Hess (Rome and Jerusalem, 1862) and Leo Pinsker (Auto-Emancipation, 1882) and the inspired, dedicated leadership of Theodor Herzl, did not succeed in winning wide support among the Jews of Europe or America. The 9,000 Jews whom Sir Moses Montefiore found in Palestine on his first visit in 1837 had barely reached 50,000 at the turn of the century. The settlements that he founded, and Baron Rothschild generously supported after him, benefited only the new colonists and posed no threat to the indigenous Arab population…”

The nationalist ideology that we know as Zionism, and which posed an immediate and mortal threat to the indigenous Arab population, arose as the result of the threats coming to Talmudic Judaism from several directions: from the secular, humanist ideals of the French revolution, from the rising tide of German anti-semitism, and from Reform Judaism.

To the defence of Talmudism there arose the German Jew Moses Hess, a friend and collaborator of Marx and Engels. He charted a path for the survival of Talmudism that was prophetic on many accounts. For it looked forward both to the Bolshevik revolution, and to the Holocaust, and to the foundation of the Zionist State of Israel.

“Hess’s task,” writes Michael Hoffman, “was to see that the Judaics did not succumb to the new winds of reform and religious indifferentism with which Catholics and Protestants under the spell of Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité, had fallen. This had been a perennial problem for Judaism: how to insulate their own nation from the liberal toxins they themselves deliberately sow among the Gentiles.

“Forged in the crucible of the German Rhineland, where he was born to an Orthodox Judaic family, and at a period of time that marked the beginning of the Prussian reaction against the legacy of Napoleon, Hess approached this dilemma through the vehicle of his Zionism, the religious nationalism which embraces the Talmud not necessarily as a code for daily living, but as a totem of racial cohesion and a prophylactic against liberalism. Hess wrote:

“’Many who have emancipated themselves from dry orthodoxy have recently manifested in their studies a deepening conception of Judaism, and have thus brought about the banishment of that superficial rationalism which was the cause of a growing indifference to things Jewish and which finally led to a total severance from Judaism.’

“Hess termed as ‘nihilists’ all liberal Judaics who sought to abolish the influence of the Talmud, which he regarded as the ‘fountain of life’. Hess

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endeavoured to build a Hegelian-Kabbalistic bridge between the Judaic liberals and the rabbinic traditionalists. ‘The new seminaries, modelled after the Breslau school... ought to make it their aim to bridge the gap between the nihilism of the Reformers, who never learn anything, and the staunch conservatism of the Orthodox, who never forget anything.’

“The bridge consisted of Communist leadership for the reform-minded, and what came to be called modern Orthodoxy for the conservatives, with these two seeming opposite tendencies eventually reconciled, far in the future, in the racial patriotism that is Israeli Zionism. As Hess stated, ‘The pious Jew is above all a Jewish patriot. The ‘new’ Jew, who denies the existence of the Jewish nationality, is not only a deserter in the religious sense, but is also a traitor to his people, his race and even to his family.’

“In his early 1837 work, The Holy History of Mankind, Hess advocated an occult, Talmudic hierarchy of Adamic man (human beings, i.e. Jews), contrasted with subhuman creatures, the Nephilim. ‘This tradition,’ observes Hess, ‘leads toward a higher and clearer consciousness.’

“In 1841 Hess began to be supported by a wealthy circle of Rhineland capitalists. They appointed him to head a leading Masonic newspaper which they funded, the Rheinische Zeitung, in whose offices he made the acquaintance of Karl Marx, whose teacher he became and in whom he discerned messianic qualities. In a letter written before Marx had published anything, Hess predicted of him, ‘... he will give the final blow to all medieval religion and politics... Can you imagine Rousseau, Voltaire, Holbach, Lessing, Heine and Hegel combined in one person? If you can – you have Dr. Marx.’

“After the Prussians drove Hess into exile in France, he joined with the German-Judaic expatriates there to lay the groundwork for the Communist ideology in such works as Kommunistisches Bekenntnis in Fragen unde Antworten (‘A Communist Credo: Questions and Answers’); Uber das Geldwesen (‘On Money’) and Sozialismus und Kommunismus. Though attributed to Marx and Friedrich Engels, Hess himself wrote the first draft of The Communist Manifesto and sections of The German Ideology, which is officially said to have been written by Marx and Engels.

“Hess the Communist sought to extirpate the Gentile’s connection to the land by weakening private property rights and in particular, the right to inherit land. In keeping with the conjunction of seeming opposites, in which Communism often is backed by capitalists, Hess believed that the modernizing trends of free trade and commerce would contribute to Communism through the demise of property rights. He also favoured the factory system which he believed would ‘guarantee abundance’.”189

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189 Hoffman, “Moses Hess”, Revisionist History,
In 1862, under the influence of the Italian Risorgimento, Hess wrote Rome and Jerusalem: the Last National Question, which explores the possibility of the Jews becoming a nation in the way that the Italians were becoming one. In his first paragraph he stated his most important conclusion: that the Jews could never become fully assimilated into western culture: "After an estrangement of twenty years, I am back with my people. I have come to be one of them again, to participate in the celebration of the holy days, to share the memories and hopes of the nation, to take part in the spiritual and intellectual warfare going on within the House of Israel, on the one hand, and between our people and the surrounding civilized nations, on the other; for though the Jews have lived among the nations for almost two thousand years, they cannot, after all, become a mere part of the organic whole." (First Letter).

Not that Hess was renouncing his assimilated western humanist ideals. On the contrary: "When I labour for the regeneration of my own nation, I do not thereby renounce my humanistic aspiration. The national movement of the present day is only another step on the road of progress which began with the French Revolution. The French nation has, since the great Revolution, been calling to the other nations for help. But the nations have turned a deaf ear to the voice from the distance and have lent a not unwilling ear to the tumult of reaction in their own midst. Today, this roar deafens not only the people in certain parts of Germany, those who, by dint of political trickery, are aroused to the pitch of enthusiasm for the kings and war lords. But the other nations hear and follow the call of France. The call has reached also our ancient nation, and I would unite my voice with that of France, that I may at least warn my racial brothers in Germany against listening to the loud noise of the reactionaries." (Third Letter).

Hess considered assimilation into German culture a vain dream: "The endeavours are vain. Even conversion itself [to Christianity] does not relieve the Jews from the enormous pressure of German Anti-Semitism. The German hates the Jewish religion less than the race; he objects less to the Jews' peculiar beliefs than to their peculiar noses." (Fourth Letter)

"The real Teutomaniacs of the Arndt and Jahn type will always be honest, reactionary conservatives. The Teutomaniac, in his love of the Fatherland, loves not the State but the race dominance. How, then, can he conceive the granting of equal rights to other races than the dominant one, when equality is still a utopia for the large masses of Germany? The sympathetic Frenchman assimilates with irresistible attraction every foreign race element. Even the Jew is here a Frenchman. Jefferson said long ago, at the time of the American Revolution, that every man has two fatherlands, first his own and then France. The German, on the other hand, is not at all anxious to assimilate any foreign elements, and would be perfectly happy if he could possess all fatherlands and dominions for himself. He lacks the primary condition of every chemical assimilative process, namely, warmth." (Fifth Letter).

190 http://www/zionismontheweb.org/Moses_Hess_Rome_and_Jerusalem.htm
Hess considered that not only the Germans, but all the European nations, with the exception of France (he was wrong here, as the Dreyfus case was to show), were antisemitic: "... The European nations have always considered the existence of the Jews in their midst as an anomaly. We shall always remain strangers among the nations. They may tolerate us and even grant us emancipation, but they will never respect us as long as we place the principle ubi bene ibi patria [where it is good, there is our fatherland] above our own great national memories. Though religious fanaticism may cease to operate as a factor in the hatred against the Jews in civilized countries, yet in spite of enlightenment and emancipation, the Jew in exile who denies his nationality will never earn the respect of the nations among whom he dwells. He may become a naturalized citizen, but he will never be able to convince the Gentiles of his total separation from his own nationality. It is not the old-type, pious Jew, who would rather suffer than deny his nationality, that is most despised, but the modern Jew who, like the German outcasts in foreign countries, denies his nationality, while the hand of fate presses heavily upon his own people..." (Fifth Letter).

The Jews are good at assimilating foreign cultures, but they have gone too far: "Just as it is impossible for me to entertain any prejudice against my own race, which has played such an important role in universal history and which is destined for a still greater one in the future, so it is impossible for me to show against the holy language of our fathers the antipathy of those who endeavour to eliminate Hebrew from Jewish life, and even supersede it by German inscriptions in the cemetery. I was always exalted by Hebrew prayers. I seem to hear in them an echo of fervent pleadings and passionate entreaties, issuing from suffering hearts of a thousand generations. Seldom do these heart-stirring prayers fail to impress those who are able to understand their meaning. The most touching point about these Hebrew prayers is, that they are really an expression of the collective Jewish spirit; they do not plead for the individual, but for the entire Jewish race. The pious Jew is above all a Jewish patriot. The 'new' Jew, who denies the existence of the Jewish nationality, is not only a deserter in the religious sense, but is also a traitor to his people, his race and even to his family. If it were true that Jewish emancipation in exile is incompatible with Jewish nationality, then it were the duty of the Jews to sacrifice the former for the sake of the latter..." (Fourth Letter).

Jewish patriotism, for Hess, humanist though he is, is inseparable from Jewish religion; the former is the root of the latter: "All feast and fast days of the Jews, their deep piety and reverence for tradition, which almost apotheosises everything Hebraic, nay even the entire Jewish cult, all have their origin in the patriotism of the Jewish nation." (Fourth Letter)

For Judaism is "nothing else but a national historical cult developed out of family traditions" (Sixth Letter).

Reform Judaism, therefore, is anathema to Hess: "The threatening danger to Judaism comes only from the religious reformers who, with their newly-invented ceremonies and empty eloquence have sucked the marrow out of Judaism and left only its skeleton... Their reforms have only a negative purpose - if they have
any aim at all - to firmly establish unbelief in the national foundation of the Jewish religion. No wonder that these reforms only fostered indifference to Judaism and conversions to Christianity. Judaism, like Christianity, would have to disappear as a result of the general state of enlightenment and progress, if it were not more than a mere dogmatic religion, namely a national cult. The Jewish reformers, however, those who are still present in some German communities, and maintain, to the best of their ability, the theatrical show of religious reform, know so little of the value of national Judaism, that they are at great pains to erase carefully from their creed and worship all traces of Jewish nationalism. They fancy that a recently manufactured prayer or hymn book, wherein a philosophical theism is put into rhyme and accompanied by music, is more elevating and soul-stirring than the fervent Hebrew prayers which express the pain and sorrow of a nation at the loss of its fatherland. They forget that these prayers, which not only created, but preserved for millennia, the unity of Jewish worship, are even today the tie which binds into one people all the Jews scattered around the world." (Seventh Letter)

Moreover, there is this difference between Judaism and other religions: it is forever tied to the ethnic Jew, implanted in his genes as it were: "In reality, Judaism as a nationality has a natural basis which cannot be set aside by mere conversion to another faith, as is the case in other religions. A Jew belongs to his race and consequently also to Judaism, in spite of the fact that he or his ancestors have become apostates. It may appear paradoxical, according to our modern religious opinions, but in life, at least, I have observed this view to be true. The converted Jew remains a Jew no matter how much he objects to it." (Seventh Letter).

"The Jewish religion, thought Heine, and with him all the enlightened Jews, is more of a misfortune than a religion. But in vain do the progressive Jews persuade themselves that they can escape this misfortune through enlightenment or conversion. Every Jew is, whether he wishes it or not, solidly united with the entire nation; and only when the Jewish people will be freed from the burden which it has borne so heroically for thousands of years, will the burden of Judaism be removed from the shoulders of these progressive Jews, who will ultimately form only a small minority. We will all then carry the yoke of the 'Kingdom of Heaven' until the end...

"The levelling tendencies of the assimilationists have remained and will always remain without influence on those Jews who constitute the great Jewish masses."

(Eleventh Letter).

The Jewish religion, according to Hess, is far superior to Christianity: "Christianity is, after all, a religion of death, the function of which ceased the moment the nations reawakened to life..." (Fifth Letter)

The new, life-giving religion is the religion of freedom - individual freedom and national freedom - that the French Revolution has given to the world. The Jewish religion, paradoxically, can come to life within the new context of this new religion bequeathed by the French: "The rigid forms of orthodoxy, the
existence of which was justified before the century of rebirth, will naturally, through the power of the national idea and the historical cult, relax and become fertile. It is only with the national rebirth that the religious genius of the Jews... will be endowed with new strength again be re-inspired with the prophetic spirit." (Fifth Letter)

"This 'religion of the future' of which the eighteenth-century philosophers, as well as their recent followers, dreamed, will neither be an imitation of the ancient pagan Nature cult, nor a reflection of the neo-Christian or the neo-Judaism skeleton, the spectre of which haunts the minds of our religious reformers. Each nation will have to create its own historical cult; each people must become like the Jewish people, a people of God." (Seventh Letter)

"As long as no other people possessed such a national, humanitarian cult, the Jews alone were the people of God. Since the French Revolution, the French, as well as the other peoples that followed them, have become our noble rivals and faithful allies" (Ninth Letter).

All this is leading to "the Messianic era", when "the Jewish nation and all other historical nations will arise again to new life, the time of the 'resurrection of the dead', of 'the coming of Lord', of the 'New Jerusalem', and of all the other symbolic expressions, the meaning of which is no longer misunderstood. The Messianic era is the present age, which began to germinate with the teachings of Spinoza, and finally came into historical existence with the great French Revolution. With the French Revolution, there began the regeneration of those nations which had acquired their national historical religion only through the influence of Judaism" (Tenth Letter)

But how can the nation be resurrected if it has no land? And so Hess is led by the logic of his argument to a kind of proto-Zionism. "You," he addresses the Jews, "are an elemental force and we bow our heads before you. You were powerful in the early period of your history, strong even after the destruction of Jerusalem, and mighty during the Middle Ages, when there were only two dominant powers - the Inquisition and its Cross, and Piracy with its Crescent. You have escaped destruction in your long dispersion, in spite of the terrible tax you have paid during eighteen centuries of persecution. But what is left of your nation is mighty enough to rebuild the gates of Jerusalem. This is your mission. Providence would not have prolonged your existence until today, had it not reserved for you the holiest of all missions. The hour has struck for the resettlement of the banks of the Jordan..." (Eleventh Letter)

Not only is the return to Palestine a worthy aim: it is absolutely necessary for the regeneration of Jewry. "In exile, the Jewish people cannot be regenerated. Reform or philanthropy can only bring it to apostasy and to nothing else, but in this no reformer, not even a tyrant will ever succeed. The Jewish people will participate in the great historical movement of present-day humanity only when it will have its own fatherland... No Jew, whether orthodox or not, can conscientiously refrain from cooperating with the rest for the elevation of the
entire Jewry. Every Jew, even the converted should cling to the cause and labour for the regeneration of Israel." (Eleventh Letter)

But the return to the fatherland can take place only after the revolution, which will shake out Western Jewry: "The rigid crust of orthodox Jewry will melt when the spark of Jewish patriotism, now smoldering under it, is kindles into a sacred fire which will herald the coming of the spring and the resurrection of our nation to a new life. On the other hand, Western Judaism is surrounded by an almost indissoluble crust, composed of the dead residue of the first manifestation of the modern spirit, from the inorganic chalk deposit of an extinct rationalistic enlightenment. This crust will not be melted by the fire of Jewish patriotism; it can only be broken by an external pressure under the weight of which everything which has no future must give up its existence. In contradistinction to orthodoxy, which cannot be destroyed by an external force without at the same time endangering the embryo of Jewish Nationalism that slumbers within it, the hard covering that surrounds the hearts of our cultured Jews will be Shattered only by a blow from without, one that world events are already preparing; and which will probably fall in the near future. The old framework of European Society, battered so often by the storms of revolution, is cracking and groaning on all sides. It can no longer stand a storm. Those who stand between revolution and reaction, the mediators, who have an appointed purpose to push modern Society on its path of progress, will, after society becomes strong and progressive, be swallowed up by it. The nurses of progress, who would undertake to teach the Creator himself wisdom, prudence and economy; those carriers of culture, the saviours of Society, the speculators in politics, philosophy and religion, will not survive the last storm. And along with the other nurses of progress our Jewish reformers will also close their ephemeral existence. On the other hand, the Jewish people, along with other historical nations, will, after this last catastrophe, the approach of which is attested by unmistakable signs of the times, receive its full rights as a people... Just as after the last catastrophe of organic life, when the historical races came into the world's arena, there came their division into tribes, and the position and role of the latter was determined, so after the last catastrophe of social life, when the spirit of humanity shall have reached its maturity, will our people, with the other historical peoples, find its legitimate place in universal history." (Eleventh Letter)

Hess concludes with a warning against German nationalism: "The cause of national regeneration of oppressed peoples can expect no help and sympathy from Germany. The problem of regeneration, which dates not from the second restoration of the kingdom in France, but goes back to the French Revolution, the war, was received in Germany with mockery and derision; and in spite of the fact that the question is an urgent one and is uppermost almost everywhere, even in Germany itself, the Germans have name it the 'Nationality trick'. Our Jewish democrats, also, display their patriotism in accusing the French and the people sympathizing with them, of conquering designs. The French, say the German politicians, as well as their allies, will only be exploited by the second Monarchy, for purposes of restraining liberty rather than promoting it. It is, therefore, according to the deep logic of these politicians, the duty of the German to be obedient to the Kaiser and the kings, in order that they should be able to defeat
the conquering desires of the French. These politicians and patriots forget that if Germany were to conquer France and Italy today, it would only result in placing the entire German people under police law; and in depriving the Jews of their civil rights, in a worse manner than after the Way of Liberation, when the only reward granted by the Germans to their Jewish brethren in arms was exclusion from civil life. And, truly, the German people and the German Jews do not deserve any better lot when they allow themselves, in spite of the examples of history, to be entrapped by medieval reaction." (Appendix V. The Last Race Rule)

"The age of race dominance is at an end. Even the smallest people, whether it belongs to the Germanic or Romance, Slavic or Finnic, Celtic or Semitic races, as soon as it advances its claim to a place among the historical nations, will find sympathetic supporters in the powerful civilized Western nations. Like the patriots of other unfortunate nations, the German patriots can attain their aim only by means of a friendly alliance with the progressive and powerful nations of the world. But if they continue to conjure themselves, as well as the German people, with the might and glory of the 'German Sword', they will only add to the old unpardonable mistakes, grave new ones; they will only play into the hands of the reaction, and drag all Germany along with them." (Appendix VI. A Chapter of History)

Hess was notable for his combining different strands of nineteenth-century Jewish and Gentile thinking: the universalist nationalism of the French Revolution, the revolutionary socialism of Marx and Engels, and traditional Talmudic Judaism. He rejected only the extremes of assimilationism, which would destroy Judaism and therefore Jewry, and the particularist nationalism of the German type.

And yet, paradoxically, his assertion that "once a Jew, always a Jew", even after conversion to Christianity, appeared to confirm one of the principal theses of German anti-Semitism. In this way he looked forward not only to Zionism but also to the Holocaust...

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Hess’s work had a strong influence on another important proto-Zionist, the historian Heinrich Graetz, whose massive History of the Jews began to appear in the 1850s. “This pioneering work,” writes Shlomo Sand, “written with impressive literary flair, remained a presence in national Jewish history throughout the twentieth century. It is hard to measure the impact on the rise of future Zionist thought, but there is no question of its significance and centrality…

“Graetz read Rome and Jerusalem before meeting the author. That meeting began their close friendship and extensive correspondence, which went on till Hess’s death in 1875. The two even planned to journey together to the old ‘ancestral land’, but eventually the historian traveled there on his own. A year after the appearance of Hess’s book, Graetz published a fascinating essay of his own, entitled ‘The Rejuvenation of the Jewish Race’. This is largely an unstated
dialogue with Hess, and though it suggests some doubts and hesitations, it also
reveals a partial acceptance of the ideological breakthrough of which Hess was
one of the catalysts. The ‘Rejuvenation’ reveals not only the means by which the
Jewish people are invented in Graetz’s writing, but also the historian’s acute
consciousness of the nationality issue roiling many circles of European
intelligentsia.

“What gives a human community the right to present itself as a nation, Graetz
wonders, and replies that it is not a racial origin, because sometimes different
racial types join up to form one people. Nor is language necessarily the common
denominator, as is shown by Switzerland, for instance. Even a unified territory is
not enough for a national formation. Do historical memories unify peoples, asks
Graetz, and responds with a sharp and prescient historical observation – that
until the modern era the peoples did not take part in political history, but
passively viewed the deeds of leaders and rulers. Was it, then, high culture that
provided the basis for a nationality? No, because it, too, is new, and has not yet
been acquired by the entire people. The existence of nations is a mystery, and
there seems to be no single way to account for them.

“As Graetz puts it, there have obviously been mortal peoples that vanished in
history and others that are immortal. Nothing is left of the Hellenic and Latin
races, which have dissolved into other human divisions. By contrast, the Jewish
race has succeeded in preserving itself and surviving, and is about to renew its
marvelous biblical youth. Its revival after the Babylonian exile and the return to
Zion revealed its potential for renewal. Thus, the people are an organic body
with a marvelous capacity for rebirth, which distinguishes them from ordinary
biological organisms. The existence of the Jewish race had been unique from the
start, which is why its history is a marvel. For Graetz, the teleology of the chosen
people is more moral than political, retaining some dusty remnants of a
crumbling traditional belief…”\textsuperscript{191}

Was Hess’s Messianic vision of the creation of a Jewish nation-state in
Palestine in fact compatible with traditional Judaism? This question, which has
so troubled the modern state of Israel, was obliquely addressed in 1836 by
Samuel Raphael Hirsch in his \textit{Nineteen Letters on Judaism}.

Hirsch’s work, as Dan-Sherbok writes, was "a defence of Orthodoxy in the
form of essays by a young rabbi to a friend who questioned the importance of
remaining a Jew. The work began with a critique of Judaism of this period:
'While the best of mankind climbed to the summit of culture, prosperity, and
wealth, the Jewish people remained poor in everything that makes human beings
great and noble and that beautifies and dignifies our lives.'

"In response Hirsch maintained that the purpose of human life is not to attain
personal happiness and perfection. Instead human beings should strive to serve
God by doing his will. As an example of such devotion, the Jewish people was
formed so that through its way of life all nations would come to know that true

\textsuperscript{191}Sand, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 72, 80-81.
happiness lies in obeying God. Thus, Hirsch maintained, the people of Israel were given the Promised Land so that they would be able to keep the Covenant. When the nation was exiled, they fulfilled this mission by remaining loyal to God and the Torah despite continual persecution and suffering. According to Hirsch, the purpose of the divine commandments is not to repress physical gratification of material prosperity; rather the goal of following God's law is to lead a religious life and thereby bear witness to the messianic ideal of universal brotherhood. Given this vision of God's plan, Reform Judaism was denounced for abandoning this sacred duty. For Hirsch citizenship rights are of little importance, since Jews are united by a bond of obedience to God's laws until the time when the 'Almighty shall see fit in his inscrutable wisdom to unite again his scattered servants in one land, and the Torah shall be the guiding principle of a state, a model of the meaning of Divine revelation and the mission of humanity'.\footnote{Dan Cohn-Sherbok, An Atlas of Jewish History, London: Routledge, 1996, pp. 147-148.}

The question was posed again by two rabbis who came to be known as "the Forerunners of Zionism" - the Serbian Rabbi Alkalai and the Polish Rabbi Kalischer. Alain Dieckhoff writes: "Giving some role to the collective organisation of the Jews to promote their return [as was done by the two rabbis] was already in itself a major innovation. It implied a reinterpretation of Jewish Messianism which had adopted an increasingly quietist approach. As the political effacement of the Jewish nation in Palestine steadily progressed, sealed by the destruction of the Second Temple (70 CE) and the crushing defeat of Bar Kochba (135), belief in the coming of the Messiah who would deliver Israel from its exile and restore it to its past glory was consolidated, as a form of compensation. This Messianic hope adopted an apocalyptic content, both restoration oriented (a return to the original golden age) and utopian (establishment of an essentially different and better age); this made it easier to adopt an attitude of distance from, even indifference towards the contemporary world. Although the deliverance of Israel was certainly located in the domain of the visible since it assumed the physical restoration of the Jewish nation in its land, it was also placed at the end of time (be-aharit ha-yamim), i.e. at the end of the course of human history. Therefore the enormous change to be inaugurated by the Messianic era could only be the miraculous work of God, from Whom man could only hope, by a life of prayer and holiness, that the final redemption would come without too great a delay.

"This spiritualization considerably weakened the political dimension of Messianism, which had been very present in the Biblical period - as illustrated by the Maccabees' struggle in the second century BCE - but was constantly eroded by rabbinical Judaism, which feared its destructive force. The epic story of Shabtai Zvi, who aroused a wave of enthusiasm across the Jewish world in 1665-7, further discredited Messianic activism. The abolition of fasting days, the proclamation of new festivals and transformations of the liturgy - all breaches of religious law - in any case somewhat undermined the Messianic legitimacy of Shabtai Zvi, who finally discredited himself by his sudden conversion to Islam. The antinomian and heretical aspect of Shabtaism, which was cultivated by his
disciples and especially by Jacob Frank, led to a 'dogmatic' hardening in official Judaism and the condemnation of all human efforts to hasten the end of time (dehikat ha-ketz). So for reassessment of the human factor in the process of redemption it was necessary to reassert voluntarism, which had been discredited by Shabtaism, and to modify the 'Messianic code' at three levels. First of all, without denying God's supernatural intervention, Rabbis Alkalai and Kalischer considered that it would only be carried out after an initial phase where man would play an active and propitiatory role. This separation of two Messianic periods, one for which man would strive while the other would be decided by God, was explicitly proposed by Kalischer.

"The redemption of Israel, for which we continue to long, should not be imagined as a sudden miracle. The Holy One - may His name be blessed - will not come down suddenly from his heights to give His people their marching orders. Nor will He send the Messiah from the clouds in the twinkling of an eye to sound the great trumpets of the dispersed children of Israel and gather them together in Jerusalem. He will not surround the Holy City with a wall of fire and will not make the Holy Temple come down from the highest heaven.

"The bliss and the miracles promised by His servants the Prophets will certainly take place, for all will be accomplished, but we shall not flee in affliction and terror, for the redemption of Israel will come in successive stages, and rays of the deliverance will shine gradually.' [Derishat Tzion, 1862]

"Because redemption is gradual, two distinct and successive moments can be distinguished - the first natural, the second miraculous. This idea was particularly daring because it made the saving power of God depend on prior action by man. It directly challenged apocalyptic Messianism, which was defended by the majority of the rabbis of the time who expected the deliverance of Israel to come only by a cataclysmic entry of the Messiah.

"For what purpose was this human energy thus liberated to be used? Here again an original distinction made it possible for the Forerunners of Zion to justify an active role for man. In Jewish tradition there was only one true remedy for sin: repentance (teshuva), i.e. explicit renunciation of evil and adoption of behaviour in accordance with the Law. The idea of inner repentance was so essential that it was supposed to have coexisted with the Law before the proclamation on Mount Sinai, and even to have existed before the creation of the world. This was above all of an individual nature in Talmudic literature, but took on a collective dimension from the sixteenth century, under the impetus of the Kabbala of Isaac Luria. After that the return to a life of holiness ensured not only the salvation of the individual soul, but also restored the original fullness of the world. Teshuva was no longer limited solely to the existential level, within the narrow confines of the individual; it also concerned the historic level of the national group, and beyond that the cosmic level of mankind. Alkalai went so far as to consider, differing from the classical idea, that collective repentance must necessarily precede individual repentance. There remained the final question: what did this general teshuva involve?
"It involved physical re-establishment of the Jews in the Land of Israel to recreate the national community. Playing on the double meaning of the word teshuva, which strictly means return, Kalischer stated that collective repentance meant a geographical return to Zion and not, at least not directly, a spiritual return. So Jews who returned to Palestine were not breaking the religious Law, since in the first instance their return was a purely material one. It was only later, when they were gathered in Zion, that by the grace of God the truly supernatural redemption would start, bringing with it the individual repentance of every Jew and union with God. This bold idea, based on exegesis of religious texts, was a powerful call to action. It meant that Jews could legitimately cooperate and meet together to prepare for and organise their settlement in the Holy Land. By turning to the traditional scholarly interpretation based on the Talmud and Midrash literature, the Forerunners of Zionism encouraged the adoption of an unconventional way ahead, in which the Jewish man had a direct responsibility for the way the world was to develop. Even if it was in a confused way and probably unconsciously, they started a Copernican revolution which Herzl's Zionism was to bring to full flower, placing man, not God, at the centre of Jewish destiny."

12. THE WESTERNIZATION OF JAPAN

In 1853, the arrival of the American naval commander Matthew Perry in Yokohama harbor with four ships, and his demand that Japan open herself to trade with America, caused a major change in Japanese society and the country’s place in the world. Commodore Perry, as Henry Kissinger writes, “bore a letter from President Millard Fillmore to the Emperor of Japan, which he insisted on delivering directly to imperial representatives in the Japanese capital (a breach of two centuries of Japanese law and diplomatic protocol). Japan, which held foreign trade in as little esteem as China, cannot have been particularly reassured by the President’s letter, which informed the Emperor (whom Fillmore addressed as his ‘Great and Good Friend!’) that the American people ‘think that if your imperial majesty were so far to change the ancient laws as to allow a free trade between the two countries it would be extremely beneficial to both.’ Fillmore clothed the de facto ultimatum into a classically American pragmatic proposal to the effect that the established seclusion laws, heretofore described as immutable, might be loosened on a trial basis...

“The Japanese recipients of the message recognized it as a challenge to their concept of political and international order. Yet they reacted with the reserved composure of a society that had experienced and studied the transitoriness of human endeavors for centuries while retaining its essential nature. Surveying Perry’s far superior firepower (Japanese cannons and firearms had barely advanced in two centuries, while Perry’s vessels were equipped with state-of-the-art naval gunnery capable, as he demonstrated along the Japanese coast, of firing explosive shells), Japan’s leaders concluded that direct resistance to the ‘black ships’ would be futile. They relied on the cohesion of their society to absorb the shock and maintain their independence by that cohesion. They prepared an exquisitely courteous reply explaining that although the changes America sought were ‘most positively forbidden by the laws of our Imperial ancestors’, nonetheless, ‘for us to continue attached to ancient laws, seems to misunderstand the spirit of the age’. Allowing that ‘we are governed now by imperative necessity’, Japanese representatives assured Perry that they were prepared to satisfy nearly all of the American demands, including constructing a new harbor capable of accommodating American ships.

“Japan drew from the Western challenge a conclusion contrary to that of China after the appearance of a British envoy in 1793... China reaffirmed its traditional stance of dismissing the intruder with aloof indifference while cultivating China’s distinctive virtues, confident that the vast extent of its population and territory and the refinement of its culture would in the end prevail. Japan set out, with studious attention to detailed and subtle analysis of the balance of material and psychological forces, to enter the international order based on Western concepts of sovereignty, free trade, international law, technology, and military power – albeit for the purpose of expelling the foreign domination. After a new faction came to power in 1868 promising to ‘revere the Emperor, expel the barbarians’, they announced that they would do so by mastering the barbarian concepts and technologies and joining the Westphalian world order as an equal member. The new Meiji Emperor’s
coronation was marked with the Charter Oath signed by the nobility, promising a sweeping program of reform, which included provisions that all social classes should be encouraged to participate. It provided for deliberative assemblies in all provinces, an affirmation of due process, and a commitment to fulfill the aspirations of the population. It relied on the national consensus, which had been one of the principal strengths – perhaps the most distinctive feature – of Japanese society...

“Japan would henceforth embark on the systematic construction of railways, modern industry, an export-oriented economy, and a modern military. Amidst all these transformations, the uniqueness of Japanese culture and society would preserve Japanese identity...”¹⁹⁴

W.H. Spellman goes into more detail on how this momentous change took place, beginning with the removal from power of the de facto priestly ruler, the Shogun: "Against the considerable opposition of the Tokugawa shogun and the emperor..., economic, military and political modernization became the rallying cry of those samurai elites and urban commercial leaders who were determined not to allow Western domination of the country to proceed unchecked. Turning from the shogunate to the imperial office for support, a new monarchical regime called 'Meiji' or 'Enlightened Rule' was inaugurated after the death of the emperor Komei in January 1867. Leaders of the four most important feudal families turned over their estates to the new 15-year-old emperor Mutsuhito (1852-1912) in a gesture of insurgent nationalism. In a memorial addressed to the emperor, the clan leaders maintained that they were returning to the Son of Heaven what had originally been his 'so that a uniform rule may prevail throughout the empire. Thus the country will be able to rank equally with the other nations of the world.' In July 1869 an imperial decree ordered all other landed elites to make the same submission. In return these aristocrats would become provincial governors under the crown; private political authority in the countryside, the norm for over a millennium, was now defined as usurpation and effectively brought to a close.

"Under Mutushito, the 122nd monarch in a line from Jinmu, calls for the overthrow of the Tokugawa shogunate intensified. Seeing the scale of the opposition to his family's rule and unwilling to plunge the country into civil war, Tokugawa Yoshinobu abolished the family office - and eight centuries of military government - in November 1867. Establishing a new capital in Tokyo (formerly Edo), the emperor enjoyed enough support from disgruntled samurai warriors, clan leaders and urban commercial interests to defeat the hold-out troops of the now-defunct shogunate. There ensued three decades of unprecedented reform, catapulting feudal Japan into the industrial age. Feudalism was officially abolished in 1871, a national conscript army based on the German model was created, and Western military advisors were recruited in order to assist with the building of a modern navy. State-sponsored and mandatory elementary education was adopted, the Gregorian calendar was introduced, a representative system of local government was created, and a

robust commercial and industrial revolution began, the first of its kind in the non-western world. No other non-European nation responded as quickly and as effectively as Japan to the threat of Western imperialism.

"The ideological components of the revolution which occurred in Japan in 1868 centred on two key elements: nationalism and tenno-ism. The historic uniqueness of Japanese civilization was stressed while the monarchy was held up as the embodiment of the nation's highest ideals, its closest bond with earlier times. There was no establishment of direct imperial rule in 1868, but instead the emperor's authority was gradually enhanced as anti-Tokugawa reformers claimed a mandate from the divine ruler. By linking the ancient institution of monarchy with the innovative programme of economic modernization and social change, reformers hoped to make change more palatable in traditionalist circles. Not the least of these changes involved the new national political institutions. After a series of delegations sent to Europe and the United States during the 1870s and 1880s returned with their suggestions for constitutional reform, in 1889 a new framework of government, reflecting the German imperial model, established a bicameral parliamentary structure with cabinet responsibility for national policy. The lower house or diet, elected on a restricted franchise which excluded 95 per cent of the adult male population, served as an advisory body to the government, but the emperor retained control over the military and named his chief ministers, all of whom served at the pleasure of the monarch. An upper house composed of former nobles and Meiji leaders rounded out the parliamentary system.

"The first article of the new German-style constitution emphasized the centrality of the sacred monarch's role in the new government. Here it was stated plainly that 'The empire of Japan shall be reigned over and governed by a line of emperors unbroken for ages eternal.' Ito Hirobumi, one of the principal authors of the new constitution, provided a commentary on the document which encapsulates the thinking of the Meiji reformers. The emperor, according to Hiroumi, 'is Heaven-descended, divine and sacred; he is pre-eminent above all his subjects. He must be reverenced and is inviolable. He is indeed to pay due respect to the law, but the law no power to hold Him accountable to it.'

"Unlike his predecessors, the Meiji emperor undertook a new public role designed to link the monarchy with the actions of the state. Reviewing troops, giving audiences to foreign envoys, presiding at various public awards ceremonies, placing his name on a large list of policy decrees, the emperor became the exclusive focus of national loyalty. At court, traditional dress was

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195 Prince Ito, the effective creator of modern Imperial Japan, wrote in his Commentary on the Constitution: "The Sacred Throne was established at the time when the heavens and the earth became separated" (in Harold Nicolson, Monarchy, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962, p. 38). However, he goes on to say that "the Emperor is heaven descended, divine and sacred", which implies that while the empire is a product of the fall, its purpose is also to overcome the fall, at least in part. It is possible that Prince Ito was here betraying the influencing of Christian ideas which he picked up during his education in Europe. (V.M.)
abandoned in favour of mandatory Western styles, and young Japanese eagerly embraced the idea of modernization in the service of the monarchy.

"It is in this last idea - service to the tenno (lord of heaven) - that the uniqueness of Japan's drive towards modernization must be assessed. The revolution of 1868 was not a middle-class, bourgeois-inspired call for an individualistic and capitalist state along Western lines. Instead the reforming oligarchs who were responsible for the end of the shogunate continued to emphasize the virtues of obedience, loyalty and acquiescence in the service of one's superiors. In an imperial rescript on education issued by the emperor in 1890 - a document to be memorized by generations of schoolchildren down to 1948 - young Japanese were exhorted to 'offer yourselves courageously to the State; and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth. So shall ye not only be Our good and faithful subjects, but render illustrious the best traditions of your forefathers.' These values, it was hoped would combine to shape a nationalist ideology unique in its association with the institution of monarchy."

Japan's lack of a loyal but independent religious institution laid the foundations of the tragedy of 1945. As Ienaga Saburo writes: "The vast majority of the people were educated from youth into a frame of mind in which they could not criticise state policies independently and had to follow them, mistaken though they were. Education since 1868 carries heavy responsibility for bringing on that tragedy."

However, the Japanese monarchy was not typically pagan. As Dominic Lieven writes: "Japanese tradition was totally opposed to the Emperor actually attempting to act as the chief executive officer of his government. For centuries the Emperor's role had been purely ceremonial and priestly, actual power being exercised by the Shogun. In the last decades of the Tokugawa era even the Shogun did not rule personally, his powers being used by subordinates in his name. Although in theory the Meiji restoration returned power to the monarchy's hands, it was never the intention of the restoration's key statesmen that the monarch should literally run his own government like a Russian or German emperor. On the contrary, the monarchy's role was to provide legitimacy for the Meiji era's reformist oligarchy and to act as a symbol around which the Japanese nation could rally. As in Europe, however, one key reason for the oligarchy's determination to locate sovereignty in the Emperor was their opposition to accepting the only alternative principle, namely the sovereignty of the people exercised through elected institutions.

"In a way that was not true even in Prussia, let alone Russia, court and government were always sharply separated in Meiji Japan. The court was the world of priestly rites and Confucian moral virtues, never of actual political

rule. Though in theory the Emperor chose prime ministers, in fact they were selected by the genro, in other words the tiny group of elder statesmen who constituted a sort of supreme privy council and presented the monarch with a candidate whom he never rejected. Recommendations on policy were submitted to the crown in the unanimous name of the government. The Emperor was never asked to adjudicate personally between conflicting choices or groups, still less to devise his own policies and find minister to support them. The traditions of the imperial house meant that the monarchs did not revolt against this passive role. The Emperor Meiji, for instance, is said to have rebuffed efforts to draw him more directly into government by commenting that 'when one views [our] long history one sees that it is a mistake for those next to the throne to conduct politics'. In any case since no modern Japanese emperor, Meiji included, had ever possessed real political power there was never any question of the need to surrender it into the oligarchy's hands. When the Emperor Hirohito contemplated intervening personally to tilt the balance against military extremists in 1937 he was warned by the sole remaining genro, Prince Saioniji, that the monarchy must not endanger itself by active political engagement. Only in the apocalyptic circumstances of 1945 did the monarch decisively enter the political arena and even then this happened because the government was split down the middle on the issue of peace or war and requested his intervention.\textsuperscript{198}

This strange position of the Japanese emperor meant that ordinary Japanese could sincerely venerate, even worship him, while despising the idea of one-man-rule. Thus "during the Second World War the Japanese Communist Nosaka Sanzo told a Chinese Communist party conference that 'the Japanese people may hold the Emperor... in religious awe, but they do not worship the system of despotic rule. We must abolish the Emperor system immediately and establish a democratic system... However, we must be very careful in defining our attitude to... his [the Emperor's] semi-religious influence... Many soldiers captured by the [Communist] Eighth Route Army said they could agree with the [Communist] ideology, but if they sought to destroy the emperor, they would be opposed. This can be seen as a general pattern of thought held by the majority of the Japanese people."\textsuperscript{199}

"Modernizing the Japanese economy required strong governmental initiatives and harsh fiscal policies. There had been for a time a grave danger of opposition and disorder. Centuries before, the imperial power had gone into eclipse, unable to control over-mighty subjects; its restored authority faced new dangers in a new age. Not all conservatives could be reconciled to the new model Japan. Discontented ronin or retainers - rootless and masterless samurai, the traditional fighting class - had been one source of trouble. Another was peasant misery; in the first decade of the Meiji era there had been scores of agrarian revolts, but reform had created unconditional private ownership in land and many tenant farmers were to benefit from it. There had also been a last

\textsuperscript{198} Lieven, Nicholas II: Emperor of all the Russias, London: Pimlico, 1994, pp. 126-127.

\textsuperscript{199} Lieven, Nicholas II, pp. 140-141.
feudal rebellion, but the energies of the discontented samurai were gradually siphoned off into the service of the new state; building their interests into it, though, only intensified an assertive nationalism in certain key sectors of the national life. It was soon expressed not only in continuing resentment of western powers but also in support of imperial ambitions directed towards the nearby Asian mainland... 

THE JEWEL IN THE CROWN

“After the 1857 rebellion,” writes Sir Richard Evans, “the subcontinent was ruled autocratically by an appointed governor-general whose power was limited only by a small council of civil servants. Over time this was expanded, and in 1909 it was enlarged to include elected members, but the council had no power to introduce laws or stop whatever the governor-general was doing. Until the First World War, therefore, India was a kind of ancien régime autocracy.

“British rule in India rested on two key institutions. First of these was the civil service, a central, elite organization operating across the entire country, and staffed by British men, with only 5 per cent of the posts occupied by Indians as late as 1915. The Indian Civil Service was well paid and after the corruption scandals of the late eighteenth century it had become reasonably honest and conscientious. It collected the taxes already levied by the Mughals, above all the land tax, which under the Mughals had been administered by officials known as zamindars, often indistinguishable from high aristocrats. It administered justice under a codified system begun in 1861 that mixed British and Hindu principles and customs, and it provided political advisers to the 600 or so mostly small princely states that survived the uprising of 1857 (not least because the move to assimilate them into British rule was thought to have been one of its causes). The princely states collected their own taxes and ran their own affairs, but under the advice of British officials who encouraged reform. Over time the growing habit of educating the younger generation at British schools and universities, as well as the intensification of communications through better transport, telegraph and so on, and the increasing employment of British or British-trained civil servants to administer them, the princely states developed an amalgam of Indian traditions and European modernity that struck many as an ideal example of what could be achieved by indirect rule. Not just in the princely states, however, but also in the areas under direct rule, British control depended effectively on the passive co-operation of Indians, both elites and masses. This was achieved above all by the retention of Indian customs, institutions and basic structures of administration, along with an attempt to provide good and honest government. Thus the full panoply of Victorian administration was applied to India, with the founding of educational institutions such as the University of Madras (1857), and the adoption of the principle put forward in Thomas Babington Macaulay’s 1835 report on Indian education that schools and colleges teaching in English should be used to create a new Indian administrative elite to act as an intermediary between British and Indian society. Police forces were created from the 1860s and unified in 1905. Free trade was used to destroy autonomous industries such as textiles in the early part of the century, but India’s incorporation into a rapidly globalizing
world economy stimulated new industries and an increasing rate of urbanization, helped by the construction of roads, railways and canals. The shock of the 1857 rebellion had stimulated the British to be both cautious and conservative in their handling of Indian society and traditions, and to engage in a sustained policy of improvement and development to convince Indians of the benefits of British rule.  

“Yet underpinning all this was the application, or threat, of force, in the form of the second great institution of British rule in India, namely the Indian Army. The British regular army numbered around 250,000 men and had to defend and garrison colonies all over the world. The Indian Army was almost as large, and it could quickly be expanded by calling up reserves. It was paid for by taxes levied in India and indeed consumed around a third of all Indian tax revenues. In the key area of the 1857 rebellion, Bengal, the proportion of European to Indian troops was fixed at one to one; in Madras and Bombay one to two. Altogether there were 73,000 British and 154,000 Indian troops in the charge of British senior officers in 1885. British regiments served in India in rotation, with ‘sepoy’ regiments remaining separate. Recruits were taken from the so-called ‘martial’ areas like the North-West frontier, Nepal, or the Punjab, which had largely stayed loyal in 1857, as well as from the poorest and most illiterate social groups, who were seen as less likely to ideas of rebellion and revolt. The Indian Army was an asset not only in ruling the subcontinent but also in establishing British supremacy more generally, among other things in providing backing for the acquisition of colonies in east Africa.  

“In major respects, however, British rule in India brought disaster for the population. The intensive land taxes levied by the Raj, and collected with considerably greater efficiency than their equivalents had been under the Mughals, caused changes in land use and turned bad harvests into famines, with two million dying of starvation in northern India in 1860-1, six million across India in the 1870s, and another five million with a monsoon failure in 1896-7, when the situation was made worse by the outbreak of plague.

201 Civil servants were dubbed “heaven-born” for their incorruptibility; their recruitment (from the 1850s on) was “by open, competitive examination, which attracted some of Britain’s best brains and made the envy of Europe, well ahead of Britain’s own domestic civil service… They were required to speak two Indian languages and spent most of their time out in the midday sun, touring remote areas, dispensing quick justice to villages that still miss them today, studying local flora, fauna and social customs and writing valuable books about them… No regime based on violence alone could have enabled a maximum of 100,000 Europeans to rule for two centuries a land of 400 million people… By the 1940s most ICS officers were Indian, as were most Indian Army officers… The judiciary, universities, professions and business had long before been ‘Indianised’ and… the new Indian middle classes were active in local and provincial governments…” (Zareer Masani, Review of “India Conquered: Britain’s Raj & the Chaos of Empire” by Jon Wilson, in History Today, April, 2017, p. 62) (V.M.)
Communications were still not good enough for effective relief operations to be mounted, and as late as 1921 only 3 per cent of Indians had any formal education, making disease prevention difficult; reading and writing were the prerogative of only a small elite. These catastrophes were not new – the Bengal famine of 1770 is estimated to have killed nearly 10 million people, and famines were also recorded in pre-colonial times - but there is little doubt that they increased in frequency and intensity under British rule, nor did the authorities of the Raj undertake adequate measures to deal with them and mitigate their effects. India also became the major global reservoir of indentured labour, a kind of quasi-slavery where workers were paid but had neither freedom nor any significant rights. Some 60,000 South Asians were sent to Fiji to work between 1879 and 1920, 25,000 to Mauritius, and 30,000 to built Kenya’s railways in the 1890s, more than a third of them suffering death or serious injury during the construction. The total number of South Asians, almost all of them Indian, working across the British Empire indicated its global nature, but it also caused disruption to Indian communities on the subcontinent, and led to racial tensions in some colonies, notably Fiji.

“Despite these problems and the failure of the British administration to deal with them adequately, in India and increasingly after 1918 in other parts of the British Empire reform was seen as the best means of bringing stability and order to colonial societies. Conquest was followed in the end by Victorian ‘improvement’. A case in point was the Kingdom of Upper Burma. Fear of growing French power in Indochina prompted British concern when the death of the Burmese king, Mindon Min (1808-78), sparked a struggle for the succession in the course of which the majority of his 110 children were strangled then trampled by elephants (it was taboo to spill royal blood). The victor, King Thibaw in (1859-1916), was not disposed to yield to the British. Indeed it was not so much disapproval of this violence as concern that the new king had begun to open negotiations with the French, who agreed to build a railway and set up a bank, which led the British Conservative government of Lord Salisbury to send in 10,000 troops in 1885. The Burmese forces were defeated and the territory was annexed in 1886 at the end of what became known as the Third Anglo-Burmese War. This was denounced by Liberal MPs as ‘an act of high-handed violence... and act of flagrant folly’, through which the Burmese political system had been destroyed, leaving chaos behind. Guerilla resistance proliferated, led by some of the remaining royal princes, and soon the British had 40,000 troops in the country, engaging in a ‘pacification’ campaign that involved the execution of alleged ‘dacoits’, or rebels, and the burning of their villages.

“By 1890 peace had descended on Burma... What this meant in practice was the wholesale conversion of the countryside to commercial rice production, with vast tracts of forest being felled and British firms bringing in thousands of
indentured labourers from India to do the work. This in turn meant roads, railways, seaports, urban and commercial development. Burma became a vitally important source of rice for large parts of the British Empire, notably eastern Africa and above all India, where it supplied 15 per cent of the rice consumed. Meanwhile the habit of British soldiers and administrators of taking Burmese women as their wives or more usually concubines, much complained of in the 1890s, led to the emergence of a new Anglo-Burmese elite that came to dominate the administration of the country in the interwar years, in a comparable development to the creation of the social stratum of ‘Anglo-Indians’ who fulfilled a similar role on the subcontinent in the same period.”

Tombs writes: “Given the size of India (20 percent of the world population in 1820) and its centrality to the empire, it is a devastating accusation to say that it was deliberately or even accidentally impoverished by British policy. What is the verdict? Asian living standards had begun to fall relative to Europe long before imperialism, partly due to political instability; and British rule did not see a further fall, but a slow rise. Asia’s export successes had depended on cheap skilled labour: and the low cost of Indian labour made early technology unviable... Rapid early-nineteenth-century improvements in technology meant that English cotton goods suddenly became both cheaper and better than those of India, which consequently lost its global markets. In space of a generation (roughly from the 1830s to the 1850s) India thus became ‘de-industrialized’, as did China. However, modern mechanized cotton mills began to be built in the 1850s, and by 1876 India reached the ‘one million spindle mark’ – twenty years before Japan and thirty before Brazil. Famous names appeared at this time: J.N. Tata visited Lancashire in 1872 and six years later opened modern cotton mills at Nagpur; his son, Sir Dorabji Tata, established a huge steelworks in 1911. By 1900 India had the fourth largest cotton industry in the world, after England, the USA and Russia. It also had the fourth-largest railway system in the world (paid for by Indians but with British technical direction and aided by cheap British capital), with three-quarters of Asia’s total track – thirty-five times more than China. Agricultural export growth in India was comparable to Brazil’s. Indian industry began competing successfully with British imports – especially as the imperial government gave preference to Indian-produced goods. Indian taxes were 20-40 percent lower than in the non-European world in general, and lower in British India than in the semi-autonomous princely states.

“But even if all this is accepted, the worst accusation is that colonial rulers, by encouraging export-oriented commercial agriculture and building railways, destroyed traditional subsistence farming, using free-market economics as a ‘mask’ for ‘holocaust’ and ‘colonial genocide’. The worst famines in 1876-79, 1888-91 and 1896-1902, caused by severe droughts connected with variations in

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the ‘El Niño’ current, were worldwide, but particularly deadly in India, China, Brazil, Russia and east Africa. To what extent was Britain responsible? A popular view – propagated today in a range of American universities and racial websites – blames it for every disaster from Brazil to China because it fostered a globalization that brought political, social, economic and ecological catastrophe. Imperial government failed disastrously to prevent a terrible death toll. Yet the Famine Codes drawn up in India in the 1880s were the world’s first anti-famine policy, still consulted today. They proclaimed that ‘the object of State intervention is to save life… all other considerations should be subordinated to this.’ Nor did colonial authorities refuse funds – the spending on famine relief in India in the 1873-74 and 1896-97 was equivalent to over £700m in today’s values, and tens of millions of people were assisted. But the authorities did fear that mass relief would encourage dependency and prove financially unsustainable, and so they cut relief too quickly. They also over-estimated the ability and willingness of the market to mobilize resources in these unprecedented crises, and were too hierarchical, complacent, dogmatic and finally parsimonious. Was this ‘genocide’? Imperial government did not do enough in the face of mass hunger, and this is widely accepted as an intrinsic failure of unrepresentative governments, colonial or other. Did British policy of encouraging commercial agriculture aggravate natural disaster? The answer is not simple. It depends on whether one assumes that traditional agriculture could have averted similar famines at a time of exceptional climatic disturbance.”

203 Tombs, op. cit., pp. 569-570.
"Christianity, commerce and civilization" for the benighted peoples of the world was the phrase Dr. David Livingstone used to describe the progress of, and justifications for, imperialism. In different parts of the world the emphasis was on different elements of the trio – in Livingstone’s own case in Central Africa it was on mission and medicine. Missionaries penetrated the furthest corners of the earth: often they were there before the secular administrators and armies. The biggest missionary drives came from the biggest imperial empires: those of England (Protestant), France (Catholic) and Russia (Orthodox) but the United States, Germany, Italy and Belgium were also important players.

"After 1870," writes Jean Comby, "the European powers rivaled one another in the conquest of new territories: in 1885 the Treaty of Berlin divided Africa into areas of influence. Article 6 recognized the freedom of preaching under the protection of the colonial powers. Colonization opened up an immense field to evangelization and mission could favour colonization. Colonial powers and missions joined together in a common task: building schools, hospitals, and so on. The colonizers wanted the missionaries to be of their own nationality. When the territory changed hands, the old missionaries were replaced by those of the new owner.

"However, there was not always perfect agreement between the missionary, the administrator, the soldier and the colonist. While loyal to the occupying power, the missionaries did not pay any less attention to the abuses of colonization, and the administrators thought of the missionaries as a rival power. The latter were closer to the people by their presence among them and by their knowledge of the language. They protested against the forced labour and an industrialization which destroyed traditional structures."

The western empire that probably attached the greatest importance to mission was France. Thus "when King Charles X came to the Chamber of Deputies formally to announce intervention in Algeria, he justified it as ‘for the benefit of Christianity’." The French saw the success of such a mission as part of the glory of France, and tried more than other imperial nations to integrate their colonials fully into the mother country. This attitude is discernible even in the republican period, when French rulers officially espoused the revolution rather than Catholicism. Thus Andrew Wheatcroft writes: "If Louis-Philippe, the victor of the 1830 Revolution, did not share his predecessor’s exalted Catholicism, he was nonetheless addicted to national glory. He saw a direct connection between the heroic France of the First Crusade and the triumphs of the new crusade and conquest in Algeria of the 1830s, in which his sons played an active part. The essence of this new crusade was later painted by Horace Vernet, a particular favourite of the new king, in The First Mass in Kabylia, which


depicts a field service. The troops kneel respectfully as the celebrant holds up the Host for them to see; symbolically the body and blood of Christ subdue the lowering mountains which form the background, while a group of Arabs sit sullenly in the foreground. In 1837, as the conquest advanced, Louis-Philippe began to remodel the great palace of Versailles to create a national history museum celebrating the many centuries of French military triumph. Vernet's work would feature prominently among the vast canvases that covered the walls.

"The first rooms of the king's museum depicted the Crusades, with a mock-Gothic style of decoration and a long list of the French Crusaders, the first heroes for France. Then came the other great figures of French military history, culminating in Napoleon's supreme achievement. But the story of glory continued after the emperor. The final galleries, the Salle de Constantine and the Salle de la Smalah, honoured the new crusade in Algeria. The official guidebook to the museum left no doubt as to what was the message the visitor was intended to receive: 'We there find again, after an interval of five hundred years, the French nation fertilising with its blood the burning plains studded with the tents of Islam. These are the heirs of Charles Martel, Godfrey de Bouillon, Robert Guiscard and Philip Augustus, resuming the unfinished labours of their ancestors. Missionaries and warriors, they every day extend the boundaries of Christendom.'

"Soon a steady stream of colonists began to settle in the nascent French Proconsulate of Algeria, providing a Christianizing presence in a terrain formerly 'infidel'. A diocese was created in Algiers in 1838, which became an archdiocese in 1866, with two subsidiary bishoprics at Constantine and Oran. Two years later a new missionary order called the White Fathers was founded with the aim of carrying the Christian message into Kabylia and south into the desert. Dressed in a white robe, or gandoura, with a mantle, they looked more like Algerian Arabs than Frenchmen. Under the direct authority of the Congregation of Propaganda in Rome, in their ardour, discipline, asceticism and energy the White Fathers resembled the Jesuits in their exultant heyday centuries before.

"This preoccupation with North Africa survived Louis-Philippe, continued through the rule of Napoleon III, and on into the Third Republic that followed him. By the end of the nineteenth century, writers could look back at a constant extension of French conquest: in Algeria, in a French Proconsulate of Tunisia and in the French (and Spanish) partition of Morocco in the 1890s. The theme of the crusade remained popular. Michaud's History had become a school textbook in 1844, with eighteen editions published by the end of the century, and in 1877 a new luxury edition appeared, which was illustrated with a set of magnificent engravings by Gustave Doré representing Christian power and dominance. This rhetoric and image of crusade in the first half of the nineteenth century was usually a mask for grubbier enterprises, but it is wrong to regard it with complete cynicism. French Algeria may have been a colony created first by accident, and then as a device to counter the unpopularity of
successive governments in Paris. But many of the migrants to Algeria and even of the soldiers who fought there, and certainly the missionaries labouring in the deserts, often believed that they were following a higher calling. Nowhere else in the Islamic lands had there been such a reprise of the medieval Latin Kingdom. Once again a Christian community had been planted among the infidels. All patriotic citizens of France could rejoice that their nation, which had won Jerusalem in the First Crusade, had now brought Christian power back to the southern shore of the Mediterranean. This had been the great mission of Saint Louis, the nation's patron saint, which was finally fulfilled some seven centuries after his death.

"Nor did France ever intend to leave. Algeria became an integral part of metropolitan France, and its existence an exemplar of France's civilization and cultural destiny. That 'civilizing mission' was taught in every school in France and in the schools of the empire beyond the seas, and this unifying ideology gradually replaced the sectarian vocabulary of crusade, except in high Catholic circles. But support for French Algeria transcended the gulf between clericals and anticlericals. Many believed with an absolute conviction in France's mission in North Africa and were prepared to use any means to sustain it. Other colonial territories, such as Indochina, could be abandoned or bargained away in the 1950s. Ironically, it was Algeria, the first fruit of the civilizing mission, a land reconquered by crusade, that ultimately destroyed the French Republic."\textsuperscript{206}

Many missionaries did extraordinary work. But where conversions to Christianity were superficial - as was very often the case - the result could be a syncretistic mixture of Christianity and paganism, as when Jesuit missionaries in China were forced to compromise with pagan ancestor-worship, or hybrids between Catholicism and voodoo appeared in Latin America.

Or the superiority of Christianity might be confused in the mind of the convert with the superiority of the white race or of his technological culture, as happened in New Guinea, where the cargo myth reached the following development by the 1930s:-

"In the beginning Anut (God) created the heaven and the earth. On the earth he gave birth to all the flora and fauna and then to Adam and Eve. He gave these power over all things on earth and established a paradise for them to live in. He completed his beneficial work by creating and giving them cargo: canned meat, steel utensils, sacks of rice, tins of tobacco, matches, but not cotton clothing. For a time they were content with that, but finally they offended God by having sexual relations. In anger God chased them out of paradise and condemned them to wander in the bush. He took the cargo away from them and decreed that they were to spend the rest of their existence being content with the minimum needed to live.

\textsuperscript{206} Wheatcroft, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 213-216
"God showed Noah how to build the ark - which was a steamship like those one sees at the port of Madang. He gave him a peaked cap, a white shirt, shorts, socks and shoes... When the flood ended, God gave Noah and his family cargo as a proof of his renewed goodness towards the human race... Shem and Japheth continued to respect God and Noah and as a result continued also to benefit from the resources of cargo. They became the ancestors of the white races who have profited from their good sense. But Ham was stupid. He uncovered his father's nakedness... God took the cargo away from him and sent him to New Guinea, where he became the ancestor of the natives.

"God had said to the missionaries: ‘Your brothers in New Guinea are plunged into utter darkness. They have no cargo because of the folly of Ham. But now I have pity on them and want to help them. That is why you missionaries must go to New Guinea and remedy the error of Ham. You must put his descendants on the right way. When they again follow me, I will send them cargo, just as today I send it to you white people...’"

Or a complete reversal might happen: the potential convert, seeing the insensitivity, materialism or cruelty of his would-be instructors, could come to the firm conclusion that their own faith and race were superior, as happened in China.

Perhaps the most unexpected result of the European missionary movement of the nineteenth century was the phenomenon of reverse conversion - the adoption by the conquerors of the faith of the conquered. The beginning of this process may be said to date to 1857, the year of the Indian Mutiny. Before that, English imperialism was determined to impose Christianity on the heathen. There was no hint of ecumenist indifference or relativism. But then came the Indian Mutiny and the bloody reprisals that followed it. Missionary zeal cooled, and racism and avarice became the dominant motives of imperial rule. "A brown skin alone sufficed to earn death, and only a tiny minority among the British protested."

207 Comby, op. cit., p. 177.

208 An anti-Christian tract of a Chinese secret society in around 1875 read: "Accursed be these Europeans, these missionary dogs or these governors of dogs who come to preach a barbarous religion and destroy the holy wisdom, who profane and defame the holy Confucius, although they have not studied the first page of a book. Heaven can no longer tolerate them and the earth refused to bear them; let us strike them, and send them to meditate eternally in the depths of hell. May their tongues be cut out because they seduce the masses by their lies and their hypocrisy has a thousand means of tearing out the heart... Let us throw their bodies in the desert to be food for dogs." (Comby, op. cit., p. 178)

This was followed, towards the end of the nineteenth century, by the gradual adoption, whether consciously or unconsciously, of the Hindu notion of the relativity of all religions. Thus Madame Blavatsky adopted a form of Hinduism in India and then preached it in Europe. And Swami Vivekandra preached Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893...

Indeed, reverse conversion may be seen to be the most profound and long-term effect of nineteenth-century imperialism. Relativism and ecumenism, which are indigenous to eastern religion, became entrenched in the lands of the West. And resistance to them was enfeebled by the guilt that the western peoples began to feel about their imperial past...

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Of the three justifications of imperialism, the vaguest and most portentous was “civilization”. As Yuval Noah Harari writes, spreading the culture of the ruling race among the other subject peoples has two advantages. First, it makes government easier through standardization of language and money; and secondly, it gives the empire legitimacy insofar as the ruling culture or civilization is deemed to be superior to all others.

“At least since the days of Cyrus and Qin Shi Huangdi, empires have justified their actions – whether road-building or bloodshed – as necessary to spread a superior culture from which the conquered benefit even more than the conquerors.

“The benefits were sometimes salient – law enforcement, urban planning, standardization of weights and measures – and sometimes questionable – taxes, conscription, emperor worship. But most imperial elites earnestly believed that they were working for the general welfare of all the empire’s inhabitants. China’s ruling class treated their country’s neighbours and its foreign subjects as miserable barbarians to whom the empire must bring the benefits of culture. The Mandate of Heaven was bestowed upon the emperor not in order to exploit the world, but in order to educate humanity. The Romans, too, justified their dominion by arguing that they were endowing the barbarians with peace, justice and refinement. The wild Germans and painted Gauls had lived in squalor and ignorance until the Romans tamed them with law, cleaned them up in public bathhouses, and improved them with philosophy. The Mauryan Empire in the third century BC took as its mission the dissemination of Buddha’s teachings to an ignorant world. The Muslim Caliphs received a divine mandate to spread the Prophet’s revelation, peacefully if possible but by the sword if necessary. The Spanish and Portuguese empires proclaimed that it was not riches they sought in the Indies and America, but converts to the true faith. The sun never set on the British mission to spread the twin gospels of liberalism and free trade. The Soviets felt duty-bound to facilitate the inexorable historical march from capitalism towards the dictatorship of the proletariat. Many Americans nowadays maintain that their government has a moral imperative to bring Third World countries the benefits of democracy and human rights, even if these goods are delivered by cruise missiles and F-16s.
“The cultural ideas spread by empire were seldom the exclusive creation of the ruling elite. Since the imperial vision tends to be universal and inclusive, it was relatively easy for imperial elites to adopt ideas, norms and traditions from wherever they found them, rather than stick fanatically to a single hidebound tradition. While some emperors sought to purify their cultures and return to what they viewed as their roots, for the most part empires have begot[t]en hybrid civilisations that absorbed much from their subject peoples. The imperial culture of Rome was Greek almost as much as it was Roman. The imperial Abbasid culture was part Persian, part Greek, part Arab. Imperial Mongol culture was a Chinese copycat. In the imperial United States, an American president of Kenyan blood can munch on Italian pizza while watching his favourite film, *Lawrence of Arabia*, a British epic about the Arab rebellion against the Turks.

“Not that this cultural melting pot made the process of cultural assimilation any easier for the vanquished. The imperial civilization may well have absorbed numerous contributions from various conquered peoples, but the hybrid result was still alien to the vast majority. The process of assimilation was often painful and traumatic. It is not easy to give up a familiar and loved local tradition, just as it is difficult and stressful to understand and adopt a new culture. Worse still, even when subject peoples were successful in adopting the imperial culture, it could take decades, if not centuries, until the imperial elite accepted them as part of ‘us’. The generations between conquest and acceptance were left out in the cold. They had already lost their beloved local culture, but they were not allowed to take an equal part in the imperial world. On the contrary, their adopted culture continued to view them as barbarians...

“In the late nineteenth century, many educated Indians were taught the same lesson by their British masters. One famous anecdote tells of an ambitious Indian who mastered the intricacies of the English language, took lessons in Western-style dance, and even became accustomed to eating with a knife and fork. Equipped with his new manners, he travelled to England, studied law at University College London, and became a qualified barrister. Yet this young man of law, bedecked in suit and tie, was thrown off a train in the British colony of South Africa for insisting on travelling first class instead of settling for third class, where ‘coloured’ men like him were supposed to ride. His name was Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.

“In some cases the processes of acculturation and assimilation eventually broke down the barriers between the newcomers and the old elite. The conquered no longer saw the empire as an alien system of occupation, and the conquerors came to view their subjects as equal to themselves. Rulers and ruled alike came to see ‘them’ as ‘us’. All the subjects of Rome eventually, after centuries of imperial rule, were granted citizenship. Non-Romans rose to occupy the top ranks in the officer corps of the Roman legions and were appointed to the Senate. In AD 48 the emperor Claudius admitted to the Senate several Gallic notables, who, he noted in a speech, through ‘customs, culture, and rites of marriage have blended with ourselves’. Snobbish senators protested
introducing these former enemies into the heart of the Roman political system. Claudius reminded them of an inconvenient truth. Most of their own senatorial families descended from Italian tribes who once fought against Rome, and were later granted Roman citizenship. Indeed, the emperor reminded them, his own family was of Sabine ancestry.

“During the second century AD, Rome was ruled by a line of emperors born in Iberia, in whose veins probably flowed at least a few drops of local Iberian blood. The reigns of Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius are generally thought to constitute the empire’s golden age. After that, all the ethnic dams were let down. Emperor Septimius Severus (193-211) was the scion of a Punic family from Libya. Elagabulus (218-222) was a Syrian. Emperor Philip (244-9) was known colloquially as ‘Philip the Arab’. The empire’s new citizens adopted Roman imperial culture with such zest that, they continued to speak the empire’s language, to believe in the Christian God that the empire adopted from one of its Levantine provinces, and to live by the empire’s laws.

“A similar process occurred in the Arab Empire. When it was established in the mid-seventh century AD, it was based on a sharp division between the ruling Arab-Muslim elite and the subjugated Egyptians, Syrians, Iranians and Berbers, who were neither Arabs nor Muslim. Many of the empire’s subjects gradually adopted the Muslim faith, the Arabic language and a hybrid imperial culture. The old Arab elite looked upon these parvenus with deep hostility, fearing to lose its unique status and identity. The frustrated converts clamoured for an equal share within the empire and in the world of Islam. Eventually they got their way. Egyptians, Syrians and Mesopotamians were increasingly seen as ‘Arabs’. Arabs, in their turn – whether ‘authentic’ Arabs from Arabia or newly minted Arabs from Egypt and Syria – came to be increasingly dominated by non-Arab Muslims, in particular by Iranians, Turks and Berbers. The great success of the Arab imperial project was that the imperial culture is created was wholeheartedly adopted by numerous non-Arab people, who continued to uphold it, develop it and spread it – even after the original empire collapsed and the Arabs as an ethnic group lost their dominion.

In China the success of the imperial project was even more thorough. For more than 2,000 years, a welter of ethnic and cultural groups first termed barbarians were successfully integrated into imperial Chinese culture and became Han Chinese (so named after the Han Empire that ruled China from 206 BC to AD 220). The ultimate achievement of the Chinese Empire is that it is still alive and kicking, yet it is hard to see it as an empire except in outlying areas such as Tibet and Xinjiang. More than 90 per cent of the population of China are seen by themselves and by others as Han.

“We can understand the decolonization process of the last few decades in a similar way. During the modern era Europeans conquered much of the globe under the guise of spreading a superior Western culture. They were so successful that billions of people gradually adopted significant parts of that culture. Indians, Africans, Arabs, Chinese and Maoris learned French, English and Spanish. They began to believe in human rights and the principle of self-
determination, and they adopted Western ideologies such as liberalism, communism, feminism and nationalism.

“During the twentieth century, local groups that had adopted Western values claimed equality with their European conquerors in the name of these very values. Many anti-colonial struggles were waged under the banners of self-determination, socialism and human rights, all of which are Western legacies. Just as Egyptians, Iranians and Turks adopted and adapted the imperial culture that they inherited from the original Arab conquerors, so today’s Indians, Africans and Chinese have accepted much of the imperial culture of their former Western overlords, while seeking to mould it in accordance with their needs and traditions…”

So West European culture or civilization has conquered the world, and the world has adopted westernism. But this has not united a westernized world to the “Old West”. On the contrary, in the name of the western values of human rights and self-determination, speaking very often in western languages and using western technology, it has rebelled against the West…

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An important example of this was the Italo-Ethiopian war. Italy, writes Evans, “had already taken control of parts of the horn of Africa and in the 1890s sought to exceed its influence over Ethiopia. Here the warlord Menelik II (1844-1913), after conquering the provinces of Tigré and Amhara, had declared himself negus, or emperor, in 1889 and concluded a treaty of friendship with the Italians. Unfortunately the treaty said different things in Italian and Amharic. While the Italians’ version gave them control of Eritrea and rights of protectorate over Ethiopia, the Amharic version merely said that Menelik could use Italian diplomats as a proxy in his foreign policy if he wanted to. After this discrepancy came to light, disputes over the treaty intensified until Menelik formally repudiated it in 1893. In 1894 the Italians duly began military action, which escalated until on 1 March 1896 a major battle was fought at Adowa in the mountainous area of Tigré.

“In this encounter 15,000 Italian troops, many of them raw conscripts, equipped with outdated guns and footwear that broke up on the rough rocky terrain, advanced in three columns that became separated because the Italians did not possess proper maps. They were met by nearly 100,000 Ethiopian troops, raised under the country’s feudal system, supplied with modern rifles, and aided by forty-two Russian field guns specially adapted for mountainous terrain. One of the Italian columns retreated in the wrong direction and became trapped in a ravine, where the Ethiopian cavalry slaughtered them in their thousands, egged on by cries of ‘reap, reap!’ from their commander. At a crucial moment Menelik brought in 25,000 fresh reserves and surrounded the other two columns, forcing them to retreat with heavy losses. Altogether 7,000 Italian troops and askaris – Eritrean auxiliaries – were killed. Some 3,000 soldiers in the

Italian expedition were taken prisoner by the Ethiopians, and the rest abandoned the field of battle, along with 11,000 rifles, all their artillery, and most of their supplies. The Italian prisoners were treated well, but 800 of the Eritrean askaris were treated as traitors by the Ethiopians, who chopped off their right hands and left feet. The Italians were forced to recognize Ethiopian independence; Menelik was satisfied, and preferred cautiously not to follow up his victory or provoke retaliation by advancing into Eritrea. In Italy people ripped up railway lines in case the government drafted reinforcements. Outraged patriots pelted Prime Minister Crispi’s house with rocks until he was forced to resign…

"Yet overall the imbalance of forces between European and non-European powers outside the Americas was starkly illustrated in 1898 by the Battle of Omdurman, where an Anglo-Egyptian army led by Major-General Sir Herbert Kitchener (1850-1916) defeated a Sudanese Mahdist force, in what was little more than a massacre: 23,000 Sudanese were killed or wounded, whereas the dead and injured on the British side numbered no more than 430. As the Anglo-French writer Hilaire Belloc (1870-1953) put it: ‘Whatever happens, we have got/The Maxim gun, and they have not.’ If a non-European state wanted to defeat a European invasion it had to follow the example of Ethiopia or Japan and acquire European weaponry and military hardware itself. Modern weaponry was in turn the produce of the great leap forward of European prosperity and industry, science and technology in comparison to other parts of the world. Yet far from being inevitable after 1500, as some historians have claimed, this global imbalance did not really take hold until the third quarter of the nineteenth century. It was the product not just of technological superiority but also of European peace. Things might have been very different had the European nations kept on fighting each other and exporting their conflicts to other parts of the globe, as they had done before 1815. Peace, underpinned by British naval hegemony, allowed the spread of communications networks, telegraph, cables, sea lanes and trade routes, and intercontinental railways, leading to further economic development and a dense network of rapid imperial communications. Global trade expanded almost exponentially under these conditions, in a way that would have been impossible had the major industrializing states been fighting one another. Mass European migration to the Americas and other parts of the world helped build a globalized economy of which Europe and the United States were the main beneficiaries. In this sense, Europe’s borders had become porous as never before. European states were also politically better-organized and more effective in mobilizing their resources. Colonization had its limits, but overall Europe gained a dominance over the rest of the world in the second half of the nineteenth century that it enjoyed neither before nor subsequently.”

15. WELFARISM, SOCIALISM AND CHRISTIANITY

The symbol of Democracy, as E.P. Thompson writes, "was the right of the individual citizen to vote - a right increasingly buttressed from the 1880s onwards by secrecy of the ballot. The vote was often endowed, by enthusiastic radicals and frightened conservatives alike, with a magic power. Too many radicals expected universal suffrage to bring the millennium - to sweep away before it the last relics of feudalism, of aristocratic and plutocratic privilege, of popular squalor and ignorance. Many conservatives and moderate liberals took the radicals at their word, and feared that democracy would demolish monarchy, church, religion, public order, and all that they cherished. Therefore the struggles for extensions of the franchise and secrecy of the ballot were often long and bitter."\(^{212}\)

"The immense increase of population in earlier decades was now producing the most momentous of all modern European phenomena - 'the age of the masses'. This, even more than the spread of democratic ideas, compelled every state to overhaul its machinery of government and administration... Every European government now had to administer and serve the interests of larger and denser agglomerations of people than ever before in the history of mankind. When the First World War began, the United Kingdom was still, as she had been since 1815, the most highly urbanized country in Europe, whereas France clung stubbornly to her rural character. But after her political unification Germany swung over sharply from a population almost as rural as the French to a position in which three out of every five Germans lived in towns. This 'flight to the towns' had begun before 1871, but it now took place in Germany at a speed unrivalled by any other nation.

"These changes in greater or lesser degree affected all European countries. In terms of politics and administration they meant that all governments were confronted with problems that British governments had been obliged to tackle earlier in the century. These were problems of how to govern densely populated industrial towns; how to ensure adequate provision for public health and sanitation, public order, and police; how to protect industrial workers against bad conditions of working and living. Perplexing social problems were forced upon every government by the course of events; and the parallel growth of democratic ideas and of wider electorates ensured for these problems a high priority of attention...

"... Nearly every state in Europe, by 1914, had a code of legislation governing the building of houses and the making of streets; ensuring minimum standards of sanitation, safety, and conditions of labour in factories, mines and mills; regulating the entry of ships into ports and enforcing standards of purity and cleanliness in food and drink. In Britain the first landmarks were Disraeli's Public Health Act of 1875 and a series of housing acts from 1875 onward. With the rapid growth of large towns and of mechanized industry, a larger

\(^{212}\) Thompson, op. cit., p. 353.
proportion of every electorate was an industrial, wage-earning class dwelling in or near large towns and making its living in conditions that demanded greater social discipline, a higher degree of organization, and more sustained administrative activity on the part of governments. Every state, in this minimum sense, was becoming a welfare state even before 1914.  

“Well before the outbreak of the First World War,” writes Evans, “Europe had undergone a social revolution of major dimensions, but of a very different kind from that imagined by Marx or Bakunin. Alongside the political transformation that had convulsed the Continent between 1848 and 1871, the relations between classes had also been transformed, though over a longer period. The traditional landowning aristocracy had been undermined by the forces of economic change, by political reforms such as the abolition of serfdom, by the advent of elected legislatures, however limited their powers, by the ending of corporate privileges such as those that had sustained the Baltic nobility earlier in the century, and by the increasing wealth and ambition of the business, banking and professional classes. A new, hybrid social elite had emerged, based on bourgeois values of thrift, hard work, sobriety and responsibility. These values had come to dominate society and politics in large parts of Europe, finding their expression in urban renewal, sanitation and hygiene, agricultural improvements, penal reform, and the attempt, not always successful, to impose order on the criminal or semi-criminal underworld. They percolated down in various forms to the petty bourgeoisie and the respectable working class, however much their politics may have varied from those of doctors, lawyers, teachers, or businessmen. This was a very different social world from that which emerged from the upheavals of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars…”  

In addition to these changes we see the creation of the movement for women’s emancipation, which may be said to have started with John Stuart Mills’ highly influential tract, The Subjection of Women (1869). Feminist organizations – often linked with socialism - were created in several European countries; the largest was the Women’s Social and Political Union in Britain, the so-called “suffragettes”. However, feminism made little headway in terms of political changes before 1914…  

“The emergence of women in the public sphere,” writes Evans, “was paralleled by a major reorientation of the state in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Europe. This was above all a response to the increasingly powerful articulation of working-class interests, a fundamental aspect of the challenge of democracy in this period. Labour unrest reached unprecedented heights in the last decade and a half before the outbreak of the First World War…”  


215 Evans, op. cit., p. 538.

216 Evans, op. cit., p. 548.
Now welfarism was not new. As early as 1601, according to Robert Tombs, “the best system of poor relief in Europe” had been introduced “under Elizabeth’s Poor Law Act (1601), brought in to replace monastic charity”. Nevertheless, the Church remained the main helper of the poor for a long time. Until the late nineteenth century, as Evans writes, “poverty in its deepest and most radical form had been the object of religious philanthropy, which was gradually being replaced by private and municipal initiative. In Britain it was driven forward in particular by middle-class women such as Octavia Hill (1838-1912), who pioneered the ‘model dwelling’ movement for improved working-class housing, and founded the Charity Organization Society in 1869. This introduced into England the Elberfeld System of poor relief, pioneered in 1852 as a response to the 1848 Revolution in the industrial conurbation where Friedrich Engels grew up. The System established a network of overseers whose task it was to visit the poor, recommend a suitable level of support, check on the probity of their domestic circumstances, and find them a job as soon as possible, which they were obliged to accept on pain of forfeiting their benefits. It took the problem of poverty out of the hands of the Church and turned relief into an instrument of secular social control. The changing rules of secular and ecclesiastical charity over the decades can be observed with particular clarity in the case of the Netherlands, where a new law passed in 1854 made the Churches the primary relief agency; municipalities were only to step in as a last resort. More and more, however, the state had to take on the burden of support – covering 40 per cent of the costs of poor relief in 1855, and 57 per cent in 1913. The medical profession increasingly urged a more dynamic approach to health care, because as the Dutch social commentator Jeronimo de Bosch Kemper (1808-76) wrote in 1851: ‘Improve the health of the people and you will have removed a major, a very great cause of poverty.’ The debate continued until in 1901 the Netherlands finally introduced a Public Health Act, a Housing Act and an Industrial Injuries Act, taking away the primary task of combating poverty from the Church to which it had been entrusted in the previous century. In many respects, however, such secular institutions were not so different from the traditional charitable institutions of the Christian Churches...

