**THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

***Volume 1: 1901-1941***

Vladimir Moss

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*Thou hast perfected the New Zion instead of the old through Thy precious Blood.*

Octoechos, Tone 8, Sunday, Mattins, Canon, Canticle Six, Troparion.

*And unto the angel of the Church in Sardis write:*

*These things saith He that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars:*

*I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.*

*Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die.*

*For I have not found thy works perfect before God.*

Revelation 3.1-2.

*Come out from her, My people, lest you share in her sins,*

*And lest you receive of her plagues.*

Revelation 18.4.

*[In the Church] one must get to the bottom of the problems, so as to eradicate the sickness from its very root.*

St. Basil the Great, Letter 156.

*Having no strength in their own teaching, they [the heretics] hunt for it in our weakness, and for this reason, like flies settling on wounds, they settle on our misfortunes – or should I say, mistakes?*

St. Gregory the Theologian, Sermon 27, 5.

*A want of zeal in small matters is the cause of all our calamities; and because slight errors escape fitting correction, greater ones creep in.*

St. John Chrysostom, Homily 1 on Galatians.

*If someone says to you: “Both your and our faith are from God”, you, my child, must reply to him as follows: “O crooked in faith! Or do you think that God, too, is two-faithed? Have you not heard what the Scripture says: ‘There is one God, one faith, one baptism’ (Ephesians 4.5)? How many years have you kept the right, Apostolic faith, and now through Satan’s insinuation you have been corrupted into evil belief. Have you not heard the teaching of the Apostle Paul: ‘Even if an angel should come from heaven and preach to you a Gospel that we have not preached to you, let him be anathema’ (Galatians 1.8)? But you have rejected the apostolic teaching and the decrees of the Holy Fathers and accepted a wrong and corrupted faith, filled with all destruction. Therefore you are rejected by us. You are dead, and the sacrifice you offer [i.e., the Eucharist] is dead. But we offer a living sacrifice to the living God, a pure and undefiled sacrifice, so as to obtain eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. To Him be glory. Amen.*

St. Theodosius of the Kiev Caves (+1074)

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# INTRODUCTION

The subject of this book is the titanic struggle between the Orthodox Church and the Revolution in the twentieth century – both the communist revolution in the East, and the liberal-ecumenist revolution in the West. This struggle has involved hundreds of millions of people on several continents, and produced hundreds of thousands of martyrs. And yet, considered as a whole, it has gone largely unrecorded, at any rate in the English language.[[1]](#footnote-1) There are several reasons for this. One is that the historical documents recording this struggle are to be found mainly in obscure journals written in Russian or Greek that are not accessible to many English-speaking writers. Another is that in order to understand this struggle, since it is a spiritual one, it is necessary to *take part in it*. In other words, this struggle is not a theme for objective historical research in the usual sense: while historical objectivity is necessary, it must be mixed with *faith,* faith in the truth of the Church and her ultimate triumph over falsehood and evil. Thirdly and most seriously, however, to many, even to many Orthodox Christians, it looks as if the struggle has been lost, that “True Orthodoxy”, that is, the Orthodoxy which refuses to compromise in any way with the Revolution, has failed in the Darwinian struggle for survival; which must give it, in their imagination, the aspect of a gallant, but essentially vain, even harmful, attempt to hold up the inevitable course of history and progress.

The thought arising in the minds of many that True Orthodoxy has lost the struggle is elicited particularly by its sadly divided state today. And yet it must be remembered that such a situation is by no means unprecedented in Church history. Thus in the fourth century St. Hilary of Poitiers wrote: “Since the Nicene Council, we have done nothing but rewrite creeds. While we fight about words, inquire about novelties, take advantage of ambiguities, criticize authors, fight on party questions, have difficulties in agreeing, and prepare to anathematize each other, there is scarcely a man who belongs to Christ. Take, for example, last year’s creed, what alteration is there not in it already? First, we have a creed which bids us not to use the Nicene ‘consubstantial’; then comes another, which decrees and preaches it; next, the third excuses the word ‘substance’, as adopted by the Fathers in their simplicity; lastly, the fourth, which instead of excusing, condemns. We determine creeds by the year or the month, we change our own determinations, we prohibit our changes, we anathematize our prohibitions. Thus, we either condemn others in our own persons, or ourselves in the instance of others, while we bite and devour one another, and are like to be consumed one of another.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

And yet it is generally acknowledged that the composition of a correct confession of faith is a matter of the very first importance; and this book is written in the firm belief that, however discouraging the present picture, the struggle for the True Faith is not over, and that this struggle is not vain; but that if True Orthodoxy is to triumph again, as the prophecies of the Holy Fathers indicate it will, lessons must be drawn from the history of the hundred years or so that have elapsed since it began – lessons that are drawn in the course of this book.

These lessons are partly dogmatic in nature; for, like previous such struggles in the history of the Church, the struggle between Orthodoxy and the Revolution in the twentieth century has had the good consequence of providing the opportunity, through the necessity of struggling with heresy, of clarifying the Church’s teaching – in this case, the Church’s teaching on *herself*. For it has revolved around such questions as: In what sense is the Church One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic, as the Nicene Creed defines her? Is she truly of Divine origin and nature, or is she a purely human organization? Does she evolve in her teachings and practice, or does she remain the same? What is the nature of her unity? What is her relation to the State and different forms of governmental power? Does she embrace all the vast multitudes who call themselves Christian today, or is she the gathering of a small faithful remnant on earth? Is she truly the only Ark of salvation, or only one of many roads leading to God? By the end of this book, therefore, I hope that clearer answers to these questions will have emerged.

Since this work is confessional as well as historical in nature, I owe much not only to the historical sources I list in the footnotes, but also to my teachers in the faith, the Holy Fathers and Teachers of the Orthodox Church. I also gratefully acknowledge the help I have received from Bishops Photius of Marathon and Ambrose of Methone of the True Orthodox Church of Greece.

I should like to dedicate this work to the hierarch who received me into the Orthodox Church and whose confession of the faith I have tried to emulate – Archbishop Nikodem of Richmond and Great Britain of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (+1976). May his memory be eternal!

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

*November 28 / December 10, 2017.*

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# PART 1. SOWING THE WIND (1901-1917)

## 1. TSAR NICHOLAS II AND THE COLLECTIVE ANTICHRIST

In the Orthodox Church in the imperial period of her history – that is, from St. Constantine the Great in the early fourth to Tsar Nicholas II in the early twentieth century, - the Anointed Emperor or Autocrat or Tsar occupied a unique, and uniquely critical role. Although only a layman, the sacred anointing which the Emperor received at his accession gave him, like Kings David and Solomon in the Old Testament, a power and authority not only above all other laymen, but also, in some respects, above even the hierarchs of the Church. The definition of the faith and the administration of the sacraments, including the ordination and deposition of bishops and priests, remained the exclusive preserve of the Church hierarchy. However, it was the Emperor who defended the Church against external enemies, being “the one who restrains” the coming of the Antichrist, in St. Paul’s words (II Thessalonians 2.7); it was he who represented the faith to the outside world and encouraged the Church’s missionary work (hence he was “the bishop for those outside”, in St. Constantine’s phrase); and it was he who, in times of dogmatic conflict when the bishops could not come to agreement, had the power to force the bishops to attend Councils at which these conflicts were resolved. Thus the Emperor was both an external shield for the Church and a focus of her internal unity.

The Church had existed without a Christian Emperor in the first centuries of her existence, and she would continue to do so after 1917. Nevertheless, his loss would be felt most acutely and would bring enormous destruction in its wake. For “from the day of his abdication,” as St. John Maximovich writes, “everything began to collapse. It could not have been otherwise. The one who united everything, who stood guard for the truth, was overthrown…”[[3]](#footnote-3)

Since Tsar Nicholas II 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 biographers 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 interlocutors, 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… C.P. Pobedonostsev and the most eminent generals of the Russian army. Nicholas Alexandrovich took systematic part in State affairs, and was president of various committees (including the Great Siberian railway), sitting in the State Council and the Committee of Ministers. He spoke English, French and German fluently. He had an adequate knowledge of Orthodox theology…”[[4]](#footnote-4)

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

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

The reign of the meek and gentle Tsar Nicholas II gave an unparalleled opportunity to tens of millions of people both within and outside the Russian empire to come to a knowledge of the truth and be saved. Moreover, the strength of the Russian Empire protected and sustained Orthodoxy in other parts of the world, such as the Balkans and the Middle East. The Tsar considered it his sacred duty to restore to Russia her ancient traditional culture, which had been abandoned by many of the "educated" classes in favour of modern, Western styles. He encouraged the building of churches and the painting of icons in the traditional Byzantine and Old Russian styles. In the words of Archpriest Michael Polsky, "In the person of the Emperor 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."[[5]](#footnote-5)

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.”[[6]](#footnote-6)

The Emperor himself took part in the laying of the first cornerstones and the consecration of many churches. He visited churches and monasteries in all parts of the country, venerating their saints. Moreover, he took a very active part in the glorification of new ones, sometimes urging on an unwilling Holy Synod. Among those glorified during his reign were: St. Theodosius of Chernigov (in 1896), St. Isidore of Yuriev (1897), St. Seraphim of Sarov (1903), St. Euphrosyne of Polotsk (1909), St. Anna of Kashin (1910), St. Joasaph of Belgorod (1911), St. Hermogenes of Moscow (1913), St. Pitirim of Tambov (1914), St. John (Maximovich) of Tobolsk (1916) and St. Paul of Tobolsk (1917).

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

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

However, “the greatest of the Tsars” (the words of Blessed Pasha of Sarov) was destined to reign at a time of spiritual decline, even apostasy. In the nineteenth century, many holy men of the Russian Church - Saints Seraphim of Sarov, Philaret of Moscow, Ambrose of Optina and Theophan the Recluse – had prophesied that the end of the world was near. They pointed to the rapid growth of false teachings and immorality, and to the persistent attempts to overthrow “him who restrains” the appearance of the Antichrist - the Orthodox Christian Emperor.

The murder of Tsar Alexander II in 1881 was seen as an especially ominous portent; and as the twentieth century dawned, apocalyptic signs multiplied. Thus in the capital of the greatest remaining pagan empire, Peking, 222 Chinese Orthodox from the Russian Spiritual Mission suffered martyrdom for Christ at the hands of the Boxers. To many, the preaching of the Gospel in the pagan empires of China and Japan, and its first-fruits in the form of the Chinese martyrs, indicated the coming of the end 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).[[7]](#footnote-7)

In 1900 the philosopher Vladimir Soloviev had a vision of Christians fleeing into the caves to escape what he called “the collective Antichrist”, which he felt was coming soon to Russia. And in his *Three Conversations on the Antichrist* he saw the Antichrist uniting Orthodox, Catholics and Protestants into a single false church. Both presentiments were to be fulfilled after the Russian revolution of 1917…

In general, therefore, the pre-revolutionary period could be described as the period of preparation for the coming of “the collective Antichrist”, Soviet power, a last chance for people to repent and come to God before the cataclysm came and swept them all – or almost all - away.

The forerunners of the Antichrist were much in evidence: revolutionaries such as Lenin and Trotsky, freethinkers such as the novelist Lev Tolstoy, theosophists such as Blavatsky, heretics such as the Athonite “name-worshippers”, and a huge army of liberals, nihilists, anti-monarchists and ecumenists were busy undermining the foundations of Church and State.

The struggle between the Church and “the collective Antichrist” that was to dominate the twentieth century was clearly foreshadowed, at the beginning of the century, by the struggle between the novelist Lev Tolstoy, “the mirror of the revolution”, as Lenin called him, who stood for a Christianity reduced to “pure” morality without the Church, the sacraments or any other other-worldly element, and 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).

There were a few who took the opportunities provided by the relatively peaceful pre-revolutionary period to repent. Among these were Lev Alexandrovich Tikhomirov, who repented of his revolutionary activity to become a prominent champion of the Orthodox monarchy and father of a Catacomb bishop and confessor, and Michael Alexandrovich Novoselov, who repented of his Tolstoyism to become a church publicist and later a Catacomb bishop and martyr. In general, however, it was only after the massive shock of the October revolution that large numbers of people were brought to their senses. In this we can see the special Providence of God, Who draws the greatest good out of the greatest evil. Thus the coming of the collective Antichrist to Russia in the shape of Soviet power was, paradoxically, the means towards the coming to Christ of many previously tepid and heretical Christians.

The world and the devil rose up against the Church in the twentieth century in two main forms: communism and ecumenism. Let us look briefly at each of them.

## 2. THE ORIGINS OF THE ANTICHRIST: (1) COMMUNISM

Communism is an attempt to substitute the State for the Church, the Party for the Priesthood, History for God, Communism for the Kingdom of God, “revolutionary morality” for Christian morality, class hatred for universal Christian love.

Thus at the beginning of the Red Terror in 1918 the first issue of the Kiev Cheka, *Krasnij Mech* (The Red Sword) declared: “We reject the old systems of morality and ‘humanity’ invented by the bourgeoisie to oppress and exploit the ‘lower classes’. Our morality has no precedent, and our humanity is absolute because it rests on a new ideal. Our aim is to destroy all forms of oppression and violence. To us, everything is permitted, for we are the first to raise the sword not to oppress races and reduce them to slavery, but to liberate humanity from its shackles… Blood? Let blood flow like water! Let blood stain forever the black pirate’s flag flown by the bourgeoisie, and let our flag be blood-red forever! For only through the death of the old world can we liberate ourselves from the return of those jackals!”[[8]](#footnote-8)

In view of the fact that communism is by a wide margin the most bloodthirsty movement in human history, it is necessary to say a few words about this aspect of its activity, which cannot be understood, according to Archpriest Lev, without understanding the movement’s “devil-worshipping *essence*. For the blood it sheds is always ritualistic, it is a sacrifice to demons. St. John Chrysostom wrote: ‘It is a habit among the demons that when men give Divine *worship* to them with the stench and smoke of blood, they, like bloodthirsty and insatiable dogs, *remain in those places* for eating and enjoyment.’ It is from such bloody sacrifices that the Satanists receive those demonic *energies* which are so necessary to them in their struggle for power or for the sake of its preservation. It is precisely here that we decipher the enigma: the strange bloodthirstiness of all, without exception all, revolutions, and of the whole of the regime of the Bolsheviks from 1917 to 1953.”[[9]](#footnote-9)

That communism, a strictly “scientific” and atheist doctrine, should be compared to devil-worshipping may at first seem strange. And yet closer study of communist history confirms this verdict. The communists’ extraordinary hatred of God and Christians, and indeed of mankind in general, can only be explained by demon-possession – more precisely, by an unconscious compulsion to bring blood-sacrifices to the devil, who was, in Christ’s words, “a murderer from the beginning” (John 8.44).

Among the direct ancestors of Soviet Communism were the Levellers of the English revolution, and the Jacobins of the French revolution. Dostoyevsky traced its origins even earlier, to Roman Catholicism, seeing in it a logical and emotional development of the secularisation of Christianity first introduced by the Western Church after its falling away from Holy Orthodoxy in the eleventh century. However, there is a strong case for seeing the roots of communism in a still earlier age and a still earlier apostasy – that of the Jews in the first century, the first rebels against Christ and Christianity…

At this first mentioning of “the Jewish question” in this book, a disclaimer is in order. The perception of a close link between communism, the Jews and Judaism is not a manifestation of “anti-semitism”, as the West would have it; for how can a Christian historian who worships a Jewish God, and is a member of the Church founded by exclusively Jewish apostles seriously maintain anti-semitic ideas? It is the product of the simple but basic and incontrovertible fact that the Russian revolution in its initial phase was the work mainly of Jews inspired by a philosophy of history that is in essence Jewish; and that although the leaders of the revolution were against all religion, including Judaism, and although in its later phase they ceased to be predominantly Jewish, they continued to be motivated, consciously or unconsciously, by essentially Jewish ideas. The writer of this work is not anti-semitic, but he is *anti-Judaist* in the sense that he is against the religion of the Talmud, which is fiercely and explicitly anti-Christian in its fundamental beliefs. In this sense all the apostles and fathers and martyrs were, and every consciously believing Orthodox Christian must be – anti-Judaist.

When Abraham left his earthly homeland in search of a promised land in which God alone would be King, world history began a series of violent oscillations between the two poles: Zion and Babylon, the God-Man and the man-god, theocracy and satanocracy. Two thousand years later, the God-Man Himself visited His Kingdom, and a second series of violent oscillations took place. First, the kings of the East came to worship Him – Babylon bowed down before Zion. Then the veil of the temple was rent in twain, – Zion became spiritually Babylon, and in the Babylonian Talmud the Jews worked out the apostate creed of Zionism.

But then the new Israel, “the Israel of God” (Galatians 6.16), the Church of Christ, was born in Zion, and the former children of wrath from the Babylon of the West, the pagan Greeks and Romans, came to bow down at her feet. And when Constantine became king of Old Rome, even the pivot and crown of the Babylonian system, the worship of the god-man-emperor, was transformed into its opposite and the God-fighting satanocracy of Old Rome became the God-loving theocracy of the New Rome.

Now, nearly two thousands years after Christ, we are in the middle of a second great series of violent oscillations in world history. In 1917 the God-loving theocracy of the Third Rome, Russia, was transformed into the God-hating satanocracy of the Babylon of the North, the Soviet Union. And the apostate Jews took revenge on the Third Rome for the destruction of their State by the First, Old Rome.

It was the Jewish revolt against Rome of 66-70, followed by the destruction of the Temple and the scattering of the apostate Jews over the face of the earth, that sealed the first reversal in the roles of Zion and Babylon. And already we see in it a close resemblance to the second reversal, the one which began in 1917. It is not simply that the Roman emperor can be compared to the Tsar, and the Jewish rebels against Roman power to the Jewish-led revolutionaries who overthrew the tsar: there are also doctrinal similarities.