“The rise of the welfare state was in essence a response to the growing popularity of left-wing politics, especially among the working-class. Conservatives and liberals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries could see no greater threat to their political position than that posed by socialism, whose central tenets were diametrically opposed to the priority given by mainstream political parties to the idea of the nation. Under the influence of Marx and Engels and their disciples, socialists came to believe that workers in industrialized or industrializing countries were so exploited and oppressed that they owed no allegiance to the capitalists who ruled them nor to the nation state they controlled. Still less did they have an interest in fighting wars, which would only use them as cannon fodder while industrialists grew fat on war profits. The declared aim of the socialist movement was to overthrow the central institutions of ‘bourgeois’ society, including private property, business corporations, the police, the army, the Church, and even the family. They were to be replaced by a state in which property would be owned collectively,

children brought up communally, religion abolished, and businesses run by the workers. In practice, however, the politics of socialism turned out to be more complex, and less frightening, than these terrifying visions suggested. The socialists’ bark was often worse than their bite, and the grand intentions stated in party programmes were in many cases belied by the pragmatism of socialist politicians in practice. Part of the reason for these developments was indeed the rise of the welfare state, which gave the workers a growing stake in the society that socialist theory said should be destroyed. To that extent, the political intentions of its architects could be said to have been fulfilled.”

The welfare state, according to Philip Bobbitt, arose together with the shift, in the late nineteenth century, from the state-nation to the nation-state, from a more liberal to a more collectivist ideal of politics. The logic of this was clear. If the state serves the nation, rather than the other way round, it must deliver a minimum of material prosperity to all the people. For conservatives, this had the added attraction that it pre-empted the socialists who were trying to overthrow the state. Thus in 1884 Bismarck said: “Give the working man a right to work as long as he is healthy, assure him care when he is sick, assure him maintenance when he is old. If you do that and do not fear the sacrifice, or cry out at state socialism - if the state will show a little more Christian solicitude for the working man, then I believe that the gentlemen of the social-democratic programme will sound their bird-call in vain.”

"Far from being the paradoxical fact it is sometimes presented as, Bismarck’s championing of the first state welfare systems in modern Europe, including the first social security program, was crucial to the perception of the State as deliverer of the people's welfare. If the wars of the state-nations were wars of the State that were made into wars of the peoples, then the wars of the nation-states were national wars, fought on behalf of popular ideals. The legitimation of the nation-state thus depends upon its success at maintaining modern life; a severe economic depression will undermine its legitimacy in a way that far more severe financial crises scarcely shoot earlier regimes." Thus according to Harari, Bismarck’s “chief aim was to ensure the loyalty of the citizens rather than to increase their well-being. You fought for your country when you were eighteen, and paid your taxes when you were forty, because you counted on the state to take care of you when you were seventy.”

According to Sir Arnold Toynbee, the German model of the welfare state showed "how to raise a whole population to a standard of unprecedented social efficiency by a system of compulsory education and of unprecedented social security, by a system of compulsory health and unemployment insurance." E.P. Thompson writes: "Just as Germany provided the most

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218 Evans, op. cit., pp. 552-553.
spectacular example, in those years, of massive and speedy industrial expansion, so she also set the pace in systematic social legislation. The emphasis in The German system lay neither on factory legislation, which Bismarck distrusted as external interference in employers’ affairs, nor on unemployment insurance, which he treated as of minor importance. It aimed at a comprehensive national provision for security against the three commonest vicissitudes of urban life - sickness, accident, and incapacity in old age. Acts tackling successively these three problems were passed in 1883, 1884, and 1889. In 1911 the whole law of social insurance was codified and extended to various classes of non-industrial workers, such as agricultural labourers and domestic servants. Before these laws were passed, a multitude of local provisions had been made voluntarily by benefit societies, guilds, burial clubs, and parishes. The Reich system utilized these older forms but gradually absorbed and replaced them by new local and factory associations which administered the insurance schemes. By 1913 some fourteen and a half million persons were insured in this way. To the sickness and pension funds, both workers and employers contributed and both were represented on their management. In the course of time such benefits as free medical attendance and hospital care were extended, and by 1914 codes of factory legislation and of child labour were at last added. Although the prewar Reich did not set up unemployment insurance, it set up labour exchanges, and some municipalities had local schemes of insurance and relief for unemployed workers. Germans were pioneers in the thoroughness and extent of their welfare system. When war began, German workers were more protected against the hazards of an industrial society than those of any other country. This was a not unimportant element in her national solidarity and strength.\textsuperscript{223}

The rest of Europe was quick to follow where Germany led. "Everywhere the state shouldered new kinds of responsibility for the safety and well-being of its citizens, and the principle of contributory insurance helped to reconcile laissez-faire individualism with this spectacular growth of state activity."\textsuperscript{224}

Although this ideological change was made first in Germany, it is most clearly seen in Britain, where, in the first half of the century, as John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge write, the liberals had taken “a decrepit old system and reformed it, establishing a professional civil service, attacking cronyism, opening up markets, and restricting the state’s right to subvert liberty. The British state shrunk in size even as it dealt with the problems of a fast industrializing society and a rapidly expanding global empire. Gross income from all forms of taxation fell from just under 80 million pounds in 1816 to well under 60 million pounds in 1846, despite a nearly 50 percent increase in the size of the population. The vast network of patronage appointees who made up the unreformed state was rolled up and replaced by a much small cadre of carefully selected civil servants. The British Empire built a ‘night-watchman

\textsuperscript{223}Thompson, op. cit., p.358.

\textsuperscript{224}Thompson, op. cit., p. 359.
state’, as it was termed by the German socialist Ferdinand Lasalle, which was both smaller and more competent than its rivals across the English Channel.

“The thinker who best articulated these changes was John Stuart Mill, who strove to place freedom, rather than security, at the heart of governance…”

“For most of the nineteenth century, the British state did a remarkably good job of embodying Mill’s principles. A succession of British governments dismantled old systems of privilege and patronage and replaced them with a capitalist state. Government, the Victorians believed, should solve problems rather than simply collect rents. They built railways, paved roads, and furnished cities with sewage systems and policemen, known as ‘bobbies’, after their inventor, Sir Robert Peel.

“Throughout the nineteenth century, this kind of lean government liberalism spread throughout Europe and across the Atlantic to the United States. Yet its moment did not last long. Mill himself typified the change. The older he grew, the more troubled he became by some profound questions, mainly to do with the persistence of poverty among plenty. How could a society judge each individual on his or her own merits when rich dunces enjoyed the best educations and poor geniuses left school as children to work as chimney sweeps? How could individuals achieve their full potential unless society played a role in providing them with a fair start? The state, he came to feel, had to do more. By its third edition, Mill’s Principles of Political Economy, the bible of British liberalism, had begun to look ever more collectivist…”

“Mill was not alone: the late Victorians (and their imitators around the world) increasingly questioned the laissez-faire certainties of their predecessors, on two grounds. First, the night-watchman state stigmatized the poor: they were deprived of the vote and consigned to workhouses in order to discourage idleness and provide incentives to work and save. In his 1854 novel, Hard Times, Charles Dickens turned ‘utilitarianism’, the term commonly attached to Mill’s thought, into a byword for heartless calculation. Second, British critics of liberalism argued that the only way to outcompete other nations, especially Prussia, was to expand the state. Confronted with Prussia’s world-class public educational system and effective tariffs, the British elite fretted about the naivety of free trade and the quality of their country’s breeding stock…”

Britain’s first welfare legislation may be said to have been Disraeli’s Public Health Act of 1875 and Housing Acts of the late 1870s. However, most Conservatives continued to oppose welfarism. As late as 1886, the minister responsible for the Poor Law, Joseph Chamberlain, said: "The spirit of independence which leads so many of the working classes to make great personal sacrifices rather than incur the stigma of pauperism, is one which

deserves the greatest sympathy and respect... It is not desirable that the working classes should be familiarized with poor relief."226

But the success of the London Dockers’ strike in 1889 showed that the age of labour arrived (the creation of the Labour Party followed soon after), and changes had to be made. Moreover, somebody had to pay for them...

"In Britain the greatest constitutional crisis of the [pre-1914] period, involving a long conflict between the House of Commons and the House of Lords, arose over this very issue. In his budget of 1909 the Liberal chancellor of the exchequer, David Lloyd George, included the whole gamut of new fiscal devices which had been evolving for some years: heavy duties on tobacco and liquor; heavier death duties on personal estates, which had first been introduced by Sir William Harcourt in 1894; graded and heavier income tax; and additional 'supertax' on incomes above a fairly high level; a duty of twenty per cent on the unearned increment of land values, to be paid whenever land changed hands; and a charge on the capital value of undeveloped land and minerals. The Conservative majority in the House of Lords broke convention by rejecting this budget until it could be referred to the electorate for approval, and so initiated a two-year battle, which was ended only by the surrender of the Lords and the passing of the Parliament Act of 1911. This important Act permanently removed the Lords' control over money bills and reduced their power over other bills to a mere capacity to delay them for two years. The merit of death duties, income tax, and supertax in the eyes of radicals and socialists - and their infamy in the eyes of conservatives and more moderate liberals - was that once accepted in principle they were capable of yielding an ever greater return by a simple tightening of the screw. The screw was, in fact, repeatedly tightened throughout the following half century.

"During the 1890s, pari passu with the growth of governmental expenditures on social services and on armaments, Germany and her component states, as well as Italy, Austria, Norway, and Spain, all introduced or steepened systems of income tax. France repeatedly shied away from it, though in 1901 she resorted to progressive death duties; it was 1917 before she at last introduced a not very satisfactory system of income tax. With the drift back to protectionism in commercial policy in the last quarter of the century, indirect taxes generally yielded a higher share of revenue than before. Every state had clung to considerable sources of indirect taxation, and as late as 1900 the bulk of the revenue of most governments came from these sources. Progressive taxation, weighing heavier on the more wealthy, was accepted by liberals as in accord with the principle of equality of sacrifice. To radicals and socialists it was welcome in itself as an instrument for achieving greater equality by systematically redistributing wealth. The modern state was to assume more and more the role of Robin Hood, robbing the rich to feed the poor."227


227 Thompson, op. cit., p. 361.
The question is: is the State right to take on the role of Robin Hood? To put it somewhat crudely: Is robbing the rich to feed the poor a Christian act? And if it cannot be called Christian at the level of the individual citizen, can it be justified at the level of the state? After all, almost all states have practiced some kind of taxation, even if the levels attained at the beginning of the twentieth century were far above the historical norm. Moreover, almost all states have used taxation to help the poor – although, again, not at the level of the pre-1914 generation.

It could be argued that it was precisely the dechristianization of Europe that made the welfare state both necessary and inevitable. Until the nineteenth century, in both East and West, the poor had been looked after by individual wealthy Christians and by the Church; alms-giving remained a cardinal virtue, and the best Church leaders took poor relief very seriously. Thus it was said of St. Gregory the Great (+604) that he would not receive Communion as long as there was one beggar on the streets of Rome.

But the eradication of poverty was never seen as the primary aim of alms-giving. The Lord had said, “The poor you have always with you” (John 12.8), so the complete elimination of poverty was a utopian dream. God, it was believed by Christians, allows some people to be rich and others to be poor for the salvation of both categories – the rich by showing compassion on the poor and through the prayers of those whom they help, and the poor by enduring poverty with patience and thanksgiving, like Lazarus in the Parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man (Luke 16.19-31). And all this is done in the name of Christ and for the sake of salvation in Christ, the Poor Man par excellence: indeed, by giving to the poor man in the name of Christ, you are giving to Christ Himself, Who will reward you accordingly (Matthew 24.31-46). In this way, as the Holy Fathers explained, social inequality can serve for the salvation of all.

However, after the French revolution, the Christian approach to poverty and inequality was increasingly discarded. Under the influence of the false ideas of the revolution, poverty was considered a "scandal", whose solution lay not in voluntary charity by the rich to the poor, but in compulsory taxation of the rich and handouts to the poor administered by "expert" intellectuals. Of course, socialism did not arise on any empty space: it filled the gap caused by the decline in Christian faith and morality with its own faith and morality. Socialism provided a kind of faith that appeared to many to be an expression of Christian love. The question is: is there really such a thing as Socialist Christianity?

At this stage we need to make use of the distinction between minimum (welfare) and maximum (revolutionary) socialism used by E. P. Thompson. After reviewing the proliferation of socialist parties before 1914, Thompson suggests "two general conclusions that have great importance for the later history of Europe. One is that within socialism there was a recurrent and inescapable cleavage: between those parties which, from an early stage in their growth, came to terms with the institutions of parliamentary democracy, with trade unionism and the cooperative movements; and those which held to more
absolutist revolutionary doctrines, whether of Marxism or anarchism, and so dedicated themselves to the task of fighting and overthrowing all other parties and institutions. The best examples of the former are the British and Scandinavian Labour parties and the parliamentary socialist groups of France and Italy; of the latter, the supreme example is the Russian Social Democratic party after 1903. It had not yet become customary to distinguish between them by labelling the former Socialists, the latter Communists. That convention arose only after 1918. But here was the origin of the mid twentieth-century cleavage between western parliamentary socialism and eastern revolutionary communism. All the essentials of that conflict are already present in 1914, save that neither socialism nor communism had by then won power in any country.

"The second conclusion is that parliamentary socialism, like other working-class movements and organizations, grew and flourished most where the traditions and institutions of liberal democracy had already become most fully established. It was in the United Kingdom, Scandinavia, and France that reformist socialism took shape most quickly and won its earliest triumphs. Wherever universal suffrage remained for a long time impeded, as in Italy and Austria-Hungary, or wherever its operation was severely limited by strong central authority, as in Germany, socialists went on using the language and preaching the ideas of revolutionary doctrinaire Marxism... The pattern of socialism is, so to speak, a pattern superimposed on the territorial distribution of liberalism and democracy, and matches the extent of the new electorate.

"These conclusions are clinched by a comparison of the minimum and maximum programmes of policy which the different parties drew up and endorsed at various times. In western countries the parliamentary socialist parties, committed to seeking votes in order to gain political representation, normally drew up minimum programmes of those reforms best calculated to win broad electoral support. Inevitably these were mostly concerned with widening of the franchise, social welfare legislation, an eight-hour day, and improvement of conditions of work. Such was the minimum programme which the Italian Socialist party drew up in 1895. Their more abstract ideological aims were relegated to ultimate or maximum programmes, which appealed more to the intellectuals and preserved something of the party's doctrinal character. Thus, when the French socialist groups combined in 1905, they drew up a common programme which included a statement of ultimate collectivism, of the party's resolve to socialize the means of production and of exchange, and a protestation that it was 'not a party of reform but a party of class struggle and revolution': but it also included an assurance that 'in parliament, the socialist group must dedicate itself to the defence and extension of political liberties and the rights of workers, to the promotion and realization of reforms which will ameliorate the conditions of life and of the class struggle of the working classes'. The difference of emphasis between French and German socialism emerges if this statement is compared with the German Social Democrats' Erfurt Programme, which they adopted in 1891. It was a more thoroughgoing Marxist statement than its predecessor, the Gotha programme of 1875. It propounded orthodox Marxist philosophy as its very foundation, and gave this theoretical basis more prominence.
"But it added, as its immediate and practical aims, demands closely similar to those of Gotha, or of the Italian and French minimum programmes: including universal direct suffrage for men and women over twenty, freedom of expression and meeting, secular education, an eight-hour day, social welfare legislation, and progressive income tax.

"The more fundamental difference between all western socialism and Russian communism becomes clear if these programmes are compared with the Russian Social Democratic programme adopted in 1903. It too, in accordance with precedent, was divided into maximum and minimum aims. But it was not exposed to the Italian or French or German danger of exalting the minimum at the expense of the maximum, in order to gain electoral votes. In western countries since 1871 (and even since 1848) the whole notion of a minimum programme depended on its being attainable within the existing framework of capitalist society without revolution; the whole point of the maximum programme was to keep before men's eyes the doctrines and the ultimate aims of socialism, but to relegate them to a distinct category of aims unattainable without revolution. In Russia both minimum and maximum programmes were of necessity revolutionary. The minimum political demands of 1903 began with the revolutionary overthrow of the tsarist regime and its replacement by a democratic republic. The minimum economic demands were those normally included in the minimum demands of western socialists: an eight-hour day and six-day week; effective factory inspection; state insurance against sickness and old age; the confiscation of church lands. But these, too, in Russia before 1914, were revolutionary demands, and there was no essential difference between this minimum programme and the maximum programme of the proletarian socialist revolution. Indeed the most important decision taken in 1903... was not about programmes at all, but about the actual organization of the party as a militant force, tempered for the struggle against the whole existing order...

"These differences of programmes and of organization involve a still wider contrast. It was not merely an issue of whether socialism should be economic or political in its scope, whether it should concentrate on capturing or on destroying existing states. To enter into competition with other parliamentary parties for winning votes, and to win from government concessions of value to the working classes, enmeshed every social democratic party, however vocal its protestations of ultimate proletarian purposes, in more nationalistic ways of thinking and behaviour. In universal suffrage what counts is the vote of the individual elector, whatever his class; and in restricted electorates majorities lie with the non-proletarian electors. The leaders of a parliamentary socialist party instinctively think in terms not of classes but of individual voters and of majorities. They find themselves thinking in general, national terms, rather than in narrow terms of class war. Their working-class supporters, benefiting increasingly from legislation in their interests passed and enforced by the national state, likewise think more and more in national and non-revolutionary terms, since they become aware that they have more to lose than their chains. The growth of social democracy and parliamentary labour parties brought
about a nationalizing of socialism. This changing outlook was at variance with the older traditions of universal humanitarian socialism which were inherently internationalist in outlook, just as it was in conflict with the resolutely internationalist tenets of orthodox Marxism. The conflicts between socialist movements that had been domesticated or 'nationalized', and revolutionary movements that still thought exclusively in terms of class war and proletarian action, were fought out before 1914. They repeatedly arose in the many congresses of the First and Second Internationals, until in 1914 the supreme issue seemed to be socialism versus nationalism.”

According to this analysis, the "domestication" of socialism in western countries, its yoking to nationalist feeling, was a product of their progress towards universal suffrage, whereas the internationalist, revolutionary character of socialism in the East was a product of its failure to democratize. So the causal nexus was as follows: in the west: democracy => socialism => national socialism; in the east: autocracy => democracy => revolution => international socialism. This would suggest that the triumph of national socialism in Germany in the 1930s was a natural consequence of German historical development, and could well have happened elsewhere in the West, whereas the triumph of international socialism in Russia was an unnatural consequence of - in fact a break in - her natural development. This conclusion runs directly counter to western historians' usual claim that German fascism was a freakish departure from the normal western democratic development, whereas Soviet communism was a natural development of Tsarist "despotism".

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

228 Thompson, op. cit., pp. 405-407, 408.
To many, welfarism appeared to be a Christian product of socialism, a proof that Christianity and socialism were compatible. But this was to ignore both the nature of Christianity and the nature of socialism in its original and "purer" forms. Historically, the founders of socialism were certainly antichristian. Not only Marx and Engels, but before them Saint Simon, Fourier and Owen, were all antichristian theorists. For them, Socialism was much, much more than welfarism. It was and is a whole world-view based on atheism and materialism and directly opposed to Christianity. It stood for an omnipotent State that squeezed religion as far as possible out of the public arena. And this is what Socialist states, both welfarist and revolutionary, have tended to do. Moreover, even in non-Socialist but democratic states, the idea that the will of the people is supreme tends to squeeze out the idea that it is the will of God that is supreme. For Christians, on the other hand, the will of the people can never be the criterion of truth: the possibility always exists that "God is true, while every man is a liar" (Romans 3.4).

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."229

Thus while Christian alms-giving is, or should be, based on love, socialist redistribution is often based on the politics of envy and hatred. Of course, individual Socialists may be - and very often are - motivated by real care for the poor, and enter Socialist politics with no other motive than to alleviate their lot. Nevertheless, the philosophical basis of Socialism is clearly anti-christian. This is not to say that minimal socialism, i.e. welfarism, is incompatible with Christianity or Christian governance. On the contrary: it is difficult to see how any modern country in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries could have survived without a vast increase of the state budget and state activity to protect the masses from the consequences of modern urban civilization. Orthodox Russia was no exception to this rule. In practice, however, - and we see this in even the more moderate socialist parties, - it has proved impossible to "insulate" minimal socialism completely from the antichristian theories of maximal socialism.

Moreover, the “minimal” Socialism of welfarism, no less thoroughly, if more slowly, than “maximal”, revolutionary Socialism, hastens those processes of equalization and homogenization that have come to dominate the modern world to such a harmful degree. These processes were sharply criticized by Constantine Leontiev. "True," he wrote, "the division of Germany [before 1871] sometimes hindered the unity of order, but it also hindered the unity of anarchy."230


"The unity of anarchy", in Leontiev's meaning, was the seemingly unstoppable tendency throughout Europe towards a democratic, egalitarian, atheist society: "Everything in that assimilationist direction from which nothing in the 19th century, neither war nor peace, neither friendship nor enmity, neither liberation nor the conquest of countries and nations, can save. And they will not save until the point of satiety with equality and homogeneity is reached."  

For, as Fr. Basil Sakkas writes, "the technocratic civilization of Antichrist strives to attain two things: a) the peas which fill the tin can have to be a certain uniform size; (b) the men who dwell on earth have to become alike, like those canned peas ['peas in a pod', to use the English expression].

"In order to rule, Antichrist has no need of individuals who are free and conscious, but of 'atoms' which constitute cells, which in turn make up an amorphous, homogeneous and anonymous mass. He seeks to achieve this by various means, utilizing idealistic slogans such as 'Liberty', 'Equality', 'Brotherhood', etc., which, however, have as their basic principle the destruction of the idea of the hierarchy of values. By means of Judeo-Masonry, he aims at the equalization of all persons and all things. Since the family is the strength of the individual and of a conscientious society, it must be abolished slowly by degrees. By means of feminism, he aims first at the equalization of the two sexes, which would replace the hierarchical distinction between man and woman. Then he proposes a 'new couple' which would possess a hierarchical 'joint-rule' and equality between male and female, an equalization from the point of equal rights so that there would be no real head in the new family. He also institutes an equalization of vocations and the outward signs of distinction, and moreover, an equalization of external appearances; the distinction that exists in their dress and hair style must also be confounded. Unfortunately, there are few who recognize that the spirit of Antichrist brings about new formulas in the social structure which have already created dreadful spiritual consequences for the entire world. The family is also warred upon by the decay of morals. The mothers and fathers of tomorrow are often so spiritually and carnally depraved, they can only transmit to their children what they themselves possess. And yet one speaks of 'liberation'.

"The equalization of individuals is performed principally in the religious and spiritual domains. Until recently, each heresy claimed the truth exclusively for itself. Today, however, things are presented under a completely different light. Truth becomes nothing but a relative matter and, in reality, does not exist: it is necessary to destroy the spiritual faculties which God has given man. We do not oppose the cinema and the theatre and television from a spirit of pietism or puritanism, but we ascertain each day that a terrible influence is exercised by these spectacles which seek to inactivate the human mind, which itself has become exhausted and lulled and brings itself to a state of doubt and indifference towards God. Through these things, eternity had become

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231 Leontiev, "Natsional'naia politika kak orudie vsemirnoj politiki", op. cit., p. 527.
something which is uncertain for man, and he limits his efforts to visible things which are the only things he accepts as real and certain. Thus, he joins with other men in their efforts to attain common and earthly ideals; the ‘things which are unseen’ constitute a utopia and an uncertainty as far as he is concerned.

“The natural consequence of this is for man to improve the conditions of his life on this earth, not in a pacific manner but in a pacifist one. The Church becomes an obstacle for him since She constantly reminds him of the futility of this world and endeavours to orient his attention towards the heavens and the things which are to come. The Church demands sacrifices, purity, effort, affliction and rejects all overestimation of earthly things. Hence, the clouded mind is no longer able to discern the absoluteness of the Truth of the Gospels, and it seeks to appease its conscience by a compromise between the demands of religion and the demands of the materialistic world. It seeks to receive an assurance of everlasting life (for itself) just in case there really does exist an eternal life after death. Antichrist has already taken this metaphysical need of man into consideration and thus he has proposed an idealistic religion to him with high-sounding words and slogans: ‘God is love, and therefore we must love all men and consider them as brothers aside from their religious beliefs.’ Above all else, we must ‘live in peace with one another with sentiments of mutual respect towards the ideas, customs, usages and traditions of others’: we must turn out attention towards always doing good and we should come to aid of others who are in need and especially those who suffer; because ‘it is of little importance what one believes, just so long as he is sincere in his convictions and his motives’ and many other such words does he say which, at first sight, fascinate one.

“Since heresy strives by means of a half truth to conceal the other half, there is never mention made of the second coming of Christ, or of eternal Judgement, or of confessing the Faith ‘even to death’: nor are the many admonitions of the Gospel heeded, such as ‘strait is the gate and narrow is the way’ (Matthew 6.12), ‘we must through much affliction enter into the Kingdom of God’ (Acts 14.22); ‘in the world ye shall have tribulation’ (John 16.33); the saved shall ‘come out of great tribulation’ (Apocalypse 7.14); nor, finally, that ‘the whole world lieth in evil’ (I John 5.19, Galatians 1.14, Ephesians 5.16), a fact which one encounters on almost every page of the Sacred Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers.

“Obviously, the coming of the Antichrist is not discussed (II Thessalonians 2) nor that in the last days ‘evil men and seducers shall grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived’ (II Timothy 3.13), nor that ‘many shall be deceived’ (Mark 13.6) ‘if it were possible, even the elect’ (Mark 13.22), nor that ‘in the last days, people shall more and more become egoists, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof’ (II Timothy 3.2-3).”
16. RELIGION IN AMERICA

The United States was relatively untouched by the democratic and socialist revolutions in Europe. And its religious life was also different…

"After the Franco-Prussian war," writes Karen Armstrong, "the nations of Europe began a frantic arms race which led them inexorably to the First World War. They appeared to see war as a Darwinian necessity in which only the fittest would survive. A modern nation must have the biggest army and the most murderous weapons that science could provide, and Europeans dreamed of a war that would purify the nation's soul in a harrowing apotheosis. The British writer I.F. Clarke has shown that between 1871 and 1914 it was unusual to find a single year in which a novel or short story describing a horrific future war did not appear in some European country. The 'Next Great War' was imagined as a terrible but inevitable ordeal: out of the destruction, the nation would arise to a new and enhanced life. At the very end of the nineteenth century, however, British novelist H.G. Wells punctured this utopian dream in The War of the Worlds (1898) and showed where it was leading. There were terrifying images of London depopulated by biological warfare, and the roads of England crowded with refugees. He could see the dangers of a military technology that had been drawn into the field of the exact sciences. He was right. The arms race led to the Somme and when the Great War broke out in 1914, the people of Europe, who had been dreaming of the war to end all wars for over forty years, entered with enthusiasm upon this conflict, which could be seen as a collective suicide of Europe. Despite the achievements of modernity, there was a nihilistic death wish, as the nations of Europe cultivated a perverse fantasy of self-destruction.

"In America, some of the more conservative Protestants were in the grip of a similar vision, but their nightmare scenario took a religious form. The United States had also suffered a terrible conflict and an ensuing anticlimax. Americans had seen the Civil War (1861-65) between the northern and southern states in apocalyptic terms. Northerners believed that the conflict would purge the nation; soldiers sang of the 'glory of the coming of the Lord'. Preachers spoke of an approaching Armageddon, of a battle between light and darkness, liberty and slavery. They looked forward to a New Man and a New Dispensation emerging, phoenix-like, from this fiery trial. But there was no brave new world in America either. Instead, by the end of the war, whole cities had been destroyed, families had been torn asunder, and there was a white southern backlash. Instead of utopia, the northern states experienced the rapid and painful transition from an agrarian to an industrialized society. New cities were built, old cities exploded in size. Hordes of new immigrants poured into the country from southern and eastern Europe. Capitalists made vast fortunes from the iron, oil, and steel industries, while workers lived below subsistence level. Women and children were exploited in the factories: by 1890, one out of every
five children had a job. Conditions were poor, the hours long, and the machinery unsafe. There was also a new gulf between town and countryside, as large parts of the United States, especially the South, remained agrarian. If a void lay beneath the prosperity of Europe, America was becoming a country without a core.

“The secular genre of the 'future war' which so entranced the people of Europe, did not attract the more religious Americans. Instead, some developed a more consuming interest than ever before in eschatology, dreaming of a Final War between God and Satan, which would bring this evil society to a richly deserved end. The new apocalyptic vision that took root in America during the later nineteenth century is called premillennialism, because it envisaged Christ returning to earth before he established his thousand-year reign. (The older and more optimistic postmillennialism of the Enlightenment, which was still cultivated by liberal Protestants, imagined human beings inaugurating God's Kingdom by their own efforts: Christ would only return to earth after the millennium was established.) The new premillennialism was preached in America by the Englishman John Nelson Darby (1800-82), who found few followers in Britain but toured the United States to great acclaim six times between 1859 and 1877. His vision could see nothing good in the modern world, which was hurtling towards destruction. Instead of becoming more virtuous, as the Enlightenment thinkers had hoped, humanity was becoming so depraved that God would soon be forced to intervene and smash their society, inflicting untold misery upon the human race. But out of this fiery ordeal, the faithful Christians would emerge triumphant and enjoy Christ's final victory and glorious Kingdom.

"Darby did not search for mystical meaning in the Bible, which he saw as a document that told the literal truth. The prophets and the author of the Book of Revelation were not speaking symbolically but making precise predictions which would shortly come to pass exactly as they had foretold. The old myths were now seen as factual logoi, the only form of truth that many modern Western people could recognize. Darby divided the whole of salvation history into seven epochs or 'dispensations', a scheme derived from a careful reading of scripture. Each dispensation, he explained, had been brought to an end when human beings became so wicked that God was forced to punish them. The previous dispensations had ended with such catastrophes as the Fall, the Flood, and the crucifixion of Christ. Human beings were currently living in the sixth, or penultimate, dispensation, which God would shortly bring to an end in an unprecedentedly terrible disaster. Antichrist, the false redeemer whose coming before the End had been predicted by St. Paul, would deceive the world with his false allure, take everybody in, and then inflict a period of Tribulation upon humanity. For seven years, Antichrist would wage war, massacred untold numbers of people, and persecute all opposition, but eventually Christ would descend to earth, defeat Antichrist, engage in a final battle with Satan and the forces of evil on the plain of Armageddon outside Jerusalem, and inaugurate the Seventh Dispensation. He would rule for a thousand years, before the Last Judgement brought history to a close. This was a religious version of the future-
war fantasy of Europe. It saw true progress as inseparable from conflict and near-total destruction.

"There was one important difference, however. Where the Europeans imagined everybody enduring the ordeal of the next great war, Darby provided the elect with a way out. On the basis of a remark of St. Paul's, who believed that Christians alive at the time of Christ's Second Coming would be 'taken up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air', Darby maintained that just before the beginning of the Tribulation, there would be a 'Rapture', a snatching-up of born-again Christians, who would be taken up to heaven and so would escape the terrible sufferings of the Last Days. Rapture has been imagined in concrete, literal detail by premillenialists. They are convinced that suddenly airplanes, cars, and trains will crash, as born-again pilots and drivers are caught up into the air while their vehicles careen out of control. The stock market will plummet, and governments will fall. Those left behind will realize that they are doomed and that the true believers have been right all along. Not only will these unhappy people have to endure the Tribulation, they will know that they are destined for eternal damnation."

Armstrong argues that premillennialism was modern "in its literalism and democracy. There were no hidden or symbolic meanings, accessible only to a mystical elite. All Christians, however rudimentary their education, could discover the truth, which was plainly revealed for all to see in the Bible. Scripture meant exactly what it said: a millennium meant ten centuries; 485 years meant precisely that; if the prophets spoke of 'Israel', they were not referring to the Church but to the Jews; when the author of Revelation predicted a battle between Jesus and Satan on the plain of Armageddon outside Jerusalem, that was exactly what would happen. A premillennial reading of the Bible would become even easier for the average Christian after the publication of The Scofield Reference Bible (1909), which became an instant best-seller. C.I. Scofield explained this dispensational vision of salvation history in detailed notes accompanying the biblical text, notes that for many fundamentalists have become almost as authoritative as the text itself."

The leader of this conservative, fundamentalist Protestantism was Charles Hodge. In 1874 he wrote What is Darwinism?, an attack on evolutionism. "To any ordinarily constituted mind," he wrote, "it is absolutely impossible to believe that the eye is not the work of design." However, while Hodge and the fundamentalists were pleading for common sense and doctrinal orthodoxy, "other Protestants, such as the veteran abolitionist Henry Ward Beecher (1813-87), were taking a more liberal line. Dogma, in Beecher's view, was of secondary importance, and it was unchristian to penalize others for holding different


233 Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 139-140.
theological opinions. Liberals were open to such modern scientific enterprises as Darwinism or the Higher Criticism of the Bible. For Beecher, God was not a distant, separate reality but was present in natural processes here below, so evolution could be seen as evidence of God's ceaseless concern for his creation. More important than doctrinal correctness was the practice of Christian love. Liberal Protestants continued to emphasize the importance of social work in the slums and cities, convinced that they could, by their dedicated philanthropy, establish God's Kingdom of justice in this world. It was an optimistic theology that appealed to the prosperous middle classes who were in a position to enjoy the fruits of modernity. By the 1880s, this New Theology was taught in many of the main Protestant schools in the northern states.

“American Protestants were discovering that they were profoundly at odds. Their difference threatened to tear the denominations apart. The chief bone of contention at the end of the nineteenth century was not evolution but the Higher Criticism. Liberals believed that even though the new theories about the Bible might undermine some of the old beliefs, in the long term they would lead to a deeper understanding of scripture. But for the traditionalist, 'Higher Criticism' seemed to symbolize everything that was wrong with the modern industrialized society that was sweeping the old certainties away. By this time, popularizers had brought the new ideas to the general public, and Christians discovered to their considerable confusion that [supposedly] the Pentateuch was not written by Moses, nor the Psalms by King David; the Virgin Birth of Christ was a mere figure of speech, and the Ten Plagues of Egypt were probably natural disasters which had been interpreted later as miracles. In 1888, the British novelist Mrs. Humphry Ward published Robert Elsmere, which told the story of a young clergyman whose faith was so undermined by the Higher Criticism that he resigned his orders and devoted his life to social work in the East End of London. The novel became a best-seller, which indicated that many could identify with the hero's doubts. As Robert's wife said, 'If the Gospels are not true in fact, as history, I cannot see how they are true at all, or of any value.'”

Outside mainstream Protestantism, there were a multitude of other religious movements in the United States. “The Harvard historian of psychiatry Eugene Taylor has identified an entire culture, what he terms a ‘shadow culture’ of more than two hundred years of alternative religions and ‘pop-psych’ movements. Standing outside mainstream psychiatry and the mainstream churches, these movements comprised a variety of attempts to live in the post-Christian world, both before and after Nietzsche. Taylor calls it both a ‘visionary’ tradition and a ‘crank literature’, a ‘folk psychology’ and a ‘psychospiritual tradition’, focusing as it does on an ‘experiential interpretation of higher consciousness’. His survey is a clear account of an otherwise woolly world...

234 Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 143-144.
“The fashions and fads for homeopathy, phrenology, mesmerism, hydrotherapy, shamanism and Orientalism all came and went in the nineteenth century, some making bigger waves than others, but all leaving their mark. Figures like Emerson, Thoreau and Margaret Fuller were all regarded as inspirational leaders with spiritual qualities, together with John Muir, an immigrant from Scotland who arrived in the United States in 1849 and who, among his other achievements, deserves credit for preserving the Grand Canyon and the Petrified Forest in Arizona as national parks.

“Perhaps the rise and fall of many of these fads, Taylor argues, the last three decades of the nineteenth century ‘produced full-fledged organizations devoted to spiritual therapeutics that were national, even international, in scope.’ One of the reasons for this, he says, was that the visionary tradition had been gradually suppressed within American high culture ‘because of the rising tide of positivistic science’.

“Utopian socialism was another part of the visionary tradition, Taylor says, and here he includes the Mormons, the Seventh-Day Adventists, charismatic religions aiming to change the experience of intimacy and alternative forms of consciousness. Theosophy, New Thought and Christian Science drew their strengths from an interest in life after death, producing a parallel interest in ‘automatic speech’, table tipping, slate writing and ‘rapping and knocking’, as he puts it. Books with titles such as The Divine Law of Cure, Ideal Suggestion through Mental Photography and Esoteric Christianity and Mental Therapeutics proliferated. In 1881, the Massachusetts Metaphysical College was formed by Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, which taught pathology, ‘therapeutics’, moral science and metaphysics. The American Society for Psychical Research was founded in 1885. Despite many experiments, Taylor reports drily, ‘the psychical researchers were unable to discover any evidence for the reality of life after death’. But they did ‘establish the reality of the unconscious’.235

“The impressive-sounding Boston School of Psychopathology comprised an additional knot of investigators, including William James, the neurologist James Jackson Putnam, Richard Clarke Cabot and the neuropsychologist Morton Prince. Many of its members ‘had direct ties either by birth or upbringing with the intuitive psychology of character formation bequeathed to them by Emerson and the Concord transcendentalists.’ The Boston School was much more scientific than any of its predecessors, being much influenced by Darwin. Even so, James maintained, it was psychic phenomena that ‘were destined to change the very shape of science in the future’.

235 For other scientific attempts to prove the existence of the soul, see Richard Sugg, “The Search for the Soul”, History Today, April 2017, pp. 48-50. (V.M.)
“There was, Taylor goes on, a dramatic expansion of psychotherapy in America after 1900, as people began to acknowledge that ‘spirituality played a key role in a person’s mental health’. Mystic states were key here, he said, but they were so different form ‘the normal everyday waking state’ that ‘we don’t know how to deal with them’. The Emmanuel movement was launched in 1906 at Emmanuel Church in Worcester, Massachusetts, ‘to fuse modern scientific psychotherapy with the Christian teachings of moral character development’. These meetings, which drew upward of five hundred people twice a week, came to be called ‘moral clinics’.

“In addition, from 1893 when the World’s Parliament of Religions met in America as part of the Columbian Exposition, marking the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of the New World, a number of Indian swamis and Japanese Zen spiritual elders, plus the White Russian mystic G.I. Gurdjieff, toured the United States to great acclaim, speaking at universities. These events resulted in the establishment, among other things, of Vedanta societies...”236

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17. ART, ETHICS AND OSCAR WILDE

Towards the end of the nineteenth-century, there arose a pan-European movement in art and literature called symbolism, a reaction against the realist trend of most of mid- and late-nineteenth-century art and literature. Its spiritual home was France, but it also had important offshoots in Romania and Russia. Symbolism was linked to subjectivist and pantheist trends in philosophy and religion, especially in Russia, and to aestheticism in England.

“Symbolists believed that art should represent absolute truths that could only be described indirectly. Thus, they wrote in a very metaphorical and suggestive manner, endowing particular images or objects with symbolic meaning. Jean Moréas published the Symbolist Manifesto (“Le Symbolism”) in Le Figaro on 18 September 1886, [naming] Charles Baudelaire, Stéphane Mallarmé, and Paul Verlaine as the three leading poets of the movement. Moréas announced that symbolism was hostile to ‘plain meanings, declamations, false sentimentality and matter-of-fact description’, and that its goal instead was to ‘clothe the Ideal in a perceptible form’ whose "goal was not in itself, but whose sole purpose was to express the Ideal.’”[237]

Symbolism was influenced not only by poets but also by philosophers such as Schopenhauer and composers such as Wagner. “The search for a ‘new music’ by the Wagnerians,” writes Sir Richard Evans, “expressed a growing dissatisfaction with conventional cultural forms that could be found in many branches of the arts in the later decades of the nineteenth century. In painting the camera was beginning to subvert Realism and representation and forced artists to rethink the nature of their business. Sharing many of the basic features of Realism, above all its focus on the ordinary and the everyday, a group of Parisian artists led by Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919), Alfred Sisley (1839-99) and Camille Pissarro (1830-1903), and influenced by Édouard Manet, broke free of the conventions of the Academy to paint not so much static, finished representations of reality as works recording its often fleeting impressions on the observer. They reacted the rejection of their work by the Academy’s annual Salon by forming a Salon des Refusés (Exhibition of Rejects) in 1863. Eventually known as the Impressionists, a term invented by a critic of Monet’s Impression, Sunrise (1872), they used free brushstrokes and paintings created en plein air rather than in the studio to record the effects of light in bold colours. Monet even painted the same subject – haystacks, for example, or Waterloo Bridge, or Rouen Cathedral – scores of times in succession to show the impression it made on the viewer in different kinds of sunlight, mist, fog, or shade, at different times of the day or the year. [238] The use of vivid and constantly changing colour offered the

[238] It could be argued that the first Impressionist painter was the Englishman J.M.W. Turner (1775-1851) in such compositions as Steam and Speed: The Great Western Railway (1844). (V.M.)
Impressionists a conscious alternative to photography, at a time when colour film has been invented only on an experimental scale without entering general circulation. Met initially with public ridicule, the Impressionists had gained widespread acceptance by the end of the nineteenth century.

“Impressionism found its way into music through the compositions of Claude Debussy (1862-1918), though he himself denied that his works were what ‘imbeciles call “impressionism” a term employed with the utmost inaccuracy’. Eschewing traditional musical form, he composed piano and orchestral pieces that used unconventional harmonies and subtle timbres to evoke the moods and emotions aroused by subjects such as mists, gardens in the rain, reflections on the water, a submerged cathedral, the hills of Anacapri or, in his most extended orchestral work, La Mer (1903-5), the play of the waves and their dialogue with the wind. His compatriot Maurice Ravel (1875-1937), who also rejected the categorization of his works as Impressionist, produced more abstract music, but several of his pieces, such as the piano suite Miroirs (1905), with its evocation of a boat on the waves or church bells in a valley, could fairly be described as belonging to the genre. A major influence on Debussy in particular was the French Symbolist movement in literature, which represented a significant move away from Realism and towards spirituality and the imagination. It was futile, argued a ‘Symbolist Manifesto’ published in 1886 by the Greek-born poet Jean Moréas (1856-1910), to attempt to represent reality in a direct way: what was required was, as in the work of the Impressionists, to depict ‘not the thing, but the effect it produces’. The three poets in the manifesto, Charles Baudelaire (1821-67), Paul Verlaine (1844-96) and Stéphane Mallarmé (1842-98), used the sounds of words as much as their meaning to convey the impression of their subject. Debussy and Ravel were inspired by the Symbolist poets to write a number of compositions, notably Debussy’s poem for orchestra, Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune (1894) and Ravel’s Trois Poèmes de Stéphane Mallarmé (1914) for soprano and chamber ensemble.

“Symbolist painters such as the German Franz von Stuck (1863-1928), whose painting Sin (1893) showed a female nude emerging seductively from the shadows, the Norwegian Edvard Munch (1863-1944), best known for The Scream (1893), and the Austrian Gustav Klimt (1862-1918), whose Judith and the Head of Holofernes (1901) surrounded an erotically charged semi-nude with Byzantine-style gold, retained a figurative core to their work while placing it in a determinedly non-figurative context. The emphasis on surface decoration in Klimt’s painting paralleled the emergence of Art Nouveau or Jugendstil in the decorative arts in the 1890s, with its curves and parabolas and cursive scripts. The new style was evident, for example, in the architectural decoration of the Norwegian town of Ålesund, rebuilt in three years after its complete destruction by fire in 1904, and in many buildings of the newly constructed Hungarian city of Pest. In Russia writers such as Alexander Alexandrovich Blok (1880-1921) and...
Andrei Bely (pen-name of Boris Nikolaevich Bugaev, 1880-1934) incorporated sound-pictures and experimental rhythms into their poetry. The Symbolists were rebelling against not only the notion of realistic representation but also the conscription of the arts into the service of nationalism, arguing instead that the arts were entirely autonomous from social or political life. The French writer Joris-Karl Huysmans (1848-1907) dealt in his novel Against Nature what Zola called a ‘terrible blow’ to Realism: the action, or rather inaction, of the novel takes place in a hallucinatory world in which the imagined becomes more real than the real. In Oscar Wilde’s The Picture of Dorian Gray (1890) the ravages of the protagonist’s dissolute life are visited upon his portrait, while his own physical appearance remains untouched by age or the consequences of sin. Art, argued Wilde and the other proponents of Aestheticism in the 1890s, should be pursued for art’s sake, and for no other purpose.”

The Anglo-Irish playwright Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) belonged to a movement related to Symbolism known as Aestheticism, whose slogan, deriving from Théophile Gautier, was “Art for Art’s sake” – the idea that art existed for no higher purpose than itself. Wilde, as we shall see, went so far as to call art “the supreme reality”. At the other extreme, Friedrich Nietzsche denied that there was any such thing as art for art’s sake: “When the purpose of moral preaching and of improving man has been excluded from art, it still does not follow by any means that art is altogether purposeless, aimless, senseless — in short, l’art pour l’art, a worm chewing its own tail. ‘Rather no purpose at all than a moral purpose!’ — that is the talk of mere passion. A psychologist, on the other hand, asks: what does all art do? does it not praise? glorify? choose? prefer? With all this it strengthens or weakens certain valuations. Is this merely a ‘moreover’? an accident? something in which the artist’s instinct had no share? Or is it not the very presupposition of the artist’s ability? Does his basic instinct aim at art, or rather at the sense of art, at life? at a desirability of life? Art is the great stimulus to life: how could one understand it as purposeless, as aimless, as l’art pour l’art?”

Wilde devoted not only his whole artistic oeuvre to the doctrine of aestheticism, but also his whole life. With a ferocious energy that belied the mask of idleness and indifference that he put on, he tried to make the whole of his life into a work of art. As he said to André Gide: “J’ai mis tout mon génie dans ma vie, je n’ai mis que mon talent dans mes œuvres.” He made his art, including his greatest work, his life, into an idol in the strict sense of the word. And God destroyed him for his idolatry...

239 Evans, op. cit., pp. 530-532.
“Art is the great stimulus to life,” said Nietzsche. Indeed, but how does it best accomplish this purpose? By the grim realism of the late-nineteenth-century novel? Or by some other means? The “art for art’s sake” movement was reacting against grim realism in art. Their slogan was not expressing a frivolous attitude to life, but rather an exalted attitude to art, as not so much “holding a mirror up to nature”, in Hamlet’s words, but revealing beauties in life that are invisible to the non-artistic eye, even if the artist has to resort to distorting the surface reality, - that is to say, “lying” – in order to do it. This is a highly ambitious, romantic, if not Platonic understanding of art, which is perhaps best expressed – albeit with characteristic hyperbole – in a dialogue by Oscar Wilde called “The Decay of Lying” (1891), in which “lying” – i.e. the artistic imagination – exalted above a narrowly realist, positivist understanding of truth.

“If something cannot be done,” writes Wilde, “to check, or at least to modify, our monstrous worship of facts, Art will become sterile and beauty will pass away from the land.

“Even Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson, that delightful master of delicate and fanciful prose, is tainted with this modern vice, for we know positively no other name for it. There is such a thing as robbing a story of its reality by trying to make it too true, and The Black Arrow is so inartistic as not to contain a single anachronism to boast of, while the transformation of Dr. Jekyll reads dangerously like an experiment out of the Lancet. As for Mr. Rider Haggard, who really has, or once had, the makings of a perfectly magnificent liar, he is now so afraid of being suspected of genius that when he does tell us anything marvellous, he feels bound to invent a personal reminiscence, and to put it into a footnote as a kind of cowardly collaboration…”

The famous French realist novelist Zola comes in for even harsher criticism. Although Wilde admits that Zola is “not without power” at some times, for example in Germinal, still “his work is entirely wrong from beginning to end, and wrong not on the ground of morals, but on the ground of Art. From any ethical standpoint it is just what it should be. The author is perfectly truthful, and describes things exactly as they happen. What more can any moralist desire?… [Zola’s characters] have their dreary vices, and their drearier virtues. The record of their lives is absolutely without interest. Who cares what happens to them? In literature we require distinction, charm, beauty and imaginative power. We don’t want to be harrowed and disgusted with an account of the doings of the lower orders…”

“Charles Dickens was depressing enough in all conscience when he tried to arouse our sympathy for the victims of the poor-law administration...

“Believe me, my dear Cyril, modernity of form and modernity of subject-matter are entirely and absolutely wrong. We have mistaken the common livery of the age for the vesture of the Muses, and spend out days in sordid streets and hideous suburbs of our vile cities when we should be out on the hillside with Apollo. Certainly we are a degraded race and have sold our birthright for a mess of facts...

“Art begins with abstract decoration, with purely imaginative and pleasurable work dealing with what is unreal and non-existent. This is the first stage. Then Life becomes fascinated with this new wonder, and asks to be admitted to its charmed circle. Art takes life as part of her rough material, recreates it, and refashions it in fresh forms, is absolutely indifferent to fact, invents, dreams, and keeps between herself and reality the impenetrable barrier of beautiful style, of decorative or ideal treatment. The third stage is when Life gets the upper hand, and derives Art out into the wilderness. This is the true decadence, and it is from this that we are now suffering…”

“What is true about the drama and the novel is no less true about those arts that we call the decorative arts. The whole history of these arts in Europe is the record of the struggle between Orientalism, with its frank rejection of imitation, its love of artistic convention, its dislike to the actual representation of any object in Nature, and our own imitative spirit. Wherever the former has been paramount, as in Byzantium, Sicily and Spain, by actual contact or in the rest of Europe by the influence of the Crusades, we have had beautiful and imaginative work in which the visible things of life are transmuted into artistic conventions, and the things that Life has not are invented and fashioned for her delight. But wherever we have returned to Life and Nature, our work has always become vulgar, common and uninteresting…”

It is perhaps unexpected to find Wilde as a champion of Byzantine art, which, however, contains a “spiritual realism” that escapes him. (His contemporary and fellow Anglo-Irish poet, W.B. Yeats, expresses a deeper appreciation of the iconic, non-representational, timeless but at the same time spiritually realistic quality of Byzantine art in “Sailing to Byzantium”:

\[
\text{Gather my soul} \\
\text{Into the artifice of eternity.}
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Wilde would have been right to date the beginning of Western art’s imitative, representative, materialist tendency to the time of the Crusades, when the West

\begin{footnotesize}244\end{footnotesize} Wilde, “The Decay of Lying”, pp. 1077, 1078.

\begin{footnotesize}245\end{footnotesize} Wilde, “The Decay of Lying”, p. 1080.
had just broken communion with Orthodox Byzantium. Instead, he places the beginning of this “decadence” somewhat later, in the Renaissance; it was already evident, he asserted, in the more boorish parts of Shakespeare’s plays. But he lays the main blame for contemporary boorish realism on America, its “crude commercialism, its materialising spirit, its indifference to the poetic side of things…”

“Art finds her own perfection within, and not outside of herself. She is not to be judged by an external standard of resemblance. She is a veil, rather than a mirror. She has flowers that no forests know of, birds that no woodland possesses. She makes and unmakes many worlds, and can draw the moon from heaven with a scarlet thread. Hers are the ‘forms more real than living man’, and hers the great archetypes of which things that have existence are but unfinished copies. Nature has, in her eyes, no laws, no uniformity. She can work miracles at her will, and when she calls monsters from the deep they come…”

“Paradox though it may seem – and paradoxes are always dangerous things – it is none the less true that Life imitates Art far more than Art imitates Life…”

“The Greeks, with their quick artistic instinct, understood this, and set in the bride’s chamber the statue of Hermes or of Apollo, that she might bear children as lovely as the works of art that she looked at in her rapture or her pain. They knew that Life gains from Art not merely spiritually, depth of thought and feeling, soul-turmoil or soul-peace, but that she can form herself on the very lines and colours of art, and can reproduce the dignity of Pheidias as well as the grace of Praxiteles. Hence came their objection to realism. They disliked it on purely social grounds. They felt that it inevitably makes people ugly, and they were perfectly right. We try to improve the conditions of the race by means of good air, free sunlight, wholesome water, and hideous bare buildings for the better housing of the lower orders. But these things merely produce health, they do not produce beauty. For this, Art is required, and the true disciples of the great artist are not his studio-imitators, but those who become like his works of art, be they plastic as in Greek days, or pictorial as in modern times; in a word, Life is Art’s best, Art’s only pupil.

“As it is with the visible arts, so it is with literature… Schopenhauer had analysed the pessimism that characterises modern thought, but Hamlet invented it. The world has become sad because a puppet was once melancholy. The Nihilist, that strange martyr who has no faith, who goes to the stake without enthusiasm, and dies for what he does not believe in, is a purely literary product. He was invented by Tourgenieff, and completed by Dostoevski. Robespierre came out of the pages of Rousseau… Literature always anticipates life. It does not copy it, but moulds it to its purpose…

“Life holds up the mirror to Art, and either reproduces some strange type imagined by painter or sculptor, or realises in fact what has been dreamed in fiction... Young men... have died by their own hand because by his own hand Werther died.”

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Wilde’s life held up the mirror to his art, to the whole of the “art for art’s sake” movement, and, still more generally, to the whole of western bourgeois civilization as it reached its glittering climax in the years leading up to the Great War.

After a brilliant double First in Classics at Oxford, Wilde embarked on a literary career that soon had the literary greats of the time – and there were many – gaping in astonishment. His plays An Ideal Husband and The Importance of Being Ernest packed playhouses then as now, eliciting tumultuous praise. His fellow Irishman George Bernard Shaw – no mean playwright himself – wrote after the first performance of An Ideal Husband: “Mr Oscar Wilde’s new play at the Haymarket is a dangerous subject, because he has the property of making his critics dull... He plays with everything with wit, with philosophy, with drama, with actors and audience, with the whole theatre...”

In view of Wilde’s notorious homosexuality, it is tempting to search for the beginnings of this fall in his earlier life. But if the beginnings can be discerned, they are not in his sexual life - he had a happy marriage, and two sons. Nor were the themes of his plays particularly scandalous – otherwise he would never have become so popular in that strait-laced Victorian milieu.

The clue is to be found in the fact that while the predominant tone of his writing is not serious, he himself took his writing ultra seriously, to the point of self-worship. Thus he describes himself as “a man who stood in symbolic relations to the art and culture of my age. I treated Art as the supreme reality, and life as a mere mode of fiction. I awoke the imagination of my century so that it created myth and legend around me. I summed up all systems in a phrase, and all existence in an epigram...”

So the underlying disease of Wilde, as of his whole generation, was pride and blasphemy. His gifts were genuine, and his work was by no means superficial (“the supreme vice”, according to Wilde, is “shallowness”); in it are to be found both wit and wisdom. But if “Art is the supreme reality” and “Aesthetics are higher than ethics”251, then there is no room for God or morality (although he was fascinated by Catholicism). Indeed, “no artist had ethical sympathies,” he

251 Wilde, “The Critic as Artist”.
wrote. “An ethical sympathy in an artist is an unpardonable mannerism of style. No artist is ever morbid. The artist can express everything...”

Having made of himself a Romantic man-god-artist, Wilde’s fall was swift and steep. As his grandson Vyvyan Holland writes, by 1895 “Wilde had now reached the pinnacle of his success. Two plays of his were drawing crowded audiences in the West End, and actor-managers were falling over one another to write for them. Then the Marquess of Queensbury, with the object of attacking his son, Lord Alfred Douglas, because of his [homosexual] friendship with Wilde, launched a campaign of ungovernable fury on Wilde. The story has been told often enough; Alfred Douglas, whose only object was to see his father in the dock, persuaded Oscar Wilde to bring a prosecution for criminal libel against him. Lord Queensbury was triumphantly acquitted and his place in the dock was taken by Oscar Wilde, who was sentenced to two years imprisonment.”

In De Profundis, a letter written from prison to his former lover, Wilde shows a moving determination not to spare himself and not to yield to hatred of the man who “in less than three years had ruined me from every point of view” (although he did not spare him a lengthy description of how he had done that): “After my terrible sentence, when the prison-dress was on me, and the prison-house closed, I sat amidst the ruins of my wonderful life, crushed by anguish, bewildered by terror dazed through pain. But I would not hate you. Every day I said to myself, ‘I must keep Love in my heart today, else how shall I live through the day.’ I reminded myself that you meant no evil, to me at any rate: I set myself to think that you had but drawn a bow at a venture, and that the arrow had pierced a King between the joints of the harness. To have weighed you against the smallest of my arrows, the meanest of my losses, would have been, I felt unfair. I determined I would regard you as one suffering too. I forced myself to believe that at last the scales had fallen from your long-blinded eyes. I used to fancy, and with pain, what your horror must have been when you contemplated your terrible handiwork. There were times, even in those dark days, the darkest of all my life, when I actually longed to console you. So sure was I that at last you have realised what you had done...”

Released from prison, Wilde fled from the opprobrium of the English Pharisees – as he wrote,

I think they love not Art

Who break the crystal of a poet’s heart

That small and sickly eyes may glare or gloat

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- to self-imposed exile in his beloved France as a penitent publican. He died soon after, penniless and miserable, in a French hotel. However, “all his life,” says his grandson, “my father had an intense leaning towards religious mysticism, and was strongly attracted to the Catholic Church, into which he was received on his death bed in 1900.”

What did this final act in the life of the notorious roué mean? Perhaps, as in the similar case of Byron’s death-bed conversion to Orthodoxy, it was a final recognition that the supreme reality is not Art, but God, and that Ethics are higher than Aesthetics. Certainly if there was one subject on which Wilde, against his principles, expressed an “ethical sympathy”, it was in his withering condemnation of the English middle classes who so admired him, and of the Anglican Church whose hypocrisy he abominated: “The dreams of the great middle classes of this country… are the most depressing things I have ever read. They are commonplace, sordid and tedious. There is not even a fine nightmare among them. As for the Church, I cannot conceive anything better for the culture of a country than the presence in it of a body of men whose duty it is to believe in the supernatural, to perform daily miracles, and to keep alive that mythopoeic faculty which is so essential for the imagination. But in the English Church a man succeeds, not through his capacity for belief, but through his capacity for disbelief. Ours is the only Church where the sceptic stands at the altar, and where St. Thomas is regarded as the ideal apostle. Many a worthy clergyman, who passes his life in admirable works of kindly charity, lives and dies unnoticed and unknown, but it is sufficient for some shallow uneducated passman out of either University to get up in his pulpit and express his doubts about Noah’s ark, or Balaam’s ass, or Jonah and the whale, for half of London to flock to hear him, and sit open-mouthed in rapt admiration at his superb intellect. The growth of common sense in the English Church is a thing very much to be regretted. It is really a degrading concession to a low form of realism…”

So Wilde’s last act was to reject appreciative but moralistic and unbelieving England for frivolous but beautiful and forgiving France; he exchanged English undogmatic Protestantism for French dogmatic Catholicism…

In the twenty-first century Wilde’s countrymen, exceeding even his contemporaries’ pride and blasphemy, have made of his sin an object of “gay pride”, thereby nullifying the greatest achievement of his life, his real (albeit incomplete) repentance. The greatness of his art is now firmly established, it has stood the test of time. But the greatness of the last years of his life, when, as we may hope, he redeemed himself through suffering and faith, showing in his own life the falseness of his own idolatrous theory that art and the artist are greater than life and the Creator of life, still awaits just appreciation…

II. THE EAST: THE GOD-CHOSEN RACE (1861-1894)
18. “THE NEW MAN”

Soon after ascending the throne, Tsar Alexander II lifted the ban on travel abroad and the limitations on the numbers of university students; censorship on the press was eased. The Decembrists, whom Nicholas I had repressed, were allowed to return from exile. Thus Prince Volkonsky, a relative of Tolstoy, was given a rapturous reception in Moscow... These developments, together with the fact that the leading Slavophiles of the pre-war period, such as Khomiakov and Kireyevsky, died soon after the war, meant that by the beginning the ideological struggle was shifting in favour of the westerners. Only this new wave of westernism was much more radical than its predecessor...

Perhaps the most typical representative of this new generation was Dmitri Pisarev. “Allow us, youths,” he wrote in May, 1861, “to speak, write and publish, allow us to shake off through our natural scepticism those things which have become stale, that clapped-out junk, which you call general authorities.’ ‘Here is the concluding word of our youth camp: what can be broken should be broken; that which withstands a blow can stay, but that which will fly off into fragments is rubbish; in any case beat to the right and to the left, no harm will come of it nor can come of it...’ ‘Literature in all its varieties must strike at one point; it must with all its powers emancipate the human person from those various restrictions which make him ashamed of his own thought, caste prejudices, the authority of tradition, the striving for a common ideal and all that outdated rubbish which hinders the living man from breathing and developing freely.”

The new generation of educated malcontents was called “the intelligentsia”, a term, according to Sir Richard Evans, “originally coined by the Polish philosopher and nationalist activist Karol Libelt (1807-75) to denote the men and women who actively campaigned for Polish national identity on the basis of language, culture and education. The term meant both more and less than its equivalent in the world of the Baltic Germans, the literati; it did not include the whole of the educated middle class (the German Bildungsbürgertum) but on the other hand it did have a specific connotation of civic activism, particularly – in the light of official restrictions on freedom of speech – in literature, which thus took on a highly political character. Initially drawn from the nobility, the members of the Russian intelligentsia were gradually joined by people of less well-defined social origins, the raznochintsy (people of miscellaneous social rank), largely because of the expansion of the professional classes, the universities, and the secondary school system. In 1833, 79 per cent of secondary school pupils were sons of nobles and bureaucrats, but by 1885 this proportion had fallen to 49 per cent. The proportion of commoners among these pupils had risen over the same period from 19 per cent to 44 per cent. By 1894, too, there were 25,000 students at Russian universities. Long before this students began to organize themselves and produce newsletters with titles such as The Living Voice and The Unmasker. The students formed the audience for the new intelligentsia and eventually supplied it with new recruits: they were, as one commentator remarked, ‘the barometer of public opinion’.
“As the students began to demand the dismissal of ineffectual professors, forcing two in Moscow to resign in 1858, a reaction set in. One group of professors complained that ‘the student is no longer a pupil but is becoming a master’. Admissions were curtailed and the police came back into the universities to supervise conduct. Exemptions from tax were removed, drastically reducing the numbers of the poor ‘academic proletariat’. Meetings could be held only with permission from the university authorities. This clampdown radicalized many students. A number were arrested and expelled. Similar events happened in the provinces. More generally, as newsletters and magazines began to appear in greater numbers, the failure of Alexander II to push forward with more reforms, above all his refusal to introduce an elected national legislature, propelled students and members of the intelligentsia sharply to the left...”

In 1862 there appeared two novels portraying the “new man” of the intelligentsia: Chernyshevsky’s What is to be Done? and Turgenev’s Fathers and Sons... Nikolai Gavrilovich Chernyshevsky (1828-89) was the editor of a radical periodical, Sovremennik (The Contemporary). In his novel he gave a positive portrayal of the new man in the figure of Rakhmetev.

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

“Allowing the publication of Chernyshevsky’s novel was one of the biggest mistakes the tsarist censor ever made: for it converted more people to the cause of the revolution than all the works of Marx and Engels put together (Marx himself learned Russian in order to read it). Plekhanov, the ‘founder of Russian Marxism’, said that from that novel ‘we have all drawn moral strength and faith in a better future’. The revolutionary theorist Tkachev called it the ‘gospel’ of the movement; Kropotkin the ‘banner of Russian youth’. One young revolutionary of the 1860s claimed that there only three great men in history: Jesus Christ, St. Paul and Chernyshevsky. Lenin, whose own ascetic lifestyle bore a disturbing resemblance to Rakhmetev’s, read the novel five times in one summer. He later

acknowledged that it had been crucial in converting him to the revolutionary movement. ‘It completely reshaped me,’ he told Valentinov in 1904. ‘This is a book which changes one for a whole lifetime.’ Chernyshevsky’s importance, in Lenin’s view, was that he had ‘not only showed that every right-thinking and really honest man must be a revolutionary, but also – and this is his greatest merit – what a revolutionary must be like’. Rakhmetev, with his superhuman will and selfless dedication to the cause, was the perfect model of the Bolshevik.

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

In *Fathers and Sons* Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev (1818-83) portrayed the generation that came of age after the Crimean War, whose members were characterized by a sharp and categorical rejection of the values of their fathers. The latter, whether they were Slavophiles or Westerners, were generally believers in God and lovers of their country. But the sons were almost invariably Westerners – and of the most extreme kind: not believers but positivists and atheists, not liberals but supporters of revolutionary socialism.

The “son” in Turgenev’s novel was Bazarov, whom the author calls a “nihilist”, that is, “a person who does not take any principle for granted, however much that principle may be revered". The term “nihilism” was first introduced, according to B.P. Kosmin, by Michael Nikiforovich Katkov (1818-87), editor of the conservative *Russkij Vestnik* (Russian Herald) and publisher of Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky. He diagnosed Bazarov’s spiritual illness as proceeding from his lack of rootedness in the national soil: “Man taken separately does not exist. He is everywhere part of some living connection, or some social

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organization... Man extracted from the environment is a fiction or an abstraction. His moral and intellectual organization, or, more broadly, his ideas are only then operative in him when he has discovered them first as the organizational forces of the environment in which he happens to live and think.”

Bazarov was a caricature of the nihilists, materialists who believed only in natural science. We see him dissecting frogs, and he dies from a disease contracted from dissecting a human corpse. As Sir Isaiah Berlin writes, he “takes deliberate pleasure in describing himself and his allies as ‘nihilists’, by which he means no more than that he, and those who think like him, reject everything that cannot be established by the rational methods of natural science. Truth alone matters: what cannot be established by observation and experiment is useless or harmful ballast – ‘romantic rubbish’ – which an intelligent man will ruthlessly eliminate. In this heap of irrational nonsense Bazarov includes all that is impalpable, that cannot be reduced to quantitative measurement – literature and philosophy, the beauty of art and the beauty of nature, tradition and authority, religion and intuition, the uncritised assumptions of conservatives and liberals, of populists and socialist, of landowners and serfs. He believes in strength, will-power, energy, utility, work, in ruthless criticism of all that exists. He wishes to tear off masks, blow up all revered principles and norms. Only irrefutable facts, only useful knowledge, matter. He clashes almost immediately with the touchy, conventional Pavel Kirsanov: ‘At present,’ he tells him, ‘the most useful thing is to deny. So we deny.’ ‘Everything?’ asks Pavel Kirsanov. ‘Everything,’ ‘What? Not only art, poetry... but even... too horrible to utter...’ ‘Everything.’ [...] ‘So you destroy everything... but surely one must build, too?’ ‘That’s not our business... First one must clear the ground.’

“The fiery revolutionary agitator Bakunin, who had just then escaped from Siberia to London, was saying something of this kind: the entire rotten structure, the corrupt old world, must be razed to the ground, before something new can be built upon it...”

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


262 Rose, Nihilism, Forestville, Ca.: Fr. Seraphim Rose Foundation, 1994, p. 34.
The growth of nihilism fairly soon elicited an anti-liberal reaction in the Russian government. Thus in 1866, Count Dmitri Tolstoy, a relative of the novelist, was appointed Minister of Education. As A.N. Wilson writes, “he caused an immediate about-turn in educational policies. He regarded the superficial materialist outlook of the young to have been caused by not doing enough Latin and Greek, and he abolished the teaching of science in all Russian grammar schools. The police, the army, the Holy Synod were all, likewise, put into reverse gear…”

However, these measures were reactionary rather than truly regenerative; they were reactions to the illness that treated the symptoms but not the cause; they did not bring health to the patient - that is, educated society, which continued, on the whole, to despise the government and all its works. Profound exposures of the nihilism of the “new man” would appear: in the later novels of Dostoyevsky, in some of the writings of the Optina elders, and, much later, in the collection of essays by ex-Marxists entitled Vekhi (Signposts). The State, however, produced very little in the way of a creative response to this threat to its very existence; and this failure must be counted as one of the causes of the Russian revolution...

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19. THE EMANCIPATION OF THE SERFS

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

According to A.I. Sheparneva, "The failures of the Crimean war were connected by the Westerners with God's punishment striking Russia for all her vices and absurdities, by which they understood the existence in the country of serfdom and the despotic character of the State administration. Despotism and serfdom, as the Westerners noted, hindered the normal development of the country, preserving its economic, political and military backwardness." 264

Although there were good landowners as well as bad, and although, as English observers noted, the Russian peasants were on the whole richer than their British counterparts265, the fact remains that the lot of the serf was undoubtedly a wretched one in many cases.

He was completely dependent on his noble owner, who could exploit him with little fear of punishment. Thus Sir Richard Evans writes: "Russian noble landowners frequently lived away from their estates. They spent much of their time and money in St. Petersburg or in French resorts and central European spas, running up enormous debts at the gambling table. Even if they were not indebted or mortgaged up to the hilt, they often saw their estates as little more than sources of income to sustain their lifestyle in the big city... What mattered indeed was the powerlessness of the enserfed. There were estates where peasants were beaten or whipped by their lord, or put in an iron collar if they disobeyed his orders..." 266

However, serfs, unlike slaves, had rights as well as duties. “Law and custom required the seigneur to provide for his serfs in hard times, to care for the sick, the elderly and the feeble-minded if their families were unable to look after them, and to feed the serfs and their draught animals while they were working for him. In many areas the serfs had the right to graze their animals on the seigneur’s pastures, to glean the pickings from harvested fields on his estate, to send their pigs to root in the lord’s forest, and to enter his forest to cut wood. In turn, the seigneur usually had the right to graze his animals on the village common land and make use of the common forests.

264 Sheparneva, "Krymskaia vojna v osveschenii zapadnikov" (The Crimean war as interpreted by the Westerners), Voprosy Istorii (Questions of History), 2005 (9), p. 37).


266 Evans, op. cit., p. 86.
“Encompassed as they were by a web of rights and duties, serfs could still be bought and sold along with the land they rented or owned. If the seigneur sold an estate, the serfs on it passed to the new owner. The state often gave tacit approval to the practice of selling serfs on their own without land, as implied in a Russian law that banned the use of the hammer at public auctions of serfs, or in a regulation of 1841 that made it illegal to sell parents and their unmarried children separately from one another. In Russia serfs were not just tillers of the soil; increasingly, they were enrolled as domestic servants, footmen, coachmen, cooks and much more besides.”  

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

"With the military character of the state," wrote St. Ignaty Brianchaninov, Bishop of the Black Sea (+1867) "it was impossible for the military class not to occupy the first place in the state. In particular in ancient and middle-period Russia the military element absorbed and overshadowed all other elements...

"The necessity of muzzling the self-will of the simple people and the impossibility of having a police force in an unorganized state forced Tsar Boris Godunov to tie the peasants to the lands. Then all the Russian peasants became unfree...

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

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267 Evans, op. cit., p. 91.
Tsar Nicholas I had long planned to emancipate the serfs, and was able to improve the lot of the State serfs considerably. Thus L.A. Tikhomirov wrote: "Under Emperor Nicholas I the government undertook a restructuring of the State peasants. The Emperor made a very good choice for the executor of his thought in Count Kiselev, one of the greatest statesmen that Russia has ever given birth to. Thus one of the most remarkable social organizations in our history was created. Lands the size of the whole of Europe were united in the hands of the State, the peasants were abundantly endowed [with them], and the system of repatriations gave an exit to new generations of the farming class. A remarkable system of national provision for the struggle against poor harvests was created. The improvement of the farming culture of 20 million peasants became the object of obligatory and conscious work on the part of the ministry. Moreover, the peasants were personally free, and their communities were ruled by men chosen by themselves. After two decades of effort this extensive organization was finally put on its feet."270

"Now," continues Bishop Ignaty, "the prosperously reigning Emperor Alexander II has found the matter already prepared and has found it necessary to change the form of administration of landowners' peasants. What is the essential significance of the improvement in the peasants' way of life? It is the change in the form of their administration. They are being given freedom, but not self-will. They are coming out from under the jurisdiction of the landowners as if from under the supervisions of educators and guardians, into a relationship of personal service to the state."271

The Tsar declared: "It is better to abolish serfdom from above than wait for it to abolish itself from below." For the serfs were becoming violent...272 This was not caused by poverty alone. "The peasants," wrote the senator, Ya. A. Soloviev, "either were disturbed in whole regions by false rumours about freedom, or were running away from cruel landlords, or resisted the decrees of unjust landowners. The landlords feared both the government and the peasants. In a word, serfdom

270 Tikhomirov, "Pochemy ia perestal byt' revoliucionerom" (Why I ceased to be a revolutionary), Kritika Demokratii (A Critique of Democracy), Moscow, 1997, p. 26.

271 Polnoe Zhizneopisanie Svятителa Ignatia Brianchaninova, op. cit.

272 Eric Hobsbawm writes: "There were 148 outbreaks of peasant unrest in 1826-34, 216 in 1835-44, 348 in 1844-54, culminating in the 474 outbreaks of the last years preceding the emancipation of 1861." (The Age of Revolution, 1789-1848, London: Abacus, 1962, p. 362) Ronald Seth writes: "A Russian historian, Vasily Semevsky, who died in 1916, using official records as a basis, claimed that there were 550 peasant uprisings in the sixty years of the nineteenth century prior to liberation; while a later Soviet historian, Inna Ignatovich, insists, upon equally valid records, that there were in fact 1,467 such rebellions in this period. And in addition to these uprisings serfs deserted their masters in hundreds and thousands, sometimes in great mass movement, when rumours circulated that freedom could be found 'somewhere in the Caucasus'." (The Russian Terrorists, London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1966, pp. 20-21) (V.M.)
was beginning to shake and with each day became more and more unsuitable: both for the peasants, and for the landlords, and for the government."²⁷³

The peasants understood their relationship with their noble masters to be: "we are yours, but the land is ours", or even: "we are yours, and you are ours".²⁷⁴ While this was unacceptable to the Tsar, he did accept that "emancipation was, in [Prince Sergius] Volkonsky's words, a 'question of justice, a moral and a Christian obligation, for every citizen that loves his Fatherland.' As the Decembrist explained in a letter to Pushkin, the abolition of serfdom was 'the least the state could do to recognize the sacrifice the peasantry has made in the last two wars: it is time to recognize that the Russian peasant is a citizen as well'.²⁷⁵

In any case, there were major benefits to be gained from emancipation from a purely material point of view. Emancipation would pave the way for more efficient agriculture and the provision of labour for the industrialization of Russia²⁷⁶, so sorely needed in view of the relative failure of the Crimean War, by freeing the peasants from the commune as soon as they had paid their redemption payments. These would then be free to seek work in the towns and factories.

Again, as Sir Geoffrey Hosking writes, "the existence of serfdom obstructed modernization of the army and thereby burdened the treasury with huge and unproductive military expenditure. As the military reformer R.A. Fadeyev pointed [out], 'Under serfdom, anyone becoming a soldier is freed; hence one cannot, without shaking the whole social order, admit many people to military service. Therefore we have to maintain on the army establishment in peacetime all the soldiers we need in war.'"²⁷⁷


²⁷⁶ This applied also to the production of armaments. The Crimean war had revealed Russian rifles to be very inefficient. Therefore priority had to be given to new armaments technologies and factories. But that required a free labour force instead of the system of forced labour of serfs that was then in operation. For "in the words of a report on the Tula Armory in 1861: 'It would seem to be generally indisputable that only free men are capable of honest work. He who from childhood has been forced to work is incapable of assuming responsibility as long as his social condition remains unchanged.'" (David Landes, The Wealth and Poverty of Nations, London: Abacus, 1999, p. 241). (V.M.)

Philip Bobbitt confirms this judgement: "Because service in the army was rewarded by emancipation, serfs had to be recruited for long periods; otherwise, the number of those bound to the land would have plummeted. Thus recruitment provided only about 700,000 men. There was no reserve. Such measures did not fill the needs of contemporary warfare, which required universal, short-term conscription, followed by service in the reserve. An adequate system, however, would move all serfs through the army in a generation. Therefore modern conscription and reserve service meant the emancipation of the serfs. And this is precisely what happened. In 1861 the serfs were freed; universal military service followed in 1874. Six years' active service and a nine-year reserve created a total force of 1.35 million." 278

Indeed, so important does Bobbitt consider Russia's defeat in the Crimean war, and the emancipation of the serfs and the introduction of universal conscription which that defeat entailed, that he described it as "completing her constitutional transition to a state-nation", a transition which all the other major powers in Europe had already made in response to the emergence of the first state-nation, Napoleonic France.

But there were still more advantages to the emancipation of the serfs. Thus it would save the poorer nobles from bankruptcy. For "by 1859, one-third of the estates and two-thirds of the serfs owned by the landed nobles had been mortgaged to the state and noble banks. Many of the smaller landowners could barely afford to feed their serfs. The economic argument for emancipation was becoming irrefutable, and many landowners were shifting willy-nilly to the free labour system by contracting other people's serfs. Since the peasantry's redemption payments would cancel out the gentry's debts, the economic rationale was becoming equally irresistible." 279 Nor would they have to wait for the peasants to pay them: the government would immediately pay them 80% of the value of the land by wiping out their debts, while the peasants, having been given their freedom gratis, would be given a 49-year period within which to pay for the land at a cheap rate of interest. The remaining 20% would be paid by the peasants directly to the landowners in cash payments or labour with the aid of generous loans from the government.

The question of the emancipation of the serfs tended to cut across these ideological discussions. Supporters of emancipation could be found in all camps; but among the more Slavophile and Orthodox thinkers could also be found


279 Figes, Natasha's Dream, p. 144. "More than 80% of the small and middle nobility were in debt to the state on the security of their own estates, and this debt would have been unpayable if it had not been for the reform. The value of the payments for the land cleared many debts." (Krivosheev and Krivosheev, op. cit. p. 20).
anxieties about its possible effects on the ethnic and religious cohesion of the country. In order to understand these concerns, we need to look at the origins of the institution of the peasant commune.

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

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

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

right of the mir to distribute and redistribute plots among members of the 'commune'."²⁸¹

Again, according to Pipes, "the origins of the Russian commune are obscure and a subject of controversy. Some see in it the spontaneous expression of an alleged Russian sense of social justice, while others view it as the product of state pressures to ensure collective responsibility for the fulfilment of obligations to the Crown and landlord. Recent studies indicate that the repartitional commune first appeared toward the end of the fifteenth century, became common in the sixteenth, and prevalent in the seventeenth. It served a variety of functions, as useful to officials and landlords as to peasants. The former it guaranteed, through the institution of collective responsibility, the payment of taxes and delivery of recruits; the latter it enabled to present a united front in dealings with external authority. The principle of periodic redistribution of land ensured (at any rate, in theory) that every peasant had enough to provide for his family and, at the same time, to meet his obligations to the landlord and state."²⁸²

The reform was announced in a manifesto written by Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow (now returned to favour under Alexander II) on February 19, 1861. It was in general well received. Thus St. Ignaty Brianchaninov saw it as "a most happy initiative, a majestic order amazing Europe". He argued: "1. That both the Word of God and the Church - both the Universal Church and the Russian Church - in the persons of the Holy Fathers, has never said anything at all about the abolition of civil slavery, that there is nothing in common between spiritual and civil freedom, that both slaves and masters were constantly taught by the Church the most exact and conscientious fulfilment of their obligations, that the violators of Christ's commandment on love were subject to rebukes and exhortations.

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

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


²⁸² Pipes, op. cit., p. 98.
"But one must not think that civil liberty morally exalts only the peasants: the class of the nobility must unfailingly enter onto a higher level of moral achievement in renouncing the ownership of slaves. That is the characteristic of self-sacrifice and the offering of material goods as a sacrifice for spiritual goods: it exalts, changes and perfects man."\textsuperscript{283}

According to Dostoyevsky, far from undermining the traditional bonds of society, emancipation in fact strengthened the bond between the Tsar and the people, the union in faith and love which was at the very heart of Holy Russia. For the peasants had always looked to the Tsar as their father and protector against the greed of the landowners and officials. They had been expecting the Tsar to liberate them, and their expectations had been fulfilled. For Dostoyevsky, as Igor Volgin writes, "the reform of 1861 created a historical precedent of exceptional importance. It presented an example of voluntary renunciation of an age-old historical injustice, a peaceful resolution of a social conflict that threatened to have terrible consequences. In this sense the emancipation of the peasants was as it were the first step to 'the Russian resolution of the question': the action taken from above hinted at the possibility of the creation of a world-order that would be founded on justice - and only on justice."\textsuperscript{284}

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

"So recently these hopes have been completely realized. Would the people renounce their further hopes? Wouldn't the latter, on the contrary, be strengthened and reinforced, since after the peasants' reform the Tsar became the people's father not merely in hope but in reality. This attitude of the people toward the Tsar is the genuine, adamant foundation of every reform in Russia. If you wish, there is in Russia no creative, protective and leading force other than this live organic bond of the people with their Tsar, from which everything is

\textsuperscript{283} Polnoe Zhizneopisanie Sviatitelia Ignatia, pp. 335-336.

\textsuperscript{284} Volgin, Poslednij God Dostoevskogo (Dostoyevsky's Last Year), Moscow, 1986, pp. 32-33.
derived. For instance, who would have ventured to dream about the peasants' reform without knowing and believing in advance that the Tsar was a father to the people, and that precisely this faith of the people in the Tsar as their father would save and protect everything and stave off the calamity?\(^\text{285}\)

Inevitably, however, many were disappointed. Many of the peasants had not expected to pay for the land, and found the payments greater than the rents they had been paying earlier. Moreover, once liberated, they lost access to timber and firewood in landowners' forests. Again, "the Law allowed landowners considerable leeway in choosing the bits of land for transfer to the peasantry - and in setting the price for them. Overall, perhaps half the farming land in European Russia was transferred from the gentry's ownership to the communal tenure of the peasantry, although the precise proportion depended largely on the landowner's will. Owing to the growth of the population it was still far from enough to liberate the peasantry from poverty."\(^\text{286}\)

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

Moreover, "during the conservative reign of Alexander III legislation was passed which made it virtually impossible for peasants to withdraw. This policy was inspired by the belief that the commune was a stabilizing force which strengthened the authority of the bol'shak [head of the individual peasant household], curbed peasant anarchism, and inhibited the formation of a volatile landless proletariat."\(^\text{287}\) So while the government genuinely wanted to free the peasant, both as a good deed in itself, and in order to exploit his economic potential, its desire to strengthen the bonds of the commune tended to work in the opposite direction...

The radicals said that the reform provided "inadequate freedom". However, the real problem was not so much "inadequate freedom" as the fact that emancipation introduced "the wrong kind of freedom". The very composer of the manifesto, Metropolitan Philaret, had doubts about emancipation.\(^\text{288}\) True freedom, according to the Metropolitan, "is Christian freedom - internal, not external freedom, - moral and spiritual, not carnal, - always doing good and never rebellious, which can live in a hut just as comfortably as in an aristocrat's or tsar's house, - which a subject can enjoy as much as the master without ceasing


\(^{286}\) Figes, \textit{Natasha's Dream} p. 145.

\(^{287}\) Pipes, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 98-99.

\(^{288}\) Metropolitan Ioann (Snychev), \textit{Zhizn' i deiatel'nost' mitropolita Filareta} (The Life and Activity of Metropolitan Philaret), Tula, 1994.
to be a subject, - which is unshakeable in bonds and prison, as we can see in the Christian martyrs'. This freedom was not lost under serfdom. Rather, it was emancipation that threatened this true Christian freedom by introducing the demand for another, non-Christian kind.

In fact, as we have seen, the old order, though harsh, was never really one of traditional slavery. It had been dictated by the military situation of the time, in which Russia had vast extended borders with no natural defences. A quasi-monastic way of life was developed in which everyone from the Tsar to the humblest peasant had his "obedience". The Tsar had to obey his calling; the nobles had to obey the Tsar (by providing military service or service in the bureaucracy); and the peasants had to obey the landowners. It was a common effort for a common cause - the preservation of Orthodox Russia. Nobody literally "owned" anybody else. But there were relations of obedience enforced by law that were carried out, for the most part, in the Spirit of Orthodoxy. For, as St. John of Kronstadt said, "the varied forms of service... to the tsar and the fatherland are an image of the main service to our heavenly King, which must continue forever. Him first of all are we are obliged to serve, as fervent slaves of His by creation, redemption and providence... Earthly service is a test, a preparatory service for service in the heavens".

The weakness of the system was the often cruel behaviour of the landowners, who had begun to lose their feeling of duty both to the state and to their serfs. The peasants, correspondingly, began to see their obedience to the nobles as a burden that was not justified, as in the past, by the defence of the land. As such, the formal structure probably had to change in view of the change in its spiritual content.

But the change in formal structure from patriarchal to civil after 1861 meant that the sanctifying bonds of obedience broke down still faster than they would have done otherwise. To that extent, the reform, though rational from a politico-economic point of view, was harmful. As Schema-Monk Boris of Optina said: "The old order was better, even though I would really catch it from the nobleman... Now it's gotten bad, because there's no authority; anyone can live however he wants."

Fr. Lev Lebedev writes: "Later critics of the reform also justly point out that it suffered from an excessive 'slant' in one direction, being inspired most of all by the idea of the immediate emancipation of the serfs from the landowners, but without paying due attention to the question how and with what to substitute the guiding, restraining and, finally, educating function of 'the lords' (the


290 St. John of Kronstadt, Moia Zhizn' o Khriste (My Life in Christ), Moscow, 1894.

291 Victor Afanasyev, Elder Barsanuphius of Optina, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 2000, pp. 216, 217. The old family retainer in Chekhov's The Cherry Orchard also believed that the rot set in with "Freedom" (Hayward, in Obolensky, op. cit., p. 13).
landowners) for the peasants. Indeed, delivered as it were in one moment to themselves, to their own self-administration (after 100 years of the habit of being guided by the lord), could the Russian peasants immediately undertake their self-administration wisely and truly, to their own good and that of the Fatherland? That is the question nobody wanted to think about at the beginning, being sometimes ruled by the illusion of the 'innateness' of the people's wisdom!... They began to think about this, as often happens with us, 'in hindsight', after they had encountered disturbances and ferment among the peasantry. All the indicated mistakes in the reform of 1861 led to the peasantry as a whole being dissatisfied in various respects. Rumours spread among them that 'the lords' had again deceived them, that the Tsar had given them not that kind of freedom, that the real 'will of the Tsar' had been hidden from them, while a false one had been imposed upon them. This was immediately used by the 'enlighteners' and revolutionaries of all kinds. The peasants gradually began to listen not to the state official and the former lord, but to the student, who promised 'real' freedom and abundant land, attracting the peasant with the idea of 'the axe', by which they themselves would win all this from the deceiving-lords... In such a situation only the Church remained in her capacity of educator and instructor of the people, which task she immediately began to fulfill, although it was very difficult because of the restricted and poor condition of the Church herself. Therefore there soon arose the question of the broadening and strengthening of the rights and opportunities of the Russian Church. The most powerful and influential person who completely understood this was Pobedonostsev, who did a great deal in this respect, thereby eliciting the hatred of all 'democrats'.

"But in spite of inadequacies and major mistakes, the reform of 1861, of course, exploded and transfigured the life of Great Russia. A huge mass of the population (about 22 million people) found themselves a free and self-governing estate (class), juridically equal to the other estates. This immediately elicited the need to build its life and activity on new foundations..."292

This judgement was echoed by J.M. Roberts: "In retrospect [the emancipation of the serfs] seems a massive achievement. A few years later the United States would emancipate its Negro slaves. There were far fewer of them than there were Russian peasants and they lived in a country of much greater economic opportunity, yet the effect of throwing them on the labour market, exposed to the pure theory of laissez-faire economic liberalism, was to exacerbate a problem with whose ultimate consequences the United State is still grappling. In Russia the largest measure of social engineering in recorded history down to this time was carried out without comparable dislocation and it opened the way to modernization for what was potentially one of the strongest powers on earth..."293


20. METROPOLITAN PHILARET AND CHURCH REFORM

We have noticed the important role played by Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow in the emancipation manifesto. It is not surprising, therefore, that his advice should have been solicited in other reforms, too, including, of course, Church reform. And yet, as Gregory Frazee writes, “from the very onset of the Great Reforms, Philaret expressed deep reservations about ambitious plans for a radical reconstruction of Russian state and society. In a sermon delivered at Chudovo Monastery in 1856 (and ostensibly directed at more radical perspectives, but implicitly applicable to those with excessive ambitions for reform), Philaret upbraided those who ‘work on the creation and establishment of better principles (in their opinion) for the formation and transformation of human cities. For more than half a century, the most educated part of mankind, in places and times, see their transformation efforts in action, but as yet, never and nowhere, have they created a “calm and tranquil life”. They know how to disturb the ancient buildings of states, but not how to create something solid. According to their blueprints, new governments are suddenly built – and just as quickly collapse. They feel burdened by the paternal, reasonable authority of the tsar; they introduce the blind and harsh authority of the popular crowd and endless fights among those seeking power. They seduce people by assuring that they will lead them to freedom, but in reality they lead them away from lawful liberty to wilfulness, and then subject them to oppression.’

Philaret was still more candid in his private correspondence. The same year, 1856, after receiving a far-reaching proposal to restore the Church’s prerogatives, Philaret warned that ‘it is easy to discern what should be improved, but not so easy to show the means to attain that improvement.’ His experience over the next few years only intensified his abiding scepticism. In February 1862, he wrote a close confidante that ‘now is not the time to seek new inventions for Church authority. May God help us to preserve that which has not been plundered or destroyed’.”

Appeals were even made, writes Fr. Alexis Nikolin, “for the summoning of a Local Council of the Russian Church. However, conditions for that had not yet ripened. The Russian Church, in the opinion of the holy hierarch Philaret (Drozdov), was not yet ready for it at that time. His words are well-known: ‘The misfortune of our time is that the quantity of sins and carelessnesses that have piled up in the course of more than one century almost exceed the strength and means of correction.’ The holy hierarch Philaret considered that a change in the situation could take place as a result of a Church initiative, but not from State supervision…”


295 Nikolin, Tserkov’ i Gosudarstvo (Church and State), Moscow, 1997, p. 124.

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Why should Philaret, the churchman par excellence, turn down the opportunity to increase the Church’s independence in relation to the State? Partly because “the Great Reforms... entailed a relaxation of the oppressive censorship of the Nikolaevan era, primarily to stimulate public involvement in the reform process and to complement and correct the activities of officialdom. But glasnost’ — as it was then termed — also entailed an unprecedented discussion of the Church and its problems. Philaret, understandably, found this critical comment in the press deeply disturbing, partly because it revealed the transparent animus of the educated and privileged toward the Church, but also because the government — ostensibly duty bound to defend the Church — allowed such publications to circulate. Even a conservative newspaper like Moskovskie Vedomosti elicited sharp complaints from Philaret, but far worse was to appear in the moderate and liberal press. The flow of antireligious publications made Philaret increasingly suspicious: ‘Is there not a conspiracy striving to bring everything honourable into contempt and to undermine the convictions of faith and morality so that it will be easier to turn everything into democratic chaos?’”

Philaret’s archconservatism was especially manifested in his reaction to the proposals for Church reform put forward by the minister of the interior, P.A. Valuev.

“In the summer of 1861,... Valuev wrote the emperor that he would like to prepare a memorandum on the matter, but because this sphere lay outside his jurisdiction, first asked permission to undertake the task. The issue had long been of concern to Valuev; while still a provincial governor, he had criticized the Church for its weaknesses and its tendency to resort to state coercion to shield believers from other confessions. Permission granted, Valuev then prepared a comprehensive memorandum that essentially became the blueprint for ecclesiastical reform in the 1860s.

“Entitled ‘On the Present Condition of the Orthodox Church and Orthodox Clergy’, his report argued that earlier proposals for Church reform in the Western provinces were doomed to failure, for the fundamental problems were structural, not regional. In Valuev’s opinion, the Orthodox Church had fallen into such an abject condition that it could not combat apostasy without relying on the coercive apparatus of the state — a practice that was ineffective for the Church and troublesome for the state officials charged with prosecuting religious dissenters. Like many in the government, Valuev wanted the Church to provide support for the state, but now found the relationship one-sided: although the Church relies upon state power, ‘the government cannot enjoy reciprocal assistance from ecclesiastical authorities, because their influence is too insignificant.’ In Valuev’s opinion, not only the Church as an institution, but its servitors (above all, the rank-and-file parish clergy) were in dire straits: ‘One cannot help feeling profound sorrow when seeing the conditions which the Orthodox clergy, the closest representatives and the pastors of the Church,

296 Frazee, op. cit., pp. 157-158.
occupy among other classes of the population. Everywhere one notices a lack of feeling of respect and trust toward [the clergy], and a feeling of profound, bitter denigration is apparent among them.’ Much of the problem, he contended, derived from the deep animus between the black and white clergy. In Valuev’s view, all this resulted from the social isolation of the bishops: ‘The diocesan bishops for the most part lead the life of involuntary recluses, avoiding the secular world around them, neither understanding nor knowing its needs.’ Valuev further asserted that the bishops ‘are primarily concerned not with the flock entrusted to them, but with the lower pastors subordinated to them,’ and that they reign over the latter ‘like the most brutal despots’. He stressed that this despotism is all the more onerous, since it unleashes ‘the avarice of the diocesan chancelleries and consistories’, who subject the parish clergy to merciless abuse: ‘The priests are obliged to pay them tribute. If the tribute is deemed insufficient, they are punished by endless, ruinous relocations from one parish to another. Not a single priest is secure against such relations by the most zealous performance of his duties, the most impeccable life.’ While not denying that the bishops were ‘in general worthy of every respect in terms of their personal qualities,’ Valuev complained that the prelates often fell under the sway of their chancelleries. The result is ‘a certain hardening of feelings’ and inaccessibility compounded by ‘advanced age and illness’, which left them unfit for ‘intensified independent work’. These problems, warned Valuev, caused parish clergy not only to despise their superiors but to exhibit an attraction to radical, even Protestant ideas: ‘The white clergy hates the black clergy, and with the assistance of this hatred there is already beginning to spread not only democratic, but even socialist strivings, but also a certain inclination toward Protestantism, which with time could lead to a convulsion within the bosom of the Church. The white clergy is poor, helpless, and lacking with respect to its own means of existence and the fate of their families. For the most part it stands at a low level of education and lives under conditions that efface the traces of that inadequate education which they acquired in the ecclesiastical seminaries and academies; it does not constitute and organized soslovie (estate) in the state, but a caste of Levites; it sees no hope for an improvement in its material existence, because it understands that, given its very large numbers, it cannot count on significant generosity on the part of the government. That explains why part of the parish priests live at the expense of the schism, which they pander to, and the other resorts to extortion from parishioners, or languishes in need that often extinguishes its mental and moral powers.

“Not surprisingly, he concluded, the Church had proven incapable of combating the steady inroads by the schism, sects, and other confessions.

“To address these problems, Valuev proposed systematic, fundamental reform. One was to dismantle the hereditary clerical estate (dukhovnoe soslovie), at a minimum by permitting the clergy’s sons – who normally remained within the hereditary clerical estate – to choose their own career path, but perhaps by excluding them from inclusion in the estate altogether. Valuev also urged a ‘radical transformation’ of the seminary curriculum in order to provide an education that would facilitate mobility into secular careers. No less important
was the problem of material support for the clergy: a combination of gratuities (a source of humiliation and endless conflict) and agriculture (a distraction from the clergy’s spiritual duties). Since the state was in position to provide salaries, Valuev could only suggest a traditional remedy (set reasonable fees to preclude haggling over rites), surplus state land (where available), and the merger of parishes (to form larger, more economically viable units). More attractive to the clergy, no doubt, was Valuev’s proposal ‘to give the parish clergy an honorable, active, and independent participation in public education’, a measure that would simultaneously provide them with additional income and help draw them ‘closer to the other educated classes’. No less important, in Valuev’s view, was the need to involve the bishops in worldly matters: ‘This improvement [in relations between prelates and priests], in turn, is hardly possible so long as the prelates of our church will remain alien to all everyday relations, all the civil needs of their flock. It is desirable to draw them [the bishops] closer to the latter; for this rapprochement, it is almost necessary to give them the opportunity, even if in some cases, to participate in the civil affairs of their fatherland, to show them the path along which they can acquire the right to this participation. The summoning of several members of the Holy Synod to the State Council, with the right to participate in discussions of all the matters brought before it (except criminal cases), would open this opportunity and indicate this path to the upper members of our clergy.’

“Fully aware of the sensitive nature of these proposals, Valuev proposed that he first hold private discussions with the venerable metropolitan of Moscow, Philaret, and seek to gain his approval – a critical step in securing the Church’s approval and cooperation... His principal concern was to secure Philaret’s support for a joint Church-state committee, an intrusion into the ecclesiastical domain likely to raise the hackles of this determined tserkovnik. In part, Valuev hoped that the emperor’s special solicitude toward Philaret would carry the day; he later reported to Alexander that ‘the attention and trust shown by Your Majesty to the opinion of His Grace Philaret was obviously pleasant and flattering for him.’

“Valuev did in fact win Philaret’s general assent, but met with resistance on several issues. First, although Valuev tactfully avoided ‘using the phrases “closed estate” (zamknutoe soslovie) and “break up the estate” (razomknut’ soslovie), Philaret understood perfectly what the minister had in mind. He denied that the clergy constituted a caste and cited his own vicar – born into the nobility – to demonstrate the point. Second, Philaret showed little enthusiasm for allotting the clergy additional land, but appeared to withdraw his objection in view of the state’s inability to provide salaries. Third, Philaret categorically opposed permitting a joint Church-state committee to reform ecclesiastical schools, a matter falling exclusively within the Church’s competence. Finally, Philaret rejected the idea of including Synod members in the State Council. He feared that the latter might treat the prelates with condescension and attempt to raise issues about Church finances (an allusion to the issue of the Church budget, an issue still unresolved at this point). In cases where the State Council needed the
Synod’s view, declared Philaret, it could simply invite them to special sessions – as had been done in the past...

“Although the government did not further consult Philaret, it did pare back the original vision. Thus Valuev jettisoned his scheme for Synodal membership in the State Council, but still tried to give the new committee a broad range of authority, even over spheres that Philaret had explicitly precluded. Thus, a Valuev draft proposal of January 1862 still gave the committee the power to deal not only with the ‘clerical question’, but also with the reform of ecclesiastical schools. More important still, Valuev wanted the committee determine ‘the degree and means for the participation of parishioners in the economic governance of the affairs of the parish church’. That was a highly sensitive issue, given the laity’s strong aversion to the diversion of local resources to finance general Church needs. In the teeth of clerical opposition, however, Valuev eventually trimmed back the original charge to the matters condoned by Metropolitan Philaret.

“Thus, while Philaret acceded to the inclusion of several ranking state officials in the mixed commission (eventually re-titled ‘Special Commission on the Needs of the Clergy’, he had greatly reduced the broad mandate that Valuev originally sought. He defended the Church’s authority (in the issue of ecclesiastical schools) and defeated the scheme to include Synodal members in the State Council. While Philaret could hardly deny the need for reform, he was adamant about preserving the Church’s institutional integrity and privileges.”

In the last years of Philaret’s life, his influence waned and the secular principles he feared began increasingly to penetrate Church life.297 Thus “from 1865,” writes Nikolin, “the over-procurator of the Holy Synod became Count Demetrius A. Tolstoy, who combined this post with the post of minister of popular enlightenment, as if renewing the experiment of the ‘double ministry’ of Prince Golitsyn. However, in contrast to the supra-confessional mysticism of the latter, Count Tolstoy demonstrated an idiosyncratic supra-confessional indifferentism. A man of conservative views and well-versed in matters of common and internal politics, Count Tolstoy showed himself to be a radical and an innovator in ecclesiastical matters, but an innovator who was far from an understanding of Church life. He worked out a series of liberal reforms in various spheres of the ecclesiastical order. Thus, immediately after the publication of the Juridical Statutes, the over-procurator raised the question of the suitability of reforming the Church courts on the same principles on which the civil courts had been reformed. This and other projects of Count Tolstoy suggested the reconstruction of Church life in accordance with the rules of


298 He did achieve one major victory, however. His project of translating the Bible into Russian, which had been successfully resisted, as we have seen, under Alexander I, was finally approved under Alexander II, even if it was not realized in Philaret’s lifetime.
secular consciousness, and not on the basis of the canonical self-consciousness of the Church.”

Again, “despite earlier promises of including the parish clergy into the new system of elementary public education, the central government ultimately abdicated a primary role and left the responsibility with the community, zemstvo, or Ministry of Education – not the Church. As Philaret acidly complained to a close confidante: ‘But then came the new minister of education. And they say that it is already decided that rural schools will be secular, and that millions of rubles have been allotted for them. A single act of grace was given to us: the priests are not forbidden to keep their schools, without any assistance for them.’ As a result, the parish schools that clergy had so fervently opened in the 1850s came upon hard times, their number sharply dropping, until the government renewed its support – and financing – in the 1880s.”

After the death of Philaret, measures were introduced to break down the closed character of the clerical estate, as Valuev had proposed. “During the reign of Alexander II decrees were issued in 1867 and 1868 by which the inheritance of Church posts was removed. And in 1869 a decree established new regulations for parish churches. Finally, on May 26, 1869 a decree destroyed the isolation of the clergy. By this decree all children of the clerical estate were classified in secular callings. Moreover, the children of clergy were put on the same level as the children of nobility, and the children of church servers on the same level as honoured citizens, while the children of the lower clergy were ascribed to town or village society while retaining their previous exemption from taxes and military service.

“Help to the monasteries after the emancipation of the peasants consisted of giving them each year 168,200 rubles for the payment of hired labourers. By 1890 this sum had grown to 425,000 rubles.

“During the reign of Alexander II the State power often returned to the questions relating to the schism [of the Old Ritualists]... On ascending the throne Emperor Alexander II liquidated the secret department [on the affairs of the Old Ritualists]. The remaining directives [of Nicholas I] remained in force, but their application was softened. The marriages of schismatics were allowed. However, these had to be registered in special metrical books.”

The objections of Metropolitan Philaret to Church reform, like those of Pobedonostsev somewhat later, were not to be scorned. But the main problem lay elsewhere, in the Church’s inability to order her internal life in accordance with her own laws. And this truly weakened her in a way that was to prove to be

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299 Nikolin, op. cit., p. 124.

300 Frazee, op. cit., pp. 184-185.

disastrous in the long term; for only a Church able to act in the spirit of the Holy Gospel and in accordance with the Sacred Canons without succumbing to the often harmful interference of the State could hope to halt the processes of apostasy that were now deeply ingrained in society.
21. THE REVOLUTIONARIES

“The revolution,” wrote the philosopher Ivan Ilyin, “is a spiritual, and perhaps also a directly psychological illness. The revolution is the unleashing of atheist, unnatural, destructive and base passions. It is born from the mistakes of the ruling power, and from the vanity and envy of its subjects. It begins with violation of the law and ends with demoralization and death.”

The strategy of revolution came in two forms: the anarchist revolution favoured by the Russian nobleman Michael Bakunin, and the socialist revolution favoured by Marx and Engels.

Marxism’s main aims, as declared in *The Communist Manifesto* of 1848, were the destruction of private property, the destruction of the family and the destruction of religion as a prelude to the triumph of the proletariat and the coming of communism. However, the revolution of 1848 had been a failure from the socialist point of view. And after that failure a mild conservative reaction set in throughout Europe as some of the wealth generated by a period of rapid growth in the world economy trickled down to the workers and dulled their zeal for revolution. But as their numbers increased in direct proportion to the increase in factory production, so did their power. And it would only take another downturn in the economy to bring them out on the streets...

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

Marx continued to control this, the First Internationale, until its Congress in Basle in 1869, when the delegates were captivated by Bakunin.302 Wagner said of him: “In this remarkable man, the purest humanitarianism [!] was combined with a savagery utterly inimical to all culture, and thus my relationship with him fluctuated between instinctive horror and irresistible attraction... The annihilation of all civilisation was the objective on which he had set his heart; to use all political levers as a means to this end was his current preoccupation, and it often served him as a pretext for ironic merriment.”303

Bakunin, wrote Berlin, “was a born agitator with sufficient scepticism in his system not to be taken in himself by his own torrential eloquence. To dominate individuals and sway assemblies was his *metier*: he belonged to that odd,
fortunately not very numerous, class of persons who contrive to hypnotise others into throwing themselves into causes – if need be killing and dying for them – while themselves remaining coldly, clearly and ironically aware of the effect of the spells which they cast. When his bluff was called, as occasionally it was, for example, by Herzen, Bakunin would laugh with the greatest good nature, admit everything freely, and continue to cause havoc, if anything with greater unconcern than before. His path was strewn with victims, casualties, and faithful, idealistic converts; he himself remained a gay, easy-going, mendacious, irresistibly agreeable, calmly and coldly destructive, fascinating, generous, undisciplined, eccentric Russian landowner to the end…”

The basic difference between Marx and Bakunin was in their attitude to the State. While Marx called for the overthrow of the old regimes, he was not against the State as such, at any rate before the advent of the communist paradise, and believed that the State could be used to free the workers. And the importance of the State in his thinking, combined with a more “scientific” and collectivist approach, became more pronounced with time.

“It meant,” as M.S. Anderson writes, “a fundamental change of emphasis in his thinking. The fulfilment and true freedom of the individual still remained the objective of revolution and the end of the historical process. As far as the making of revolutions was concerned, however, his ‘alienation’ and his revolutionary consciousness, so important in the early works of the 1840s and still important in those of the 1850s, were now threatened with submersion in a vast and impersonal process of social evolution governed by laws analogous to those of the physical world and quite impossible to divert or restrain.”

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

Bakunin’s most famous remark was: “The desire to destroy is also a creative desire.” “The whole of Europe,” he said, with St. Petersburg, Paris and London, will be transformed into an enormous rubbish-heap.” “The miracles of the revolution,” he said, “will come out of the depths of this fiery ocean. Russia is the aim of the revolution, its greatest forces will be unleashed there, and there it will attain its perfection.” “The constellation of the revolution will rise high and beautiful in Moscow out of the sea of blood and will become the guiding star for the good of the whole of liberated humanity…”


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

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

One of those present at Bakunin’s speech was Dostoyevsky. He said that the whole speech had been given “without the slightest proof, all this was learned by rote twenty years ago and has not changed one bit. Fire and sword! And when all has been destroyed, then, in their opinion, there will be peace...”

Dostoyevsky had no time for Bakunin’s atheist slogans: “As long as God exists, man is a slave” and: “Man is rational, just, free, therefore there is no God.” Already in Notes from the Underground (1864) Dostoyevsky had demonstrated that man in his fallen state was quite irrational, and would never be happy with rationalist schemes for his happiness. “I would not be at all surprised, for instance, if suddenly and without the slightest possible reason a gentleman of ignoble or rather reactionary and sardonic countenance were to arise amid all that coming reign of universal common sense and, gripping his sides firmly with his hands, were to say to us all. ‘Well, gentlemen, what about giving all this common sense a great kick and letting it shiver in the dust before our feet simply to send all these logarithms to the devil so that we again live according to our silly will?”

307 Engels, in Chomsky, Understanding Power, pp. 31-32.

308 Wrangel, in Wilson, op. cit., p. 269.

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

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

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

In about 1870, writes Richard Pipes, “radical youths became increasingly interested in the newly emancipated peasant. The leading theoretical lights of this period, Michael Bakunin and Peter Lavrov, called on young people to abandon universities and go to the village. Bakunin wished them to carry the message of immediate rebellion. He believed that the muzhik [peasant] was a born anarchist, and only a spark was needed to set the countryside on fire. That spark was to be carried by the intelligentsia in the form of revolutionary ‘agitation’. Lavrov adopted a more gradual approach. Before he would turn into a revolutionary, the Russian peasant needed exposure to ‘propaganda’ which would enlighten him about the injustices of the Emancipation Edict, about the causes of his economic predicament, and about the collusion between the


312 Friedrich Engels, Karl Marx and the Revolutionary Movement in Russia.
propertied classes, the state and the church. Inspired by these ideas, in the spring of 1874 several thousand youths quit school and went ‘to the people’. Here disappointment awaited them. The muzhik, known to them largely from literary descriptions and polemical tracts, would have nothing to do with idealistic students come to save him. Suspecting ulterior motives… he either ignored them or turned them over to the rural constabulary. But even more disappointing than the peasants’ hostility, which could be explained away by his ignorance, were his ethics. Some radical youths scorned property because they came from propertied backgrounds: they associated concern for wealth with their parents, whom they rejected. Hence they idealized the rural commune and the artel. The muzhik, living from hand to mouth, looked at the matter quite differently. He desperately wanted to acquire property… The intellectuals could indulge in talk of selfless brotherhood because, being supported by their families or the government (by means of stipends), they were not required to compete with one another. The muzhik, however, was always competing for scarce resources…

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

“By the end of 1874,” writes Evans, “the movement was over. The Minister of Justice reported that 770 people had been arrested, including 158 women. Fifty-three Narodniki had escaped but 265 were imprisoned on remand.

“The sheer extent of the movement was deeply worrying to the tsarist authorities, who ordered a mass trial of 193 individuals in 1877. Lasting for several months, the trial was conducted in public, and the defendants, who also included participants in student demonstrations, heckled the judges, delivered lengthy political speeches, and impressed the jury to the extent that 153 of them were acquitted. Forty of them were sentenced all the same, and the rest had been in prison for many months awaiting trial. This trial further radicalized the remaining revolutionaries, who formed a new organization, ‘Land and Liberty’, the first proper political programme with a title and a programme, rather than a loose network grouped around a single individual. It sent out its members to the provinces in the spirit of the movement ‘to go to the people’, and had considerable influence among the students. It advocated the ‘disorganization of the state’ by selective assassinations. In the middle of the trial of the 193, the Governor of St. Petersburg, Fyodor Fyodorovich Trepov (1809-89), was shot by the young secretary Vera Zasulich (1849-1919), a close associate of Nechayev. Zasulich belonged to a small Bakuninist group in Kiev and, like many others,

313 Pipes, Russia under the Old Regime, pp. 273-274.
was outraged by Trepov’s flogging of a political prisoner who had refused to
doff his cap in his presence. Her shot only wounded Trepov, and in her
subsequent trial so much evidence emerged of his brutality that the jury
acquitted her of all charges. Fearing re-arrest, she fled to Switzerland. The
government responded by transferring political trials to military courts.

“The revolutionary movement was now pulled in different directions by the
followers of Bakunin and Lavrov. One wing, styling itself ‘Black Partition’, and
led by Georgi Valentinovich Plekhanov (1856-1918) and Pavel Borisovich
Axelrod (1850-1928), eschewed violence; the leaders left for Switzerland in 1880
and continued their political activities in exile, joining Zasulich in the formation
of a new Marxist movement. The other wing, ‘The People’s Will’, focused on
realizing the anarchist vision of the collapse of the state by killing the tsar. They
got one of their members into Alexander II’s palace and supplied him with
dynamite, which he used to set an explosive device timed to go off under the
dining room of the Winter Palace when the tsar was present. Eleven people were
killed but the tsar’s arrival had been delayed and so he escaped. A second
attempt was made, involving digging a tunnel under a railway line and planting
a bomb which the People’s Will would detonate when the tsar’s train passed
over it. Through a double agent in the Third Section, they had obtained detailed
plans of the tsar’s movements, and knew he would be in the first of the two
trains, but the order of the trains was changed at the last moment, and the bomb
only destroyed the wagons carrying the tsar’s baggage. To try and defused the
movement, Alexander II ordered a degree of liberalization to include the first
steps towards a system of representative institutions…”

The first “pure” terrorist was Bakunin. But he lived abroad. More typical of
the young devils who came to dominate the revolutionary underground inside
Russia was Nicholas Ishutin. Ronald Seth writes: “He was the son of a merchant
and of a mother who came of a noble family. When he was two both his parents
died, and he was brought up until he was eleven by relatives of his father. In
1863 he entered Moscow university, where he quickly gathered round him a
group of young men upon whom he was soon exerting a quite extraordinary
influence.

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

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

However, this romantic Populist phase did not last long. For in fact “all
Ishutin’s efforts and multifarious schemes were directed to one sole end – the
creation of a revolutionary force. To achieve this he tossed all scruples out of the

314 Evans, op. cit., pp. 613-614.
window, and introduced a new approach to the means by which the end might be attained – naked terrorism.

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

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

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

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

It was an appropriate name for an organization, whose layers within layers recalled Weishaupt’s Illuminati. And it was a member of Hell, the young nobleman Dmitry Vladimirovich Karakozov (1840-66), who made the first failed attempt to assassinate the Tsar. “Racked by remorse for his father’s exploitation of the peasantry, he was personally enthusiastic about his mission. ‘I have decided to destroy the evil Tsar,.. and to die for my beloved people.’ On 4 April, 1866, the date predicted for the revolution in What is to be Done?, he rushed towards the tsar as he was leaving the Summer Garden in St. Petersburg, but as he took aim with his pistol his arm was jostled and he missed; the guards arrested him as he tried to take a second shot, and found a phial of strychnine in his jacket. ‘What do you want?’ the tsar asked him. ‘Nothing, nothing,’ he replied. Despite begging forgiveness and converting to Orthodoxy, Karakazov was executed by hanging on 3 September 1866; ten of his accomplices were sentenced to hard labour.”

These included Ishutin, who died of tuberculosis, having spent the last eleven years of his life insane…

316 Evans, op. cit., p. 611.
The next terrorist leader was Sergius Gennadiyevich Nechayev (1847-82), a teacher of Holy Scripture who from his student years devoted himself to political activity. (The combination of seminary training and revolutionary activity was not uncommon. Dobroliubov was the son of a priest. Stalin was a seminarian...)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

318 Ivanov, op. cit., pp. 342-343.
After the great work of destruction, according to Nechayev, all power would necessarily be concentrated in the hands of a Central Committee. (In this centralism, he differed from the more democratic Bakunin.) Everybody was to undertake physical work. Dissidents were to be executed…

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

“Dostoyevsky’s description of Shatov’s murder [in The Devils (1872)] follows closely the description of Ivanov’s murder. After the murder, Nechayev, like Peter Verkhovensky in the novel, escaped first to Petersburg and then abroad. He went back to Geneva, where he rejoined Bakunin and Ogaryov and assisted them in their abortive attempt to revive Herzen’s London journal The Bell. His ruthlessness in carrying out Bakunin’s own principle that the end justifies the means appalled even Bakunin, who soon broke with him. Nechayev then went to London, where he began publishing his terrorist journal Village Commune, which was sharply condemned by Engels…

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

“Atheist anarchism,” wrote Dostoyevsky, “is near—our children will see it. The Internationale has decreed that the European revolution should begin in Russia, and it will begin, for there is no reliable buttress against it with us, neither in the administration nor in society. The revolt will begin with atheism and the robbing of all wealth. They will begin to pull down religion, destroy the churches and turn them into barracks and stalls. They will drown the world in blood and then they themselves will get frightened…”

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22. DOSTOYEVSKY ON SOCIALISM

The simultaneous defeat in 1870-71 of both the most reactionary and the most revolutionary regimes in Europe (the Papacy and the Paris Commune) raised the question: might there be a connection between these seeming opposites?

Following the suggestion of some French socialist thinkers, Dostoyevsky saw a link between the two antichristian systems. "Present-day French Socialism," he wrote, "is nothing but the truest and most direct continuation of the Catholic idea, its fullest, most final consequence which has been evolved through centuries. French Socialism is nothing else than the compulsory union of mankind - an idea which dates back to ancient Rome and which was fully expressed in Catholicism." 320

Papism, according to Dostoyevsky, was the beginning of western atheism. As Prince Myshkin says in The Idiot (1868): "Roman Catholicism believes that the Church cannot exist on earth without universal temporal power, and cries: Non possumus! In my opinion, Roman Catholicism isn't even a religion, but most decidedly a continuation of the Holy Roman Empire, and everything in it is subordinated to that idea, beginning with faith. The Pope seized the earth, an earthly throne and took up the sword; and since then everything has gone on in the same way, except that they've added lies, fraud, deceit, fanaticism, superstition wickedness. They have trifled with the most sacred, truthful, innocent, ardent feelings of the people, have bartered it all for money, for base temporal power. And isn't this the teaching of Antichrist? Isn't it clear from Roman Catholicism itself! Atheism originated first of all with them: how could they believe in themselves? It gained ground because of abhorrence of them; it is the child of their lies and their spiritual impotence! Atheism! In our country it is only the upper classes who do not believe, as Mr. Radomsky so splendidly put it the other day, for they have lost their roots. But in Europe vast numbers of the common people are beginning to lose their faith - at first from darkness and lies, and now from fanaticism, hatred of the Church and Christianity!" 321 And since Socialism is "above all an atheistic question, the question of the modern integration of atheism [it], too, is the child of Catholicism and the intrinsic Catholic nature! It, too, like its brother atheism, was begotten of despair, in opposition to Catholicism as a moral force, in order to replace the lost moral power of religion, to quench the spiritual thirst of parched humanity, and save it not by Christ, but also by violence! This, too, is freedom by violence. This, too, is union through the sword and blood. Don't dare to believe in God! Don't dare to have property! Don't dare to have a personality of your own! Fraternité ou la

So akin is Socialism to Papism that Papism "will tell the people that Christ also preached everything that the Socialists are preaching to them. Again it will pervert and sell them Christ as it has sold Him so many times in the past." 

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"One way or another, the alliance will be formed. Catholicism does not wish to die, whereas social revolution and the new social period in Europe are
indubitable: two forces, unquestionably, will have to come to understanding, to unite. It stands to reason that slaughter, blood, plunder, even cannibalism would be advantageous to Catholicism. Precisely then it may hope to catch once more its fish in troubled waters, foreseeing the moment when, finally, mankind, exhausted by chaos and lawlessness, will fall into its arms. Then, once more, it will become in reality the sole and absolute 'earthly ruler and universal authority', sharing its power with no one. Thereby it will attain its ultimate goal."325

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

In The Brothers Karamazov (1881), Dostoyevsky underlined the link between Papism and Socialism by making the leading proponent of Socialism a Papist Inquisitor. After his disillusionment with Papism, Western man could not be satisfied with the atomic individualism of the societies that replaced it, but yearned for the brotherhood of all men in obedience to one Father that Papism provided, albeit in a perverted form. "For the chief concern of these miserable creatures," says the Inquisitor, "is not only to find something that I or someone else can worship, but to find something that all believe in and worship, and the absolutely essential thing is that they should do so all together. It is this need for universal worship that is the chief torment of every man individually and of mankind as a whole from the beginning of time. For the sake of the universal worship they have put each other to the sword..."

Over forty years later, on the death of Lenin in 1924, the Social-Revolutionary leader Victor Chernov confirmed Dostoyevsky's analysis of the relationship between Papism and Socialism when he compared Lenin to the most famous of Inquisitors: "His love of the proletariat was the same despotic, exacting, and merciless love with which, centuries ago, Torquemada burned people for their salvation..."326

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Although Dostoyevsky was fiercely opposed to the atheist teaching of socialism, he remained profoundly concerned about social justice and poverty from his explicitly socialist days in the Petrashevtsy circle until the end of his days as a conservative Orthodox Christian. His views on this extremely important topic were well expounded by the philosopher N.O. Lossky (1870-

325 Dostoyevsky, The Diary of a Writer, November, 1877, pp. 910-912.

1965), whom we shall therefore cite at length: “I could never understand the notion,’ says Dostoyevsky, ‘that only one-tenth of people should attain higher development, and the remaining nine-tenths should serve only as a means and material to that goal while themselves remaining in darkness. I don’t want to think and live in any way but with the faith that our ninety million Russians (or however many will be born) will all someday be educated, humanized and happy.’ (Diary of a Writer, January, 1876) In Dostoyevsky’s notebooks, the thought of these unhappy nine-tenths of humanity is repeated many times. From the years of his youth to the end of his life, he was concerned over questions of social justice, the necessity of securing every person the means for developing a spiritual life, the protection of the dignity of the human person and a defence against arbitrary rule.

“In his novels, Dostoyevsky speaks much of the wounds inflicted upon man’s soul by the offenses resulting from social and economic inequality. In Diary of a Writer, he writes much about the cruel force of capital, about a proletariat exhausted by poverty and labour, etc…

“… Dostoyevsky himself was a participant in the socialist movement as a member of Petrashevsky’s Circle, and for that he was almost subject to execution and endured eight years of hard labour and exile. Inasmuch as Dostoyevsky spiritually matured, within him there developed an ever-growing hatred for that type of socialism which was most widespread from the second half of the nineteenth century up to our time, a hatred namely for revolutionary atheist socialism based upon a materialist worldview morally and without any foundation in religion. For Dostoyevsky the highest value was the individual human person and his free spiritual development. Yet revolutionary socialism focuses all its attention upon material goods and neither values the individual person nor cares for the freedom of spiritual life.

“In Dostoyevsky’s reading, the spiritual makeup of the bourgeois and the materialist socialist is homogeneous: both value material goods above all else. ‘Present-day socialism,’ writes Dostoyevsky, ‘in Europe and here in Russia, removes Christ everywhere and cares foremost about bread, summons science and asserts that the reason for all human calamities is one – poverty, the struggle for existence, “society.”’ These socialists, ‘in my observation, in their expectation of a future arrangement of society without personal property, love money terribly in the meantime and value it even to the extreme, but namely in accordance with the idea they attach to it.’ (Dostoyevsky’s wonderful letter to V.A. Alekseev on the three temptations offered by the devil to Christ, June 7th, 1876, No. 550)

“Beforehand there was a moral formulation of the matter: ‘There were Fourierists and Cabetists, arguments and debates over various quite refined things. But now the leaders of the proletariat have already done away with all
this” and the struggle is governed by the slogan, “Ote-toi de là que je m’y mette” (“Get out of here, I’m taking your place”). Any means therein are counted as permissible: the ringmasters of materialist socialism say they do not consider them, the bourgeoisie, capable of becoming brothers to the people, and therefore they simply move against them with force, while brotherhood is denied outright:

“‘Brotherhood will be formed from the proletariat later, and you - you are one hundred million souls condemned to extermination and nothing more. You are finished for the sake of humanity’s happiness.’ Others among the ringmasters directly say that they need no brotherhood whatsoever, that Christianity is nonsense and that the future of humanity will be designed on a scientific basis. (Diary of a Writer, February, 1877)

“If the moral foundations of society’s structure are rejected, then social unity will prove unachieveable. ‘How will you unite men,’ asks Dostoyevsky, answering Gradovsky with regard to the latter’s article containing criticism of the author’s Pushkin Speech, ‘to reach your civil goals if you have no basis in a great and initial moral idea?’ Dostoyevsky at once points to this initial great idea: all moral principles, he says, ‘are based upon the idea of personal absolute self-perfection ahead, in the ideal, for this holds everything within, all aspirations and all cravings, and from there all of our civil ideals would derive. Just try and unite men into a civil society with the only goal of ‘saving our tummies.’ You’ll get nothing but the moral formula of Chacun pour soi et Dieu pour tous. With such a formula, no civil institution will last long.” (Diary of a Writer, February, 1877)

On the contrary, Dostoyevsky’s short formula composes the whole essence of the Christian worldview. The Christian ideal of personal absolute self-perfection leads to the Kingdom of God, in which every member loves God more than himself and all people created by God as himself.

“Behaviour is right only inasmuch as it consciously or instinctively is guided by such a love, with which is closely connected love for impersonal absolute values - truth, beauty, etc. Not only personal individual relations, but also social ties, any social hierarchy, and any social subordination and command carried out in good conscience, should in finality ascend to the ideal of absolute good under God. This notion was naively but correctly expressed by Dostoevsky’s Captain Lebyadkin, who responded after listening to the arguments of the atheists: ‘If there is no God, then what kind of captain am I after this!’ (The Demons)...

“Atheist socialists, having rejected the idea of unselfish moral duty and counting the drive for advantage and self-preservation as man’s only motive of behaviour, at the same time demand that the citizen of the future society renounce ‘rights to property, family and freedom.’ ‘Man can only be so designed through terrible violence, his placement under dreadful systems of spying and the continuous control of a most despotic power.’ (Diary of a Writer, February, 1877) In a society deprived of the spiritual ideal, people are such that, ‘give them
bread, and they will become enemies to each other out of boredom.’ (Letters, No. 550) ‘Never shall they be able to share out amongst each other,” says the Grand Inquisitor, and even the bread acquired by them will turn to stone in their hands.

“Dostoyevsky compares the project of building a society without a moral foundation, a society based only on science and upon imaginary scientific axioms like ‘the struggle for existence,’ to the construction of the Tower of Babel; attempting to design something along the lines of an anthill, men will not create wealth, but rather will come to such ruin as to end in cannibalism. (November, 1877) In The Demons Shigalev developed the programme for his anthill. ‘Proceeding from limitless freedom, I conclude,’ he says, ‘with unlimited despotism.’ Pyotr Verkhovensky relates that ‘he has every member of his [secret] society watching over the other and obliged to inform.’ ‘All are slaves and in slavery are equal. In extreme cases, slander and murder, but mainly equality.’

“Shigalev’s project seemed a caricature created through Dostoyevsky’s antipathy toward atheist socialism. Now, however, we must admit that the Bolshevik Revolution enacted the Shigalev system and even very likely surpassed it. In Bolshevik socialism, spying has been reached the point that parents and children often do not trust one another. The Bolshevik despotism is more multidimensional and petty than the despotism of some African potentate; slander and murder are applied on the widest scale. There is not the slightest freedom of conscience under the Bolsheviks (for a teacher there is not even freedom of silence on religious matters), nor is there freedom of thought, freedom of print or legal guarantees defending the individual from arbitrary rule; the exploitation of workers by the state is carried out to a degree undreamed of by capitalists under the bourgeois regime.

“Dostoyevsky insistently repeats that revolutionary atheist socialism will lead to such devastation as to bring about anthropophagy. His prophecy was realized literally: in the USSR there were at least two periods of cannibalism, in 1920-21 as a result of famine caused by ‘War Communism,’ and in 1933 as a result of famine caused by the rapid shift from individual agriculture to collective farms...

“Conceiving clearly by which paths it’s likely impossible to arrive at the establishment of social justice, Dostoyevsky himself neither developed a specific positive ideal of social order, nor did he adopt one from other thinkers. In 1849, during an interrogation, Dostoyevsky confessed that socialist ‘systems,’ like Fourier’s system, did not satisfy him, but at the same time announced that he considered the ideas of socialism, under the condition of their peaceful achievement, ‘sacred and moral, and most importantly universal, the future law of humanity without exception.’ Such a conviction Dostoevsky preserved until the end of his days. This is clearly visible from his article on the occasion of the death of George Sand in 1876. With deep emotion, Dostoevsky touchingly speaks of George Sand’s socialism, which was seeking to secure the spiritual freedom of
the individual and was founded upon moral principles, ‘not upon the necessity of the anthill.’ (June, 1876) But at this time of his life, Dostoevsky required that social order definitively should be based on Christ’s testament. He wrote to V.A. Alekseev in June of 1876:

“’Christ knew that by bread alone, one cannot bring man to life. If there will be no spiritual life, the ideal of Beauty, then man will languish and die, he will go mad and kill himself or descend into pagan fantasies. And as Christ in Himself and in His Word bore the ideal of Beauty, He then decided it better to imbue in souls the ideal of Beauty; having this at heart, all men will become brothers to one another and then, of course, working for one another, they will be wealthy. (No. 550)

“Dostoevsky was to all appearances a supporter of a type of ‘Christian socialism,’ but he says nothing specific about its economic and legal structure. He has only one mystical-economic position announced by him in the name of some kind of interlocutor of his, the ‘paradoxalist,’ and it is a position he obviously approves of. ‘A nation should be born and rise, in its vast majority, on the soil from which the bread and trees grow.’

“In the land, in the soil, there is something sacramental. If you want humanity to be reborn for the better, almost making men from beasts, then endow them with land, and you shall achieve your aim. At the very least we have the land and the commune.

“Speaking about France, the paradoxalist directly clarifies his thinking: ‘In my opinion, work in a factory: the workshop is also a legitimate business and will always be born alongside already cultivated land – such is its law. But let every worker know that he has somewhere a garden under the golden sun and grapevines, his own, or more likely, a communal garden, and that in this garden lives his wife, a glorious woman, not one picked up off the road.’ ‘Let him at least know that there his children will grow with the earth, with the trees, and with the quail they catch; that they are at school, and school is in the field; and that he himself, having worked enough in his age, will arrive there to rest, and then to die.’ The bases for the development of such a system he located in Russia. ‘The Russian factory worker has still kept a connection with the countryside, and the Russian peasantry has the village commune.’ (Diary of a Writer, July-August, 1876)

“As is known, love for the village commune among Russian populists was tied to the dream that the habit of communal land ownership would ease the enactment of socialism for the Russian people. This dream was hardly reasonable, as land in the village commune was divided into plots cultivated by each family individually. At the present time under the Bolshevik regime, the shift from a family’s individual work over a delegated plot of land to the
collective labour of the kolkhoz in communal fields is being accomplished extremely painfully.

“Besides notions of each man’s connection to the land, Dostoyevsky also has many considerations concerning a just social order, but they all concern only the moral and religious conditions for the appearance and preservation of such an order; on its actual structure he provides no information.

“In the West, Dostoyevsky says in his Winter Notes on Summer Impressions, liberty, equality and fraternity are declared as principles upon which life should be built. But where the bourgeoisie holds power, freedom is in the possession of the millionaire: he does as he wishes, and those without any millions are at their mercy. Such criticism of the bourgeois regime is expressed in various forms by Marxists and especially Bolsheviks. And Dostoyevsky recognizes that in the capitalist system, freedom provided by the law to the citizen remains without the possibility of its realization among those classes of the populace who do not have the material means to enjoy it.

“Dostoyevsky characterizes the equality that concerns people in modern society as envious: it is comprised of the wish to degrade those spiritually superior. (Diary of a Writer, February, 1877) Instead of fraternity, Dostoyevsky finds everywhere only fighting for one’s own equal value; genuine brotherhood, meanwhile, exists where the ego sacrifices itself for society, and society itself gives over all rights to the person. Such a genuine brotherhood exists foremost where internal freedom is achieved through overcoming one’s will, and there will be a noble equality free from envy for others’ spiritual gifts. In a society guided by such principles, there is no necessity to sacrifice all one’s property for the common benefit, even more so as even the renunciation of property by all the rich would be only “a drop in the sea” and would not destroy poverty.

“One must do ‘what the heart orders.’ If the heart ‘orders you to give away your estate, then give it away,’ but there is no need to dress up in homespun coats or adopt the ‘simple life’ for this; ‘it is better to raise a peasant to your level of refinement.’ ‘Only your resolve to do everything for the sake of active love is obligatory and important.’ ‘We must be concerned more about light, the sciences and strengthening love. Then wealth will grow as a matter of fact, and genuine wealth.’ Dostoevsky calls such a solution to the social question the Russian solution; it is based on the Christian ideal of life, and he considers the spirit of the Russian people that developed Russian Orthodoxy to be Christian in its preponderance. (Diary of a Writer, February, 1877)

“Having become acquainted in Dostoevsky’s Pushkin Speech with similar thoughts of his on the conditions for resolving the social question, Professor Gradovsky penned a critical article; he said that Dostoevsky put forth a ‘mighty propagation of personal morality, but no hint of social ideals.’ In other words,
Gradovsky understood Dostoevsky as a follower of the notion that only ‘personal improvement in the spirit of Christian love’ is needed, while forms of social order are irrelevant, for kind and loving people will fill any social form with good content.

“Such a unidimensional social philosophy exists. In this sphere, there are two opposed doctrines. According to one, all of man’s shortcomings, his vices and crimes, are conditioned upon the imperfection of the social structure; it is sufficient to perfect the social structure, and man’s behaviour will become good. According to the other doctrine, quite to the contrary, correct behaviour both in individual and social relations depends only upon personal morality, and forms of social order are irrelevant. Dostoevsky harshly rejected the first of these one-dimensional theories, and Gradovsky assumed that he must have been a representative of the opposite and also unidimensional doctrine. Vladimir Soloviev termed this one-sidedness ‘abstract subjectivism in morality.’ In The Justification of the Good, he clearly and convincingly proves that subjective good is insufficient; in addition a ‘collective incarnation’ of good made from the perfection of the social order is necessary – and so human society would become ‘organized morality.’ The state is never solely comprised of good people, and therefore it is necessary to organize such a social order that would promote the restraint of evil and the achievement of good.

“Like Pushkin, Dostoevsky strikes us not only with the force of his artistic creation, but also with the force of his mind. Therefore it is difficult to permit that he fell into such a crude unidimensional theory of ‘abstract subjectivism.’ And he in fact was indignant over Gradovsky’s criticism and wrote him an answer in Diary of a Writer, in which he attempted to prove that he was free from the one-sidedness ascribed to him. Nonetheless, Dostoevsky is interpreted as a proponent of abstract subjectivism in our time, as well. We shall examine this question in detail.

“Answering Gradovsky, Dostoevsky clearly says that religious and moral ideas, along with the improvement tied to them, serve as a point of departure in the search for a corresponding organization of society: due to these ideals, men will begin to search for ‘how they should organize themselves to preserve the jewel of great value they received, not losing anything from it, and find such a civil formula of common living that would help them advance to all the world the moral treasure they have obtained in all its glory.’

“If the spiritual ideal of any nation begins to ‘shake and weaken,’ alongside it ‘the entire civic rule’ collapses. (August, 1880) Not only that, even with the existence of well-organized social forms, morally unsuitable men contrive in certain cases to find the means to bypass the law and distort the spirit of social forms, from which, of course, it does not follow that these forms have no meaning. Dostoevsky therefore resolves to say that personal improvement is
‘not only the beginning of everything,’ ‘but the continuation of everything and its outcome.’ (Ibid) However tempting it may be to interpret these words in the spirit of abstract subjectivism, we must remember that they were written in the response to Gradovsky, where Dostoyevsky removes himself from the professor’s reproach over one-sidedness, and by these words he only wants to express the notion that ‘social and civic ideals’ are connected ‘organically to moral ideals,’ and that it is impossible to divide them into “two halves” isolated from one another. (Ibid)

“Consequently, Dostoyevsky did not deny the necessity of a certain ideal of just social organization. Without a doubt, he had such an ideal or was searching for it. In which direction? To all appearances and as in his youth, in the direction of socialism, though neither revolutionary nor atheist, but Christian. As has been said, he hoped like the populists, that a perfected order would evolve from the Russian village commune. He considered it necessary that every worker, and especially his wife and children, keep their ties to the land and have a garden, whether personal or communal. Especially valuing freedom, he was confident that the social ideals developed by Russia and deriving from ‘Christ and individual self-perfection’ would be ‘more liberal’ than those of Europe. (Ibid)…

“Looking at how difficult this process of developing a new system is and what kind of special knowledge, both theoretical and practical, it demands, we fully understand why Dostoyevsky has no defined teaching on it. As a religious thinker and moralist, he confidently spoke of the religious and moral bases of a just order, but as a man of extraordinary intellect, he understood perfectly well that to elaborate a concrete doctrine on a new economic system and its legal forms was a matter for politico-economic specialists and practical social agents. Besides that, the actualization of these problems was premature in his time. Only fifty years after his death, due to the extreme primacy of technology, the rationalization of production, and the ever-decreasing number of workers needed for physical labour, the development of a new economic system became urgently necessary…”

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23. PORTENTS OF THE ANTICHRIST

The moral disease that afflicted both the fathers and the sons could not fail to be manifested in other forms in other parts of the mystical body of Russia - that is, the Russian Orthodox Church. As the future New-Martyr Anna Zertsalova wrote: "It was a sad time then in the capital. The holy churches, the unconquerable strongholds of Orthodoxy, stood in it as before, as did the unshakeable walls; the holy icons were adorned with shining covers of precious stones, the God-pleasers rested in the churches in their incorrupt relics. But the people were perishing from their vices and errors. The spirit of little faith and debauchery entered everywhere like the most savage plague into unstable heads. Tolstoy and other false teachers crept into inexperienced young hearts with their destructive propaganda, undermining in them the bases of faith and piety. The Lord was forgotten, forgotten were the rules of morality and honour; forgotten were the authorities and order; passions and vices broke out into liberty."328

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

this spiritual stench and who has then, while on the path of his own destruction, been detained by the unseen hand of the benevolent Creator."329

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

Among those who still considered themselves Orthodox, one of the earliest signs of this spiritual sickness was indifferentism, what we would now call ecumenism, that is, an increased tolerance for Christian heresies to the extent of placing them on a par with Orthodoxy. As we have seen, the first ecumenical dialogue with the American Episcopalians had begun, and while the Church leaders stood firm in Orthodoxy, the spirit of Anglican indifferentism was infectious.

Thus in the 1850s St. Ambrose of Optina wrote: “Now many educated people bear only the name of Orthodox, but in actual fact completely adhere to the morals and customs of foreign lands and foreign beliefs. Without any torment of conscience they violate the regulations of the Orthodox Church concerning fasts and gather together at balls and dances on the eves of great Feasts of the Lord, when Orthodox Christians should be in church in prayerful vigil. This would be excusable if such gatherings took place on the eves of ordinary days, but not on the eves of Feasts, and especially great Feasts. Are not such acts and deeds clearly inspired by our enemy, the destroyer of souls, contrary to the commandment of the Lord which says: carry out your ordinary affairs for six days, but the seventh (festal) day must be devoted to God in pious service? How have Orthodox Christians come to such acts hated by God? Is it not for no other reason than indiscriminate communion with believers of other faiths?…”

The danger of religious indifferentism was especially noted by St. Ignaty Brianchaninov (+1867): "You say, 'heretics are Christians just the same.' Where did you take that from? Perhaps someone or other calling himself a Christian while knowing nothing of Christ, may in his extreme ignorance decide to acknowledge himself as the same kind of Christian as heretics, and fail to distinguish the holy Christian faith from those offspring of the curse, blasphemous heresies. Quite otherwise, however, do true Christians reason about this. A whole multitude of saints has received a martyr's crown, has preferred the most cruel and prolonged tortures, prison, exile, rather than agree to take part with heretics in their blasphemous teaching.

"The Ecumenical Church has always recognised heresy as a mortal sin; she has always recognised that the man infected with the terrible malady of heresy is spiritually dead, a stranger to grace and salvation, in communion with the devil and the devil's damnation. Heresy is a sin of the mind; it is more a diabolic than a

human sin. It is the devil's offspring, his invention; it is an impiety that is near idol-worship. Every heresy contains in itself blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, whether against the dogma or the action of the Holy Spirit.330

St. Ignaty was especially fierce against the heresy of Papism: "Papism is the name of a heresy that seized the West and from which there came, like the branches from a tree, various Protestant teachings. Papism ascribes to the Pope the properties of Christ and thereby rejects Christ. Some western writers have almost openly pronounced this rejection, saying that the rejection of Christ is a much smaller sin than the rejection of the Pope. The Pope is the idol of the papists; he is their divinity. Because of this terrible error, the Grace of God has left the papists; they have given themselves over to Satan – the inventor and father of all heresies, among which is Papism. In this condition of the darkening [of the mind], they have distorted several dogmas and sacraments, while they have deprived the Divine Liturgy of its essential significance by casting out of it the invocation of the Holy Spirit and the blessing of the offerings of bread and wine, at which they are transmuted into the Body and Blood of Christ… No heresy expresses so openly and blatantly their immeasurable pride, their cruel disdain for men and their hatred of them."

St. Ignaty was pessimistic about the future of Russia: "It is evident that the apostasy from the Orthodox faith is general among the people. One is an open atheist, another is a deist, another a Protestant, another an indifferentist, another a schismatic. There is no healing or cure for this plague."

"What has been foretold in the Scriptures is being fulfilled: a cooling towards the faith has engulfed both our people and all the countries in which Orthodoxy was maintained up to now."

"Religion is falling in the people in general. Nihilism is penetrating into the merchant class, from where it has not far to go to the peasants. In most peasants a decisive indifference to the Church has appeared, and a terrible moral disorder."331

"The people is being corrupted, and the monasteries are also being corrupted," said the same holy bishop to the future Tsar Alexander II in 1866, one year before his own death.332


Another pessimist was Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, who feared “storm-clouds coming from the West”, and advised that rizas should not be made for icons, because “the time is approaching when ill-intentioned people will remove the rizas from the icons.”

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

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

"...The words 'Rome, Troy, Egypt' may have the following significance. Rome at the time of the Nativity of Christ was the capital of the world, and, from the beginning of the patriarchate, had the primacy of honour; but because of love of power and deviation from the truth she was later rejected and humiliated. Ancient Troy and Egypt were notable for the fact that they were punished for their pride and impiety - the first by destruction, and the second by various punishments and the drowning of Pharaoh with his army in the Red Sea. But in Christian times, in the countries where Troy was located there were founded the Christian patriarchates of Antioch and Constantinople, which flourished for a long time, embellishing the Orthodox Church with their piety and right dogmas;

but later, according to the inscrutable destinies of God, they were conquered by barbarians - the Muslims, and up to now have borne this heavy slavery, which restricts the freedom of Christian piety and right belief. And in Egypt, together with the ancient impiety, there was from the first times of Christianity such a flowering of piety that the deserts were populated by tens of thousands of monastics, not to speak of the great numbers of pious laity from whom they came. But then, by reason of moral licentiousness, there followed such an impoverishment of Christian piety in that country that at a certain time in Alexandria the patriarch remained with only one priest.

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

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

"He who saw this vision correctly observed that the explanation given him by an inner voice was terrible. Terrible will be the Second Coming of Christ and terrible the last judgement of the world. But not without terrors will also be the period before that when the Antichrist will reign, as it is said in the Apocalypse: 'And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and death shall flee from them' (9.6). The Antichrist will come during a period of anarchy, as the apostle says: 'until he that restraineth be taken away from the midst' (II Thessalonians 2.7), that is, when the powers that be no longer exist.334

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St. Ambrose's identification of "him that restraineth" the coming of the Antichrist with the Russian State had long roots in the patristic writings. St. John Chrysostom, Blessed Theophylact and others identified him with the Roman emperor, whose successor, as being the emperor of "the Third Rome", Russia, was the Russian Tsar. Metropolitan Philaret had restated the political teaching of Orthodoxy with exceptional eloquence in the previous reign. And now St. Theophan the Recluse wrote: "The Tsar's authority, having in its hands the means of restraining the movements of the people and relying on Christian principles itself, does not allow the people to fall away from them, but will restrain it. And since the main work of the Antichrist will be to turn everyone away from Christ, he will not appear as long as the Tsar is in power. The latter's authority will not let him show himself, but will prevent him from acting in his own spirit. That is what he that restraineth is. When the Tsar's authority falls, and the peoples everywhere acquire self-government (republics, democracies), then the

334 St. Ambrose of Optina, Pis'ma (Letters), Sergiev Posad, 1908, part 1, pp. 21-22.
Antichrist will have room to manoeuvre. It will not be difficult for Satan to train voices urging apostasy from Christ, as experience showed in the time of the French revolution. Nobody will give a powerful 'veto' to this. A humble declaration of faith will not be tolerated. And so, when these arrangements have been made everywhere, arrangements which are favourable to the exposure of antichristian aims, then the Antichrist will also appear. Until that time he waits, and is restrained."

Bishop Theophan wrote: "When these principles [Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality] weaken or are changed, the Russian people will cease to be Russian. It will then lose its sacred three-coloured banner." And again: "Our Russians are beginning to decline from the faith: one part is completely and in all ways falling into unbelief, another is falling into Protestantism, a third is secretly weaving together beliefs in such a way as to bring together spiritism and geological madness with Divine Revelation. Evil is growing: evil faith and lack of faith are raising their head: faith and Orthodoxy are weakening. Will we come to our senses? O Lord! Save and have mercy on Orthodox Russia from Thy righteous and fitting punishment!"\footnote{St. Theophan, in Fomin and Fomina, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. I, pp. 346, 347.}

Again, he wrote: “Do you know what bleak thoughts I have? And they are not unfounded. I meet people who are numbered among the Orthodox, who in spirit are Voltaireans, naturalists, Lutherans, and all manner of free-thinkers. They have studied all the sciences in our institutions of higher education. They are not stupid nor are they evil, but with respect to the Church they are good for nothing. Their fathers and mothers were pious; the ruin came in during the period of their education outside of the family homes. Their memories of childhood and their parents’ spirit keeps them within certain bounds. But what will their own children be like? What will restrain them within the needed bounds? I draw the conclusion from this that in one or two generations our Orthodoxy will dry up.”

As St. Ignaty Brianchaninov wrote: “We are helpless to arrest this apostasy. Impotent hands will have no power against it and nothing more will be required than the attempt to withhold it. The spirit of the age will reveal the apostasy. Study it, if you wish to avoid it, if you wish to escape this age and the temptation of its spirits. One can suppose, too, that the institution of the Church which has been tottering for so long will fall terribly and suddenly. Indeed, no-one is able to stop or prevent it. \textit{The present means to sustain the institutional Church are borrowed from the elements of the world, things inimical to the Church, and the consequence will be only to accelerate its fall}. Nevertheless, the Lord protects the elect and their limited number will be filled."\footnote{Sokolov, L.A. \textit{Episkop Ignatij Brianchaninov} (Bishop Ignaty Brianchaninov), Kiev, 1915, vol. 2, p. 250. Italics mine (V.M.).}
24. THE JEWS UNDER ALEXANDER II

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

"More expansively than this," writes Alexander Solzhenitsyn, "Alexander II expressed his intention to resolve the Jewish question - and in the most general sense favourably. For the whole way in which the question was posed was radically changed. If under Nicholas I the government had set itself the task, first, of reforming the inner way of life of the Jews, gradually clearing it up through productive labour and education, in this way leading to the removal of administrative restrictions; then under Alexander II, by contrast, the government began by removing external restrictions and impediments, without searching deeply into possible inner causes of Jewish isolation and sickliness, and hoping that then all remaining problems would be solved of themselves; it began 'with the intention of merging this people with the native inhabitants of the country', as the sovereign command of 1856 put it."

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

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

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

Solzhenitsyn, *Dvesti Let Vmeste* (Two Hundred Years Together), Moscow, 2001, volume 1, p. 136.

However, this measure created some further problems. For the Russian peasants who were neighbours of the Jewish colonists were angry that, while they did not have enough land, the Jews had been given more than enough - and were then able to lease the land out to the Russians at a high price. It was this fact that led in part to the sacking of several Jewish settlements during the disturbances of 1881-1882.339

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

When the government offered privileges in military service to those with education, the Jews suddenly converted to the idea of accepting Russian education. By 1887 13.5% of all university students in the country were Jews, and the figures were much higher in cities such as Kharkov and Odessa.340 According to the theory, this should have been a good thing - it was the government's aim to assimilate the Jews into Russian culture through education. However, Russian education in this period was rapidly becoming radicalized. And so the institutions that, as it was hoped, would make the Jews into model Russian citizens and patriots in fact turned them into - revolutionaries...

Although the Russian revolution was caused in the first place, of course, by the Russians, it is impossible to ignore the disproportionately massive contribution made by the Jews...

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

However, the simple fact that the Russian State did not submit completely to the contemporary fashion for giving the Jews everything they asked for meant that it was enemy number one for the Jewish leadership. Moreover, as Mikhail Nazarov writes, there were other powerful reasons for the Jews to hate Russia: “Already Suvorov’s campaign in Europe against the armies of revolutionary

340 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 165-166.
France in 1799 (‘God save the kings!’ said Paul I to the commander as he left), the
victory of Russia over the ‘usurer’ Napoleon and the creation of the monarchist
Sacred Union in 1815, the crushing of the bourgeois-democratic rebellion in
Poland in 1831, the interference into the European bourgeois revolution of 1848-
1849, when the Russian army gave help to the Austrian monarchy in Hungary –
had demonstrated before the eyes of the powers behind the scenes that Russia
was the withholding power of the old Christian world-order in Europe (in the
sense of the Apostle Paul’s words, cf. II Thessalonians 2.7)…”341

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

Paradoxically, Alexander’s attempt to solve the Jewish problem only seemed
to make things worse… "It is precisely under Alexander II,” writes Solzhenitsyn,
“when the restrictions on Jewish life in Russia were so weakened, that Jewish
names begin to be encountered amidst the revolutionaries... In the student
disturbances of 1861 we encounter Mikhoels, Utin and Gen.”342

Again, David Vital writes: "A breakdown based on official records of the
calling, social status, and origin of 1,054 revolutionaries arrested, tried,
condemned, and sent into punitive exile or placed under police surveillance in
the course of the round-up of dissidents in 1873-7 showed that 68 - 6.5 per cent
were Jews. Of 79 condemned to exile 12 were Jews: 15.2 per cent. These were not
immensely large figures, but they do illustrate the fact that the Jewish contingent
was already strikingly in excess of the Jewish proportion of the total population
of the empire.”343

In fact, the exposure of the younger generation of Jews to goy literature was
the cause of a profound change within Jewry itself. Many young fanatics who
had immersed themselves in the study of the Talmud now abandoned
Talmudism, and even the external appearance of Talmudic Jewry, and immersed

341 Nazarov, “Krovavaia mest’ slavianskim varvaram” (Bloody revenge on the Slavic
barbarians), address to the international scientific conference, ‘The Jewish-Bolshevik coup of 1917
as the precondition of the red terror and forced starvations’,

342 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 213.

themselves instead in Turgenev, Belinsky, Dobroliubov, Chernyshevsky, Pisarev and Nekrasov. They became socialists and joined the populist movement [narodnichestvo], distancing themselves more and more from their own people. Meanwhile, most Jews remained fenced off by Talmudic edicts from Russian culture and even the Russian language. Even among the russified Jewish intelligentsia voices were heard warning against complete assimilation. Thus in 1868 Perets Smolenskin warned that, in adapting to the general culture, the Jews should preserve their national spiritual character. And the Petersburg newspapers Rassvet [Dawn] and Russkij Evrej [Russian Jew] "strengthened the attraction of Jewish youth towards the study of the Jewish past and present life. At the end of the 70s and beginning of the 80s there arose a watershed between the cosmopolitan and nationalist tendencies in Russian Jewry. 'In essence the leaders of Rassvet no longer believed in the truth of assimilation... Rassvet, without realising it, went along the path of ... the excitation of national self-consciousness... it had a vividly expressed national bias... the illusions of russification... were dispelled..."'

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

"Brafmann asserted that 'State laws cannot annihilate that harmful power hidden in Jewish self-government... According to his words, this organization is not limited to local kahals... but encompasses, he says, the Jewish people throughout the world... and in consequence of this the Christian peoples cannot be delivered from Jewish exploitation until everything that aids the isolation of the Jews is destroyed'. Brafmann supported 'the view of the Talmud as not so much a codex of a religio-national character, but rather "a civil-political codex", which went "against the flow of the political and moral development of Christian countries"', creating 'a Talmudic republic'. He insisted that 'the Jews constitute a State within the State', that the Jews 'consider themselves not bound by State laws', the Jewish community has 'as one of its basic aims "the darkening of the mind of Christians" to turn them only into fictional owners of the property that belongs to them'. More broadly, he 'accused the Society for the Spreading of Enlightenment among the Jews and the Universal Jewish Union (the Alliance Israélite) of being a part of "a world-wide Jewish conspiracy"'..."
"The State Council, 'softening the blunt phraseology of the Book of the Kahal', declared that while the external distinguishing of the Jews from the rest of the population could be achieved by administrative measures, this 'will in no way guarantee the annihilation of the self-enclosed and almost anti-Christian feelings of the Jewish communities', but 'the isolation of the Jews which is so harmful for the State' can be 'annihilated, on the one hand, by a weakening, as far as possible, of the social links of the Jews among themselves and of the Jewish elders' abuse of their power, and on the other hand, which is still more important, by the spread of enlightenment among the Jews'.

The phrase “the annihilation of the self-enclosed and almost anti-Christian feelings of the Jewish communities” cut to the root of the matter. As even the famous English Jew Sir Isaiah Berlin admits, the Jews regarded the Russian peasants as “a species of lower beings”. Again, David Baron, a Jew born in Russia in 1855, who was converted later to Christianity, writes: “I need scarcely tell you that my heart was full of hatred and prejudice against Him, Whom, until that time, I only knew by the name of Toulekh (crucified), and Who, I believed, only taught his followers to serve idols and persecute the Jews. In this prejudice I was trained up from my earliest days, for when I was only four years old my mother taught me to repeat, whenever I passed a Christian Church, the following words in Hebrew: 'Thou shalt utterly detest it, thou shalt utterly abhor it, for it is a cursed thing' (Deuteronomy 7.26). I was therefore the most bitter against any Jew who professed to believe in Christ: I could to some extent understand that a Gentile should believe in Him, for, I thought, it was his religion, and he does not know any better, but a Jew, and a Talmudic Jew, too, to believe in Him Whom our nation pronounced an imposter! Impossible! He must have been bribed to do so, I thought.”

"I.S. Aksakov, a constant opponent of complete emancipation for the Jews, already at the end of the 50s had tried to restrain the government 'from too bold steps' along this path. When a law was passed giving state service to Jews with degrees, he objected (1862), saying that the Jews were 'a handful of people who completely reject the Christian teaching, the Christian ideal and moral code (and consequently all the bases of the social existence of the country), and confess a teaching that is contrary and hostile to it'. He was not in favour of equality for the Jews in political rights, although he was completely in favour of their having equality in purely civil rights, so that the Jewish people "should be provided with complete freedom of existence, self-government, development, education and trade... even... that they should be allowed to live throughout Russia'. In 1867 he wrote that economically 'one should not talk about the emancipation of the Jews, but about the emancipation of the Russians from the Jews'. He noted the deaf indifference of the liberal press to the peasants' condition and needs. And now Aksakov explained the way of pogroms in 1881 as the display of

347 Baron, Led of God from Darkness into Light, London: Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony.
popular anger against 'the oppression of the Russian local population by Jewry', which is why during the pogroms there was 'no burglary', only the destruction of property and 'some kind of simple-minded conviction of the rightness of their actions'; and he repeated that the question should be put 'not about the equality in rights of the Jews with the Christians, but about the equality of the Christians with the Jews, and about the removal of the rightlessness of the Russian population before the Jews'...

"The writer D. Mordovtsev, who was sympathetic to the Jews, in his 'Letter of a Christian on the Jewish question', which was published in the Jewish newspaper Rassvet [Dawn], pessimistically called on the Jews 'to emigrate to Palestine and America, seeing this as the only solution of the Jewish question in Russia.'\(^\text{348}\)

In 1879 Constantine Pobedonostev wrote to Dostoyevsky: "They are at the root of the revolutionary socialist movement and of regicide, they own the periodical press, they have in their hands the financial markets; the people as a whole fall into financial slavery to them; they even control the principles of contemporary science and strive to place it outside of Christianity.\(^\text{349}\)

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

"And, in truth, the whole activity of the Jews in these border regions of ours consisted of rendering the native population as much as possible inescapably dependent on them, taking advantage of the local laws. They always managed to be on friendly terms with those upon whom the people were dependent, and, certainly, it is not for them to complain, at least in this respect, about their restricted rights compared with the native population. They have received from us enough of these rights over the native population. What, in the course of decades and centuries, has become of the Russian people where the Jews settled is attested by the history of our border regions. What, then? - Point to any other tribe from among Russian aliens which could rival the Jew by his dreadful influence in this connection! You will find no such tribe. In this respect the Jew

\(^{348}\) Solzhenitsyn, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 197, 198.

\(^{349}\) Pobedonostev, in Cohen and Major, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 627.
preserves all his originality as compared with other Russian aliens, and, of course, the reason therefore is that status in statu of his, the spirit of which specifically breathes with pitilessness for everything that is not Jew, with disrespect for any people and tribe, for every human creature that is not a Jew. And what kind of justification is it that in Western Europe the nations did not permit themselves to be overwhelmed, and that thus the Russian people themselves are at fault? Because the Russian people in the border regions of Russia proved weaker than the European nations (and exclusively as a result of their cruel political circumstances), for this sole reason should they be completely crushed by exploitation, instead of being helped?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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


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

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

If liberalism, socialism, anarchism and other false beliefs were sapping the foundations of Holy Russia, a different, albeit related disease was corrupting the rest of the Orthodox oikoumene: nationalism. Like many in the West, the Orthodox nations of the Balkans and the Middle East were thinking of one thing: freedom! The Balkan Orthodox had already started to liberate themselves from the weakening Turks. And the Greeks in the Free State of Greece wanted freedom for their fellow countrymen still under the Ottoman yoke in accordance with their "great idea" of the re-establishment of the Byzantine Empire. Whether the Greek dreams of the resurrection of Byzantium were compatible with the Slav dreams of their own liberation was a moot point...

These winds of freedom were less strongly felt by the Greeks still under the Ottoman yoke (as by the Serbs still under the Habsburg yoke). For one thing, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, together with the monks of Mount Athos over whom it had jurisdiction, stood for strict, traditional Orthodoxy, for which spiritual freedom is much more important than national freedom. As such, it resisted the liberal, westernizing trends that were gradually gaining the upper hand in Athens, Belgrade, Sophia and Bucharest. Another reason was that they already had considerable power. The Ecumenical Patriarch was the civil as well as the ecclesiastical head of all the Balkan Orthodox under the Sultan, and the rich Phanariots that supported the Patriarch were among the most privileged citizens of the Ottoman empire.

Orthodox traditionalism and anti-liberalism made the patriarchate a natural ally of the Russian government. However, after the Crimean War, Russia was no longer protector of the Christians at the Sublime Porte - and the Greeks felt the difference. And not only the Greeks. Thus in 1860 the Orthodox of Damascus were subjected to a massacre which the Russians were not able to prevent or avenge. According to Professor A.P. Lopukhin, "the Christian subjects of the Sultan, whatever oppression and humiliation they were suffering, were now unable to rely on any outside help but were obliged to rely solely on their own resources... During the last years of the reign of Abdul Mecid [1839-61],... the Greeks... not only remained in a dreadful social and economic state, but even lost many of their former rights and privileges."\(^{352}\)

The reason for this was a series of liberal reforms that the Western Powers imposed on Turkey at the Treaty of Paris in 1856, and which the Ottomans issued in the form of an Imperial Rescript. These were seen as supplementing and strengthening the policy of reform known as tanzimat that Turkey had begun in 1839. Their aim was to improve the lot of the Christians under Ottoman rule.

In fact, however, they made it worse. Thus both Christians and Muslims were promised equality before the law in place of their separate legal systems - which, however, both groups wanted to retain. Again, the economic reforms, which essentially involved the imposition of liberal free-trade principles on the empire, were harmful to both groups. For neither the Orthodox nor the Muslims could compete with the mass-produced products now pouring in from the West, while Ottoman industries were deprived of the protection they needed in order to survive. But the Ottomans were massively in debt to the West, so they were in no position to refuse the terms of trade imposed upon them.

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

These events placed the Russian government in a quandary. Russia had been looking to liberate the Balkans and Constantinople from the Turkish yoke since the seventeenth century. The liberation of Constantinople would continue to be seen as an imperial aim until the very fall of the Russian Empire in 1917. But it was only at two moments in the nineteenth century, 1829-30 and 1877-78, that its achievement looked a distinct possibility, even probability. “The Eastern Question” came down to: which power was to rule Constantinople? Or: were the Orthodox nations subject to the Ottoman empire to be liberated at their own hands, at the hands of the Russians, or through the concerted pressure of the great powers on Turkey?

For most of the nineteenth century Russia had been governed in her foreign policy by two not completely compatible principles or obligations: her obligations as a member of the Triple Alliance of monarchist states (Russia, Austria and Prussia) against the revolution, and her obligations as the Third Rome and the Protector of Orthodox Christians everywhere. As a member of the Triple Alliance Russia could not be seen to support any revolution against a legitimate power. That is why Tsar Alexander I refused to support the Greek Revolution in 1821 - the monarchist powers considered the Ottoman empire to be a legitimate power. On the other hand, as the Third Rome and Protector of all Orthodox Christians, Russia naturally wished to come to the aid of the Orthodox

353 Thus "on April 12th, 1791," writes Roman Golicz, "a cartoon was published in London entitled 'An Imperial Stride!' depicting Catherine the Great with one foot in Russia and the other in Constantinople. The image recalls the empress's epic tour to the Crimea in 1787 when she entered Kherson through an arch inscribed 'The Way to Constantinople'" ("The Russians Shall Not Have Constantinople", History Today, September, 2003, p. 39.)
Greeks, Serbs, Bulgars and Romanians under the oppressive Turkish yoke. That is why Tsar Nicholas I, legitimist though he was, did intervene in the Greek revolution in 1829 by invading the Ottoman empire - the decisive event enabling the emergence of the Free State of Greece in 1832.