Thus Neil Faulkner writes: “The revolutionary message of sectarian radicals and messiahs was addressed, above all, to the poor. Josephus was explicit about the class basis of the conflict: it was, for him, a struggle between dunatoi – men of rank and power, the property-owning upper classes – and stasiastai – subversives, revolutionaries, popular leaders whose appeal was to ‘the scum of the districts’. The Dead Sea Scrolls were equally explicit, though from the other side of the barricades: whereas ‘the princes of Judah… wallowed in the ways of whoredom and wicked wealth’ and ‘acted arrogantly for the sake of riches and gain’, the Lord would in due time deliver them ‘into the hands of the poor’, so as to ‘humble the mighty of the peoples by the hand of those bent to the dust’, and bring them ‘the reward of the wicked’…

“The popular movement of 66 CE amounted to a fusion of Apocalypse and Jubilee, the radical minority’s vision of a revolutionary war to destroy corruption having become inextricably linked with the peasant majority’s traditional aspiration for land redistribution and the removal of burdens…”[[10]](#footnote-10)

The main features of the Jewish revolution were resurrected, in Christianized form and using Christian language, in the English revolution of the seventeenth century, and in a still more fearsome and less Christian form (and with the direct participation of the Jews themselves) in the French revolution of 1789. But the English and French revolutions were merely “trial runs”, as it were, for the Russian revolution of 1917, which overthrew the primary stronghold of traditional thinking in the whole world, and was not only assisted by, but directly inspired and led by, the Jews. And so just as all the apostate trends of European history from the eleventh century onwards – and of world history from the first century - lead up to, and find their culmination in, the Russian revolution, so all world history since 1917 has evolved from it or in reaction to it, and under its terrible shadow.

That the Russian revolution of 1917 was a resurrection, as it were, of the failed Jewish revolt of 66-70, the age-old determination of the Jews to overthrow the Gentile rulers and take over world domination from them, was demonstrated by an extraordinary “coincidence” that has been little noted.

On November 9, 1917, the London *Times* reported two events in the same column of newsprint: above, the Bolshevik revolution in Petrograd, and immediately below it, the British Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour’s promise of a homeland to the Jews in Palestine. To the unbeliever, the two events seem to have no relation to each other; the fact that they happened at exactly the same time, and under the leadership of men from the same race and class and locality – the Jewish intelligentsia of Western Russia and Poland – seems purely coincidental. To the believing eye, however, they are two aspects, in two geographical areas, of one and the same event – the event called in the Gospel “the beginning of sorrows” (Matthew 24.8), in the epistles of St. Paul – “the removal of him that restraineth” (II Thessalonians 2.7), and in the Apocalypse of St. John – “the releasing of the beast from the abyss” (Revelation 20.3).

Looked at from its Jewish aspect, the revolution appears to be the triumph of a purely national and secular movement – Zionism. From the Russian aspect, it looks like a political-social coup motivated by a purely secular vision of world history – Marxism-Leninism. In truth, however, Zionism and Marxism-Leninism are two aspects of a movement which is neither purely nationalist nor political, but religious – or rather, demonic – in essence.

Such a view was not confined to “anti-Semites”. Thus Winston Churchill wrote: “It would almost seem as if the Gospel of Christ and the gospel of anti-Christ were designed to originate among the same people; and that this mystic and mysterious race had been chosen for the supreme manifestations, both of the Divine and the diabolical… From the days of ‘Spartacus’ Weishaupt to those of Karl Marx, and down to Trotsky (Russia), Bela Kun (Hungary), Rosa Luxembourg (Germany) and Emma Goldman (United States), this worldwide conspiracy for the overthrow of civilization and for the reconstitution of society on the basis of arrested development, of envious malevolence and impossible equality, has been steadily growing. It played, as a modern writer, Mrs. Nesta Webster, has so ably shown, a definitely recognizable part in the tragedy of the French Revolution. It has been the mainspring of every subversive movement during the nineteenth century; and now at last this band of extraordinary personalities from the underworld of the great cities of Europe and America have gripped the Russian people by the hair of their heads and have become practically the undisputed masters of that enormous empire. There is no need to exaggerate the part played in the creation of Bolshevism and in the bringing about of the Russian Revolution by these international and for the most part atheistical Jews. It is certainly a very great one; it probably outweighs all others.”[[11]](#footnote-11)

Douglas Reed writes: “The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, which wielded the supreme power, contained 3 Russians (including Lenin[[12]](#footnote-12)) and 9 Jews. The next body in importance, the Central Committee of the Executive Commission (or secret police) comprised 42 Jews and 19 Russians, Letts, Georgians and others. The Council of People’s Commissars consisted of 17 Jews and five others. The Moscow Che-ka (secret police) was formed of 23 Jews and 13 others. Among the names of 556 high officials of the Bolshevik state officially published in 1918-1919 were 458 Jews and 108 others. Among the central committees of small, supposedly ‘Socialist’ or other non-Communist parties… were 55 Jews and 6 others.”[[13]](#footnote-13)

Even the “pro-Semite” historian Richard Pipes admits: “Jews undeniably played in the Bolshevik Party and the early Soviet apparatus a role disproportionate to their share of the population. The number of Jews active in Communism in Russia and abroad was striking: in Hungary, for example, they furnished 95 percent of the leading figures in Bela Kun’s dictatorship. They also were disproportionately represented among Communists in Germany and Austria during the revolutionary upheavals there in 1918-23, and in the apparatus of the Communist International.”[[14]](#footnote-14)

The London *Times* correspondent in Russia, Robert Wilton, reported: ”Taken according to numbers of population, the Jews represented *one* in ten; among the commissars that rule Bolshevik Russia they are *nine* in ten; if anything the proportion of Jews is still greater.”[[15]](#footnote-15)

On June 9, 1919 Captain Montgomery Shuyler of the American Expeditionary Forces telegrammed from Vladivostok on the makeup of the presiding Soviet government: “… (T)here were 384 ‘commissars’ including 2 negroes, 13 Russians, 15 Chinamen, 22 Armenians, and more than 300 Jews. Of the latter number, 264 had come to Russia from the United States since the downfall of the Imperial Government.”[[16]](#footnote-16)

Of course, the Jewish Bolsheviks were not religious Jews, and were in fact as opposed to Talmudic Judaism as any other segment of the population.[[17]](#footnote-17) Moreover, as Pipes points out, “the results of the elections to the Constituent Assembly indicate that Bolshevik support came not from the region of Jewish concentration, the old Pale of Settlement, but from the armed forces and the cities of Great Russia, which had hardly any Jews”.[[18]](#footnote-18) So blame for the Russian revolution must fall on Russians as well as Jews; and in fact hardly any of the constituent nations of the Russian empire can claim to have played no part in the catastrophe.

Nevertheless, the extraordinary prominence of Jews in the revolution is a fact that must be related, at least in part, to the traditionally anti-Russian and anti-Christian attitude of Jewish culture, which is reflected in both of its major political offspring – Bolshevism and Zionism. For, as Chaim Weitzmann, the first president of Israel, showed in his *Autobiography*, the atheist Bolshevik Jews and the theist Zionist Jews came from the same milieu, often the very same families; so that his mother was able to witness her sons’ triumph both in Bolshevik Moscow and Zionist Jerusalem…[[19]](#footnote-19)

Moreover, so complete was the Jewish domination of Russia as a result of the revolution that it is a misnomer to speak about the “Russian” revolution; it should more accurately be called the anti-Russian, or Russian-Jewish revolution. Indeed, the Russian revolution may be regarded as one branch of that general triumph of Jewish power which we observe in the twentieth century in both East and West, in both Russia and America and Israel. It is as if, by God’s permission and for the chastisement of the sins of many nations, there arose in the Pale of Settlement an avenging horde that swept away the last major restraining power and ushered in the era of the Apocalypse.

If we turn to the philosophical basis of the revolution, we find the same Jewish element seemingly inextricably entwined with it – and this not only because so many of the theorists of the revolution were Jews. As Bertrand Russell pointed out, many elements of the Marxist system are reminiscent of Judaism: the same striving for the promised land on earth and in time (communism and the withering away of the state); the same division of the peoples of the world into the chosen people (the proletariat) and the goyim (the exploiting classes), and the hatred incited against the latter; and the same cult of the false Messiah (the infallible leader or party).[[20]](#footnote-20)

At the heart of the philosophical system of Marxism-Leninism lies *utopianism*. Igor Shafarevich has traced examples of utopian thought and statehood in many epochs and geographical regions. He has concluded that it is always (a) totalitarian, leading to the abolition of private property, the family and religion, and (b) guided by a kind of death-wish which results in the physical and spiritual death of the people.[[21]](#footnote-21)

Under the name of “chiliasm” or “millenarianism”, utopianism was one of the earliest Christian heresies (with, as we might now expect, a strongly Jewish colouring). It is possible that the addition of the phrase: “Whose Kingdom shall have no end” to the Nicene Creed at the Second Ecumenical Council in Constantinople in 381 was aimed against this heresy.[[22]](#footnote-22) For chiliasm essentially amounted to the belief that Christ Himself will come to earth before the Last Judgement in order to install His Kingdom physically for a period of a thousand years, this Kingdom being characterised, according to the heretics, by the triumph of the Jewish race and the Jewish law. But the Church rejected this, teaching that the true Kingdom of Christ will come only after the Judgement, and that it will then be a spiritual Kingdom that is “not of this world” and “has no end”. We can enter the Kingdom of God partially before the Judgement, but only in and through the Church, which is not, and can never be, a sensually apprehended, temporal kingdom, still less a Jewish kingdom when “in Christ there is neither Greek nor Jew” (Galatians 3.28).

The former revolutionary-turned-monarchist Lev Alexandrovich Tikhomirov 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…

“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…”[[23]](#footnote-23)

Again, the philosopher Simeon Ludwigovich Frank, another (Jewish) convert from Marxism to Christianity, wrote: "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."[[24]](#footnote-24)

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 by perfect love and humility. But to suppose that any class of men, once delivered from injustice and poverty, will automatically behave like angels, is a myth. This is the error of the early, theistic utopias such as Plato’s *Republic* and *Laws*, and Sir Thomas More’s *Utopia*. And that the Russian communists recognized these utopians to be akin to themselves is proved by the fact that they erected a monument in the Kremlin to Thomas More and another utopian, Tommaso Campanella.[[25]](#footnote-25)

However, there is another, related error of utopianism: the idea that the glorious end of utopia justifies any means to its attainment. In practice, this doctrine was not practised or preached by the noble pagan or Christian utopians such as Plato or More. And yet the institution of the Inquisition – set up during More’s lifetime and by his own Roman Catholic Church – is clearly already infected by the idea. And as the dechristianization of Europe proceeded, it became still more common to think that the kingdom of love and brotherhood can be ushered in by hatred and fratricidal war.

However, the means do not justify the ends; and the employment of evil means leads unfailingly to evil ends. For, as Solzhenitsyn said, the line between good and evil passes, not between classes or nations, but down the middle of each human heart. Therefore the final 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 kings 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. Georges Florovsky,” – that 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 that he is 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… There is no place for the act, no place for the exploit (podvig).”[[26]](#footnote-26)

If chiliasm-utopianism is one of the earliest Jewish Christian heresies, the division of the world into “clean” and “unclean” classes or nations is the earliest, being the subject of the very first Church Council held at Jerusalem under the presidency of the Apostle James. Nor is such a temptation confined to the Jews: nationalism, the exaltation of one’s own nation or class as being essentially superior to all others, is a perennial temptation for all nations, and never more so than among certain Orthodox nations now. When God commanded Noah to lead pairs both of “clean” and of “unclean” animals into the ark, and when He commanded the Apostle Peter to eat of both “clean” and “unclean” foods, He demonstrated that there is no essentially clean nation. “For there is no difference; for all have sinned, all have fallen short of the glory of God” (Romans. 3.22-23). All outside the ark, the Church of Christ, are unclean; and all inside the Church are, if not completely clean, at any rate in the process of being cleansed. And all, regardless of nationality, can enter the Church. For “is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, since there is one God Who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith” (Romans. 3.29-30).

Of course, nationalism is not always a pathological phenomenon, and has often contributed to the saving of a nation and the buttressing of the true faith; so perhaps we should reserve the term “nationalism” for the pathological phenomenon, while using another term – “patriotism”, say – for the positive phenomenon to which we now wish to draw attention. Thus when, in the middle of the nineteenth century, the Russian Emperor Nicholas I approved of the Slavophile slogan “Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Narodnost”, he was referring by “Narodnost” to the positive virtue of patriotism or love of country. Narodnost was linked to Orthodoxy in the minds of Nicholas and the Slavophiles, because it was subject to Orthodoxy and exalted the nation, not for its own sake and not in opposition to other nations, but for the sake of the supra-national idea of Orthodoxy.

However, the revolution strives to destroy the collective personality of each nation, just as it strives to destroy the individual personality of each man. Thus Lenin said that the aim of socialism was not only the drawing together of the nations, but also their fusion – i.e. their destruction. For, as Dostoyevsky wrote, “socialism deprives the national principle of its individuality, undermining the very foundations of nationality.”[[27]](#footnote-27)

Of course, Lenin was not averse to approving of and stirring up the nationalisms of the smaller nations of the Russian empire in order to destroy the God-bearing nation that he hated and feared the most. But having stirred up nationalist feeling, he then tried to destroy it again, subordinating the nations to the only nation and caste of which he approved – the nation of Jewish internationalism, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.[[28]](#footnote-28)

The paradox that socialism both incites nationalism and destroys the nation is one aspect of the general paradox of the socialist revolution, that while preaching freedom it practises slavery, while proclaiming equality it creates inequality, and while dreaming of brotherhood it incites fratricidal war. In the same way, the French revolution proclaimed the freedom and equality of all nations; but its first appearance on the international arena was in the form of Napoleonic imperialism, which strove to destroy the freedom of all the nations of Europe. And paradoxically, it was autocratic Russia, the conqueror of Napoleon, which guaranteed the survival of the nations of the West, and their freedom from totalitarianism, for at least another century.

For the truth is that the revolution, while inciting the passions for personal and national freedom in order to destroy the old church and state structures, was aimed at the destruction of all freedom and individuality, both personal and national. And while hypocritically invoking those ecumenical ideals which Christianity gave to the world – “neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female,” – it actually aimed at their complete destruction by destroying the pivot upon which they all rest – “for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3.28). Thus like the serpent in the Garden of Eden, it promised life, but delivered death…

However, even more than its anti-personal and anti-national passion, the deepest, longing of the Jewish-Russian revolution is its worship of the false Messiah. Through its utopianism, the revolution merges the personalities of its adherents into an elemental, all-embracing process to which they surrender their freedom and personality. And through its class-warfare and anti-patriotism, it destroys those last strongholds of personal and collective freedom that stand in the way of its final victory. But what is such a “victory”, if there is no victor to whom to give the spoils, no personal cause of the victory of the proletariat? That is why the revolution is incomplete until it has found its god, why the personal “modesty” of Lenin had to be “corrected” by the “all-wise” Stalin, and why the collective Antichrist of Sovietism must one day reach its apotheosis in the personal Antichrist of Judaism…

In *The Brothers Karamazov* Dostoyevsky saw this need for universal worship as lying at the heart of the revolution. He traced its origin to the worship of the infallible Pope and, still further back, to the worship of the Roman imperator-pontifex maximus. Deep in the soul of man, as Blessed Augustine pointed out, there is a God-shaped hole; and if that hole is not filled by the worship of the true God, it will be filled by the worship of a false god; and to that god, man will give himself totally. The need for worship and total self-sacrifice is as alive now, in our materialist age, as it has ever been.

Now the West has ascribed the emergence of totalitarianism in Russia to the weakness of her democratic institutions in 1917 and to her long history of autocratic rule. The satanocracy of Bolshevism, according to this view, is closely akin to the theocracy of Holy Russia, both being opposed to the “true faith” of western liberalism.

In truth, however, society by its very nature is hierarchically ordered. Thus Bishop Dionysius (Alferov) of Novgorod writes: “The cell of the State is the family. In the family the father is the head by nature, while the son is subject to him; the authority of the father is not the result of elections in the family, but is entrusted to him naturally by the law of God (Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow). Just as from the extended family of the tribe there arises the people, so out of the family headed by one man there arises tsarist autocracy. Both the familial and the monarchical organization are established by God for the earthly existence of the sinful, fallen man. The first-created man, living in living communion with God, was not subject to anyone besides God, and was the lord of irrational creation. But when man sinned, destroying the Divine hierarchy of submission and falling away from God, he became the servant of sin and the devil, and as a consequence of this became subject to a man like himself. The sinful will of man requires submission for the restraint of his destructive activity. This Divine ordinance has in view only the good of man – the limitation of the spread of evil. And history itself shows that whatever the inadequacies of monarchies, they bear no comparison with that evil that revolutions and anarchies have brought to the peoples.

“Monarchical administration has been established by God in accordance with His likeness. ‘God being One established the authority of one person; as Almighty – autocratic authority; as Eternal – hereditary authority’ (Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow). Such is monarchy in general, independent of its spiritual content; being established in accordance with the likeness of God, it already has an educational religious significance. Christian monarchy was formed and developed under the immediate leadership and grace-filled sanctification of the Church of Christ, and for that reason has a special spiritual content.”[[29]](#footnote-29)

The revolution strove to overthrow this natural order, not out of a love of the people, but in order that one people – the Jewish – should rule over all. For, as the Talmud says, “the Messiah is, without metaphor, the Jewish people”[[30]](#footnote-30) This was clear already in the French revolution, when, having won, by dint of bribery, personal influence and violence, the emancipation of their race, the Jews so abused their newly won privileges that in 1806, on returning from Austerlitz, Napoleon was forced to convene a special meeting of the Sanhedrin in order to ask them the straight question: are you loyal to the French State and its laws?

In the nineteenth century, democracy, liberalism and Jewish emancipation spread everywhere; only Russia and Romania refused to give the Jews full civil rights. Therefore the Jews, having come to power in the West on the back of democracy and liberalism, sought to spread it through revolutionary propaganda also in the East, where most Jews still lived. The vast area in the West of Russia known as “the Pale of Settlement” became a seething hive of revolutionary activity aiming at the overthrow of the Orthodox autocracy and the imposition of a Jewish “dictatorship of the proletariat”.

However, with the exception of a few such as Plekhanov and Lenin, Marxism did not attract the Russian intelligentsia, without whose support the revolution could not succeed. They were ensnared by the more “moderate” doctrine of liberalism, which preached the freedom of the individual from the State. But, having been ensnared by the more “moderate” doctrine, they placed themselves in the power of the extremists, and prepared the way for the imposition of the most totalitarian State power.

For as the notorious *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, whose authenticity is suspect, but whose intelligence is not[[31]](#footnote-31), put it: “From liberalism were born the constitutional states, which took the place of Autocracy which was saving for the goys. And a constitution, as you well know, is nothing other than a school for scandals, quarrels, arguments, disagreements, fruitless party agitation and party tendencies – in a word, a school for everything that will depersonalise the activity of the state… By such measures we will acquire the possibility of abolishing, little by little, step by step, everything that, at the beginning when we entered into our rights, we were forced to introduce into state constitutions, for the transfer to the unnoticed removal of every constitution, when the time will come to transform every government into our autocracy…” (Protocol 10)

“Depersonalised” states are always weak: the people cannot express their victory fully without having a focus for it in the veneration of a leader. So the overthrow of the personal autocracy of the kings by depersonalised democracy could not stop there, but had to go on to its ultimate consequence – the enthronement of the Jewish king, the Antichrist. As the Jewish revolutionaries said in Kiev in 1905: “We gave you God, and we will give you a Tsar!”[[32]](#footnote-32)

Thus in modern times we see an ever-quickening descent from autocracy to democracy to the Antichrist. 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.

That is why the great saints of the nineteenth and early twentieth century insisted on the necessity – the *religious* necessity – of faithfulness to the 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…” [[33]](#footnote-33)

## 3. THE ORIGINS OF THE ANTICHRIST: (2) ECUMENISM

If communism destroys the traditional bases of hierarchical authority in political and social life, declaring that the Tsar is entitled to no more honour than the simplest peasant, ecumenism does the same in religious life, declaring that no one religion is truer or more worthy of respect than any other.

Ecumenism is the heresy that there is no such thing as heresy as the Apostles and Fathers of the Church understand that term – that is, a false teaching on the Faith. Ecumenism is the heresy that there is no single Faith, whether Orthodox, Papist or Protestant, which expresses the fullness of the truth, and that all existing faiths (except Ecumenism itself) are more or less in error. It implies that the One, Undivided Church of Christ has foundered on the reef of sectarian strife, and that She has to be re-founded on the sands of doctrinal compromise and indifference to the truth. It is the tower of Babel rebuilt, a babble of conflicting tongues united only in their insistence that they all speak the same language…[[34]](#footnote-34)

Ecumenism has deep roots in European history. In a sense the Roman Empire was ecumenist, since it embraced all religions so long as they did not constitute a threat to the State. It was only the Christians and the Jews who did not accept the Roman thesis that all religions are to be respected, asserting on the contrary that “all the gods of the pagans are demons” (Psalm 95.5).

The origins of ecumenism as a *religious* movement go back to Asia Minor in the second century, where Apelles, a disciple of the heretic Marcion, introduced what has been called “the atheist dogma of Apelles”, but which is more popularly known as “ecumenism”*.* As the Athonite Elder Augustine writes: “Apelles, the head of the numerous sect, venerable both for his life and for his age, wanted to undertake the pacification and unification of all the shoots of the heretic Marcion under a single rule and authority. With this aim he exerted all his powers to come into contact with all the leaders of the sects, but had to admit that it was impossible to persuade each sect to abandon its unreasonable dogmatic teaching and accept that of another. Having come away from his attempts at mediation with no fruit, he decided a bridge had to be built, a way of living together peaceably, or a mutual tolerance of each other, with a single variety of ‘faith’…

“Starting from this point of view, he established an atheist dogma of unity, which has been called, after him, ‘the atheist dogma of Apelles’, with the notorious slogan: ‘… We don’t have to examine the matter thoroughly, everyone can remain in his faith; for those who hope on the Crucified One,’ he declared, ‘will be saved so long as they are found to have good works.’ Or, to put it more simply: ‘it is not at all necessary to examine the matter – the differences between us – but everyone should retain his convictions, because,’ he declared, ‘those who hope on the Crucified One will be saved so long as they are found to practise good works!… ‘It would be superfluous to explain that this atheist dogma of Apelles was first formulated by the heretic Marcion himself (whom St. Polycarp, the disciple of the Apostle John, called ‘the first-born of Satan’) and is entirely alien to the Christians. We Christians love the heterodox and we long for a real and holy union with them – when they become sober and believe in an Orthodox manner in our Lord Jesus Christ, abandoning their heretical and mistaken beliefs and ‘their distorted image of Christ’.”

Apelles’ dogma was condemned at the Fifth Ecumenical Council, but, like all the early heresies, it reappeared at a later date. Thus in the year 384, Symmachus, the pagan leader of the Roman Senate, wrote to the Emperor Theodosius the Great, appealing to him to be tolerant towards the pagans because, as he said, many paths led to God… Again, the twelfth-century Arab philosopher and doctor Avveroes pleaded for a kind of union between Christians, Jews, Muslims and pagans that was avidly discussed in western scholastic circles.

The Romanist variant of Apelleanism known as uniatism appeared after the schism of 1054. As Elder Augustine explains: “After the canonical cutting off of the Latins from the Church as a whole in 1054, that is, after their definitive schism and anathematisation, there was also the acceptance, or rather the application, of the atheist dogma of Apelles. The Catholic (=Orthodox) Church of Christ condemned the heresies of the Nestorians, Monophysites and Monothelites in the (Third, Fourth and Sixth) Ecumenical Councils. It anathematised the heretics and their heretical teachings and declared those who remained in the above-mentioned heresies to be excommunicate. *The apostate ‘church’ of Rome took no account of the decisions of these Ecumenical Councils, but received into communion the unrepentant and condemned Nestorian, Monophysite and Monothelite heretics without any formality, with only the recognition of the Pope as Monarch of the Church. And not only the heretics, but also many others after this, were received into communion with only the recognition of the Monarchy of the blood-stained beast that presided in it.”*

However, Apelleanism in its modern, ecumenist variety is really a product of the Protestant Reformation. Thus the Anglican Settlement of the mid-sixteenth century was a kind of Protestant Unia, the Anglican Church being allowed to retain some of the outward trappings of Catholicism – but without its central pivot, the papacy, which was replaced by obedience to the secular monarch as head of the Church. Being a politically motivated compromise from the beginning, Anglicanism has always been partial to ever more comprehensive schemes of inter-Church and inter-faith union, and many leaders of the ecumenical movement in the twentieth century were Anglicans.

In 1614 there appeared the first modern ecumenist, George Kalixtos, a man famous, according to Elder Augustine, “for the breadth of his knowledge and his ‘eirenic’ spirit in tackling various questions, including ecclesiastical ones. Propelled by this spirit, he declared that there was no need of, nor did he even seek, the union of the various Churches… Nevertheless, he did demand their mutual recognition and the retaining of reciprocal ‘love’ through the reciprocal tolerance of the manifold differences of each ‘Church’…”[[35]](#footnote-35)

In modern times, the first major impulse to ecumenism came from the Protestants, who rejected the idea of the Church as “the pillar and ground of the Truth” (I Timothy 3.15) and vaunted the power of the individual mind to find the truth independently of any Church. This led to a proliferation of Protestant sects, which in turn led to attempts to achieve unity by agreeing on a minimum truth, which in turn led to the idea that all faiths are true “in their own way”. As religious passions cooled round Europe, the Freemasons took the lead in preaching religious tolerance and indifference. But they went further by saying that underlying all religions there was a “true, primitive, universal religion”. In accordance with this principle, Jews were admitted to the masonic lodges as early as 1724.[[36]](#footnote-36)

The ecumenism of Masonry was linked to the crisis of faith that was taking place in the Anglican church in the early eighteenth century, and in particular to the loss of faith in the unique truth and saving power of Christianity. Thus “in 1717,” wrote William Palmer, “a controversy arose on occasion of the writings of Hoadly, bishop of Bangor, in which he maintained that it was needless to believe in any particular creed, or to be united to any particular Church; and that sincerity, or our own persuasion of the correctness of our opinions (whether well or ill founded) is sufficient. These doctrines were evidently calculated to subvert the necessity of believing the articles of the Christian faith, and to justify all classes of schismatics or separatists from the Church. The convocation deemed these opinions so mischievous, that a committee was appointed to select propositions from Hoadly’s books, and to procure their censure; but before his trial could take place, the convocation was prorogued by an arbitrary exercise of the royal authority…”[[37]](#footnote-37)

Hardly coincidentally, 1717, the year in which Hoadly’s heretical views were published, was the same year in which the Grand Lodge of England, was founded. And we find a very similar doctrine enshrined in Dr. Anderson’s *Constitutions*: “A Mason is obliged, by his tenure, to obey the moral Law; and if he rightly understands the Art, he will never be a stupid Atheist, nor an irreligious Libertine. But though in ancient Times Masons were charged in every Country to be of the Religion of that Country or Nation, whatever it was, yet, ‘tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that Religion in which all men agree, leaving their particular Opinions to themselves; that is to be good Men and true, or Men of Honour and Honesty, but whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be distinguish’d; whereby Masonry becomes the Centre of Union and the Means of Conciliating true Friendships among Persons that must have remained at a perpetual Distance.”

A new and extremely deceptive concept was here introduced into the bloodstream of European thought: “that Religion in which all men agree”. *There is no such thing.* Even if we exclude the “stupid Atheists” and “irreligious Libertines” (of whom there are very many), we still find men disagreeing radically about the most fundamental doctrines: whether God is one, or one-in-three, or more than three, whether He is to be identified with nature or distinguished from it, whether He is evolving or unchanging, whether or not He became incarnate in Jesus Christ, whether or not He spoke to Mohammed, whether or not He is coming to judge the world, etc. Upon the answers to these questions depend our whole concept of right and wrong, of what it is “to be good Men and true”. Far from there being unanimity among “religious” people about this, there is bound to be the most radical disagreement between them.

Later developments in Anglicanism, such as the Oxford movement of the 1840s, introduced the idea of “the Branch theory of the Church”. According to the Oxford theologians E.B. Pusey and William Palmer, the Church consisted of three branches – Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Anglicanism (preferably in the “High Church” variety they espoused). However, “Low Church” Anglicanism also made its contribution. Thus Archbishop Vitaly (Ustinov) of Canada saw the forerunners of ecumenism in the “Low Church” Anglicanism of the Victorian era and in the semi-Christian ideologies of the YMCA, YWCA and the Boy Scouts with their belief in the basic goodness of human nature, light-minded attitude to sin, emphasis on charity as the handing out of earthly goods not in the name of Christ, cult of the flesh under the cover of concern for heath and hygiene, carnal emotionalism, interconfessionalism and a condescending attitude towards dogmatic Christianity.

Especially important in the construction of this Tower of Babel, he says, “is the complete spiritual disintegration of the Protestant heresy. But if we say, together with Tertullian: ‘the human soul is naturally Christian’ – by which this western teacher of the Church undoubtedly meant: ‘naturally Orthodox’ – then we can affirm that every heresy by its very nature is contrary to the human soul and must sooner or later be rejected and cast out by it. And so we are present at the overthrow of the Protestant heresy, but insofar as the spiritual world, like nature, abhors a vacuum, the place of this heresy is being occupied by Ecumenism. For Ecumenism seeks to re-establish the dogma of the One Church that Protestantism with its innumerable sects and ever-multiplying divisions has destroyed.”[[38]](#footnote-38)

Ecumenism may be described as religious egalitarianism, the doctrine that one religion is as good as any other. When combined, as it was in the Masonic lodges of Europe and America, with political and social egalitarianism, that is, communism, it made for an explosive mixture – a programme for revolutionary action. And this revolutionary potential of Masonry became evident very soon after it spread from England to the Continent in the eighteenth century…

A critical role in the development of ecumenism (as of communism) was played by Rousseau, who insisted that his subjects should believe in a “civil religion” that combined belief in “the existence of an omnipotent, benevolent divinity that foresees and provides; the life to come; the happiness of the just; the punishment of sinners; the sanctity of the social contract and the law”.[[39]](#footnote-39) If any citizen accepted these beliefs, but then “behaved as if he did not believe in them”, the punishment was death. As Jacques Barzun writes: “Rousseau reminds the reader that two-thirds of mankind are neither Christians nor Jews, nor Mohammedans, from which it follows that God cannot be the exclusive possession of any sect or people; all their ideas as to His demands and His judgements are imaginings. He asks only that we love Him and pursue the good. All else we know nothing about. That there should be quarrels and bloodshed about what we can never know is the greatest impiety.”[[40]](#footnote-40)

A further major impulse to ecumenism was provided by the Romantic movement and its philosophical mirror, Hegelian idealist historicism, which emphasised the inevitability of historical change in all things, even – God! For God for the romantics was a dynamic, evolving being indistinguishable from nature and the temporal process, always overcoming contradictions and rising to ever higher unities. It followed that the notion of a perfectly revealed religion, a final, unalterable truth, was anathema to them. “Christians must not be ‘vain and foolish’, Friedrich Schleiermacher warned, for their religion is not the only ‘revealed religion’. All religions are revealed from God. Christianity is the center around which all others gather. The disunity of religions is an evil and ‘only in the totality of all such possible forms can there be given the true religion,’ Schleiermacher added.”[[41]](#footnote-41)

A Romantic scheme of history and the evolution of religion was given by Friedrich Schelling in his Berlin lectures of 1841-1842 (many of which were attended by leading Russian intellectuals). “In the Twenty-Sixth Lecture,” writes Fr. Michael Azkoul, “Schelling discoursed on the three ages of history – the age of the Father, the age of the Son, and the age of the Holy Spirit which correspond to the events of creation, redemption and consummation. Schelling believed that Christianity was now passing through ‘the second age’ which Christ ‘incarnated’ almost two millennia ago.

“In the vocabulary of the Romantics, Christ brought ‘the Idea of Christianity’ with Him. An ‘Idea’ is the invisible, unchangeable, and eternal aspect of each thing. (Plato was probably the first to teach ‘Idealism’.) Phenomena are visible, changeable, and temporary. Put another way, the Idea of Christianity (‘one Church’) is what the historical institution will become when it finishes growing, or, as Schelling would say, when God becomes fully God. One may compare its Idea to wheat and historical Christianity (the Idea) to what Protestantism, Roman Catholicism and Eastern Christianity will become. When the multiplicity of churches grows into the ecumenical Church, then, the Idea of Christianity, of ‘one church’, will have been actualised in space and time. It will be actualised in the coming of ‘the third age’, ‘the age of the Spirit’, ‘the age of consummation’.”[[42]](#footnote-42)

A third major impulse to ecumenism, especially in its more recent, “super-ecumenist” (that is, inter-religious) manifestations, came from the Pentecostal movement. At precisely 7 p.m. on New Year’s Eve of the year 1900 “the age of the Spirit” and “the new Pentecost” is supposed to have dawned. For it is to that moment that the modern Pentecostal movement dates its origin.

“For some time before that moment,” writes Hieromonk Seraphim Rose, “a Methodist minister in Topeka, Kansas, Charles Parham, as an answer to the confessed feebleness of his Christian ministry, had been concentratedly studying the New Testament with a group of his students with the aim of discovering the secret of the *power* of Apostolic Christianity. The students finally deduced that this secret lay in the ‘speaking in tongues’ which, they thought, always accompanied the reception of the Holy Spirit by preaching that there is no one truth, and therefore no one Church which it can be the pillar of. It maintains that all Churches – and in its more extreme, contemporary forms, all religions – contain partial or relative truths which, on being reduced to their lowest common denominator, will form the dogmatic basis of a new Church or universal religion of a new, enlightened mankind.”[[43]](#footnote-43)

A fourth impulse to ecumenism was *spiritual pacifism.* It is no accident that ecumenism began after the end of the German Wars of Religion in the seventeenth century, that it received another strong impulse after the First World War, and that its first institutional expression – in the World Council of Churches – appeared after the Second World War. When people are tired of war, whether physical or spiritual, they settle for the path of least resistance: the renunciation of all struggle for the truth.

The false pathos of both communism and ecumenism is *unity* – unity among workers of all nations in the one, and among believers of all denominations in the other. Christians who succumbed to this pathos were ready to surrender the Church’s truth, freedom and dignity to the dominant forces in the contemporary world, with the ultimate end, whether conscious or unconscious, of the complete *secularization* of the human race. The heresies of communist and ecumenist “Christianity” attempted to justify or “dogmatize” this apostasy – in the former case, by claiming that only such apostasy can *save* the Church (from destruction by communism), and in the case of ecumenism by claiming that only such apostasy can *recreate* the Church (out of sectarian disintegration). Essentially, therefore, they were (and are) two aspects of a single politico-ecclesiological heresy, for which the present writer has coined the term “ecucommunism”[[44]](#footnote-44), a single assault on the existence and the dogma of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church…

Ecucommunism threatens completely to destroy the foundations of Christian civilization. It is part of a still broader movement, the attack on the concept of *Tradition* as the source of truth not only in the Church, but in all branches of knowledge. This wider movement has been variously called modernism, secularism and renovationism; but could still more simply be called *the Revolution*.

The Revolution has been through several historical stages, of which the revolution in the Church accomplished by Pope Gregory VII in the eleventh century was the first. Papism led to Scholasticism and Humanism, then Protestantism, Scientism, Deism, Materialism, Romanticism, Hegelianism, Darwinism, Marxism, Freudianism, Ecumenism and, most recently, New-Ageism. It is beyond the scope of this work to show how all these “isms” are connected and take their origin from the primal rebellion against the Church in the eleventh century. Suffice it to say for the present that underlying the revolution in all its stages is a single antichristian, antitheist, man-centred philosophy.

This philosophy can be summarized as follows:- Man is his own master. If there is a God, then he is a God in man’s own image, perhaps even of man’s own making; and man does not depend on Him to learn the truth, for his own unaided mind is capable of that. The wisdom of the ages is a myth; tradition is a brake on progress. As man is a product of evolution from the lower animals, so his social and religious and political institutions are in a process of constant upward evolution. Therefore there is no such thing as absolute truth, no sacred, unchanging, God-given authority. Everything is in flux, therefore everyone must change. The only unchanging, ineluctable fact is the fact of the revolution – the social revolution, the political revolution, the religious revolution, and above all the scientific revolution upon which all the other revolutions are based. Therefore the only unforgivable sin (if it is not simply a kind of illness, which can be treated by drug-therapy in a psychiatric hospital) is *the sin of counter-revolution,* the sin of being bigoted, intolerant of change, out-of-date. Everything is permitted – the craziest of beliefs, the most deviant of life-styles – so long as it does not stand in the way of the revolution, that revolution which is making man master of himself and of his environment. But for those who stand in the way of “progress”, there will be no mercy; they will be cast onto the rubbish heap of history like the extinct species of Darwinian pre-history. For nothing must stand in the way of man’s ascent to godlike status. Just as in physics the anthropic principle “seems to be on the verge of substituting man for God, by hinting that consciousness, unbound by time’s arrow, causes creation”[[45]](#footnote-45), so in life based on the scientific revolution man must substitute himself for God, removing all those constraints associated with the Divine Creator…

## 4. RUSSIA AND THE BALKANS

Only a little less damaging to the Orthodox commonwealth than communism and ecumenism was *nationalism*. Already in 1872, in the wake of the schism between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Bulgarian Church, the patriarchate had anathematized the heresy of *phyletism*, or nationalism, together with the Exarchate that the Bulgarians had created on a national basis and independently of the Patriarchate. Unfortunately, the Greeks were no less sinners in respect of nationalism than the Bulgarians, and in the Balkans as a whole nationalism was rampant. Strong national feeling founded on faith had helped to preserve the integrity of the Orthodox nations during the centuries of the Ottoman yoke. But it served them less well when that yoke was crumbling, and the new kind nationalism inspired by the French revolution had infected them and was beginning to infect their Muslim enemies.