In spite of Nicholas I’s intervention in Greece in 1829, he was in general a legitimist - that is, his priority was not primarily the protection of Orthodox Christians from the Turkish authorities but the protection of all legitimate regimes against the revolution. In practice, this meant all the major powers including Turkey but excluding France. So it was from a legitimist position that he twice crushed uprisings of the Poles against his own rule, and in 1849 crushed the Hungarian rising against Austria-Hungary. However, the quarrels between the Greek Orthodox and the Roman Catholics over the Holy Sepulchre led him to take a more specifically "Third Rome" stand. As we have seen, this led eventually to the Crimean War against Turkey, Britain and France, which, as Oliver Figes’ authoritative study of the war confirms, was essentially a religious war between Orthodoxy and Islam, with the Western states supporting the Muslims.\(^{354}\)

Although the Crimean War constituted a defeat for the "Third Rome" policy, it inflicted even more damage on the legitimist principle; for illegitimate France was now legitimized again (the treaty ending the war was signed in Paris), while the Tsars never again fully trusted the legitimate monarchy of Austria-Hungary, which had not supported Russia in the war in spite of Russia’s vital intervention to save it in the revolution of 1848-49.

So intervention for the sake of the Orthodox again became popular, especially as a new wave of rebellions against Turkish rule began in the Balkans.

However, the Russian intervention under Alexander II was different from earlier interventions under Nicholas I. Under Nicholas, wrote Leontiev, "there was more talk of the rights of Russian protection, of Russian power." However, from the 1860s "Russian diplomacy, the Russian press and Russian society began to speak more and more loudly in favour of the Christians of the East, without relying, as in the 50s, on the right of our power, but much more on the rights of the Sultan's Christian subjects themselves." In other words, human rights, rather than Russia's rights. And so Turkey "was forced to make concessions to us constantly on the path of the liberal reforms that we suggested for the Christians. Because of this Turkey became weaker; the Christians became bolder and bolder, and we in the course of twenty years in all, step by step, destroyed the Turkish empire."\(^{355}\)

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\(^{355}\) Leontiev, "Pis'ma o vostochnykh delakh - I" (Letters on Eastern Matters - I), in *Vostok, Rossia i Slavianstvo* (The East, Russia and Slavdom), Moscow, 1996, p. 354. Cf. Mansel, *Constantinople*, p. 248: "Wellington revealed the great truth: 'The Ottoman Empire stands not for the benefit of the Turks but of Christian Europe.' Metternich pronounced the preservation of the Ottoman Empire in Europe 'a political necessity for Austria'."
But the paradoxical fact was that the gradual weakening of the Ottoman empire, and liberation of the Christians from under the Turkish yoke, while to be welcomed in itself, contained great spiritual dangers for the Orthodox commonwealth. For the removal of the yoke gave renewed strength to two diseases that had plagued the Orthodox since even before 1453: an inclination towards western humanist culture; and disunity among themselves on ethnic lines.

Moreover, after the French revolution, and especially after the Greek revolution of 1821, the two diseases began to work on each other. Thus western ideas about freedom and the rights of individuals and nations began to interact with frictions among the Christians caused by Greek bishops' insensitivity to the needs of their Slavic, Romanian and Arabic flocks to produce a potentially revolutionary situation.

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

These two very important benefits of the Turkish yoke went some way to offsetting its disadvantages in the form of the restrictions on missionary activity, the forced induction of Bosnian boys into the Janissaries, and intermittent persecutions; just as the advantages of the pagan pax Romana had outweighed its disadvantages during the pagan Roman empire. The Christian leaders in both Church and State - specifically, the Tsar of Russia and the Patriarch of Constantinople - understood this. So they did not try to destroy the empire, while at the same time trying to mitigate its savagery.

Leontiev also understood this. Thus "it is necessary," he wrote, "as far as possible, to preserve the Porte; the Porte must be served; it must be defended. And I agree with this point of view of the Phanariots: the pasha is better than the Hellene democratic nomarch (prefect): the pasha is more monarchical, more statist, cleverer, broader."357

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

357 Leontiev, "Pis'ma o vostochnykh delakh" (Letters on Eastern Affairs), Vostok, Rossia i Slavianstvo, op. cit., p. 362.
Now the Greek "great idea" (μεγαλή ιδέα), otherwise known as *Pan-Hellenism*, consisted in the idea that all the traditionally Greek lands not yet freed from the Turks - Crete, Epirus, Macedonia, Thrace, even Constantinople and the vast territory of Asia Minor - should be united under Greek suzerainty. This idea dated from well before the Greek revolution of 1821; some say it began immediately after the fall of Constantinople in 1453; but it gathered headway after the foundation of the Free State of Greece, being nourished especially by western-educated liberal thinkers in Athens. It is not to be confused with the universalist idea of *Byzantinism*, the faith and culture of Christian Rome...

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

These injustices suffered by the Slavs at the hands of the Greeks elicited the sympathy of notable Russians such as Alexis Khomiakov and Bishop Theophan the Recluse. The latter, as archimandrite, was sent by the Russian government and the Holy Synod to Constantinople to gather information on the Greco-Bulgarian quarrel. On March 9, 1857 he presented his report, in which his sympathies for the Bulgarians were manifest. However, on the broader political plane he by no means rejected the Ecumenical Patriarchate, but called on "magnanimous" Russia to come to her aid - "we must not abandon our mother in the faith in this helpless situation of hers".358

The Greeks distrusted this movement in Russian society for the liberation of the Southern Slavs. Whereas earlier generations would have welcomed any incursion of Russia into the Balkans, hoping that the Tsar would liberate Constantinople and give it to the Greeks, the modern, more nationalist-minded Greeks rejected any such interference. For in Free Greece Russia was no longer seen as the liberator of the Balkans for the sake of the Orthodoxy that the Russian and Balkan peoples shared, but as the potential enslaver of the Balkans for the sake of Russian *Pan-Slavism*. More specifically, the Greeks suspected that Russia wanted to help Bulgaria take the ancient Greek lands of Thrace and Macedonia in which there was now a large Bulgarian population. Thus Pan-Slavism was seen as the great threat to Pan-Hellenism. True, many Greeks, especially in the Ottoman Empire and on Mount Athos, cherished more charitable views of Russia, which continued to support the Orthodox under the Turkish yoke in many ways. But the views of the western-educated liberals in Athens were gaining ground...

A sign of the times was the court case that took place on Mount Athos in 1874 between the Russian and Greek monks of the monastery of St. Panteleimon with regard to the rights of the Russian monks to stay there. "The case divided the whole of Athos into two opposing camps: the Greek monks and the Russian monks. Only a few of the Greeks had the courage to support the Russians. Thanks to the energy and insistence with which the Russian monks defended their rights to the monastery, with documents in their hands and with the strong support of the Russian consul at the Porte [Count N.P. Ignatiev], the case ended with victory for the Russians."[359]

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The phenomenon of so-called Pan-Slavism was misunderstood and exaggerated by the Greeks. While there was some talk in Russia - for example, by Michael Katkov at the ethnographic exhibition in Moscow in 1867[360] - of bringing all the Slavs together into a single polity under Russia just as the German lands were being brought together under Prussia, this was never a serious political proposition and never entertained by any of the Tsars. It existed more in the minds of the Greeks than in reality.

Indeed, the famous Serbian Bishop Nikolai (Velimirovich) was inclined to deny the very existence of Pan-Slavism, saying that it was invented by the Germans: "Who thought up Pan-Slavism and spoke about it to the world? The Pan-Germanists! Yes, it was precisely the Pan-Germanists who thought up Pan-Slavism and sounded out about it to the whole world. Man always judges about others from himself. If Pan-Germanism exists, then why should Pan-Slavism not exist? However, this analogy, however much it may appear to represent the rule, is inaccurate in this case. Pan-Germanism existed and exists, while Pan-Slavism was not and is not now. Everybody knows that there is a Pan-German party in both Germany and Austria. We know that there exists Pan-German journalism, and pan-German clubs, and German literature, and pan-German organizations, and German banks. But in the Slavic world, by contrast, there exists nothing of the kind. As a Slav, I would have known about it, and as a free man I would have spoken about it all openly. However, in the Slavic world there exists something which is somewhat different from the Pan-Slavic spectre - a feeling, only a feeling, which is to be found more often in literature than in politics - Slavophilism. This is the same feeling of blood kinship and sympathy that exists in Italy towards the French, which is far from political Pan-Romanism, or the same feeling of kinship that exists in the United States towards the English and in England towards the Americans, although here also

359 Lopukhin, op. cit., pp. 136-137. For more on this quarrel, see Deacon Peter Pakhomov, "O Prekraschenii Afonskoj Smuty, Igumene Makarii i Generale Ignatieve" (On the Ending of the Athos Time of Troubles, Abbot Macarius and General Ignatiev), 1 October, 2015.

it is far from any kind of fantastic Pan-Anglicanism. It is a sentimental striving for kin, a nostalgia of the blood, a certain organic fear of being separated from one's own. And if in this Slavophilism the penetrating note of love is just a little more audible than in Romanophilism or Anglophilism (and I think that it is audible), then this is completely natural and comprehensible. People who suffer are closer to each other than people who are lords. We Slavs, first of all as Slavs, and secondly as oppressed slaves, love and strive towards those who suffer from the same injustice, from the same arrogant pride, from the same disdain. Who can understand a slave better than a slave? And who is more likely to help a sufferer than a sufferer?..." 361

Even the Pan-Slavism of a man like General Fadeyev can be called this only with major qualifications. Thus consider his Opinion on the Eastern Question of 1876, in which he writes: "The liberated East of Europe, if it be liberated at all, will require: a durable bond of union, a common head with a common council, the transaction of international affairs and the military command in the hands of that head, the Tsar of Russia, the natural chief of all the Slavs and Orthodox. Every Russian, as well as every Slav and every Orthodox Christian, should desire to see chiefly the Russian reigning House cover the liberated soil of Eastern Europe with its branches, under the supremacy and lead of the Tsar of Russia, long recognized, in the expectation of the people, as the direct heir of Constantine the Great." 362

The ideology expressed here is not Pan-Slavism, but that of Russia the Third Rome, the idea - which goes a long way back, before the age of nationalism - that Russia, as the successor of Rome and Byzantium, is the natural protector of all Orthodox Christians. Hence the reference to "all the Slavs and Orthodox", and "every Slav and every Orthodox Christian", and to Constantine the Great - who, needless to say, was not a Slav.

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

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361 Velimirovich, Dusha Serbii (The Soul of Serbia), Moscow, 2007, pp. 572-573.
Nor was it in Russia's interests to support individual Slavic nationalisms. As Tom Gallacher points out, "as a multi-national empire in its own right, Russia was hostile to the pretensions of European small state nationalism." 363 As Hosking points out, "the official Foreign Office view was that Russia should cooperate with Germany and Austria to reaffirm the legitimist monarchical principle in Eastern Europe, to counteract revolutionary movements there, whether nationalist or not, and to promote a stable balance of power. Panslavism could never be consistently espoused by the Russian government, for it was a policy which would inevitably lead to war against the Ottomans and Habsburgs, if not against the European powers in general. Besides, it was in essence a revolutionary strategy, directed against legitimate sovereign states. For the Russian empire to promote the principle of insurrectionary nationalism was, to say the least, double-edged." 364

For to support, say, Bulgarian pretensions to an independent Greater Bulgaria - as opposed to simply protecting Bulgarians suffering from Turkish cruelty - would have created conflicts with the Greeks, the Romanians and the Serbs; whereas it was in Russia's interests to see unity among all the Orthodox nations.

Even supposing that Russia in the name of some mythical Pan-Slavist ideal had been willing and able to conquer the whole of the Balkans and take Constantinople, she could not have held on to her gains for long. First, the western powers, including the new rising power of Germany, would have been stirred up to launch another crusade against her. Secondly, to drive the Turks out of Constantinople would not have meant their final defeat, and further operations deep into Asia would have been necessary. But thirdly and most importantly, the union between the Tsar of Russia and the Patriarch of Constantinople, upon which the whole of the Orthodox commonwealth was based, would have been shattered. For what then would the position of the Patriarch within the Russian empire have been? Still the first hierarch of Orthodoxy, or de facto subordinate to the Russian Synod? How would the Greeks (not to mention the Southern Slavs) have reacted to exchanging one form of foreign dominion for another, albeit Orthodox?

A rare true Pan-Slavist in the political sense was Nicholas Danilevsky, whose Russia and Europe (1869) made use of Slavophile ideas from the 1840s. Danilevsky distinguished ten types of civilization in history: (1) Egyptian, (2) Chinese, (3) Assyrian-Babylonian-Phoenician or Ancient Semitic, (4) Hindu, (5) Iranian, (6) Hebrew, (7) Ancient Greek, (8) Roman, (9) Neo-Semitic or Arabian, and (10) Romano-Germanic or European. He believed that after Russia had conquered Constantinople and liberated and united the Slavs under her rule, she would create an eleventh type of civilization or cultural type. 365

Being a form of nationalist historicism, Danilevsky's theory identified the latest in history with the best. And so Slavism, being the last in the series of "historico-cultural" types was the best, in his view. "The new Slavic civilization, with its capital at Constantinople, would synthesize the highest achievements of its predecessors in religion (Israel), culture (Greece), political order (Rome) and socio-economic progress (modern Europe), and would supplement them with the Slavic genius for social and economic justice. 'These four rivers will unite on the wide plains of Slavdom into a mighty sea.'"

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

As Fr. Georges Florovsky writes, speaking of the later Slavophiles, "Significance is ascribed to this or that cultural achievement or discovery of the Slavic nationality not because we see in it the manifestation of the highest values, values which surpass those that inspired 'European' culture, but simply because they are the organic offshoots of the Slavic national genius. And so not because they are good, but because they are ours.

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

"It was on this plane, that the annihilating criticism to which Vladimir Soloviev subjected the imitative nationalism of the later Slavophiles lay. His words had the greater weight in that, even though he was not conscious of it, he stood squarely on the ground of the old, classical Slavophile principles. True, his criticism suffered from wordiness and 'personalities'. Too often a harsh phrase took the place of subtle argumentation. But the basic fault of 'false' nationalism was sensed by him and illumined completely correctly. Only on the soil of universal principles that are absolutely significant to all is genuine culture possible, and the national task of Slavdom can lie only in actively converting itself to the service of values that will be chosen for their supreme good in the free exercise of

366 Hosking, op. cit., p. 369.
thought and faith… But the denial of the ‘universal-historical’ path is a step towards nihilism, to the complete dissolution of values,… in the final analysis, the abolition of the category of values altogether…”

In spite of the existence of one or two true Pan-Slavists like Danilevsky, Mark Almond is right in asserting that "Pan-Slavism remained a minority taste in Alexander II's Russia. Although it attracted interest among journalists and academics as well as curious politicians wondering whether it might serve imperial interests abroad or undermine stability at home, even the Slavic Congress founded in 1858 or the high profile Slavic Congress in Moscow in 1867 attracted little more than interest. Cash to support the idea of Pan-Slavism was in short supply. The Slavic Committee made do with 1700 rubles a year even in 1867, at the height of public interest before the war a decade later."  

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

A more important enduring influence in the work of Leontiev was early Slavophilism…


369 Walicki, _op. cit._, pp. 304-305.  

370 Thus "one of the sources of Leontiev's ideas", writes S.V. Khatuntsev, “on the inevitability of serious conflicts between a Russia that was renewing and transforming itself and the civilization of the West was, without a doubt, the ideas of the Slavophiles. Proceeding from a recognition of the complete opposition of the two worlds – the ‘western’, ‘Romano-Germanic’, ‘Catholic-Protestant’, and the ‘eastern’, ‘Slavic-Orthodox’, the Slavophiles concluded that conflicts and wars between them were inevitable. So for Yu.F. Samarin, ‘the essential, root difference’ between the two worlds was already ‘a condition of struggle’ between them in all spheres, including the political. The political opposition between Western Europe and Slavdom was the initial basis of the views of I.S. Aksakov. Already in 1861 he was speaking about ‘the hatred, which is often instinctive’ of Europe for the Slavic, Orthodox world, the case of which was ‘the antagonism between the two opposing educational principles and the envy of the decrepit world for the new one, to which the future belongs’. Several years later Aksakov wrote: ‘The whole task of Europe..."
However, he was more appreciative than any of the Slavophiles of the continuing importance of Greek Orthodoxy to Slavic Orthodoxy. Leontiev believed that if one subtracted Byzantinism from Slavdom, very little distinctively different was left. An ardent Philhellene, he thought that narrowly Serbian and Bulgarian nationalisms were real and powerful forces, very similar in their aims and psychology to Greek nationalism, and, like contemporary Greek nationalism, sadly lacking in that exalted and spiritual form of "universalist nationalism" that he called Byzantinism. These petty nationalisms, argued Leontiev, were closely related to liberalism. They were all rooted in the French revolution: just as liberalism insisted on the essential equality of all men and their "human rights", so these nationalisms insisted on the essential equality of all nations and their "national rights". But this common striving for "national rights" made the nations very similar in their essential egoism; it erased individuality in the name of individualism, hierarchy in the name of egalitarianism.

Leontiev believed, as Walicki writes, that "nations were a creative force only when they represented a specific culture: 'naked' or purely 'tribal' nationalism was a corrosive force destroying both culture and the state, a levelling process that was, in the last resort, cosmopolitan; in fact, nationalism was only a mask for liberal and egalitarian tendencies, a specific metamorphosis of the universal process of disintegration". According to Leontiev, the nations striving to be independent was based precisely on their desire to be like every other nation: "Having become politically liberated, they are very glad, whether in everyday life or in ideas, to be like everyone else". Therefore nationalism, freed from the universalist idea of Christianity, leads in the end to a soulless, secular cosmopolitanism. "In the whole of Europe the purely national, that is, ethnic principle, once released

371 As Leontiev put it: "The Greeks have 'the Byzantine empire', 'the Great Hellenic Idea'; while the Bulgars have 'Great Bulgaria'. Is it not all the same?" ("Pis'ma o vostochnykh delakh - IV" (Letters on Eastern Matters - IV), op. cit., p. 363.

372 "So much for the national development, which makes them all similar to contemporary Europeans, which spreads petty rationalism, egalitarianism, religious indifference, European bourgeois uniformity in tastes and manners: machines, pantaloons, frock-coats, top hats and demagogy!" ("Plody natsional'nykh dvizhenii" (The Fruits of the National Movements), op. cit., p. 560).

373 Walicki, op. cit., p. 303.
Leontiev foresaw that Bulgarian nationalism would lead to a diplomatic break with Bulgaria’s liberator and protector, Russia, which took place in the reign of Tsar Alexander III. He also foresaw that state nationalism in general could lead to the internationalist abolition or merging of states. "A grouping of states according to pure nationalities will lead European man very quickly to the dominion of internationalism" - that is, a European Union or even a Global United Nations. "A state grouping according to tribes and nations is... nothing other than the preparation - striking in its force and vividness - for the transition to a cosmopolitan state, first a pan-European one, and then, perhaps, a global one, too! This is terrible! But still more terrible, in my opinion, is the fact that so far in Russia nobody has seen this or wants to understand it..."

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

Orthodoxy recognizes no essential difference between Jew and Greek, Scythian and barbarian so long as they are all Orthodox, all members of the Church. The same applies on the collective level, between nations. This is the Orthodox egalitarianism. So it went against the spirit of Orthodoxy for Russia to take the side of one Orthodox nation against another, or of Slavs against non-Slavs. The

374 Leontiev, Letter of a Hermit.
375 Vadim Venediktov, “Pravoslavnij Vostok Glazami Russkogo Filosofa K.N. Leontiev”.
aim of Russia, as the protectress of Orthodoxy throughout the world, had to be to cool passions, avert conflicts and build bridges among the Orthodox of different races, rejecting both Pan-Hellenism and Pan-Slavism. Therefore neither Pan-Hellenism nor Pan-Slavism but Byzantinism, or Romanity (Romanitas or Ῥωμαίοσύνη), was the truly Orthodox ideal, the ideal of a commonwealth of all Orthodox nations united by a strict adherence to Holy Orthodoxy in the religious sphere and loyalty to the Orthodox Emperor in the political sphere.

This vision has repelled many. Thus it has been argued that "for Leontiev, 'ascetic and dogmatic Orthodoxy' was mainly distinguished by its 'Byzantine pessimism', its lack of faith in the possibility of harmony and universal brotherhood."379 However, this criticism is unjust: Orthodoxy does not reject the possibility of universal brotherhood, still less the actuality of Orthodox brotherhood. After all, what is the Kingdom of God, according to Orthodoxy, if not the complete brotherhood of man in the Fatherhood of God, when God will be "all in all"? But the Orthodox are also realistic; they know that man is fallen, and that neither the idea of human rights nor that of national rights can take the place of true fraternity, or love in Christ, acquired through true faith in Christ and ascetic struggle.

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379 Walicki, op. cit., p. 308.
26. THE GRECO-BULGARIAN SCHISM

In her role as the defender of Ecumenical (non-nationalist) Orthodoxy, Russia's natural ally was the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and the more perspicacious Russians always strove to preserve good relations with the patriarchate.

This was a point stressed by Leontiev's spiritual father, Elder Ambrose of Optina: "In your note about the living union of Russia with Greece, in our opinion you should first of all have pointed out how the Lord in the beginning founded the Ecumenical Orthodox Church, consisting of five Patriarchates, or individual Churches; and, when the Roman Church fell away from the Ecumenical Church, then the Lord as it were filled up this deprivation by founding the Church of Russia in the north, enlightening Russia with Christianity through the Greek Church, as the main representative of the Ecumenical Church. The attentive and discerning among the Orthodox see here two works of the Providence of God. First, the Lord by his later conversion of Russia to Christianity preserved her from the harm of the papists. And secondly, He showed that Russia, having been enlightened with Christianity through the Greek Church, must be in union with this people, as the main representative of the Ecumenical Orthodox Church, and not with others harmed by heresy. That is how our forefathers acted, seeing, perhaps, a pitiful example, beside the Romans, in the Armenian Church, which through its separation from the Ecumenical Church fell into many errors. The Armenians erred for two reasons: first, they accepted slanders against the Ecumenical Church; and secondly, they wanted self-government and instead of this subjected themselves to the subtle influence of the westerners, from which they were protected by their very geographical position. The cunning hellish enemy also wove his nets and is still weaving them over the Russians, only in a somewhat different form. The Armenians were confused first by accepting a slander against the Ecumenical Church, but afterwards by their desire for self-government. But the Russian could be closer to the same actions by accepting slanders against the first-hierarchs of the Ecumenical Church. And thus, through the enemy's cunning and our blunders, it will turn out that we, wilfully departing from a useful and saving union with the Ecumenical Church, involuntarily and imperceptibly fall under the harmful influence of western opinions, from which Providence Itself has preserved and protected us, as was said earlier... You should have pointed out that absolute obedience is one thing, and relations with the Greek Church another. In the latter case there is nothing obligatory with regard to absolute obedience..." 380

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In 1872, however, relations with Constantinople were put to a severe test when an ecclesiastical schism took place between the Greeks and the Bulgarians.

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

However, things were stirring in Bulgaria, too. Only the Bulgarians saw the main obstacle to their ambitions not in the Turks - some were even happy at the thought of a "Turkish tsar" (after all, the Bulgarians were partly of Turkic origin) - but in the neighbouring Christian nations. There was particular tension in Thrace and Macedonia, which from ancient times had been Greek381, but where there were now more Bulgarians than Greeks. The question was: if Turkish power finally collapsed, which nation would take control in those provinces - the Greeks or the Bulgarians?

Parallel to the movement for political independence was a movement for ecclesiastical independence. "In 1839," writes Christopher Walter, "the Ottoman government published the first of a series of edicts, granting liberty of conscience to its Christian subjects. The Bulgarians then petitioned the Phanar to appoint Bulgarian bishops and to authorize the celebration of the liturgy in Slavonic.382 Progressively the Bulgarians became more insistent. When the Phanar so manipulated the election to the synod convoked in 1858 to study the Bulgarians' demands that none of them were accepted, the first symptoms of rupture became manifest. Greek bishops were expelled from districts where Bulgarians were in the majority. On Easter Sunday 1860, the Liturgy was celebrated in the church of St. Stephen in Constantinople in Slavonic, and the commemoration of the patriarch was omitted."383

Moreover, the 28th canon of the Fourth Ecumenical Council specifically mentions Thrace and Macedonia as coming within the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The Greeks were to use this canon in defence of their position.

The Phanar's refusal led to two distinct movements for Bulgarian ecclesiastical independence: the Bulgarian Uniate Church, which was in communion with Rome, and the Bulgarian exarchate, later the Bulgarian patriarchate, which remained Orthodox. What is written here relates exclusively to the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

“There followed,” writes Eugene Pavlenko, “a de facto refusal of the Bulgarians to submit to the Patriarchate, which did not satisfy their demands for the right to elect their own bishops in their own dioceses and the granting to them the possibility of occupying the higher Church posts on an equal basis with the Greeks. The Patriarchate of Constantinople made various concessions: it issued Divine service books for the Bulgarian clergy in the Slavonic language, and appointed archimandrites from the Bulgarians. Later, under the influence of passions aroused on both sides, the demands of the Bulgarians intensified and flowed out into the desire to have their own separate exarchate. In 1867 the Constantinopolitan Patriarch Gregory VI proposed a project for the creation of a separate Bulgarian exarchate, but no meeting of minds was achieved on this project. It was hindered not only by the impossibility of precisely delineating dioceses with Greek and Bulgarian populations, but also by the gradually formed striving of the Bulgarians to create their own national Church, in which every Bulgarian, wherever he might be – in Bulgaria or in Asia Minor, would be in subjection only to the Bulgarian hierarchy. Such a striving was leading to a situation of ecclesiastical dual powers and to schism, but the Bulgarians were no longer upset by this. They wanted a schism, they were seeking it. They wanted separation not only from the Greeks, but also from the whole of Orthodoxy, since such a separation made them an independent people. ‘Look how willingly religion has been sacrificed for the same purely tribal principle, for the same national-cosmopolitan impulses!’ said K.N. Leontiev in this connection.384

“In 1868 Patriarch Gregory VI of Constantinople attempted to settle the Greco-Bulgarian question by convening an Ecumenical Council, but without success. In these circumstances the Bulgarians decided to act through the sultan and submitted to him a petition concerning the re-establishment of ecclesiastical independence which had been lost because of the abolition of the Trnovo Patriarchate. ‘Asking the Porte to establish their national independent hierarchy,’ wrote Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, ‘shows that although the Bulgarians have had sufficient time to think over what they are doing, they still have the stubborn desire without having acquired understanding. It is possible to establish a new independent hierarchy only with the blessing of a lawfully existing hierarchy.’385 In reply to this request of the Bulgarians the Porte put forward two projects. According to point 3 of both projects, ‘in Constantinople, next to the Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch, a pre-eminent Orthodox Metropolitan of Bulgaria must be introduced…, to whom the supervision of the administration of the Bulgarian churches is to be entrusted and under whom there will be an assembly, that is, a kind of Synod, occupied with church affairs.’ In point 5 of one of these projects the Bulgarian Church is also called ‘a separate body’, while the aforementioned assembly is more than once called a Synod.

384 Leontiev, “Plody natsional’nykh dvizhenij” (The Fruits of the National Movements), op. cit., p. 559.

385 Metropolitan Philaret, in Leontiev, “Pis’ma o vostochnykh delakh” (Letters on Eastern Matters), op. cit, p. 360.
“It goes without saying that Patriarch Gregory VI spoke out against such projects that transgress the canons of the Church. The ecclesiastical decrees which forbid such dual power situations are contained in:

- The 8th canon of the First Ecumenical Council: ‘Let there not be two bishops in a city.’
- The 35th canon of the Holy Apostles: ‘Let not a bishop dare to carry out ordinations outside the bounds of his diocese in cities and villages not subject to him’, which is confirmed and clarified by the 22nd canon of the Council of Antioch: ‘Let a bishop not go into another city that is not subject to him, nor into a settlement that does not belong to him, in order to ordain someone, and let him not establish priests or deacons in places subject to another bishop…’
- The 34th canon of the Holy Apostles: ‘The bishops of each people should know the first among them, and recognise him as their head, and do nothing exceeding their authority without obtaining his permission: but each must do only that which touches his diocese and those places that belong to it.’

“With regard to the words from the 34th canon of the Holy Apostles: ‘The bishops of each people’, there developed a polemic between the Bulgarians and Constantinople which was destined to have a long history. The Bulgarians considered that the words: ‘The bishops of each people’ meant the order of the joint administration of one and the same (geographical) district by several priestly hierarchies belonging to different nationalities. But this passage was interpreted in a different way by the Byzantine interpreters Zonaras, Balsamon and Aristene. Zonaras, in his explanation of the 34th Apostolic canon, says: ‘With this aim (the prevention of ecclesiastical disorder) the present canon commands that the first bishops of each district, that is, the hierarchs of the metropolia, should be recognized by all the bishops of that district as their head.’ Thus Zonaras considers the expression ‘of each people’ to be identical with the expression ‘of each district’. This interpretation is confirmed by the juxtaposition of the 34th Apostolic canon with the 9th canon of the Council of Antioch: ‘In each district it behoves the bishops to know the presiding bishop in the metropolia… in accordance with the rule of our fathers that has been in force since ancient times.’ Zonaras: ‘Although this canon does not coincide completely in its wording with the 34th canon of the Holy Apostles, nevertheless as far as the meaning is concerned it agrees with it in everything.’ Balsamon: ‘The content of this canon is explicated by the interpretation of the 34th Apostolic canon.’ Aristene: ‘This canon has exactly the same teaching as the 34th canon of the Holy Apostles.’ As we see, the authoritative Byzantine interpreters agree that by the expression ‘the bishops of each people’ ‘the bishops of each district’ must be understood, and so this canon agrees with all the remaining canons which forbid dual power in the Church.

“The Patriarch’s refusal to make concessions elicited the irritation of the Turkish government, and in 1870 the sultan issued a firman, in which permission was granted to the Bulgarians to establish a separate exarchate with a specified number of dioceses. The administration of the exarchate was given to the Synod
of the Bulgarian bishops under the presidency of the exarch, who had to commemorate the name of the Constantinopolitan Patriarch during the Divine service. The Synod was obliged to refer to the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate in connection with the most important matters of the faith, and after the election of its exarch it had to seek a confirmatory certificate from the Patriarch. The Bulgarians also had to receive chrism from the Patriarch. In accordance with the ecclesiastical canons (the 6th and 7th canons of the First Ecumenical Council and the 3rd canon of the Second Ecumenical Council), independent patriarchal sees and the Synods having equal honour to them have to be established in a conciliar fashion, and not on the orders of a secular power. Patriarch Gregory VI asked the Turkish government for permission to convene an Ecumenical Council to examine this question, but he was refused, and he resigned his see. In accordance with the decree of the Turkish government, the Bulgarian Assembly in Constantinople elected its exarch, who was presented to the sultan on April 4, 1872. However, the Constantinopolitan Patriarch, who was now Anthimus IV, did not agree not only to recognize, but also to receive the exarch, from whom he demanded written repentance for all that had been done. But the semi-independent existence of the exarchate no longer suited the Bulgarians, either. They longed for complete separation from the Greeks, which could only be achieved by means of an ecclesiastical schism. On May 11, 1872, after the Gospel during the Liturgy, which was celebrated in Constantinople by the exarch together with the other Bulgarian bishops and many clergy, an act signed by the Council of seven Bulgarian bishops was proclaimed, which declared that the Bulgarian Church was independent. On May 15, the Patriarchal Synod declared the Bulgarian exarch [Atanas Mihaylov Chalakov] deprived of his rank and defrocked; the other Bulgarian bishops, together with all the clergy and laity in communion with them, were subjected to ecclesiastical punishments. A declaration was also made concerning the convening of a Local Council.

“The feelings of the sides drawn in one way or another into the ecclesiastical conflict between the Greeks and the Bulgarians were described in detail on the eve of the Local Council of 1872 by K.N. Leontiev in his work, The Fruits of the National Movements. The Bulgarians affirmed that they would fight until ‘the last Bulgarian village, even including those in Asia Minor, is liberated from the ecclesiastical authority of the Patriarch’.386 The Bulgarians did not fear a schism, they found a schism convenient for themselves. While the Turks, in their turn, considered that a quarrel between the Orthodox would be useful for their disintegrating state. The liberally inclined Russians sympathized with the ‘national-liberation’ movement of the Bulgarians... At the same time the Athenian Greeks were trying by all means to bring the matter to the convening of a Council and the ecclesiastical condemnation of the Bulgarians. Besides, they hoped that the Russian Holy Synod would finally come out openly in defence of the Bulgarians, after which they would be able to declare the Russians, too, to be schismatics, and having thereby separated themselves from the whole of Slavdom, tie their fate in with the peoples of Western Europe. The Athenian Greeks were drawn by the idea of a Great Hellas, the Bulgarians – by the idea of a Great Bulgaria. ‘We must baptize the sultan,’ they dreamed, ‘merge with the

Turks, become established in Tsarigrad and form a great Bulgar-Turkish state, which instead of aging Russia would take up the leadership of Slavdom.'387 ‘Who has remained faithful to Orthodoxy?’ cried K.N. Leontiev. ‘It is only these same Greek bishops who are subjects of the Turks who have remained faithful to these foundations, to Orthodoxy and its ancient rules and spirit.’388 He called these bishops Phanariots (after the Phanar, the quarter of Istanbul in which the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate was situated). They cursed Bulgarian phyletism at the Council of 1872, but did not allow a break also with Russia. The Russian Holy Synod, which at that time supported neither side, made no mistake meanwhile. The Constantinopolitan Patriarchate could not without transgressing the canons break with us, to which they were being urged by the Greeks of Hellas. But Constantinople did not wish to transgress the canons. Both in relation to the Bulgarians and in relation to Russia the Phanariots remained unshaken and faithful to the laws and traditions, in spite of all the difficulties caused by our liberals’ flirting with the Bulgarians.

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


388 Leontiev, “Plody natsional’nykh dvizhenij”, op. cit., p. 560. As he wrote in another place: “They wanted to have, not an administrative, or topographical exarchate within definite boundaries, but a tribal [ethnic] exarchate, a ‘phyletic’ exarchate as the Greek clergy put it at the council of 1872. The Ecumenical Patriarch could have given them an administrative exarchate or even a patriarchy, and he would have been forced to do that later by force of circumstances... but the Bulgarians wanted a ‘tribal’ exarchate, that is, they wanted all Bulgarians, wherever they lived, to depend directly and in all respects on their national clergy. Of course, the Patriarch did not even have the right to bow to their wishes in this form. The Bulgarians then separated in a self-willed manner; while the council declared them to be... ‘schismatics’...” (“Dopolnenie k dvum stat’iam o panslavizme” (Supplement to Two Articles on Pan-Slavism), op. cit., p. 81.)

And again: “In the ecclesiastical question the Bulgarians and the Greeks were equally cunning and wrong according to conscience. The difference lay in the fact that canonically, formally, in the sense precisely of abstract principles of tradition, the Greeks were more right” (“Khram i Tserkov'” (Temple and Church), op. cit., p. 165). (V.M.)
hitherto unheard-of racial assemblies are foreign to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and are real schismatics.” 389

The Patriarchs of Serbia and Russia refused to attend this Council, and Patriarch Cyril of Jerusalem refused to sign, which led to his uncanonical deposition for being a “Muscovite traitor”. 390 Nevertheless, the Churches of Russia, Jerusalem, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania remained in communion with both the Greeks and the Bulgarians. 391 As Sir Richard Evans writes, “In 1874 the Christian population of the bishoprics of Skopje and Ohrid voted in 1874 to join [the Exarchate] by 91 per cent and 97 per cent respectively, bringing a substantial part of Macedonia under the control of the Bulgarian Church.” 392 Leonidas Pittas writes: “Aside from the autonomous Principality of Bulgaria (which before 1878 was the Vilayet of the Danube), the Exarchate extended throughout the Ottoman Vilayets of Eastern Rumelia, Adrianople, Constantinople, Salonica, and Monastir. Abdulaziz I granted the right to each village to hold a referendum on which ecclesiastical jurisdiction to join. In some regions all the villages went over to the Exarchate. In other regions only some, and many times villages were split between the two. Thus, throughout the same regions, the Exarchate and the Patriarchate maintained parallel ecclesiastical administrations.” 393

Bishop Theophan the Recluse was completely on the side of the Bulgars: “The ‘East’ does not understand the Bulgarian affair. For them the Bulgarians are guilty. But in fact they are not guilty. They could not of themselves separate from the patriarchate – and they did not separate, but asked [to separate]. But when they asked, the patriarchate was obliged to let them go... How did we [the Russian Church] separate from the patriarchate?! We stopped sending [candidates to the metropolitanate] to them, and that was the end of it. That is what they [the Bulgars] have done. The patriarchate is guilty. But their Council


392 Evans, op. cit., p. 462.
393 Pittas, personal communication, May 26, 2015.
which condemned the Bulgarians was the height of disorder. There it was the Hellene γένος that ruled."

For many Russians the conciliar condemnation of nationalism carried little weight because it came from the patriarchate that they considered the first sinner in this respect. Thus D.A. Khomiakov wrote. "Is not ‘pride in Orthodoxy’ nothing other than the cultural pride of the ancient Greek? And, of course, the true ‘phyletism’, formulated for the struggle against the Bulgarians, is precisely characteristic of the Greeks themselves to a much greater extent than the Bulgarians, Serbs, Syrians and others. With them it is only a protest against the basic phyletism of the Greeks. The contemporary Greek considers himself the exclusive bearer of pure Orthodoxy..."394

Again, Professor Nicholas Glubokovsky wrote: "Greek nationalism historically merged with Orthodoxy and protected it by its own self-preservation, while it in its turn found a spiritual basis for its own distinctiveness. Orthodoxy and Hellenism were united in a close mutuality, which is why the first began to be qualified by the second. And Christian Hellenism realized and developed this union precisely in a nationalist spirit. The religious aspect was a factor in national strivings and was subjected to it, and it was not only the Phanariots who made it serve pan-hellenic dreams. These dreams were entwined into the religious, Orthodox element and gave it its colouring, enduing the Byzantine patriarch with the status and rights of ‘ethnarch’ for all the Christian peoples of the East, and revering him as the living and animated image of Christ (Matthew Blastaris, in his 14th century Syntagma, 8). As a result, the whole superiority of the spiritual-Christian element belonged to Hellenism, and could be apprehended by others only through Hellenism. In this respect the enlightened Grigorios Byzantios (or Byzantijsky, born in Constantinople, metropolitan of Chios from 1860, of Heraklion in 1888) categorically declared that 'the mission of Hellenism is divine and universal'. From this source come the age-old and unceasing claims of Hellenism to exclusive leadership in Orthodoxy, as its possessor and distributor. According to the words of the first reply (in May, 1576) to the Tubingen theologians of the Constantinopolitan patriarch Jeremiah II (+1595), who spoke in the capacity of a 'successor of Christ' (introduction), the Greek 'holy Church of God is the mother of the Churches, and, by the grace of God, she holds the first place in knowledge. She boasts without reproach in the purity of her apostolic and patristic decrees, and, while being new, is old in Orthodoxy, and is placed at the head', which is why 'every Christian church must celebrate the Liturgy exactly as she [the Greco-Constantinopolitan Church] does (chapter 13). Constantinople always displayed tendencies towards Church absolutism in Orthodoxy and was by no means well-disposed towards the development of autonomous national Churches, having difficulty in recognizing them even in their hierarchical equality. Byzantine-Constantinopolitan Hellenism has done nothing to strengthen national Christian distinctiveness in the Eastern patriarchates and has defended its own governmental-hierarchical hegemony by all means, fighting against the national independence of Damascus (Antioch) and

Jerusalem. At the end of the 16th century Constantinople by no means fully accepted the independence of the Russian Church and was not completely reconciled to Greek autocephaly (from the middle of the 19th century), while in relation to the Bulgarian Church they extended their nationalist intolerance to the extent of an ecclesiastical schism, declaring her (in 1872) in all her parts to be 'in schism'. It is a matter of great wonder that the champions of extreme nationalism in the ecclesiastical sphere should then (in 1872) have recognized national-ecclesiastical strivings to be impermissible in others and even labelled them 'phyletism', a new-fangled heresy."

Nevertheless, ecclesiastical nationalism, or phyletism, was a major problem that would get worse in the coming decades leading to the First World War. So to that extent the Greek anathema on phyletism was legitimate and necessary. Moreover, on the strictly canonical issue, the Greeks were right and the Bulgarians were wrong.

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

*Cyril Hovorun has an interesting take on the 1872 Council, distinguishing between two kinds of nationalism: “One is ‘ethnic’ nationalism, and the other is ‘imperial’ or ‘civilizational’ nationalism. The former helps shape an ‘imagined community’ (to use the famous phrase of Benedict Anderson), sharing the same language, culture, and ethnic origin. The latter also shapes an imagined community; however, this community can include several languages and cultures, as well as peoples with different ethnic backgrounds, because they more highly value their belonging to a common political milieu—in other words, an empire. When there is no acknowledged empire, people instead tend to think that they belong to a common ‘civilization.’ This imperial/civilizational identity may lead to imperial/civilizational nationalism—a feeling of superiority over other civilizations.

“Imperial/civilizational nationalism is larger and less particularistic than ethnic nationalism. Nevertheless, it is not large enough for Christianity. Neither

395 Glubokovsky, "Pravoslavie po ego sushchestvu" (Orthodoxy in its essence), in Tserkov' i Vremia (The Church and Time), 1991, pp. 5-6.

396 Leontiev, “Panslavism i Greki” (Pan-Slavism and the Greeks), op. cit., p. 46.
type of nationalism is compatible with Christianity, which is opposed to the idea of superiority on the basis of any criterion, including ethnic and civilizational criteria. Furthermore, these two types of nationalism are incompatible with each other. Although their nature is similar (nationalistic), they are enemies. The bloodiest battle in human history was between extreme examples of these two nationalisms: Nazism was a monster grown from ethnic nationalism, and its rival in the World War II, Soviet Communism, was another monster, but one which grew from a class-based quasi-imperial nationalism. The initial friendship between Stalin and Hitler—founded on their opposition to the free democratic world—and their subsequent deadly clash, together reveal the homogeneity of the two nationalisms on the one hand and the existential incompatibility of their purposes on the other.

“It is particularly tragic when a nation is affected by both sorts of nationalism. This is the case with the Greek people. Since the beginning of the struggle for the independence of a Hellenic state in the early nineteenth century, proponents of Greek ethnic nationalism were confronted by advocates of Greek imperial nationalism, such as Phanariots. Later, these bearers of imperial nationalism were succeeded by adherents to the idea of ‘Greek civilization,’ in the form of either the Megali Idea or the Romeosyne. The two groups still wrestle with each other in modern Greek political discourse. For instance, the famous philosopher and publicist Christos Yanaras, who leads the group of ‘civilizational’ nationalists, tirelessly attacks what he calls the ‘Neo-hellenic’ or ‘Helladitic’ myopia of modern Greek culture and politics.

“We can interpret the 1872 Council as one of the battlefields between ethnic and civilizational nationalisms. Ethnic particularism was condemned there under the name of ‘ethnophyletism.’ However, it appears that it was condemned from the perspective of its rival, imperial/civilizational nationalism. The latter was supported by the Sublime Porte, which pursued its imperialist interests, and by the Phanariots, who also had in mind the interests of the Ottoman Empire—as far as they coincided with the interests of what Arnold Toynbee would later call ‘the civilization of Hellenism.’ It is remarkable that the Council of Constantinople was not attended or endorsed by the other Churches that pursued ethnic agendas or represented an alternative imperial/civilizational nationalism, such as the Russian Church, which promoted Pan-Slavism. Instead, these Churches perceived the Council as an attack by the Hellenic world against Slavic ethnic particularism.”

The 1872 Council was right to declare that “ethnophyletism” is a heresy and incompatible with Christianity. But the fact that, even while condemning nationalism, the Council was perceived as championing Hellenism against Slavism shows how deeply nationalism had penetrated into the Orthodox world. The fact is that both Greeks and Slavs belonged to a single Orthodox Christian civilization that originated in Byzantium but spread to the Slavic nations. As such, it was not to be linked with one nation primarily or exclusively. Both Greeks and Bulgars were heirs of the truly superior civilization of *Christian Rome*; and both betrayed one of the basic principles of that civilization when they deemed themselves to be intrinsically superior to other bearers of that same civilization…
There had been many wars between Russia and Turkey in the last few centuries, as Russia slowly but steadily expanded south, first towards the northern coast of the Black Sea, and then on towards the Straits and Constantinople herself. But the aim of the war that broke out now was not expansionist: its aim was to rescue the Orthodox Christians of the Balkans, who were suffering persecution at the hands of their Turkish overlords.

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

"Every piece of revolutionary propaganda and each intelligence report read served to bolster the fear. Was the government in Constantinople to disregard the terrorist threats made by the Bosnian and Bulgarian revolutionaries? The insurgents wrote: 'Herzegovina is fighting; Montenegro is spreading over the mountains and coming with help; Serbia is ready to put its forces on the move; Greece is about to declare war; Rumania will not remain neutral. Is there any doubt that death is hanging over Turkey?' In July 1875, at Nevesinje in Herzegovina, the clan chiefs had met and thrown down a challenge to the Turks. One declared: 'Ever since the damned day of Kosovo [Polje, in 1389] the Turk robs us of our life and liberty. Is it not a shame, a shame before all the world, that we bear the arms of heroes and yet are called Turkish subjects? All Christendom waits for us to rise on behalf of our treasured freedom... Today is our opportunity to rebel and to engage in bloody fight.' This guerilla war, in Harold Temperley's view, led directly to the revolt in Bulgaria and all that followed. It was a cruel war on both sides. The first things that the British Consul Holmes [in Sarajevo] saw as he entered Nevesinje were a Turkish boy's head blackening in the sun, and a bloody froth bubbling from the slit throat of a young Turkish girl..."
The Turks replied in kind. When the Bulgars rebelled in the town of Panagyurishte the Turkish irregulars known as "Bashi Bazouks" unleashed a savage wave of reprisals that left about 12,000 dead. Many were martyred precisely because they refused to renounce their Orthodox faith for Islam.399

"Russia and Germany tried to intervene in Bulgaria in May 1876 with a general plan of reform for the Ottoman provinces in the Balkans, but they were rebuffed by the sultan." 400

The Serbs and the Montenegrins then declared war on the Turks on 30 June. "This time we have to avenge Kosovo!" said Montenegro's Prince Nikola. "Under Murad I the Serbian empire was destroyed - now during the reign of Murad V it has to rise again."401

Western governments at first dismissed reports of atrocities against the Orthodox populations, preferring to believe their ambassadors and consuls rather than The Daily Telegraph. Disraeli dismissed public concern about the Bulgarian atrocities as "coffee-house babble". And when a conference was convened in Constantinople by the Great Powers, it failed to put any significant pressure on the Turks.

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

Disraeli, on the other hand, ascribed the violence to the activities of the secret societies, which he said were on the side of Serbia. "Serbia declared war on Turkey, that is to say, the secret societies of Europe declared war on Turkey, societies which have regular agents everywhere, which countenance assassination and which, if necessary, could produce massacre." Then Disraeli and his cabinet, supported by Queen Victoria, decided that if the Russians took Constantinople, this would be a casus belli. For "if the Russians had

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400 Evans, op. cit., p. 673.


and were soundly defeated in August 1876, with 5,000 dead and 9,500 wounded.\footnote{According to Judah, Cherniaev’s troops were "often drunk and had little or no military experience" (op. cit., p. 66). (V.M.)} At this point the Russians stepped in and threatened war on the Ottomans unless peace was concluded on the basis of the status quo ante, which it was on 17 February 1877.

“These events had major repercussions in Constantinople. Sultan Abdul-aziz (1830-76) was deposed in a military coup led by the so-called Young Ottomans, most of whom had been educated in western European universities, on 30 May 1876, and murdered a few days later. His successor and nephew, Murad V (1840-1904), was not a strong character; on hearing the news of his uncle’s death, he fainted, and on coming round is said to have vomited continuously for a day and a half. The Young Ottomans had wanted Murad to grant a constitution, but he failed to do anything, so they deposed him on grounds of insanity on 31 August 1876 in favour of his brother Abdulhamid II (1842-1918). Realizing the need to keep in with the Young Ottomans, Abdulhamid granted a constitution almost immediately. Together with the defeat of the Serbian Army, this made him for the moment extremely popular. He thus felt strong enough to reject another attempt at international mediation in the so-called London Protocol, agreed by all the major powers on 31 March 1877, which contained a demand for further reforms in the Balkan Provinces…”\footnote{Evans, op. cit., pp. 673-674. Cf. Misha Glenny, The Balkans, 1804-1999, London: Granta Books, 2000, p. 132.}

The Turks’ main weakness consisted in their empire’s financial dependence on the West. “Unable to finance its military operations in view of the massive public debt with which it was burdened, amounting by this time to more than half the state’s revenue every year, the Ottoman government had declared bankruptcy in 1875. In 1881 an international agreement created the Ottoman Public Debt Administration, which soon had a staff of more than 5,000 officials. It was run by the empire’s creditors, effectively on behalf of the British and French banks to which most of the money was owed, and it had the right to collect taxes and customs dues and finance profitable ventures such as railway construction. This humiliating situation continued until after the First World War.”\footnote{Evans, op. cit., p. 675.}

Meanwhile, the Russians were faced with a dilemma. Either they committed themselves officially to war with Turkey, or the cause of the liberation of their brothers under the Turkish yoke, for which every Russian peasant prayed in his daily prayers, would be lost. In November, 1876 the Tsar spoke of the need to defend the Slavs. And his foreign minister Gorchakov wrote that "national and Christian sentiment in Russia... impose on the Emperor duties which His Majesty cannot disregard". Ivan Aksakov then took up the Tsar’s words, invoking the doctrine of Moscow the Third Rome: "The historical conscience of all Russia spoke from the lips of the Tsar. On that memorable day, he spoke as the descendant of Ivan III, who received from the Paleologi the Byzantine arms and
combined them with the arms of Moscow, as the descendant of Catherine and of Peter... From these words there can be no drawing back... The slumbering east is now awakened, and not only the Slavs of the Balkans but the whole Slavonic world awaits its regeneration.”

However, not all were in favour of the campaign. One of those was Lev Tolstoy; he expressed his opposition in the epilogue to *Anna Karenina*. In spite of the extreme popularity of the novel as a whole, “not all readers,” writes Rosamund Bartlett, “relished the epilogue. Levin’s disparaging remarks about the Balkan Question and the Russian Volunteer Movement were highly contentious, and ran exactly counter to those of Tolstoy’s great rival Dostoyevsky... Although Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy never met, they were, of course, aware of each other, but were natural antipodes who found many shortcomings in each other’s work. As a journalist, it was more or less incumbent upon Dostoyevsky to deliver a verdict on Tolstoy’s novel, and after much prevarication he finally came out in print with an opinion of *Anna Karenina* in early 1877. Tolstoy, however, never returned the compliment of publicly commenting on any of Dostoyevsky’s fiction, remaining, as always, aloof.

“To begin with, Dostoyevsky was generous with his praise of *Anna Karenina*. He was particularly enthusiastic about Levin as literary character, and he devoted several pages to the novel in the February issue of his *Diary of a Writer*, the independent monthly journal he had started up in 1876 to explore the character and destiny of the Russian people. But when he read the epilogue he lambasted Levin for being egocentric, unpatriotic and out of touch with the Russian people. He took a dim view of Levin’s claim that the Russian people shared his lack of concern for the predicament of the Balkan Slavs, and took strong exception to his declared unwillingness to kill, even if it resulted in the prevention of atrocities. It is here, of course, that we meet in embryonic form the idea of non-resistance to violence which would lie at the heart of the new religious outlook which Tolstoy would develop over the next decade. People like Tolstoy were supposed to be our teachers, Dostoyevsky concluded at the end of his lengthy tirade, but what exactly were they teaching us? Needless to say, Dostoyevsky did not receive a response either in 1877 or in the years leading up to his death in January 1881...”

On April 24, 1877 Russia declared war on Turkey, “but more”, argues Hosking, “to preserve Russia’s position in the European balance of power than with Panslav aims in mind. At a Slavic Benevolent Society meeting Ivan Aksakov called the Russo-Turkish war a ‘historical necessity’ and added that ‘the people

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409 Rosamund Bartlett, *Tolstoy. A Russian Life*, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011, pp. 249-250. At about the same time (May, 1877) Tolstoy visited Elder Ambrose of Optina. The Elder said prophetically about Tolstoy: “His heart seeks God, but there is muddle and a lack of belief in his thoughts. He suffers from a great deal of pride, spiritual pride. He will cause a lot of harm with his arbitrary and empty interpretation of the Gospels, which in his opinion no one has understood before him, but everything is God’s will...” (*op. cit.*, p. 256)
had never viewed any war with such conscious sympathy’. There was indeed considerable support for the war among peasants, who regarded it as a struggle on behalf of suffering Orthodox brethren against the cruel and rapacious infidel. A peasant elder from Smolensk province told many years later how the people of his village had been puzzled as to ‘Why our Father-Tsar lets his people suffer from the infidel Turks?’, and had viewed Russia’s entry into the war with relief and satisfaction.”

However, the Russians had to reckon, not only with the Turks, but also with the western great powers, and especially Britain... "British interests in the Balkans," writes Roman Golicz, "derived from wider economic interests in India via the Eastern Mediterranean. In 1858 the British Government had taken direct control over Indian affairs. Since 1869 the Suez Canal had provided it with a direct route to India. Britain needed to secure the shipping routes which passed through areas, like Suez, that were nominally Turkish." Or rather, that was the theory. In fact, Russia presented no real threat to British interests in India. The real cause of British hostility to Russian expansion was simply visceral jealousy - the jealousy of the world's greatest maritime empire in relation to the world's greatest land-based empire. As Selischev writes: "If Palmerston unleashed the Crimean war, then Disraeli was ready to unleash war with Russia in 1877-78, in order, as he wrote to Queen Victoria, to save the Ottoman state and 'cleanse Central Asia from the Muscovites and throw them into the Caspian sea.'" Palmerston himself commented once that "these half-civilized governments such as those of China, Portugal, Spanish America require a Dressing every eight or ten years to keep them in order". "And no one who knew his views on Russia," writes Dominic Lieven, "could doubt his sense that she too deserved to belong to this category."

In the spring of 1877 the Russian armies crossed the River Prut into the Romanian Principalities. Then, with Romanian support, they crossed the Danube, they cut off Plevna and defeated the Turks who tried to break out of the city. On December 9, Osman Pasha with 2,000 officers and 44,000 men surrendered and went into captivity. Meanwhile, Russian armies had captured Kars in the Caucasus, capturing 17,000 men. In January, the Russians conquered Sofia, defeated the Turks at Plovdiv and scaled the Shipka Pass, forcing the surrender of another 22,000 Turks. Finally, they seized Adrianople (Edirne), only a short march from Constantinople...

410 Hosking, op. cit., p. 371.

411 Golicz, op. cit., p. 40.

412 Selischev, "Chto neset Pravoslaviu proekt 'Velikoj Albanii'?” (What will the project of a 'Greater Albania' bring for Orthodoxy), Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia), N 2 (1787), January 15/28, 2005, p. 10.

413 Lieven, Empire, London: John Murray, 2000, p. 213.
The Russians were now in a similar position to where they had been in the war of 1829-31, when Tsar Nicholas I had reached Adrianople but held back from conquering Constantinople because he did not have the support of the Concert of Europe. Now, however, the Concert no longer existed, and the commander-in-chief of the Russian armies and brother of the Tsar, Grand Duke Nicholas, wrote to the Tsar: "We must go to the centre, to Tsargrad, and there finish the holy cause you have assumed."

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

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

However, there were powerful reasons that made the Russians hesitate on the eve of what would have been their greatest victory. First, and most obviously, there was the fierce opposition of the western great powers, and especially Britain. The entire British Mediterranean Squadron was steaming towards the Dardanelles, dispatched by Disraeli as British public opinion turned "jingoistic":

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

Under the influence of this threat, the Russians agreed not to send troops into Constantinople if no British troops were landed on either side of the Straits... Then, on March 3, at the village of San Stefano, just outside Constantinople, they signed a treaty with the Turks, whereby the latter recognized the full independence of Romania, Serbia and Montenegro. "The Treaty also constituted Bulgaria as a tributary principality of Russia; it required a heavy financial indemnity from Turkey; it gave to Russia the right to select a port on the Black Sea; it opened up the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus at all times to Russian vessels; it obtained full rights for all Christians remaining under Turkish rule; and it gave Bessarabia to Russia in exchange for the corner of Bulgaria known as Dobruja."415

415 Golicz, op. cit., p. 44.
In little more than 20 years the Russian defeat in the Crimean war had been avenged. It was a great victory for the Orthodox armies...

However, the Great Powers were determined to rob Russia of the fruits of her victory by diplomatic means. Dominic Lieven points out that “before embarking on the struggle, Petersburg agreed with Vienna to limit its war aims and offer territorial compensation to the Habsburgs. In 1877-78, spectacular victories brought the Russian army to the gates of Constantinople. In the excitement, the hero of the Russian nationalist and Slavophile camp, Count Nikolai Ignatiev, was allowed to ignore the promises to Austria and to impose a punitive peace on the Ottomans. In part, this reflected the weak control over policy exercised by Alexander II and his aging foreign minister, Prince Alexander Gorchakov. Britain and Austria threatened war unless the terms of the peace were revised. At this point, control over Russian foreign policy was seized by the ambassador in London, Count Petr Shuvalov, who persuaded Alexander II to agree on a compromise with London and Vienna. The terms of this deal were thrashed out at a congress held in Berlin in 1878 under the chairmanship of the German chancellor, Prince Bismarck.

“The events of 1875-78 resonated right down to the First World War in important ways. The crisis revealed the battles over foreign policy within the ruling elite. Petr Shuvalov came from one of Russia’s richest and best-connected aristocratic families. Both in his person and in his policies, he was the epitome of the ‘court’ party. His struggle with Nikolai Ignatiev was perceived by much of public opinion as a perfect illustration of how a cosmopolitan Petersburg elite appeased foreign powers at the expense of the national cause. Meanwhile, for foreign observers the chief lesson learned from these years was that nationalist and Slavophile public opinion could push the government into a war that the tsar did not want and could result in policies that risked confrontation with the other powers. No foreign diplomat ever ignored public opinion again or imagined that in autocratic Russia only the emperor and his foreign minister mattered. But the biggest single result of the crisis was the lasting damage it caused to Russo-German relations.

“Ever since Russia had rescued Prussia from Napoleon’s dominion in 1813, the Russo-Prussian alliance had been a constant element in international relations. Alone among the European powers, Prussia had not opposed Russia during the Crimean War. Tsar Alexander II not only remained neutral while Prussia united Germany under its rule but also stopped Austria from intervening on France’s side in 1870. Russia had not gone unrewarded for taking this stance. At the end of the Crimean War, the victorious Anglo-French coalition had imposed a peace treaty on Russian that denied it the right to a navy or land fortifications on the Black Sea coast. This was not just humiliating but also a great threat to Russian security. With France defeated and Britain isolated in 1871, Alexander II took the opportunity to force Europe to accept Russia’s right to rebuild its land and sea defences in the south. Despite this gain, Russian public opinion continued to believe that Prussia-Germany was in Russia’s debt for
Russian support both against Napoleon and in the wars of German unification. When at the Congress of Berlin, Bismarck played the role of central chairman and ‘honest broker’, Russian nationalist opinion boiled over. It failed to recognize that Bismarck’s efforts had helped Russia to avoid a potentially disastrous confrontation with Austria and Britain. The raging of Russian public opinion helped to persuade Bismarck to sight the Dual Alliance with Austria in 1879, which committed Germany to defend the Habsburg Empire against Russian aggression.

“Perhaps the break between Germany and Russia would have come in any case. Alexander II might rejoice in the victories over France in 1870-71 of his favourite uncle, Kaiser William I, but his generals immediately saw a united Germany as a threat and began to plan to defend Russia against it. Regardless of government policies, there were deep currents in public opinion pushing toward Germanic solidarity in central Europe. Even leaving these aside, Bismarck had good practical reasons for backing Austria against Russia. Russia was stronger than Austria and might well destroy it in single combat, with dangerous consequences for the European balance of power and internal policies in Germany. Should the Habsburg Empire collapse, Berlin would probably be forced to intervene on behalf of the Austrian-Germans. This might result in a European war. Berlin might even need to absorb the Austrian-Germans into its own empire. Because this would turn the Protestant and Prussian-dominated Reich into a country with a Catholic majority, this was a prospect both Bismarck and all traditional Prussians dreaded…”

The Congress agreed that all Russian troops should be withdrawn from the area around Constantinople, and Greater Bulgaria was cut down into two smaller, non-contiguous areas. Britain added Cyprus to her dominions. (Before the Russo-Turkish war was over, “Indian troops were dispatched to occupy Cyprus, since it was deemed necessary for Britain to have a Mediterranean base to strengthen her negotiating position with Russia. By the time the sepoys had warmed up their first billycan of curry on Cypriot soil, the Russo-Turkish crisis was over. Rather than withdraw from the island, Britain held on to Cyprus.”) Serbia, Montenegro and Romania were recognized as independent States (on condition that they gave full rights to the Jews), but Serbia and Montenegro lost the acquisitions they had made in the war. To Romania’s intense annoyance, Russia gained the mainly Romanian-speaking province of Bessarabia, which she had annexed in 1812, for which she earned the hatred of the Romanians… Bosnia and Herzegovina were handed over to Austria for her “temporary” use. In this way, as Archpriest Lev Lebedev pointed out, a mine was laid at the base of the structure of international relations that would later explode into the First World War…

416 Lieven, Towards the Flame. Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia, London: Allen Lane, 2015, pp. 77-79.

417 Wilson, op. cit, p. 400.

418 Lebedev, Velkorossia, p. 349.
In fact, Russia gained nothing from the war of 1877-78. Not even the Serbs were grateful: they, “indignant at Russian support for their Bulgarian rival, had also become clients of Vienna.”419 Perhaps this is why by this time Dostoyevsky was becoming disillusioned with the Balkan Slavs. “Russia will never have, and never has had, such haters, enviers, slanderers and even open enemies as all these Slavic tribes. Immediately Russia liberates them [this was written in December, 1877], and Europe agrees to recognize them as liberated, they will begin their new life, after their liberation by asking Europe – England and Germany, for example – for the guarantee of their protection of their freedom, and although Russia will be in the concert of European states, they will do that to defend themselves from Russia.

“They will unfailingly begin by saying within themselves, if not out loud, and persuade themselves that they are not obliged to show the slightest gratitude to Russia: on the contrary, they have just saved themselves from Russian ambition by concluding peace through the intervention of the European concert, for if Europe had not intervened, Russian would have swallowed them up immediately, ‘having in mind the expansion of their frontiers and the foundation of a great Pan-Slavic empire, enslaving the Slavs to the greedy, cunning and barbaric Great Russian tribe.’

“Perhaps a whole century, or even more, will pass, and then they will constantly tremble for their freedom and fear the ambition of Russia; they will suck up to the European states, and will slander Russia, will gossip about her and intrigue against her.

“Oh, I’m not talking about individual people: there will be those who will understand what Russia meant, means and will always mean for them. But these people, especially at the beginning, will be in such a small minority that they will be subject to mockery, hatred and even political persecution.

“It will be especially pleasant for the liberated Slavs to say and proclaim to the whole world that they are educated tribes, capable of the highest European culture, while Russia is a barbaric country, a dark, northern colossus that is not even of pure Slavic blood, the persecutor and hater of European civilization.

“From the beginning, of course, they will have constitutional government, parliaments, responsible ministers, orators, speeches. This will be of extraordinary comfort and joy for them. They will exultant on reading about themselves in the Paris and London newspaper, about telegrams informing the whole world that after a long parliamentary storm the ministry for (such-and-such a country) has finally fallen and a new one has been formed from the liberal

419 Lieven, Towards the Flame, p. 80.
majority and that a certain (such-and-such a surname) has finally agreed to accept the portfolio of the President of the Council of Ministers.

“Russia has to make serious preparations for the time when all these liberated Slavs will exultantly rush into Europe, completely losing themselves in their delight in European political and social customs. In this way they will be forced to live through a whole long period of Europeanism before they attain anything of their Slavic significance and of their particular Slavic calling in the midst of humanity…

“It goes without saying that at some moment of serious disaster they will unfailingly turn to Russia for help. However they hate and gossip and slander us to Europe, flirting with her and affirming their love for her, still they will always instinctively feel (of course at the moment of disaster, not before), that Europe was and always will remain the natural enemy of their unity, and that if they survive on the earth, it will, of course, be because there is a huge magnet – Russia, which, unconquerably drawing them to herself, will thereby maintain their integrity and unity.”

However, between 1878 and 1881 Russia was hardly a magnet, but in a critical state, her tsar discredited and under attack from terrorists at home, and her foreign policy in tatters. Nevertheless, Constantinople and the Straits would not cease to be vitally important to the Russian public and Russian politicians, whose nationalist wing could continue to threaten it – and not only for political or military reasons, to put pressure on the Turks and liberate the Balkan Slavs. By the early twentieth century, the Straits were even more important to the Russians than Suez was to the British, or Panama to the Americans, for economic reasons. It not only shortened trade routes for nearly half Russia’s exports; effectively, it was the only trade route for her most important export, grain. So as time passed, and the Ottoman empire became weaker, and the competition between the great powers increased (Germany taking Britain’s place as the power with the greatest influence in the City), Dostoyevsky’s cry became ever louder: “Constantinople will be ours!”

420 Dostoyevsky, The Diary of a Writer, September-December, 1877.
28. THE ALLIANCE ISRAELITE UNIVERSELLE

The Congress of Berlin resurrected an old concern that was becoming acute again in Russia: were important Jewish politicians and bankers such as Disraeli, Crémieux and the Rothschilds to be seen as working for their national governments in the first place (Britain or France usually) or as part of a Jewish government working independently of the Gentile nations and exclusively for Jewish national interests? After all, had not Disraeli been the prime architect of Russia’s humiliation at the Congress? And was it really just a coincidence that immediately after the Congress, “in 1877-78, the House of Rothschild, by agreement with Disraeli, first bought up, and then threw out onto the market in Berlin a large quantity of Russian securities, which elicited a sharp fall in their rate.”

From this moment “the Jewish question”, already a sore point inside Russia because of Jewish revolutionary activity, became an important factor also in Russian foreign policy...

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The Jewish scholar Sir Isaiah Berlin writes: "Perpetual discussions went on, during the nineteenth century - the most historically conscious of all ages - about whether the Jews were a race, or solely a religion; a people, a community, or merely an economic category. Books, pamphlets, debates increased in volume if not in quality. But there was one persistent fact about this problem, which was in some respects more clearly perceived by the Gentiles than by the Jews themselves: namely, that if they were only a religion, this would not have needed quite so much argument and insistence; while if they were nothing but a race, this would not have been denied quite so vehemently as it has been by persons who nevertheless professed to denote a unique group of human beings by the term 'Jew'.

"It gradually became clear, both to Jews and to those who took an interest in their affairs, that in fact they constituted an anomaly, which could not be defined in terms of the ordinary definition of nations, as applied at any rate to European nations; and that any attempt to classify them in such terms would lead to unnatural, artificial and Procrustean consequences. Despite passionate denials of this proposition from many sides, it became increasingly clear to almost everyone who approached the problem from outside that the Jews were a unique combination of religion, race and people; that they could not be classified in normal terms, but demanded an extraordinary description, and their problem an extraordinary solution."  


The problem was made more complex by the fact that there were large differences between the Sephardic Jews of the West, who were not particularly numerous and were in general striving for assimilation, and the more numerous, poorer and more religious Ashkenazi Jews of Eastern Europe, whose attitude to the Gentiles among whom they lived was disdainful and hostile. Correspondingly, governments in East and West took very different views of "the Jewish problem". In the West, the Jews were disliked, not so much for their Talmudic religious beliefs, of which most Westerners were profoundly ignorant, as for their racial characteristics, whether real or imaginary. In the East, however, the Jews were discriminated against, not on racial but on religious grounds, as is proved by the fact that the Karaite Jews, who rejected the Talmud, were freed of all restrictions by the Russian government.

The question that all governments had to answer was: what were the real intentions of the Jews? Just a place under the sun like every other nation? Or world domination?

Certainly, the Jews were beginning to organize themselves on the international scene. The Alliance Israélite Universelle (in Hebrew: Khaburi Menitsi Indrumim, "Brotherhood Arousing the Sleepy") was founded in 1860 in Paris with a Central Committee led by Adolphe Crémieux. It was the first of a series of national Jewish organisations, such as the Anglo-Jewish Association in Great Britain, the Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden in Germany and the Israelitische Allianz zu Wien in Austria, which began to campaign for Jewish rights in this period. Although the Alliance considered itself to be motivated by universalist sentiments, it did not disguise the fact that its aim was the defence of the Jewish faith: "Universal union is among our aspirations without any doubt, and we consider all men our brothers, but just as the family comes before strangers in the order of affection, so religion inspires and memory of common oppression fortifies a family sentiment that in the ordinary course of life surpasses others... Finally, there is the decisive consideration for not going beyond the religious confraternity: all other important faiths are represented in the world by nations - embodied, that is to say, in governments that have a special interest and an official duty to represent and speak for them. Ours alone is without this important advantage; it corresponds neither to a state nor to a society nor again to a specific territory: it is no more than a rallying-cry for scattered individuals - the very people whom it is therefore essential to bring together."423

That concerns about rising Jewish power were not just anti-semitic prejudice is shown by the examples of prominent Jews who believed that members of their own race were striving precisely for world domination. Thus Benjamin Disraeli, the Christianized Jew and British Prime Minister, "made sensational statements about Jewish and secret society conspiracies' running Europe's public affairs. In Coningsby, a novel published in 1844, he had one character declare that 'The first Jesuits were Jews... that mighty revolution which is at this moment preparing in Germany,... and of which so little is yet known in England, is entirely developing

under the auspices of Jews.' Two pages further, a character makes an even more ominous statement, one quoted time and again by conspiracy theorists: 'So you see, my dear Coningsby, that the world is governed by very different personages from what is imagined by those who are not behind the scenes.' Nor did Disraeli confine himself to making such statements in fictional works. In a biographical work of 1852, he asserted that Jews 'wish to destroy that ungrateful Christendom.' He even took his conspiracism to the floor of Parliament, announcing in 1856 that 'a British Minister has boasted - and a very unwise boast it was - that he had only to hold up his hand and he could raise a revolution in Italy to-morrow. It was an indiscreet boast, but I believe it not impossible, with the means at his disposal, that he might succeed. What would happen? You would have a republic formed on extreme principles.'”

Again, already in 1861 Adolphe Crémieux, leader of the Alliance Israélite Universelle and at one time the minister of justice in the French government, had written: "The Messianism of the new era must arise and develop; the Jerusalem of the New World Order, which is established in holiness between the East and Asia, must occupy the place of two forces: the kings and the popes... Nationality must disappear. Religion must cease to exist. Only Israel will not cease to exist, since this little people is chosen by God."425

Were these just aspirations, or did the Jews have a secret government in order to put them into effect? Lev Alexandrovich Tikhomirov wrote: "The main defender of this thesis is Copen Albancelli. His argumentation is based not so much on any factual data, of which, in essence, there are none, as on logic.

"The question,' he writes, 'can be summarized in very few words. In order that the descendants of the ancient nation of the Jews should preserve the ideal of this nation, it is necessary that their generations should be bound amongst themselves in space and time by one organization, one government. This is necessary for the simple reason that the Jewish race is ruled by the same laws of nature as all other races. This government, it is true, has not manifested itself since the 9th century (the end of the Resh Golut), but the conditions of existence ruling over the Jewish people from the time of its dispersal have been such that its government could not exist, if it were well-known. Since it had to exist, it had to become secret.' Perhaps, he says, the majority even of the Jews know nothing about it, but this does not prove its non-existence.

"But where are these ruling circles directing their nation? Since the matter is secret, of course, we can only make guesses, the more so in that no powerful organization and no government has set itself the task of making any kind of investigation into the question whether the Jews have any world plans and how

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424 Daniel Pipes, Conspiracy, p. 32.

425 Crémieux, Archives Israelites (Israelite Archives), 1861, N 25.
these are to be achieved. In this area we have only the surmises of the anti-
Semitic, and in particular Copen Albaneli, which we cannot fail to mention for
lack of any more positive material. Copen Albaneli’s assertions come down to
the following. But first we must note that Albaneli was a Freemason for quite a
long time (eight years) and attained in it the degree of Rosicrucian, which is
quite high in the degrees of classification - the 18th degree. True, Copen
Albaneli considers that after the 33 degrees of capitularies a new layer of the
organization of Masonry begins - an 'invisible' layer, and on top of that yet
another layer of the now [purely] Jewish administration of Masonry. But
although, in this way, Copen Albaneli was still far from the highest degrees,
nevertheless with great skill he was able to notice and listen into a lot. However
they may be, these are his presuppositions.

"First of all, he considers that the secret Jewish government has as its weapon
of influence in the extra-Jewish world - precisely the Masonic organization,
which subconsciously carries out the aims of the Jewish government. But the aim
of the latter is the universal dominion of the Jews.

"The aim of the Masonic machinations,' says Copen, 'is not the destruction but
the submission of the Christian world. The Jewish Secret Government (Pouvoir
Occulte) wishes to destroy the Christian spirit because the Christian spirit
constitutes the true defence of the world born from it. In exactly the same way if
this secret government destroyed the French monarchy, it was only because this
monarchy was the best defence of France.' "The dream [of universal mastery] is
supported in the heart of the Jewish people by its religion. The Jews at first
thought that mastery would come about sometime, would be given to their race
by a triumphant Messiah. But now the idea has spread amongst them that the
word 'Messiah' must be applied not to a certain son of the Israelite race, but to
the race itself, and that the conquest of the world can be carried out without the
use of weapons. They are now convinced that the future victor will be the Jewish
people itself, and that the Messianic times are those in which this people will
succeed in subduing to itself the world begotten by the Christian Messiah, who
has for so long taken the place appointed for the true messiah, that is, the Jews
themselves.'

"The dream of universal dominion, continues Copen, is not new to humanity.
Other peoples also dreamed of universal dominion. 'Perhaps this idea was not
always the ruling one for Israel to the extent that it is now.' It developed
gradually. But to the degree that they seized the most powerful weapon - gold -
this dream matured. The successes of Masonry strengthened it. 'Jewry has begun
to see the growth of its might in every corner of the globe in proportion as the
power of the solidarity, and consequently resistance of the Christian races has
decreased as the result of the loss of tradition. Its government sees everything
while not being seen by anyone. For that reason it probably bursts out when
nobody is even thinking of defending himself against it, since nobody knows of
its existence. In such conditions it would be complete senselessness on the part of
the Jewish government if it did not come to the idea of conquering the world
which nothing or almost nothing is defending... Having accomplished a miracle -
the keeping of the race that had wandered over the world in fidelity to its ancient national ideal - and seeing that the other races senselessly consider progress to be the abandonment of their ideals the Jewish government must have recognized itself capable of giving its own people rule over the whole world.'

"But in order to secure dominion a new organization of the subject races is needed. Every ruler over peoples strives to give them an organization adapted to the possibility of administering them. For the Jews in this respect it was necessary to destroy nationality. This is now taking place under the banner of progress. But in the place of an organization growing on the soil of nationality, another one is needed: it is being prepared in the form of socialism.

"'We,' says Copen Albancelli, 'are going towards a universal republic because only under it can the financial, industrial and commercial kingdom of the Jews be realized. But under the mask of a republic this kingdom will be infinitely more despotic than any other. This will be absolutely the same mastery as that which man organizes over the animals. The Jewish race will hold us by means of our needs. It will lean on a well-chosen police force, well organized and richly rewarded. Besides this police force, in this new society there will be only administrators, directors and engineers, on the one hand, and workers on the other. The workers will all be non-Jews, while the administrators and engineers will be Jews... The peoples themselves will facilitate the destruction in their midst of every power besides the State, while it will be insinuated to them that the State possessing everything is they themselves. They will not cease to work on their own enslavement until the Jews will tell them: 'Excuse us, you have not understood us in the right way. The all-possessing State is not you, but we.' Then the peoples will try to rebel, but it will be too late, for their moral and material springs that are necessary for action will already have disappeared. Flocks cannot resist dogs trained to watch over them. The only thing that the working world will be able to do is refuse to work. But the Jews will not be so stupid as not to foresee this. They will lay up enough stores for themselves and their guard dogs, while they will starve the resisters to death. If necessary, they will hurl onto the rebels their police force, which will be invincible and provided with the most advanced means of destruction.'

"'That is the plan of the Secret Government,' says Copen Albancelli, 'the establishment of the universal dominion of the Jews by means of the organization of collectivism under the form of a universal republic. Masonry will lead us to the realization of this.'"426

Nesta Webster confirmed this link between the Jews, Masonry and a world government: "The formula of the 'United States of Europe' and of the 'Universal Republic' [was] first proclaimed by the Illuminatus Anacharis Clootz", whose La République universelle was published in 1793. "It has long been the slogan of

the French lodges. And "in 1867," writes Lebedev, "the Masons created the 'International League of Peace and Freedom' with Garibaldi at its head. In it for the first time the idea of the United States of Europe under Masonic leadership was put forward."

"But of course," notes Tikhomirov, "the very forms of collectivism can give way to a single Jewish national organization." In other words, the Jewish leaders of Masonry might wish to destroy the various nationalisms of Europe in order to create a single socialist republic, but only as a steppingstone to the realisation of their own nationalist dreams. For, as Baruch Levy wrote to Marx: "The Jewish people as a whole will be its own Messiah. It will attain world dominion by the dissolution of other races, by the abolition of frontiers, the annihilation of monarchy, and by the establishment of a world republic in which the Jews will everywhere exercise the privilege of citizenship. In this 'new world order' the children of Israel will furnish all the leaders without encountering opposition. The Governments of the different peoples forming the world republic will fall without difficulty into the hands of the Jews. It will then be possible for the Jewish rulers to abolish private property, and everywhere to make use of the resources of the state. Thus will the promise of the Talmud be fulfilled, in which it is said that when the Messianic time is come, the Jews will have all the property of the whole world in their hands."

Let us look more closely at how the Jews operated in the Orthodox lands of Eastern Europe.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn writes that, "insufficiently informed... about the situation of the Jews in Russia', the Alliance Israélite Universelle 'began to interest itself in Russian Jewry', and soon 'began to work for the benefit of the Jews in Russia with great constancy.' The Alliance did not have departments in Russia and 'did not function within her frontiers'. Besides charitable and educational work, the Alliance more than once directly addressed the government of Russia, interceding for Russian Jews, although often inopportune... Meanwhile, the newly-created Alliance (whose emblem was the Mosaic tablets of the law over the earthly globe), according to the report of the Russian ambassador from Paris, already enjoyed 'exceptional influence on Jewish society in all States'. All this put not only the Russian government, but also Russian society on their guard. [The baptised Jew] Jacob Brafmann also agitated intensively against the Alliance Israélite Universelle. He affirmed that

427 Webster, Secret Societies and Subversive Movements, Christian Book Club of America, 1924, p. 275.
428 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1997, p. 35.
429 Tikhomirov, op. cit., pp. 378
the Alliance, 'like all Jewish societies, has a two-faced character (its official documents tell the government one thing, but its secret documents another)', that the Alliance's task was 'to guard Judaism from the assimilation with Christian civilization that was harmful to it'...