The Treaty of Berlin (1878) was in general a huge disappointment for the Slav nations. Russia, it seemed, had snatched diplomatic defeat out of the jaws of military victory, while great powers who had played no direct part in the Russo-Turkish war had managed to gain succulent morsels at the expense of the Orthodox. Thus Britain snapped up Cyprus, while Austria-Hungary gained a protectorate in Bosnia and greater influence in the region as a whole, which forced Serbia to seek good relations with that great power at the expense of her relations with Russia.

Nevertheless, the international recognition of the independence of Serbia and Romania, together with the virtual independence of Bulgaria (even if shorn of much 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 Austria-Hungary – the other old enemy, whose power, unlike that of Turkey, was increasing?

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 century history, there were many Catholic Croats and Slovenes – including the famous Catholic Bishop and opponent of papal infallibility, Strossmaier - who were enthusiastic about joining such a State. The Bulgarians were not part of this idea because of their 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.[[46]](#footnote-46)

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. And here the signs were not encouraging.

First of all, a truly Orthodox state required 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 Lutheran, and King Ferdinand, a Catholic, were not commemorated in Orthodox Greece and Bulgaria. Instead their Orthodox heirs to the throne were commemorated. This attitude to the authorities sometimes led to conflict with them. Thus in 1888 the Bulgarian 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…”[[47]](#footnote-47)

Serbia was the only Balkan state ruled by native Orthodox kings – but they had the unfortunate habit of being killed by rival dynastic factions…

The sad fact was that, while the Balkan states seemed more independent than ever before, the gap in power between them and the major western states – Britain, France, Austria-Hungary and Germany – was increasing at the same time that western interference in the region – partly for commercial reasons, but partly also out of fear of Russia – was also increasing. Logically, therefore, the Balkan Orthodox should have sought, not only some kind of unity amongst themselves and the immediate cessation of their proxy wars over Macedonia (about which more anon), but also closer ties with the only Orthodox great power – Russia. Indeed, now as never before was the time when the idea of “the Third Rome” needed to be put into practice, not for the selfish motive of the aggrandisement of Russian power, but for the sake of the survival of the Orthodox Christian commonwealth as a whole…

Now for both religious and historical reasons, Russia could never remain indifferent to 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 1438-39 and the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the rulers of Russia, although de facto independent of, and much more powerful than, the Byzantine Emperor, considered themselves de jure only junior partners of the Emperor, while the huge Russian Church remained only a single metropolitan district of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. After the fall of Constantinople, the Balkan Slavs and Greeks looked to the Russians as potential liberators from the Turkish yoke, and in 1562 Tsar Ivan IV received a gramota from the Ecumenical Patriarch Joasaph calling him “*our* Tsar”, ascribing to him authority over “Orthodox Christians in the entire universe”, and applying to him the same epithets, “pious, God-crowned and Christ-loving” as had been applied to the Byzantine Emperors. Moscow “the Third Rome” been born…

The idea of the Third Rome has been subjected to much mockery and revilement as if it were just an excuse for nationalist ambition. But exactly the reverse is true: in acknowledging themselves to be the successors of the Byzantines, “the Second Rome”, the Russians took upon themselves an *internationalist obligation*: to fight for the protection of all Orthodox Christians throughout the inhabited world. This 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. On the other hand, since most non-Russian Orthodox lived within, or within the orbit of, the major Muslim powers of Ottoman Turkey and Persia, it also involved almost continuous war along her southern frontiers and, in some cases – Georgia, for example - the annexation of the threatened Orthodox land in order to protect it 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 fulfilment of the ideal of Christian Rome: the liberation of all fellow Orthodox Christians living under the yoke of heretical or pagan rulers.

The cost was enormous. It has been calculated that, quite apart from losses in terms of men killed, Russians taken into slavery by the Turks from the 15th to the 18th century inclusive numbered between three and five million, while the population of the whole of Russia in the time of Ivan the Terrible (16th century) numbered less than five million.[[48]](#footnote-48) And yet losses of men killed or driven into slavery abroad were only the beginning of the cost. Both the institution of serfdom, which so upset the liberals, and that of military service from youth until (virtually) death, were the results, not of the despotic cruelty of the tsars, but of sheer 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, whose results, while in general galling to the Orthodox, nevertheless established Serbia, Romania and (almost) Bulgaria as independent states.

To illustrate this point, let us look more closely at the unification of Bulgaria with East Rumelia referred to above. In 1885, a band of rebels seized control of Plovdiv, capital of Eastern Rumelia. Prince Alexander von Battenburg of 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.

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 could have dragged other great powers into a major European war. So Tsar Alexander III, 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”.[[49]](#footnote-49) 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.”[[50]](#footnote-50)

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, shortsighted 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 their failure to work more than intermittently with Russia was to lead to the most disastrous consequences over the next seventy years…

## 5. THE KOSOVAN AND MACEDONIAN QUESTIONS

Nationalist passions in the Balkans centred especially on two neighbouring territories: Kosovo and Macedonia. Both were under the Turkish yoke, but both were coveted by the Orthodox nations fighting for independence. Kosovo was coveted especially by Serbia, and Macedonia – by Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece.

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.[[51]](#footnote-51) 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.[[52]](#footnote-52)

At this point, when Serbs and Albanians might have been expected to unite against the Turks, a major deterioration in relations between the Serbs and Albanians of Kosovo took place.

“The prime cause of this,” writes Noel Malcolm, “was the mass expulsion of Muslims from the lands taken over by Serbia, Bulgaria and Montenegro in 1877-78. Almost all the Muslims… were expelled from the Morava valley region: there had been hundreds of Albanian villages there, and significant Albanian populations in towns such as Prokuplje, Leskovac and Vranje. A Serbian schoolmaster in Leskovac later recalled that the Muslims had been driven out in December 1877 at a time of extreme cold: ‘By the roadside, in the Gudelica gorge and as far as Vranje and Kumanovo, you could see the abandoned corpses of children, and old men frozen to death.’ Precise figures are lacking, but one modern study concludes that the whole region contained more than 110,000 Albanians. By the end of 1878 Western officials were reporting that there were 60,000 families of Muslim refugees in Macedonia, ‘in a state of extreme destitution’, and 60-70,000 Albanian refugees from Serbia ‘scattered’ over the vilayet of Kosovo. Albanian merchants who tried to stay on in Nish were subjected to a campaign of murders, 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…”[[53]](#footnote-53)

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”.[[54]](#footnote-54)

So Serbs began to emigrate from the province. By 1912 the Serbian proportion of the population had dropped to about 25% or less...[[55]](#footnote-55)

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 told the Royal Academy that "an inexhaustible source of national pride was discovered in Kosovo. More important than language and stronger than the Church, this pride unites all Serbs in a single nation..."[[56]](#footnote-56)

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."[[57]](#footnote-57)

So who did the inhabitants of Macedonia think they were?

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..."[[58]](#footnote-58)

We must also not forget the Romanians, who from the beginning of the century "began to show a great interest in the Vlach population, which spoke a Romance language and was scattered throughout the area. Although Romania obviously could not advance claims for Macedonian territory, the issue could be used to gain compensation elsewhere. The Albanian position received very little recognition..."[[59]](#footnote-59)

"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 Pec 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 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 Priština. A major propaganda campaign was launched inside Macedonia. From the beginning the efforts of the Serbs were hindered by their lack of an ecclesiastical organization equal to that of the Patriarchate and the Exarchate. They nevertheless made considerable advances before 1912."[[60]](#footnote-60)

"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 (Raška-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..."[[61]](#footnote-61)

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

Meanwhile, in 1895 a Greek secret society called *Ethniki Etairia* tried to revive the traditions of the *Philiki Etairia.* "Just as VMRO was preparing to destabilize Bulgaria, so did the Etairia become a virtual state within the Greek state. The Etairia included many Greek Macedonian émigrés in its ranks, but the main focus of its aspirations was Crete..."[[62]](#footnote-62) In 1896 the Cretans, whose slogan was "Freedom or Death!", rebelled against the Ottomans and called on the Free Greeks on the mainland to support them. They responded by landing an army onto the island.

"The great powers, smelling another Eastern Crisis, attempted to mediate between Turkey and Greece by suggesting that Istanbul offer Crete autonomy. By the middle of 1897, the Greeks were still procrastinating and so the Sultan decided to declare war on Greece. Turkish troops massed in Epirus on Greece's northern border and soon put the Greeks to flight. Before long the Ottoman troops were marching on an open road to Athens. Once again the great powers stepped into the breach and imposed a peace-deal on the two sides.

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

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

"Conversions of whole villages were common. Sometimes they took place at the end of a gun barrel, sometimes there were compelling economic reasons, as H.N. Brailsford discovered at the time. 'I was talking to a wealthy peasant who came in from a neighbouring village to Monastir market. He spoke Greek well, but hardly like a native. 'Is your village Greek,' I asked him, 'or Bulgarian?' 'Well,' he replied, 'it is Bulgarian now, but four years ago it was Greek.' The answer seemed to him entirely natural and commonplace. 'How,' I asked in some bewilderment, 'did that miracle come about?' 'Why,' said he, 'we are all poor men, but we want to have our own school and a priest who will look after us properly. We used to have a Greek teacher. We paid him £5 a year and his bread, while the Greek consul paid him another £5; but we had no priest of our own. We shared a priest with several other villages, but he was very unpunctual and remiss. We went to the Greek Bishop to complain, but he refused to do anything for us. The Bulgarians heard of this and they came and made us an offer. They said they would give us a priest who would live in the village and a teacher to whom we need pay nothing. Well, sirs, ours is a poor village, and so of course we became Bulgarian.'..."[[63]](#footnote-63)

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

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

"Punitive executions continue to comprise standard fare of the guerrilla band activities. In the last 14 days alone, there has been a revenge murder of the Greek priest in Zelenic, the death of the teacher from Strebeno, and of a Patriarch supporter from Ajtos... [then] the Serbian priest from Vrbjani and an Albanian landowner from Lenista... whose throat was slit."[[64]](#footnote-64)

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 VMRO, approached the Ottoman authorities and requested that they strengthen their garrison. Sure enough, on August 2, "Ilinden" (St. Elijah's day), 300 guerillas 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 *četas* intimidate Greek villages, the Greek *andartes* swept through western Macedonia forcing the reconversion of Exarchate communities to the Patriarchate.

"The *andartes* now administered solace to those Patriarchate villages which had courageously resisted VMRO during the uprising. However, in the villages genuinely committed to the Exarchate or VMRO, the Greeks behaved like vengeful bullies, executing suspected renegades and holding the Patriarchate version of the Mass [Divine Liturgy] at gunpoint if the priest or townspeople were unwilling to perform the service. This Greek backlash was orchestrated by the gun-toting bishop of Kastoria, Germanos Karavangelis. This extraordinary figure, who roamed the countryside in a dark English raincoat with a black scarf wrapped around his priest's hat, 'had a Männlicher slung over one shoulder, a bandolier over the other, a belt round the middle from which hung his holster carrying a large pistol and a knife.' Karavangelis appeared consciously to cultivate an image of threatening romanticism. The bishop considered Bulgarian influence in the region to be the greatest threat to Greek national interests. He therefore advocated close friendship and cooperation between the Greeks and Turks of Macedonia, but only as an expedient. Karavangelis admitted openly that the only issue in Macedonia was the future contours of the Balkan states once the Turks had been thrown out.

"As VMRO's influence shrivelled and almost died, Karavangelis and his colleagues began to receive more money, weapons and men from the Greek Kingdom. This renewed Greek activity and the retreat of Bulgarian aspirations hastened a change in Serbian policy, too. Nikola Pašić, the old Radical leader and now Prime Minister, had long given up hope that his ideal of a federal solution for the Macedonian Question might be realized. Serbia would now be fighting for clerical and territorial influence not just against Greeks and Bulgarians, but also against the Turks and Albanians. Demonstrating again that neither Greeks, Serbs nor Bulgarians have natural allies, Pašić issued an order to Serbia's diplomatic representative: 'to protect our compatriots from the damaging consequences of the monopoly of Patriarchate organs which have placed themselves in the service of Hellenism to the detriment of the non-Greek adherents to the Patriarchate church; and to counter the activity of Exarchate agents whose Committees are appearing with weapons in those areas of eminent interest to us: Poreć, Kićevo, 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."[[65]](#footnote-65)

Nevertheless, the international recognition of the independence of Serbia and Romania, together with the virtual independence of Bulgaria (even if shorn of much of the territory she claimed), 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 Austria-Hungary – the other old enemy, whose power, unlike that of Turkey, was increasing?

There were several possibilities. One was “Yugoslavism”, a federation of Slavic states 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.

Surprisingly, perhaps, in view of later, twentieth-century century history, there were many Catholic Croats and Slovenes who were enthusiastic about joining such a federation. The Croats and the Serbs of Croatia, Slavonia and Vojvodina had cooperated well in the revolution of 1848, and the increased power of Serbia after 1878 (King Milan was pouring a lot of money into his army) promised much. Thus the Croat sculptor Ivan Mestrovic was a philo-Serb and pro-Yugoslav whose works included the powerful *Milos Obilic* and the project for a Kosovo temple.

Yugoslavism in its original form, that is, including Bulgaria, was dealt a blow when the Bulgarian kingdom was reunited with East Rumelia in 1885, making Bulgaria the largest power in the Balkans. War broke out between the two countries in the same year, and Serbia was defeated. Finally, the rivalry over control of Macedonia destroyed any chance of the two Slavic Orthodox nations uniting.

However, a more attenuated form of Yugoslavism without Bulgaria survived. As Tim Judah writes: “In the latter years of the nineteenth century, ideas of Illyrianism or Yugoslavism in the Habsburg lands had undergone something of a decline. It was Hungarian attempts to play off Serbs and Croats, however, and the continued division of Dalmatia from Croatia and Slavonia that helped revive the ideology. The single most important development here was the founding of the Croatian-Serbian Coalition of political parties in Croatia in 1905. Part of the understanding that led to this was that, if the Serbs would support Dalmatian unification with Croatia and Slavonai, which were being subjected to increasing Magyarisation, the Croats would support the principle of Serbian political equality within Croatia. In 1906 the Croatian-Serbian Coalition won the elections in Croatia-Slavonia. Central to its ideology was *narodno jedinstvo,* or Croat-Serb ‘national unity’, which was a precursor to the idea that Serbs, Croats, Slovenes and the other south Slavs were simply different names for parts of the same ‘Yugoslav’ nation.

“The Austrian and Hungarian authorities, who governed according to the principle of divide and rule, took fright at these developments and attempts were made to discredit the Croatian-Serbian Coalition. In 1909, a great treason trial of fifty-three Serbs was held in Zagreb, at which they were accused of having treasonous contacts with Belgrade. Evidence included the singing of Serbian epic poetry and the owning of portraits of King Peter, which were popular among the Serbs of Croatia. Although the trial ended in convictions, the charges were so widely seen as having been trumped up that the emperor was forced to issue pardons. Hard on the heels of this came a case in Vienna against Dr. Heinrich Friedjung. The eminent historian was accused of libel, having written an article claiming that leaders of the Croatian-Serbian Coalition were being funded by the authorities in Belgrade. What Friedjung had not known, however, was that the documents he had been given, which came from the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry, were forgeries. The net result of both these cases was to alienate both Croats and Serbs from the Habsburgs and so to further the Yugoslav cause.

“In Serbia the idea of Yugoslavism was far less attractive than it was in the Habsburg lands. It was seen as one of three political options which governed thoughts about the future. The first and most prevalent was the creation of a Greater Serbia, including Bosnia and perhaps those lands in Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia inhabited by large numbers of Serbs. The second was the formation of a somehow united Slav Balkans. This would include the Bulgarians, who were seen as no less south Slav than the Croats or the Slovenes. With the Bulgarian attack on the Serbs in 1913, though, this option was foreclosed. The third idea, that of Yugoslavism, while becoming increasingly prominent in academic circles, remained of little interest among politicians. In 1904, however, intellectuals and students founded *Slovenski Jug* (Slavonic South), a society which aimed at uniting the south Slavs.

“Over the next few years, there were increasing numbers of Yugoslav congresses and exhibitions held in Belgrade. In September, 1904, King Peter opened the First Yugoslav Art Exhibition. On display were 458 pieces by Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian and Bulgarian artists. In 1906, some 800 gathered for a conference of teachers from all of the lands that would later become Yugoslavia…”[[66]](#footnote-66)

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. And here the 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 Lutheran, and King Ferdinand, a Catholic, were not commemorated in Orthodox Greece and Bulgaria. Instead their Orthodox heirs to the throne were commemorated. This attitude to the authorities sometimes led to conflict with them. Thus in 1888 the Bulgarian 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…”[[67]](#footnote-67)

Serbia was the only Balkan state ruled by native Orthodox kings – but they had the unfortunate habit of being killed by rival dynastic factions… The most shocking example of this was the killing of King Alexander and Queen Draga of Serbia in Belgrade in 1903. This crime had the good side-effect that the pro-Austrian Obrenović dynasty was replaced by the pro-Russian Karadjordjević dynasty.

But the long-term effects were evil; for the crime was neither deeply repented of, nor investigated sufficiently so as to bring the killers to justice. For, as Rebecca West writes, the new King Petar “was entirely surrounded by the conspirators whose crime he abhorred, and he could not dismiss them, because… with these fierce critics all about him perfectly capable of doing what they had done before, he had to keep order in a new and expanding country, vexed with innumerable internal and external difficulties.”[[68]](#footnote-68)

West goes on to assert, with pardonable exaggeration, that “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…”[[69]](#footnote-69) For the shots in Belgrade in 1903 led to the shots at Sarajevo in 1914, which led to the First World War, which led to the Russian revolution…

For God is not mocked, and He does not allow anyone to touch His anointed kings. And the murder was a symptom of a wider revolutionary malaise, not only in Serbia, but in contemporary Orthodox Christendom as a whole, which took on a predominantly nationalist character in the Balkans and an internationalist character in Russia. Soon it was 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…

## 6. THE ORTHODOX CHURCHES AND “PROTO-ECUMENISM”

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.”[[70]](#footnote-70)

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. 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.”[[71]](#footnote-71) 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.”[[72]](#footnote-72)

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.”[[73]](#footnote-73)

Turning from Free Greece to Greece under the Turks – that is, to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, we see that piety was in general higher, especially in the country districts of Anatolia, where holy priests such as St. Arsenius of Cappadocia (+1924) struggled. However, the capital suffered from various heterodox influences – not only the Islam of the Ottoman rulers, but also the Catholicism and Protestantism of the western powers and the Monophysitism of the Armenians. Thus in 1878 Patriarch Joachim II and his Synod decreed that Orthodox priests could give communion to Armenians who were isolated from their own priests and churches.[[74]](#footnote-74)

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

The Catholic Adrian Fortescue finds this reply “unpardonably offensive”. 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 Œcumenical Patriarch ever betrays; he was only helpless before the Porte and the Russians. He did his best to keep his see. As soon as he heard that the synod wanted him to retire he suspended the leaders of the opposition and ordered them to go back to their dioceses. Of course they refused to obey. Poor Anthimos did all a man could. He went to the Yildiz-Kiösk and implored the Sultan to protect him, but the Sultan had other things to think about, and, on February 8, 1897, he went to swell the number of ex-Patriarchs, who wait in hope of being some day re-elected. There were now three – Joachim III, Neophytos VIII, and Anthimos VII. Constantine V (Valiades) was elected Patriarch in April. Lord Constantine seems to have been one of the best of all the later Œcumenical 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…*.”[[75]](#footnote-75)

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 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…”[[76]](#footnote-76)

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

The Local Orthodox Churches were unanimous in their rejection of the new calendar (Alexandria and strife-torn Cyprus did not reply).

As for ecumenism, it is instructive to read the summary of the Churches’ replies by 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 fulfil. 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…

“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.’”[[77]](#footnote-77)

When Patriarch Joachim had received all the replies, he published a second encyclical in 1904 which expressed his own moderate, but firm opinion, both about ecumenism and about the first major step necessary in order to implement ecumenism in a practical way – 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…”[[78]](#footnote-78)

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 of their Church 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.[[79]](#footnote-79) In 1914 the “World Congress for International Friendship through the Churches” was founded. 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…

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It was not only the Greeks who were being influenced by Ecumenism. Thus during the First World War the famous Serbian theologian Fr. Nikolai Velimirovich served with Anglicans in London (he later turned away from ecumenism, and became a great confessor).[[80]](#footnote-80) Again, Archbishop Tikhon, the future patriarch and hieromartyr, served with Anglicans in America.[[81]](#footnote-81)

The official service-books of the Russian Church reveal an unclear, ambiguous attitude towards the sacraments of the heretics and schismatics. Thus in the *Trebnik,* or *Book of Needs*, we read: “Know this also, that a schismatic baptism, and a heretical one, by those who believe in the Holy Indivisible Trinity, in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Church determines to be ultimately acceptable in every way.”

Again, Bulgakov’s *Nastol’naia Kniga*, or *Handbook for Clergy*, explains that Roman Catholics, if they have been baptised and confirmed, should be received by the “Third Rite”, that is, renunciation of heresies and repentance. If they have not been confirmed, they must be chrismated. They must *never* be baptised.

“Recognising Baptism as a requirement for becoming a member of her, [the Russian Orthodox Church] accepts Jews, Muslims, pagans and those sectarians who distort the fundamental dogmas of the Orthodox Church through Baptism; Protestants are accepted through Chrismation; and those Catholics, Armenians and members of the Anglican Church who have not received Chrismation or Confirmation, and also those who have fallen away from Orthodoxy, she accepts through the Third Rite, through Repentance, repudiation of errors and Communion of the Holy Mysteries.”[[82]](#footnote-82)

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

The 1903 Epistle of the Holy Synod of the Russian Church to Patriarch Joachim 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 seducements on the part of the Latins and the Protestants.”[[83]](#footnote-83)

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 over the centuries, 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.”[[84]](#footnote-84)

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An important field of ecumenical activity was the United States, where until a few years before the revolution the Orthodox of various ethnic jurisdictions were united under the Russian Church in the person of Archbishop Tikhon of Alaska. The Episcopalian Anglicans made many efforts to draw the Orthodox into communion with them. But they were well rebuked by His Grace, the Right Reverend [Saint] Raphael Hawaweeny, Bishop of Brooklyn and head of the Syrian Greek Orthodox Catholic Mission of the Russian Church in North America.

As the Orthodox Christian Information Center writes: “Called from Russia to New York in 1895, to assume charge of the growing Syrian parishes under the Russian jurisdiction over American Orthodoxy, he was elevated to the episcopate by order of the Holy Synod of Russia and was consecrated Bishop of Brooklyn and head of the Syrian Mission by Archbishop Tikhon and Bishop Innocent of Alaska on March 12, 1904. This was the first consecration of an Orthodox Catholic Bishop in the New World and Bishop Raphael was the first Orthodox prelate to spend his entire episcopate, from consecration to burial, in America. [Ed. note—In August 1988 the remains of Bishop Raphael along with those of Bishops Emmanuel and Sophronios and Fathers Moses Abouhider, Agapios Golam and Makarios Moore were transferred to the Antiochian Village in southwestern Pennsylvania for re-burial. Bishop Raphael's remains were found to be essentially incorrupt. As a result a commission under the direction of Bishop Basil (Essey) of the Antiochian Archdiocese was appointed to gather materials concerning the possible glorification of Bishop Raphael.]

“With his broad culture and international training and experience Bishop Raphael naturally had a keen interest in the universal Orthodox aspiration for Christian unity. His work in America, where his Syrian communities were widely scattered and sometimes very small and without the services of the Orthodox Church, gave him a special interest in any movement which promised to provide a way by which acceptable and valid sacramental ministrations might be brought within the reach of isolated Orthodox people. It was, therefore, with real pleasure and gratitude that Bishop Raphael received the habitual approaches of "High Church" prelates and clergy of the Episcopal Church. Assured by "catholic-minded" Protestants, seeking the recognition of real Catholic Bishops, that the Anglican Communion and Episcopal Church were really Catholic and almost the same as Orthodox, Bishop Raphael was filled with great happiness. A group of these "High Episcopalian" Protestants had formed the American branch of "The Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches Union" (since revised and now existing as "The Anglican and Eastern Churches Association," chiefly active in England, where it publishes a quarterly organ called The Christian East).This organization, being well pleased with the impression its members had made upon Bishop Raphael, elected him Vice-President of the Union. Bishop Raphael accepted, believing that he was associating himself with truly Catholic but unfortunately separated [from the Church] fellow priests and bishops in a movement that would promote Orthodoxy and true catholic unity at the same time.

“As is their usual custom with all prelates and clergy of other bodies, the Episcopal bishop urged Bishop Raphael to recognize their Orders and accept for his people the sacramental ministrations of their Protestant clergy on a basis of equality with the Sacraments [better, Mysteries—webmaster] of the Orthodox Church administered by Orthodox priests. It was pointed out that the isolated and widely-scattered Orthodox who had no access to Orthodox priests or Sacraments could be easily reached by clergy of the Episcopal Church, who, they persuaded Bishop Raphael to believe, were priests and Orthodox in their doctrine and belief though separated in organization. In this pleasant delusion, but under carefully specified restrictions, Bishop Raphael issued in 1910 permission for his faithful, in emergencies and under necessity when an Orthodox priest and Sacraments were inaccessible, to ask the ministrations of Episcopal clergy and make comforting use of what these clergy could provide in the absence of Orthodox priests and Sacraments.

“Being Vice-President of the Eastern Orthodox side of the Anglican and Orthodox Churches Union and having issued on Episcopal solicitation such a permission to his people, Bishop Raphael set himself to observe closely the reaction following his permissory letter and to study more carefully the Episcopal Church and Anglican teaching in the hope that the Anglicans might really be capable of becoming actually Orthodox. But, the more closely he observed the general practice and the more deeply he studied the teaching and faith of the Episcopal Church, the more painfully shocked, disappointed, and disillusioned Bishop Raphael became. Furthermore, the very fact of his own position in the Anglican and Orthodox Union made the confusion and deception of Orthodox people the more certain and serious. The existence and cultivation of even friendship and mutual courtesy was pointed out as supporting the Episcopal claim to Orthodox sacramental recognition and intercommunion. Bishop Raphael found that his association with Episcopalians became the basis for a most insidious, injurious, and unwarranted propaganda in favor of the Episcopal Church among his parishes and faithful. Finally, after more than a year of constant and careful study and observation, Bishop Raphael felt that it was his duty to resign from the association of which he was Vice-President. In doing this he hoped that the end of his connection with the Union would end also the Episcopal interferences and uncalled-for intrusions in the affairs and religious harmony of his people. His letter of resignation from the Anglican and Orthodox Churches Union, published in the Russian Orthodox Messenger,February 18, 1912, stated his convictions in the following way:

“’I have a personal opinion about the usefulness of the Union. Study has taught me that there is a vast difference between the doctrine, discipline, and even worship of the Holy Orthodox Church and those of the Anglican Communion; while, on the other hand, experience has forced upon me the conviction that to promote courtesy and friendship, which seems to be the only aim of the Union at present, not only amounts to killing precious time, at best, but also is somewhat hurtful to the religious and ecclesiastical welfare of the Holy Orthodox Church in these United States.

“’Very many of the bishops of the Holy Orthodox Church at the present time—and especially myself have observed that the Anglican Communion is associated with numerous Protestant bodies, many of whose doctrines and teachings, as well as practices, are condemned by the Holy Orthodox Church. I view union as only a pleasing dream. Indeed, it is impossible for the Holy Orthodox Church to receive—as She has a thousand times proclaimed, and as even the Papal See of Rome has declaimed to the Holy Orthodox Church' s credit—anyone into Her Fold or into union with Her who does not accept Her Faith in full without any qualifications—the Faith which She claims is most surely Apostolic. I cannot see how She can unite, or the latter expect in the near future to unite with Her while the Anglican Communion holds so many Protestant tenets and doctrines, and also is so closely associated with the non-Catholic religions about her.

“’Finally, I am in perfect accord with the views expressed by His Grace, Archbishop Platon, in his address delivered this year before the Philadelphia Episcopalian Brotherhood, as to the impossibility of union under present circumstances.

“One would suppose that the publication of such a letter in the official organ of the Russian Archdiocese would have ended the misleading and subversive propaganda of the Episcopalians among the Orthodox faithful. But the Episcopal members simply addressed a reply to Bishop Raphael in which they attempted to make him believe that the Episcopal Church was not Protestant and had adopted none of the errors held by Protestant bodies. For nearly another year Bishop Raphael watched and studied while the subversive Episcopal propaganda went on among his people on the basis of the letter of permission he had issued under a misapprehension of the nature and teaching of the Episcopal Church and its clergy. Seeing that there was no other means of protecting Orthodox faithful from being misled and deceived, Bishop Raphael finally issued, late in 1912, the following pastoral letter which has remained in force among the Orthodox of this jurisdiction in America ever since and has been confirmed and reinforced by the pronouncement of his successor, the present Archbishop Aftimios.

“’Two years ago, while I was Vice-President and member of the Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches Union, being moved with compassion for my children in the Holy Orthodox Faith once delivered to the saints(Jude 1:3), scattered throughout the whole of North America and deprived of the ministrations of the Church; and especially in places far removed from Orthodox centers; and being equally moved with a feeling that the Episcopalian (Anglican) Church possessed largely the Orthodox Faith, as many of the prominent clergy professed the same to me before I studied deeply their doctrinal authorities and their liturgy—the Book of Common Prayer—Iwrote a letter as Bishop and Head of the Syrian-Orthodox Mission in North America, giving permission, in which I said that in extreme cases, where no Orthodox priest could be called upon at short notice, the ministrations of the Episcopal (Anglican) clergy might be kindly requested. However, I was most explicit in defining when and how the ministrations should be accepted, and also what exceptions should be made. In writing that letter I hoped, on the one hand, to help my people spiritually, and, on the other hand, to open the way toward bringing the Anglicans into the communion of the Holy Orthodox Faith.

“’On hearing and in reading that my letter, perhaps unintentionally, was misconstrued by some of the Episcopalian (Anglican) clergy, I wrote a second letter in which I pointed out that my instructions and exceptions had been either overlooked or ignored by many, to wit:

“’a) They (the Episcopalians) informed the Orthodox people that I recognized the Anglican Communion (Episcopal Church) as being united with the Holy Orthodox Church and their ministry, that is holy orders, as valid.

“b) The Episcopal (Anglican) clergy offered their ministrations even when my Orthodox clergy were residing in the same towns and parishes, as pastors.

“c) Episcopal clergy said that there was no need of the Orthodox people seeking the ministrations of their own Orthodox priests, for their (the Anglican) ministrations were all that were necessary.

“I, therefore, felt bound by all the circumstances to make a thorough study of the Anglican Church's faith and orders, as well as of her discipline and ritual. After serious consideration I realized that it was my honest duty, as a member of the College of the Holy Orthodox Greek Apostolic Church, and head of the Syrian Mission in North America, to resign from the vice-presidency of and membership in the Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches Union. At the same time, I set forth, in my letter of resignation, my reason for so doing.

“I am convinced that the doctrinal teaching and practices, as well as the discipline, of the whole Anglican Church are unacceptable to the Holy Orthodox Church. I make this apology for the Anglicans whom as Christian gentlemen I greatly revere, that the loose teaching of a great many of the prominent Anglican theologians are so hazy in their definitions of truths, and so inclined toward pet heresies that it is hard to tell what they believe. The Anglican Church as a whole has not spoken authoritatively on her doctrine. Her Catholic-minded members can call out her doctrines from many views, but so nebulous is her pathway in the doctrinal world that those who would extend a hand of both Christian and ecclesiastical fellowship dare not, without distrust, grasp the hand of her theologians, for while many are orthodox on some points, they are quite heterodox on others. I speak, of course, from the Holy Orthodox Eastern Catholic point of view. The Holy Orthodox Church has never perceptibly changed from Apostolic times, and, therefore, no one can go astray in finding out what She teaches. Like Her Lord and Master, though at times surrounded with human malaria—which He in His mercy pardons—She is the same yesterday, and today, and forever(Heb. 13:8) the mother and safe deposit of the truth as it is in Jesus (cf. Eph. 4:21).

“The Orthodox Church differs absolutely with the Anglican Communion in reference to the number of Sacraments and in reference to the doctrinal explanation of the same. The Anglicans say in their Catechism concerning the Sacraments that there are "two only as generally necessary to salvation, that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord." I am well aware that, in their two books of homilies (which are not of a binding authority, for the books were prepared only in the reign of Edward VI and Queen Elizabeth for priests who were not permitted to preach their own sermons in England during times both politically and ecclesiastically perilous), it says that there are "five others commonly called Sacraments" (see homily in each book on the Sacraments), but long since they have repudiated in different portions of their Communion this very teaching and absolutely disavow such definitions in their "Articles of Religion" which are bound up in their Book of Common Prayeror Liturgy as one of their authorities.

“The Orthodox Church has ever taught that there are seven Sacraments. She plainly points out the fact that each of the seven has an outward and visible sign and an inward and spiritual Grace, and that they are of gospel and apostolic origin.

“Again, the Orthodox Church has certain rites and practices associated and necessary in the administration of the Sacraments which neither time nor circumstances must set aside where churches are organized. Yet the Anglicans entirely neglect these, though they once taught and practiced the same in more catholic days.

“In the case of the administration of Holy Baptism it is the absolute rule of the Orthodox Church that the candidate must be immersed three times (once in the name of each Person of the Holy Trinity). Immersion is only permissory in the Anglican Communion, and pouring or sprinkling is the general custom. The Anglicans do not use holy oil in the administration, etc., and even in doctrinal teaching in reference to this Sacrament they differ.

“As to the doctrine concerning Holy Communion the Anglican Communion has no settled view. The Orthodox Church teaches the doctrine of transubstantiation without going into any scientific or Roman Catholic explanation. The technical word which She uses for the sublime act of the priest by Christ's authority to consecrate is "transmuting" (Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom). She, as I have said, offers no explanation, but She believes and confesses that Christ, the Son of the living God Who came into the world to save sinners, is of a truth in His "all-pure Body" and "precious Blood" (Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom) objectively present, and to be worshiped in that Sacrament as He was on earth and is now in risen and glorified majesty in Heaven; and that "the precious and holy and life-giving Body and Blood of Our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ are imparted" (to each soul that comes to that blessed Sacrament) "Unto the remission of sins, and unto life everlasting" (Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom).

“Confirmation or the laying on of hands, which the Orthodox Church calls a Sacrament—"Chrismation"—in the Anglican Church is merely the laying on of hands of the Bishop accompanied by a set form of prayers, without the use of Holy Chrism, which has come down from Apostolic days as necessary.

“Holy Matrimony is regarded by the Anglican Communion as only a sacred rite which, even if performed by a Justice of the Peace, is regarded as sufficient in the sight of God and man.

“Penance is practiced but rarely in the Anglican Communion, and Confession before the reception of Holy Communion is not compulsory. They have altogether set aside the Sacrament of Holy Unction, that is anointing the sick as commanded by Saint James (see James 5:14). In their priesthood they do not teach the true doctrine of the Grace of the Holy Orders. Indeed they have two forms of words for ordination, namely, one which gives the power of absolution to the priest, and the alternative form without the words of Our Lord, whosoever sins ye remit,etc. (John 20: 23). Thus they leave every bishop to choose intention or non-intention in the act of ordination as to the power and Grace of their priesthood ("Ordination of Priests," Book of CommonPrayer).

“But, besides all of this, the Anglican Communion ignores the Orthodox Church's dogmas and teachings, such as the invocation of saints, prayers for the dead, special honor to the blessed Virgin Mary the Mother of God, and reverence for sacred relics, holy pictures and icons. They say of such teaching that it is "a foul thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the word of God" (Article of Religion, XXII).