"Fears about the Alliance were nourished by the original very emotional appeal of the Alliance's organizers 'to the Jews of all countries, and by forgeries. With regard to Jewish unity it declared as follows: Jews,... If you believe that the Alliance is for you - good, and that in constituting a part of various peoples, you nevertheless can have common feelings, desires and hope... if you think that your disunited attempts, good intentions and the strivings of individual people could become a powerful force, uniting into a single whole and going in one direction and to one goal... support us by your sympathy and cooperation'.

"But later there appeared a secondary document which was printed in France - supposedly an appeal of Adolphe Crémieux himself 'To the Jews of the Whole World'. It is very probable that this was a forgery. It is not excluded that it was one of the drafts of an appeal that was not accepted by the organizers of the Alliance (however, it fell in with Brafman's accusations that the Alliance had hidden aims): 'We live in foreign lands and we cannot interest ourselves in the passing interests of these countries as long as our own moral and material interests are in peril... the Jewish teaching must fill the world...' A sharp controversy broke out in the Russian press, at the peak of which I.S. Aksakov in his newspaper Rus' concluded that 'the question of the inauthenticity... of the appeal does not in the present case have any particular significance in view of the authenticity of the Jewish views and hopes expressed in it'.

"The pre-revolutionary Jewish Encyclopaedia writes that in the 70s in the Russian press 'voices in defence of the Jews began to be heard less frequently... In Russian society the thought began to be entrenched that the Jews of all countries

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431 "The Union which we want to create is not French, English, Swiss or German; it is Jewish, it is universal. The Jew will not become a friend of the Christian or the Muslim before the light of the Jewish faith, the only religion of reason, shines out everywhere among the other peoples and countries that are hostile to our manners and interests. We first of all want to be and remain Jews; our nationality is the religion of our fathers, and we do not recognize any authority. We lived in foreign lands and cannot about the changing desires of countries that are completely alien to us while our own material and moral tasks are in danger.

"The Jewish teaching must fill the whole world... The Christian churches are obstacles to the Jewish cause, and it is necessary in the interests of Jewry not only to fight the Christian churches, but also to annihilate them... Our cause is great and holy, and its success guaranteed. Catholicism, our age-old enemy, lies face down, wounded in the head. The net cast by Israel over the whole earthly globe will spread with each day, and the majestic prophecies of our sacred books will finally be fulfilled. The time is approaching when Jerusalem will become a house of prayer for all peoples, and the banner of Jewish monotheism will be unfurled on distant shores. We will take advantage of circumstances. Our power is huge. We shall learn how to apply it for our cause. What have we to be frightened of? Not far distant is the day when all the riches of the earth will pass into the possession of the children of Israel." (italics mine - V.M.).
were united by a powerful political organization, the central administration of which was concentrated in the Alliance Israélite Universelle. So its creation produced in Russia, and perhaps not only in Russia, a reaction that was the reverse of that aimed at by the Alliance.  

The leader of this trend in Russian thought was I.S. Aksakov. Relying especially on Brafman's testimony, he wrote: "The Jews in the Pale of Settlement constitute a 'state within a state', with its own administrative and judicial organs, and with a national government - a state whose centre lies outside Russia, abroad, whose highest authority is the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Paris."

Another country in which the Alliance's influence was felt was Romania. "At the beginning of the nineteenth century," writes Barbara Jelavich, "the Danubian Principalities had no problem with minorities as such. Their population was in the vast majority Romanian in nationality and Orthodox in religion. This situation changed, however, in the second half of the century, when Russian Jews moved in ever-increasing numbers into the Habsburg Empire and the Principalities. In 1859 about 118,000 Jews lived in Moldavia and 9,200 in Wallachia. By 1899 the number had increased to 210,000 in Moldavia and 68,000 in Wallachia. They thus formed a minority of about a quarter of a million in a population of 6 million."

According to David Vital, the Jews were in a worse situation in Romania than in Russia. "The Jews of Russia... were citizens. Theirs were diminished rights - as were, for different reasons and in different respects, those of the peasants of Russia as well. But they were not without rights; and both in theory and in administrative practice their legal situation and their freedoms were superior to those of the peasants... [However,] contrary to Russian practice, let alone that of the central and western European states, the new rulers of Romania set out not only to deny Jews ordinary civic rights, but to place them outside the law of the country altogether and to subject them to a system of arbitrary and punitive rule..."

The Convention of Paris in 1858 had stipulated, as a condition of Romania's autonomy from Turkey, that "all Moldavians and Wallachians shall be equal in the eye of the law and with regard to taxation, and shall be equally admissible to public employments in both Principalities" (Article XLVI). However, under pressure from the Prince of Moldavia the Powers had agreed that only Christians in Moldavia and Wallachia should have political rights. And in 1866, as the central synagogue of Bucharest was being destroyed, the national parliament, led by Ion Bratianu, the minister of finance, enacted Article VII of the new constitution which declared that "only foreigners of the Christian religion may obtain the status of a Romanian".

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433 Aksakov, Rus', October 10, 1881; in Cohen and Major, op. cit., p. 627.
“Jews were also prevented from buying rural property. Because of these limitations, they tended to congregate in the large cities, particularly in Bucharest and Iaşi, where they took up occupations such as that of merchant or small trader. In the countryside they could be found as stewards on large estates, as owners of inns selling alcoholic drinks, and as moneylenders - occupations that could bring them into conflict with the peasant population.”435

At this point the Alliance became involved. "When a greatly agitated Adolphe Crémieux, now the grand old man of western European Jewry, turned to Napoleon III in 1867 to protest against [the Romanians'] conduct he was assured that 'this oppression can neither be tolerated nor understood. I intend to show that to the Prince [Charles].' As good as his word, the emperor telegraphed a reprimand to Bucharest, marginally softened by the ironic conclusion that 'I cannot believe that Your Highness's government authorizes measures so incompatible with humanity and civilization'. The Hohenzollern prince, only recently installed as ruler of the country, still sufficiently uncertain of his status and throne not to be embarrassed by the image Romania and he himself might be presenting to 'Europe', took action. Bratianu was made to resign. Émile Picot, one of the prince's private secretaries, was sent to Paris to meet the directors of the AIU in person (on 22 July 1867) and give them as good an account of the government's position as he was able. Crémieux presiding, the meeting passed off civilly enough although, as Picot's assurances of the good intentions of the Romanian government failed to correspond to what the AIU knew of the true conditions on the ground in Romania itself, the effort to mollify the Parisian notables failed. Crémieux then addressed himself directly to Prince Charles. Hardly less than imperious, his language speaks volumes both for the mounting indignation with which the condition of Romanian Jewry had come to be regarded by the leading members of the western European Jewish communities and for the historically unprecedented self-assurance with which many of them now approached their public duty. 'The moment has come, Prince,' Crémieux wrote, 'to employ [your] legitimate authority and break off this odious course of events.' Bratianu should be dismissed 'absolutely'. The savage measures taken against the Jews should be annulled. The unfortunates who had been torn violently from their homes must be allowed to return. For the rest, 'Inform [the country] that nothing will be neglected to erase the traces of this evil, pursue without respite the newspapers that have for the past year continually engaged in incitement to hatred, contempt, assassination, and expulsion of the Jews, dismiss all the cowardly officials who have lent a violent hand to this dreadful persecution and deal energetically with all violence directed at the Jews from this time on.'

"One may assume that this made unpleasant reading for Prince Charles, but it remained without real effect. Bratianu was not dismissed 'absolutely'. He was, on the contrary, given a new post. The press was not restrained. Officials engaged in active persecution of Jews were not removed from office. And after 1870 and the plummeting of French prestige, Émile Picot, a Frenchman, was out of favour in

Bucharest anyway and the channel he had opened to western Jewry collapsed - as, of course, did the political weight ascribed in Bucharest to the AIU itself.436

However, the French had another chance at the Congress of Berlin in 1878, demanding that the independence of Romania would be recognized on the same terms as that of Bulgaria and Serbia - that is, acceptance of Article XLIV, which guaranteed equality of treatment in all places and in all circumstances for members of all religious creeds. The Russian Foreign Minister Gorchakov "tried to block the move, arguing that the Jews of Russia and Romania were a social scourge, not to be confused with the fine merchants of London, Paris, Berlin and Vienna".437 But the French, supported by Bismarck and Disraeli, won the day.

Since Article XLIV contravened the provisions of the constitution of 1866, it "required a special act of the assembly. Most Romanian leaders regarded the measure as an unwarranted interference in their internal affairs, an issue on which they were particularly sensitive. In fact, the government never fully complied with the intent of the treaty. In 1879, under great pressure, it was agreed that Jews could become naturalized citizens, but special action would have to be taken on each individual case. The Jewish question was to remain controversial and to cause many problems in the future..."438

This seemed to demonstrate the impotence of the Jews in one part of Europe to help their compatriots in another. On the other hand, "the campaign mounted on behalf of Romanian Jewry had been remarkably well organized and well supported... The exertions of the notables and philanthropic organizations of western and central European Jewry on behalf of the Romanian Jews added more than a mite to the mythology of the 'international power' of the Jews"439 - if it was only a myth...

437 Glenny, op. cit., p. 150.
438 Jelavich, op. cit., p. 26. 67,000 Jews eventually emigrated to the USA (Winder, op. cit., p. 394).
439 Vital, op. cit., pp. 504, 505.
29. DOSTOYEVSKY ON RUSSIA

The Treaty of Berlin represented an unprecedented interference of the western Great Powers in the Balkans at the expense of Russia and the Christian Balkan States. As we have seen, it reignited tension between Russia and the West, as a partial result of which, writes Misha Glenny, "the 1870s saw another very dangerous development in great-power attitudes to the region. France, Britain and Russia had, in their dealings over Greece in the 1830s, acted in harmony with one another to protect their strategic interests. From the Congress of Berlin onwards, cooperation was replaced by competition, harmony by discord. The peoples of the Balkans would pay dearly for this transformation." 440

Russia's failure to conquer Constantinople was a great blow to the Slavophiles. "At a Slavic Benevolent Society banquet in June 1878 Ivan Aksakov furiously denounced the Berlin Congress as 'an open conspiracy against the Russian people, [conducted] with the participation of the representatives of Russia herself!'" 441

Dostoyevsky was also disillusioned. But his disillusionment was not the product of the failure of his "Pan-Slavist" dreams, as some have made out. For Dostoyevsky’s dreams were not “Pan-Slavist”, but “Pan-Human”, genuinely universalist. His dream was the conversion of the whole world to Christ, and thereby to real fraternity – that fraternity which the revolutionaries had promised, but had not delivered, and would never be able to deliver. A major step on the road to this dream was to be the liberation and unification of the Orthodox peoples of the East under the Russian tsar through the planting of the Cross on the dome of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople by the Russian armies. Dostoyevsky found real brotherhood only in the Orthodox Church, and in that Orthodox nation which, he believed, had most thoroughly incarnated the ideals of the Gospel – Russia.

"The moral idea is Christ. In the West, Christ has been distorted and diminished. It is the kingdom of the Antichrist. We have Orthodoxy. As a consequence, we are the bearers of a clearer understanding of Christ and a new idea for the resurrection of the world... There the disintegration, atheism, began earlier: with us, later, but it will begin certainly with the entrenchment of atheism... The whole matter lies in the question: can one, being civilized, that is, a European, that is, believe absolutely in the Divinity of the Son of God, Jesus Christ? (for all faith consists in this)... You see: either everything is contained in faith or nothing is: we recognize the importance of the world through Orthodoxy. And the whole question is, can one believe in Orthodoxy? If one can, then everything is saved: if not, then, better to burn... But if Orthodoxy is impossible for the enlightened man, then... all this is hocus-pocus and Russia’s whole strength is provisional... It is possible to believe seriously and in earnest.


441 Hosking, op. cit., pp. 372-373.
Here is everything, the burden of life for the Russian people and their entire mission and existence to come…”

It was for the sake of Orthodoxy, the true brotherhood of man, that the Russian armies had sacrificed, and would continue to sacrifice themselves. Russia, Dostoyevsky believed, had only temporarily been checked at the Gates of Constantinople, and would one day conquer it and hand it back to the Greeks, even if took a hundred years and more. Nor was this universalist love confined to Russia’s brothers in the faith: it extended even to her enemies in Western Europe – that “graveyard of holy miracles”. The lost half of Europe, immersed in Catholicism and its child, Protestantism, and its grandchild, atheism, would be converted from Russia: “The whole destiny of Russia lies in Orthodoxy, in the light from the East, which will suddenly shine forth to the mankind of the West, which has become blinded and has lost its faith in Christ. The cause of the whole misfortune of Europe, all of its ills, everything without exception, hearkens back to its loss of Christ with the establishment of the Roman Church, followed by its subsequent decision that it could manage just fine without Christ at all.”

But in the meantime, what sorrows, what torture and bloodshed, lay in store for Europe, and first of all for Russia, whose ruling classes were already Orthodox only in name! It was all the fault of the misguided idealism that sought, on the basis of science and rationalism, to force men to be happy – or rather, to give them happiness of a kind in exchange for their freedom. This rationalist-absolutist principle was common both to the most believing (Catholic) and most unbelieving (Socialist) factions in Western political life, and was typified in the Grand Inquisitor in *The Brothers Karamazov*, who “in his last remaining years… comes to the clear conviction that it is only the advice of the great and terrible spirit that could bring some sort of supportable order into the life of the feeble rebels, ‘the unfinished experimental creatures created as a mockery’. And so, convinced of that, he sees that one has to follow the instructions of the wise spirit, the terrible spirit of death and destruction. He therefore accepts lies and deceptions and leads men consciously to death and destruction. Keeps deceiving them all the way, so that they should not notice where they are being led, for he is anxious that those miserable, blind creatures should at least on the way think themselves happy. And, mind you, the deception is in the name of Him in Whose ideal the old man believed so passionately all his life! Is not that a calamity?…”


443 Dostoyevsky, “Letter to A. N. Maikov”, 1870. V. Weidle writes: “‘Europe is a mother to us, as is Russia, she is our second mother; we have taken much from her and shall do so again, and we do not wish to be ungrateful to her.’ No Westernizer said this; it is beyond Westernizers, as it is beyond Slavophiles. Dostoyevsky wrote it at the height of his wisdom, on the threshold of death… His last hope was Messianism, but a Messianism which was essentially European, which developed out of his perception of Russia as a sort of better Europe, which was called upon to save and renew Europe” (*The Task of Russia*, New York, 1956, pp. 47-60; in Alexander Schmemann, *The Historical Road of Eastern Orthodoxy*, Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1963, p. 338).

Since so many in Russia’s educated classes thought like Ivan Karamazov and the Grand Inquisitor (although much less seriously and systematically, for the most part), it was premature to think of the unification of the Orthodox peoples – still less, of the whole of Europe - under the leadership of Russia. The first need was to unite Russia within herself. And that meant uniting the educated classes with the bulk of the population, the peasants, whose lack of education and poverty, and attachment to the Orthodox Tsar and Church, repelled the proud, self-appointed guardians of the nation’s conscience...

In his youth Dostoyevsky had been converted from the socialist ideas of his youth to the official slogan of Nicholas I’s Russia, “Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality”.445 But he wrote little directly about Orthodoxy or Autocracy, probably because this would immediately have put off his liberal audience.446 A generation earlier, Slavophiles such as Khomiakov and Kireyevsky had been able to speak more or less openly in support of the Church and the Tsar. But the years 1860-1880 had entrenched liberalism and positivism firmly in the hearts and minds of the intelligentsia. So Dostoyevsky had to approach the subject more indirectly, through the third element of the slogan – Nationality.

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

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

445 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 331.
446 Among his few sayings on the subject is the following: "Our constitution is mutual love. Of the Monarch for the people and of the people for the Monarch." (cited in Lossky, N.O., Bog i mirovoe zlo (God and World Evil), 1994, Moscow: 'Respublika’, pp. 234-35).
documents, but the people groan, and so as not to groan they drink like the devil, and groan worse than ever: haven’t moved!” 447

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

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

Let us consider, first, the following words of Shatov in The Devils: “Do you know who are now the only ‘God-bearing’ people on earth, destined to regenerate and save the world in the name of a new god and to whom alone the keys of life and of the new word have been vouchsafed?” 448

The “people” here is, of course, the Russian people. And the God they bear is Christ, Who is “new” only in the sense that the revelation of the truth of Christ in Orthodoxy is something new for those other nations who were once Christian but who have lost the salt of True Christianity. Not that the Russians are considered genetically or racially superior to all other nations; for “Russianness” is a spiritual concept closely tied up with confession of the one true faith, which may exclude many people of Russian blood (for example, the unbelieving intelligentsia), but include people of other nations with the same faith.

Thus Shatov agrees with Stavrogin that “an atheist can’t be a Russian”. And again, “an atheist at once ceases to be a Russian”. And again: “A man who does not belong to the Greek Orthodox faith cannot be a Russian.” 449

It follows that “the Russian people” is a concept with a universalist content insofar as her Orthodox faith is universal; it is virtually equivalent to the concept of “the Orthodox Christian people”, in which “there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither barbarian nor Scythian” (Colossians 3.11).


449 Dostoyevsky, The Devils, p. 255.
For “if,” writes M.V. Zyzykin, “it is possible to call the fact that Christianity has become the content of a certain people’s narodnost’ the national property of that people, then such a property belongs also to the Russian people. But we should rather add the term ‘universal’ here, because the very nationality is expressed in universality, universality has become the content of the narodnost’.”

Shatov continues: “The purpose of the whole evolution of a nation, in every people and at every period of its existence, is solely the pursuit of God, their God, their very own God, and faith in Him as the only true one… The people is the body of God. Every people is a people only so long as it has its own particular god and excludes all other gods in the world without any attempt at reconciliation; so long as it believes that by its own god it will conquer and banish all the other gods from the world. So all believed from the very beginning of time – all the great nations, at any rate, all who have been in any way marked out, all who have played a leading part in the affairs of mankind. It is impossible to go against the facts. The Jews lived only to await the coming of the true God, and they left the true God to the world. The Greeks deified nature and bequeathed the world their religion – that is, philosophy and art. Rome deified the people in the State and bequeathed the State to the nations. France throughout her long history was merely the embodiment and development of the idea of the Roman god, and if she at last flung her Roman god into the abyss and gave herself up to atheism, which for the time being they call socialism, it is only because atheism is still healthier than Roman Catholicism. If a great people does not believe that truth resides in it alone (in itself alone and in it exclusively), if it does not believe that it alone is able and has been chosen to raise up and save everybody by its own truth, it is at once transformed into ethnographical material, and not into a great people…”

It follows that what we would now call “ecumenism” – the belief that other nations’ gods or religions are as good as one’s own – is the destruction of the nation. And indeed, this is what we see today. For the ecumenist nations who recognize each other’s gods have become mere “ethnographical material”, members of the United Nations but not nations in the full sense of entities having a spiritual principle and purpose for their independent existence.

Therefore, according to this logic, any nation that asserts its own truth in the face of other supposed truths must be “nationalist”, and steps must be taken to reduce or destroy its power. Universalism is declared to be good and nationalism bad. However this fails to recognize the possibility – a possibility that Dostoyevsky insisted upon as a fact in the case of Russia – that a nation’s particular, national faith may have a universalist content.

And yet this is precisely what Dostoyevsky insisted on for Russia… “Dostoyevsky,” wrote Florovsky, “was a faithful follower of the classical Slavophile traditions, and he based his faith in the great destiny marked out for

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

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This, Dostoevsky’s fundamental insight on Russia was summarized and
most eloquently expressed in his famous Pushkin Speech, delivered at the
unveiling of the Pushkin Monument in Moscow on June 8, 1880.

In this speech, writes Walicki, Dostoevsky presents Pushkin as the supreme
embodiment in art of the Russian spirit, a ‘prophetic’ apparition who had
shown the Russian nation its mission and its future.

“In the character of Aleko, the hero of the poem Gypsies, and in Evgeny
Onegin, Dostoevsky suggested, Pushkin had been the first to portray ‘the
unhappy wanderer in his native land, the traditional Russian sufferer detached
from the people....’ For Dostoevsky, the term ‘wanderer’ was an apt description
of the entire Russian intelligentsia – both the ‘superfluous men’ of the forties and
the Populists of the seventies. ‘The homeless vagrants,’ he continued, ‘are
wandering still, and it seems that it will be long before they disappear’; at
present they were seeking refuge in socialism, which did not exist in Aleko’s
time, and through it hoped to attain universal happiness, for ‘a Russian sufferer
to find peace needs universal happiness – exactly this: nothing less will satisfy
him – of course, as the proposition is confined to theory.’

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

“Pushkin himself was proof that such a return was possible without a
rejection of universal ideals. Dostoevsky drew attention to the poet’s ‘universal

452 Florovsky, op. cit., pp. 105-106.
susceptibility’, his talent for identifying himself with a Spaniard (Don Juan), an Arab (‘Imitations of the Koran’), an Englishman (‘A Feast During the Plague’), or an ancient Roman (‘Egyptian Nights’) while still remaining a national poet. This ability Pushkin owed to the ‘universality’ of the Russian spirit, ‘to become a genuine and complete Russian means… to become brother of all men, an all-human man.’

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

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

"Before delivering his ‘Address’, Dostoyevsky was seriously worried that it might be received coldly by his audience. His fears proved groundless. The speech was an unprecedented success: carried away by enthusiasm, the crowd called out ‘our holy man, our prophet’, and members of the audience pressed around Dostoyevsky to kiss his hands. Even Turgenev, who had been caricatured in The Possessed [The Devils], came up to embrace him. The solemn moment of universal reconciliation between Slavophiles and Westernizers, conservatives and revolutionaries, seemed already at hand…"453

The Slavophile Ivan Aksakov "ran onto the stage and declared to the public that my speech was not simply a speech but an historical event! The clouds had been covering the horizon, but here was Dostoyevsky’s word, which, like the appearing sun, dispersed all the clouds and lit up everything. From now on there would be brotherhood, and there would be no misunderstandings..."454

It was indeed an extraordinary event. And while the enthusiasm was short-lived, the event represented in a real sense an historic turning-point: the point at which the unbelieving intelligentsia had the Gospel preached to them in a

454 Dostoyevsky, in Igor Volgin, Poslednij God Dostoevskogo (Dostoyevsky's Last Year), Moscow, 1986, p. 267.
language and in a context that they could understand and respond to. For a moment it looked as if the “the Two Russias” created by Peter the Great’s reforms might be united. With the advantage of hindsight one may pour scorn on such an idea. But, as Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky) writes: “However accustomed people are to crawling in the dust, they will be grateful to every one who tears them away from the world below and bears them up on his powerful wings to the heavens. A man is ready to give up everything for a moment of pure spiritual joy and bless the name of him who is able to strike on the best strings of his heart. It is here that one must locate the secret of the amazing success won by the famous speech of Dostoyevsky at the Pushkin festival in Moscow. The genius writer himself later described the impression produced by him upon his listeners in a letter to his wife: ‘I read,’ he writes, ‘loudly, with fire. Everything that I wrote about Tatiana was received with enthusiasm. But when I gave forth at the end about the universal union of men, the hall was as it were in hysterics. When I had finished, I will not tell you about the roars and sobs of joy: people who did not know each other wept, sobbed, embraced each other and swore to be better, not to hate each other from then on, but to love each other. The order of the session was interrupted: grandes dames, students, state secretaries – they all embraced and kissed me.’ How is one to call this mood in the auditorium, which included in itself the best flower of the whole of educated society, if not a condition of spiritual ecstasy, to which, as it seemed, our cold intelligentsia was least of all capable? By what power did the great writer and knower of hearts accomplish this miracle, forcing all his listeners without distinction of age or social position to feel themselves brothers and pour together in one sacred and great upsurge? He attained it, of course, not by the formal beauty of his speech, which Dostoyevsky usually did not achieve, but the greatness of the proclaimed idea of universal brotherhood, instilled by the fire of great inspiration. This truly prophetic word regenerated the hearts of people, forcing them to recognize the true meaning of life; the truth made them if only for one second not only free, but also happy in their freedom.”

455 Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky), Besedy so svoim sobstvennym serdsemy (Conversations with my own Heart), Jordanville, 1948, pp. 9-10.
June 8, 1880 was perhaps the last date on which the deep divisions in Russian society might have been healed, and the slide to revolution halted. However, the opportunity was lost. Disillusion and criticism set in almost immediately from all sides.456 This was less surprising from the liberals, who were looking for another, leftist answer to the question: "What is to be done?" from Dostoyevsky. They forgot that, as Chekhov wrote in 1888, an artist does not attempt to solve concrete social, political or moral problems, but only to place them in their correct context...457 Somewhat more surprising was the less than ecstatic reaction of the right-wing litterati. Thus Mikhail Nikolayevich Katkov, a conservative who had published both War and Peace and Crime and Punishment, was very happy to publish the Speech in his Moskovskie Vedomosti (Moscow Gazette) - but laughed at it in private.458 Perhaps for him, too, the Speech offered too little in the form of concrete political solutions or advice - an open endorsement of the monarchy, for example.

And yet Katkov was not far from Dostoyevsky in his views. "M.N. Katkov wrote that the opposition between Russia and the West consists in the fact that there everything is founded on contractual relations, and in Russia - on faith. If western society is ruled by law, then Russian society is ruled by the idea. There is no question that good principles can be laid at the base of any state, but they are deprived of a firm foundation by the absence of religious feeling and a religious view of the world. Good principles are then held either on instinct, which illumines nothing, or on considerations of public utility. But instinct is an unstable thing in a reasoning being, while public utility is a conventional concept about which every person can have his own opinion."459

Like Dostoyevsky, Katkov was striving to build bridges, and especially a bridge between the Tsar and the People (he had been a liberal in his youth). "Russia is powerful," he wrote, "precisely in the fact that her people do not separate themselves from their Sovereign. Is it not in this alone that the sacred significance that the Russian Tsar has for the Russian people consists?"460 "Only

456 The only person who retained his enthusiasm for the Speech for years to come was Ivan Aksakov. As Dostoyevsky wrote: “Aksakov (Ivan) ran onto the stage and declared to the public that my speech was not simply a speech but an historical event! The clouds had been covering the horizon, but here was Dostoyevsky’s word, which, like the appearing sun, dispersed all the clouds and lit up everything. From now on there would be brotherhood, and there would be no misunderstandings” (in Volgin, op. cit., p. 267).

457 Volgin, op. cit., p. 266.

458 Volgin, op. cit., p. 271.

459 K.V. Glazkov, "Zashchita ot liberalizma" ("A Defence from Liberalism"), Pravoslavnaia Rus' (Orthodox Russia), N 15 (1636), August 1/14, 1999, pp. 9, 10, 11.

460 Katkov, Moskovskie Vedomosti (Moscow Gazette), 1867, N 88; in L.A. Tikhomirov, Monarkhicheskaia Gosudarstvennost’ (Monarchical Statehood), St. Petersburg, 1992, p. 31.
by a misunderstanding do people think that the monarchy and the autocracy exclude ‘the freedom of the people’. In actual fact it guarantees it more than any banal constitutionalism. Only the autocratic tsar could, without any revolution, by the single word of a manifesto liberate 20 million slaves.”

They say that Russia is deprived of political liberty. They say that although Russian subjects have been given legal civil liberty, they have no political rights. Russian subjects have something more than political rights: they have political obligations. Each Russian subject is obliged to stand watch over the rights of the supreme power and to care for the benefit of the State. It is not so much that each one only has the right to take part in State life and care for its benefits: he is called to this by his duty as a loyal subject. That is our constitution. It is all contained, without paragraphs, in the short formula of our State oath of loyalty…”

This was all true, and Dostoyevsky undoubtedly agreed with it in principle. However, he was doing something different from Katkov, and more difficult: not simply state the truth before an audience that was in no way ready to accept it in this direct, undiluted form, but bring them closer to the truth, and inspire them with the truth by indirect, aesthetic means.

And with this aim he did not call on his audience to unite around the Tsar. In any case, he had certain reservations about the Tsardom that made him in some ways closer to his liberal audience than Katkov. In particular, he did not support the “paralysis” that the Petrine system had imposed on the Church, whereas Katkov’s views were closer to the official, semi-absolutist position.

Katkov’s views were important especially with regard to the Ukrainian question, which began to rear its head shortly after the Polish rebellion of 1863. Katkov supported the repressive actions that were then taken by the Russian Interior Minister Peter Valuev against incipient “Ukrainianization”, which he regarded as “Polonization” by the back door. In a circular dated June 18, 1863, he banned most Ukrainian-language publications - between 1863 and 1868 their

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461 Katkov, Moskovskie Vedomosti (Moscow Gazette), 1881, N 115; in Tikhomirov, op. cit., p. 314.
462 Katkov, Moskovskie Vedomosti (Moscow Gazette), 1886, N 341; in Tikhomirov, op. cit., p. 314.
463 For example: “The whole labour and struggle of Russian History consisted in taking away the power of each over all, in the annihilation of many centres of power. This struggle, which in various forms and under various conditions took place in the history of all the great peoples, was with us difficult, but successful, thanks to the special character of the Orthodox Church, which renounced earthly power and never entered into competition with the State. The difficult process was completed, everything was subjected to one supreme principle and there had to be no place left in the Russian people for any power not dependent on the monarch. In his one-man-rule the Russian people sees the testament of the whole of its life, on him they place all their hope” (Moskovskie Vedomosti (Moscow Gazette), № 12, 1884; in Tikhomirov, op. cit., p. 312). Again, “[the Tsar] is not only the sovereign of his country and the leader of his people: he is the God-appointed supervisor and protector of the Orthodox Church, which does not recognize any earthly deputy of Christ above it and has renounced any non-spiritual action, presenting all its cares about its earthly prosperity and order to the leader of the great Orthodox people that it has sanctified” (in Tikhomirov, op. cit., p. 313).
number dropped from thirty-three to one. “Valuev’s circular,” writes Serhii Plokhy, “was directed mainly against the Ukrainian intellectuals, whose efforts to introduce their language into churches and schools he regarded as part of a Polish intrigue to undermine the empire. ‘That phenomenon is all the more deplorable and deserving of attention,’ stated the circular, ‘because it coincides with the designs of the Poles and is all but obliged to them for its origin; judging by the manuscripts received by the censors and by the fact that most of the Little Russian compositions actually come from the Poles.’ Valuev claimed that the ‘adherents of the Little Russian nationality’ were turning to the common people for political reasons. He noted that many of them has already been investigated by the government and were being accused by their own compatriots of ‘separatists designs hostile to Russia and fatal for Little Russia.’”

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 Valuev. The Ukrainians were called “Little Russians” by contrast with the “Great Russians” to the north, the important point being that they were all Russians, being really one nation, not two. As Dominic 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.”

“On June 21, 1863,” continues Plokhy, “a month before Valuev signed his circular, Katkov added his voice to the discussion on prohibiting Ukrainian-language publications in an article with a telling title, ‘The Coincidence of Ukrainophile Interests with Polish Interests’. In complete agreement with the adherents of pan-Russian Orthodoxy in [the ex-uniate Bishop] Iosif Semashko’s camp, Katkov accused the Ukrainophiles of being instruments not only of Polish

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465 Lieven, Nicholas II, pp. 279-280.
but also of Jesuit intrigue. In doing so, Katkov not only politicized the question of Ukrainian-language publications but in fact criminalized it, opening the door to the politically damaging Polish-Ukrainian connection in Valuev’s circular. More importantly in the long run, Katkov provided intellectual foundations for the repressive policies vis-à-vis the Ukrainian cultural and political movement that would be adopted by the imperial government and last for decades. Katkov argued that ‘Ukraine has never had its own history, never been a separate state: the Ukrainian people are an authentic Russian people, an indigenous Russian people, an essential part of the Russian people, without which it can hardly remain what it is now.’ Although he recognized linguistic and cultural differences between the branches of the ‘Russian nation’, he considered them only locally significant. If the big Russian nation was to develop and prevail, the cultivation of local dialects would have to be arrested…”

466 Plokhy, op. cit., p. 141.
31. LEONTIEV VERSUS DOSTOYEVSKY

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

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

But was he being fair? Dostoyevsky was not looking to the fusion of the races into one liberal-ecumenist conglomerate, but to their union in spirit through the adoption of the Orthodox faith, the essential condition of true brotherhood among both individuals and nations. Nor was he a chauvinist, but simply believed that the Russian people was the bearer of a truly universal content, the Orthodox Christian Gospel, which it would one day preach to all nations; for “this Kingdom of the Gospel shall be preached to all nations, and then shall the end come” (Matthew 24.14).

As he wrote in another place: “You see, I’ve seen the Truth. I’ve seen it, and I know that men can be happy and beautiful without losing the ability to live on

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467 Volgin, op. cit., pp. 269-270.

468 Leontiev, “G. Katkov i ego vragi na prazdnike Pushkina” (G. Katkov and his enemies at the Pushkin festivities), in Vostok, Rossia i Slavianstvo (The East, Russia and Slavdom), op. cit., p. 279.

469 Leontiev, op. cit., p. 282.
earth. I cannot – I refuse to believe that wickedness is the normal state of men. And when they laugh at me, it is essentially at that belief of mine.”

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

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

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

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

Leontiev counters by more or less accusing Dostoyevsky of the heresy of chiliasm: “It is not the complete and universal triumph of love and general righteousness on this earth that is promised to us by Christ and His Apostles; but, on the contrary, something in the nature of a seeming failure of the evangelical preaching on the earthly globe, for the nearness of the end must coincide with the last attempts to make everyone good Christians… Mr. Dostoyevsky introduces too rose-coloured a tint into Christianity in this speech. It is an innovation in relation to the Church, which expects nothing specially beneficial from humanity in the future…”

470 Dostoyevsky, The Dream of a Ridiculous Man.


473 Leontiev, op. cit., pp. 315, 322.
However, of one thing the author of *The Devils*, that extraordinary prophecy of the collective Antichrist, cannot be accused: of underestimating the evil in man, and of his capacity for self-destruction. The inventor of Stavrogin and Ivan Karamazov did not look at contemporary Russian society with rose-tinted spectacles. Dostoyevsky’s faith in a final harmony before the Antichrist did not blind him to where the world was going in his time.

"Europe is on the eve of a general and dreadful collapse," he wrote. “The ant-hill which has been long in the process of construction without the Church and Christ (since the Church, having dimmed its ideal, long ago and everywhere reincarnated itself in the state), with a moral principle shaken loose from its foundation, with everything general and absolute lost - this ant-hill, I say, is utterly undermined. The fourth estate is coming, it knocks at the door, and breaks into it, and if it is not opened to it, it will break the door. The fourth estate cares nothing for the former ideals; it rejects every existing law. It will make no compromises, no concessions; buttresses will not save the edifice. Concessions only provoke, but the fourth estate wants everything. There will come to pass something wholly unsuspected. All these parliamentarisms, all civic theories professed at present, all accumulated riches, banks, sciences, Jews - all these will instantly perish without leaving a trace - save the Jews, who even then will find their way out, so that this work will even be to their advantage."\(^{474}\)

However, Leontiev accuses him also, and still more seriously, of distorting the basic message of the Gospel. Dostoyevsky’s “love” or “humaneness” (gumannost’) is closer to the “love” and “humaneness” of Georges Sand than that of Christ. Christian love and humaneness is complex; it calls on people to love, not simply as such, without reference to God, but “in the name of God” and “for the sake of Christ”. Dostoyevsky’s “love”, on the other hand, is “simple and ‘autonomous’; step by step and thought by thought it can lead to that dry and self-assured utilitarianism, to that epidemic madness of our time, which we can call, using psychiatric language, *mania democratica progressiva*. The whole point is that we claim *by ourselves*, without the help of God, to be either very good or, which is still more mistaken, useful… “True, in all spiritual compositions there is talk of love for people. But in all such books we also find that the beginning of wisdom (that is, religious wisdom and the everyday wisdom that proceeds from it) is “the fear of God” – a simple, *very simple fear* both of torments beyond the grave and of other punishments, in the form of earthly tortures, sorrows and woes.”\(^{475}\)

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

Again, Leontiev rejects his call to the intelligentsia to humble themselves before the people. “I don’t think that the family, public and in general *personal* in

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the narrow sense qualities of our simple people would be so worthy of imitation. It is hardly necessary to imitate their dryness in relation to the suffering and the sick, their unmerciful cruelty in anger, their drunkenness, the disposition of so many of them to cunning and even thievery... Humility before the people... is nothing other than humility before that same Church which Mr. Pobedonostsev advises us to love.”

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

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

“Not in communism, not in mechanical forms is the socialism of the Russian people expressed: they believe that they shall be finally saved through the universal communion in the name of Christ. This is our Russian socialism! It is the presence in the Russian people of this sublime unifying ‘church’ idea that you, our European gentlemen, are ridiculing.”

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

476 Leontiev, op. cit., pp. 326, 327.

477 Dostoyevsky, The Diary of a Writer; in Figes, op. cit., p. 331.

Dostoevsky discussed with him his plans for his new novel, The Brothers Karamazov, and “the Church as a positive social ideal was to constitute the central idea of the new novel or series of novels”. 479

In some ways, in fact, Dostoevsky was more inoculated against Westernism than Leontiev. Thus Leontiev complained to Vasily Rozanov that Dostoevsky’s views on Papism were too severe. And Leontiev was so fixated on the evils of liberalism and cosmopolitanism that he could have been called an ecumenist in relation to Papism – an error that Dostoevsky, with his penetrating analysis of the kinship between Papism and Socialism, was not prone to. “Of particular importance”, writes Fr. Georges Florovsky, “was the fact that Dostoevsky reduced all his searching for vital righteousness to the reality of the Church. In his dialectics of living images (rather than only ideas), the reality of sobornost’ becomes especially evident... Constantine Leontiev sharply accused Dostoevsky of preaching a new, ‘rose-coloured’ Christianity (with reference to his Pushkin speech). ‘All these hopes on earthly love and on earthly peace one can find in the songs of Béranger, and still more in Georges Sand many others. And in this connection not only the name of God, but even the name of Christ was mentioned more than once in the West.’... It is true, in his religious development Dostoevsky proceeded precisely from these impressions and names mentioned by Leontiev. And he never renounced this ‘humanism’ later because, with all its ambiguity and insufficiency, he divined in it the possibility of becoming truly Christian, and strove to enchurch (otserkovit’) them. Dostoevsky saw only insufficiency where Leontiev found the complete opposite...”480

This reveals the difference in between what we might call “pastoral” gifts of Dostoevsky and Leontiev. Dostoevsky started where his audience were – outside the Church, in the humanist-rationalist-utopian morass of westernism, and tried to build on what was still not completely corrupted in that world-view in order to draw his audience closer to Christ and the Church. In this way, he imitated St. Paul in Athens, who, seeing an altar with the inscription “TO THE UNKNOWN GOD”, gave the Athenians the benefit of the doubt, as it were, and proceeded to declare: “He Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him I declare unto you” (Acts 17.23). Constantine Leontiev would perhaps have objected that the Athenians, as pagans, were certainly not worshipping the True God at this altar. And he would have been formally right... And yet St. Paul saw the germ of true worship in this inchoate paganism, and, building upon it, led at any rate a few to the truth. This was also the method of Dostoevsky with his semi-pagan Russian audience. And he, too, made some converts... Again, if Dostoevsky emphasised certain aspects of the Christian teaching such as compassionate love and the humble bearing of insults, more than others such as the fear of God, the sacramental life and obedience to authorities, this is not because he did not think the latter were important, but because he knew that his audience, being

479 Soloviev, in David Magarshack’s introduction to his Penguin translation of The Brothers Karamazov, pp. xi-xii.

480 Florovsky, Puti Russkogo Bogoslovia (Paths of Russian Theology), Paris, 1937, pp. 300-301.
spiritually infants, could not take this “hard” food, but had to begin on the “milk” of those teachings which were not so distasteful to their spoilt palates. And the results proved him right from a pragmatic, missionary point of view. For the unbelieving intelligentsia of several subsequent generations have been stimulated to question their unbelief far more by the writings of Dostoyevsky than by those of Leontiev and Pobedonostev, undoubtedly Orthodox though the latter are.

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

And yet what is more significant: the fact that there is a certain inaccuracy in Dostoyevsky’s words from a strictly theological point of view, or the fact that Dostoyevsky talks about deification at all as the ultimate end of man? Surely the latter… Even among the Holy Fathers we find inaccuracies, and as Lourié points out in other places, the Palamite ideas of uncreated grace and the deification of man through grace had almost been lost even among the monasteries and academies of nineteenth-century Russia. Which makes Dostoyevsky’s achievement in at least placing the germs of such thoughts in the mind of the intelligentsia, all the greater. For in what other non-monastic Russian writer of the nineteenth century do we find such a vivid, profound and above all relevant (to the contemporary spiritual state of his listeners) analysis of the absolute difference between becoming “god” through the assertion of self (Kirillov, Ivan Karamazov) and becoming god through self-sacrificial love and humility (Bishop Tikhon, Elder Zosima)?

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

personal monkhood than the superficial and sentimental inventions of Dostoyevsky in The Brothers Karamazov.”

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

Again, as Fr. Georges Florovsky writes: “To the ‘synthetic’ Christianity of Dostoyevsky Leontiev opposed the contemporary monastic way of life or ethos, especially on Athos. And he insisted that in Optina The Brothers Karamazov was not recognized as ‘a correct Orthodox composition’, while Elder Zosima did not correspond to the contemporary monastic spirit. In his time Rozanov made a very true comment on this score. ‘If it does not correspond to the type of Russian monasticism of the 18th-19th centuries (the words of Leontiev), then perhaps, and even probably, it corresponded to the type of monasticism of the 4th to 6th centuries’. In any case, Dostoyevsky was truly closer to Chrysostom (and precisely in his social teachings) than Leontiev… Rozanov adds: ‘The whole of Russia read The Brothers Karamazov, and believed in the representation of the Elder Zosima. “The Russian Monk” (Dostoyevsky’s term) appeared as a close and fascinating figure in the eyes of the whole of Russia, even her unbelieving parts.’… Now we know that the Elder Zosima was not drawn from nature, and in the given case Dostoyevsky did not proceed from Optina figures. It was an ‘ideal’ or ‘idealised’ portrait, written most of all from Tikhon of Zadonsk, and it was precisely Tikhon’s works that inspired Dostoyevsky, constituting the ‘teachings’ of Zosima… By the power of his artistic clairvoyance Dostoyevsky divined and recognized this seraphic stream in Russian piety, and prophetically continued the marked-out line…”

Whatever the truth about the relationship between Dostoyevsky's fictional characters and real life, one thing is certain: both Dostoyevsky and the Optina Elders believed in the same remedy for the schism in the soul of Russian society - a return to Orthodoxy and the true Christian love that is found only in the Orthodox Church. There was no substantial difference between the teaching of Elder Ambrose and Dostoyevsky (whom Ambrose knew personally and commended as "a man who repents!"). Dostoyevsky would not have disagreed,

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482 Magarshack, op. cit., p. xviii.

483 Magarshack, op. cit., p. xvi.

for example, with this estimate of Elder Ambrose's significance for Russia: "Fr. Ambrose solved for Russian society its long-standing and difficult-to-solve questions of what to do, how to live, and for what to live. He also solved for Russian society the fatal question of how to unite the educated classes with the simple people. He said to Russian society that the meaning of life consists of love - not that humanistic, irreligious love which is proclaimed by a certain portion of our intelligentsia, and which is expressed by outward measures of improvement of life; but that true, profound Christian love, which embraces the whole soul of one's neighbour and heals by its life-giving power the very deepest and most excruciating wounds. Fr. Ambrose also solved the question of the blending of the intelligentsia with the people, uniting them in his cell in one general feeling of repentant faith in God. In this way he indicated to Russian society the one saving path of life, the true and lasting foundation of its well-being - in the first place spiritual and then, as a result, material..."\(^\text{485}\)

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

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

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

“The Tsar’s forebodings had solid foundations.

“On April 4, 1866 Karakozov made an attempt on the life of the Tsar.

“It was necessary to speak, not about a constitution, but about the salvation of the State…”

As Dominic Lieven writes, Alexander “explained to Otto von Bismarck, who was then Prussian minister in Petersburg, that ‘the idea of taking counsel of subjects other than officials was not in itself objectionable and that great participation by respectable notables in official business could only be advantageous. The difficulty, if not impossibility, of putting this principle into effect lay only in the experience of history that it had never been possible to stop a country’s liberal development at the point beyond which it should not go. This would be particularly difficult in Russia, where the necessary political culture, thoughtfulness and circumspection were only to be found in relatively small circles. Russia must not be judged by Petersburg, of all the empire’s towns the least Russian one… The revolutionary party would not find it easy to corrupt the people’s convictions and make the masses conceive their interests to be divorced from those of the dynasty. The Emperor continued that ‘throughout the interior of the empire the people still see the monarch as the paternal and absolute Lord

486 S. P. Ivanov, Russkaia Intelligentsia i Masonstvo ot Petra I do nashikh dnei (The Russian Intelligentsia and Masonry from Peter I to our days), Harbin, 1934, Moscow, 1997, p. 340.
set by God over the land; this belief, which has almost the force of a religious sentiment, is completely independent of any personal loyalty of which I could be the object. I like to think that it will not be lacking too in the future. To abdicate the absolute power with which my crown is invested would be to undermine the aura of that authority which has dominion over the nation. The deep respect, based on innate sentiment, with which right up to now the Russian people surrounds the throne of its Emperor cannot be parcelled out. I would diminish without any compensation the authority of the government if I wanted to allow representatives of the nobility or the nation to participate in it. Above all, God knows what would become of relations between the peasants and the lords if the authority of the Emperor was not still sufficiently intact to exercise the dominating influence.

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

The revolutionaries did not rest making the tsar’s last years extremely difficult. In 1876 in London, the Jewish revolutionaries Liberman, Goldenburg and Zuckerman worked out a plan for the murder of the Tsar. Goldenburg was the first to offer his services as the murderer, but his suggestion was refused, “since they found that he, as a Jew, should not take upon himself this deed, for then it would not have the significance that was fitting for society and, the main thing, the people.”

“On April 2, 1879 the village teacher Alexander Soloviev fired at the Emperor Alexander near the Winter palace while he was going for his morning walk.

“On May 28, 1879 Soloviev was hanged, while three weeks later a secret congress of revolutionaries in Lipetsk took the decision to kill the Tsar.

“The propaganda of socialism, they argued, was impossible in Russia under the existing form of government, and for that reason it was necessary to strive for its overthrow, for the limitation of autocratic power, for the bestowal of political freedoms and the convening of the people’s representatives. The means for the attainment of this goal had to be terror, by which the plotters understood the murder of people in [high] positions, and first of all the Tsar.

487 Lieven, Nicholas II, pp. 142, 143.

488 Ivanov, op. cit., p. 345.
“On November 19, 1879 the terrorists tried to blow up the Emperor’s train.489

“In 1880 a mine was laid and exploded under the Tsar’s dining room in the Winter palace.

“On February 12, 1880, on the insistence of the Tsarevich-heir, a ‘Supreme Investigative Commission’ was founded and Loris-Melikov was given dictatorial powers.

“From February 12 to August 6, 1880 there was established the so-called ‘dictatorship of the heart’ of Count Loris-Melikov.

“The liberals from the zemstva and the professors were demanding a constitution, for this was the only way to struggle with the insurrection. The terrorists were attacking the government with bombs, daggers and revolvers, while the government replied with freedoms and constitutions.

“Count Loris-Melikov was, as was only to be expected, a humanist and a liberal and was under the direct influence of the Mason Koshelev.

“Count Loris-Melikov entered into close union with the zemstva and the liberal organs of the press.

“The liberal Abaza was appointed to the ministry of finance490; Tolstoy was retired.

489 “The participation of the Masons in this deed,” writes Selyaninov, “cannot be doubted. This was discovered when the Russian government turned to the French government with the demand that it hand over Hartman, who was hiding in Paris under the name Meyer. Scarcely had Hartman been arrested at the request of the Russian ambassador when the French radicals raised an unimaginable noise. The Masonic deputy Engelhardt took his defence upon himself, trying to prove that Meyer and Hartman were different people. The Russian ambassador Prince Orlov began to receive threatening letters. Finally, the leftist deputies were preparing to raise a question and bring about the fall of the ministry. The latter took fright, and, without waiting for the documents promised by Orlov that could have established the identity of Hartman-Meyer, hastily agreed with the conclusions of Brother Engelhardt and helped Hartman to flee to England… In London Hartman was triumphantly received into the Masonic lodge ‘The Philadelphia.’” (in Ivanov, op. cit., p. 346).

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

“He suggested stopping the creation in St. Petersburg of ‘temporary-preparatory commissions’ so that the work of these commissions should be subjected to scrutiny with the participation of people taken from the zemstva and ‘certain significant towns’, taken, as Tatischev put it, ‘from the elected people’.

“Lev Tikhomirov, the penitent revolutionary and former terrorist, being well acquainted with the events and people of the reign of Alexander II Nikolayevich, affirmed that Count Loris-Melikov was deceiving his Majesty and by his ‘dictatorship of the heart’ was creating a revolutionary leaven in the country.

“Emperor Alexander II confirmed the report of his minister on the constitution on February 17, 1881, and on the morning of March 1 [13 (O.S.)] also confirmed the text announcing this measure, so that before its publication it should be debated at the session of the Council of Ministers on March 4.

“On the same day that the report of Count Loris-Melikov was signed, a bomb thrown by terrorists, cut short the life of the Sovereign.”

The future Tsar Nicholas II described the event as follows: "We were having breakfast in the Anichkov palace, my brother and I, when a frightened servant ran in and said:

"'An accident has happened to the Emperor! The heir [the future Tsar Alexander III, Nicholas' father] has given the order that Great Prince Nicholas Alexandrovich (that is, I) should immediately go to the Winter palace. One must not lose time.'

"General Danilov and I ran down, got into a carriage and rushed along Nevsky to the Winter palace. When we were going up the staircase, I saw that all those who met us had pale faces and that there were big red spots on the carpet - when they had carried my grandfather up the staircase, blood from the terrible wounds he had suffered from the explosion had poured out. My parents were already in the study. My uncle and aunt were standing near the window. Nobody said a word. My grandfather was lying on the narrow camp bed on which he always slept. He was

490 Abaza argued in favour of a constitution as follows: “The throne cannot rest exclusively on a million bayonets and an army of officials” (quoted in Figes, A People’s Tragedy, p. 41).

491 Ivanov, op. cit., pp. 344-345. In broad daylight, a bomb was thrown at the Tsar’s carriage. It injured some of the guards but left him unhurt. Disregarding his personal safety, he left his carriage and was attending to the injured when a second bomb was thrown, fatally wounding him and many others. He was rushed to the Winter Palace where he died in the presence of his grief-stricken family. Both his son, the future Tsar Alexander III, and his grandson, the future Tsar Nicholas II, were present.
covered with the military greatcoat that served as his dressing-gown. His face was mortally pale, it was covered with small wounds. My father led me up to the bed:

"'Papa,' he said, raising his voice, 'your sun ray is here.'

"I saw a fluttering of his eyelids. The light blue eyes of my grandfather opened. He tried to smile. He moved his finger, but could not raise his hand and say what he wanted, but he undoubtedly recognized me. Protopresbyter Bazhenov came up to him and gave him Communion for the last time, we all fell on our knees, and the Emperor quietly died. Thus was it pleasing to the Lord.

Ironically, Russia had been saved from a constitution by the bombs of the terrorists...
“Alexander II’s murder,” writes St. John Maximovich, “unleashed a storm of indignation in Russia, which helped strengthen the moral fibre of the people, as became evident during the reign of Alexander III…”.492

Loris-Melikov did succeed in capturing the terrorists, and on April 3 Zhelyabov, Perovskaya and three others were hanged. But he had no influence with the new tsar, Alexander III, who looked instead to the conservative Pobedonostsev, over-procurator of the Holy Synod, nicknamed “Torquemada”.

“The liberals,” writes Sebag Sebastian Montefiore, “were at war with Torquemada. ‘I am living with madmen,’ said Pobedonostsev, ‘and they think I’m an idiot from the sixteenth century! He ranted at Loris: ‘I’m a believer… You idolaters worship idols of freedom, all idols!’

“On 21 April, the tsar met them again at Gatchina. This time Pobedonostsev was conciliatory, Alexander positive, and Loris and [the War Minister] Miliutin left in triumph. But things were not as they seemed. ‘They want to lead us to representative government,’ the tsar wrote to Pobedonostsev. ‘I won’t permit it. The over-procurator saw his chance, sending the tsar a draft manifesto: ‘You must speak out!’

“’I approve wholeheartedly,’ wrote the tsar on 26 April. ‘Meet tomorrow at 2 to talk.’ Pobedonostsev hurried to Gatchina. The next evening, at a meeting in Loris’s home, the imminent publication of an imperial manifesto was suddenly revealed. ‘Such unexpected news struck us like lightning’, recalled Miliutin. ‘What manifesto? Who prepared it?’ Pobedonostsev admitted that it was he. The ministers screamed at him. Pobedonostsev, sure that ‘TRUTH is with me’, fled lest ‘the frenzied Asiatic Loris’ should try some Armenian ruse.

“The liberals resigned. ‘They wanted to take me into their clutches and enslave me.’ Alexander told his younger brother Sergei, ‘but they failed and I’m especially happy to get away from Count Loris who, with just a bit more of his liberal tricks, would have brought the eve of revolution.’…”493

On April 29 the tsar published his manifesto, “On the Unshakeableness of the Autocracy”, declaring: “We call on all our faithful subjects to serve us and the state in faith and righteousness, to the uprooting of the abominable rebellion that is devastating the Russian land, to the confirmation of faith and morality, to the good education of children, to the destruction of unrighteousness and theft, to the instilling of order and righteousness in the acts of the institutions given to Russia by her benefactor, our beloved parent.” Although the new tsar promised to work within the institutions created by his father, there was no promise of any new ones, let alone a constitution - the project of Leris-Melikov, which Alexander


II was about to sign at the time of his death, was quietly dropped. And when Ignatiev proposed convening a Zemsky Sobor before his coronation, the tsar said that he was “too convinced of the ugliness of the electoral representative principle to allow it at any time in Russia in that form in which it exists throughout Europe”. 494

"The murder of Alexander II," writes G.P. Izmostieva, "was seen by monarchical Russia as the culmination of the liberal 'inebriation' of earlier years, as the shame and guilt of all, God's judgement and a warning." 495 As St. Ambrose of Optina wrote on March 14: "I don't know what to write to you about the terrible present times and the pitiful state of affairs in Russia. There is one consolation in the prophetic words of St. David: 'The Lord scattereth the plans of the heathens, He setteth aside the devices of the peoples, and He bringeth to nought the plans of princes' (Psalm 32.10). The Lord allowed Alexander II to die a martyric death, but He is powerful to give help from on high to Alexander III to catch the evildoers, who are infected with the spirit of the Antichrist. Since apostolic times the spirit of the Antichrist has worked through his forerunners, as the apostle writes: 'The mystery of iniquity is already working, only it is held back now, until it is removed from the midst' (II Thessalonians 2.7). The apostolic words 'is held back now' refer to the powers that be and the ecclesiastical authorities, against which the forerunners of the Antichrist rise up in order to abolish and annihilate them upon the earth. Because the Antichrist, according to the explanation of the interpreters of Holy Scripture, must come during a time of anarchy on earth. But until then he sits in the bottom of hell, and acts through his forerunners. First he acted through various heretics who disturbed the Orthodox Church, and especially through the evil Arians, educated men and courtiers; and then he acted cunningly through the educated Masons; and finally, now, through the educated nihilists, he has begun to act blatantly and crudely, beyond measure. But their illness will turn back upon their heads, as it is written in the Scriptures. Is it not the most extreme madness to work with all one's might, not sparing one's own life, in order to be hung on the gallows, and in the future life to fall into the bottom of hell to be tormented forever in Tartarus? But desperate pride pays no attention, but desires in every way to express its irrational boldness. Lord, have mercy on us!" 496

It was not only the holy elders who saw in Russia the main obstacle to the triumph of “the mystery of iniquity". “The same witholding role in Russia," writes Mikhail Nazarov, “was seen by the founders of Marxism: ‘... It is clear to us that the revolution has only one truly terrible enemy - Russia'; the role of Russia is ‘the role predestined from on high of the saviour of order’.

494 Krivosheev & Krivosheev, op. cit., pp. 91, 90, 88.

495 Izmostieva, "Dmitrij Andreevich Tolstoj", Voprosy Istorii (Questions of History), 2006 (3), p. 84.

“In those years Marx wrote in the New Rhine Newspaper (the organ of the ‘League of Communists’): ‘Russia has become a colossus which does not cease to elicit amazement. Russia is the one phenomenon of its kind in history: the terrible power of this huge Empire... on a world scale’. ‘In Russia, in this despotic government, in this barbaric race, there is such energy and activity as one would look for in vain in the monarchies of the older States’. ‘The Slavic barbarians are innate counter-revolutionaries’, ‘particular enemies of democracy’.

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

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

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

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

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

On April 15 the first pogrom broke out in Elizavettgrad. It spread to Kiev and Kishinev and Odessa. The government reacted energetically: in Kiev 1400 people were arrested.

However, there were not enough policemen for the scale of the disturbances, and “the government recognized that it had been insufficiently active. An official declaration proclaimed that in the Kiev pogrom ‘measures to rein in the crowd had not been undertaken quickly and energetically enough’. In June, 1881 the director of the department of police, V.K. Plehve, in his report to the sovereign on the situation in Kiev province named ‘as one of the reasons “for the development of the disturbances and their not very speedy suppression” the fact that the military court “was very condescending to the accused, and very superficial in approaching the affair’. Alexander III commented on the report: ‘This is unforgiveable’.”

Many western historians have accused the Tsarist government of complicity in the pogroms. But in fact, as David Vital admits, “Alexander did display genuine dismay and dissatisfaction when reports of the weak and ineffective conduct of the security forces were brought to him; and fury when he learned of cases of military officers and men having actually joined the mob. His instructions were to deal firmly with rioters, to see to it that their leaders were severely flogged; and to make clear to the civil and military authorities alike that their business was to restore and maintain order before all else…. All in all then, while much was murky in official Russia at this time, the grounds for positing a momentarily disoriented, intrinsically inefficacious government not so much stimulating as failing to cope with simmering, popular, generalized discontent seem solid enough.”

500 Solzhenitsyn, Dvesti let vmeste (Two Hundred Years Together), Moscow, 2001, part 1, p. 185.

501 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 189.

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

“The reasons for the pogroms were earnestly investigated and discussed by contemporaries. Already in 1872, after the Odessa pogrom, the governor-general of the South-Western region had warned in a report that such an event could happen again in his region, for ‘here hatred and enmity towards the Jews is rooted in history and only the material dependence of the peasants on them at the present, together with the administration’s measures, holds back an explosion of discontent in the Russian population against the Jewish race’. The governor-general reduced the essence of the matter to economics: ‘I have counted and estimated the commercial-industrial property belonging to the Jews in the South-Western region, and at the same time have pointed to the fact that the Jews, having taken eagerly to the renting of landowners’ lands, have leased them out again to the peasants on very onerous terms’. And this causal nexus ‘was generally recognized in the pogrom years of 1881’.

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

This was true: the “evil-minded” revolutionaries, both Russian and Jewish, used the hatred to their own end. And yet it is little wonder that conservative opinion, while deploring the pogroms, saw the root cause of the Jews’ problems in the Jews themselves, in their economic exploitation of the peasants. When Loris-Melikov was succeeded in 1881 by Count N.P. Ignatiev, the latter, on the instructions of the emperor, sent him a memorandum on the causes of the pogroms. In it, writes Geoffrey Hosking, he outlined “his fears about domination by ‘alien forces’. In it he linked the whole Westernizing trend with the Jews and the Poles... ‘In Petersburg there exists a powerful Polish-Jewish group in whose hands are directly concentrated, the stock exchange, the advokatura, a good part of the press and other public affairs. In many legal and illegal ways they enjoy immense influence on officialdom and on the course of affairs in general.’ They

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used this influence to mould public opinion in the interests of their favourite schemes: ‘the broadest possible rights for Poles and Jews, and representative institutions on the western model. Every honest voice from the Russian land is drowned out by Polish-Jewish clamours that one must only listen to the ‘intelligentsia’ and that Russian demands should be rejected as old-fashioned and unenlightened.’”

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

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

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

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

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

505 Hosking, op. cit., p. 390.
you, under the guise of crafts and other productive occupations, develop throughout the provinces of Russia the trades that you usually practise now.

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

The importance of the kahal organization was especially emphasized by Archbishop Nicanor of Odessa and Kherson: "Religion is the basis of the powerful Jewish spirit. The more or less secret-open religious organization of the kahal is that mighty, many-cylndered machine which moves the millions of Jews to secretly planned ends. Only a blind man could not see how terrible and threatening is this power! It is striving for nothing less than the enslavement of the world!… In the last century it has had horrific successes by relying on European liberalism, on equality before the law, etc. It is mixing up people of other faiths more and more closely, while it rules its own people like a machine. All the Jews are in essence like one man. We reason in a liberal way whether it is useful or harmful to ban bazaars on feast-days. But the secret Jewish power says to its own people: 'Don't you dare! Honour the Sabbath! Honour the law of your fathers! The law gives life and power to Jewry!' And look: not a single Jew dares to go out on Saturday from Nikolaev to Kherson or Odessa. The railway trains are empty, while the steamer services between these great cities stop completely. It is strange and offensive for the Christian people and such a great Kingdom as ours! But what a foreign power! And how bold and decisive it is. This is a religious power coming from the religious organization of the kahal."  

In May, 1882 the government issued new "temporary rules" which "forbade Jews to resettle or acquire property in rural areas, even within the Pale, while outside it the police were instructed to enforce restrictions on Jewish residence which had previously been widely flouted. In the following years Jews were barred from entering the advokatura and the military-medical professions, while a numerus clausus was imposed on their admission to secondary and higher education in general. They were also denied the vote in zemstvo and municipal elections. In 1891, at Passover, there was a mass expulsion of illegal resident Jews from Moscow, which deprived the city of two-thirds of its Jewish population."  

The Jewish radicals of the previous reign had seen themselves as joining Russian culture, whose famous writers had been their idols. Unfortunately, however, the pogroms served to radicalize Jewish youth still further and in an


507 Archbishop Nicanor, in Fomin and Fomina, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 351. Of course, the kahal, that "state within a state", was supposed to have been abolished in the reign of Nicholas I. Evidently, the Jews had managed to get round that law…

opposite direction, so that their radicalism was now nationalist rather than internationalist, and anti-Russian rather than pro-Russian. As Solzhenitsyn writes: “The general turning-point in Jewish consciousness in Russia after 1881-82 could not fail, of course, to be reflected to some extent also in the consciousness of the Jewish revolutionaries in Russia. These youths had first left Jewry, but afterwards many returned, ‘the departure from “Jew street” and return to the people’, ‘our historical destiny is bound up with the Jewish ghetto, and from it comes our national essence’. Until the pogroms of 1881-82 ‘it absolutely never entered the head of any of us revolutionaries to think about the necessity’ of publicly explaining the role of the Jews in the revolutionary movement. But the pogroms elicited ‘amongst... the majority of my compatriots an explosion of discontent’. And so ‘not only the intelligent Jews in general, but also some revolutionary Jews, who previously had felt not the slightest bond with their nationality... suddenly recognized themselves as obliged to devote their strength and abilities to their unjustly persecuted compatriots’. ‘The pogroms brought out previously hidden feelings and made the youth more sensitive to the sufferings of their people, and the people more receptive to revolutionary ideas.”

And yet there is reason to believe that the great wave of Jewish emigration from Russia to the West in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – about two million Jews emigrated to America alone before 1914 - was not elicited primarily by the pogroms. A more important factor, probably, was the introduction of a state monopoly on the sale of alcohol in 1896. As Solzhenitsyn writes: “There is no doubt about it: the introduction of the state wine monopoly turned out to be a very powerful blow at the economy of Russian Jewry. And right up to the World War itself, when it more or less came to an end, the state wine monopoly continued to be a favourite target of public displeasure – although only it introduced strict control over the quality of the spirits sold in the country and their purity. And although the state monopoly also removed the livelihood of Christian publicans... it was nevertheless made out to be primarily an anti-Jewish measure: ‘The introduction of the state sale of wines in the Pale of Settlement at the end of the 90s deprived more than 100,000 Jews of their livelihood’, ‘the authorities counted on pushing the Jews out of their village localities’, and from that time ‘trade in alcohol did not have its former significance for the Jews’.

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

509 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 192.
However, other means of exploiting the Christian peasantry remained. 18% of the Jews before the revolution, about one million people, were occupied in the sale of bread. And sometimes they would hoard the harvest and refuse to sell it so that the prices should fall. “It is not by accident that in the 90s of the nineteenth century agricultural cooperatives (under the leadership of Count Haydn and Bekhteev) arose for the first time in Russia, forestalling Europe, in the southern provinces. [This was envisaged] as a counter-measure to this essentially completely monopolistic hoarding of peasant bread.”\textsuperscript{512}

The Jews were also heavily involved in the lumber, sugar, gold, oil and banking industries. And by 1900 they controlled one-third of the trade of Russia. With such a heavy involvement in the country’s economy, it is not surprising to learn that, of those Jews who emigrated between 1899 and 1907, only one per cent were educated.\textsuperscript{513} ‘The educated had no reason to leave: there were plenty of opportunities for them in Tsarist Russia. We might also have expected that those who remained would be gradually assimilated. But no: the Jews chose emancipation (education), but not assimilation. They fought for equality of rights, but without the loss of their Jewishness.’\textsuperscript{514}

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

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

“However, as we have seen, Palestinophilia began to develop in an unexpected form and with a strength that was unexpected for many…”\textsuperscript{515}

“Anti-Jewish manifestations - both abroad and in Russia - were being passionately discussed already in 1884 by Vladimir Soloviev, who was disturbed by them: ‘The Jews have always treated us in a Jewish way; but we Christians, by contrast, have not yet learned to treat Judaism in a Christian way’; ‘with regard to Judaism the Christian world in its majority has so far displayed either zeal not

\textsuperscript{512} Solzhenitsyn, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 299.

\textsuperscript{513} Solzhenitsyn, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 311.

\textsuperscript{514} Solzhenitsyn, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 313-314.

\textsuperscript{515} Solzhenitsyn, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 314.
according to reason or a decrepit and powerless indifferentism’. No, ‘Christian Europe does not tolerate the Jews – unbelieving Europe does’.

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

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

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

“As in Europe, the many-faceted growth of Jewish strivings could not fail to elicit in Russian society – alarm in some, sharp opposition in others, but sympathy in yet others... And in others – a political calculation. Just as in 1881 the People’s Will revolutionaries had thought of the usefulness of playing on the Jewish question..., so, some time later, the Russian liberal-radical circles, the left wing of society, appropriated for a long time the usefulness of using the Jewish question as a weighty political card in the struggle with the autocracy: they tried in every way to re-iterate the idea that it was impossible to attain equality of rights for the Jews in Russia in any other way than by the complete overthrow of the autocracy. Everyone, from the liberals to the SRs and Bolsheviks, brought in the Jews again and again – some with sincere sympathy, but all as a useful card in the anti-autocratic front. And this card, without a twinge of conscience, was never let out of the hands of the revolutionaries, but was used right up to 1917...”516

For both religious and historical reasons, Russia could never remain indifferent to, or detached from, events in the Balkans. In the tenth century Russia received her Orthodox faith from the Greeks of the New Rome of Constantinople. For nearly five hundred years, until the council of Florence in 1438 and the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the rulers of Russia, although de facto independent of, and much more powerful than, the Byzantine Emperor, considered themselves de jure only junior partners of the Emperor, while the huge Russian Church remained only a single metropolitan district of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. After the fall of Constantinople, the Balkan Slavs and Greeks looked to the Russians as potential liberators from the Turkish yoke, and in 1562 Tsar Ivan IV received a *gramota* from the Ecumenical Patriarch Joasaph calling him “*our Tsar*”, ascribing to him authority over “Orthodox Christians in the entire universe”, and applying to him the same epithets, “pious, God-crowned and Christ-loving” as had been applied to the Byzantine Emperors. Forty years later another Ecumenical Patriarch, Jeremiah II, confirmed this, and raised the Russian Church to patriarchal status: Moscow “the Third Rome” been born...

The idea of the Third Rome has been subjected to much mockery and revilement as if it were just an excuse for nationalist ambition. But exactly the reverse is true: in acknowledging themselves to be the successors of the Byzantines, “the Second Rome”, the Russians took upon themselves an internationalist obligation: to fight for the protection of all Orthodox Christians throughout the inhabited world. Of course, this could have been an excuse for nationalist aggression, but in practice it involved, on the one hand, defensive wars against aggressive powers that invaded her territory from the west, such as the Swedes, the Germans, the Poles and the French, and on the other hand, since most non-Russian Orthodox lived within the spheres of influence of the major Muslim powers of Ottoman Turkey and Persia, almost continuous war along her southern frontiers to protect Orthodox Christians from the Muslims. In all cases, it involved the shedding of Russians’ blood for their fellow Orthodox Christians with no real gain for Russia, as in the liberation of Bulgaria from the Turks in 1877. To a large extent the history of Russia from the fifteenth century onwards can be seen as a slow, painful but inexorable advance to the fulfillment of the ideal of Christian Rome: the liberation of all fellow Orthodox Christians living under the yoke of heretical or pagan rulers.

The cost was enormous. It has been calculated that, quite apart from losses in terms of men killed, Russians taken into slavery by the Turks from the 15th to the 18th century inclusive numbered between three and five million, while the population of the whole of Russia in the time of Ivan the Terrible (16th century) numbered less than five million souls.517 And yet losses of men killed or driven into slavery abroad were only the beginning of the cost. Both the institution of

517 I.L. Solonevich, *Narodniaia Monarkhia* (The People’s Monarchy), Minsk, 1998, pp. 403-404. The slaves included some who have been numbered among the saints, such as St. John the Russian (enslaved in Turkey) and St. Paul of Cairo.
serfdom, which so upset the liberals, and that of military service from youth until (virtually) death, were the results, not of the despotic cruelty of the tsars, but of sheer military necessity...

If the western nations’ cynical attitude to Russian expansion was only to be expected, it was less to be expected, and harder to take, from the very Balkan Orthodox who benefited from this expansion through the gradual weakening of Ottoman power. None of them saw in Russia “the Third Rome”, and so none of them felt obliged to coordinate their political and military initiatives with Russia, as the leader of the Orthodox world. Paradoxically, this was especially the case after the Russian advance to the gates of Constantinople and the Congress of Berlin in 1878, whose results, while in general galling to the Orthodox, and especially to Russia and Bulgaria, nevertheless established Serbia and Romania as independent states with increased territories.

The main problem with the Treaty of Berlin from the point of view of the Balkan Orthodox was that Austria-Hungary gained a protectorate in Bosnia, which infuriated the Serbs, and greater influence in the region as a whole. The Hungarian Foreign Minister, Count Julius Andrassy, was fearful of Russia and had already tried, in earlier years, to draw Serbia away from the Russian sphere of influence. Now he employed bribery – the offer of increased territory for Serbia in the south-east, at Bulgaria’s expense, - to draw Serbia into dependence on Austria.

As Ian Armour writes, Andrassy “would only promote Serbia’s territorial claims at the Congress if [the Serbian Prime Minister] Ristic accepted his conditions. These were formalised in a preliminary convention on July 8th, 1878: Serbia agreed to complete a railway line to its southern frontier within three years; and to conclude a commercial treaty with the Monarchy.

“The realisation of these goals took somewhat longer. The railway treaty, for instance, came a year and a half later, largely because Ristic had to overcome heavy opposition in the national assembly. This was due to the understandable fear that, if Serbia were connected by rail to Austria-Hungary in advance of the commercial treaty, it would rapidly be made totally dependent on exports to the Monarchy. The railway convention was nevertheless ratified in the course of 1880.

“With the commercial treaty the determination of the Austro-Hungarian government to bend Serbia to its will became painfully apparent. Andrassy by this time had stepped down as foreign minister, but his successor, Baron Haymerle, was a colourless Austrian diplomat groomed in the Andrassy stable; and, as his right-hand man in the foreign ministry, Haymerle had the Hungarian, Kallay. Ristic's attempts to wriggle out of the terms they wanted now prompted Haymerle and Kallay to activate Austria-Hungary's secret weapon - Prince Milan. By threatening economic reprisals they had little difficulty in winning over the Austrophile Milan, and Ristic was forced to resign in October 1880.
“The commercial treaty was thus signed on May 6th, 1881. By this instrument, Austria-Hungary was given what amounted to preferential treatment in Serbia: the treaty assured Serbian produce of a readier market in the Monarchy, but it also ensured the domination of the Serbian market by Austro-Hungarian manufactured goods. The overall effect was to stunt Serbia's economic growth for a generation. With the trade treaty went an even subtler form of control, a veterinary convention. Livestock, especially pigs, were Serbia's principal export, and the country possessed no processing plant of its own. Almost all these animals marched to their fate in Austria-Hungary. The veterinary convention contained a 'swine fever clause', which enabled the Monarchy to close the Hungarian frontier to Serbian oxen and swine on the slightest suspicion of infection. It was a powerful lever, to which the Austro-Hungarian government was to resort nine times between 1881 and 1906.

“The final touch was the secret political treaty of June 28th, 1881. This showed the extent to which the Hungarians' paranoia about Russian influence in Serbia had become the stock-in-trade of Habsburg policy since the Ausgleich [the creation of the Dual Monarchy in 1867]. As Haymerle put it to the Serbian foreign minister during the negotiations, 'we could not tolerate such a Serbia on our frontier, and we would, as a lesser evil, occupy it with our armies'. The treaty bound Serbia not to tolerate 'political, religious or other intrigues... against the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy', including Bosnia. It obliged both states to observe benevolent neutrality if either was involved in war with a third party. Most startlingly, Serbia undertook, in Article IV, neither 'to negotiate nor conclude any political treaty with another government', unless Austria-Hungary approved...”

These restrictions grated on the increasing national feeling of the Serbs... Nevertheless, the international recognition of the independence of Serbia and Romania (with increased territory), together with the virtual independence of Bulgaria (even if shorn of some of her territory), was something to rejoice at. The Balkan Orthodox could now look forward to final liberation from the old enemy, Turkey, in the not so distant future. The question was: could they unite into some kind of federation or commonwealth that would bring that joyful event forward, and perhaps also help to reduce the power and influence of their other old enemy, Austria-Hungary?

There were several possibilities. One was “Yugoslavism”, a federation of Slavic peoples stretching from the Croats in the West to the Bulgarians in the East, in which Serbia would serve as the geographical core and magnet, “the Piedmont of the South Slavs”. Of course, this presupposed the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which Russia had opposed in 1848 even while rescuing the Habsburg Slavs from the Hungarian counter-revolution.

Another was “Illyrianism” - that is, Yugoslavism without Bulgaria. Surprisingly, perhaps, in view of later, twentieth-century history, there

were many Catholic Croats and Slovenes – including the famous Catholic Bishop and opponent of papal infallibility, Strossmaier - who were enthusiastic about this option. Bulgaria was not part of the idea because of her frequent wars with Serbia over Macedonia.

A third possibility was Great Serbia, the union of all the South Slavs, including those in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but excluding Bulgaria, under the Serbian king.519

In the long term, however, what mattered most was not the precise form of the relationship between the South Slav states as how truly Orthodox the resultant unitary state or confederation of states would be. Serbia was the only Balkan state ruled by native Orthodox kings – but they had the unfortunate habit of being killed by rival dynastic factions... And other signs were not encouraging.

First of all, a truly Orthodox state required or a strong “symphony” between King and Church. But this was nowhere to be found in the Balkans, imbued as the region was increasingly becoming with western ideas of democracy and constitutionalism. Moreover, both Romania and Bulgaria were ruled by Catholic Germans imposed on them by the great powers, while the Greek King George was Lutheran – and there could be no symphony between them and the Orthodox Church. Thus Protopriest Benjamin Zhukov writes: “In Austria-Hungary the Orthodox Serbs and Romanians did not pray for their emperor Franz-Joseph, who was not Orthodox. In exactly the same way the names of King George, a Lutherian, and King Ferdinand, a Catholic, were not commemorated in Orthodox Greece and Bulgaria. Instead their Orthodox heirs to the throne were commemorated. This attitude to the authorities sometimes led to conflict with them. Thus in 1888 the Bulgarian Synod was dismissed by Ferdinand of Coburg, and the members of the Synod were expelled by gendarmes from the capital because they refused to offer prayer in the churches for the Catholic prince, who had offended the Orthodox Church by many of his actions. After this the government did not allow the Synod to assemble for six years…”520

Another major problem was the disunity among the Orthodox Balkan states, especially over Macedonia, where Serbs, Bulgars and Greeks fought for possession of the minds, hearts and territories of the native inhabitants. Peace could have been achieved between them if they had recognized Russia as mediator in their quarrels. But nationalist pride would not allow any of them to recognize the Russian tsar as having the status of the Pan-Orthodox Emperor.

The indiscipline of the Balkan Orthodox was illustrated in 1885, when a band of rebels seized control of Plovdiv, capital of Eastern Rumelia, thereby violating one of the articles of the Treaty of Berlin. Prince Alexander von Battenburg of

520 Zhukov, Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ na Rodine i za Rubezhom (The Russian Orthodox Church in the Homeland and Abroad), Paris, 2005, pp. 18-19.
Bulgaria, who had been threatened with “annihilation” by a Macedonian secret society if he did not support the coup, promptly marched into Plovdiv (Philippopolis), took credit for the coup, and proclaimed himself the ruler of a united North and South Bulgaria. Now from a narrowly nationalist point of view, this was a triumph – one of the most galling decisions of the Treaty of Berlin had been reversed, and Bulgaria, though formally still not completely free of Ottoman suzerainty, was now de facto independent and united (if we exclude the disputed territories of Northern Dobrudja and Macedonia). However, from the point of view of the preservation of international peace, and still more of Pan-Orthodox unity, it was a disaster. The Bulgarians’ violation of the Treaty of Berlin gave the Turks – still a formidable military power – a good legal excuse to invade Bulgaria, which would have dragged the Russian armies back into the region only eight years after the huge and costly effort of 1877-78, which in turn may have dragged other great powers into a major European war.

Seeing the dangers, Tsar Alexander III, - who is not undeservedly called “the Peacemaker”, - decided not to support his irresponsible nephew, Prince Alexander, and to withdraw the Russian officers from the army of his ungrateful ally. This was undoubtedly the right decision, but it cost him much - both in terms of an estrangement between Russia and Bulgaria, and in terms of his discomfiture at the hands of the British, who cynically decided to support the coup...

But this was not the end of the sorry story. The Serbian King Milan now invaded Bulgaria, boasting that he was going “on a stroll to Sofia”.\footnote{Glenny, The Balkans, 1804-1999, London: Granta Books, 2000, p. 175.} Barbara Jelavich explains why this conflict took place: “Since the unified Bulgarian state would be larger and more populous than Serbia, Milan felt that he was entitled to compensation. He thus launched an attack in November 1885. Despite widely held convictions that the Bulgarian army, deprived of its higher officers by the Russian withdrawal, would be crushed, it in fact defeated the invaders. The Habsburg Empire had to intercede to save Milan. Peace was made on the basis of the maintenance of the former boundaries; Serbia had to accept the Bulgarian unification. The entire episode was an enormous blow to the king’s prestige.”\footnote{Jelavich, History of the Balkans, Cambridge University Press, 1983, vol. 2, p. 31.}

All this was caused by the Balkan States’ refusal to accept the leadership of Russia, “the Third Rome”. This was, regrettably, to be expected of the Romanians, who resented the Russians’ possession of Southern Bessarabia, and were always fearful of a return of the Russian protectorate. And it was to be expected of the Greeks, who accused the Russians, absurdly, of “Pan-Slavism”, and who in any case were dreaming of a resurrection of Byzantium... But it was less expected of the Slavic states, who, proud of their newly acquired independence, decided to have completely independent – that is, egoistic, short-sighted and foolish - foreign policies that completely ignored the existence of the “batyushka-tsar” to the north, who alone, among Orthodox leaders, had the interests of the Orthodox Christian commonwealth as a whole at heart. Their
behaviour confirmed Leontiev’s thesis that there was little to choose between Greek and Slavic nationalism, and Dostoyevsky’s thesis that the Slavic states would continually intrigue against each other and hate each other, and seek recognition from Europe, ignoring Russia, but then, in their hour of need, they would turn for help to her, that “huge magnet, which inexorably drawing them all to herself, will thereby preserve their integrity and unity”.\textsuperscript{523}

This failure of the Balkan Orthodox to work more than intermittently with Russia would to lead to the most disastrous consequences over the following decades...