“There is a striking variance between their wording of the Nicene Creed and that of the Holy Orthodox Church; but sadder still, it contains the heresy of the "filioque."

“I do not deem it necessary to mention all the striking differences between the Holy Orthodox Church and the Anglican Communion in reference to the authority of holy tradition, the number of Ecumenical Councils, etc. Enough has already been said and pointed out to show that the Anglican Communion differs but little from all other Protestant bodies, and therefore, there cannot be any intercommunion until they return to the ancient Holy Orthodox Faith and practices, and reject Protestant omissions and commissions.

“Therefore, as the official head of the Syrian Holy Orthodox Catholic Apostolic Church in North America and as one who must give account(Heb. 13:17) before the judgment seat of the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls(I Pet. 2:25), that I have fed the flock of God(I Pet. 5:2), as I have been commissioned by the Holy Orthodox Church, and inasmuch as the Anglican Communion (Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA) does not differ in things vital to the well-being of the Holy Orthodox Church from some of the most errant Protestant sects, I direct all Orthodox people residing in any community not to seek or to accept the ministrations of the Sacraments and rites from any clergy excepting those of the Holy Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church, for the Apostolic command that the Orthodox should not commune in ecclesiastical matters with those who are not of the same household of faith(Gal. 6:10), is clear: "Any bishop, or presbyter or deacon who will pray with heretics, let him be anathematized; and if he allows them as clergymen to perform any service, let him be deposed." (Apostolic Canon 45) "Any bishop, or presbyter who accepts Baptism or the Holy Sacrifice from heretics, we order such to be deposed, for whatconcord hath Christ with Belial, or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?"(Apostolic Canon 46)

“As to members of the Holy Orthodox Church living in areas beyond the reach of Orthodox clergy, I direct that the ancient custom of our Holy Church be observed, namely, in cases of extreme necessity, that is, danger of death, children may be baptized by some pious Orthodox layman, or even by the parent of the child, by immersion three times in the names of the (Persons of the) Holy Trinity, and in case of death such baptism is valid; but, if the child should live, he must be brought to an Orthodox priest for the Sacrament of Chrismation.

“In the case of the death of an Orthodox person where no priest of the Holy Orthodox Church can be had, a pious layman may read over the corpse, for the comfort of the relatives and the instruction of the persons present, Psalm 90 and Psalm 118, and add thereto the Trisagion ("Holy God, Holy Mighty," etc.). But let it be noted that as soon as possible the relative must notify some Orthodox bishop or priest and request him to serve the Liturgy and Funeral for the repose of the soul of the departed in his cathedral or parish Church.

“As to Holy Matrimony, if there be any parties united in wedlock outside the pale of the holy Orthodox Church because of the remoteness of Orthodox centers from their home, I direct that as soon as possible they either invite an Orthodox priest or go to where he resides and receive from his hands the Holy Sacrament of Matrimony; otherwise they will be considered excommunicated until they submit to the Orthodox Church's rule.

“I further direct that Orthodox Christians should not make it a practice to attend the services of other religious bodies, so that there be no confusion concerning the teaching or doctrines. Instead, I order that the head of each household, or a member, may read the special prayers which can be found in the Hours in the Holy Orthodox Service Book, and such other devotional books as have been set forth by the authority of the Holy Orthodox Church.”[[85]](#footnote-85)

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## 7. THE RUSSIAN CHURCH AND THE INTELLIGENTSIA: (1) CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS

The Russian Orthodox Church existed in a close unity with, and in some respects dependence on, the Russian State. On January 25, 1721 Peter the Great issued his *Spiritual Regulation*, which abolished the patriarchy and instituted in its place “The Most Holy Governing Synod”. “The activity of the Synod,” writes Professor Michael Babkin, “was controlled by a secular person appointed by the emperor – the over-procurator of the Holy Synod, who was the official representative of the authority of his Majesty. The juridical basis of the foundation of the institution of the over-procurator was the necessity of reporting to the supreme power on the course of church affairs. The over-procurator’s function was to preserve the interests of the State in the sphere of ecclesiastical administration and to control the organs of power of the Russian Orthodox Church in the centre (the Holy Synod) and locally (the spiritual consistories)… On the whole the competence of the over-procurator was limited to administration and did not extend to the sphere of the confession of faith or ecclesiastical law.

“Juridically, the participation of the emperor in church affairs raised the status of the Russian Orthodox Church and its decrees. The acts of the Holy Synod were published ‘by order of his Imperial Majesty’ in the form of ukases, directives or laws which became part of the collection of laws of the Russian Empire.

“The unity of Empire and Church based on the Orthodox faith, although it was not without its inadequacies, was on the whole very fruitful. The Empire supported the Russian Church morally and materially through the institution of the over-procurator, freed the episcopate from routine bureaucratic-chancellery work (linked, for example, with economic activity and the seeking of sources of finance), and supported its educational and missionary activity… In the Basic Laws there were more than a thousand articles protecting the privileges and property rights of the Russian Orthodox Church. The hierarchs were de facto high spiritual satraps of the Empire. According to the Table of Ranks, metropolitans, archbishops and bishops were equivalent to the first three classes of military and civil officials.

“Although the Russian Orthodox Church was literally merged with the Russian Empire, it did not possess the rights of a juridical person and did not have self-administration. However, such rights were bestowed on the Holy Synod, parish churches, monasteries, spiritual-academic institutions and other church structures which possessed immovable property and capital.”[[86]](#footnote-86)

In spite of these not inconsiderable advantages, the structure of Church-State relations in Russia was not ideal from an Orthodox point of view, being closer to the Protestant caesaropapist model than to the traditional Orthodox “symphony of powers”. This was first pointed out by the Slavophiles in the 1840s, and was reiterated by many of the intelligentsy in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Persuaded by these criticisms, as well as his own deep knowledge and love of pre-Petrine Russia, in 1901 Tsar Nicholas II removed from the Constitution the phrase describing the sovereign as the “Supreme Judge” of the Church. In this way he signalled that he was prepared to undertake a far-ranging reform of Church-State relations, bringing them back to the true “symphony” that had prevailed under the Muscovite tsars. The next step he had in mind was the convening of the first Council of the Russian Orthodox Church since 1667. For whereas the Tsar always viewed liberal developments in politics with suspicion, this was not the case with regard to Church-State relations, where he understood that freeing the Church from the dead hand of the State would ultimately be to the benefit of both Church and State.

However, there was here concealed a great danger that “freedom” for the Church would be understood as part of the democratic revolution that the liberals were calling for. Properly understood, freedom for the Church from the State did not mean the democratization of the Church herself (the Church is not a democracy, but a theocracy, a sui generis mixture of monarchical, oligarchical and democratic elements under the overall rule of God), but her ability to run her own affairs without interference from the secular power. It might entail a certain “freeing up” of the internal structure of the Church at several levels – less bureaucracy generally, more control of bishops over their own dioceses, more independence of parishes to elect their own priests, buy their own property, etc. – but this was not the essence of the matter. The essence of the matter was that, freed from secular control, the Church would be more free to follow her own rules as embodied in the Sacred Canons of the Church, thereby giving more place to *God* to rule His Church in accordance with her real inner nature. The result would be a true renovation of Church life, a release of new streams of vivifying grace into the flagging organism.

Unfortunately, however, the movement for the return of the Church to her canonical norms was seen by many in the Church in the context of the general movement to limit the powers of the Tsar. Thus “on the border of the 19th and 20th centuries right until the February revolution, the representatives of the higher reaches of the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church acted in such a way as to limit the participation of the emperor in ecclesiastical administration and to ‘distance’ the Church from the State. A confirmation of this is the shortening, from January, 1900, of the commemoration of the emperor at the proskomedia (the initial stage of the liturgy, the central Christian service), and also the shortening, from February, 1901, of the ‘loyal allegiance’ part of the oath for those being ordained to the episcopate and the removal of the oath for members of the Holy Synod. An indicator of the striving of the higher reaches of the hierarchy to raise their intra-ecclesiastical status was constituted by the processes taking place at the time of the gradual increase in the liturgical titles of the hierarchs, and also the increase in the commemorations of the diocesan bishops.

”… At the same time the clergy quite demonstratively declined from working out a theological point of view with regard to the power of the tsar. On the whole, it supported the ‘rational’ estimates that the jurists, political commentators and historians gave to tsarist power. Moreover, there was no clarification of such questions as the ecclesiastical prerogatives of the emperor and the so-called sacred rights of the Anointed of God. Even with regard to whether the anointing of the tsar was a church sacrament or not there was no unity among the hierarchs.”[[87]](#footnote-87)

The over-procurator of the time, Constantine Petrovich Pobedonostsev, was strongly opposed to the prevailing liberal currents, and in general to any change in Church-State relations. In fact, as events were to prove, he was more to the “right” on these questions even than his former pupil, Tsar Nicholas. However, in 1901 he was reluctantly forced to allow the convening of a series of 20 religio-philosophical meetings between the “God-seeking” intelligentsia and the clergy in St. Petersburg. This was the idea of D.S. Merezhkovsky, V.V. Rozanov and a Synodal official, V.A. Ternavtsev.

It answered to a definite turning away of a part of the intelligentsia from sixties-style positivism to some kind of religion. As often as not, however, the conversion was not to Orthodoxy but to some vague kind of mysticism or theosophy. Moreover, many of these intellectuals were primarily interested in introducing their liberal political ideas into Church life; they wanted the Church to be renovated, not by slow, cautious reform from above that always remained faithful to the dogmatic and canonical bases of Orthodoxy, but by a revolution from below in which they saw themselves, rather than the bishops or the Tsar, as taking the leading role. 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.”[[88]](#footnote-88) 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”.[[89]](#footnote-89) In other words: if the State was truly the defender of Orthodoxy, as it claimed, it should free the Church from political tasks and a bondage that was alien to her nature. Otherwise, freedom would simply help the sectarians and atheists to fight against the Church, while she remained unable to defend herself freely. Thus the questions of Church reform and freedom of conscience were inescapably linked…

It was not only liberals like Sergius who favoured Church reform. The former revolutionary-turned-monarchist L.A. Tikhomirov published an article arguing that the State should “give the Church independence and the possibility of being the kind of organization she must be in accordance with *her own* laws, while remaining in union with her”.[[90]](#footnote-90) The problem was that both conservatives and liberals could argue for Church reform, but for completely different motives. Tikhomirov wrote as one who had seen the revolution from within, and turned away from it with all his heart, acknowledging the only true defence against it to be the strengthening of Church consciousness among the people. The liberals, on the other hand, were motivated, not by a desire to see the Church free and therefore able to exert a more powerful influence on society, but rather the opposite: a desire to humble the State and destroy the Church’s influence once and for all. As for the liberal *bishops* such as Sergius, they leapt onto the band-waggon of the reform of Church-State relations, and of what later came to be called *renovationism*, in order to further their own careers…

## 8. THE RUSSIAN CHURCH AND THE INTELLIGENTSIA: (2) TOLSTOYISM

Another liberal-renovationist cause that Bishop Sergius espoused during the religio-philosophical meetings was the supposed injustice of the novelist Tolstoy’s excommunication from the Church.[[91]](#footnote-91) Tolstoy was in essence a Protestant, who stood for a Christianity reduced to “pure” morality without the Church or the sacraments. He not only preached his own Gospel (according to his own translation published in Geneva), and created his own sect: he also subjected the teaching and the sacraments of the Orthodox Church to ridicule, as in his novel *Resurrection*.

Tolstoy was opposed among the clergy especially by St. John of Kronstadt, who wrote of him that he had “corrupted his moral personality to the point of deformity and mortification”, and that he had “made himself into a complete savage with regards to the faith and the Church, because of his lack of education in the faith and piety since his youth.” St. John appealed for help: “Holy warriors of the heavenly Church, take up arms, take up arms for the Church of God on earth. She, the beloved bride, is impoverished, she suffers from the savage attacks on her from the atheist Lev Tolstoy…”

St. John especially bemoaned Tolstoy’s influence on youth: “Our young intelligentsia have subverted the social and educational order, they have taken politics and the law-courts upon themselves without having been called to do so by anyone; they have taken to judging their masters, their teachers, the government and all but kings themselves; together with their head, Lev Tolstoy, they have judged and condemned the universal and fearful Judge Himself… Verily, the day of the dread Judgement is near, for the deviation from God which was foretold has already occurred and the forerunner of the antichrist has already revealed himself, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped.”[[92]](#footnote-92)

Tolstoy was the first twentieth-century antichrist in the precise sense of the word (I John 2.22, 4.3; II John 7), and, in Lenin’s famous phrase, “the mirror of the Russian revolution”. But Bishop Sergius, following the popular trend, defended him against the decision of his own Synod. Soldatov writes: “Sergius compared Lev Tolstoy to Julian the Apostate, whom, as he said, no council had condemned and who had not been excommunicated, but who was an apostate from Christianity. For that reason, he said, ‘it was not necessary to excommunicate Tolstoy, since he himself consciously left the Church’…”[[93]](#footnote-93) After the revolution, Bishop Sergius would become one of the leaders of the pro-communist “Living Church”, and then became the first Soviet patriarch through the mercy of the former seminarian Stalin…

St. John of Kronstadt, a fervent monarchist, was opposed not only to Tolstoy, but also to the whole “proto-renovationist” current in the Church led by Bishop Sergius. “These people,” he wrote, “are rejecting the Church, the sacraments, the authority of the clergy and they have even thought up a journal *The New Way* [which published 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.”[[94]](#footnote-94)

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 Bishop Theophan (Bystrov), inspector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, later witnessed to an Extraordinary Commission of the Provisional Government in 1917: “Rasputin indicated with unusual skill that he had reservations [about Fr. John]… Rasputin… said of Fr. John of Kronstadt… that he was a saint but, like a child, lacked experience and judgement… As a result Fr. John’s influence at court began to wane…” However, Fr. John was supported by the better clergy: for example, by 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.”[[95]](#footnote-95) However, with Fr. John’s death in 1908, the renovationist tide gathered strength again.

## 9. THE RUSSIAN CHURCH AND THE INTELLIGENTSIA: (3) MONASTICISM

Another arena of conflict between “rightist” church intelligentsy and “leftist” renovationists was *monasticism.* A movement to promote monasticism, not only within monastic walls, but also within the theological academies and seminaries, was led by Bishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), rector of the Kazan Theological Academy.[[96]](#footnote-96) Many of his pupils were to occupy important posts after the revolution both inside and outside Russia.

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

Another important influence was Bishop Theophan (Bystrov), who became rector of the St. Petersburg Academy in 1909. Vladyka Theophan enlivened the religio-moral atmosphere in the academy and created a whole direction among the students, a kind of school of “Theophanites”, as they were called. He tried to instill in the students a respect for the lofty authority of the Holy Fathers of the Church in everything that pertained to Church faith and piety. When replying to a question of a theological or moral character he tried to avoid speaking “from himself”, but immediately went to the bookcase and found a precise answer to the question from the Holy Fathers, which allowed his visitor to depart profoundly satisfied. He himself was a walking encyclopaedia of theological knowledge. And yet this was by no means merely book knowledge: because of his ascetic life, he knew the truth of the teachings of the Fathers from his own experience. He would go to all the services, and often spend whole nights in prayer standing in his cell in front of the analoy and the icons. He would even take service books with him on his travels, and read all the daily services.

His very look inspired respect, and soon cases of amazing spiritual perspicacity revealed themselves. Never familiar, always correct and restrained in manner, but at the same time warm and attentive, he was a fierce enemy of all modernism, vulgarity and falsehood. This caused him to have many enemies, but people also involuntarily respected him. Once the famous writer V.V. Rozanov spoke at length to him against monasticism. Vladyka Theophan did not reply with a single word. But his silence was effective, for at the end the writer simply said: *“But perhaps you are right!”*

The debate for and against monasticism also affected the Moscow Theological Academy, where the proponents of monasticism, especially Archimandrite Nicon (Rozhdestvensky), the future Hieromartyr Archbishop of Vologda, and Archimandrite Joseph (Petrovykh), the future Hieromartyr Metropolitan of Petrograd, were opposed by several of the secular professors***.*** “This polemic between the professors of the Academy and the steward of the Holy Trinity – St. Sergius Lavra, Archimandrite [later Bishop] Nicon (Rozhdestvensky) began already in 1902 and unfolded on the pages of the journals *Soul-Profiting Reading* and *The Theological Herald*. The professors subjected monasticism in its contemporary form to sharp criticism and called on the monks to carry out in a practical way the commandment of love for one’s neighbour in the form of social service. Archimandrite Nicon defended the contemplative character of monasticism. The articles on both sides were quite sharp in character. In March, 1904 Metropolitan Vladimir of Moscow banned an article by the Academy Professor N.F. Kapterev, which was being prepared for the press as a reply to Archimandrite Nicon. On March 18 an extraordinary session of the Academy Council took place for this reason. The decision was taken to protest against the metropolitan’s ban. Archimandrite Joseph did not agree with this decision, supported the ban on the publication and expressed himself against N.F. Kapterev’s article because of its unbecoming and sharp attacks and even ‘the poison of barbs, mockeries and insults directed not only against opponents but also against monasticism itself, but very well concealed under an external mask of objective scholarship’.