\textsuperscript{523} Dostoyevsky, \textit{The Diary of a Writer, Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenij} (Complete Works), vol. 26, pp. 77-82.
35. SOLOVIEV ON NATIONALISM AND CATHOLICISM

The reign of Alexander III was an era of peace and stability during which the old authoritarian regime was not seriously threatened. At the same time it was not a period of intellectual stagnation; and two powerful thinkers set about examining the foundations of the Russian autocracy. The philosopher Vladimir Soloviev examined it particularly in relation to what he regarded as its weakest point, its tendency towards unenlightened nationalism, while the law professor and over-procurator of the Holy Synod, Constantine Pobedonostsev, examined it in relation to the fashionable contemporary theories of liberal democracy and Church-State separation.

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

Turning from his metaphysics to his social and political teaching, we find in Soloviev a mixture of East and West, Slavophilism and Westernism. On the one hand, he believed fervently, with the Slavophiles, in the Divine mission of

524 “It was a notable event,” writes Rosamund Bartlett, “not because Tolstoy found the lecture interesting (he dismissed it as ‘childish nonsense’), but because it was the only occasion on which he and Dostoyevsky were in spitting distance of each other. Strakhov was a friend of both the great writers, but he honoured Tolstoy’s request not to introduce him to anyone, and so the two passed like ships in the night, to their subsequent mutual regret. Much later, Tolstoy described in letters the horrible experience of having to sit in a stuffy hall which was packed so full that there were even high-society ladies in evening dress perched on window ledges. As someone who went out of his way to avoid being part of the crowd, and who disdained having anything to do with polite society or fashion, his blood must have boiled at having to wait until the emaciated figure of the twenty-four-year-old philosopher decided to make a grand theatrical entrance in his billowing white silk cravat. Tolstoy certainly did not have the patience to sit and listen to some boy ‘with a huge head consisting of hair and eyes’ spout pretentious pseudo-profundities. After the first string of German quotations and references to cherubim and seraphim, he got up and walked out, leaving Strakhov to carry on listening to the ‘ravings of a lunatic’” (Tolstoy. A Russian Life, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011, p. 267).

525 Archbishop Nicon (Rklitsky), Zhizneopisanie Blazhenneishago Antonia, Mitropolita Kievskago i Galitskago (Biography of Blessed Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich), volume 1, 1971, pp. 103-104.

526 For Soloviev Sophia was the feminine principle of God, His ‘other’. For some of his heretical followers, such as Protopriest Sergius Bulgakov, it was the Mother of God.
Russia. But on the other, he was fiercely critical of the nationalism of the later Slavophiles, he admired Peter the Great and did not admire Byzantium. He felt drawn to the universalism of the Roman Catholics, becoming an early “prophet” of Orthodox-Roman Catholic ecumenism.

The problem with the Slavic world and Orthodoxy, Soloviev came to believe, was its nationalism. Thus in 1885 he wrote with regard to the Bulgarian schism: "Once the principle of nationality is introduced into the Church as the main and overriding principle, once the Church is recognized to be an attribute of the people, it naturally follows that the State power that rules the people must also rule the Church that belongs to the people. The national Church is necessarily subject to the national government, and in such a case a special church authority can exist only for show...”

Soloviev feared that Russia’s political ambitions in the Balkans and the Middle East were crudely imperialist and did not serve her own deepest interests, but rather the petty nationalisms of other nations. Thus in “The Russian Idea” (1888) he wrote: “The true greatness of Russia is a dead letter for our pseudo-patriots, who want to impose on the Russian people a historical mission in their image and in the limits of their own understanding. Our national work, if we are to listen to them, is something that couldn’t be more simple and that depends on one force only – the force of arms. To beat up the expiring Ottoman empire, and then crush the monarchy of the Habsburgs, putting in the place of these states a bunch of small independent national kingdoms that are only waiting for this triumphant hour of their final liberation in order to hurl themselves at each other. Truly, it was worth Russia suffering and struggling for a thousand years, and becoming Christian with St. Vladimir and European with Peter the Great, constantly in the meantime occupying its unique place between East and West, and all this just so as in the final analysis to become the weapon of the ‘great idea’ of the Serbs and the ‘great idea’ of the Bulgarians!

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

527 Soloviev, “Golos Moskvy” (The Voice of Moscow), 14 March, 1885; quoted in Fomin and Fomina, op. cit.

528 Soloviev, in N.G. Fyodorovsky, V poiskakh svoego puti: Rossia mezhdu Evropoj i Aziej (In Search of her own Path: Russia between Europe and Asia), Moscow, 1997, pp. 334-335.
Soloviev believed passionately in freeing the Church from the shackles imposed on her by the State. In an 1885 article he wrote: “Enter into the situation of our churchman, Spiritual initiative on his own moral responsibility is not allowed. Religious and ecclesiastical truth is completely preserved in a state strongbox, under state seal and the guard of trustworthy sentries. The security is complete, but living interest is lacking. Somewhere far off a religious struggle is going on, but it does not touch us. Our pastors do not have opponents who enjoy the same rights they do. The enemies of Orthodoxy exist outside the sphere of our activity, and if they ever turn up inside it, then only with bound hands and a gag in their mouth.”

If these shackles were removed, Russian Orthodoxy could not only be able to preach to the heterodox in a more honest and free environment: she could also fulfil her own needs. For “Russia left to herself,” he wrote, “lonely Russia, is powerless. It is not good for man to be alone: this word of God is applicable also to collective man, to a whole people. Only in union with that which she lacks can Russia utilize that which she possesses, that is, in full measure both for herself and for the whole world.”

In union with whom was Russia to quench her loneliness? Soloviev revealed his answer in 1889, in *La Russie et l'Eglise universelle*, in which he argued in favour of a union between the Russian empire and the Roman papacy. (The Roman papacy was to be preferred above the Orthodox Church as the partner to the Russian empire because, in Soloviev’s opinion, the Orthodox Church had become a group of national Churches, rather than the Universal Church, and had therefore lost the right to represent Christ. Nevertheless, the Orthodox Church had a wealth of mystical contemplation, which had to be preserved. “In Eastern Christendom for the last thousand years religion has been identified with personal piety, and prayer has been regarded as the one and only religious activity. The Western church, without disparaging individual piety as the true germ of all religion, seeks the development of this germ and its blossoming into a social activity organized for the glory of God and the universal good of mankind. The Eastern prays, the Western prays and labours.”

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


exclusively to any one nation or group of nations, but must have an international centre from which to spread throughout the whole universe...

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

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

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

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

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

“Soloviev struggled in his works against every distortion of the Christian ideal of general harmony; he also struggled against all the attempts made by man to satisfy his selfishness under the false pretence of serving a noble cause. Such are for instance the aims of chauvinistic nationalism. Many persons believe, Soloviev tells us, that in order to serve the imaginary interests of their people, ‘everything is permitted, the aim justifies the means, black turns white, lies are preferable to truth and violence is glorified and considered as valor… This is first of all an insult to that very nationality which we desire to serve.’ In reality, ‘peoples flourished and were exalted only when they did not serve their own interests as a goal in itself, but pursued higher, *general* ideal goods.’ Trusting the highly sensitive conscience of the Russian people, Soloviev wrote in his article, ‘What is Demanded of a Russian Party?’ ‘If instead of doping themselves with Indian opium, our Chinese neighbors suddenly took a liking to the poisonous mushrooms which abound in the Siberian woods, we would be sure to find Russian jingos, who in their ardent interest in Russian trade, would want Russia to induce the Chinese government to permit the free entry of poisonous mushrooms into the Celestial empire… Nevertheless, every plain Russian will say that no matter how vital an interest may be, Russia’s honor is also worth something; and, according to Russian standards, this honor definitely forbids a shady deal to become an issue of national politics.’

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

As we have seen, Dostoyevsky disagreed with his friend on this point, considering the papacy to be, not so much a Church as a State. Nor did he agree with the doctrine of papal infallibility, which Soloviev also supported. As Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) wrote in 1890, in his review of Soloviev’s book: “A sinful man cannot be accepted as the supreme head of the Universal Church without this bride of Christ being completely dethroned. Accepting the compatibility of the infallibility of religious edicts with a life of sin, with a wicked will, would amount to blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of wisdom by admitting His compatibility with a sinful mind. Khomiakov very justly says that besides the holy inspiration of the apostles and prophets, Scripture tells us of only one inspiration – inspiration of the obsessed. But if this sort of inspiration was going on in Rome, the Church would not be the Church of Christ, but the Church of His enemy. And this is exactly how Dostoyevsky defines it in his ‘Grand Inquisitor’ who says to Christ: ‘We are not with Thee, but with him’…”

Dostoyevsky in his ‘Grand Inquisitor’ characterised the Papacy as a doctrine which is attractive exactly because of its worldly power, but devoid of the spirit of Christian communion with God and of contempt for the evil of the world…”

As a warning against the dangers of a Russian nationalism lacking the universalist dimension of the early Slavophiles and Dostoyevsky, Soloviev’s critique had value. But his attempt to tear Russia away from Constantinople and towards Rome was misguided. (He himself became a Catholic, but returned to Orthodoxy on his deathbed). Moreover, it had an unhealthy influence on other writers, such as D.S. Merezhkovsky, not to mention the many educated Russians who read French and Catholic writers more readily than Russian ones.

Thus Merezhkovsky, according to Sergius Firsov, “found it completely normal to compare Roman Catholicism headed by the Pope and the Russian kingdom headed by the Autocrat. Calling these theocracies (that is, attempts to realise the City of God in the city of man) false, Merezhkovsky pointed out that they came by different paths to the same result: the western – to turning the Church into a State, and the eastern – to engulfing the Church in the State. ‘Autocracy and Orthodoxy are two halves of one religious whole,’ wrote Merezhkovsky, ‘just as the papacy and Catholicism are. The Tsar is not just the Tsar, the head of the State, but also the head of the Church, the first priest, the anointed of God, that is, in the final, if historically not yet realised, yet mystically necessary extent of his power – ‘the Vicar of Christ’, the same Pope, Caesar and Pope in one.”

To the educated Russians being seduced by Catholicism, St. Ambrose of Optina wrote the following letter: “In vain do some of the Orthodox marvel at the current propaganda of the Roman Church, at the feigned selflessness and activity of her missionaries and at the zeal of the Latin sisters of mercy, and incorrectly ascribe to the Latin Church such importance, as if by her apostasy from the Orthodox Church, the latter remained longer such, and has the necessity to seek unification with the former. On rigorous examination, this opinion proves to be false; and the energetic Latin activity not only does not evoke surprise, but, on the contrary, arouses deep sorrow in the hearts of right-thinking people, who understand the truth.

“The Eastern Orthodox Church, from apostolic times until now, observes unchanged and unblemished by innovations both the Gospel and Apostolic teachings, as well as the Tradition of the Holy Fathers and resolutions of the Ecumenical Councils, at which God-bearing men, having gathered from throughout the entire world, in a conciliar manner composed the divine Symbol of the Orthodox Faith [the Creed], and having proclaimed it aloud to the whole universe, in all respects perfect and complete, forbade on pain of terrible

532 Khrapovitsky, “The Infallibility of the Pope according to Vladimir Soloviev”, Orthodox Life, vol. 37, N 4, July-August, 1987, pp. 37, 43.

533 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. 39-40.
punishments any addition to it, any abridging, alteration, or rearrangement of even one iota of it. The Roman Church departed long ago into heresy and innovation. As far back as Basil the Great, certain bishops of Rome were condemned by him in his letter to Eusebius of Samosata, ‘They do not know and do not wish to know the truth; they argue with those who proclaim the truth to them, and assert their heresy.’

“The Apostle Paul commands us to separate ourselves from those damaged by heresy and not to seek union with them, saying, A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself (Titus 3:10-11). The Catholic [universal] Orthodox Church, not two times, but multiple times tried to bring to reason the local Roman Church; but, despite all the just attempts at persuading the former, the latter remained persistent in its erroneous manner of thinking and acting.

“Already back in the seventh century, the false philosophizing that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son was conceived in the Western Church. At first, certain popes rose up against this new reasoning, calling it heretical. Pope Damasus proclaims in a Council resolution: ‘He who thinks rightly about the Father and the Son but improperly about the Holy Spirit is a heretic’ (Encyclical § 5). Other popes, such as Leo III and John VIII, also affirmed the same thing. But most of their successors, having been carried away by rights of domination and finding many worldly benefits in this for themselves, dared to modify the Orthodox dogma about the procession of the Holy Spirit, contrary to the decisions of the seven Ecumenical Councils, and also contrary to the clear words of the Lord Himself in the Gospel: Which proceedeth from the Father (John 15:26).

“But just as one mistake—which is not considered a mistake—always brings another one in its train, and one evil begets another, so the same happened with the Roman Church. This incorrect philosophizing that the Holy Spirit proceeds also from the Son, having just barely appeared in the West, already then gave birth to other similar offspring, and instituted little by little other novelties, for the most part contradictory to the commandments of our Saviour clearly portrayed in the Gospel, such as: sprinkling instead of immersion in the mystery of Baptism, exclusion of laypersons from the Divine Chalice and the use of unleavened bread instead of leavened bread in the Eucharist, and excluding from the Divine Liturgy the invocation of the All-Holy and Life-Giving and All-Effectuating Spirit. It also introduced novelties that violated the ancient Apostolic rites of the Catholic Church, such as: the exclusion of baptized infants from Chrismation and reception of the Most-Pure Mysteries, the exclusion of married men from the priesthood, the declaration of the Pope as infallible and as the locum tenens of Christ, and so on. In this way, it overturned the entire ancient Apostolic office that accomplishes almost all the Mysteries and all the ecclesiastical institutions—the office, which before had been preserved by the ancient holy and Orthodox Church of Rome, being at that time the most honored member of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church (Encyclical § 5, item 12).

“Nevertheless, the main heresy of the Roman Church is not in subject matter, but in action; there is the fabricated dogma of supremacy, or rather, prideful striving for dominance of the bishops of Rome over the four other Eastern
Patriarchs. For the sake of this dominance, supporters of the Roman Church placed their pope above the canons and foundations of the Ecumenical Councils, believing in his infallibility. But history truthfully testifies as to just what this papal infallibility is. About Pope John XXIII, it was stated in the decision of the Council of Constance, which deposed this pope: ‘It has been proved that Pope John is an inveterate and incorrigible sinner, and he was and is an unrighteous man, justly indicted for homicide, poisoning, and other serious crimes; a man who often and persistently before various dignitaries claimed and argued that the human soul dies and burns out together with the human body, like souls of animals and cattle, and that the dead will by no means resurrect in the last day.’ The lawless acts of Pope Alexander VI and his sons were so monstrous that, in the opinion of his contemporaries, this pope was trying to establish on Earth the kingdom of Satan, and not the Kingdom of God. Pope Julius II revelled in the blood of Christians, constantly arming—for his own purposes—one Christian nation against another (Spiritual Conversation, No. 41, 1858). There are many other examples, testifying to the great falls and fallibility of popes, but there is no time to talk about them now. With such historical evidence of its impairment through heresy and of the falls of its popes, is it warranted for the papists to glory in the false dignity of the Roman Church? Is it just that they should abase the Orthodox Eastern Church, whose infallibility is based not on any one representative, but on the Gospel and Apostolic teachings and on the canons and decisions of the seven Ecumenical and nine Local Councils? At these Councils were God-inspired and holy men, gathered from the entire Christian world, and they established everything relating to the requirements and spiritual needs of the Church, according to the Holy Scriptures. So, do the papists behave soundly, who, for the sake of worldly goals, place the person of their pope above the canons of the Ecumenical Councils, considering their pope as more than infallible?

“For all the stated reasons, the Catholic Eastern Church severed its communion with the local Church of Rome, which had fallen away from the truth and from the canons of the catholic Orthodox Church. Just as the Roman bishops had begun with pride, they are also ending with pride. They are intensifying their argument that allegedly the Orthodox Catholic Church fell away from their local Church. But that is wrong and even ridiculous. Truth testifies that the Roman Church fell away from the Orthodox Church. Although for the sake of imaginary rightness papists promote the view that during the time of union with the Catholic Orthodox Church, their patriarch was first and senior among the five patriarchs, this was true only for the sake of Imperial Rome, and not because of some spiritual merit or authority over the other patriarchs. It is wrong that they called their Church "Catholic", i.e. universal. A part can never be named the whole; the Roman Church before its fall from Orthodoxy, comprised only a fifth part of the one Catholic Church. Especially since it rejected the decisions of the Ecumenical Councils the Roman Church should not be called catholic, as it follows its own incorrect theorizing.

“To some, the sheer numbers and widespread distribution of adherents to the Latin Church is eye-catching, and therefore those who unreliably understand truth deliberate: should it not be for this reason that the Latin Church be called Ecumenical or Catholic? But this view is extremely erroneous, because nowhere in Holy Scriptures are special spiritual rights ascribed to great numbers and large
quantity. The Lord clearly showed that the sign of the true Catholic Church does not consist in great numbers and quantity when he spoke in the Gospels, *Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom* (Luke 12:32). There is another example in Holy Scripture which does not favour quantity. Upon the death of Solomon, the kingdom of Israel was divided in the presence of his son, and Holy Scripture presents ten tribes as having fallen away; whereas two, having remained faithful to their duty, had not fallen away. Therefore, the Latin Church in vain tries to prove its correctness by its multitude, quantity, and widespread distribution.

“At the Ecumenical Councils, a completely different indication of the Ecumenical Church was designated by the Holy Fathers, i.e. determined in council: to believe in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, and not simply in a universal, or everywhere-present church. Although the Roman Church has followers everywhere in the world, since it did not maintain inviolate the catholic and apostolic decrees, but rather deviated towards innovation and incorrect philosophies, it does not at all belong to the One, Holy and Apostolic Church.

“Those well-disposed towards the Latins likewise extremely erroneously reason that, firstly, upon the falling away of the West from Orthodoxy, something as if became lacking in the Catholic Church. This loss was replaced long ago by all-wise Providence--it was the foundation in the North of the Orthodox Church of Russia. Secondly, they think that allegedly for the sake of the former seniority and size of the Roman Church, the Orthodox Church has need of union with it. However, we are speaking not of a human judgment, but a judgment of God. Apostle Paul clearly says, *What communion hath light with darkness?* (II Corinthians 6:14) – i.e., the light of Christ’s truth can never be combined with the darkness of heresy. The Latins don’t want to leave their heresy, and they persist, as the words of Basil the Great testifies about them what has been proven over many centuries, "They do not know the truth and do not wish to know; they argue with those who proclaim the truth to them and assert their heresy,” as stated above.

“Instead of entertaining the above-mentioned thoughts, those supportive of the Latins, would be better off thinking about what is said in the psalms, *I have hated the congregation of evil-doers* (Psalm 25:5), and to pity those who, for the sake of domination and avarice and other worldly aims and benefits, scandalized almost the entire world through the Inquisition and cunning Jesuit intrigues, and even now outrage and abuse the Orthodox in Turkey through their missionaries. Latin missionaries don’t care about converting to the Christian faith the native Turks, but they strive to pervert from the true path the Orthodox Greeks and Bulgarians, using for this purpose all sorts of unpleasant means and schemes. Is this not craftiness, and is this craftiness not malicious? Would it be prudent to seek unity with such people? For the same reason, should one be surprised at the feigned diligence and selflessness of such figures, i.e. the Latin missionaries and sisters of mercy? They are downright pitiable ascetics. They strive to convert and lead people, not to Christ, but to their pope.
“What should we say in response to these questions: can the Latin Church and other religions be called the New Israel and ark of salvation? And how can one understand the Eucharist of this Church of Rome? Only the Church of the right-believing, undamaged by heretical philosophizing, can be called the New Israel. Holy Apostle John the Theologian says, They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they all were not of us (I John 2:19). And Holy Apostle Paul says, One Lord, one faith (Ephesians 4:5), i.e. one is the true faith, and not every belief is good—as those having separated themselves from the one true Church recklessly think, about whom Holy Apostle Jude writes, How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit (Jude 1:18-19). Therefore, how can these, who are alien to the spirit of truth, be called the New Israel? Or, how can they be called a haven of salvation for anyone, when both one and the other cannot be effectuated without the grace of the Holy Spirit?

“In the Orthodox Church, it is believed that the bread and wine in the mystery of the Eucharist are transubstantiated by the invocation and descent of the Holy Spirit. But the Latins, as mentioned above, considered this invocation unnecessary and excluded it from their Liturgy. Thus, he who understands - let him understand about the Eucharist of the Latins.

“And another question: if, as it is said, except for the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, which is called the Orthodox Church, salvation in other religions is doubtful, then why is this truth not preached openly in Russia? To this question the answer is very simple and clear. In Russia religious tolerance is allowed, and the heterodox occupy important posts along with Orthodox: heads of educational institutions for the most part are heterodox; leaders of provinces and districts of cities are often heterodox; regimental and battalion commanders are not infrequently heterodox. Wherever a clergyman starts openly proclaiming that outside of the Orthodox Church there is no salvation, heterodox of religious rank take offense. From such a situation, Russian Orthodox clergy have acquired the habit and engrained characteristic of talking about this subject evasively. For this reason, and from continual interaction with heterodox, but more from reading their works, perhaps some began to be lax in their thoughts about the hope of salvation and other religions.

“Despite the Orthodox Church’s spirit of meekness and the love of peace and patience of her pastors and followers, in the West there has been published during the preceding centuries by followers of different Christian creeds, and predominantly in our times, such a multitude of books against the teaching of the Eastern Church that not only would it be difficult to appraise their merit, it would be hard to enumerate them. And although such books in general are filled with slanders, fables, blame, obvious inventions and lies, and especially poisonous mental cobwebs, with the obvious goal of forming in Europe a spirit hostile to the Eastern Church, and especially to our homeland, and, having shaken the faith of our Orthodox Church, to seduce her followers from the path of truth. But since they are published under tempting names, in agreeable forms, with such typographical neatness that they unconsciously lure the curiosity of
readers, not a few of whom are found in our homeland, where these works penetrate by dark paths, and who, having a superficial understanding of the subjects of Christian doctrine, cannot help but be carried away by thoughts contrary to the truth. The writers of the Latin Church have now especially armed themselves against the Orthodox, proclaiming the supremacy of their pope and local Roman Church over all governments and local Churches and nations of the world. Predominantly at the current time those busy with this are the Jesuits in France, who, using the omnipresence of the French language, are intensifying some sort of feverish activity by means of works in that language to implant their manner of thought everywhere against the doctrine and hierarchical structure of the Eastern Church—not ashamed for this purpose to create the most heinous fictions, obvious lies and shameless distortion of historical truths. Many of the educated Orthodox, reading these works in the French language, and not reading their own in Russian about the Orthodox faith, can easily believe the fine-spun lies instead of the truth, which they do not know well…”

534 St. Ambrose, “A reply to one well disposed towards the Latin church. Regarding the unjust glorying of the papists in the imaginary dignity of their church”.

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Merezhkovsky’s comparison of the Pope and the Tsar, though greatly exaggerated, had a certain basis in fact - in the fact, namely, that the relationship between Church and State in Russia since Peter the Great had not been canonical, but leaned in a caesaropapist, absolutist direction, with the Tsar having too great a control over the decisions of the Church hierarchy. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, this question became increasingly topical, with general agreement on the nature of the problem, but much less on its solution.

The debate centred especially on the personality and policies of Constantine Petrovich Pobedonostsev, who from April, 1880 to October, 1905 was over-procurator of the Russian Holy Synod and whose policy of Orthodox conservative nationalism was dominant in Russia until the publication of the October manifesto in 1905.

Pobedonostsev was one of the most far-sighted prophets of the revolution. Thus as early as 1873, Dostoyevsky’s journal Grazhdanin published a series of articles of his entitled "Russian Leaflets from Abroad", in which he wrote: "A cloud can be seen on the horizon that will make things terrible, because we did not see it before. This is the fanaticism of unbelief and denial. It is not simple denial of God, but denial joined to mad hatred for God and for everyone who believes in God. May God grant that nobody lives to the time when fanaticism of this type gains power and receives the power to bind and to loose the human conscience."

And again: "There is no doubt that if the atheists of our time ever come to the triumph of the Commune and the complete removal of Christian services, they will create for themselves some kind of pagan cult, will raise some kind of statue to themselves or their ideal and will begin to honour it, while forcing others to do the same."535

Since Pobedonostsev personified this policy of the supremacy of the Orthodox Autocracy perhaps even more than the tsars whom he served, and since his influence extended far beyond his role as over-procurator, he was reviled more than any other figure by the liberal press. He was portrayed as standing for the complete, tyrannical domination by the State of every aspect of Russian life; and among the epithets the press gave him were “prince of darkness, hatred and unbelief”, “state vampire”, “the great inquisitor” and “the greatest deicide in the whole of Russian history”.536


536 A.I. Peshkov, “Kto razoriaet – mal vo Tsarstvii Khristovym” (He who destroys is least in the Kingdom of Christ), in K.P. Pobedonostev, Sochinenia (Works), St. Petersburg, p. 3.
These were vile slanders; for Pobedonostev was a pious man who believed in the Church, and educated the future Tsar Nicholas on the necessity of his being a servant of the Church. And although he never tried to correct the uncanonical state of Church-State relations, and even expressed the view that Peter the Great’s removal of the patriarchate was “completely lawful”, his work as over-procurator was in fact very beneficial. Thus he did a great deal for the development of parish schools, an essential counter-measure to the spread of liberal and atheist education in the secular schools, for the spread of the Word of God in various languages throughout the empire, for the improvement in the lot of the parish priest and for an enormous (fourfold) increase in the number of monks over the previous reign.\footnote{Firsov, op. cit., pp. 42-43.}

At the same time, it cannot be denied that the power that the tsars wielded over the Church through the over-procurators was anti-canonical. In the 16\textsuperscript{th} and 17\textsuperscript{th} centuries there had been something like real “symphony” between Church and State. However, the eighteenth century tsars from Peter the Great onwards succeeded, through the lay office of over-procurator, in making the Church dependent on the State to a large degree. Finally, through his decrees of November 13, 1817 and May 15, 1824 Alexander I made the Holy Synod into a department of State. Fortunately, the over-procurators of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century were in general more Orthodox than those of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century. But this did not change the essentially uncanonical nature of the situation…\footnote{Peshkov provides a certain, not very convincing correction to this point of view: “It is necessary to take into account that even in the Synod he did not have that direct administrative power which any minister in Russia’s Tsarist government possessed in the department subject to him, since the Most Holy Synod was a collegial organ, whose decision-making required the unanimity of its members. As Pobedonostsev himself emphasized, ‘juridically I have no power to issue orders in the Church and the department. You have to refer to the Synod.’ In particular, when Metropolitan Isidore of St. Petersburg expressed himself against the publication in Russia of the New Testament in the translation of V.A. Zhukovsky, K.P. Pobedonostev had to publish it abroad, in Berlin...” (Peshkov, op. cit., p. 7)}

Some of the complaints about the State’s interference in Church affairs were exaggerated - for example, the Petrine decree that priests should report the contents of confession if they were seditious. As Pobedonostsev himself pointed out, this had long been a dead letter. Others, however, were serious and had major consequences – as, for example, the tendency of over-procurators to move bishops from one diocese to another.

Firsov writes: “While K.P. Pobednostsev was over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod, the transfer of hierarchs from see to see was finally turned into a kind of ‘educational’ measure. The paradox consisted in the fact that ‘while exalting the position of bishops from an external point of view, he [Pobedonostsev] at the same time had to increase his control over them’. The over-procurator was quite unable to square this circle: he wanted an intensification of Episcopal activity and at the same time did not want to present...
the hierarchs with the freedom of action that was necessary for this. State control over the Church had to be kept up. It was precisely for this reason that the over-procurator so frequently moved Vladykos from see to see. According to the calculations of a contemporary investigator, ‘out of 49 diocesan bishops moved in 1881-1894, eight were moved twice and eight – three times. On average in one year three diocesan bishops were moved and three vicars; four vicars received appointments to independent sees’. In 1892-1893 alone 15 diocesan bishops and 7 vicar bishops were moved, while 14 vicar-bishops were raised to the rank of diocesan. At times the new place of their service and the composition of their flock differed strikingly from the former ones. In 1882, for example, a hierarch was transferred to Kishinev from Kazan, then in his place came the bishop of Ryazan, and he was followed by the bishop of Simbirsk.

“One can understand that this ‘shuffling’ could not fail to affect the attitude of hierarchs to their archpastoral duties: they were more interested in smoothing relations with the secular authorities and in getting a ‘good’ diocese. One must recognise that serious blame for this must attach to the long-time over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod, K.P. Pobedonostev…”539

Nevertheless, the theoretical works of Pobednostsev demonstrate a profound understanding of the importance of the Church in Russian life and indicate that, whether his views on Church-State relations were correct or not, he knew, as few others, what was truly in the Church’s interests, considering that the State could not without profound damage to itself and the nation as a whole touch upon the religious consciousness of the people, upon which its own power depended; for the people will support only that government which tries to incarnate its own “idea”.

Thus in an article attacking the doctrine of the complete separation of Church and State that was becoming popular in Europe and Russia he wrote: “However great the power of the State, it is confirmed by nothing other than the unity of the spiritual self-consciousness between the people and the government, on the faith of the people: the power is undermined from the moment this consciousness, founded on faith, begins to divide. The people in unity with the State can bear many hardships, they can concede and hand over much to State power. Only one thing does the State power have no right to demand, only one thing will they not hand over to it – that in which every believing soul individually and all together lay down as the foundation of their spiritual being, binding themselves with eternity. There are depths which State power cannot and must not touch, so as not to disturb the root sources of faith in the souls of each and every person…”540

But in recent years a division has opened up between the faith of the people and the ideology of the State. “Political science has constructed a strictly worked out teaching on the decisive separation of Church and State, a teaching in

539 Firsov, op. cit., p. 77.

540 Pobedonostev, Moskovskij Sbornik: Tserkov’ i Gosudarstvo (Moscow Anthology: Church and State), op. cit., p. 264.
consequence of which, according to the law that does not allow a division into two of the central forces, the Church unfailingly turns out to be in fact an institution subject to the State. Together with this, the State as an institution is, according to its political ideology, separated from every faith and indifferent to faith. Naturally, from this point of view, the Church is represented as being nothing other than an institution satisfying one of the needs of the population that is recognized by the State - the religious need, and the State in its most recent incarnation turns to it with its right of authorization, of supervision and control, with no concern for the faith. For the State as for the supreme political institution this theory is attractive, because it promises it complete autonomy, a decisive removal of every opposition, even spiritual opposition, and the simplification of the operations of its ecclesiastical politics."

“If the issue consists in a more exact delineation of civil society from religious society, of the ecclesiastical and spiritual from the secular, of a direct and sincere separation, without cunning or violence – in this case everybody will be for such a separation. If, coming to practical matters, they want the State to renounce the right to place pastors of the Church and from the obligation to pay for them, this will be an ideal situation... When the question matures, the State, if it wishes to make such a decision, will be obliged to return to the person to whom it belongs the right to choose pastors and bishops; in such a case it will no longer be possible to give to the Pope what belongs to the clergy and people by historical and apostolic right...

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

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

541 Pobedonostsev, op. cit., p. 266.
“No, the moral principle is one. It cannot be divided in such a way that one is a private moral principle, and the other public, one secular and the other spiritual. The one moral principle embraces all relationships – private, in the home and political; and the Church, preserving the consciousness of her dignity, will never renounce her lawful influence in questions relations both to the family and to civil society. And so in demanding that the Church have nothing to do with civil society, they only give her greater strength.”\(^{542}\)

“The most ancient and best known system of Church-State relations is the system of the established or State Church. The State recognizes one confession out of all as being the true confession of faith and supports and protects one Church exclusively, to the prejudice of all other churches and confessions. This prejudice signifies in general that all remaining churches are not recognized as true or completely true; but it is expressed in practice in various forms and a multitude of all manner of variations, from non-recognition and alienation to, sometimes, persecution. In any case, under the influence of this system foreign confessions are subject to a certain more or less significant diminution in honour, in law and in privilege by comparison with the native, State confession. The State cannot be the representative only of the material interests of society; in such a case it would deprive itself of spiritual power and would renounce its spiritual unity with the people. The State is the stronger and more significant the clearer its spiritual representation is manifested. Only on this condition is the feeling of legality, respect for the law and trust in State power supported and strengthened in the midst of the people and in civil life. Neither the principle of the integrity or the good of the benefit of the State, nor even the principle of morality are sufficient in themselves to establish a firm bond between the people and State power; and the moral principle is unstable, shaky, deprived of its fundamental root when it renounces religious sanction. A State which in the name of an unbiased relationship to all beliefs will undoubtedly be deprived of this central, centrifugal force and will itself renounce every belief – whatever it may be. The trust of the people for their rulers is based on faith, that is, not only on the identity of the faith of the people and the government, but also on the simple conviction that the government has faith and acts according to faith. Therefore even pagans and Mohammedans have more trust and respect for a government which stands on the firm principles of belief, whatever it may be, than for a government which does not recognize its own faith and has an identical relationship to all beliefs.

“That is the undeniable advantage of this system. But in the course of the centuries the circumstances under which this system received its beginning changed, and there arose new circumstances under which its functioning became more difficult than before. In the age when the first foundations of European civilization and politics were laid, the Christian State was a powerfully integral and unbroken bond with the one Christian Church. Then in the midst of the Christian Church itself the original unity was shattered into many kinds of sects and different faiths, each of which began to assume to itself the significance of

\(^{542}\) Pobedonostsev, op. cit., pp. 268-269.
the one true teaching and the one true Church. Thus the State had to deal with several different teachings between which the masses of the people were distributed. With the violation of the unity and integrity in faith a period may ensue when the dominant Church, which is supported by the State, turns out to be the Church of an insignificant minority, and herself enjoys only weak sympathy, or no sympathy at all, from the masses of the people. Then important difficulties may arise in the definition of the relations between the State and its Church and the churches to which the majority of the people belong.

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

“From 1848 this relationship of the State to the Church changes essentially: the flooding waves of liberalism break through the old dam and threaten to overthrow the ancient foundations of Christian statehood. The freedom of the State from the Church is proclaimed – it has nothing to do with the Church. The separation of the State by the Church is also proclaimed: every person is free to believe as he wants or not believe in anything. The symbol of this doctrine is the fundamental principles (Grundrechte) proclaimed by the Frankfurt parliament in 1848/1849. Although they soon cease to be considered valid legislation, they served and serve to this day as the ideal for the introduction of liberal principles into the most recent legislation of Western Europe. Legislation in line with these principles is everywhere now. Political and civil law is dissociated from faith and membership of this or that church or sect. The State asks nobody about his faith. The registration of marriage and acts of civil status are dissociated from the Church. Complete freedom of mixed marriages is proclaimed, and the Church principle of the indissolubility of marriage is violated by facilitating divorce, which is dissociated from the ecclesiastical courts...

“Does it not follow from this that the unbelieving State is nothing other than a utopia that cannot be realized, for lack of faith is a direct denial of the State. Religion, and notably Christianity, is the spiritual basis of every law in State and civil life and of every true culture. That is why we see that the political parties that are the most hostile to the social order, the parties that radically deny the State, proclaim before everyone that religion is only a private, personal matter, of purely private and personal interest.

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

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

“And so a free State can lay down that it has nothing to do with a free Church; only the free Church, if it is truly founded on faith, will not accept this decree and will not adopt an indifferent attitude to the free State. The Church cannot refuse to exert its influence on civil and social life; and the more active it is, the more it feels within itself an inner, active force, and the less is it able to adopt an indifferent attitude towards the State. The Church cannot adopt such an attitude without renouncing its own Divine calling, if it retains faith in it and the consciousness of duty bound up with it. On the Church there lies the duty to teach and instruct; to the Church there belongs the performance of the sacraments and the rites, some of which are bound up with the most important acts and civil life. In this activity the Church of necessity enters ceaselessly into touch with social and civil life (not to speak of other cases, it is sufficient to point to questions of marriage and education). And so to the degree that the State, in separating itself from the Church, retains for itself the administration exclusively of the civil part of all these matters and removes from itself the administration of the spiritual-moral part, the Church will of necessity enter into the function abandoned by the State, and in separation from it will little by little come to control completely and exclusively that spiritual-moral influence which constitutes a necessary, real force for the State. The State will retain only a material and, perhaps, a rational force, but both the one and the other will turn out to be insufficient when the power of faith does not unite with them. And so, little by little, instead of the imagined equalization of the functions of the State and the Church in political union, there will turn out to be inequality and opposition. A condition that is in any case abnormal, and which must lead either to the real dominance of the Church over the apparently predominant State or to revolution.
“These are the real dangers hidden in the system of complete Church-State separation glorified by liberal thinkers. The system of the dominant or established Church has many defects, being linked with many inconveniences and difficulties, and does not exclude the possibility of conflicts and struggle. But in vain do they suppose that it has already outlived its time, and that Cavour’s formula alone gives the key to the resolution of all the difficulties of this most difficult of questions. Cavour’s formula is the fruit of political doctrinairism, which looks on questions of faith as merely political questions about the equalization of rights. There is no depth of spiritual knowledge in it, as there was not in that other famous political formula: freedom, equality and brotherhood, which up to now have weighed as a fateful burden on credulous minds. In the one case as in the other, passionate advocates of freedom are mistaken in supposing that there is freedom in equality. Or is our bitter experience not sufficient to confirm the fact that freedom does not depend on equality, and that equality is by no means freedom? It would be the same error to suppose that the very freedom of belief consists in the leveling of the churches and faiths and depends on their leveling. The whole of recent history shows that here, too, freedom and equality are not the same thing.”

Although a belief in liberal democracy was almost universal by now in the West, in some countries it was not obviously a success. Thus in France and Italy governments succeeded each other with bewildering rapidity. German autocracy looked both more stable and more prosperous...

In his article "The New Democracy", Pobedonostsev expounded the view that modern democracy differed essentially from ancient democracy. In the ancient city-states, he said, the suffrage was far from universal, and the de facto rulers were those who were best suited to govern the State. In modern democracy, by contrast, the new aristocracy of the nouveaux riches buys power by bribing and manipulating the masses. "In broadening its foundation, the newest democracy places universal suffrage as the goal closest to its heart. This is a fatal error, one of the most striking in the history of mankind. The political power which democracy tries to attain so passionately is splintered in this form into a multitude of particles, and each citizen acquires an infinitely small part of this right."  

"History witnesses that the most essential and fruitful and stable measures and transformations for the people have proceeded from the central will of statesmen or from a minority enlightened by a great idea and deep knowledge. By contrast, with the broadening of the suffrage a lowering of State thought and a vulgarisation of opinion in the mass of the electors has taken place. This broadening in large States has either been introduced with the secret aim of concentrating power, or has itself led to dictatorship. In France universal suffrage was removed at the end of the last century with the cessation of the terror; but afterwards it was restored twice in order confirm the absolute rule in it of the two Napoleons. In Germany the introduction of universal suffrage was

543 Pobedonostsev, op. cit., pp. 271-275, 276-277.

undoubtedly aimed at confirming the central power of the famous ruler [Bismarck] who acquired great popularity by the huge successes of his politics. What will happen after him, God only knows. "The game of collecting votes under the banner of democracy has become a common phenomenon in our time in almost all the European States, and it would seem that its lie has been displayed before all. However, nobody dares to rise up openly against this lie. The unfortunate people bears the burden, while the newspapers - the heralds of what is supposed to be public opinion - drown the cries of the people with their own shouts: 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians!' But for the unprejudiced mind it is clear that the whole of this game is nothing other than a struggle and fight of parties and a juggling with numbers and names. The votes - in themselves negligible quantities - receive a price in the hands of skilful agents. Their value is realized by various means and first of all by bribery in the various forms - from small cash and material payments to the handing out of profitable posts in excise and financial administration and in the civil service. Little by little a whole contingent of voters is formed, voters that are accustomed to sell their votes or their agents. It reaches the point, for example in France, where serious citizens, right-thinking and hard-working, turn away in huge numbers from the elections, feeling the complete impossibility of struggling with the gang of political agents. Besides bribery, violence and threats are put into play, and electoral terror is organized, by means of which the gang puts forward its candidate by force: we know the stormy pictures of electoral meetings at which weapons are taken up and killed and wounded remain on the field of battle."\textsuperscript{545}

In the new democracy, "the great lie of our age", reasoned argumentation is not needed to convince a mainly uneducated electorate. More important is the slick slogan. "The art of making generalizations serves for them [political activists pushing for power] as a most handy weapon. Every generalization comes about through a process of abstraction: out of a multitude of facts, some that do not serve the purpose are put aside completely, while others that do are grouped together and out of them a general formula is extracted. It is evident that the whole worthiness, that is, truthfulness and reliability, of this formula depends on the degree to which the facts from which it is drawn are of decisive importance, and the degree to which the facts which have been set aside as unsuitable are unimportant. The speed and facility with which general conclusions are drawn in our time are explained by the extremely cavalier way in which suitable facts are selected and generalized in this process. Hence the huge success of political orators and the striking influence of the general phrases on the masses into which they are cast. The crowd is quickly diverted by platitudes dressed up in loud phrases; it does not think to check them, for it is not able to do that: in this way unanimity in opinions is formed, a seeming, spectral unanimity. Nevertheless, it produces a striking result. This is called the voice of the people, with the addition - the voice of God. A sad and pitiful error! The facility with which [the people] is diverted by platitudes leads everywhere to the extreme demoralization of social thought, and to the weakening of the political nous of

\textsuperscript{545} Pobedonostev, op. cit., pp. 278-279.
the whole nation. Present-day France presents a vivid example of this weakening. But even England is infected with the same illness.\textsuperscript{546}

"The basic principle of democracy is the \textit{equality} of the citizens. But this word alone explains nothing. It is good if this equality is an equality of the right to serve one's country: each man is obliged to carry out this service according to his abilities and means, and participates to the degree that he is needed in administrative activity. That is how this concept was understood in the ancient democracies, especially in small States in which people could know each other, and public matters were discussed in the square. For the sake of self-preservation amidst the endless wars with neighbours, it was necessary to summon the best people to the government, and the best people were the most capable. Rome, which from the very beginning became a conquering republic, had to follow this same path, and its Senate became a gathering of the best people, who held in their hands the destinies of the State.

"But in modern democracies equality means the right of each and everyone to rule the affairs of his country - the right of a whole population of a large country to take part in the administration. On this is based the existing system of elections according to universal suffrage: in big States this leads to the preponderance of the masses, who belong to the least educated class and do not have a clear idea of State affairs, or of the people who are capable of administering them. It is evident that under this order the \textit{worthiness} and ability of the elected person loses its significance: this is the essential difference between the new democracy and the old, and it is this that threatens destruction for the former. At the same time one should bear in mind that this mechanism of democracy is called to function in an epoch of an exceptional and unheard-of increase in the complexity of human affairs and relationships. Even one hundred years ago people did not dream of the present development of trade, industry and mechanisation, or of the present development of literature and the press with its huge significance, or of the present speed of communications, news and rumours of every kind. One can imagine how complicated all the functions of governmental and financial power, and the conditions in which they have to work, have become, and the innumerable quantity of facts and new ideas which the legislative power now has to reckon with.

"In this condition of society democracy has a \textit{frightening} task which it cannot cope with. On taking up the supreme power, it must take upon itself the affairs of the supreme power, and the most important of these is the choosing of men for posts and responsibilities. Everything depends on this; if it fails in this, every law, whatever it may be, loses its significance, and the fundamental order of the whole State institution is deprived of trust and wavers. For the people the government is an abstract idea insofar as it is not incarnated in agents of power who are in direct contact with the people and its justified needs: if these agents are chosen haphazardly or for wrong reasons, then the whole of their activity

\textsuperscript{546} Pobedonostsev, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 279-280.
becomes a burning subject of rumours that disturb the opinion of the people, and a weapon in the hands of all opponents of firm authority, whatever it may be.

"And so we see that from the time that the historical idea of people being called to State service in accordance with their estate and social position has lost all significance in democracy, service appointments have become a weapon in the hands of political parties which strengthen themselves by handing out posts. At the same time the number of posts increases exponentially, and this does not benefit, but burdens the people, since they serve not so much the general good as their own interests. But amidst general dissatisfaction, a passionate striving grows among the people to get well-paid and profitable posts. Everybody can see a picture of this fall in the new democracies in France, in Italy and in the United States. This fall is particularly evident in the higher and in the elective posts that have a political significance, sometimes even governors and members of legislative assemblies. Elective posts have a representative significance; administrative posts, by contrast, must in their essence be foreign to any such significance. But from the time of the French revolution the idea of this distinction has been completely muddied in the new democracy, and the contrary idea has become popular that administrative posts serve as a reward for people who have served this or that powerful party or who have this or that variety of opinions. Moreover, people do not ask whether the person is capable or not capable of carrying out the particular duties of his post. In the past everyone thought and believed that the ruler must be better than those whom he rules, and the experience of history has confirmed that all the achievements of civilization have been attained by the desires of the most capable people in spite of the opposition of the environment in which they had to work. But in the new democracy, in spite of this undoubted truth, the opinion has become entrenched that even a large State can be successfully administered by anyone, even someone unworthy. All this leads to demoralization, thanks to which the private interests of a party or company of people acquires a preponderant significance in society at the cost of the public interest.

"A natural consequence of all this is the complete collapse of legislative assemblies or democratic parliaments [in contemporary France and Italy, for example]. According to the democratic theory the elected representative of the people is called to vote, not for what he recognizes to be useful for the people or reasonable and just, but for what the people of the party which has elected and sent him considers to be best and needed, even if this does not agree with his personal opinion. Thus the election of representative is turned into a game of parties, which is just as passionate as any competitive game - a game governed by intrigue, false promises and bribery. Thus even the legislature falls into the hands of unenlightened, undiscriminating, and often avaricious people, or people who are indifferent to everything that is not bound up with the interests of the party. Little by little all the people of straight thinking, honourable spirit and higher culture withdraw from participating in this game, especially when each of them has in his hands the work of his own special calling.

547 As in Gilbert and Sullivan's operetta, H.M.S. Pinafore: I always voted at my Party’s call / And I never thought of thinking for myself at all. (V.M.)
Parliament is turned into a machine pushing out of itself a mass of laws that have not been thought through or worked out, which contradict each other and are completely unnecessary, which do not protect freedom, but constrict it in the interests of one part or one company.

"Everybody to a greater or lesser degree feels and recognizes that the present democratic system of legislation is completely incoherent and based on a lie; and when a lie lies at the base of this institution, what is society to expect if not destruction? Democracy itself, we can say, has lost faith in its parliament, but is forced to be reconciled with it, because it has nothing to replace it with, and because everything that stood before has been destroyed, while democracy rejects in principle every idea of dictatorship. It is obvious to all that the falsely constructed building is wavering, is already shaking. But when and how it will fall, and what will arise on its ruins - that is the task of the sphinx that stands on the threshold of the twentieth century."548

548 Pobedonostsev, op. cit., pp. 281-283.
The conservative views of such men as Pobedonostsev were protected and nurtured during the 1880s by Tsar Alexander III, who quietly reversed the main direction of his father’s reforms.

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

Tsar Alexander succeeded in most of the tasks he set himself. He avoided war, while gaining the respect of the European rulers. He suppressed the revolution, giving emergency powers to local governors in troubled areas, and checked the power of the zemstva and the press. He increased the prosperity of all classes. And he strengthened the Church and the family.

The Tsar put special emphasis on family life. Almost all the Romanovs before him had done the opposite, having numerous affairs and illegitimate children. But he and his son, Nicholas II, were models of marital fidelity.

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This was necessary if the monarchy was to recover its authority among the people. For how would the people venerate their “little father-tsar” if he was a poor father and husband within his own family? Prince Sergius Trubetskoy illustrated the link between family feeling and feeling for the monarchy during his childhood under the same Tsar Alexander: “Father and mother, grandfathers and grandmothers were for us in childhood not only sources and centres of love and unquestioned authority; they were enveloped in our eyes by a kind of aura which the modern generation does not know... Our fathers and grandfathers were in our children’s eyes both patriarchs and family monarchs, while our mothers and grandmothers were family tsaritsas.”

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

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

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

“This thesis was advanced with the help of arguments drawn from the writings of Marx and Engels. Marx and Engels initially disowned such an interpretation of their doctrine, but they eventually changed their minds, conceding that there might be more than one model of economic development. In 1877, in an exchange with a Russian, Marx rejected the notion that every country had to repeat the economic experience of Western Europe. Should Russia enter the path of capitalist development, he wrote, then, indeed, nothing could save her from its ‘iron laws’, but this did not mean that Russian could not avoid this path and the misfortunes it brought. A few years later Marx stated that the ‘historical inevitability’ of capitalism was confined to Western Europe, and that because Russia had managed to preserve the peasant commune into the era of
capitalism, the commune could well become the ‘fulchrum of Russia’s social rejuvenation’. Marx and Engels admired the terrorists of the People’s Will, and, as an exception to their general theory, Engels allowed that in Russia the revolution could be made by a ‘handful of people’.

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

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

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

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

These various strands of socialist thinking had little influence in Russia during the reign of Alexander III. And it was not from bomb-throwing raznochintsy and peasants that the real threat to the regime came – at this time. The real threat

came, not from socialists, but from liberals, and not from the lower classes, but from the nobility who dominated local government.

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

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

“Russia’s general backwardness – its small tax-base and poor communications – largely accounts for this under-government. The legacy of serfdom also played a part. Until 1861 the serfs had been under the jurisdiction of their noble owners and, provided they paid their taxes, the state did not intervene in the relations between them. Only after the Emancipation – and then very slowly – did the tsarist government come round to the problem of how to extend its influence to its new ‘citizens’ in the villages and of how to shape a policy to help the development of peasant agriculture.
“Initially, in the 1860s, the regime left the affairs of the country districts in the hands of the local nobles. They dominated the zemstvo assemblies and accounted for nearly three-quarters of the provincial zemstvo boards. The noble assemblies and their elected marshals were left with broad administrative powers, especially at the district level (uezd) where they were virtually the only agents upon whom the tsarist regime could rely. Moreover, the new magistrates (mirovye posredniki) were given broad judicial powers, not unlike those of their predecessors under serfdom, including the right to flog the peasants for minor crimes and misdemeanours.

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

Already for over a decade, the famous novelist Lev Tolstoy had abandoned his profession of a writer, for which everyone admired him and which gave deep pleasure to millions of readers in many countries, for that of a false prophet who undermined the faith of millions in the true meaning of the Gospel. In a series of publications, Tolstoy denied all the dogmas of the Christian Faith, including the Trinity and the Divinity of Christ, and every miraculous element in the Bible. The only part of the Gospel that he clung to was the Sermon on the Mount - but interpreted in a perverse way that led him to denounce property as theft, sexual activity as evil even in marriage, and all governments, armies and penal systems as unnecessary evils that only engendered further evils. While preaching poverty and love, he failed to practice what he preached in his own life, to the great distress of his wife and family; and while his work in relieving the effects of the Volga famine of 1891-92 was undoubtedly good, the use he made of the publicity he received from it was no less undoubtedly evil.

Tolstoy had a deep influence on many people, as did his enemy and polar opposite, St. John of Kronstadt. In a way, Russian society towards the end of the century could be divided into those who believed in Tolstoy and those who believed in John of Kronstadt. Some believed, first in one, and then in the other. The latter included the future hieromartyr-bishop and organizer of the Catacomb Church, Michael Alexandrovich Novoselov. In 1886 he graduated from the historical-philological faculty of Moscow Imperial University. During this period he got to know Tolstoy, who often visited his father when he lived in Tula, and became a close friend and disciple of his. There exists a copious correspondence between them from the period 1886-1901. Michael Alexandrovich was arrested on December 27, 1887, together with some young friends who had been infected with the ideas of the "People's Will" movement, for possessing some literature of this movement as well as Tolstoy's brochure "Nicholas Palkin", and might well have been sent to Siberia if it had not been for the intervention of Tolstoy himself. In February, 1888, Michael Alexandrovich was released but forbidden to live in the capitals. Abandoning any thought of a career in teaching, Michael Alexandrovich bought some land in the village of Dugino, Tver province, and created one of the first Tolstoyan land communes in Russia. However, the peasants' refusal to accept the commune, and their patient endurance of their hard life, gradually led Michael Alexandrovich to question his own beliefs and pay more attention to the world-view of the peasants - Orthodoxy. Moreover, on one point he could never agree with Tolstoy - his rejection of the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the element of mystery in human life. Finally, he broke with Tolstoy, and spoke against his teachings for the rest of his life, while acknowledging the very significant influence he had had on him. Tolstoy's last letter, written in Optina Desert, was addressed to M.A. Novoselov. Michael Alexandrovich did not succeed in replying to it, but much later said that if he had been able, he probably would not have replied. After the break with Tolstoy, he became very close to St. John of Kronstadt and the Optina and Zosima Desert elders...
Now Tolstoy became famed as an opponent of the government especially during the Volga famine of summer, 1891, which was caused by severe frosts in the winter followed by drought in the spring, and “exacerbated by the policy to finance industrialization by borrowing, which in turn had to be paid for by selling grain abroad.” Covering an area twice the size of France, the famine together with the consequent cholera and typhus had killed half a million people by the end of 1892. On November 17, the government appointed the Tsarevich Nicholas as president of a special commission to provide help to the suffering, and was forced to appeal to the public to form voluntary organizations.

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

Exploiting his fame and aristocratic birth, Tolstoy denounced the government, not only for the Samaran famine, but for almost everything else. As A.N. Wilson writes, he “defied his own Government’s censorship by printing appeals in The

552 Montefiore, The Romanovs, p. 471.

553 Figes, op. cit., p. 160.
Daily Telegraph [of London]. Rumours began to reach the Tolstoys that the Government was thinking of taking action against him... The Minister for the Interior told the Emperor that Tolstoy’s letter to the English press ‘must be considered tantamount to a most shocking revolutionary proclamation’: not a judgement that can often have been made of a letter to The Daily Telegraph. Alexander III began to believe that it was all part of an English plot and the Moscow Gazette, which was fed from the Government, denounced Tolstoy’s letters as ‘frank propaganda for the overthrow of the whole social and economic structure of the world’.”554 If such a characterization may seem absurdly exaggerated when made of the apostle of non-violence, it must be remembered that Tolstoy’s words could well have been interpreted as a call for world revolution, and that he did more for the revolutionary cause than a thousand professional conspirators.

In this connection it is ironic that “while Lev Lvovich Tolstoy organized famine relief in the Samara district in 1891-92, there was one very conspicuous absentee from his band of helpers: Lenin, who was at that time in ‘internal exile’ there. According to a witness, Vladimir Ulyanov (as he still was) and a friend were the only two political exiles in Samara who refused to belong to any relief committee or to help in the soup kitchens. He was said to welcome the famine ‘as a factor in breaking down the peasantry and creating an industrial proletariat’. Trotsky, too, took the line that it was improper to do anything to improve the lot of the people while the autocracy remained in power. When they themselves seized power, the chaos and desolation were immeasurably worse. One thinks of the crop failure on the Volga in 1921 when somewhere between one and three million died, in spite of the fact that they allowed in foreign aid. By the time of the 1932-33 famine in the Ukraine, the Soviet Union was enjoying the munificent protection of Comrade Stalin. His policy was to allow no foreign aid, and no Government intervention. At least five million died…”555

“Russian society,” continues Figes, “had been activated and politicized by the famine crisis, its social conscience had been stung, and the old bureaucratic system had been discredited. Public mistrust of the government did not diminish once the crisis had passed, but strengthened as the representatives of civil society continued to press for a greater role in the administration of the nation’s affairs. The famine, it was said, had proved the culpability and incompetence of the old regime, and there was now a growing expectation that wider circles of society would have to be drawn into its work if another catastrophe was to be avoided. The zemstvos, which had spent the past decade battling to expand their activities in the face of growing bureaucratic opposition, were now strengthened by widespread support from the liberal public for their work in agronomy, public health and education. The liberal Moscow merchants and industrialists, who had rallied behind the relief campaign, now began to question the government’s policies of industrialization, which seemed so ruinous for the peasantry, the main buyers of their manufactures. From the middle of the 1890s they too supported


555 Wilson, op. cit., p. 403.
the various projects of the zemstvos and municipal bodies to revive the rural economy. Physicians, teachers and engineers, who had all been forced to organize themselves as a result of their involvement in the relief campaign, now began to demand more professional autonomy and influence over public policy; and when they failed to make any advances they began to campaign for political reforms. In the press, in the ‘thick journals’, in the universities, and in learned and philanthropic societies, the debates on the causes of the famine – and on reforms needed to prevent its recurrence – continued to rage throughout the 1890s, long after the immediate crisis had passed.

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

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

“In short, the whole of society had been politicized and radicalized as a result of the famine crisis. The conflict between the population and the regime had been set in motion…”556

Was Lenin a real Marxist? In order to answer this question, let us recall that after the “going to the people” movement had petered out by 1875, it was

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

Now while Lenin’s instincts were doubtless anarchist and Bakuninist, there is also no doubt that he saw himself as a true follower of Marx. By the end of the 19th century, however, “socialist thought was dividing. Marx's laws of motion were failing. Capitalism still flourished: no sign of the falling rate of profit that would signal its end. The working class was getting the vote. The welfare state was taking shape. Factory conditions were improving and wages were rising well above the floor of subsistence. All this was contrary to Marx's laws.

“In response, the left was splitting. On one side were reformers and social democrats who saw that capitalism could be given a human face. On the other were those who believed that Marx's system could be developed and restated, always true to its underlying logic—and, crucially, with its revolutionary as opposed to evolutionary character brought to the fore.

“Whose side in this would Marx have been on? Revolution or reform? Would he have continued to insist that the vampire be destroyed? Or would he have turned reformer, asking it nicely to suck a bit less blood? The latter seems unlikely. Marx was a scholar, but he was also a fanatic and a revolutionary. His incapacity for compromise (with comrades, let alone opponents) was pathological. And in the preface to the 1882 Russian edition of the *Manifesto*, his last published writing, Marx hoped that a revolution in Russia might become ‘the signal for a proletarian revolution in the West, so that both complement each other’; if so, Russia, despite its pre-capitalist characteristics, ‘may serve as the starting-point for a communist development.’ Lenin was surely right to believe that he, not those soft-headed bourgeois accommodationists, was true to the master's thought.”

The fruits of the radicalization of society were not slow to reveal themselves. 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 was founded, from both the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks came. The party was founded with the active participation of the Bund. The Russian-Jewish revolutionary underground had received its first organizational impulse...

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Lenin said that Tolstoy was “the mirror of the Russian revolution”. However, this is only part of the truth: to a significant degree, Tolstoy was also the father of the revolution.\textsuperscript{559} His first (unrealised) literary project was to write a novel on the Decembrists, the failed revolutionaries of 1825, one of whom, Sergei Volkonsky, had been his relative. His last, \textit{Resurrection}, published in 1899, was a sustained attack on the existing order and the Orthodox Church; it inspired the failed revolution of 1905. No wonder that throughout the Soviet period, while other authors were banned and their works destroyed, the Jubilee edition of Tolstoy’s \textit{Complete Works} (1928) continued to sell in vast numbers…

\textsuperscript{559} Lenin also said of Tolstoy, on the one hand, that he was a “spirited man” who “unmasked everyone and everything,” but on the other hand, he was also a “worn-out, hysterical slave to power,” preaching non-resistance to evil. As for Dostoyevsky’s works, he called them “vomit-inducing moralization,” “penitential hysteria” (on Crime and Punishment), “malodorous” (on The Brothers Karamazov and The Devils), “clearly reactionary filth… I read it and threw it at the wall” (on The Devils).
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.


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.


We [the IRA] adopted political assassination as a principle. We turned the whole thoughts and passions of a generation upon blood and revenge and death; we placed gunmen, most half-educated and totally inexperienced, as dictators with powers of life and death over large areas. We decided the moral law, and said there was no law but the law of force, and the moral law answered us. Every devilish thing we did against the British army went full circle, and then boomeranged and smote us tenfold; and the cumulative effect of the whole of it was a general moral weakening and a general degradation, a general cynicism and disbelief in either virtue or decency, in goodness or uprightness or honesty.

P.S. O’Hegarty.

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-spreading fire consuming all.

Alexander Blok.
III. THE WEST: “LA BELLE EPOQUE” (1894-1914)
39. GLOBALIZATION AND ANTI-GLOBALIZATION

The zenith of imperialism created the first economic globalization since Roman times. Thus Dani Rodrik writes: “Heights of integration were reached at the end of the 20th century that make that earlier period [at the beginning of the century], in many ways, comparable to today. Under the Gold Standard regime, national currencies could be freely converted into fixed quantities of gold, and capital flowed without hindrance across borders. The regime not only encouraged capital flows but also trade, by removing currency risk: merchants could safely take payment from anywhere in the system without worrying about exchange rates shifting about. By 1880, the Gold Standard and free capital mobility were the norm. People were free to move, too, which they did in large numbers from Europe to the New World. Just as today, improvements in transport and communication technologies – the steamship, railroad, telegraph – greatly facilitated the movement of goods, capital, and workers.

“A backlash was not long in coming. As early as the 1870s, a decline in world agricultural prices produced pressure for a resumption of import protection. With the exception of Britain, all European countries raised agricultural tariffs towards the end of the 19th century. In many cases agricultural protectionism also spread to manufactured goods. Immigration limits also began to appear in the late 19th century. In 1882, the United States Congress passed the infamous Chinese Exclusion Act, and restricted Japanese immigration in 1907. Later, in the 1920s, the US established a more general system of immigration quotas…”

Moreover, globalization did not distribute its benefits equally to all, even in what was fast becoming both the richest and the most democratic country in the world – the United States.

“The Chicago World’s Fair of 1893,” writes David Reynolds, “was intended to celebrate four centuries of American achievement since Christopher Columbus. Its ‘White City’ of gleaming stucco and electric lights was a wonder of modernity and during the six months the fair was open 27 million people – equivalent to two-fifths of the US population – came to marvel. But by the time it closed in the autumn of 1893, the United States was in the grip of the worst depression it had yet experienced.

“Like most economic crises, the depression started with a stock market collapse and a rash of bank failures, but confidence did not recover. For five consecutive years unemployment soared above 10 per cent. Those workers who kept their job faced savage wage cuts, while farmers watched the value of their crops fall precipitously. The depression of the 1890s brought to a head the mounting antagonism between the beneficiaries and the victims of America’s frenzied industrial revolution.


561 In the same year Chicago hosted the Parliament of World Religions. Religion, like commerce, was becoming globalized.
“America’s farmers lurched from one side of this divide to the other. The opening up of the Great Plains after the Civil War produced a new wheat and cattle frontier, in the cities there were now millions of people who could not feed themselves, and the railroad revolution made it possible to move food quickly to satisfy urban demand. The result was massive growth in American agriculture – between 1870 and 1890 the number of farms doubled to 5.7 million, wheat production more than doubled to 600 million bushels, and the number of cattle virtually tripled to 68 million. Yet America’s farmers were now even more dependent on the vicissitudes of the market – not just in the nearby town or city but across the country and on the other side of the world. They also at the mercy of middlemen, having to accept whatever the cotton factor or the grain elevator manager offered and being obliged to pay the rates the railroad charged. And they were chronically in debt – long term to buy land and short term to survive from planting to harvest – at a time when America’s money supply did not keep pace with growth. Moreover, banking remained localized – unlike commerce – without an effective nationwide system to move funds around easily to where they were needed. The result was crippling interest rates – often 10 per cent, sometimes up to 40.

“So in good years, farm income soared; in depressions like that of the 1890s the situation was grim. By 1900 a third of America’s farmers were working as tenants – hardly Jefferson’s vision of liberty. The farmers formed sales cooperatives in an effort to cut out the middlemen and boost their profit. These local Farmers’ Alliances were not just marketing organizations: Masonic-like, their lodges provided fraternal support and regular mass picnics drew hundred of families into something like revivalist meetings. Above all, through their newspapers and lecturers, the Alliances became instruments of political education in the backwaters of rural America. ‘People commenced to think who had never thought before, and people talked who had seldom spoken,’ noted the write Elizabeth Higgins. ‘On mild days they gathered on the street corners, on cold days they congregated in shops and offices. Everyone was talking and everyone was thinking.’ Thoughts and theories sprouted, she said, ‘like weeds after a May shower’.

“By 1890 the National Farmers’ Alliance had more than a million members. Despairing of Republicans and Democrats alike, it went political – creating the People’s Party, commonly known as the Populists. This was a genuinely radical movement that reached out to black sharecroppers in the South and also gave a prominent role to women. A leading Kansas Populist was Mary Elizabeth Lease – variously known as ‘Queen Mary’ and the ‘Pythoness of the Plains’ – a tall, spare farm mother of four but also a lawyer with a hot Irish tongue. ‘What you farmers need to do is raise less corn and more Hell’, she chastised them. ‘Wall Street owns the country. It is no longer a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, but a government of Wall Street, by Wall Street, and for Wall Street. The great common people of this country are slaves, and monopoly is the master. The West and South are bound and prostrate before the manufacturing East. Money rules.’
“The Populists came up with various far-reaching demands, including a graduated income tax and government ownership of the railroads, but by 1896 one issue predominated: the gold standard. This, above all, critics claimed, had constricted the money supply; in its place they advocated a bimetallic currency with silver coins as readily available as gold. (It was no coincidence that America’s silver was mined in Rocky Mountain states that were Populist strongholds.)

“In 1896 the silver lobby seized control of the Democratic Party from the bosses, nominating as candidate for the presidency William Jennings Bryan, a thirty-six-year-old lawyer from Nebraska. Bryan was a devout evangelical who believed liquor and gambling were sins; like many Populists, he treated silver as a mixture of political campaign and religious crusade: ‘It is the issue of 1776 over again. Our ancestors, when by three million, had the courage to declare their political independence of every other nation upon earth. Shall we, their descendants, when we have grown to seventy million, declare that we are less independent than our forefathers? No, my friends, it will never be the judgement of this people.’ Bryan challenged the ‘gold bugs’: ‘If they dare to come out in the open field and defend the gold standard as a good thing, we shall fight them to the uttermost, having behind us the producing masses of the nation and the world.’ The Democrats would, he said, ‘answer their demands for a gold standard by saying no to them, you shall not press down upon the brow of labour this crown of thorns. You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold.’

“Bryan’s ‘cross of gold’ speech was one of the classics of American political oratory, but his silver crusade and evangelical style played into the hands of the Republicans. Fanning business fears. They accumulated an unprecedented campaign chest in 1896, enabling them to outspend the Democrats by ten to one and ensuring a landslide for the Republican candidate, William McKinley. The 1896 election proved a landmark in American politics. Not only did it bury the Populists as a radical third-party alternative, it tarnished the Democrats as economically unsound and established the Republicans as the dominant party for a generation. Apart from Woodrow Wilson’s presidency (1913-21) – made possible by a split within the Republican Party in 1912 – the Republicans dominated the White House and Congress from 1897 to 1933...”

So the first major political challenge to globalization, at any rate in the New World, was crushed. But whenever globalization falters and leads to depression – as in 1929 and 2008 – similar causes are revealed, and similar prescriptions proposed. Like the eternal dialectic between democracy and despotism, the closely related dialectic between globalization and anti-globalization crops up anew in each generation

Nevertheless, the general, seemingly irresistible trend was and is towards ever-increasing globalization and the breaking down of barriers of all kinds, aided by the vast increase in global population and the huge flows of people from one continent to another.

“As a result,” writes Evans, “the world balance of population was beginning to change. At mid-century the population of the USA was not much larger than that of Britain, the same as that of France, and a little less that the area covered by the future German Empire. By the end of the First World War the USA was well ahead, with a total population of more than 92 million. Yet Europe’s share of world population actually increased over most of this period, from 12 per cent in 1850 to around 25 per cent in 1900 (for comparison, its share by the early twenty-first century was around 10 per cent). Overall the population of Europe increased from 188 million in 1800 to 458 million in 1914, and this increase forced the major driving force behind the massive emigration waves of this century. Within this global figure, there were marked contrasts between different areas and different countries. Russia’s population expanded by 300 per cent, partly because of the conquest and incorporation under the tsar’s rule of large areas of Central Asia, the Caucasus and Siberia. The population of Great Britain grew by a remarkable 400 per cent, that of Italy and Spain by nearly 100 per cent. France’s population, by contrast, grew slowly, by only 50 per cent.

“This vast human replenishing of the earth was the social dimension of a process of globalization that reached its peak in the years immediately preceding the outbreak of the First World War, as capital, goods, people and ideas began to flow with increasing rapidity and intensity from continent to continent. More rapid communications boosted trade and reduced the price gaps of commodities between Europe and the USA as well as Europe and Asia by a half or three-quarters in the period 1870-1914. Investment overseas, dominated by Europe during this period, accounted for 32 per cent of the net national wealth of Britain in 1913. Foreign investment reached nearly 20 per cent of domestic savings in France by 1900. Much of this was in other European countries (60 per cent in the French case, 53 per cent in the German) but capital also flowed overseas, with 21 per cent of British foreign investment going to America in the period 1870-1913 and 16 per cent of German foreign investment (the same figure as for German investment in Latin America, only slightly below the British figure). Technology transfer took place on every level and in virtually every industry, with America increasingly the innovator in new industries such as motor manufacture. This was the first age of globalization, one in which Europe remained the dominant force. This fact was reflected in the particular intensity with which European countries developed ties with their formal and informal colonies in Africa, Asia, Australasia and Latin America…”

563 Evans, op. cit., p. 352.
**40. THE SCRAMBLE FOR AFRICA**

The most striking fact of this period, as we have seen, was globalization and its two chief engines – global population growth and migration, and the global expansion of European power. This expansion was astonishing. “By 1914,” writes J.M. Roberts, “more than four-fifths of the world’s land surface outside Antarctica was under either a European flag, or the flag of a nation of European settlement.”\(^564\) “Britain, France, Belgium, Holland and Germany, which among them accounted for less than 1 per cent of the world’s land surface and less than 8 percent of its population, ruled in the region of a third of the rest of the world’s area and more than a quarter of its people. All of Australasia, 90 percent of Africa and 56 percent of Asia were under some form of European rule, as were nearly all the islands of the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean and the Pacific. And although only around a quarter of the American continent – mainly Canada – found itself in the same condition of dependence, nearly all the rest had been ruled from Europe at one time or another in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In both the north and the south, the politics of the American republics were fundamentally shaped by the colonial past.

“Nor do these calculations about the extent of the West European maritime empires tell the whole story of nineteenth-century empire. Most of Central and Eastern Europe was under Russian, German or Austrian imperial rule. Indeed, the Russian empire stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea and from Warsaw to Vladivostok. And still intact, though in a position of increasing inferiority to the European empires, were the Ottoman Empire in the Middle East and the Chinese empire in the Far East. Independent nation-states, in short, were the exception to a worldwide imperial rule. Even Japan, the best-known example of an Asian state that had resisted colonization (though its economy had been forcibly opened to trade by the United States), had itself already embarked on empire building, having conquered Korea. And… the United States, though forged in the crucible of an anti-imperial war, had taken its first steps on the road to empire, having annexed Texas in 1845, California in 1848, Alaska in 1867 and the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Hawaii and Guam in 1898. Indeed, its nineteenth-century history can be told as a transition from continental to hemispherical imperialism.”\(^565\)

Other changes – the growth of nationalism, of democracy and socialism, of science and pseudo-science – were more profound and are with us still, whereas the European empires have disappeared. But it was European imperialism that spread these profounder developments throughout the world, and thereby made possible the transformation of the world in the image of the European revolution that we see today, a process that has continued in spite of the huge transfer of power from Europe to her former colonies.

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European imperialism, writes John Darwin, “provoked, and drew strength from, a fiercer assertion than ever before of Europe’s cultural mission to be the whole world’s engine of material progress and also its source of religious and philosophical truth. Europeans were uniquely progressive, it was variously claimed, because of their physical, social or religious evolution. This was the charter of their ‘race supremacy’. Last but not least, Greater Europe’s expansion into Afro-Asian lands too remote or resistant in earlier times seemed a tribute to its scientific and technological primacy. The ‘knowledge gap’ between Europeans and (most) others looked wider, not narrower, at the end of the century. Parts of Europe were entering the second industrial revolution of electricity and chemicals before the non-Western world had exploited coal and steam.”

The most astonishing expansion of European power took place in Africa: “In the late nineteenth century,” writes Yuval Noah Harari, “several European powers laid claim to African territories. Fearing that conflicting claims might lead to an all-out European war, the concerned parties got together in Berlin in 1884 and divided Africa as if it were ice. Back then much of the African interior was terra incognita to Europeans. The British, French and Germans had accurate maps of Africa’s coastal regions, and knew precisely where the Niger, Congo and Zambezi empty into the ocean. However, they knew little about the course these rivers took inland, about the kingdoms and tribes that lived along their banks, and about local religion, history and geography. This hardly mattered to the European diplomats. They unrolled a half-empty map of Africa across a well-polished Berlin table, sketched a few lines here and there, and divided the continent among them.

“When in due course the Europeans penetrated the African interior, armed with their agreed-upon map, they discovered that many of the borders drawn in Berlin did little justice to the geographic, economic and ethnic reality of Africa. However, to avoid renewed clashes the invaders stuck to their agreements, and these imaginary lines became the actual borders of European colonies. During the second half of the twentieth century, as the European empires disintegrated and their colonies gained independence, the new countries accepted the colonial borders, fearing that the alternative would be endless wars and conflicts. Many of the difficulties faced by present-day African countries stem from the fact that their borders make little sense…”

European imperialism elicited movements of reaction. Thus “between the 1820s and 1880s Egypt (backed by Britain) conquered Sudan and tried to modernize the country and incorporate it into the new international trade network. This destabilized traditional Sudanese society, creating widespread resentment and fostering revolts. In 1881 a local religious leader, Muhammed Ahmad bin Abdallah, declared that he was the Mahdi (the Messiah), sent to establish God’s law on earth. His supporters defeated the Anglo-Egyptian army


and beheaded its commander – General Charles Gordon – in a gesture that shocked Victorian Britain. They then established in Sudan an Islamic theocracy governed by sharia law, which lasted until 1898.”

In southern Africa there were still greater problems. Britain, writes Tombs, “had taken the Cape as a naval base during the Napoleonic Wars. Subsequent history is a textbook example of usually reluctant imperialist expansion mostly driven by local problems: to control settlers (in this case mostly Dutch ‘Boers’); to restrain them from attacking natives; to defend them from reprisals when they did; to secure frontiers by pushing outwards, thus replacing existing problems with new ones; to fight wars against neighbouring polities seen as a threat – most famously the militaristic Zulus, temporarily triumphant over a small British force at Isandlwana in 1879; and to secure valuable assets – in this case, diamonds and gold. The Boers, as annoyingly intractable as the Zulus, decimated an even smaller British force at Majuba in February 1881 – ‘Sad Sad news from South Africa,’ lamented Gladstone, ‘is it the Hand of Judgement?’”

A good question, and one that the British were to put to themselves more and more in the decades leading up to the First World War. It did not require a Marxist analysis to see that imperialist expansion would sooner or later lead to conflicts, not only with the native peoples of empire (Assanti, Swahilis, Aborigines, Maoris, North American Indians, Bengalis, Afghans, Chinese, etc.), but also with other European imperialists (as nearly happened with the French at Fashoda in Sudan, did happen with the Dutch in South Africa and would happen with the Germans in East Africa). Evangelical Anglicans like Gladstone were uneasy with the idea of imperialism – for moral, but also for financial reasons. And while the idea of mission – of bringing Christianity and civilization, as well as commerce, war and rapine – to the colonies still outweighed moral unease, the latter remained in the collective unconscious of the colonizers. Ultimately, it was pride, pride in the nation, that succeeded in keeping the uncomfortable facts and comparisons (comparisons that Kipling nevertheless made in his Recessional) firmly at the back of Victorians’ minds.

“Southern Africa by the 1890s posed a unique set of difficulties. The ‘Boers’, essentially patriarchal and racist farmers, longer established and even more disobedient than settlers elsewhere, had established an autonomous South African Republic (ZAR). The discovery of gold and diamonds had turned Johannesburg into a turbulent and corrupt Wild West, a magnet for the usual hopefuls, crooks, tarts, lunatics and adventurers from around the world. The

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569 We see the same motive in “the Malayan peninsula, where local states were forced to accept British informal suzerainty in 1873, in an attempt to protect trade with China against piracy – also a major factor in prompting the Dutch to extend their control over Indonesia in the 1850s. The same can be said of the activities of the French in Indonesia, where Napoleon III sent troops at the end of the 1850s after French missionaries had been persecuted and killed; local French officials argued that further expansion was necessary to protect missions and trading interests, clashes took place with local and regional powers, and by the 1890s France was in full possession of the entire peninsula, after capturing the key fort of Hung Hôa in 1884.” (Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 639) (V.M.)

570 Tombs, *op. cit.*, p. 583.
income from mining, warned a Colonial Office official in 1896, enabled the Boers to buy ‘arms and ammunition enough to shoot down all the armies of Europe’. Their rejection of nominal ‘suzerainty’ was a challenge to Britain, especially as they attracted support from France and Germany. The latter annexed the adjoining South-West Africa in 1884, where it soon fought a genocidal war against the inhabitants.

“In Capetown and London appeared a new breed of ideological imperialists – they had counterparts in Berlin, Washington and Paris – convinced that the future prosperity and security of Britain and the ‘race’ depended on unifying the empire. Their leader was the popular former radical Joseph Chamberlain, now Conservative Colonial Secretary. He was seconded by Cecil Rhodes, a ruthlessly successful diamond millionaire with megalomaniac political ambitions who had become prime minister of Cape Colony, and Alfred Milner, a partly German and highly educated social reformer and imperialist, who was High Commissioner. For them the challenge was fundamental: ‘What is now at stake is the position of Great Britain in South Africa,’ Chamberlain told the Cabinet in September 1899, ‘and with it the estimate of our power and influence in our colonies and throughout the world’.

“Their first plan had been to foment an uprising among the foreign population of the ZAR, who had no political rights, by secretly encouraging the ‘Jameson Raid’ into the Transvaal by an armed group in December 1895. The raiders were immediately rounded up by the Boers, and no uprising ensued. This fiasco drew world attention. Kaiser Wilhelm II sent a telegram of congratulation to the ZAR president, Paul Kruger. When Britain began to build up forces in the Cape, the Boers declared war in October 1899 in a self-proclaimed ‘struggle against the new world tyranny of Capitalism’. This may seem in retrospect a remarkably bold or reckless act, but the Boers hoped that early successes would force the British to compromise, as after Majuba in 1881. Britain and the world were respectively shocked and delighted when a weak British invasion force was repulsed, and border garrisons at Ladysmith and Mafeking (commanded by Colonel Robert Baden-Powell) were besieged. Relief forces were badly mauled during the ‘Black Week’ of December 1899. This provided a thrilling sase for newspaper reader at home and a new roll-call of heroes. When the sieges were finally lifted in 1900, uninhibited popular rejoicing – ‘mafficking’ – shocked progressives.

“Opinion at home was divided. Mainstream Liberals held to the belief that war in general was immoral and expensive, especially this one, which many believed had been brought about by the machinations of capitalists and Jews. Some ultra-conservatives agreed. So did some socialists, tinged with anti-Semitism. But others, including the Fabian Society, supported British imperialism as progressive while the popular socialist writer Robert Blatchford robustly declared that ‘England’s enemies are my enemies’. This was the majority view, and it led to a Conservative victory in the ‘khaki election’ of October 1900. But the war required more effort than anyone had imagined, and it became the most difficult since the Crimea and at £270m the most expensive since that against Napoleon. Not for the first time, the British had underestimated their enemy,
who were highly mobile, familiar with the country, skilled marksmen, better armed and more numerous. British soldiers were picked off by a concealed enemy with Mauer rifles and smokeless ammunition…

“The Boer cause enthused all who loathed the English, especially if they also hated capitalists and/or Jews. At the 1900 Paris Exposition, one of the most popular exhibits was a Boer farmhouse. Volunteers from across Europe and from Ireland went to fight for Boer freedom. Facing them, British regulars and volunteers were joined by men from Canada, Australia and New Zealand, eventually totaling 250,000, now competently commanded by a veteran of the Indian Mutiny and Afghanistan, Lord Roberts of Kandahar, and the conqueror of the Sudan, Sir Herbert Kitchener. Once these forces could be supplied and moved – which required the assistance of large numbers of Africans, who preferred a future under the British than the Boers – the ZAR was invaded, and by June 1900 had fallen. But some Boer ‘commandos’, small groups of mounted infantry, continued a guerrilla war, their exploits applauded across the white world.

“Kitchener countered the guerrillas by a scorched-earth policy, burning 30,000 farms, and criss-crossing the country with barbed-wire fences protected by blockhouses and armoured trains. Civilians were compulsorily evacuated to ‘concentration camps’, where dirt and overcrowding led to some 40,000 deaths and international outrage, in which the ‘pro-Boer’ minority in England joined. Leading Liberal politicians such as Campbell-Bannerman and Lloyd George denounced these ‘methods of barbarism’. Barbarism worked, however, and the Boers surrendered in 1902. The empire had rallied to an unprecedented extent. Other countries, especially France and Germany had been indignant but impotent in the face of the Royal Navy. The Boers accepted British sovereignty and the ZAR formed a federation with the British colonies of the Cape and Natal. The main British strategic object – control of the Cape and overlordship of southern Africa – had been preserved, and was to last through two world wars. However, the Boers, having lost the war, largely won the peace, for the British, as in all settler colonies, gradually conceded self-government, formally established in 1909. The losers were the Africans within the union, left under a racist government. Swaziland, Bechuanaland and Basutoland had the relative good fortune of remaining under imperial protection.

“The war had profound effects. Chamberlain, convinced that this was the historic opportunity to consolidate the empire, launched a campaign for Imperial Federation based on ‘preference’ in trade, and which would he hope move towards a true political federation under an imperial Parliament in which all the white colonies would be represented. But Britain could give no ‘preference’ as long as it practiced unconditional free trade with everyone. So Chamberlain campaigned for import tariffs, arguing that they would also create ‘free trade’ by protecting British industry against (protected) German and American competition, as well as raising revenue for welfare. For Chamberlain’s supporters, this fiscal revolution would solve economic, social and strategic problems at a stroke. But free trade, seen by most voters as meaning cheap food, was too deeply ingrained in British political culture, and the Conservative
government was crushed by a Liberal-Labour landslide in 1906. The second consequence of the war was to convince many that the empire needed a friend. It was, in Chamberlain’s phrase, a ‘weary titan’, the ‘object of envy and greed to all the other Powers,’ lamented the Secretary of State for India. Lord Salisbury, Prime Minister until 1902, had refused to panic: ‘We know that we shall maintain against all comers that which we possess, and we know, in spite of the jargon about isolation, that we are amply competent to do so.’ His successors were less sanguine, and pessimism about the future became a dangerously pervasive characteristic of official thinking…”

The 1906 general election “was a decisive defeat for [Chamberlain’s] vision of imperial federation, proof of the political weakness of imperialism at its apogee. Moreover, the while colonies had been given increasing self-government since the 1840s and saw no reason to give it up. The six Australian colonies federated in 1901, and those of South Africa in 1909. An enthusiast, Lord Meath, campaigned for an ‘Empire Day’ (adopted in 1902), but he had to pay for it from his own pocket, and many teachers and local councils disliked introducing it into schools. The suggestion of a school flag-raising ceremony was dismissed as un-English. Respectable workers despised soldiers, and, though patriotic, their love of England stopped at Dover…”

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 benevolence towards the subject people, while other nations were motivated entirely by greed.”

That attitude, which was shared by other imperialist states, was about to change as the Titanic of European imperialism hit the iceberg of the First World War...

571 Tombs, op. cit., pp. 584-586.
41. 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 Arabs.

“’Political Zionism’, or the concept of turning Palestine into a national Jewish state, was founded by Theodor Herzl…”\textsuperscript{574}

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.”\textsuperscript{575}

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.""*


577 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." (David Vital, A People Apart: The Jews in Europe 1789-1939, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 439).


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 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

580 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.).
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'.

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, Herzl was quick to change his orientation 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 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.'\(^5\)

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."\(^4\) However, little came of his promise because in July, 1904 Herzl died and Plehve himself was assassinated by the Social Revolutionaries.

Again, the Kaiser said: "I am all in favour of the kikes going to Palestine. The sooner they take off the better..."\(^5\)

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

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583 Solzhenitsyn, Dvesti Let Vmeste (Two Hundred Years Together), Moscow, 2001, pp. 257-258, 260-261, 262, 263.

584 According to Vital (op. cit., p. 468), Plehve's memorandum to Herzl was approved beforehand by the Tsar.

585 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).
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."586

However, more important than the Americans 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."587 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 Palestine. He was able to arrange a meeting in 1898 between Herzl and the Kaiser in Jerusalem. When he failed to secure German support for the cause he next looked to England for help, which came in the form of the Balfour Declaration [of 1917]."588

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…”589

But it was in Britain that the Zionists "could act most freely and where, according to Herzl, there was least anti-Semitism".590 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

587 Armstrong, op. cit., p. 360.
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." 591

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!' 592 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 malice could accuse us of a desire of establishing an independent Jewish Kingdom." 593

After Herzl's death in 1904, the leadership of the Zionist movement passed to Chaim Weizmann. "He was born," writes A.N. Wilson, "in a ghetto, in poverty, in southern Russia in 1874 at a time when Zionism was little more than a

591 Johnson, op. cit., pp. 400-402.
592 Armstrong, op. cit., p. 366.
593 Lilienthal, op. cit., p. 13.
dream, when spoken Hebrew was unknown outside rarified rabbinic circles, and when Judaea was part of the Ottoman Empire, an under-populated, picturesque but decayed region. When he died in 1952 in Rehovot, he was the president of the state of Israel. He had been the key figure in bringing that state into being.

“He came to England from Russia – via Switzerland – becoming a demonstrator in chemistry at Victoria University, Manchester, in 1904. Winston Churchill, electioneering in Oldham, approached the Jewish leaders in Manchester, hoping for their support of the Liberal party. On the eve of the 1906 election, Weizmann met the Tory Prime Minister, Arthur Balfour, and they had the conversation which passed into legend.

“Weizmann was concerned that many British assimilated Jews were extremely dubious about the Zionist idea.

“I began to sweat blood to make my meaning clear through my English. At the very end I made an effort, I had an idea. I said, “Mr. Balfour, if you were offered Paris instead of London, would you take it?” He looked surprised, “But London is our own!” He leaned back, continued to stare at me, and said two things which I remember vividly. The first was: “Are there many Jews who think like you?” I answered, “I believe I speak the mind of millions of Jews whom you will never see and who cannot speak for themselves, but with whom I could pave the streets of the country I come from.” To this he said, “If this is so, you will one day be a force.” Shortly before I withdrew, Balfour said, “It is curious. The Jews I meet are quite different.” I answered: “Mr. Balfour, you meet the wrong kind of Jews.”’

“It was Weizmann’s conviction that ‘England will understand the Zionists better than anyone else.’ The models used by Weizmann, who was neither a prophet like Herzl, not an historian, but a chemist, were, consciously or not, anachronistically contemporary. In seeking to ‘recreate’ the ancient homeland of the Jews, it was no accident that he found that England understood the idea ‘better than anyone else. Although the Ugandan proposal was ditched, Weizmann went on thinking of the new country as a colony on the British model. Soon after Turkey entered the First World War, he wrote:

“’Don’t you think that the chance for the Jewish people is now within the limits of a discussion at least?... Should Palestine fall within the sphere of British influence and should Britain encourage a Jewish settlement there as a British dependency, we could have in 25-30 years about a million Jews out there, perhaps more; they would develop the country, bring back civilization to it.’

“In just the same way, Europeans appropriating African or Asian or South American territory considered themselves to be thereby bringing ‘civilization’. Though he was always careful in his public utterances to express his respect for the rights of the indigenous population of Palestine – ‘There is an Arab nation with a glorious past’ – he was candidly colonialist in his language. He spoke of the Jewish settlers as ‘colonialists’ following his first visit to Palestine in 1907,
the Arabs were ‘primitive people’. The Jewish incomers would be ‘bearers of
the torch and the preparers of civilization’. It is true that as his thinking
developed Weizmann categorically stated and patently wished that ‘600,000
Arabs have just as much right to their life in Palestine as we have to our
National Home’. It was an optimistic expectation. Like the British in India, the
Zionists of Weizmann’s generation could not entirely shake off the sense that
when a European man set foot on non-European soil he did so as the superior
of the native population. He came to conquer and to improve. In his more
unguarded moments he suggested, in his thinking about the settlement of
Palestine, that the fate of ‘several hundred thousand negroes’ was ‘a matter of
no consequence’. Just as the British in South Africa could dehumanize the
Indians by referring to the as coolies, so Weizmann could see the indigenous
population of the Middle East as negroes…”

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…”

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 residents 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…"596

596 Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 367-369. Ironically, in 1918, Ben Gurion and Ben-Zvi wrote a book entitled Erets 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!
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.
42. FIN DE SIÈCLE RELIGION

Being an aristocrat still counted for something in the last decades before the First World War. But political and economic power had already slipped away from the landed aristocracy to the middle classes – to the bankers and industrialists, the lawyers, the accountants and the doctors, who bought up their country estates when they fell into debt and whose numbers increased rapidly in the equally rapidly growing great cities of “the second industrial revolution”. “Over the decades,” writes Sir Richard Evans, “political systems everywhere, even in reluctant tsarist Russia, had adjusted to the new role of the middle classes. Yet there was also a sense in some quarters that their heyday was over by 1900. In the first year of the new century the German writer Thomas Mann (1875-1955) published his great novel of upper-middle-class life, Buddenbrooks, in which a mercantile family gradually falls apart over the decades as its members abandon their core values and sink into self-indulgence and decadence in process symbolized in the progressively worsening tooth decay suffered by the men of each generation.”

"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 thrusting, 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.'"

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.

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"There is no doubt that, as the career and popularity of H.G. Wells demonstrates, unbelief was rife among the masses." Nevertheless, “the nineteenth century was an era of faith quite as much as it was one of doubt. While sophisticates abandoned the old Bible, new bibles were in the making. An angel called Moroni directed Joseph Smith, a teen-aged labourer from New England, to find, in 1827, those Golden Plates which would contain the new gospel, *The New Mormon*. In 1875, Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910) was to publish *Science and Health*, later named *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, which, as the eternal document of the new religion of Christian Science, was in effect to be a further testament, assuring believers that disease and indeed evil itself were illusory. Blavatsky’s new Scripture, *Isis Unveiled* (1879), was written by invisible Spirit hands. Half a million words long, it began by denouncing the scientific materialism of Darwin and Huxley, and went on to expound its key doctrine, namely that all wisdom is One, that science is not opposed to religion, and that religious differences are man-made. Anyone who has nursed the thought that ‘deep down all religions are saying the same thing’ is more than halfway towards Theosophy…”

Theosophy’s most famous adept 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

599 Wilson, *After the Victorians*, p. 80.

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.”

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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 Pavlovich 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."

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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Yet another popular false religion was Freemasonry. 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. In the Anglo-Saxon countries and Germany, Masonry was theist and antirevolutionary, concentrating on 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.

602 Tikhomirov, "Religiozo-filosofskie Osnovy Istorii" (The Religio-Philosophical Foundations of History), Moscow, 1997, pp. 480-481.


604 Soloviev, op. cit., p. 29.
However, it was different in France: after the Republican victory in the 1877 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'.”605

"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."606

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."607


607 Ridley, op. cit., pp. 70-71.
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 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".608

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

608 Ridley, op. cit., p. 220.
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.⁶⁰⁹

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."⁶¹⁰

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."⁶¹¹

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.


⁶¹⁰ Soloviev, op. cit., p. 39.

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!"\textsuperscript{612}

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 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."\textsuperscript{613}

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."\textsuperscript{614}

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Pius IX's successor, Leo XIII, gradually brought the Papacy into a more "normal" relationship with the modern world. As A.N. Wilson writes, "he was rumoured to be more 'liberal' than his predecessor, which would not have been difficult. Politically, the great question facing the Papacy was whether it would admit that it had lost its temporal power, and accept the new kingdom of Italy. 'To the Italians it would seem that the Pope had abjured his principles, had abolished his sovereignty. In Europe his reconciliation with the Revolution would be a triumph to the revolutionary party in every land.' So the Holy See stood firm, refused to recognize the Italian king, and put Italian Catholics in the position of having to choose whether to accept the new realpolitik or be loyal to the Church. To vote in the elections, or take posts as civil servants, automatically excommunicated them... Little by little, however, the pope began to show common sense in this respect, even going so far in 1901 as to write an encyclical (\textit{Graves de communi}) which permitted the use of the phrase 'Christian democracy', though with the provision that this had no political implications..."\textsuperscript{615}

\textsuperscript{612} Frély, in Archpriest Lev Lebedev, \textit{Velikorossia (Great Russia)}, St. Petersburg, 1997, p. 357.

\textsuperscript{613} De Poncins, \textit{Freemasonry and the Vatican}, Chulmleigh: Britons Publishing Company, p. 73.

\textsuperscript{614} V.F. Ivanov, \textit{Russkaia Intelligentsia i Masonstvo: ot Petra I do nashikh dnej} (The Russian Intelligentsia and Masonry: from Peter I to our Days), Harbin, 1934, Moscow, 1997, p. 67.

\textsuperscript{615} Wilson, \textit{The Victorians}, pp. 515-516.
Leo XIII continued, like all the Pope before the later 20th century, to reject ecumenism. Thus he wrote in Libertas Praestantissimum: "Justice forbids, and reason itself forbids, the State to be godless; or to adopt a line of action which would end in godlessness—namely, to treat the various religions (as they call them) alike, and to bestow upon them promiscuously equal rights and privileges."

Leo normalized relations with Germany and Bismarck after Kulturkampf, and even improved relations with Russia after the murder of Alexander II. Also, in his famous encyclical *Rerum novarum* (1891), whose subject was the condition of the working classes, he attempted to place the Church above both sides in the capital versus labour debate. In view of its importance in the history of Catholic social philosophy, it will be worth quoting some paragraphs from it:-

"To remedy these wrongs the socialists, working on the poor man's envy of the rich, are striving to do away with private property, and contend that individual possessions should become the common property of all, to be administered by the State or by municipal bodies. They hold that by thus transferring property from private individuals to the community, the present mischievous state of things will be set to rights, inasmuch as each citizen will then get his fair share of whatever there is to enjoy. But their contentions are so clearly powerless to end the controversy that were they carried into effect the working man himself would be among the first to suffer. They are, moreover, emphatically unjust, for they would rob the lawful possessor, distort the functions of the State, and create utter confusion in the community." (Par 4)

"It is surely undeniable that, when a man engages in remunerative labor, the impelling reason and motive of his work is to obtain property, and thereafter to hold it as his very own… a working man's little estate thus purchased should be as completely at his full disposal as are the wages he receives for his labor. . . . Socialists, therefore, by endeavoring to transfer the possessions of individuals to the community at large, strike at the interests of every wage-earner, since they would deprive him of the liberty of disposing of his wages, and thereby of all hope and possibility of increasing his resources and of bettering his condition in life. " (Par 5).

"What is of far greater moment, however, is the fact that the remedy they propose is manifestly against justice. For, every man has by nature the right to possess property as his own. This is one of the chief points of distinction between man and the animal creation. . . . But animal nature, however perfect, is far from representing the human being in its completeness, and is in truth but humanity's humble handmaid, made to serve and to obey. . . . man alone among the animal creation is endowed with reason - it must be within his right to possess things not merely for temporary and momentary use, as other living things do, but to have and to hold them in stable and permanent possession;" (Par 6)

"The great mistake made in regard to the matter now under consideration is to take up with the notion that class is naturally hostile to class, and that the wealthy and the working men are intended by nature to live in mutual conflict.
So irrational and so false is this view that the direct contrary is the truth. . . . Each needs the other: capital cannot do without labor, nor labor without capital. " (Par 19)

"Of these duties, the following bind the proletarian and the worker: fully and faithfully to perform the work which has been freely and equitably agreed upon; never to injure the property, nor to outrage the person, of an employer; never to resort to violence in defending their own cause, nor to engage in riot or disorder; and to have nothing to do with men of evil principles, who work upon the people with artful promises of great results, and excite foolish hopes which usually end in useless regrets and grievous loss. The following duties bind the wealthy owner and the employer: not to look upon their work people as their bondsmen, but to respect in every man his dignity as a person ennobled by Christian character." (Par 20)

The encyclical, writes Wilson, “foresees the possibility of state socialism being just as prejudicial to individual liberty as voracious capitalism. It asserts – is it the first major political tract of the nineteenth century to do so? – the notion of human rights:

“‘Rights must be held sacred wherever they exist… Where the protection of private rights is concerned, special regard… must be had for the poor and the weak. Rich people can use their wealth to protect themselves and have less need of the State’s protection; but the mass of the poor have nothing of their own with which to defend themselves and have to depend above all on the protection of the state.’

“The encyclical was inspirational to figures such as Hilaire Belloc, G.K. Chesterton and Eric Gill in the twentieth century, who drew from it the inference that socialism and capitalism were two sides of the same coin, both dedicated to depriving the individual of liberty…”

After Leo’s death, however, as George L. Mosse writes, “the Church attempted to tighten its control over both political parties and Catholic thought in general. Pius X… believed that liberalism still constituted a menace to the Church, especially in its effect upon Biblical scholarship and the analysis of Church history. There were ‘Modernists’ who wanted to do what Lamennais had advocated earlier: bring Church tradition in line with modern thought. They were especially influenced by Kant, by a rationalism which led them to revise Church history away from anti-Protestant polemics to a ‘scientific’ analysis of the history of the Church in tune with German historical scholarship. This led some of them to question the pope’s ex cathedra statements in the name of historical tradition. Once more, the introduction of ‘modern thought’ into the Church meant a strong pull toward Christian interdenominationalism. Pius

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616 Wilson, op. cit., p. 516.
reacted with the syllabus *Lamentabile* (1907), excommunicated leading Modernists, and made the clergy swear an anti-modernist oath (1910).

“... After Pius’s death, the pendulum again swung the other way and Benedict XIV gave national, political Catholicism a lasting measure of freedom from Rome (1914)...”"617

*Mason*ry, 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, "dramatically crystallized opinion in Paris [and] 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."618

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.

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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 a 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.619

619 Comby, How to Read Church History, London: SCM Press, 1989, 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
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.”

The Separation between Church and State in France “had several important consequences. It meant that Church and State were rudely torn apart and this fed bitterness on both sides. In education there had always been, in France, a dual system of Church and state schools, but now the latter schools were strengthened through the completion of a network of free, compulsory, and secular primary and secondary schools. By 1925 over four times as many children went to state schools as attended the schools of the Church. The result was much strife and bitterness between the two systems, especially on the local level. The teachers in the state schools, facing hostility and pressure from the Church, tended to become ever more antclerical and indeed left-wing. They became the constant furtherers of anticlericalism in France.

“On the political level the Church was slinked to violently pro-Catholic movements which were also anti-Republic and authoritarian. The anti-Dreyfusard atmosphere was kept alive here as many of the bishops and clergy supported groups like the Action Française of Charles Maurras. It has been pointed out quite correctly that the separation between Church and state meant the end of the Gallican liberties which had given the state a say in the appointment of bishops. From now on the pope alone controlled the Church in France. But even those pope who wanted the Church to be reconciled to the Republic could not stem the tide of bitterness which remained. When in 1925 the Action Française was put on the Index many clergy changed their support to even more radical rightist movements…”

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.)


621 Mosse, op. cit., p. 258.
The generation that followed the art for art’s sake debate was followed, not coincidentally, by a breakdown in the continuity of artistic styles that had been such a striking aspect of western civilization since the Renaissance. Of course, western civilization was distinguished from other, more static civilizations in the East by its dynamism, its constant changes of style. Nevertheless, each change of style had grown naturally out of its predecessors, and each new style had produced undoubted masters and masterpieces. To take the example of music: the Renaissance produced Palestrina and Tallis, Byrd and Gibbon and Monteverdi; the Baroque produced Purcell, Vivaldi, J.S. Bach and Handel; the Classical produced C.P.E. Bach, Boccherini, Gluck, Haydn and Mozart; the early Romantic produced Beethoven and Schubert (who also produced works in the Classical style), Schumann, Chopin, Mendelssohn, Berlioz and Liszt; the late Romantic produced Wagner, Brahms, Bruckner, Tchaikovsky, Dvorak, Bizet, Debussy, Ravel, Borodin and Mussorgsky. However, from the beginning of the twentieth century we notice a change. There were still composers of genius producing Late Romantic masterpieces. But the style, in the opinion of many, was becoming “decadent”, “Silver Age”, “overblown” both in its need for ever larger orchestral and choral forces and in the sense that the emotions expressed were extravagant and wild in the extreme. This produced a reaction in some of the same composers who had produced these masterpieces. Stravinsky and Sibelius, for example, tried to produce sparer, more restrained music – even if their Romantic roots could not be hidden. Others, such as Schoenberg entered the strange world of atonality.

However, the truth was that there was no new musical style. Atonality is not a style, nor does it grow out of the previous, late Romantic style, but is rather a denial of all styles, a leap into the dark of rootless stylelessness. The great composers of the twentieth century who – unlike the atonalists – actually had a following, were still exploring Romanticism. Thus Shostakovich and Prokofiev, Britten and Bernstein were all essentially Romantics – but with some added angst and astringency, harking back sometimes backwards to the eighteenth century Baroque and Classical composers, and sometimes sideways to African jazz or South American dance rhythms. Those who remained fixed in the old pre-1914 style, like Rachmaninov or Strauss, remained popular, but lost their front-rank status. (Strauss said: “I may not be a first-rank composer, but I am a first-rank second-rank composer.”)

Something similar was happening in the visual arts. Atonality in music was paralleled by abstract art, in which only aficionados could see real beauty. Cézanne and Picasso still had had roots – just – in the old tradition of western representational art. But beyond them was – the abyss.
The breakdown in art was a sign of the general breakdown in western civilization. Wherever we look – in religion, where the existence of a single truth was increasingly denied; in morality, where relativism denied a clear difference between good and evil; in physics, where relativity theory and the beginnings of quantum physics denied that time was constant or matter material; in politics, where governments succeeded each other with bewildering speed; in psychology, where the highest strivings of man were reduced to the lowest instincts - we see breakdown, chaos, the end of the line. Only a general conflagration could – perhaps – clear the air and enable civilization to begin again on firmer foundations...

Let us look more closely at the influence of the new science of 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-cathcted, remains thereafter in the Ucs in a state of repression."627

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."628

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*:

*Look what thy memory cannot contain*  
*Commit to these waste blanks, and thou shalt find*  
*Those children nurs'd, deliver'd from thy brain, To take a new acquaintance of thy mind.*

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 affictions 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.\footnote{Watson, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 84-88.}

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But how can religion be a way for humankind to understand itself if it is \textit{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 \textit{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…”\footnote{Kramer, in Jerry Adler, “Freud in our Midst”, \textit{Newsweek}, March 27, 2006, p. 37.} This is not to say that these Freudian phenomena are \textit{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 \textit{repression}, which is valid. But repression, says Lewis, must not be confused with \textit{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…”\footnote{Lewis, \textit{Mere Christianity}, London: Fount Paperbacks, 1977, pp. 91-92.}

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 “\textit{id}” are \textit{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 “\textit{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 supernatural 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 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.


633 Lewis, op. cit., p. 81.
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.”

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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 constitutes a part of our personality. We must suppose that much

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636 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).
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.”

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 followers, 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”639, 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...

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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

637 Grabbe, op. cit.

638 Freud, Group Psychology, pp. 103, 94.

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'.

“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

640 Wilson, op. cit., pp. 89-90.

641 Watson, op. cit., p. 59.
pragmatic philosophy – again, so typical of this, the age of relativity - would in any case have prevented him from finding the truth.

Nevertheless, he and his brother, the novelist Henry James, can be counted among the subtlest observers of the human condition.

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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 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. 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 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 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." 643

"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...

"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."

"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."644

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.

“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 has 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 any 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 brain science), or wanders into metaphysical clouds of nonsense and/or ambiguity that increase neither scientific nor any other kind of knowledge...
44. AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

In 1897, many of the crowned heads of Europe assembled in London to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of Queen Victoria’s accession to the throne. The Diamond Jubilee celebrations, bringing together representatives of every nation of the empire, marked the zenith not only of the British empire, the largest in extent to that date in world history, but the acme of the idea of empire in general, of empire as the bearer of true civilization.

The great poet of empire, Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936), wrote a poem for the occasion, Recessional (referring to the procession of clergy out of church after a service), which was published in The Times the next day:

Far-called, our navies melt away;
On dune and headland sinks the fire;
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget – lest we forget…

Coming from the “jingoistic” poet par excellence, this call to humility was unexpected. The British Empire, he warned, could go the same way as those ancient empires of Nineveh and Tyre if it succumbed to pride... His words seemed to strike a chord in the heart of the people... And yet the pride, cruelty and rapacity of the European imperialist nations continued unabated right up to the First World War, which served as God’s punishment of these same sins.

Russia and America were exceptional among the 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."646 And yet America was an empire in all but name. Essentially, she was the same type of relatively liberal, 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."647

The distribution of wealth in America, as in Russia, was very unequal. “In its distribution of wealth and income,” writes Robert Tombs, “Victorian England was probably comparable with Germany, but much less unequal than Russia

and America, where both new and inherited wealth reached unique heights: in 1900 the richest American had at least twelve times as much money as the richest Englishman.”

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 twice warred against each other in the past, and the British remained the only power that could seriously contest American domination in the Western Hemisphere. 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, and between Lord Curzon and his wife) 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.” 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.’

“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. ‘Today 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.’

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“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…”650

As a result of the Spanish-American War that then took place, America vaulted herself into the ranks of the major powers. The British chose not to contest this. Indeed, in 1899, on the occasion of the American’s annexation of the Philippines, Rudyard Kipling wrote a famous poem, “passing on the baton”, as it were, from one liberal empire to another:

Take up the White Man’s burden –  
The savage wars of peace –  
Fill full the mouth of Famine  
And bid the sickness cease;  
And when your goal is nearest  
The end for others sought,  
Watch Sloth and heathen Folly  
Bring all your hope to nought.

Britain was glad to pass on “the White Man’s burden”, not only because it was heavy in itself, but also because, 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.”

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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". 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, according to Diana Preston, "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…'"

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...""

“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


652 Reynolds, op. cit., p. 295.


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, 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.”

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

655 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)

656 Judis, "Imperial Amnesia", Foreign Policy, July-August, 2004, p. 54.

657 Smith, "Heroes of the Cuban revolution: Marti, Maceo and Gomez", Historian, N 44, Winter,
1994, pp. 7-8.
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 Philippinos 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... 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...

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."

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. "The Kingdom of Hawaii," writes Thornton, "gained the recognition of the United States and the

658 Smith, op. cit.
659 Judis, op. cit., p. 50.
660 Ferguson, Colossus, p. 50.
661 Ferguson, Colossus, p. 48.
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, Liliʻuokalani, 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.”

At the beginning of the twentieth century, America’s 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 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

662 Thornton, op. cit.
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)...665

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 shrunk. 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."666

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

663 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.” (op. cit., p. 301).


665 Reynolds, op. cit., p. 301.

666 Judis, op. cit., p. 54.
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 moderative action on the other’. For his mediation, Roosevelt was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, the first American to be so honored…”667

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 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 instill U.S.-style constitutional democracy and capitalism through force were destined to fail.”668

While American power might look old-fashionedly 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

667 Kissinger, op. cit., pp. 251-252. In order further to limit Japanese expansion, Roosevelt sent a fleet of sixteen battle-ships around the world. It was painted in white to denote peace. He thereby hoped to show how America could “speak softly and carry a big stick” (Kissinger, op. cit., p. 253).

668 Judis, op. cit., p. 54.
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. American 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.

“The 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’…”

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

670 Tooze, op. cit., pp. 44-45.
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’.”671

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.

“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

671 Kissinger, op. cit., p. 257.
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.’”

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 (Pescador 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 (fanshu) 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 colonization, 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, Jiaozhou 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.

673 The policy proposed the principle of equality of access for goods and capital but without annexation of territory. (V.M.)
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 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…”674

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.”675

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…


46. THE GREAT POWERS 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

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676 Lieven, Towards the Flame. Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia, London: Allen Lane, 2015, p. 28.
fleets 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.

“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, 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 these were not serious. 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

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677 As the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Selborne, said in 1902: the German fleet “is very carefully built up from the point of view of a war with us” (Tombs, The English and their History, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014, p. 604). (V.M.)


679 Lieven, op. cit., p. 29.
general direction of German expansion: not overseas, but overland. While Britain would build 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. Only Germany’s building of the Berlin-Baghdad railway, which threatened India, really worried the British, for whom India was all-important…

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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 against 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 hitherto had been their traditional enemies.680

While Britain was become less isolated, Germany was becoming more so – and the fault was mostly hers, as her highly aggressive, provocative yet inconsistent and ill-thought-out policies alarmed her neighbours and drew them closer together. Thus Britain and France, through the cultural diplomacy of the Francophile King Edward VII, formed an entente cordiale, which, while not a full military alliance, was creeping in that direction. According to Tombs, “British politicians, diplomats, service chiefs and public came to see Germany as a potential threat… and France as a potential ally although plans were still being considered for the possibility of war against France and Russia. Tentative military ‘conversations’ took place between British and French generals. The Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, tried to explain it all in 1911 to the Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith: ‘Early in 1906 the French said to us ‘will you help us if there is a war with Germany?’ We said ‘we can’t promise, our hands must be free’. The French then urged that the Military Authorities should be allowed to exchange views – ours to say what they should do – the French to say how they would like it done, if we did side with the French – Otherwise, as the French urged, even if we decided to support France, on the outbreak of war we shouldn’t be able to do it effectively. We agreed to this.’”681


681 Tombs, op. cit., p. 605.
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” – 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.”

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. By 1912 a quarter of the state budget was being spent on the naval build-up.

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...

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686 Tombs, op. cit., p. 605.

687 Carter, op. cit., p. 373.
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.”

688 The Tsar, always a peacemaker, was still 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).

688 Carter, _op. cit_, pp. 331-332.
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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Where did the Austro-Hungarian empire, the other Great Power in Central Europe, fit into this equation? “In 1870,” writes Lieven, “the emperor Franz Joseph, the Austrian ruler, still hoped to join France in defeating Prussia and reasserting Habsburg pre-eminence in Germany. In the aftermath of France’s defeat in 1870-71, Prusso-German dominance of central Europe was an accepted fact, and Vienna increasingly saw the need for German support against its Russian rival in the Balkans.

“Whatever Franz Joseph’s personal inclination, the Austro-German alliance initially agreed in 1879 was never simply a matter of shared strategic interests. For many Germans on both sides of the border, it became a substitute for the dreams of a greater Germany (Gross-Deutschland), which Bismarck’s policy had reined in and which the empire of the Hohenzollerns could not satisfy. Catholic Germans were especially likely to welcome the alliance for this reason. The Austrian-Germans were the most powerful community in the Habsburg Empire, and for them the alliance with Berlin was increasingly seen as a bulwark against the Slav threat not just from without but also from within the monarchy. In a world shot through with ideas about ethnicity and race, the alliance with Berlin also simply seemed ‘natural’ in Austrian-German eyes. Hungarian elites too saw the alliance as a crucial guarantee against Slav domination of their region. Governments in Vienna and Berlin by no means always saw eye to eye. Germany was, for example, Austria’s chief economic competitor in the Balkans. The Habsburg authorities also made many efforts to conciliate their Slav subjects in a manner that annoyed Austrian-Germans and did so without too much concern for Berlin’s opinions. Internal and foreign affairs remained separate on an

689 Carter, op. cit., p. 392.

690 Carter, op. cit., p. 393.
everyday level. But even having aside common geopolitical interests, it was by now barely imaginable for Austria to remove itself from Berlin’s embrace or join any anti-German international alliance. Equally unlikely was German toleration of the Austrian empire’s breakup or even of the radical weakening of the German-Austrian position within the monarchy. Potentially, the Germanic bloc in central Europe was less powerful than the Anglo-American one, but before 1914 in military and diplomatic terms it was far more closely united.

“Austrian perspectives were inevitably less global than in Berlin, let alone London, but Austrian diplomats in the United States were all too aware of enormous America’s potential power and its implications. At the turn of the twentieth century, Austria’s representatives in Washington commented that as all eyes turned to global competition and the future of Asia, Austria-Hungary more and more seemed a second- or even third-class power. In the sixteenth century, the Habsburg monarch Charles V had threatened to dominate all Europe. Klemens von Metternich, the Austrian foreign minister, had stood at the centre of the coalition that had defeated Napoleon and created a new European order at the Congress of Vienna. In comparison both to the Habsburgs’ glorious past and to the great issues linked to mankind’s future that were now on the agenda, the Balkan questions that had obsessed Austrian leaders in the 1880s were petty. The Anglo-Saxon powers had essentially fenced off Europeans in a continental enclosure from which they could safely look out wistfully at goings on in the great world. While Europeans lived on scraps in their continental zoo, the British and the Americans felt free to graze all across the globe’s rich pastures. This was an insult to dignity as well as to more concrete European interests because Anglo-American power and arrogance meant that ‘outside the European continent anyone who isn’t an Anglo-Saxon is a barely tolerated second-class human being.’ Americans knew that they could outcompete Europe in industry and agriculture. They were conscious of their country’s enormous potential resources, as well as of the superior wealth and education of ordinary Americans when compared with the average European. All this went far toward explaining their offhand and dismissive attitude toward foreigners.

“At least German leaders’ hopes for the future could be sustained by their country’s growing economic domination of Europe and by the vibrant self-confidence of German nationalism. In Vienna by contrast, it was difficult not to feel that history was against one. Austria had been the leading power in both Germany and Italy in the mid-nineteenth century. First France and then Germany had defeated it. Still worse, the defeats were not just a question of power and geopolitics. It was also generally believed that in the 1850s and 1860s Austria had been defeated not just by rival powers but also by the nationalist idea, which was then embodied in the new German and Italian nation-states. The nation seemed to represent the future, while the era of polyglot empires seemed part of the past. In 1900, all European empires were potentially threatened by the spread of nationalist ideas. These empires were sustained, however, by the strength of metropolitan nationalism. Austria was the exception. Germans made up less than one-quarter of the Habsburg Empire’s population. Moreover, subjects of the Habsburg emperor who were German nationalists in many cases
actually looked forward to the empire’s demise and the unification of all German territories and peoples under the rule of Berlin.

“After Austria was forced out of Germany and Italy, the only remaining region where it could act as a great power was in the Balkans. This was doubly true because, alone among the powers, Austria had no overseas colonies that might give the metropolitan population a sense of unity, mission, and global significance. At a time when the Dutch, the Portuguese, and even the Belgians had large overseas colonial empires, this was particularly galling. The closest the Austrians had to a colony was the formerly Ottoman Bosnia-Hercegovina, occupied in 1878 and finally annexed in 1908. Here the Austrians sought to implement their own version of a European civilizing mission. They operated according to the usual Christian, European, and liberal assumptions of their day as they tried to foster economic progress and civic culture. The Ottomans had ruled Bosnia-Hercegovina with a loose rein through an imperial local bureaucracy of 120 officials. In the early twentieth century, Vienna employed over nine thousand officials there. As in British India, a commitment to progress was tempered by the wish not to antagonize Muslim landowning elites. In addition, a genuinely radical land reform (of the kind executed by the British in Ireland) would have meant buying out the Muslim landowning class, and for this no funds were available.

“The Austrian government did much to modernize the provinces, but satisfaction was bound to be muted by the lesson of European history that education and modernity tended to breed nationalists. Certainly there was evidence of this in Bosnia-Hercegovina, where the sons of apolitical Serb peasants who attended high schools could easily be taken up by the romantic, nationalist appeal of heroism and martyrdom...”

Austria’s annexation of Bosnia with its large Serbian population profoundly shocked the Serbs and Russians, 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. This event, more than any other, made eventual war between the Germanic and Slavic nations not simply possible but probable.

* * *

Meanwhile, as Carter writes, “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

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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…” 692

The reason for the lack of political, as opposed to cultural sympathy was twofold: first, the increasing democratization of British society, 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…” 693

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.” 694 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 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…” 695

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

692 Carter, op.cit., p. 401.
693 Carter, op.cit., p. 372.
694 Carter, op.cit., p. 402.
695 Simms, op.cit., p. 294.
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 inflammation 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..."

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.”

697 Lieven, op. cit., p. 29.

Why did Britain join the war? After all, Germany declared war on France and Russia, not on Britain, which was not closely tied to the other nations in military alliances. With its overwhelming naval power, Britain was not directly threatened by Germany, and so could have sat out the war without fatal danger to itself.

“Given the terrible permanent damage the war did,” writes Tombs, “it is natural to feel that Britain should have stayed out at all costs. What would those costs have been? The Foreign Office feared both possible outcomes: ‘(a) Either Germany and Austria win, crush France and humiliate Russia. With the French fleet gone, Germany in occupation of the Channel, with the willing or unwilling cooperation of Holland and Belgium, what will be the position of a friendless England? (b) Or France and Russia win. What would then be their attitude towards England? What about India and the Mediterranean?’ As Bethmann Hollweg put it, ‘the English policy of the Balance of Power must disappear’ and ‘a new Europe’ be created. This, feared Grey, would expose Britain and its empire to subsequent German aggression, perhaps abetted by an embittered Russia and France – which the German government did indeed intend. ‘[I]f we must bleed to death,’ said the Kaiser on 30 June, ‘at least England must lose India’.

“A few historians have taken an optimistic view of the likely consequences of a German victory. It would merely have brought about ‘the Kaiser’s European Union,’ a German-led common market ‘eight decades ahead of schedule... with which Britain, with her maritime empire intact, could... have lived.’ Besides, Germany might meanwhile have become a democracy. Such optimism rests on two assumptions. First, that the hegemonic war aims formulated by Germany soon after war began would not have emerged had Britain not intervened. Second, that the Kaiser’s government is comparable with that of post-1945 Germany: mellowed by victory, it would have introduced democracy, handed power to its domestic enemies, and devoted itself to friendly relations with its defeated foreign rivals. It is true that Germany (like other belligerents) had no list of war aims when war broke out: not surprisingly, as all were claiming to be fighting in self-defence. In the hope of preventing or delaying British intervention, Germany offered not to annex any Belgian territory if the Belgians did not resist – a significant condition – and not to annex any French territory – though French colonies were fair game. But relative restraint promised before war had begun rapidly disappeared once battle was joined.

“So a far less optimistic vision of German victory is plausible. Even if Britain had remained neutral, war would still have broken out, Germany would have invaded Belgium and France, and the French and Belgians could have resisted – as of course they did irrespective of British action. Germany would probably have been victorious eventually without British intervention, but that victory would not have been quick or painless. As it was, the French army bloodily threw back the German invasion with minor help from the British, and the French and Russians were capable of resisting for many months at least on their own. As early as September 1914, Bethmann-hollweg (a relative moderate) laid out his vision of the ‘Kaiser’s European
Union’ when imposed by force. Belgium would be taken over completely as a ‘vassal state’ with its ports ‘at our military disposal’, and this became the core of Germany’s war aims in the west. The German navy wanted to establish bases directly threatening England – something the English had fought against for centuries. This aim was supported by nationalist politicians and newspapers, and backed by a surge of Anglophobia. To ensure ‘security for the German Reich in West and East for all imaginable time,’ Bethmann envisaged annexing large parts of northern France, including the Channel coast, imposing a crippling financial indemnity, making France ‘economically dependent on Germany’ and excluding British commerce. Holland would become ‘dependent’. A European ‘economic association’ would be imposed to ‘stabilise Germany’s economic dominance’; Germany would subsequently set up a continuous ‘Central African colonial empire’. Finally, Germany would detach vast territories from Russia to ‘thrust [it] back as far as possible’ – precisely what it did after defeating Russia in 1917.

“Germany’s rules came to see the war as a struggle against democracy, with victory the way of finally establishing their authoritarian power, which by the end of the war was practically a military dictatorship. The Kaiser, when he thought Germany had finally won in March 1918 said that ‘if an English delegation comes to sue for peace it must kneel before the German standard for it was a question here of a victory of monarchy over democracy.’ Democracy would have had a bleak future in a Europe dominated by triumphant military monarchies in Berlin and Vienna. It seems unlikely that French democracy would have survived – it did not in 1940. Other vassal states would plausibly have come under harsh puppet dictatorships. What German soldiers and governors actually did is telling: over 6,000 civilians in Belgium and France were massacred in the first weeks of the war by invading troops; Belgium and occupied northern France were subjected to harsh military rule, semi-starvation, mass forced labour and systematic economic devastation in many ways worse than in the Second World War. In short, England in 1914 faced a prospect not so different from those in 1803 and in 1939. Perhaps in all three cases it could have survived as a cowed and impoverished satellite state, and it is possible to consider that a lesser evil than the carnage of the war. But in 1914 government and people chose overwhelmingly to fight against ‘militarism and aggression, defending law and order in Europe and even hoping that this would be the war to end war. They were probably right to fear what Germany might do, but they underestimated – like everyone else - the cost of preventing it. It is possible to disagree. But it was not a frivolous cause or a senseless decision…

“Grey was convinced that British security, and indeed honour, required that France should not be crushed by German. He also feared making an enemy of Russia - ‘If we fail her now,’ wrote the ambassador in St. Petersburg, ‘we cannot hope to maintain that friendly cooperation with her in Asia that is of such vital importance to us.’ On 28 July Austria declared war on Serbia, and on the twenty-ninth Russia ordered the mobilization of her forces. When King George V informed Asquith on 28 July that he had told Prince Henry of Prussia that Britain would try to remain neutral, Asquith pointed out the dangers: ‘Russia says to us: "If you won’t say you are ready to side with us now, your friendship is valueless, and we shall act on that assumption in the future".’ The desperate French ambassador warned that if Britain let France down ‘those in favour of an alliance with Germany at the expense of
Britain could feel justified’ – France would watch the future ruin of the British Empire ‘without a movement of sympathy’. On 30 July Germany refused to attend Grey’s conference, asking instead that Britain should promise neutrality in return for a pledge that Germany would make no territorial changes after its victory. Sir Eyre Crowe, head of the Foreign Office’s Western Department, though this ‘cynical and dishonourable’, proving that ‘Germany wants this war’.

“Amid these pressures from all sides, the British government tried to dissuade the other states from taking fatal actions. Grey confided to a friend that he had ‘not lost all hope of a settlement,’ and he warned Paris on 31 July that Britain might have to remain neutral because its involvement would bring down the European economy. On 1 August, George V on Foreign Office advice sent a personal telegram to the tsar (addressed to ‘Dear Nicky’ and signed ‘Georgie’) urging the Russians to stop their mobilization. Later that day Grey told the German ambassador that if Germany promised not to attack France, Britain would remain neutral and try to keep France neutral. As German troops were already entering neutral Luxembourg, this news gave the German chief of staff a mild stroke. On 2 August the British Cabinet reluctantly consented to defend the French coast and French shipping from possible German attack. Grey made a statement to the Commons asserting that if Britain stayed neutral it would ‘sacrifice our… reputation before the world, and [we] should not escape the most serious and grave economic consequences.’ Both the king and the social reformer Beatrice Webb recorded in their diaries the impact of Grey’s speech on public opinion: Webb thought that now ‘even staunch Liberals agree that we had to stand by Belgium.’ Both Lloyd George and Churchill, however, though that if the Germans marched through only a small part of its territory, no British action would be necessary. But on 4 August the German army smashed its way into the heart of Belgium, and the Belgians fought back. ‘This simplified matters,’ commented Asquith. The German ambassador in London reported to Berlin that ‘the Government will have behind it the overwhelming majority of parliament [for] the protection of France and Belgium.’ Britain declared war at midnight on the fourth. A month later, it signed a pact with France and Russia not make a separate peace…”

47. GERMANY, NIETZSCHE AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR

The catastrophic period in world history that began in 1914 and has not really ended yet proves one thing beyond doubt: that ideas are the main propellors of history, that men go to war, not primarily for political or economic reasons, but for religious or ideological reasons. And no idea was more important in understanding Germany’s role in world history in the period of the two world wars than Nietzsche’s ideas of the Superman and the Triumph of the Will. But Nietzschean ideas needed Nietzsche – or, at any rate, neurotic - characters in which the ideas could germinate and bring forth fruit. In the period leading up to the First World War such a personality was Kaiser Wilhelm II. The Kaiser was important not only in himself: he served as a symptom and symbol of the Nietzschean pathology of the whole German nation...

For, as Felix Ponsonby said, the Kaiser “was the creation of the Germans themselves. They wanted a sabre-rattling autocrat with theatrical ways, attempting to dominate Europe, sending telegrams and making bombastic speeches, and he did his best to supply them with the superman they required.”700 Again, as Stuart Miller writes, "the real problem was that he was too typical of the new state which he was now called upon to rule. A very complex personality with a rather stunted body and a withered arm, he was very insecure and unsure of himself and over-compensated for these inadequacies with bumptious aggressiveness and flamboyant posing. 'Psychological' versions of history can be very dangerous, but it is not difficult to see the problems and responses of the Kaiser and the state as being identical."701

Wilhelm had had a difficult birth that gave him a withered arm; and he developed a hatred for his English mother and all things English. Mary Greene writes: “By the time his father died of cancer in 1888 at their palace in Potsdam, Wilhelm was set in his anglophobia and loathing for his mother and her liberal ideas. An English doctor had crippled his arm, he declared, and an English doctor had killed his father after misdiagnosing his cancer as benign: ‘One cannot have enough hatred for England’…” 702 Unbalanced, aggressive and inconsistent to the point of illness (Tsar Nicholas II said he was "raving mad"), Wilhelm had much to do with dividing Europe into two armed camps and souring the relations between Germany and England, on the one hand, and between Germany and Russia, on the other. He dismissed Bismarck and allowed the "reinsurance" treaty with Russia to lapse, thereby introducing a dangerous note of insecurity into German foreign policy. His relative, St. Elizabeth the New Martyr, the sister of the Tsaritsa, blamed the outbreak of war partly his departure from the policies of Bismarck.

"The monarch," writes W.H. Spellman, was moving Germany "into an aggressive and expansionist posture. In language reminiscent of eighteenth-century divine-right absolutism, he informed the Provincial Diet of Brandenburg

in 1891, 'that I regard my whole position and my task as having been imposed on me from heaven, and that I am called to the service of a Higher Being, to Whom I shall have to give a reckoning later.' To Bismarck's successor William confided in 1892 that he was not interested in personal popularity (although his actions belied this), 'for, as the guiding principles of my actions, I have only the dictates of my duty and the responsibility of my clear conscience towards God'. In 1900 William told the future George V of England that as Kaiser he alone 'was master of German policy and my country must follow me wherever I go'. In the judgement of one recent observer the emperor personified the dynastic culture of later eighteenth-century Europe: 'He was a monarch by Divine Right yet always the parvenu; a medieval knight in shining armour and yet the inspiration behind that marvel of modern technology, the battle fleet; a dyed-in-the-wool reactionary yet also - for a time at least - the Socialist Emperor who supported basic accident and retirement insurance for the industrial worker.'

Prussian militarism gradually penetrated most of the country. Only the more pacifist and internationalist tendency of the powerful Social Democratic party stood out as a significant exception to the general mood. But in Germany’s fractured political system the Social Democrats were not able to prevent the Kaiser and the Army from taking control of the general direction of German foreign policy. Nietzsche disliked the New Germany. But paradoxically, as we shall see, no writer contributed more to the establishment of the German proto-fascism of the pre-1914 era...

While the militarists were nationalist rather than internationalist, they had their own global ambitions. Thus in 1894 “radical nationalists set up the Pan-German League. The ambition of the bourgeois nationalist project, and its irritation with the restraint of government policy, was summed up by the rising German sociologist and economist Max Weber. ‘We must realize,’ he announced in his famous Freiburg Lecture of 1895, ‘that the unification of Germany was a youthful prank which the nation played in its dotage, and should have been avoided on account of its cost, if it was to have been the completion rather than the starting point of a bid for German global power.’...

Archimandrite Cyril (Govorun) writes: “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 state’s self-consciousness it was surrounded by enemies who could not understand it or accept its lofty mission because of their corruption. 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, die 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), suggested, 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’…”

At this point Nietzsceanism made its contribution. 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 have his views on the Superman and the Triumph of the Will been seen to foreshadow and influence the coming of Hitler, who paid a visit to his archive in 1934...

What drove Nietzsche, writes Margaret 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

705 Govorun, “Zavtra byla Vojna” (Tomorrow there was War), Religia v Ukraine, March 10, 2014, in Portal-Credo.ru, March 12, 2014.
Serbian nationalists who carried out the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and so precipitated the Great War were deeply impressed by Nietzsche’s views…”

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:

‘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 idols… 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 Kaiserrreich, 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 Tantzscher thought Nietzscheanism fitted neatly 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 avant-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 revealed 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…”\[707\]

In 1914, continues Watson, “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 immorality’ 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.’

“Whatever 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 looked forward to the death of bourgeois society, ‘from whose ashes a nobler world would arise’.”

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 many, thereby making the age that followed truly that of the collective Antichrist...

The vital importance of Nietzscheanism was emphasized by the famous Serbian Bishop Nicholas Velimirovich, who was sent by Serbia as an unofficial ambassador to England during the war, and became very popular there.

The real struggle, said Velimirovich, was 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 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.”

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

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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.”710

IV. THE EAST: SOWING THE WIND (1894-1914)
48. 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-bearing forbear, Alexander I, was and remained an enigma, ‘a sphinx’. It would not have been difficult to decipher this enigma if there had been the desire, if people had looked at his deeds and judged him from them. But ‘educated’ society did not have this desire (there is almost none even now!). However, there was a great desire to represent him as ‘the all-Russian despot’, ‘the tyrant’ in the most unflattering light. And so sometimes spontaneously, at other times 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 Rechs, reported to his government in 1893: ‘... I consider Emperor Nicholas to be a spiritually gifted man, with a noble turn of mind, circumspect and tactful. His manners are so meek, and he displays so little external decisiveness, that one could easily come to the conclusion that he does not have a strong will, but the people around him assure me that he has a very definite will, which he is able to effect in life in the quietest manner.’ The report was accurate. Later the West would more than once become convinced that the Tsar had an exceptionally strong will. President Emile Lubet of France witnessed in 1910: ‘They say about the Russian Tsar that he is accessible to various influences. This is profoundly untrue. The Russian Emperor himself puts his ideas into effect. His plans are maturely conceived and thoroughly worked out. He works unceasingly on their realization.’ Winston Churchill, who knew what he was talking about when it came to rulers, had a very high opinion of the statesmanship abilities of Nicholas II. The Tsar received a very broad higher juridical and military education. His teachers were outstanding university professors, including... 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.”711

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

711 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1997, pp. 377-379.
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 Education alone by 628% from 1894 to 1914; while the railway network increased in length from 1895 to 1915 by 103%, etc. In only twelve years, from 1900 to 1912, infant mortality (infants under one year) went down in Russia from 252 per 1000 live births to 216.

In an age when family life was being undermined, the family of Tsar Nicholas presented an icon, as it were, of what it could and 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 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. 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. 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.”


714 Mikhail V. Shkarovskii, “The Russian Orthodox Church”, in Edward Action, Vladimir Cherniaev, William Rosenberg (eds.), *A Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution, 1914-1921,*
Moreover, he took a very active part in the glorification of new ones, sometimes urging on an unwilling Holy Synod. Among those glorified during his reign were: St. Theodosius of Chernigov (in 1896), St. Isidore of Yuriev (1897), St. Seraphim of Sarov (1903), St. Euphrosyne of Polotsk (1909), St. Anna of Kashin (1910), St. Joasaph of Belgorod (1911), St. Hermogenes of Moscow (1913), St. Pitirim of Tambov (1914), St. John (Maximovich) of Tobolsk (1916) and St. Paul of Tobolsk (1917).

The Emperor stressed the importance of educating the peasant children within the framework of church and parish and, as a result, the number of parish schools, which were more popular among the peasants than the state, zemstvo schools, grew to 37,000. Moreover, Christian literature flourished; excellent journals were published, such as Soul-Profiting Reading, Soul-Profiting Converser, The Wanderer, The Rudder, The Russian Monk, The Trinity Leaflets and the ever-popular Russian Pilgrim. The Russian people were surrounded by spiritual nourishment as never before. And so Archpriest Michael Polsky put it, "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."715

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...”\textsuperscript{716}

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, we must conclude that Tsar Nicholas accomplished much, very much, and that he crowned a righteous life with a truly martyrlic death, fully deserving to be considered as, in the words of Blessed Pasha of Sarov, “the greatest of the Tsars”...

49. RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY

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

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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 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:

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719 Tsar Nicholas, in Lieven, Nicholas II, p. 94.
‘Russia is not only in Europe but in Asia as well... We must cast aside our servile fear that Europe will call us Asiatic barbarians and say that we are more Asian than European... This mistaken view of ourselves as exclusively Europeans and not Asians (and we have never ceased to be the latter)... has cost us very dearly over these two centuries, and we have paid for it by the loss of our spiritual independence... It is hard for us to turn away from our window on Europe; but it is a matter of our destiny... When we turn to Asia, with our new view of her, something of the same sort may happen to us as happened to Europe when America was discovered. With our push towards Asia we will have a renewed upsurge of spirit and strength... In Europe we were hangers-on and slaves [the words ‘slave’ and ‘Slav’ are etymologically identical], while in Asia we shall be the masters. In Europe we were Tatars, while in Asia we can be Europeans. Our mission, our civilizing mission in Asia will encourage our spirit and draw us on; the movement needs only to be started.’ This quotation is a perfect illustration of the Russians’ tendency to define their relations with the East in reaction to their self-esteem and status in the West. Dostoevsky was not actually arguing that Russia is an Asiatic culture; only that the Europeans thought of it as so. And likewise, his argument that Russia should embrace the East was not that it should seek to be an Asiatic force: but, on the contrary, that only in Asia could it find new energy to reassert its Europeanness. The root of Dostoevsky’s turning to the East was the bitter resentment which he, like many Russians, felt at the West’s betrayal of Russia’s Christian cause in the Crimean War, when France and Britain had sided with the Ottomans against Russia to defend their own imperial interests. In the only published very he ever wrote (and the qualities of ‘On the European Events of 1854’ are such that one can see why this was so) Dostoevsky portrayed the Crimean War as the ‘crucifixion of the Russian Christ’. But, as he warned the Western readers of his poem, Russia would arise and, when she did so, she would turn toward the East in her providential mission to Christianize the world.

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

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 has... influence everywhere.”

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 Richard 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

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722 Vladimir Gubanov (ed.), Nikolai II-ij i Novie Mucheniki (Nicholas II and the New Martyrs), St. Petersburg, 2000, p. 705.

later to violate China’s sovereignty and come into conflict with the imperial ambitions of Japan...”\(^{724}\)

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.”\(^{725}\)

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 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...’\(^{726}\)

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


\(^{725}\) Lieven, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 94.

\(^{726}\) Ferguson, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 49-50.
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)…”

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.’

“This run of opportunistic successes – intervention against Japan in 1895, annexation of Port Arthur and now expansion into Manchuria – encouraged the

727 Carter, op. cit., p. 209.


729 “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.)
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.’” 730

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.” 731

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.

The Church now began to speak out. Thus Bishop Anthony (Khраповитский), 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

730 Montefiore, op. cit., p. 505.
731 Lieven, op. cit., p. 97.
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 trustiness, 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.”

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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 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 by the 1899 conference and its follow-up in 1907. Thus, as Sir Richard Evans writes, they “laid down an important series of ground rules for limiting the damage caused by war. They banned the killing of prisoners and civilians, and declared that an occupying force was the guardian of the cultural heritage of the areas it conquered, and should not loot or destroy cultural artifacts.”

“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 preambule 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 states 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.”

734 “‘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.)

735 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


737 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).

738 Carter, op. cit., p. 252.
conflicting nationalisms of French and German workers, Bulgarian and Serb workers, Austrian and Italian and Czech workers.739

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….

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 zemstva 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

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740 V.F. Ivanov, Russkaia Intelligentsia i Masonstvo ot Petra I do nashikh dnei (The Russian Intelligentsia from Peter I to our days), Moscow, 1997, p. 363.
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 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

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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 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.”

743 S.S. Oldenburg, Tsarstvovanie Imperators Nikolaia II (The Reign of Emperor Nicholas II), Belgrade, 1939, p. 147.

744 Tsar Nicholas, in Oldenburg, op. cit., p. 149.

745 Voeikov, So Tsarem i Bez Tsaria (With and Without the Tsar), Moscow, 1995, p. 127.
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 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’.

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...


748 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.
51. "PROTO-ECUMENISM" AND THE ORTHODOX CHURCHES

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."749

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."750


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{751}

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.'\textsuperscript{752}

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, more seriously, 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."\textsuperscript{753}

\textsuperscript{751} Keselopoulos, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 88.
\textsuperscript{752} Keselopoulos, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 91.
\textsuperscript{753} Enoch, “Constantinople Attempted Union with Armenian Monophysites in 19th Century; Allowed Armenians to Take Communion in 1879”, \textit{NFTU News}, July 21, 2016. See more at:
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 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 Anthimus' 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...

"Reverting, then, to that teaching which was common to the Churches of the East and of the West until the separation, we ought, with a sincere desire to know the truth, to search what the One Holy, Catholic and Orthodox Apostolic Church of Christ, being then 'of the same body,' throughout the East and West believed, and to hold this fact, entire, and unaltered. But whatsoever has in later times been added or taken away, every one has a sacred and indispensable duty, if he sincerely seeks for the glory of God more than for his own glory, that in a spirit of piety he should correct it, considering that by arrogantly continuing in the perversion of the truth he is liable to a heavy account before the impartial judgment-seat of Christ. In saying this we do not at all refer to the differences regarding the ritual of the sacred services and the hymns, or the sacred vestments, and the like, which matters, even though they still vary, as they did of old, do not in the least injure the substance and unity of the faith; but we refer to those essential differences which have reference to the divinely transmitted doctrines of the faith, and the divinely instituted canonical constitution of the administration of the Churches. In cases where the thing disregarded is not the
faith (says also the holy Photius), and is no falling away from any general and
Catholic decree, different rites and customs being observed among different
people, a man who knows how to judge rightly would decide that neither do
those who observe them act wrongly, nor do those who have not received them
break the law.'"754

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 Anthimos VII
(Metropolitan of Leros and Kalymnos) was elected. There was a tumult at his
enthronement; the people wanted Joachim, and would cry 'Unworthy' (Ανθιμος
αναξιος) 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

754 “A Reply to the Papal Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, on Reunion”.
http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/encyc_1895.aspx
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-Kiosk 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 also 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.” 755

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" was Patriarch Joachim's declaring, in 1902, that Papism and Protestantism were "great ramifications (αναδενδραδας) 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 all rejected 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 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..."

756 Ekklesiastiki Alitheia (Ecclesiastical Truth), 1920; in Monk Pavlos, Neoimeroglogitismos Oikoumenismos (Newcalendarism Ecumenism), Athens, 1982, pp. 17-19

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"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.'"

Having received all the replies, the patriarch published a second encyclical in 1904 which expressed his own opinions, both about ecumenism and about the first 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."


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 all 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.\footnote{760 Monk Pavlos, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 19-20.}

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...

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item It was not only the Greeks who were influenced by “proto-ecumenist” tendencies. In 1847 a concordat was signed between Emperor Nicholas I and Pope Gregory XVI according to which Orthodox priests would be allowed to give sacraments to Catholics exiled to Russia for participating in the Polish rebellions against the Tsar if there were no Catholic churches or priests in the vicinity. In accordance with this concordat, the Russian Synod ordered all Orthodox clergy to satisfy the requests of exiled Catholics in this connection. In 1900, Bishop Tikhon of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands, the future Martyr-Patriarch, attended the consecration of Reginald Weller as Episcopalian Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.\footnote{761 \textit{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?” Again, 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.\footnote{762 See Muriel Heppell, \textit{George Bell and Nikolai Velimirovich}, Birmingham: Lazarica Press, 2001.})

Although for the time being the Lord “winked” at these violations of Orthodox canon law, the time was coming when He would no longer be so indulgent...

The official service-books of the Russian Church reveal an unclear attitude towards the sacraments of the heterodox. Thus in the \textit{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 \textit{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 sectarian
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.”

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.”

763 S.V. Bulгakov, Nastol’naia Kniga sviaschennoto-serkovno-sluzhitel’ (Handbook for Church
Servers), Kharkov, 1900, p. 928. In a footnote Bulгakov 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.”

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 to be received in full ecclesiastical rank, with no re-ordination.

764 A translation of the whole Epistle is to be found in Athelstan Riley, Birkbeck and the Russian
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...

With regard to the Latins, Archbishop Anthony wrote: “The Church is one and has never been divided, but heretics and schismatics fell away from her in the first age, have fallen away since, and will fall away until the Lord’s Second Coming. Therefore, there can be no question of Union with heretics and schismatics, but only of their restoration to union with the Church from which they fell away.

“If the Roman Catholics should renounce their imaginings, then their restoration to union with the Church would be a matter for the greatest joy to the faithful and to the Holy Angels, not only for the sake of their souls’ salvation but for the realization of the restored fullness of the Church’s life to which our brethren of the West would bring that corporate ecclesiastical activity which is characteristic to them. In the circumstance of the renunciation by the Roman Catholics of their pseudo-dogmas, and in particular of that absurd one of them which ascribes Infallibility to the Pope in matters of Faith, the Holy Church, in restoring them to union with herself, would not only certainly restore to the Roman Primate that primacy which was assigned to him before his falling away into schism, but would probably invest him with such an authority in the Ecumenical Church as had never hitherto been assigned to him—inasmuch as that which he formerly possessed was confined to Western Europe and North-West Africa.

“But such authority, assumed as being given to the Pope after his return to Orthodoxy, would be based, not on Roman fables about the Apostle Peter as chief over all the Apostles, about the succession of the Popes to the fullness of his imaginary authority, about indulgences, purgatory, etc., but in the practical need of ecclesiastical life by the force of which that life was gradually centralized: first, in the metropolitanates (from the third century) and then in the patriarchates (from the fourth and fifth centuries) with the result that the authority of the metropolitans and patriarchs in their areas was continually and gradually strengthened in proportion to the assimilation of the people to Christian culture. We admit for the future the conception of a single personal supremacy of the Church in consonance with the broadest preservation of the conciliar principle and on the condition that that supremacy does not pretend to
be based on such invented traditions as the above, but only on the practical need of ecclesiastical life.”

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.”

52. FERMENT IN THE RUSSIAN CHURCH

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

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

767 Firsov, *Russkaia Tserkov’ nakanune peremen (konets 1890-kh – 1918 g.)* (The Russian Church on the Eve of the Changes (the end of the 1890s to 1918), Moscow, 2002, p. 47.
only the first step in a far-ranging reform of Church-State relations, bringing them back to true “symphony”.

The movement for Church reform first manifested itself publicly in 1901, when, somewhat reluctantly, Pobedonostsev allowed the convening of a series of religio-philosophical meetings between the “God-searching” intelligentsia and the clergy in St. Petersburg. These meetings - the idea of D.S. Merezhkovsky, V.V. Rozanov and a Synodal official, V.A. Ternavtsev - were an attempt to respond to a definite turning away of a part of the intelligentsia from sixties-style positivism to some kind of religion. Unfortunately, however, the conversion was, as often as not, not to Orthodoxy but to some vague kind of mysticism or theosophy. For Russia at that time was teeming with false teachers and prophets: revolutionaries such as Lenin and Trotsky, freethinkers and heretics such as the novelist Lev Tolstoy or the philosopher Vladimir Soloviev, theosophists such as Blavatsky and the “silver age” poets, and a huge army of masons, liberals, nihilists, anti-monarchists and ecumenists who were busy undermining the foundations of Church and State.768

M. Rodzianko writes that “among the intelligentsia, especially of St. Petersburg, all kinds of groups began to organize, often infected by sectarianism. Simultaneously the enthusiasm for the teaching of Redstock, the passion for theosophy, occultism, spiritism and other teachings condemned by the Church was considerable. During the period after 1901 the society of ‘Argonauts’ was formed, which met at the home of Andrew Bely, an author of that period. This is how he describes those times: ‘Among the “unseeing”, “seers” appeared, who recognized each other; they were drawn to share incomprehensible knowledge with each other; their interest in everything appeared new to them, encompassed with rays of cosmic and historical importance. The “seers” differed in their conjectures: one was an atheist, another a theosophist, one was drawn to piety, another was pulled away from it, but all agreed one with the other as to the imminence of a dawning: “something is shining forth”, and from this “something” the future will unfold its destinies’ (Epopee, vol. 1, pp. 136-137). This dawn was disclosed as the goddess Sophia and this in fact became the beginning, the ‘disclosure’ by the Russian progressive society of the object of its worship, tearing it away from Orthodoxy, i.e. from the Church, in order to begin a ‘philosophical’ combat with it. Numbered among the ‘Argonauts’ we meet the following widely known people: the poet Balmont, Valery Bryusov, Baltushaytis, S.I. Taneyev, N.A. Berdyaev, S.N. Bulgakov, later a priest, D.V. Filosofov, prof. Kadlukov, D.N. Merezhkovsky, Igor Kistyakovsky, Z.N. Hippius, A.V. Kartasheв, Theodore Sologub and others (Epopee, vols. 1,2 and 3; pp. 179, 191, 768

768 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).
181, 144). The Russian intelligentsia of that time, knowingly or not, was undermining the age-old foundations of the Russian Orthodox Church. The guiding center was the ‘Religious-Philosophical Society’, created during this period. In this society were: V. Ivanov, D.V. Filosofov, S. Kablukov, Merezhkovsky, Rozanov, Kartashev, Bulgakov, Berdiaev and others (Epopee, vol. 1, pp. 61, 130, 156). This society held closed as well as open meetings, having as its goal the wide propaganda of the spirit of the revolution, reformation and sophianism...

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...

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

769 Rodzianko, The Truth about the Russian Church Abroad, Jordanville, 1975, pp. 5-6.

770 Soldatov, “Tolstoy i Sergij: Iude Podobnie” (Tolstoy and Sergius: Images of Judas), Nasha Strana (Our Country), N 2786; Vernošť (Fidelity), N 32, January 1/14, 2006

771 Firsov, op. cit., p. 117.
remaining in union with her”.\textsuperscript{772} 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 bandwagon 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.”\textsuperscript{773}

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

\textsuperscript{772} Tikhomirov, “Gosudarstvennost’ i religia” (Statehood and religion), Moskovskie Vedomosti (Moscow Gazette), March, 1903, p. 3; in Firsov, op. cit., p. 137.

\textsuperscript{773} Solonevich, “Etudy Optimizma” (Studies in Optimism), in Rossia i Revoliutsia (Russia and the Revolution), Moscow, 2007, p. 59.
also subjected the teaching and sacraments of the Orthodox Church to ridicule. If the government felt 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.”

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.774 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

774 V.F. Ivanov, Russkaia Intelligentsia i Masonstvo ot Petra I do nashikh dnei (The Russian Intelligentstia from Peter I to our days), Moscow, 1997, p. 379.
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 rykayushchyi], looking for someone to devour [I 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 Fr. Joseph (Petrovykh), who wrote: “Lack of faith, impiety and all kinds of harmful tendencies are now pouring over Holy Rus’ in a still more swollen river. They were restrained by this powerful personality [Fr. John], who was put forward by the Providence of God to oppose the heretic Tolstoy.”

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!”


779 Kizenko, op. cit., p. 88.
53. 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 but not entirely successful 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. 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

780 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.)

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.”^782

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, idiosyncrasies of speech, folklore, dress and everyday life^783 - 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, the Russians argued, they were all really one nation... Thus, as Dominic Lieven writes, “Virtually all publications in Ukrainian were 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.”^784

^782 Hosking, op. cit., p. 378.


^784 Lieven, Nicholas II, pp. 279-280.
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. The paradox was that while the Great Russians in the nineteenth century suppressed Ukrainian language publications so as to prevent “Polonization”, in the early twentieth the Russian language became, at least for the intelligentsia in the western regions, the vehicle for another kind of Westernization…

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.

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

785 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.)
council and Kuropatkin’s conscription law went into effect. In the Emperor’s defence it could be argued that had he failed to back up his new Minister of War the latter’s authority would have been fatally damaged. Moreover, the government’s case vis-à-vis Finland was not entirely unjustified, its fears for the security of Petersburg, very close to the Finnish border, causing it particular alarm. In terms of political wisdom and tact, however, Kuropatkin’s law, not to mention Bobrikov’s antics, were a disaster. The government, which had hoped to play off the ethnic Finnish majority against the country’s Swedish elite, quickly united the whole country against itself. Among those who protested to Nicholas about Bobrikov’s policy was his mother, herself a Scandinavian princess. In what was, coming from her, an extremely angry letter, she accused her son of going back on his promise to her that Bobrikov would be reined in and commented that ‘all that has been and is being done in Finland is based on lies and deceit and leads straight to revolution’. Apart from asserting that the Finns would come round if the government showed itself resolute, Nicholas’s reply to his mother skated around the main issue at stake. Seen from the Russian perspective this issue was, in 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

786 Lieven, Nicholas II, pp. 86-87.
numerous than themselves. In the long run they would all become the mere pawns of European great-power politics.

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

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

“Administrative integration began with the introduction of the new municipal institutions in the Baltic in 1877, but the authorities shrank from undermining the Ritterschaften in the countryside by introducing Russian-style zemstvos there. To that extent, the old policy of accommodating local elites continued: the Ritterschaften remained as the ultimate repositories of local authority right through to 1917, though their practical power was gradually being chipped away both by social change and by governmental measures. In the 1880s they lost judicial powers with the introduction of the new Russian courts, along with the use of Russian in all administrative and judicial procedures. Their supervision of schools was weakened by the opening of numerous ‘ministerial schools’ run from St. Petersburg and offering intuition in Russian only: it was here that many Estonians and Latvians received their basic education and began to move into professional and administrative positions, becoming what St. Petersburg hoped would be the agents of future Russian domination. At the same time an attempt was made to make Russian compulsory in all but the lowest forms of primary schools. In 1893 Dorpat University was closed and reopened as Iur’ev University, a Russian institution: professors and lecturers (with the revealing exception of theology) who were not prepared to teach in Russian had to resign.
“In religious matters there was a return to the policy of forbidding Estonians and Latvians who had converted – usually under threat - to Orthodoxy to return to the Lutheran faith. Those who had done so now found that their marriages were declared invalid, while pastors who had celebrated them were suspended investigation. Some 120 suffered this fate before the policy was abandoned in 1894…”

Here Hosking distorts the evidence. There was a genuine, unforced movement of Latvians towards Orthodoxy, of which the most famous product was the future hieromartyr Archbishop John (Pommer) of Riga, who was devoted to Russia 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.

Nevertheless, the russification policy in the Baltic states did not achieve its purpose. For, as Miranda Carter writes, “émigré German Balts had become... at the forefront of anti-Slavic Pan-Germanism”.

5. Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. 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.’"


788 Lyudmilla Koeller, Sv. Ioann (Pommer), Arkhiepiskop Rizhskij i Latvijskij (St. John (Pommer), Archbishop of Riga and Latvia), Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1984. (V.M.)

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

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

The annexation of Georgia was proclaimed by Paul I on December 18, 1800, and was reaffirmed by his successor, Alexander I, on September 12, 1801. On the whole Georgia benefited from being part of the Russian empire – 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.”

790 Sargs, The Romanoffs and the Bagrations, 1996; quoted by Brien Horan, “The Russian Imperial Succession”, 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.

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

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

792 Hosking, op. cit., pp. 385-386.

793 Figes, op. cit., p. 75.
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. 794

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. 795

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 of 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.” 796

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

796 Lieven, Empire, p. 275.
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…”

Here we come to the hub of the matter: Russification was of little value if the Russia it propagated was not Orthodox, 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…

797 Lieven, Empire, p. 276.
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...”

798 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 exhilarated 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

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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 glared 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...’”

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

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801 Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-53.
years at Pascha” and with “the hostility of the local Christian population towards the Jews”. And then “two weeks before Pascha... rumours began to circulate in Kishinev that there would be a slaughter of Jews in the forthcoming feast”. A particularly inflammatory role was played here by the newspaper *Bessarabets*, whose editor, Pavolachi Krushevan, also published *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

The *Protocols* 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.”

Krushevan’s *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...”

The pogrom began after the murder of a Russian man and the death of a Russian girl in the local Jewish hospital. 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’.

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 off 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-Semite sources accept.

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806 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 327-328.
807 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 329.
808 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 332.
809 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 333.
810 Vital, op. cit., p. 513.
However, this did not prevent the 1996 edition of *The Jewish Encyclopaedia* from reiterating the accusation as if it were fact...811

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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 gymnasis, 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.

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“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 rotting 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 greyish-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.’”

“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

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and Tsaritsa to holy places. Up to 300,000 worshippers from every corner of Russia assembled in Sarov for those days. Nicholas II tried to be present at all the long, almost unending services. The peak of the festivities was the transfer of the relics of St. Seraphim from the monastery’s hospital church of SS. Zosimas and Sabbatius, where he had been buried, into the Dormition cathedral of the Sarov community on July 18. The coffin with the relics was borne on their shoulders by the Tsar, the Great Princes and the hierarchs, tightly surrounded by a sea of people.  

The festivities were truly an icon of Holy Russia: the Royal Family and the Great Princes mixed with thousands of peasants in 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...

“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’...

813 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 388-389.
“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, 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

814 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 390.
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...""815

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.”816 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...
“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.’

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

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

“Defenders of the commune believed it was a form of social welfare, which would ensure that no peasant would go without the means of survival. They felt that at least until the capitalist economy had developed to the point where millions of secure jobs existed in the cities, the only way to avoid pauperization was to ensure that any peasant, even if he was temporarily resident in a town, would have a plot of land on which to fall back. Because the masses would not be destitute and would have rights to the use of property, it was believed that they would be more immune to radical and socialist propaganda than urban workers and landless agricultural labourers in the West. Not even the most ardent defenders of the commune would probably have argued that, from the narrow perspective of agricultural modernization, it was the best form of landownership; they did deny, and probably rightly, that it was as serious an obstacle to technical improvement as its enemies suggested. The fact that the commune was seen to be an old Russian institution which would preserve the country from the perils that had attended modernization in the West also added to its appeal. Anatol Kulomzin, for instance, was very much on the liberal and Westernizing wing of the ruling elite. He wrote, however, that even he swallowed whole the Russian nationalist view of the commune, so flattering to patriotic pride, and ‘only troubles of 1905-6 which pointed to the socialist spirit which the commune had bred in the life of the peasantry finally sobered me.’”817

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 them818 - 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

817 Lieven, Tsar Nicholas II, pp. 80-83.
818 Pipes, op. cit., p. 112.
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 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. In the Soviet solidarity between priest and peasant was shown to be 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, but also with the Tsar and the Church, which upheld the traditional – that is to say, the Roman – concept of ownership.

819 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 116-117.
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 Gorznyi applied to the mentally unbalanced and sadistic Ivan IV, usually rendered in English as ‘Terrible’, actually meant ‘Awesome’ and carried no pejorative meaning. Personas who possessed vlast’ (authority) and did not exercise it in an ‘awe-inspiring’ manner could be ignored. Observance of laws for the peasant invariably represented submission to a force majeure, to the will of someone stronger, not the recognition of some commonly shared principle or interest. ‘Today, as in the days of serfdom,’ wrote the Slavophile Iurii Samarin, ‘the peasant knows no other sure pledge of the genuineness of imperial commands than the display of armed force: a round of musketry still is to him the only authentic confirmation of the imperial commands.’ In this conception, moral judgement of governments or their actions was as irrelevant as approval or condemnation of the vagaries of nature. There were no ‘good’ or ‘bad’ governments: there were only strong and weak ones, and strong ones were always preferable to weak ones. (Similarly, serfs used to prefer cruel but efficient masters to kindly but ineffective ones.) Weak rulers made it possible to return to primitive freedom or volia, understood as license to do whatever one wanted, unrestrained by man-made law. Russian governments took account of these attitudes and went to great lengths to impress on the country the image of boundless power. Experienced bureaucrats opposed freedom of the press and parliamentary government in good part because they feared that the existence of
an overt, 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.

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“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.”

821 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 119-120.

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...”

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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.’ 825

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…” 826

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

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

825 Macmillan, op. cit., p. 257.

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 cobblers.

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

“Many of these mutinies were part of a general protest against the feudal conditions prevailing in the army. Tolstoy, who had served as an army officer in the Crimean War, described them in his last novel Hadji-Murad. The peasant soldiers, in particular, objected to the way their officers addressed them with the familiar ‘your’ (tyi) – normally used for animals and children – rather than the polite ‘you’ (yii). 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…”827

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 so different that it is difficult for them to understand each other.’”

Defeat at the hands of Japan in 1905, writes Dominic Lieven, “made the need for radical reform especially evident. Disputes rages over what reforms were needed and how to implement them. The upper ranks of the army were a wasps’ nest of individual ambitions and jealousies that intersected with patron-client networks and arguments over fortresses, operational plans, and other professional concerns. The creation of the Duma in 1906 complicated the war minister’s job. After the changes in the electoral law in June, 1907, parliament was dominated by liberal-conservatives and nationalist parties that supported generous military budgets and took a strong interest in the resurrection of Russian military power. In terms of military matters, the Duma’s leading member was Aleksandr Guchkov, head of the liberal-conservative party in power (1906-11)… Nicholas distrusted most politicians, but he especially disliked Guchkov, whom he viewed (correctly) as an unscrupulous adventurer. But the conflict between the monarchy and parliament was also an inevitable result of the creation of representative institutions. In seventeenth-century England, control over the army had been a key source of conflict between Charles I and Parliament in the years leading up to the Civil War. Similary, control over the army was at the core of the Prussian constitutional crisis of the 1860s. By winning this conflict for the crown, Bismarck did much to shape not just civil-military relations in the German Empire but also German politics as a whole…”

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

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829 Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, p. 146.
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. 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. 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.

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.’

832 Malcolm, op. cit., pp. 219-228.
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, 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...“

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”. So Serbs began to emigrate from the province. By 1912 the Serbian proportion of the population had dropped to about 25% or less...

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

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834 Malcolm, op. cit., p. xlvi.
important than language and stronger than the Church, this pride unites all Serbs in a single nation...  

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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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."

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."  

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836 Jelavich, op. cit., p. 21.  
We must also not forget the Romanians, who from the beginning of the century, as Jelavich writes, "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..."