“For his words Archimandrite Joseph was publicly and coarsely reproached by the offended N.F. Kapterev, after which he left the meeting. The scene made a bad impression on everyone, but Fr. Joseph was not spared – it was considered that he had received his due for his conceit and his speech against the professorial corporation and one of its most senior members. Professor I.V. Popov in a letter of April 16, 1904 wrote: ‘Joseph set off straight from the meeting to the elders at the skete. There he wept and wrote a petition for his retirement…’ At Pascha a deputation from the professors was received by Metropolitan Vladimir, who also summoned Archimandrite Joseph. In spite of the warm reception and long conversation with the professors, the ban was not removed, and Kapterev’s article was not printed.”[[97]](#footnote-97)

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

Bishop Theodore wrote: "Many contemporary renovators of Christianity think it unnecessary to take account of the true attitude of Christianity towards man, his nature and the meaning of life. They create their own ideal of life and judge Christianity in accordance with that ideal. They want to bring in Christianity as the most suitable, so to speak, most vital factor contributing to the realization of their ideal. The most important thing, the question of sin, is completely ignored by them, and they have no idea what it is. That is why, for example, Merezhkovsky, who accuses Christianity of the split between flesh and spirit that destroyed the pagan world, has no explanation of where this split appeared among the pagans or why they lived by affirming the flesh. But Christianity says that this destructive split and disharmony in the nature of man was not imposed on man from without, but lives within him, as a consequence of sin... This is the corruption, illness and servitude of man to the flesh, and in order to understand what happened in the soul of man through sin it is necessary to penetrated into the psychology of sin. One should point out that, among the representatives of that part of the intelligentsia which is thinking of going along the path of Christianity, this path is indeed new, because, far from wanting to accept Christianity as it is and always was, historically speaking, they want to find - or, better, invent - in this same Christianity certain new ways of incarnating it in life and, through it, of renovating human life... For the man who is used to living in accordance with the ideals of the new philosophy of life, or in accordance with the moods revealed by the philosophy of Nietzsche and the wild heroes of the works of Gorky, L. Andreyev, etc., it is of course not easy immediately to accept Christianity in its historical integrity, and such people find much in the teaching of the Christian Church that is as strange as it is incomprehensible. The Apostle Paul said that the preaching of Christ crucified appeared as very strange and difficult to accept: for some it was simply a deception, and for others - sheer madness... This same teaching about Christ, crucified and suffering, this demand that man should crucify his passions and lusts, this Christianity imbued with the spirit of compunction and the suppression of the carnal principle in the name of spiritual interests - in a word: the ascetical spirit of Christianity has disturbed the new pagans who seek in the Christianity the truth of life (as they understand it, of course) and has become a stone of stumbling and fall in the task of following Christ. Open the pages of any work of Merezhkovsky, Minsky or Rozanov, and you will see that their articles are mainly occupied with a criticism of monasticism, which is identified with asceticism. This strange phenomenon is the result of the fact that a part of the intelligentsia which is seeking God has approached Christianity with the very definite aim of reforming it, which is nothing other than the same decadence applied to the religious life…"

"The proponents of the idea that ascetics should do public service make the direct demand that the antiquated institution of monasticism should be reformed by turning monasteries into associations and congregations with a predominantly practical significance. Among secular writers, Merezhkovsky, for example, in his article 'The Last Saint', directly states that 'the whole of ancient eastern and Russian asceticism is imbued with the spirit of hatred and disdain for society'. Berdyaev for some reason represents asceticism as rejoicing in the existence of diabolical evil in the world, for if this evil did not exist, where would ascetics go in their search for reasons to suffer? This is an example of the contemporary misunderstanding of the nature and meaning of Christian asceticism..."[[98]](#footnote-98)

## 10. THE RUSSIAN CHURCH AND THE INTELLIGENTSIA: (4) THE NEW THEOLOGY

We see, then, that the ferment in political and social life was matched by a scarcely less varied, if less violent, ferment of opinions and movements in Church life. On the one hand, we see the conservative churchmen such as St. John of Kronstadt and Bishops Anthony (Khrapovitsky), Theophan (Bystrov), Nicon (Rozhdestvensky), Joseph (Petrovykh) and Theodore (Pozdeyevsky). And on the other we see the renovationists such as Bishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) and “the new pagans”, such as Tolstoy, Merezhkovsky, Rozanov, Bulgakov and Berdyaev. These debates were to become more rather than less important in the course of time. For it would be largely along the lines drawn in these pre-revolutionary decades that the Church schisms of the post-revolutionary period would develop.

In addition, we should note a current of thought that arose among certain Church conservatives against what was seen to be the dead scholasticism of the contemporary teaching of theology in Russia. A conventional target was the Metropolitan of Moscow Macarius (Bulgakov)’s *Dogmatic Theology,* which, while a splendid handbook for quotations from the Holy Fathers, was considered by many to be lacking in inspiration. Thus Professor Nicholas Glubokovsky, while not denying that the virtues of Macarius’ book were “undoubted and huge”, nevertheless argued that “the author is dragged towards the past, lives by its traditions and is governed by former methods. For him dogma is a finished theoretical formula that is undeniably obligatory in its abstract, irrefutable completedness. In this case only one scientific operation is permitted in relation to it – the establishment of its truth by the logically interrelated connections of all its parts the crushing force of its external arguments. Hence the whole construction inevitably acquires the character of a priori dryness and bookish lifelessness, and the scientific exposition turns out to be directly scholastic…”[[99]](#footnote-99)

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

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

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

“How do such spiritual writers (who, however, are significant more for those who are not yet far from the Church, and still more those living in it) such as Bishop Theophan, Bishop Anthony of Ufa, Fr. John Sergiev (I have in mind his book, *My Life in Christ*) attract people to themselves? By renouncing the stereotypical, the dead and the deadening, the formal-dialectical method of thinking. They have gone along a new path of theological thought, a path which, it would seem, should most accurately be called ‘psychological’…”[[100]](#footnote-100)

The call for a more living approach to theology was not, of course, wrong in itself. However, it contained potential dangers. One was that “exciting” but heretical theologians (Novoselov mentions Vladimir Soloviev) were preferred to “boring” but Orthodox ones like Metropolitan Macarius. Another was that false diagnoses of the causes of Russian theology’s supposed “deadness” were offered. As, for example, that it was not Russian enough. Thus, as Protopriest Valentine Asmus writes, “Professor M.M. Tareev of the Moscow Theological Academy tried to demonstrate that Russian Orthodoxy had to cast off the yoke of Byzantine asceticism, which had dried up the Russian religious genius. A vivid representative of ‘the national theology’ was Tareev’s colleague, Vladimir Alexeevich Troitsky, in monasticism Hilarion (he was ordained to the episcopate after the revolution). He shared the ambiguity of Slavophilism, which well understood the universal meaning of Christianity and at the same time was inclined to see in Orthodoxy ‘the wealth of tribal faith’ (Khomiakov), as if it were naturally inherent in the Russians and Slavs as a whole. ‘The spirit of Slavdom is defined by Orthodoxy’ (Troitsky, *The Church as a Union of Love*, Moscow, 1998, p. 333). ‘I always somehow feel a lie in the position of the Slav Catholic’. Everything specifically Catholic ‘must be extremely opposed to the Slavic soul. The betrayal of Orthodoxy is… the betrayal of Slavdom, a going over to a western key in mood and in life’ (this was said about the Poles, p. 334). The remarkable thought of Tertullian that the human soul is by nature Christian is here narrowed to a single tribe taken on its own. The Russian man even in the fall preserves such natural resources as are not to be found in others, and even flirting with the devil is for him child’s play. ‘The German has sold his soul to the devil, but the Russian has given it away in such way that – and in this is the undoubted superiority of the Russian – he can leave the devil, while the German has nothing with which to redeem himself’ (p. 115).”[[101]](#footnote-101)

Another danger was that the perception was created, whether justly or unjustly, that the reformers were striving to form an elite within the Church that would gradually replace the old cadres. Bishop Anthony in particular was seen as trying to create a core body of learned monks who would replace the old professorial cadres. Thus, “recalling the 1890s, [Professor] N.N. Glubokovsky used to remark that it was precisely at that time that [there arose] the artificial development of a new monasticism, which created a special ‘direction’ in the Russian Church that announced and practised ‘in the spirit of true churchliness’ that ‘everything is permitted, allowed and forgiven to monks’. Later, wrote Glubokovsky, ‘there developed tendentious agitation for the monastic tonsure to be declared one of the sacraments, and if there were meant to be no more than seven, then it was necessary to dethrone marriage and put monasticism in its place, which would serve God following the example of the redemption on the Cross “through the compassionate love” of Christ alone…’[[102]](#footnote-102)

Glubovsky is here referring to Bishop Anthony’s controversial theory of redemption, according to which Christ saved us simply through the power of His compassionate love and not through offering any kind of “expiation” or “satisfaction” of God’s justice. This product of the new, “living” theology, which was shared by other leading theologians such as Bishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) and Archimandrite Hilarion (Troitsky), bordered on heresy, and was to cause major arguments. Thus one of the earliest critics of Bishop Anthony was the future Hieromartyr Archbishop Victor of Vyatka. He noted already in 1912 that the “new theology” of Bishops Anthony and Sergius “would shake the Church”. Later, after Sergius issued his pro-Soviet “Declaration” of 1927, which caused a huge schism in the Russian Church, Archbishop Victor saw in the “Declaration” a direct result of Sergius’ pre-revolutionary teaching on salvation*…*[[103]](#footnote-103)

## 11. THE SAROV DAYS

Dark clouds were gathering over the Orthodox world: assassinations of ministers in Russia, violence between Russians and Jews in Kishinev, the murder of the King and Queen of Serbia in Belgrade… But before the storm God granted a last great feast of light to strengthen the faithful: the canonization of St. Seraphim of Sarov. “It was a long time ago, July 19, 1903. Then Great Russia – Holy Orthodox Rus’ – was still alive, powerful and glorious. Then there sat on the Russian throne the Tsar, the Anointed of God; then the great Russian people was free and was peacefully carrying out its difficult historical task. It was an unforgettable time. A time of great and radiant hopes. It seemed to all that the 20th century would be a time of peace, of fruitful work and the flourishing of all peoples. Then there was a common dream that stirred everybody, both old and young. It was at this time of great expectations and radiant hopes that it was pleasing to the Lord to send to Russia great joy, to allow the great Russian people to experience the radiant days of the Sarov Festivities.”[[104]](#footnote-104)

The glorification of the most revered of Russia's saints, Seraphim of Sarov, was undertaken at the insistence of the Tsar himself.[[105]](#footnote-105) As Archpriest Lev Lebedev writes: “From 1895 to 1901 four daughter were born to the Tsar and Tsarina: Great Princesses Olga, Tatiana, Maria and Anastasia. But an Heir was needed! Because of the absence of an Heir complications arose in the official definition of the order of succession to the Throne. From the end of the 19th century and in the first years of the 20th, there was a sharp increase in students’ and workers’ disturbances. Under the influence of revolutionaries the workers’ strikes and demonstrations acquired not only an economic, but also a political character. Terrorist parties appeared again, and the murders of state functionaries began. In such a situation, clarity in the matter of the succession of tsarist power was more necessary than ever – an Heir was needed! It seemed that for a pair who had had four daughters this could happen only by a miracle, since medical means did not help. Various people renowned for the gift of healing were invited, beginning with natives ones (certain ‘blessed’ ones) and ending with foreigners such as the Frenchman Philippe. But nobody was able to help. The thought arose that a miracle could take place through the intercession of St. Seraphim of Sarov, whose glorification, on the initiative of the Tsar, was already being prepared.

“The Royal Family had known about the great Wonderworker of the Russian Land for a long time. But a particular impression was made on the Tsar and Tsarina by the book *A Chronicle of the Seraphimo-Diveyevo Women’s Monastery*, written and given personally to Nicholas II by Archimandrite Seraphim (Chichagov) – a scion of a noble family, one of the most educated and talented representatives of the nobility, who wanted to exchange a military career for monastic asceticism… In the *Chronicle* there were so many teachings, words of the holy elder of Sarov, prophecies, information about his miracles that the Royal Family was inspired with great faith in him! The triumphant glorification of Seraphim of Sarov, who had already been widely venerated in the people for a long time, was appointed from July 17-20, 1903. The Tsar came to Sarov with his whole family, his mother, the widowed Empress Maria Fyodorovna, his brothers, the Great Princes, other members of the Imperial House, and his suite. The Royal Family had never undertaken such a pilgrimage before. It was unlike any of the other journeys undertaken by the Tsar and Tsaritsa to holy places. Up to 300,000 worshippers from every corner of Russia assembled in Sarov for those days. Nicholas II tried to be present at all the long, almost unending services. The peak of the festivities was the transfer of the relics of St. Seraphim from the monastery’s hospital church of SS. Zosimas and Sabbatius, where he had been buried, into the Dormition cathedral of the Sarov community on July 18. The coffin with the relics was borne on their shoulders by the Tsar, the Great Princes and the hierarchs, tightly surrounded by a sea of people.”[[106]](#footnote-106)

The festivities were truly an icon of Holy Russia: the Royal Family and the Great Princes mixed with thousands of peasants in the true, unforced union that only the true worship of God and the veneration of His saints can produce. Many miracles of healing took place, and those who were present witnessed to the extraordinary spiritual peace and joy that was granted the worshippers. “Something unseen and unheard took place. Russian Tsar and his Family were for several days in immediate prayerful union with hundreds of thousands (!) of Russian people, praying together with them, in their very heart. The secret police were as it were dissolved in this mass; in fact, there was essentially no need for its presence! It was truly ‘with one heart and one mouth’ that the Orthodox people glorified God, the God-pleaser Seraphim and God’s Anointed, Tsar Nicholas II!... *Such* a meeting with Holy Russia, represented by *such a multitude of the people* and with the breathing of *the special grace of God*, bound up with the glorification of St. Seraphim of Sarov, turned out to be *the first* for the Royal Couple and… *the last…*

“The Sarov days of 1903 became *a key event in the whole reign.* During the festivities the Tsar received from the widow of P.A. Motovilov a letter of St. Seraphim of Sarov addressed *precisely to him*, Nicholas II [‘to the Tsar in whose reign I shall be glorified’], ‘sealed (but never opened!) with the soft part of a piece of bread. The Tsar read the letter and his face changed, and after reading it… he wept (neither before nor after this did anyone see him in tears). To this day nobody knows what was in the letter. We can guess that it contained some kind of prophecy about his destiny, or the destiny of Russia.[[107]](#footnote-107) In the same period Nicholas II visited the fool-for-Christ Pasha of Sarov… She symbolically (by means of a doll) foretold to the Tsar *the birth of a son*, and spoke much with him in figurative language. The Tsar left amazed and joyful: ‘I have travelled across the whole of Russia and have not met such a saint. Everyone has received me as Tsar, but she as a simple person,’ he said. Pasha placed the portrait of Nicholas II in her prayer corner and made many prostrations to the earth in front of it, which greatly exhausted her cell-attendants who used to lift and lower Pasha since she could not make prostrations herself because of illness. ‘Matushka, why are you praying to the Tsar?!’ they asked. ‘You know nothing,’ replied the blessed one. ‘He will be higher than all the Tsars.’ When war began in 1914 Pasha, covered in tears, began to kiss the feet of the Tsar on the portrait, saying: ‘Dear one, it is already near the end,’ and sent him the message: ‘*Your Majesty, come down from the Throne yourself’*…

“The visit to Sarov quickly produced results: On July 30 / August 12, 1904 the Heir to the Throne Alexis Nikolayevich was born! We can imagine the joy of the Crown-Bearing Parents! In the first months of the life of the new-born it was still not known what a terrible disease nestled in him He looked completely health, 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…”[[108]](#footnote-108)

One of the foundations of pre-Petrine Russia had been the institution of the patriarchate, which Peter the Great had abolished. According to the witness of Sergius Nilus, it was some months later, when still under the joyful impressions of the Sarov days, and shortly after the birth of the Tsarevich, that the Tsar suggested to the Holy Synod that the patriarchate be restored with himself as patriarch, while his wife and brother ruled the country until his son came of age. His offer was declined.[[109]](#footnote-109)

## 12. THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

On February 8, 1904 the Japanese navy launched a surprise attack on the Russian fleet stationed at Port Arthur on the Pacific coast. In April Japan widened the war by crossing the Yalu River into Russian-occupied Manchuria. After a series of victories on land and on sea, the Japanese began a long siege of Port Arthur and succeeded in taking the city in January, 1905. This was followed, in May, by the Battle of Tsushima, in which the Russians lost 5000 sailors killed with 6000 captured, while only 117 Japanese sailors died.[[110]](#footnote-110) Russia was defeated, and sued for peace. At Portsmouth, USA, in September, 1905, thanks to the very tough negotiating stance of Tsar Nicholas, skilfully carried out by Count Sergius Witte, favourable terms were won for Russia.[[111]](#footnote-111) Nevertheless, the loss of prestige was great, and gave renewed encouragement to the revolutionaries.

The Russo-Japanese war is the first instance of a phenomenon that was to be of major importance in 1917: the financing of Russia’s enemies by American Jews. Archpriest Lev Lebedev asserts that “Japan would never have risked attacking Russia herself if she had not been specially *incited* to it by England and the U.S.A.

“At the end of 1903 the American Jewish banker Jacob Schiff, Morgan and also ‘First National Bank’ and ‘National City Bank’ loaned Japan 30 million dollars so that she should attack Russia.[[112]](#footnote-112) On January 27, 1904, *without declaring war,* Japanese ships treacherously attacked the Russian squadron in Port Arthur (on the Lyaodun peninsula in China, where Russia had built a powerful naval base on leased land). The war began which, according to the plans of its inspirers, was bound to be accompanied *by a revolution in Russia.* The military actions developed in a direction unfavourable to Russia. The suddenness of the attack gave Japan many advantages. If all Russia’s military forces in the Far East did not exceed 100,000 men, Japan moved up an army of 300,000. Japan’s numerical and, to a certain degree, technical superiority allowed her to win a series of major victories over the Russian armies. The fortress of Port Arthur fell [in January, 1905] after a lengthy and heroic siege. In other battles at Mukden near Lyaoyan in Manchuria, the Russians were also defeated, and retreated. In the naval battles the Russians more than once defeated the Japanese. But… in [May,] 1905, in the Korean bay of Tsushima, the second Russian squadron under Admiral Rozhdestvensky, which had come from the Gulf of Finland through all the seas and oceans to the place of its destruction, was almost completely annihilated. But here, too, non-Japanese forces inimical to Russia helped… While ‘Rozhdestvensky’s squadron was accomplishing its gigantic voyage as if in the light of a torch lighting up the whole world’, wrote the newspaper *Novoe Vremia (New Times)*, ‘nobody knew about the movements of the Japanese naval forces even in the ports of China’. The Japanese information services were actively *helped by the Jews.* Some of them acted as spies in the Russian army, others tried to demoralize it, which is witnessed by the commander-in-chief of the armies in the Far East, General Kuropatkin. In 1906 the well-known journalist M.O. Menshikov wrote in the same *Novoe Vremia*: ‘The last terrible war… was armed with the most active participation of the Jews. In order to thrust Japan against Russia, it was necessary to arrange for Japan not only external loans, but also the most ardent sympathy [for Japan] in America and England. This sympathy, as has now been established beyond doubt, was artificially stirred up in the American press, which almost completely in Jewish hands. In the course of a whole series of years an army of Jewish hacks has slandered Russia, poured an unbelievably dirty torrent of abuse on her, and stirred people up to hate and despise everything Russian. As a result public opinion, and not only in America, was confused. The huge reading world was pitifully deceived…’ At the height of the war the Paris newspaper *Presse* noted: ‘Japan has not been waging war against Russia alone. She has a powerful ally – Jewry.’ …”[[113]](#footnote-113)

However, Russia lost not only, and not mainly, because of the enmity of the Jews but because of the enmity of the Russians, the huge fifth column of anti-monarchist Russians within the country. Thus “at the end of 1904, on the eve of the preparation of a general attack against the Japanese army near Lyaodun, strikes began in the major Russian military factories and on the railways, which left the Russian army without ammunition and food and allowed the Japanese to take back the initiative. The first defeats of the Russian army elicited the genuine joy of the liberals and a flow of congratulations on this score to the emperor of Japan… With regard to the surrender to the Japanese at Port Arthur his Majesty Emperor Nicholas II organized a government judicial inquiry, since there were no military reasons for the capitulation.”[[114]](#footnote-114)

If we seek still deeper, spiritual reasons for Russia’s defeat we may go back to an event that took place during the Boxer rebellion in 1900. During the rebellion, certain Russian military commanders in Blagoveschensk on the Amur had driven some thousands of Chinese out of the city and into the river. This showed that Russia had begun to be infected by the racist and imperialist spirit of the pseudo-Christian West.