"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. 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," writes Pavlowitch, "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

839 Jelavich, op. cit., p. 91.
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 1912.840

"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 northern 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 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...841

840 Jelavich, op. cit., pp. 92-93.
841 Pavlowitch, op. cit., pp. 43-44.
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. Between 1903 and 1908 these inter-Orthodox conflicts cost some eight thousand lives. 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 (IMRO). A reign of terror followed in which Macedonian terrorists threatened to overthrow the Bulgarian State...

“Behind the scenes,” writes Evans, “Abdulhamid II turned in desperation to Germany for help. Soon German officers were training Ottoman troops, and German engineers were building a new railway to Baghdad, financed by German banks. All of this, however, undermined the sultan’s authority within the empire, and his refusal to reintroduce the 1876 Constitution led to the emergence of conspiracies to try and oust him. Shortly after his accession, Abdulhamid had abandoned the policy of trying to create an Ottoman national identity. Perhaps reacting to the loss of a very large proportion of the empire’s Christian population in the Balkans, and the migration of hundreds of thousands of Muslims from the Caucasus and from the new Balkan states to Anatolia, he had substituted the policy with a new ideology of pan-Islamism. From now on the sultan’s religious status as the Caliph was emphasized in Ottoman propaganda as the basis for the allegiance of his people. Increasingly, Abdulhamid put his empire’s troubles down to an international conspiracy of the Christian world, and in particular to the Christian minority in Anatolia, mostly well-off traders and merchants whom the Treaty of Berlin had obliged him to protect. In 1892-3, Muslim crowds, egged on by officials who claimed the Armenians were trying to destroy Islam, began massacring the area’s Armenian population. When Armenian nationalist groups retaliated, they were crushed by the Ottoman Army, after which local and regional officials encouraged further violence against them, aided by Kurdish irregulars sent in by the sultan.

“The worst atrocity occurred with the burning alive of more than 3,000 Armenians in the cathedral of Urfa in December 1895. A protest demonstration of Armenians in Constantinople was suppressed and was followed by widespread killings of Armenians in the capital. Foreign intervention, again urged by Gladstone, never became a reality. The massacres continued until 1897, by which time between 100,000 and 300,000 Armenians had been killed.”

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Meanwhile, in 1895 a Greek secret society called *Ethniki Etairia* tried to revive the traditions of the *Philiki Etairia*. Glenny writes: "Just as IMRO 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..."844

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. [They were also defeated At Domokos in Thessaly, where arudn 45,000 troops were assembled on each side.]845 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 IMRO 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

845 Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 690.
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.'..."846

The situation gradually descended into chaos. In March, 1903 the Austrian consul in Monastir reported: "The Committee [IMRO] 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."847

During the spring of 1903 the village of Kruševo, whose 10,000 inhabitants were almost all Orthodox - Vlach, Greek and Slav, anticipating an attack by IMRO, approached the Ottoman authorities and requested that they strengthen their garrison. Sure enough, on August 2, "Ilinden" (St. Elijah's day), 300 guerrillas assaulted Kruševo. 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 IMRO during the uprising. However, in the villages genuinely committed to the Exarchate or IMRO, 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 IMRO'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."848

848 Glenny, op. cit., pp. 205-207.
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...” 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.

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849 John Etty, “Serbian Nationalism and the Great War”, History Today, February 27, 2014. For a description of the murder, and the circumstances leading up to it, see Christopher Clark, Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914, London: Penguin, 2013, pp. 7-13. There were other reasons for the murder. Thus the Interior Minister Djordje Genči “objected to the king’s marriage to Draga...,” whose reputation in society was so bad that the entire Cabinet resigned when the couple became engaged. ‘Sire,’ Genči told the king, ‘You cannot marry her. She has been everybody’s mistress – mine included.’ The king’s response – a slap in the face – was enough to drive Genči into the arms of Apis’s conspiracy” (Evans, op. cit., p. 691).


852 “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 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." 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 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." 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 customs treaty with Bulgaria whose contents were communicated to the Russians, but not the Austrians, who "suspected the two Balkan powers were moving towards a union".
Belgrade now, writes Clark, “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…”"856

“During 1905-6, a crisis unfolded in which trade policy, armaments orders, high finance and geopolitics were closely intertwined. Vienna pursued a threefold 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 again not from Vienna, but from Paris (offered in return for the placement of armaments orders with French firms).”857

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, where public opinion was turning more bellicose and nationalist...

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 Russian leaders (as opposed to the newspaper columnists) were always more conscious

856 Clark, op. cit., p. 82.

857 Clark, op. cit., p. 29.
of the wider geopolitical picture than the other Orthodox states, and did not support Serbia's nationalist irredentism, which could lead to disastrous consequences for the multi-national Russian empire and which had its roots, not in Orthodoxy or pro-Slav feeling as such, but in the French revolution. The tsar was trying to resist nationalism and irredentism both within Russia's borders and outside them. But it was a difficult task in view of the increasing nationalism of the Russian press, and the headstrong support the Russian ambassador in Belgrade, Hartwig, was giving to the Serbian nationalists.

The suspicion was 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...
58. 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 out-maneuver 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.’…”

862 Oldenburg, op. cit., p. 274.


864 In all Schiff loaned $200 million to Japan during the war, while preventing other firms from lending to Russia (A. Solzhenitsyn, Dvesti let vmes’t (Two Hundred Years Together), Moscow, 2001, p. 347). (V.M.)

865 Lebedev, Velikorossiia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 417-418.
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.”

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.’”

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866 “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 Prishesvaniem (Russia before the Second Coming), Sergiev Posad, 1998, vol. 1, p. 373).


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 Lyao dun, 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…” 870

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.” 871

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. 872

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.” 873 The archpastor himself decided to stay in Japan with his flock, even if there was a war...

870 Lebedev, op. cit.


873 As he wrote in his diary for January 30 / February 12, 1904: “Pray to God that He give victory to your emperor’s army. Thank God for the victories He gives. And sacrifice to the needs of the
“It began in February 1904. Then Bishop Nicholas handed over all ecclesiastical affairs to the council of priests, and himself served his last liturgy before the war. At the end of the service in his farewell sermon to his flock he called on it to pray for victory for their fatherland, but he, as a subject of the Russian Emperor, could not take part in the common service; but he would be happy to see his flock carrying out their duty. In his encyclical of February 11, 1904, Bishop Nicholas blessed the Japanese to carry out their duty, not sparing their lives, but reminded them that our fatherland is the Church, where all Christians constitute one family; he told them to pray for the re-establishment of peace and asked for mercy to prisoners of war. After this he shut himself away and gave himself over to exploits of prayer…

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

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 war… Fight, not out of hatred to the enemy, but out of love for your fellow-citizens… In a word, do everything that is required of you by love for your Fatherland. Love for the Fatherland is a holy feeling. The Saviour consecrated this feeling by His example: out of love for His earthly Fatherland He wept over the wretched lot of Jerusalem. But besides our earthly Fatherland we also have a Heavenly Fatherland. This Fatherland of ours is the Church, of which we are all equally members and through whih the children of the Heavenly Father truly constitute one family. Therefore I am not separating from you, brothers and sisters, and I remain in your family. And we shall together fulfil our duty with regard to our Heavenly Fatherland.” (V.M.)

Many wounded Russian prisoners of war were nursed by their Japanese co-religionists. (V.M.)

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 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.
59. 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 early 1900s the British press came under the dominion of Lord Northcliffe, and was largely uncensored. Even in monarchical Germany and Russia it was beginning to flex its muscles...

Writing in 1901, St. John of Kronstadt linked “the lying press” with the power of Jewry. The press “… has been gradually invading the sphere of life of recent centuries and is becoming a dominant factor in the historical acts of the peoples. They go wherever the press draws them. They are drawn to serve the Jews, for since the beginning of the 19th century the Jews have begun to take control of the press. This took place on the orders of the founder of the universal Jewish union. He taught it the way to get control of the peoples and kingdoms. The victory of Jewry is guaranteed by the fact that the apostates from Christianity see allies in those who are similar to them in their apostasy; but they are woefully wrong. The Jews can be allies only with themselves…”

“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...

876 St. John, Nachalo i Konets Nashego Zemnogo Mira (The Beginning and End of our Earthly World), Moscow, 2004, p. 115.

877 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 428.
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.’

“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 Kievtianin, 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...

“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. 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

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880 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.)
lower-middle class would achieve the socialist revolution, which could come immediately if the revolutionary parties pursued the proper tactics and exploited their opportunities.

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

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 exacerbated 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 intelligentsia 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.


882 Oldenburg, op. cit., p. 198.
“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

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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 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

884 Kazantsev, op. cit.

885 Montefiore, op. cit., p. 521.

886 Kazantsev, op. cit.

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.

"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…
61. TOWARDS THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF SYMPHONY

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

The process that led to this discussion had begun a little earlier, in November, 1904, when a report sponsored by the Minister of the Interior Prince P.D. Sviatopolk-Mirsky was completed envisaging important changes in a liberal direction in both Church and State. This led to the convening of an important conference on December 2 that included all the government ministers and four of the Tsar’s uncles. 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.

888 Archbishop Anthony, in Fomin & Fomina, Rossia pered Vtorym Prishhestviem Khristovym (Russia before the Second Coming of Christ), Moscow, 1994, p. 394.
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 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…” 889

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 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.890

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!’”891

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

890 Firsov, op. cit., p. 163.
891 Oldenburg, op. cit., p. 276.
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 and decisively pushed through by S.Yu. Witte and a special Conference of the Committee of Ministers”.892

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.

892 Skvortsov, in Firsov, op. cit., p. 172.
“If matters continue like this in Russia and the atheists and crazy anarchists are not subjected to the righteous retribution of the law, and if Russia is not cleansed of its many tares, then it will become desolate like the ancient kingdoms and cities wiped out by God’s righteous judgement from the face of the earth for their godlessness and their wickedness: Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, Greece-Macedonia. Hold fast, then, Russia, to your faith, and your Church, and to the Orthodox Tsar if you do not wish to be shaken by people of unbelief and lawlessness and if you do not wish to be deprived of your Kingdom and the Orthodox Tsar. But if you fall away from your faith, as many intelligently 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...”

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, and the Orthodox began to suffer persecution. Archbishop Anthony (KhраОvitsky) 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

893 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 protoierea Valentina Amfiteatrova (II)” (Life of Protopriest Valentine Amphiteatrov), Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’ (Orthodox Life), N 12 (659), December, 2004, p. 29).

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-estabishment of the Kirghiz kingdom with its hereditary dynasty, together with expulsion and even the beating up of all Christians.

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

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

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

“But our government – more precisely, our State – has been attracted 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 Yedinoversy, 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…”

62. THE 1905 REVOLUTION

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

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

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

At the end of September a wave of strikes, economic in origin, but politicised by the Union of Unions and the radical students, hit Central Russia. They culminated in a vast general strike in mid-October. The country was descending into anarchy.

Witte was 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


897 Montefiore, The Romanovs, p. 524.

898 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 36-37.
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.”

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 D.F. Trepov, the Governor-General of St. Petersburg, 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 un convinced, 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” hysterical 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:

899 Oldenburg, op. cit., pp. 312-313.

900 Pipes, op. cit., p. 43.
1. Fundamental civil freedoms will be granted to the population, including real personal inviolability, freedom of conscience, speech, assembly and association.

2. Participation in the Duma will be granted to those classes of the population which are at present deprived of voting powers, insofar as is possible in the short period before the convocation of the Duma, and this will lead to the development of a universal franchise. There will be no delay to the Duma elect already been organized.

3. It is established as an unshakeable rule that no law can come into force without its approval by the State Duma and representatives of the people will be given the opportunity to take real part in the supervision of the legality of government bodies.

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

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:

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902 Oldenburg, op. cit., p. 315.
'The reforms I announced on October 17 will be realized unfailingly, and the freedoms given by me in the same way to the whole of the population are inalienable. But my Autocracy will remained what it was of old.'..."903

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 had never been unlimited in an absolutist 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”904 – 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 “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 convoke one at all? This depends on the Autocrat’s will.”905

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...

904 Vostorgov, in Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., p. 403.
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

906 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 375.

907 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 428.
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 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…”908

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

rarely into enlightened conservatism, and – the most significant in its consequences – into the revolutionary movement.”

“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 intelligency 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.”

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 snatched

909 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 358.


911 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 361.
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 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. 914 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

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913 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 393.

914 “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.).

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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.”

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.”

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

On October 27 the Tsar wrote to his mother “that the pogromshchiki represented ‘a whole mass of loyal people’, reacting angrily to ‘the impertinence of the Socialists and revolutionaries… and, because nine-tenths of the trouble-makers are Jews, the People’s whole anger turned against them.’ This analysis was accepted by many foreign observers, notably British diplomats like the ambassador at St. Petersburg, Sir Charles Hardinge, his councillor, Cecil Spring Rice, and the Consul-General in Moscow, Alexander Murray.”

This analysis was also supported by Senator Kuzminsky, who concluded that “the October disturbances and disorders 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”.

916 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 401.
918 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 398-399.
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…”  

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But the revolution was not just a Russian-Jewish affair: it also involved other nationalities within the empire, that sometimes threatened intervention by foreign countries. For example, there was anarchy in the Baltic provinces, and, as Dominic Lieven writes, “William II promised Professor Theodore Schiemann, a leading spokesman for the Baltic Germans in Berlin, that if the Russian monarchy fell, Germany would not abandon the Balts…”  

920 There is no question that the 1905 revolution could have led to international war…  

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.  

A critical western border province was that of Kholm, where the neighbouring Polish rebellion combined with the April manifesto on religious freedom elicited disturbances. It was feared that many nominal Orthodox would be tempted to become uniates, and the Bishop of Kholm, Evlogy (Georgievsky), wrote to Pobedonostsev: “The very credit of our priests has been undermined. For thirty years they repeated to the people that the Kholm-Podliaschie country will always be Orthodox and Russian, and now the people see, on the contrary, the complete, willful takeover of the enemies of the Orthodox Russian cause in that country.”  

“Soon after he sent the letter,” writes Serhii Plokhy, “Evlogi and his supporters went to St. Petersburg to meet with Pobedonostsev and discuss how to deal with the threat to Russian interests in the region. They wanted to redraw the borders of the imperial provinces, dividing the Kholm region from the lands of the former Kingdom of Poland. The new Kholm province was to have a ‘Russian’ core consisting of more than 300,000 ethnic Ukrainians – those who had

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919 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 421.

920 Lieven, Towards the Flame. Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia, London: Allen Lane, 2015, p. 190.
said Little Russian was their native language in the 1897 census. Officials in the Ministry of the Interior got busy planning for the administrative change. The bill was sent to the Duma. Debates on the measure continued until 1912, leading eventually to the creation of a new province and mobilizing Russian nationalist forces in parliament and beyond.

“The Kholm debate brought together Ukrainophiles and proponents of Russia, one and indivisible, in common cause against Polish influence, but their alliance was situational and limited to a single goal. In almost every other case, Ukrainophiles and Russian nationalists found themselves engaged in a life-or-death struggle for the future of a land that both considered their own. The language issued had traditionally been central to the Ukrainophile agenda. In December 1904, with the war against Japan going badly and social discontent rising precipitously, the imperial government had agreed to revisit the question of the prohibitions imposed on Ukrainian-language publications by the Edict of Ems [in 1876]. Once again, discussion focused on translation of the Gospels, but this time the atmosphere was different. The president of the Imperial Academy of Sciences himself, Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich, advocated the abolition of the ban on publishing the Scriptures in Ukrainian.

“In March 1905, a commission of the Academy of Sciences also discussed the issue of ending the ban on Ukrainian-language publications generally. The discussion was held at the behest of the government, which also solicited the opinions of the universities of Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Odesa. All found institutions advised lifting the restrictions, with the Academy of Sciences making the strongest statement. Its memorandum, prepared by the philologists Aleksei Shakhmatov and Fedor Korsh and signed by many other liberal academicians in April 1905, not only recommended doing away with the ban but also opened the door to the recognition of Ukrainian as a separate language.

“The authors of the Academy of Sciences memorandum did not say explicitly that Ukrainian was a separate language, but their reasoning left little doubt that it was on a par with Russian. They achieved that effect by discarding the notion of an ‘all-Russian language’. The academics claimed that the efforts of Russian authors to bring their literary language closer to the vernacular ‘had already made the all-Russian literary language fully Great Russian by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and our literary speech, the speech of the educated classes and written language of every kind, should be considered fully Great Russian.’ The authors of the memorandum used not only historical and linguistic but also political arguments to make their case. ‘A state that does not know how to guarantee one of the most elementary civil rights – the right to speak and publish in one‘s mother tongue – arouses neither respect nor love in the citizen but a nameless fear for his existence,’ wrote Shakhmatov and Korsh before delivering their ultimate warning: ‘That fear gives rise to dissatisfaction and revolutionary aspirations.’ Their timing was perfect: shocked by the revolutionary upheaval of the previous few months, the government was prepared to listen.
“The memorandum was published in a limited number of copies (exclusively for government use) in April 1905 and immediately had a major impact on political debates within the Russian Empire and beyond its borders. The lifting of restrictions on Ukrainian-language publications began in February 1905, with permission to publish religious texts in Ukrainian, for which Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich had lobbied. All prohibitions were abolished with the introduction of new censorship regulations in the spring of 1906. By that time the abolition was a mere formality, given that the prohibitions on Ukrainian-language newspapers had been done away with in October 1905, the month that also saw the publication of the tsar’s manifesto granting his subjects basic civil rights, including ‘freedom of the word’. By the end of the year, three Ukrainian-language newspapers were being published in the empire, one in Kyiv and two in Poltava province.

“Among the beneficiaries of the changes in official language policy were Belarussian activists. In September 1906, the first Belarussian daily, Nasha doli (Our Destiny), began publication in Vilnius. After being closed for its radical leftist content, it was replaced in November 1906 by the more centrist newspaper Nasha niva (Our Field), which would continue publication until 1915. It formed a new Belarussian literary canon and helped popularize Belarussian-language literature. Between 1906 and 1915, the number of books published in Belarussian increased from almost zero to 80 titles, attaining a cumulative print run of 220,000 copies.

“Although these figures represented a breakthrough for the Belarussian language and literature, they were very modest in comparison to publications in other languages of the empire. In 1911 alone there were 25,526 titles published in Russian, 1,664 in Polish, and 965 in Yiddish and Hebrew. The Ukrainians trailed those front-runners with 242 items. The Belarusians, who had never waged a prolonged struggle against the discrimination of their language or mobilized around that issue, were even further behind…”

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Some 15 per cent of Russia’s manor houses were destroyed in 1905. For “the peasantry,” as Pipes writes, “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 overthowing 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…”

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What part did the Church play in the disturbances? There were some lower clergy (Gapon is the best-known example) who expressed themselves against the Tsar. But the great majority of the clergy were patriots. A great champion of

923 The textile industry was virtually founded by the freed serf Savva Vasilyevich Morozov (1770-1862) 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. According to another account, she did this “after he tried to introduce a profit-sharing scheme for the workers; some alleged it was murder” (Evans, op. cit., p. 326). A few weeks later, on May 13, Savva Morozov shot himself in Cannes. 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). For more on the Morozovs, see Natalia Dumova, Moskovskie Metsenaty (Muscovite Maecenases), Moscow, 1992, pp. 132-150. (V.M.)

924 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 48-50.

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..."

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 Kontactovi 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.926

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

“When the multitude assembled Archbishop Platon was in his own church in full canonicals, with his miter upon his head. He heard the angry storming of the crowd without and realized its meaning and purpose. Instantly he came to a

decision, and in robes and miter went forth to meet the multitude. Of the church attendants only two accompanied him. So the tumultuous throng came on, crying for vengeance upon the Jews, and Archbishop Platon went to meet them. It had rained heavily all night and was raining still. Paying no heed to the pools of water and mud that covered the street, the Archbishop, seeing that there was but one way to check the hysterically excited mob, knelt down in the street immediately in the path of the turbulently advancing throng and began to pray.

“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...”\textsuperscript{927}

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. 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 N 150’ instructed the diocesan bishops and the clergy subject to them to make efforts ‘to remove quarrels in the population’, which, to a large extent, were continuing because of the opposition of the liberal priests to their metropolitan.

“But nothing could devalue or undermine the influence of the epistle of Metropolitan Vladimir on the Muscovites, and the true Russian people responded to it. The day after the publication of the ‘Word’, the workers began to serve molebens and return to work; the city water-supply began to work, the trams began to run, etc. Metropolitan Vladimir himself went to the factories and, after prayer, conducted archpastoral discussions with the workers.

“Later, in evaluating the labours of the holy hierarch Vladimir in overcoming the disturbances of 1905, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) said the following notable words about him: ‘Meek and humble, never seeking anything
for himself, honourable and a lover of righteousness, Vladyka Vladimir gradually and quietly ascended the hierarchical ladder and was immediately exalted by his authority, drawing the hearts of ecclesiastical and patriotic Russia to himself during the days of general instability and treachery, when there were few who remained faithful to their duty and their oath, firm in the defence of the Orthodox Church, the Tsar-Autocrat and the Homeland… when everything began to shake in our Rus’, and many pillars began to waver…” (speech of Archbishop Anthony of Zhitomir and Volhynia at the triumphal dinner given by Metropolitan Vladimir in honour of Patriarch Gregory of Antioch who was visiting Russia, 22 February, 1913).

“By ‘pillars’ Vladyka Anthony probably had in mind the liberal members of the Most Holy Synod, who did not support their brother, Metropolitan Vladimir…” Among these, many suspected the most senior member of the Synod, Metropolitan Anthony of St. Petersburg.

Another under suspicion was Bishop Sergius (Stragorodsky), whose political sympathies were clearly leftist. Thus “when in 1905 the revolutionary professors began to demand reforms in the spiritual schools, then, in the words of Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), ‘his Grace Sergius… wavered in faith.’”

Again, when the revolutionary Peter Schmidt was shot in 1906, Archbishop Sergius, who was at that time rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, served a pannikhida at his grave; and he also gave refuge in his hierarchical house in Vyborg to the revolutionaries Michael Novorussky and Nicholas Morozov (a participant in the attempt on the life of Tsar Alexander II).

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928 Riasophor-Monk Anempodist, “Sviashchennomuchenik mitropolit Vladimir (Bogoiaevlenskij) i bor’ba s revoliutsii” (Hieromartyr Metropolitan Vladimir (Bogoiaevlensky) and the struggle against the revolution), Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’ (Orthodox Life), 53, N 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)


Having such sympathies, it is not surprising that he was not liked by the Royal Family... Thus in 1915 the Empress wrote to the Emperor that Sergius “must leave the Synod” Bishops Sergius was to betray the Church to the Bolsheviks after the revolution and become the first Soviet patriarch...

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The 1905 revolution failed because the majority of Russians still remained loyal to the Autocracy, as expressed in this speech pronounced at a reception by the Tsar himself on December 31, 1905 by Professor B.V. Nikolsky (who was shot in June, 1919):

“Your Most Merciful Majesty!

“We have appeared before the face of Your Imperial Majesty at an agonizing time, when the whole people is beginning with horror to understand that Russia is threatened by danger not only from foreign invasions and enslavement to foreign evil, but also from internal civil collapse, while Your Ruling House is threatened not only by open rebellion with its bloody banners, but also by a great schism from the people. At such a time our duty before the Fatherland orders us to witness before the whole people that we have sworn an oath of allegiance and that it is impossible to order us to change this oath or replace it by another oath to any other earthly authority, and least of all to that authority which itself has betrayed the authority to which we have sworn allegiance. The time has come for us, before the face of the whole world and in the name of the people’s oath, to say directly to the Tsar that the universe must know that we, who have so far been voiceless and weaponless, are no less firm in our confession than the enemies of Your Majesty, of the Russian people and of us, who have long been shaming our homeland by their mutinous betrayal, by their hysterical cries and by their treacherous shedding of blood.

“God’s punishing hand is hanging over us. War has not given us victory, and peace has not brought us pacification. The intrigues of the international enemies of law and order, who have united into a global Judaeo-Masonic conspiracy, are waging a desperate struggle in our homeland with Christianity, enlightenment and culture... Rebellion is tearing away the borderlands, and treachery is corrupting the age-old Russian lands. Russian people are being driven out of the borderlands by violence and threats, while panic has seized the native population. Mutual distrust and outright hatred are tearing apart the provinces, the tribes, the cities and the villages, the institutions and the unions, the Church and the family, the school and the army. Neither the authorities, nor freedom, nor personal security, nor lawful possessions are recognized. Mindless preachers of violence are conducting propaganda in the army by word, in print and by their very acts; they are calling society to general destruction and armed rebellion. Murder, theft and robbery rule throughout our Fatherland. Russia has

become hell, and its existence – torment. God Himself is calling on us to respond on the eve of the 1000th anniversary of our past. Events have powerfully put a threatening question before us: is our history about to be broken?

“However, Your Majesty, our history will not be broken in two if the whole people itself does not want it... That is why we, your faithful subjects, Russian people, in the name of the Tsar and the people and their unbreakable unity, proclaim that we do not recognize and never will recognize any other supreme power than the Tsarist Autocracy, and we dedicate all our spiritual powers and all our resources to its regeneration... For our fidelity there is not, and with God’s blessing never will be, any reconciliation with a government acting not in agreement with the oath we have given, and we will be reconciled only on the basis of the complete victory of the traditions, waging an unbending struggle to the end for the Orthodox Faith, for the Russian people and for Your Royal Autocracy.”

In 1905 the Jewish revolutionaries in Kiev said: “We gave you God, and we will give you a Tsar!” And so after the revolutionaries came to power in 1917 we see an ever-quickening descent from autocracy to democracy to despotism in the form of Lenin and Stalin. Democracy cannot be more than a transitional phase because the rule of the people by the people is a contradiction in terms; for “rule” means the imposition of one will on the will of the people, which, at least in its fallen state, is always multiple. It is possible for one man to rule with the consent of the people and for the benefit of the people; but it is impossible for the State to be ruled by the people itself; real democracy is a myth.

That is why the great saints of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries insisted on the necessity – the religious necessity – of faithfulness to the Orthodox Tsar. St. Seraphim of Sarov said that after Orthodoxy, faithfulness to the Tsar was “our first Russian duty and the chief foundation of true Christian piety”. Again, St. John of Kronstadt said: “The autocracy is the sole condition of the piety of Russia; if there is no autocracy, there will be no Russia; power will be taken by the Jews, who greatly hate us...” And Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow, the apostle to the Altai, said: “You don’t want your own Russian authority, so you will have a foreign power over you...” 934


933 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 428.

934 Quoted in Sergius Fomin, Rossia pered vtorym prishestviem (Russia before the Second Coming), Sergiev Posad: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1993, p. 100.
63. 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. “In the aftermath of the 1905 Revolution,” writes Evans, “the average rose from around fifteen death sentences a year in the 1880s and 1890s to 637 in 1907 and 1,342 in 1908, almost all of which were actually carried out.”935 This rate was often criticized. But Stolypin 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…”936 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!”937

“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 action. On the 3rd, police surrounded the Taurida Palace, arresting many of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks... The third Duma was 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...

935 Evans, op. cit., p. 433.
“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…”

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. “By 1900,” writes Lieven, “massive population growth meant that in some of Russia’s core agricultural provinces land was becoming scarce and rents were growing quickly. As a result, tensions between the peasantry and the landowning class were high. Mass migration to Siberia could be an answer. Much of the area worst affected by overpopulation was in what we would not call Eastern Ukraine. It was here – in the provinces of Chernigov, Kharkov, Poltava and Ekaterinoslav – that the peasant revolt of 1905 was often most serious. Immigration to Siberia of Ukrainians (and Belorussians) might reduce not just the social crisis but also the national one. English, Scots, Welsh, and even sometimes Irish immigrants to the white Dominions to some extent forged a new and unique British identity. Russian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian immigrants to Siberia might even more easily become ‘New Russians’. By 1900, there was a minimal chance of separatism developing in Siberia, but a specific ‘frontier’ variant of Russian identity did exist. Even in western Siberia, there were no noble landowners, but by 1914 there were many wealthy peasant farmers. Their dairy exports were, for instance, competing strongly with the Danes’ in the British market. Siberia was very much more than the land of ice, convicts, and Rasputing so dear to the

938 Montefiore, The Romanovs, pp. 542-543.

Western imagination. It was in fact a new Russia, and amid the many crises they faced, Russia’s rulers were buoyed up when they contemplated its future…”940

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…”941

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 resettlers 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

940 Lieven, Towards the Flame, p. 59.

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 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

942 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 403-405.

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...”

* * *

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.

“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

944 Yakobi, Imperator Nikolaj II i revoliutsia (Emperor Nicholas II and the Revolution), Moscow,
2010, p. 73.
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…”

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.

* *

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. One of the reasons for the great popularity of the Black Hundredists in these western provinces was that the Russian peasants looked to the Tsar and the monarchists to deliver them from the power of their Polish and Jewish oppressors. 947

“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 intelligentsia, 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.…” 948

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

947 Plokhy, op. cit., p. 170.
948 Solonevich, “Puti, Oshibki i Itogi” (Ways, Mistakes and Conclusions), in Rossia i Revoliutsia (Russia and the Revolution), Moscow, 2007, p. 98.
Violate racial equality in 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…
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.

(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.\textsuperscript{950}

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”.\textsuperscript{951}

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-Conciliary 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

\textsuperscript{950} Suggestions of the Diocesan Hierarchs on the Reform of the Church, St. Petersburg, 1906, vol. 3, p. 443.

\textsuperscript{951} Firsov, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 222-223.
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 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’.952

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 idiosyncracy 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 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

954 Journals and Protocols, p. 56.

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…

Not even all the Georgian bishops were in favour of autocephaly. In March, 1917 Archbishop Demetrius of Tauris (formerly Prince David Abashidze), who later became organiser of the Georgian Catacomb Church until his death in Kiev in 1943, protested against the election and enthronement of Bishop Kirion as Georgian Catholicos. Vladyka Demetrius was “more Russian than the Russians” and did not sympathize with the nationalist designs of the leaders of the Georgian Church. During the Moscow Council of 1917-18, he was appointed president of the section on the Orthodox Church in Transcaucasia, and in connection with the Georgians’ declaration of the autocephaly of their Church was elected a deputy member of the Holy Synod.
65. THE BLACK HUNDREDS

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 even after the revolution had been defeated, “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 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.

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957 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)

958 Oldenburg, op. cit., p. 349.

959 Oldenburg, op. cit., p. 355.
In June, the First Battalion of the elite Preobrazhensky guards mutinied. General Alexander Kireev noted in his diary: “This is it…”\footnote{Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, London: Allen Lane, 2015, p. 190.} For if even the army rebelled, and the regime’s other pillar, the peasantry was also revolting (on the land issue), then the regime itself, it would seem, was doomed...

However, the Tsar now acted with admirable decisiveness. On July 8 he 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 on Finland’s autonomy. The deputies returned to Petersburg having achieved nothing; nobody paid any attention to them… 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.”\footnote{Svod Zakonov Rossiiskoi Imperii (The Collection of the Laws of the Russian Empire), 3rd series, vol. 1, pt. 1. St Petersburg, 1912, pp. 5-26.}

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. However, the Union was not so much anti-semitic as anti-Judaist and anti-revolutionary.

Serhii Plokhy writes: “The first rally the Union organized in Moscow attracted close to 20,000 people. In December 1905, Nicholas received a delegation of leaders of the Union and gave his blessing to its activities. Backed by the authorities, the Union played a key role in mobilizing support for the monarchy under the banner of modern nationalism. According to the Union’s statute, ‘the good of the motherland lies in the firm preservation of Orthodoxy, unlimited Russian autocracy, and the national way of life.’ Count Sergei Uvarov’s formula of the 1830s – autocracy, Orthodoxy and nationality – had been revived, now inspiring not only imperial bureaucrats but also rank-and-file subjects.

“The Russia represented by the Union was not limited to Great Russians. ‘The Union makes no distinction between Great Russians, White Russians, and Little Russians,’ read the statute. In fact, the western provinces, and Ukraine in particular, became the Union’s main base of operations. Its largest branch, located in the Ukrainian province of Volhynia, was centered on the Pochaiv Monastery. According to a report of 1907, the Union counted more than 1,000 chapters in Volhynia, with a membership of more than 100,000. If one trusts the report, compiled by the governor of Volhynia, that province alone accounted for one-quarter of the Union’s membership throughout the empire. Not far behind were other Right-Bank Ukrainian provinces, especially the Kyiv gubernia.

“What accounted for the truly impressive number of Union members in the western provinces was that, as in Volhynia, individual chapters were organized and led by priests, who enlisted their parishioners into the Union…”

The bishops were also enthusiastic. The most prominent exception was the liberal Metropolitan Anthony (Vadkovsky) of St. Petersburg, who, as we have seen, was rumoured to be an enemy of St. John of Kronstadt and even a Freemason.

But Metropolitan Vladimir of Moscow, Archbishop Tikhon (Bellavin) of Yaroslavl, Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Volhynia, Bishop Hermogen

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962 During the successful counter-revolution of 1906-07, the Union had about 11,000 local sections, and their members comprised several hundreds of thousands of people from all walks of life. (S. Anikin, “Buduschee prinadlezhit trezvym natsiam” (The Future Belongs to Sober Nations), Vernost’, 142, March, 2010, http://metanthonymemorial.org/VernostNo142.html) (V.M.)


964 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
of Saratov, St. John of Kronstadt, Elder Theodosius of Minvody and many others joined it without doubting.

St. John of Kronstadt became member 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, if you want to be unshaken by the people of unbelief and anarchy and do not want to be deprived of the kingdom and the Orthodox Tsar. But if you do fall away from your faith, as many intelligentsy 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 if 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.”

A great priestly organizer of the Union 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...”

“The monarchist Unions,” wrote Fr. John, “...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...”

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.”

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966 Tatiana Groyan, Tsariu Nebesnomu i Zemnomu Vernij (Faithful to the Heavenly and Earthly Kings), Moscow, 1996, p. CXI.

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However, the Union was plagued by schisms and poor leadership that gave it a bad name. Thus 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. Dubronin’s views were contradictory: pro-tsarist, but anti-hierarchical. 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.” Fr. John Vostorgov considered Dubronin an enemy of the truth, and stressed that true patriotism can only be founded on true faith and morality: “Where the faith has fallen, 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.”

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. Moreover, the monarchists were forced to conduct party politics in favour of the idea that the state should not be the product of party politics, being incarnate in the tsar who was above all party and class interests...

In spite of this, 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 Rosecrucians and, finally, in Freemasonry it merged into a universal Jewish organization. And

967 Vostorgov, in Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., p. 400. My italics (V.M.)

now, having gathered strength to the point where France is completely in the hands of the Masons, it – Masonry – already openly persecutes Christianity out of existence there. In the end Masonry will be poured out into one man of iniquity, the son of destruction – the Antichrist (II Thessalonians 2). In this resides the solution of the riddle of our most recent freedoms: their aim is the destruction of Christianity in Rus’. That is why what used to be the French word ‘liberal’, which meant among the Masons a ‘generous’ contributor to the Masonic aims, and then received the meaning of ‘freedom-loving’ with regard to questions of faith, has now already passed openly over to antichristianity. In this resides the solution of the riddle of that stubborn battle for control of the school, which is being waged in the zemstvo and the State Duma: if the liberal tendency gains control of the school, the success of antichristianity is guaranteed. In this resides the solution of the riddle of the sympathy of liberals for all kinds of sects in Christianity and non-Christian religions. And the sectarians have not been slumbering – they have now set about attacking the little children… And when your children grow up and enter university – there Milyukov and co. will juggle with the facts and deceive them, teaching them that science has proved man’s origin from the apes. And they will really make our children into beasts, with just this difference, that the ape is a humble and obedient animal whereas these men-beasts will be proud, bold, cruel and unclean….”

Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) put the monarchist case in February, 1907: “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

969 Bishop Andronicus, “Russkij grazhdanskij stroj zhizni pered sudom khristianina” (The Russian civil order before the judgement of the Christian), Fryazino, 1995, pp. 24-25.
people: they all taught to look on this life as the entrance courtyard into the future life, they all taught to use it in such a way as not to console the flesh, but to raise the soul to evangelical virtue, to preserve the apostolic faith unharmed, to keep the purity of morals and truthfulness of speech, to honour the tsars and those placed in authority by them, to listen to and venerate the sacred monastic order, not to envy the rich, but to compete with the righteous ones, to love to work the land as indicated by God to our race through Adam and Noah, and to turn to other crafts only out of necessity or because of a special talent; not to borrow the corrupt habits of foreigners, their proud, lying and adulterous morals, but to preserve the order of the fatherland, which is fulfilled through chastity, simplicity and evangelical love; to stand fearlessly for your native land on the field of battle and to study the law of God in the sacred books. That is what our land teaches us, that is what the wise men and righteous ones of all epochs of our history entrusted to us, in which there was no disagreement between them, but complete unanimity. The whole of Rus’ thinks in the same way. But she knows that only the Anointed of God must preserve this spirit and defend it from enemies visible and invisible by his mighty right hand. And look he hardly stepped back from life when his popular privileges were snatched from him by deception and violence by his enemies and the enemies of the people. Yes, the Russian people thinks and feels one thing: in its eyes public life is a general exploit of virtue, and not the realm of secular pleasures, it is the laborious increase of the Kingdom of God amongst us ourselves and its implanting in the unenlightened tribes, and not the equalisation of all faiths and superstitions. The Orthodox people knows and feels this. It feels that without one ruling royal right hand it is impossible for our land of many tribes to exist. In it are 102 different faiths, 102 tribes that will now nourish malicious enmity against each other immediately they cease to feel the ruling right hand of the White Tsar above them. Let him hear out the reports of the people’s delegates, let him allow them to express their opinions on various matters of the kingdom. But the final decision will be made by him himself, and he will give an account for this only through his conscience before the Lord God. One only submission, one only limitation of his power is necessary to the people: that openly on the day of his crowning he should confess his Orthodox faith to God and the people in accordance with the Symbol of the Fatherland – so that he should not have human arbitrariness, but the evangelical law of God as his unfailing guide in his sovereign decisions and undertakings. That is the kingdom we need, and this is understood not only by Russian people, but also by people of 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…”

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

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970 Bishop Nikon (Rklitsky), Zhizneopisanie Blazhenneishago Antonia, Mitropolit Kievskago i Galitskago, vol. 2, pp. 173, 175-177.
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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Meanwhile, Church thinkers continued to wage war against the revolution. Prominent among them was the future Archbishop Hilarion (Troitsky), who in 1929 won the crown of martyrdom for his opposition to the socialist atheist state: "One of the more prominent misunderstandings which have arisen in this area is the misunderstanding about socialism. On the one hand, they aver that Christ was a socialist; and on the other, that socialism is entirely in agreement with Christianity... In light publicistic literature one may constantly encounter attempts to reconcile pagan socialism and Christianity...

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

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

"If socialism looks upon itself as a world-view, what, then, is this world-view? It is, first of all, a consistent materialism. A materialistic understanding of history, as acknowledged by the socialists themselves, comprises the essence of the entire theory of their teaching, its cornerstone, according to the expression of Bernstein. 'One must seek the basic reasons of all social changes and revolutions not in the heads of men and not in their views on eternal righteousness and justice, but in changes in the means of production and distribution' (Engels). If socialism is so closely bound up with materialism, how can it bear any relationship to religion? Crudely distorting the moral and educational significance of religion, the materialistic criticism of Marx and
Engels sees religion as the mere 'handiwork of man', the product of ignorant imagination or profit motives; and God Himself as a reflection of economic relations. Even in the Christian God they dare to see an 'anthropological idealization of a capitalism which thirsts for power and satisfaction.' Religion is called forth, in the words of Engels, 'by the dark, primordial ideas of man concerning his personal nature and that which surrounds him,' and is defined in its permutations 'by class, and consequently economic, relations'. Religion seemed to Marx to be a superstition which has outlived its time, 'a dead question for the intelligentsia, but an opium for the people.' According to this, Marx considered 'freedom of conscience from the charms of religion' to be 'the assistance of the people toward real happiness.'

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

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

"I think that everyone can now see that socialism, as a distinct world-view, is in essence the adversary of all idealism, of all the immutable principles of morality, and the enemy of all religion. Reducing everything in the world to matter, the socialist world-view leaves no place for the divine Principle.

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

"But is not such hypocrisy, such falsehood, immoral, scandalously immoral? To this the socialists answer us thus: 'Mere moral means have nothing to recommend them to us. You will not get far in politics with them' (Bebel). 'In each party perfidious tricks are unavoidable, and the laws of traditional morality here recede completely into the background' (Menger). What can you do with party tactics? But these tactics are such as would move Jesuits to ecstasy. The more direct and (if one can speak of honesty among them) honest socialists, however, let the cat out of the bag and openly state their enmity towards religion. On August 22nd, 1901, the French Social-Revolutionary Party resolved: 'Citizens, the members of the Party vow that under no circumstances will they carry out any religious acts whatever in conjunction with representatives of any denomination' (freedom of conscience!!!). On December 31st, 1878, Bebel, in the presence of the entire Reichstag, declared: 'In the area of religion, we aspire to atheism'; and on September 16th, 1878, he expressed 'a firm trust that socialist will lead to atheism'. This same blasphemer Bebel calls himself the enemy of all religion, 'of which people of high quality have no need'. At the Gall Assembly, Liebknecht expressed the hope that 'the basic principles of socialism will overcome religious forms of popular ignorance'. According to Todt, 'He who is himself not an atheist and does not commit himself with all zeal to the dissemination of atheism is not fit to be called a socialist'. Lafarge is indignant 'that religious principles are still not utterly extirpated from the minds of the learned', but is comforted by the hope that in the future socialism would completely erase faith in God from men's souls....
"It is understood that in the socialist world-view there will also be no place for belief in the immortality of the soul. The denial of immortality is one of the main conditions for the success of socialism, 'because with the weakening of belief in heaven, socialist demands for heaven on earth will be strengthened' (Bebel). Dietzgen advises that one prefer 'a comfortable world here' to the other world. On February 3rd, 1893, a certain Catholic deputy asked the social-democrats of the German Reichstag the question as to whether they believed in the afterlife. They answered unanimously in the negative. One socialist newspaper, Neue Zeit, suggested that 'the threats of hell be mocked, and that pointing to heaven be disdained'.

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

"But enough! Enough of these mindless words! I hope my readers will forgive me for setting down these blasphemies of the socialists and offending their Christian sensibilities with them. I have only wanted to show what moral ugliness socialism is, what an abyss of falsehood lies within it, and, therefore, how mistaken is any attempt to reconcile socialism and the divine Christian Faith."\textsuperscript{971}

\textsuperscript{971} Troitsky, "Christianity and Socialism", \textit{Orthodox Life}, vol. 48, N 3, May-June, 1998, pp. 37, 38-41, 43.
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

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Albanians, and with the Bulgarian and Serbian guerrillas they were supposed to be fighting.\textsuperscript{973}

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”.\textsuperscript{974} 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’...”\textsuperscript{975}

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 Mehment Talaat Pasha, Grand Master of the Turkish Grand Orient, and Kemal Ataturk, who had been initiated into an Italian lodge in Macedonia.\textsuperscript{976} On July

\textsuperscript{973}Glenny, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 215.

\textsuperscript{974}Akçam, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 39.

\textsuperscript{975}Glenny, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 216.

\textsuperscript{976}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 \textit{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 \textit{ex officio}. Freemasons had existed in Constantinople since the
23, 1908, the same day as the celebrations in Salonika, 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

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 high official in the Sultan’s government who was secretly the leader of the Young Turks. Midhat Pasha had been initiated as a Freemason while he was a student in England. After he returned to Turkey he was appointed Governor of the Danube region, and established a regime in which there was no religious persecution. In 1872 he was for a short time Grand Vizier, the head of the Turkish government.

“Scalieris and Midhat Pasha were able to exercise their influence on Prince Murad, the nephew of the Sultan Abd-Ul Aziz and the heir to the throne. Murad listened with sympathy to their progressive liberal views, and at their suggestion became a Freemason in 1872, joining a Greek-speaking lodge in Constantinople under the authority of the French Grand Orient. In 1876, while the Bulgarian revolt against Turkish rule was taking place and Russia was preparing to go to war with Turkey in support of the Bulgarians, Midhat Pasha carried out a coup, deposed Abd-Ul Aziz, and proclaimed Murad as the Sultan Murad V.

“A liberal-minded Freemason was now Sultan of Turkey; but within a few months he was deposed after another coup which placed the tyrannical Abd-Ul Hamid II on the throne. During his thirty-three-year reign he acquired international notoriety both by his despotic government and by the sexual excesses of his private life. At first he maintained Midhat Pasha as Grand Vizier, but then arranged for him to be assassinated. He kept Murad imprisoned in the palace. Scalieris tried to arrange for Murad to escape, but the rescue attempt failed. Murad died in 1904, having been kept as a prisoner in the palace for 28 years.

“Abd-Ul Hamid continued to reign until 1909, when he was deposed and imprisoned after the revolution of the Young Turks.” (The Freemasons, London: Constable, 1999, pp. 216-217)
“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 Osmanli 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...’”

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.”

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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

977 Glenny, op. cit., p. 218.


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. Izvolsky 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 Šandjak 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.’

“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 Cvijić, 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’,

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980 Oldenburg, Tsarstvovanie Imperatora Nikolaia II (The Reign of Emperor Nicholas II), Belgrade, 1939, vol. 2, pp. 36-37.
except, of course, for the minority of ‘temporary inhabitants’ and ‘exploiters’
installed by the Austrians over the previous thirty years.”\textsuperscript{981}

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.\textsuperscript{982}

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, \textit{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
\textit{Ujedinjenje ili smrt!} [Union or Death!] opened with the unsurprising declaration
that the aim of the new association 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 \textit{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...

\textsuperscript{981} Clark, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 33-35.

\textsuperscript{982} Clark, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 36.
“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 an 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.

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

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984 Clark, op. cit., p. 41.
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...
67. 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. The Russian Athonite Monastery of St. Panteleimon, where the heresy first arose, also renounced their own heretical brethren.985

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.”987 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

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987 Gubanov, op. cit., p. 770.
“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”.

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-worshipping in the inter-war period. In modern times the heresy has enjoyed a revival in intellectualist circles in Russia, especially in the works of Hieromono Turkov 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 theologians988, 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.989 Bulatovich himself was a left social revolutionary.990

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

988 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.

989 Constantine Papoulides, Oi Rossoi onomolatroi tou Agiou Orous, (The Russian Name-Worshippers of Mount Athos), Thessaloniki, 1977 (in Greek).

990 "Kratkoe opisanie biografii menie nyedostojnago skhipiskopa 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.
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.991

* 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 of Russia’s so-called “Silver Age” 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.”992 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).993

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 Poem (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."994

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. 995

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

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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…”

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.


997 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


1000 Florovsky, "Metafizicheskie predposylyki utopizma" (The Metaphysical Presuppositions of

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 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…”

1002 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=BrylQ9QpXwl.

1003 Figes, *Natasha's Dance*, pp. 279, 280-282. However, a year later, on April 5, 1914, the reaction was different: “The audience gave it a standing ovation, and afterward ran behind the stage and carried the composer out in their arms.” (Ilya Ovchinnikov, “Contact with a Mystery, *Russian Life*, June 17, 2017).
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


1005 “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).
him in it.' Again, 'the Russian-Jewish revolutionary, Lev Deutsch, writing in 1923, clearly remembered the time when the Jews 'considered it sinful to learn Russian, and its use was allowed only if absolutely essential and, of course, only for speaking to Christians (the goyim).''

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. 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, Kokovtsev replied: ‘As head of the government.’ Later, a local official came up to the Finance Minister to complain, ‘Well, Your Excellency, by calling in the troops you have missed a fine chance to answer Bogrov’s shot with a nice Jewish pogrom.’ 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.’”


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

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“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.’

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one victim of such a murder, Child-Martyr Gabriel of Zverki, Belorussia, to whom Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) wrote a service in 1908.\textsuperscript{1011}

In 1855 Bishop Porphyrius (Uspensky) of Chigirinsk wrote to the director of the Department of foreign confessions, Khruschev: "Just as the Christian peoples have retained many pagan superstitions, so the Jews – it goes without saying, not all of them – continue to shed the blood of children and youths who are not of their tribe according to very ancient tradition, which points to the redemption of their whole race in a bloody human sacrifice... In the East everyone is convinced that the killing of Christian boys by the Jews is ordered in such a way that this evil is accomplished in one year in Thessalonica, for example, in another in Damascus, in a third in Spain, or Russia, or Wallachia, etc., and that the towels soaked in the blood of the unfortunate victim are burned, and their ashes are scattered to all the 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..."\textsuperscript{1012}

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.


For ritual murders demonstrated in court, see Dal’, V. \textit{Rozyskanie o ubiyenii evreev khristianskikh mladentsev i upotreblenii krovi ikh} (Investigation into the Killing by Jews of Christian Children and the Use of their Blood), St. Petersburg, 1844; Rozanov, V. \textit{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, \textit{Ternovij venets Rossii} (Russia’s Crown of Thorns), Moscow, 1998.

\textsuperscript{1012} Uspensky, in Fomin and Fomina, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. II, p. 632.
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 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 abjure 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 care 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 eminently 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

1013 Platonov, op. cit., pp. 748-754.
Skomorovsky, he had twice, in 1903 and 1905, spoken up against the antisemite pogroms in Zhitomir, he went on: “But in both of the above-mentioned cases of my conversation with the rabbi, I decisively refused to say that I did not recognize the existence of ritual murders carried out by Jews, but on the contrary I expressed to my interlocutor my conviction that these murders exist, perhaps as belonging to one or another sect of the Jewish religion, perhaps as a secret of the highest spiritual government of the Jews, but there undoubtedly have been cases of ritual murders both in recent times and in antiquity.

“When my Jewish academic acquaintances pointed to the fact that Jewish law forbids the drinking of the blood even of animals, so that the thought of their mixing Christian blood with the paschal matsa was absurd, I replied that what seemed more probable to me was the link between the ritual killings and, not the Jewish feast of Pascha, but the feast that precedes it of ‘Purim’, in which the story of Esther, Haman and Mordecai is remembered, when the Persian king, having executed the enemy of the Jews, Haman, allowed them, who had not long before been condemned to general killing, to kill their enemies themselves. Purim in 1911 [the year of the ritual killing of Andrew 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...”

The Beilis trial polarized Russian society and, through the Jewish press, had international ramifications. Liberal opinion throughout the world pilloried Russia, which was now the country, supposedly, not only of the cruellest tyranny and retrograde religion, but also of systematic persecution and slander of the Jews. Unfortunately, these criticisms, though unjust, helped to create the very phenomenon they decried. Racial anti-semitism, as opposed to religious anti-Judaism and anti-Talmudism, had been rare in Russia – rarer than in most western countries. But in the decade that followed the Beilis trial, under the stress of war and revolution 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...

1014 Archbishop Anthony, in Zhizn’ Volynii (The Life of Volhynia), N 221, 2 September, 1913.

1015 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 mœurs’ 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

1016 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 135-137.
the service of earthly needs and the religion of the service of ideal values strike against each other, and however complex and varied their irrational psychological interweaving in the soul of the intelligent, in the sphere of the intelligent’s consciousness their conflict leads to the complete annihilation and expulsion of ideal demands in the name of the integrity and purity of the moralistic faith.

“Nihilistic moralism is the fundamental and most profound trait of the spiritual physiognomy of the Russian 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...

1017 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…”1018

“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.”1019

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.”1020

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.


1019 Tikhomirov, “Pochemu ia perestal byt’ revoliutsionerom” (Why I ceased to be a Revolutionary), in “Korni zla” (The Roots of Evil), Pravoslavnaiia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia), N 7 (1412), April 1/14, 1990.

As Solzhenitsyn has said, “If only it were all so simple! If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the dividing line between good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being, and who is willing to destroy his own heart?”\(^\text{1021}\)

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.”\(^\text{1022}\)

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 ecstatics 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...”\(^\text{1023}\)

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1021 Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*.


The arguments of Vekhii 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 – 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 intelligently 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…”

Moreover, there were still many intelligently 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, still clinging to his false reasoning and having abandoned the Orthodox 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 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!'”

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70. THE BALKAN WARS

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, 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, with the humiliation suffered at the hands of the Austrians in 1908-09 still fresh in his mind, his sympathies were with Serbia. 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…”1026

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 elites. Even Alexander Krivoshein, the Minister of Agriculture, was a potential ally of this coalition. His ministry, and indeed he himself, maintained cordial relations with the Duma and the zemstva. On the whole, they enjoyed a good press. And Krivoshein was not merely inclined towards pro-Slav nationalist sympathies, he had also married a daughter of one of Moscow’s leading industrialist families [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…”1027


1027 Lieven, Nicholas II, pp. 191-192
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 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.

But this did not mean that the Serbs and Bulgarians were friends... As Lieven writes, “Nobody believed that the status quo in Macedonia could survive for much longer. Within Macedonia, Muslims (mostly but by no means only Albanians), Greeks and Slavs were often in conflict. Grigorii Trubetskoy wrote that the great majority of Macedonian Slavs were currently neither truly Bulgarian nor truly Serbian. Which direction their identity took would depend on whether the Bulgarian or the Serbian government and intelligentsia came to control the region. This gave an added twist to the rivalry of the regimes in Sofia and Belgrade. All the governments in the region were nationalist through and through. This was the source of their legitimacy and of most local politicians’ sense of their own personal identity. Where governments did try to show statesmanship and moderation, however, they could rely on being denounced by wide sections of their country’s intelligentsia. Worst of all, the officer corps of all states in the region were shot through with extreme and aggressive nationalist assumptions and loyalties. The monarchs of Greece, Romania, and Bulgaria were foreigners: they were especially vulnerable to accusations of betraying the national cause. But even in Serbia and Turkey, two countries with native dynasties, monarchs were overthrown by military coups in these years...”

The Russians were prepared to support a defensive alliance among the Balkan states in order to prevent an Austrian advance towards Salonica. 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. 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. In August, 1912 20,000 Albanian troops occupied Skopje, and the Turks were forced to grant autonomy to this mainly Albanian-occupied region. Nor did any of the larger 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...

1030 Macmillan, op. cit., p. 441.
1031 Radzinsky, The Last Tsar, London: Hodder, 1992, p. 188.
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 8.1032

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…”1033

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, 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 [chetniks], 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

1032 Lieven, Towards the Flame, pp. 253-256.
refused to submit to the demands of the Black Hand and the četniks were scared. Branislav 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 might 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 rejoice 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 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…”

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…”

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

1035 Lieven, Towards the Flame, pp. 256-258.

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 Balkan 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 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...

1037 Radzinsky, op. cit., p. 189.

1038 Lieven, Towards the Flame, p. 263.

1039 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).
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…”\(^{1040}\)

As Tim Judah, writes, “ethnic cleansing” was common during the Second Balkan 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 \textit{en masse}, incredible acts of violence, pillage and brutality of every kind – such were the means which were employed by the Serbo-Montenegrin soldiery, with a view to the entire transformation of the ethnic character of regions inhabited exclusively by Albanians.

“’We thus arrive at the second characteristic feature of the Balkan wars, a feature which is the necessary correlative of the first. Since the population of the countries about to be occupied knew, by tradition, instinct and experience, what they had to expect from the armies of the enemy and from the neighbouring countries to which these armies belonged, they did not await their arrival, but fled. Thus generally speaking, the army of the enemy found on its way nothing but villages which were either half deserted or entirely abandoned. To execute the orders for extermination, it was only necessary to set fire to them. The population, warned by the glow from these fires, fled all in haste. There followed a veritable migration of peoples, for in Macedonia, as in Thrace, there was hardly a spot which was not, at a given moment, on the line of march of some army or other. The Commission everywhere encountered this second fact. All along the railways interminable trains of carts drawn by oxen followed one another; behind them came emigrant families and, in the neighbourhood of the big towns, bodies of refugees were found encamped.’

“Just as conversion had been accepted as a means to escape death in earlier times, in some places it once again became an issue. When the Montenegrins captured the village of Plav, Rebecca West, whose pro-Serbian bent somewhat undermines her otherwise masterly account of Yugoslavia in the 1930s, characteristically dismisses a major massacre as an ‘unfortunate \textit{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.”\(^{1041}\)

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This latter incident shows that rivalry and hatred among the Orthodox, especially in Macedonia, 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:

The sea of fire which boils in my breast
And calls for vengeance with the savage waves of my soul,
Will be quenched when the monster of Sofia is still,
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 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).

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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, with each Orthodox nation fighting for its own power and glory, not

1042 Judah, op. cit., pp. 84-85.
only against the Turkish oppressors but also against the Albanians – and even against each other. 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; Bulgarians fled Macedonia to escape from invading Greek troops in 1913; Greeks chose to leave the Macedonian districts ceded to Bulgaria and Serbia by the Treaty of Bucharest. Sometimes populations were deliberately expelled, as the Greeks were from Western Thrace in 1913 and from parts of Eastern Thrace and Anatolia in 1914. In the wake of the Turkish defeat, there was an agreed population exchange: 48,570 Turks moved one way and 46,764 Bulgarians the other across the new Turkish-Bulgarian border. Such exchanges were designed to transform regions of ethnically mixed settlement into the homogeneous societies that so appealed to the nationalist imagination. The effects on some regions were dramatic. Between 1912 and 1915, the Greek population of (Greek) Macedonia increased by around a third; the Muslim and

Bulgarian population declined by 26 and 13 per cent respectively. The Greek population of Western Thrace fell by 80 per cent; the Muslim population of Eastern Thrace rose by a third. The implications were distinctly ominous for the many multi-ethnic communities elsewhere in Europe…”

The 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.1045 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…”1046

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…”

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.”1048

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 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

1045 Clark, op. cit., p. 298.
1046 Macmillan, op. cit., p. 444.
1047 Clark, op. cit., p. 288.
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 herself and with her the whole of the Orthodox commonwealth - which, again, is precisely what happened...


1050 Clark, _op. cit._, p. 218.

1051 Clark, _op. cit._, pp. 271-282.
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, Slovenses, 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. The tsar read Giers’s memorandums “and sometimes requested that ministers consider Giers’s suggestions and report back to him. It is certainly arguable that Giers’s priorities of peace, reconciliation with Austria and minimalist ambitions in the Straits would have served Russian interests better than the policy pursued by Serge Sazonov. Of course, because we know that Sazonov’s policies ended in war, revolution, and catastrophe for Russia, there is a natural bias in favour of Giers’s alternative strategy... The one certain point is that the policy suggested by Aleksandr Giers would have angered the military and naval leadership and outraged wide sections of Russian public opinion...”

Probably for that reason the tsar did not adopt Giers’s suggestions. He could not afford to alienate the army and nationalist public opinion... And so 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)...
THE POLISH AND UKRAINIAN QUESTIONS

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 did 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 Orthodox Slavs – more precisely, Orthodox Eastern Slavs, 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 Baptist 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 Petersburg 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 Petersburg’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...
“Given such calculations, Russians could take comfort from the idea that theirs was a national empire with a secure future. In the eyes of Russian elites, their empire was strong and glorious precisely because – like its British and German counterparts – it combined the national spirit of its core people and gave the Russian nation great global and historical significance. If Ukrainians were indeed a separate people, however, the calculations became far more alarming. The Russian Empire then began to look rather like its ever weaker, polyglot, and despised Habsburg rival. For most educated Russians and all Russian nationalists, this was unthinkable. As the leading pro-government newspaper stressed in 1911, ‘The... Russian state was created by the great efforts and sacrifices of the Russian people and now in Russia two-thirds of the population is Russian... In this we see the greatness and the winning advantage of Russia over the Habsburg Empire, where the ruling nation, the Germans, constitute less than one-quarter of the entire population of the state.’…”

Was it really conceivable that the Ukrainians would prefer to be within the German or Austrian rather than the Russian empires? The answer to this question depended partly on which part of the Ukraine we are talking about. 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’…”

“The Ukrainian problem was greatly complicated by the fact that although three-quarters of all those whom we would nowadays define as Ukrainians lived in the Russian Empire in 1900, the remaining quarter lived in Austria-Hungary. Of the latter, 3.5 million lived in Austrian Galicia, and over 400,000 dwelled in Hungary. The Hungarian ‘Ukrainians’ are usually described by historians as Rusyns, though they often called themselves Russians and saw themselves as members of a single Russian community, albeit with local peculiarities. As the confusion of names suggests, there was no agreement on Ukrainian identity. The battle to define this identity went on simultaneously in three different countries, each of which had its own distinct context. Nevertheless, this battle was widely seen – not least by Russians – as a single war to determine the fate of the whole Ukrainian region. The potential stakes were therefore immense. It was largely for this reason that a nationalist member of the Duma, Count Vladimir Bobrinsky, founded the Carpatho-Russian Society and mobilized support to defend the small Hungarian Rusyn community against attempts to weaken its sense of a common Russian identity.

1054 Lieven, Towards the Flame, pp. 51-53.

1055 Figes, op. cit., pp. 75-76.
“Bobrinsky’s support for the Rusyns caused difficulties for Austrian-Russian relations, but the group was too small for them to play a key role in the region’s fate. The 3.5 million Austrian Ukrainians, at the time generally described as Ruthenes, were far more crucial because by 1914 Austrian Galicia was the centre of Ukrainian nationalism. The basic reason for this was that the Austrian authorities, unlike either their Russian or their Hungarian counterparts, put no constraints on civil society’s freedom nor on the evolution of a sense of national identity among Austria’s many peoples. Vienna had indeed encouraged the development of Ukrainian identity as a check both on Polish power within the monarchy and on Russian attempts to claim leadership of the Slav world. Galicia became a refuge for Ukrainian nationalist emigres from Russia. With their help, there grew up a literary language and a national historical narrative completely divorced from Russian literature and opposed to key aspects of Russians’ understanding of their country’s history. After 1867, Austrian political life became increasingly democratic, with universal male suffrage introduced in 1907. Ukrainian nationalism organized itself politically and put down deep roots in Galician society. Even in Galicia, the battle over Ukrainian identity was not over in 1914: a substantial minority that still saw itself as Little Russian survived. Nevertheless, Ukrainian nationalism was clearly on top, and many of its tribunes dreamed of the day when all Ukrainians would be united in a single nation outside the Russian Empire…”

Oliver Figes confirms that Galicia’s “relatively liberal rights of self-government…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

1056 Lieven, Towards the Flame, pp. 52-53, 56-57.
Society, whose nationalist members devoted themselves to the study of Ukrainian folk culture, language and history."\textsuperscript{1057}

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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.”\textsuperscript{1058} 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.


\textsuperscript{1058} Voeikov, So Tsarem i Bez Tsaria (With and Without the Tsar), Moscow, 1995, p. 41.
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, 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 Sebaste, after which some of them soon died. Thus do they torture our Russians in Hungary and Austria in broad daylight in our civilized age…’

“But when massive arrests and tortures of the Orthodox began, and there was a trial of 94 Orthodox in Sihet, Vladyka Anthony composed a special prayer and
petitions in the litanies, which were read in all the churches of the Volhynia diocese in the 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.”1059

On May 20, 1914 Archbishop Anthony was duly transferred to Kharkov…

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“By 1913,” writes Robert Tombs, Britain’s “relations with Germany were improving hesitantly, encouraged by shared worries in London and Berlin about growing Russian power, and about the danger of serious conflict in the Balkans. Germany quietly scaled down its naval plans (which for the time being it could no longer afford), but much damage had been done: as the German foreign minister observed, ‘tensions had gone too deep for a speedy improvement.’ Yet by June 1914 Grey was hoping that improving relations with Germany might make London ‘the connecting link between the European Powers, able to calm tensions. War was not seen as inevitable. But when the fatal crisis came, the rapprochement with Germany too recent to make a difference.

“War, of course, did not begin in Morocco, the North Sea or the Channel, but on the Danube. The British ambassador in Vienna, Sir Fairfax Cartright, had predicted the crisis with astonishing prescience in January 1913: ‘Servia will some day set Europe by the ears and bring about a universal war on the Continent… [T]he Serbs may lose their heads and do something aggressive against the Dual Monarchy [Austria-Hungary] which will compel the latter to put the screws on Servia.’ The Balkans had become the arena for growing antagonism between Austria-Hungary and Russia, implicitly involving their respective allies, Germany and France…”

“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 Romanians within Hungary and negotiations broke off in February 1914…”

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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 Christopher 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 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 Serbia 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…”

Meanwhile, on May 4/16, 1914 there took place, as N.Yu. Selischev writes, “the signing of the document widely known in Greece as ‘the Corfu protocol’. The Corfu protocol gave the Orthodox Greeks a broad autonomy and sealed their religious, civil and social rights. The international control commission of the great powers (Russia was represented by the consul-general M. Petriaev) acted as a mediator in the quarrel and became the trustee of the fulfilment of the Corfu accord. In Russia the Corfu protocol… was known as the ‘Epirot-Albanian accord’. That is, the question of Epirus was not reduced to the level of an ‘internal affair’ of the newly created Albania, but was raised to the significance of an international agreement when the Orthodox Greek Epirots and the Mohammedan Albanians were recognized as parties to the agreement having equal rights. Our [Russian] press at that time – Pravitel’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

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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.” 1064

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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...’” 1065

“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 Symbolist 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 Asiatics... 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."*1066

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…”1067

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…”1068

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.

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’.”1069

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...

1067 House, in Macmillan, op. cit., p. 509.


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…”\textsuperscript{1070} That is why the chief of the German general staff, von Moltke, who had a healthy respect for Russia’s improving military capabilities,\textsuperscript{1071} 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…”\textsuperscript{1072}

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…”\textsuperscript{1073}

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.\textsuperscript{1074}

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

\textsuperscript{1070} Strachan, \textit{The Outbreak of the First World War}, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 78.

\textsuperscript{1071} Oldenburg, \textit{Tsarstvovanie Imperatora Nikolaia II} (Reign of Emperor Nicholas II), Belgrade, 1939, vol. II, p. 113.

\textsuperscript{1072} Voeikov, \textit{So Tsarem i Bez Tsaria} (With and Without the Tsar), Moscow, 1995, p. 62.

\textsuperscript{1073} Macmillan, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 215.

\textsuperscript{1074} Clark, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 322-325.
the Straits was a priority of their foreign policy in view of its importance for the vital grain export trade (that trade had been seriously damaged after Italy declared war on Turkey a year earlier). 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…\textsuperscript{1075}

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.\textsuperscript{1076}

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 most important promise – that of the Straits and Constantinople itself.) And although, according to Witte, 90% of Russians did not want to go to war\textsuperscript{1077}, 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 difficult, and there were powerful and rational arguments to justify the foreign policy adopted by Petersburg.”\textsuperscript{1078}

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

\textsuperscript{1075} Clark, op. cit., pp. 338-345.

\textsuperscript{1076} \url{http://novaonline.nvcc.edu/eli/evans/his242/documents/Durnovo.pdf}. See also Professor Paul Robinson, “How Russia might have stopped World War I”, \textit{The American Conservative}, February 4, 2014, \url{http://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/how-russia-might-have-stopped-world-war-i/}

\textsuperscript{1077} Clark, op. cit., p. 355.

\textsuperscript{1078} Lieven, \textit{Towards the Flame}, p. 366.
committed themselves to the French and Russians as much as the French and Russians did to each other (Germany might never have declared war if he had), 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 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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1079 Miranda Carter, The Three Emperors, London, 2010, 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…”

1080 Montefiore, The Romanovs, p. 566.

1081 Clark, op. cit., p. 345.

1082 Platonov, Ternovij Venets Rossi (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 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 nachikh dnei (The Russian Intelligentsia and Masonry from Peter I to our days), Moscow, 1997, pp. 395-398.
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.’

“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…”’

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 have stopped the war – the Tsar; and only the one Divine Actor could have prevented it if the peoples had been worthy of it – He Who said of Himself: “I am He Who makes peace and creates wars…” (Isaiah 45.7)

73. SARAJEVO


1084 In this connection, it is important to take into account a conversation that the Tsar had with a member of the Rothschild banking family at a ceremonial dinner in Dunkirk in 1901. “The billionaire Rothschild suggested that Russian debt to France could be written off in exchange for the Jews being given equal rights in Russia. The Tsar refused, saying that the Russian people was very trusting, and in conditions of equal rights would quickly fall into the Jewish cabal. On leaving Rothschild the Tsar said: Now I have signed my death sentence.” (Reminiscence of E.I. Balabin, an officer of a Cossack light-guards regiment. See https://sergedid.livejournal.com/417307.html?utm_source=fbsharing&utm_medium=social)
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 of both a political and a religious nature. 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” (after the pagan Egyptian god), Colonel Dragutin Dmitrijevich, the leading regicide of 1903 and inspirer of the terrorist “Black Hand” organization, was in charge of military intelligence!

Besides taking part in the regicide of 1903, Apis confessed to participation in plots to murder King Nicetas of Montenegro, King Constantine of Greece, Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany and King Ferdinand of Bulgaria!\textsuperscript{1085} 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”.\textsuperscript{1086}

Lieven writes: “Because Apis and the Black Hand were partly responsible for the murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and thereby for the First World War, the Serbian government’s failure to control them was of huge significance. The Russians knew a good deal about this organization. In the winter of 1911-12, the Russian military attaché in Belgrade, Colonel Victor Artamanov, sent detailed reports back to Petersburg concerning the origins and activities of the Black Hand, as well as the newspaper associated with it called Piedmont. As the newspaper’s name suggests, the aim of the Black Hand was to follow the example of Piedmont and united all Serbs in a kingdom ruled from Belgrade. With all the Balkan Serbs now ruled by Belgrade after the wars of 1912-13, the remaining task was to gather in the Serbs who currently lived under Habsburg rule, largely but not exclusively in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Artamanov sympathized with the patriotic ideals of the Black Hand but not with the

\textsuperscript{1085} West, Black Lamb and Grey Falcon, Edinburgh: Canongate, 2006, p. 369.

\textsuperscript{1086} Stevenson, op. cit., p. 12.
organization itself. He believed too that its leaders were often driven by purely selfish and personal motives. He wrote that those behind the Black Hand should have set up a political party, not a secret organization partly within the army that threatened military discipline and political stability in Serbia. Artamanov reported in January, 1912 that he had been approached by the Black Hand through an intermediary, ‘but of course I immediately and flatly refused the invitation to have conversations with members of a secret organization, so as not to give them the opportunity to connect Russia’s name with their agitation.’

“Nevertheless, wrote Artamanov, it was not hard to discover information about the Black Hand, because many people in Belgrade were eager to talk to Russia’s representatives and gain their sympathy. Artamanovich’s narrative of the Black Hand’s activities is far too long and complex to reproduce here. He began with the military conspiracy that had murdered King Alexander Obrenović in 1903 and had brought the Karageorgevics back to the Serbian throne in the person of King Peter. Since then, the army had been divided between ‘conspirators’ and ‘anti-conspirators’, and this division had also affected civilian political life. Military and party-political factions had become entwined but in a manner that was hard to follow because factions split and mutated over time and in response to specific issues, corruption scandals, and the everyday struggle for power and position in Belgrade’s political and military worlds. Within the army, for example, matters had been complicated both by the split within the ‘conspirators’ over issues of promotion and corruption and by the entry into the military political arena of the young, intelligent, and ambitious crown prince Alexander. At times, Colonel Dimitriević and the Black Hand were allies of Pašić’s Radical Party, at other times enemies. In January, 1912, Artamanov interpreted the current situation as reflecting the fact that the civilian government either felt itself too weak to move against the Black Hand and other ultranationalists or actually believed it could exploit Apis’s support for its own purposes. A deal seemed to have been struck whereby the Black Hand stayed out of domestic politics and concentrated entirely on ‘patriotic activites’.”

By 1913 Apis and Pašić, according to Max Hastings, were enemies, and in that year there were even discussions about “murdering him [Apis]. 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 definitely 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.

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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 “Tri
alism”.

“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.” As 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.”

The terrorists were armed 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 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.”


1091 Clark, op. cit., pp. 368-369.

1092 Hastings, op. cit., p. xxxvi.
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...”

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 averted been averted at 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. 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...

1093 Macmillan, op. cit., p. 515.

1094 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#t17288663).

1095 Lieven, Towards the Flame, p. 316.
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…”

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.”

As Tombs writes, there was now “a window of opportunity for war, because all four Continental powers felt they could win. France and Russia (humiliatingly defeated by Japan in 1905) would not have felt this as recently as 1910. The confidence of German and Austrian military commanders, however, was ebbing: they believed that Russia and France, both modernizing their armies, would be too strong for them by 1917. Helmut von Moltke, the German chief of staff, considered that ‘today we should still be a match for them.’ The Austrian chief of staff used an appropriate gambler’s metaphor: ‘In 1908-09 [victory] would have been a foregone conclusion, in 1912-13 it would have been a game with decent chances, now we play va banque.’ Both high commands had repeatedly been urging war while there was time, and after the Sarajevo assassination Vienna and Berlin resolved to destroy the Serbian threat – ‘Now or never,’ commented the Kaiser. Hence the ultimatum to Serbia. If they could intimidate Russia or France into backing down, and limit conflict to Austria and Serbia, as they continue to hope, so much the better: the predominance of Germany and Austria would be cemented without a major struggle, and the Franco-Russian alliance be destroyed…”

The Austrians, therefore, 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…

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1098 Tombs, op. cit., p. 607.
The Serbian evidence 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.”

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 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 must lie with 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

1099 Stevenson, op. cit, pp. 11, 12-13.
1100 Fischer, Germany’s Aims in the First World War, 1961, chapter 2.
popular than conflict with Japan had been, its burdens and dangers would also be infinitely greater. Russian generals usually had a deep respect for the German army, to which on the whole they felt their own army to be inferior. Above all, Russian leaders had every reason to feel that time was on their side. In strictly military terms, there was good reason to postpone conflict until the so-called ‘Great Programme’ of armaments was completed in 1917-18. In more general terms, Russia already controlled almost one-sixth of the world’s land surface, whose hitherto largely untapped potential was now beginning to be developed at great speed. It was by no means only Petr Stolypin who believed that, given 20 years of peace, Russia would be transformed as regards its wealth, stability and power. Unfortunately for Russia, both the Germans and the Austrians were well aware of all the above facts. Both in Berlin and Vienna it was widely believed that fear of revolution would stop Russia from responding decisively to the Austro-German challenge: but it was also felt that war now was much preferable to a conflict a decade hence.

“In fact, for the Russian government it was very difficult not to stand up to the Central Powers in July 1914. The regime’s legitimacy was at stake, as were the patriotism, pride and self-esteem of the key decision-makers. Still more to the point was the conviction that weakness would fatally damage Russia’s international position and her security. If Serbia became an Austrian protectorate, that would allow a very significant diversion of Habsburg troops from the southern to the Russian front in the event of a future war. If Russia tamely allowed its Serbian client to be gobbled up by Austria, no other Balkan state would trust its protection against the Central Powers. All would move into the latter’s camp, as probably would the Ottoman Empire. Even France would have doubts about the usefulness of an ally so humiliatingly unable to stand up for its prestige and its vital interests. Above all, international relations in the pre-1914 era were seen to revolve around the willingness and ability of great powers to defend their interests. In the age of imperialism, empires that failed to do this were perceived as moribund and ripe for dismemberment. In the judgement of Russian statesmen, if the Central Powers got away with the abject humiliation of Russia in 1914 their appetites would be whetted rather than assuaged. At some point in the near future vital interest would be threatened for which Russia would have to fight, in which case it made sense to risk fighting now, in the hope that this would deter Berlin and Vienna, but in the certainty that if war ensued Serbia and France would fight beside Russia, and possibly Britain and certain other states as well.”

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, 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

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by Pašić do anything to calm Serbian passions or reassure Austrian opinion – quite
the reverse.\footnote{Clark, op. cit., pp. 387-391.} 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…\footnote{Clark, op. cit., pp. 407-412.}

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
is some evidence for this 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.\footnote{Clark, op. cit., pp. 415-423.}

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
gulp 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

\footnote{Clark, op. cit., pp. 387-391.}

\footnote{Clark, op. cit., pp. 407-412.}

\footnote{Clark, op. cit., pp. 415-423.}
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.\textsuperscript{1108}

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 by 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 posture confused some German leaders into believing that Britain might remain neutral in a European war.”\textsuperscript{1109}

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.”\textsuperscript{1110} 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”.\textsuperscript{1111} However, 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

\textsuperscript{1108} Clark, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 552.


\textsuperscript{1110} Clark, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 484.

\textsuperscript{1111} Clark, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 557.
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 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

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1112 Lieven, Towards the Flame, p. 347.
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...”\textsuperscript{1113}

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 Petersburg and Warsaw military districts were not mobilized, Russian preparations of war against Germany could not get very far.”\textsuperscript{1114} 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.”\textsuperscript{1115}

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.\textsuperscript{1116} The European royal family was German in origin, being made up of branches of the Saxe-Coburg dynasty.\textsuperscript{1117} Thus even the matriarch of the family, Queen Victoria of England, once told King Leopold of the Belgians: “My heart is so German...”\textsuperscript{1118} For many generations, the Russian tsars and princes had taken brides from German princely families; Nicholas II, though thoroughly Russian in spirit, had much more German blood than Russian in his veins; and the Tsaritsa Alexandra and her sister Grand Duchess Elizabeth were Hessian princesses with an English mother.\textsuperscript{1119} However, a

\textsuperscript{1113} 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.

\textsuperscript{1114} Lieven, \textit{Towards the Flame}, p. 333.

\textsuperscript{1115} Lieven, \textit{Towards the Flame}, p. 335.

\textsuperscript{1116} Tsar Nicholas II became the godfather of the future King Edward VIII at his Anglican baptism (Carter, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 137), and in 1904 Kaiser Wilhelm was invited to be godfather of the Tsarevich Alexis (Niall Ferguson, \textit{The War of the World}, London: Penguin, 2007, p. 100).


\textsuperscript{1118} Ferguson, \textit{The War of the World}, p. 97.

\textsuperscript{1119} 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”, \textit{Orthodox Life}, vol. 31, no. 4, July-August, 1981).
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…”¹¹²⁰ 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 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.”¹¹²¹

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

¹¹²⁰ Carter, op. cit., 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).

¹¹²¹ Clark, op. cit., p. 521.
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…”1122

As for the third cousin, the British King George V, as we have seen, he appealed to the Tsar to stop his mobilization on August 1. But by then it was too later...

“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…”1123

Grand Duchess Elizabeth said that the Tsar had not wanted war, but rather blamed her cousin, the Kaiser, “who disobeyed the bidding of Frederick the Great and Bismarck to live in peace and friendship with Russia.”1124

Perhaps. But perhaps more blame should be attached to the moderate but deeply pessimistic attitude of the German chancellor Bethmann, whose acquiescence to the Austrians Lieven finds “bewildering”.1125 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.’”1126 Three weeks before the war he said to one of his most trusted assistants: “The future belongs to Russia which grows and grows and lies on us like an ever-heavier nightmare.”1127 And again in the same month, with the typical recklessness of the gambler, he said: “A leap in the dark has its attractions…”

1122 Clark, op. cit., p. 513.
1123 Lieven, Towards the Flame, p. 337.
1125 Lieven, Towards the Flame, p. 317.
1126 Macmillan, op. cit., p. 527.
1127 Lieven, Towards the Flame, p. 60.
However, if Clark is right, the situation did not depend on personalities on either side. In the last analysis, both monarchs had cold feet about going to 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 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...

1128 Millar, op. cit., p. 171.
74. ORTHODOXY AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR

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 Hötzendorff, 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”.¹¹²⁹ “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…”¹¹³⁰

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…”¹¹³¹

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 1870 and into the building of the Second Reich from 1871. 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...


¹¹³¹ Clark, op. cit., p. 558.
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.

* *

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 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.

1132 Von Bernhardi, *Germany and the Next War.*


1134 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)
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 Westernism in all its forms gradually to corrupt their God-given inheritance, the one true faith of Orthodoxy. . . .

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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?

Of course there were; and many Orthodox “washed their clothes in the Blood of the Lamb”, redeeming their backsliding by their courage and faithfulness to God, faith and nation. For this 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 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 betyers 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 (later Archbishop of Hieromartyr) 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.  

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…  

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  

his allies and 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?