She would bear her punishment for it in the Russo-Japanese war only a few years later. This was indicated by Bishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Ufa, who “was profoundly saddened by this event and foretold that it was precisely there, in the Far East, that we were bound to await the special punishment of God. The text of this prophecy has unfortunately not been found, but Vladyka Anthony himself spoke about it in his sermon before the service at the conclusion of peace with Japan [in 1905]. Pointing to the fact that the unsuccessful war with Japan was God’s punishment for the apostasy of Russian society from the age-old foundations of Russian life, Vladyka Anthony said: ’… I will speak about the fact that it is not only the traitors of the fatherland that are guilty before God, I will say what I said five years ago, when I foretold that it would be precisely there, in the Far East, that we had to expect a particular punishment of God. But I will speak not with evil joy, as do our enemies, but with sadness and with shame, as a Christian and a Russian priest. In Blagoveschensk, on the Amur, five years ago, we permitted a cruel action to take place. Several thousand Chinese, who were in service to Russian citizens, for the general security of the latter, were deceitfully led out of the city and forced into the river, where they found inescapable death… It was not for this that the Lord opened up before us the confines of the Far East, from the Volga to the sea of Okhotsk, so that we amazed the foreigners by our heartlessness. On the contrary, it is there, in the East, and not in the West, that lies the missionary and even messianic calling of our people. Russians did not want to understand this calling – not simple people, of course, but people who consider themselves enlightened, who, following the example of their western enlighteners, would not allow themselves the slightest rudeness in relation to any European rascal, but do not consider humble, straightforward and industrious inhabitants of the East even to be people. We were bound to reveal to them Christ, we were bound to show them the Russian breadth of spirit, Russian love of man, Russian trustingness, but we showed them only animal self-preservation that does not stop before anything. This is our first guilt, for God even in the Old Testament imputed the sinful fall of a people’s military commanders to the whole people…’”[[115]](#footnote-115)

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, in 1870 he founded an astonishingly successful mission that by 1910 numbered 32,000 native converts, 28 priests, seven deacons and 150 catechists. He aroused the admiration of all, including the Japanese. In July, 1882 he presided over the first All-Japanese Orthodox Council. A delegation from the Orthodox Mission in Peking was also present. During the Boxer Uprising in Peking in 1900 222 Chinese Orthodox converts were martyred for Christ.[[116]](#footnote-116)

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 means to defend one’s fatherland. The Saviour Himself bequeathed patriotism to us when He sorrowed over the lot of Jerusalem. The archpastor himself decided to stay in Japan with his flock, even if there was a war… And it began in February 1904. Then Bishop Nicholas handed over all ecclesiastical affairs to the council of priests, and himself served his last liturgy before the war. At the end of the service in his farewell sermon to his flock he called on it to pray for victory for their fatherland, but he, as a subject of the Russian Emperor, could not take part in the common service; but he would be happy to see his flock carrying out their duty. In his encyclical of February 11, 1904, Bishop Nicholas blessed the Japanese to carry out their duty, not sparing their lives, but reminded them that our fatherland is the Church, where all Christians constitute one family; he told them to pray for the re-establishment of peace and asked for mercy to prisoners of war. After this he shut himself away and gave himself over to exploits of prayer…

“Nobody in Russia understood the hierarch of Japan as well as Emperor Nicholas II. At the end of the war the Tsar wrote to him: ‘You have shown before all that the Orthodox Church of Christ is foreign to worldly dominion and every tribal hatred, and embraces all tribes and languages with her love. In the difficult time of the war, when the weapons of battle destroy peaceful relations between peoples and rulers, you, in accordance with the command of Christ, did not leave the flock entrusted to you, and the grace of love and faith gave you strength to endure the fiery trial and amidst the hostility of war to keep the peace of faith and love in the Church created by your labours…’”[[117]](#footnote-117)

Archbishop Nicholas’ noble affirmation, in word and deed, of the primacy of faith over politics did not go unappreciated. Michael Van Remortel writes: “In the very midst of home front hostility in 1904, the Japanese publisher Aisui Nakagawa wrote and distributed a laudatory profile of Bishop Nikolai… [After the war], in respect of Vladyka Nikolai’s efforts on behalf of Russian prisoners, he was awarded the Order of St. Alexander Nevsky by Tsar Nicholas II. In April 1906, the Holy Synod elevated him to the dignity of Archbishop; at that point, the Harisutosu Orthodox Church of Japan became an independent jurisdiction within the Russian Orthodox Church. In 1907, another diocese was created in western Japan, with its cathedra at Kyoto…

“… An ecumenical assembly of American bishops voted Archbishop Nikolai the most outstanding Christian evangelist in the entire world…”[[118]](#footnote-118)

St. Nicholas’ death in 1912 was covered by all the newspapers of Japan. Very rarely in any age has a Christian so won the hearts of a pagan people, especially one that was at war with his homeland…[[119]](#footnote-119) His life witnessed in the most vivid way 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.

## 13. THE FALL OF THE REACTIONARIES

On January 22, 1905 some hundreds of demonstrating workers were killed by tsarist troops in St. Petersburg while the Tsar himself was away - a tragic event that was used by the intelligenty and revolutionaries as an excuse to undermine the faith of the masses in the Tsar. Ostensibly, the demonstration was about working conditions. In fact, its aims were political. Thus in the petition composed by the demonstration’s leader, the priest Fr. George Gapon, he, together with his revolutionary friends, demanded, among other things: an amnesty for political prisoners, a government responsible to the people, the separation of the Church and State, a progressive income tax, the abolition of redemption payments from the peasants, an end to the war, the creation of elected trade unions and the abolition of the factory inspectorate. Moreover, there is evidence that the first shots were fired, not by the soldiers, but by the demonstrators. [[120]](#footnote-120)

At least two thousand people were killed on Bloody Sunday. The Tsar “appeared in the Winter Palace only on January 11 and on the same day 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.”[[121]](#footnote-121)

On February 4, 1905 Great Prince Sergius Alexandrovich Romanov was murdered by revolutionaries. He was killed by a bomb that exploded almost at the doorstep of the palace he and Grand Duchess Elizabeth inhabited in the Kremlin.

At that moment the grand duchess was leaving for her workshops. She was alarmed by the sound of an exploding bomb nearby. Hurrying toward the place (near the Chudov monastery in the Kremlin), she saw a soldier stretching his military overcoat over the maimed body of her husband. The soldier tried to hide the horrible sight from the eyes of the unfortunate wife. But the grand duchess dropped to her knees, on the street, and put her arms out trying to embrace the torn remains of her husband. The bomb had shattered his body to such an extent that fingers of the great prince were found, still in their gloves, on the roof of the neighbouring building. From that time on, the grand duchess refused the food she was accustomed to, and vegetables and bread became her daily nourishment, even before she took her monastic vows.

The lofty spirit in which she 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..."

\*

In November, 1904 a report sponsored by the Minister of the Interior, Prince P.D. Sviatopolk-Mirsky, suggested important changes in a liberal direction in both Church and State. “Among the changes suggested in it,” writes Sergius Firsov, “was the re-establishment of the Orthodox parish as a special church-social institution, which had been undermined ‘by the Time of Troubles in the Church and the growing development of serfdom’. Mirsky also intended to bring the activity of the church-parish trusts closer to the public administration, ‘turning the parish communities into a powerful force in defining the direction of activity of the zemstvos and cities, using their huge numbers and their rights as juridical persons, and consequently the possibility of [their] possessing property’. Unfortunately, these suggestions remained only on paper, [for] after all the reform of the parish in the interests of the State required first of all the reform of Church-State relations and changes in the whole structure of Orthodox administration.

“But in the given instance it is important to not something else: the parish problem was viewed in the general context of the reforms, the chief of which was the introduction of popular representation in one or another form in combination with an autocratic form of government. In accordance with custom, to the report of the minister was attached the project of an ukaz that he wanted discussed. With this aim he obtained permission from the sovereign for the convening of a conference at which all the ministers, including C.P. Pobedonostsev, were present, the presidents of the departments of the State Council the chiefs of the imperial chancelleries and several influential courtiers. Later during the work of the conference, which opened on December 2, there also took part the great princes – the Tsar’s uncles Vladimir, Alexis, Michael and Sergius Alexandrovich. Finally the president of the Committee of Ministers, S.Yu. Witte, was able to seize the initiative from Mirsky and attain the signing of the ukaz in a form acceptable to the Tsar – without the point about elections. On December 12 the ukaz ‘On Plans for the Perfecting of State Order’ was signed, and two days later it appeared in the press.

“It should have fallen to the Committee of Ministers to work out a suggestion for putting the ukaz into practice. Its president, S.Yu. Witte, was trying to broaden the role of the Committee as far as possible, making it a kind of ‘headquarters’ for the transformations. Witte included among his rights the formation of special extra-departmental conferences, the presidents of which, it is true, should have been appointed by the sovereign. In order to work out the recommendations for carrying out the sixth point in the ukaz, which spoke of the autocrat’s unbending desire to maintain tolerance in matters of the faith, a Conference of Ministers and Presidents of the Departments of the State Council was organized. The task placed before this organ was to review ‘the laws on the rights of the schismatics, as well as of persons belonging to heterodox and non-Christian confessions.’

“It was as if there had been no talk about the Orthodox Church. However, it was clear that the review of the rights of the Old Ritualists and representatives of non-Orthodox confessions would inevitably touch the interests of the first and ruling confession in the empire. It was normal that the question of the situation of the Orthodox Church should be raised as a result of the review of the general state apparatus: the ‘symphony of powers’ in its imperial variant signified the primacy of the secular power over the spiritual power. This was well understood by contemporaries. Thus Metropolitan Eulogius (Georgievsky), in remembering the past, noted that it was precisely ‘the reform of the state apparatus that drew in its wake the project for the reform of the Church’. The metropolitan went on to point out that S.Yu. Witte’s note became a significant event. He evidently had in mind the note that saw the light in February, 1905 and signed by the president of the Committee of Ministers. It was called ‘On the Contemporary Situation of the Orthodox Church’ and was composed for S.Yu. Witte by professors of the theological academies in the capital.

“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 had stood and been strong up to now.’

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

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

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

“The note undoubtedly touched on the privileges of the over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod. After all, if the desires expressed by the metropolitan were to be satisfied, the Orthodox episcopate would receive the possibility of independently, with the mediation of the State, influencing legislative proposals touching the Church, that is, it would have the right of a political voice in the empire. It is understandable that C.P. Pobedonostsev could not welcome such self-will, the more so in that, besides questions on the position of the Orthodox Church in Russia, the metropolitan gave reasons for the need to review the structure of the Church and some aspects of the Church’s administration, and spoke about the particular importance of recognizing the parish as a legal person and on the desirability of reviewing the laws that regulated the right of the Church to own, acquire and use property… ”[[122]](#footnote-122)

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-á-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 18 the Synod resolved to present a report to the Tsar with an icon. 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.[[123]](#footnote-123)

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

However, Pobedonostev’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*, 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”.[[124]](#footnote-124)

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, 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. In this way he indicated that Pobedonostsev’s bid to keep the Petrine system untouched had failed. A few months later the venerable over-procurator went into retirement – a man who had done much for the Russian Church and State, but whose usefulness had passed…

## 14. THE APRIL DECREE AND THE OCTOBER MANIFESTO

The confessional reform referred to by Skvortsov reached its legal enactment in the Tsar’s ukaz of April 17, the Sunday of Pascha, “On the Strengthening of the Principles of Religious Toleration”.

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

“If matters continue like this in Russia and the atheists and the anarchist-crazies 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 intelligenty have fallen away, then you will no longer be Russia or Holy Rus’, but a rabble of all kinds of other faiths that wish to destroy one another.”[[125]](#footnote-125)

The final defeat of the Russian navy at Tsushima in May, 1905[[126]](#footnote-126) increased the political tensions in Russia. A meeting in Moscow of representatives from the zemstvos, 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. Although the franchise to this parliament was limited, its powers limited, and “the inviolability of autocratic power” was retained, it represented a major concession by the government to the liberal opposition.

But the liberals were not satisfied…

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 “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.’”[[127]](#footnote-127)

At the end of September a wave of strikes, economic in origin, but politicised by the Union of Unions and the radical students, hit Central Russia. They culminated in a vast general strike in mid-October. The country was descending into anarchy. Witte tried to persuade the Tsar to introduce a constitutional monarchy. He resisted for some time, but finally gave in… The Tsar gave in because the only real alternative, the imposition of a military dictatorship, was rejected by the man whom he called upon to take up the post: Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolayevich Romanov. The parallel with February, 1917 and the behaviour of the generals then is revealing…

Both Witte and D.F. Trepov, the Governor-General of St. Petersburg, were in favour of the creation of a constitutional monarchy on the lines of the Bulygin Constitution. “To the question whether he [Trepov] could restore order in the capital without risking a massacre, he answered that ‘he could give no such guarantee either now or in the future: rebellion [kramola] has attained a level at which it was doubtful whether [bloodshed] could be avoided. All that remains is faith in the mercy of God.’

“Still unconvinced, Nicholas asked Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich to assume dictatorial powers. The Grand Duke is said to have responded that the forces for a military dictatorship were unavailable and that unless the Tsar signed the manifesto he would shoot himself…”[[128]](#footnote-128)

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

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

We call on all true sons of Russia to remember the homeland, to help put a stop to this unprecedented unrest and, together with this, to devote all their strength to the restoration of peace to their native land.”[[129]](#footnote-129)

The date of the 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). And so the triumph of the liberal phase of the revolution coincided, by that inexorable logic that we find in all revolutions, with the beginning of its more radical, communist successor. If the Antichrist was born in February, 1917, he was conceived in October, 1905…

Witte was invited to chair the Council of Ministers, whom he, and not the Tsar, now selected. The position of the Prime Minister under the constitution was now critical – and critically ambiguous. Was he still primarily a servant of the Tsar? Or was he simply a servant of the Duma, and answerable before them for producing a government “responsible to the people”?

Fr. Lev Lebedev writes: “When some time had passed, Witte began to praise his Majesty with sweet words for ‘the people’s representation’ in which the Tsar would find support. Nicholas II interrupted him: ‘Sergius Yulyevich: I very well understand that I am creating for myself *not a helper,* but *an enemy*, but I comfort myself with the thought that I will succeed in bringing up a state force which will turn out to be useful for providing Russia in the future with a path of peaceful development, without sharp undermining of those supports on which she has lived for so long.’ In the new order the old State Council, composed of high-ranking dignitaries appointed by the Tsar was preserved, as a kind of ‘higher chamber’. However, all this together with the Duma *was not a parliament*, since his Majesty was not intending to renounce his autocratic power. He made a public declaration about this during a reception of a monarchist organization: ‘The reforms I announced on October 17 will be realized unfailingly, and the freedoms given by me in the same way to the whole of the population are inalienable. But my Autocracy will remained *what it was of old.*’…”[[130]](#footnote-130)

But could the Autocracy remain what it was when there was now a Duma with not merely consultative, but also legislative powers? Was it not now in effect a constitutional monarchy?

Pipes writes: “Two aspects of the October Manifesto call for comment, for otherwise a great deal of the political history of the last decade of the Imperial regime will be incomprehensible.

“The manifesto was extracted from Nicholas under duress, virtually at the point of a gun. For this reason he never felt morally obligated to respect it.

“Second, it made no mention of the word ‘constitution’. The omission was not an oversight. Although the claim has been made that Nicholas did not realize he had committed himself to a constitution, contemporary sources leave no doubt that he knew better. Thus, he wrote to his mother on October 19 that granting the Duma legislative authority meant ‘in essence, constitution’. Even so, he wanted at all costs to avoid the detested word in order to preserve the illusion that he remained an autocrat. He had been assured by the proponents of liberal reforms that under a constitutional regime he would continue as the exclusive source of laws and that he could always revoke what he had granted. He believed this explanation because it helped assuage his conscience, which was troubled by the thought that he might have violated his coronation oath. This self-deception – the absurd concept of a constitutional autocrat – would cause no end of trouble in relations between the Crown and the Duma in the years to come.”[[131]](#footnote-131)

Although he has a point, Pipes overstates his case and is too harsh on the Tsar. For it remained a fact that if the Tsar was above the law, and the source of all (non-ecclesiastical) law, then if he bestowed a law, 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.

This argument was put forward, for example, by N. Rodzevich 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.”[[132]](#footnote-132)

The Manifesto not only failed to pacify the country: the anarchy increased as young Jewish and Russian revolutionaries rampaged in the cities, the press, freed from all restraints, raged against the government, and the police, overstretched and unsure of their rights under the new constitutional regime, hesitated to apply strong measures. Even the peasants began to be violent…

“The peasantry completely misunderstood the October Manifesto, interpreting it in its own manner as giving the communes licence to take over the countryside. Some rural disorders occurred in the spring of 1905, more in the summer, but they exploded only after October 17. Hearing of strikes and pogroms [both anti-Christian and anti-Jewish] in the cities going unpunished, the peasants drew their own conclusions. Beginning on October 23, when large-scale disorders broke out in Chernigov province, the wave of rural disorders kept on swelling until the onset of winters, re-emerging in the spring of 1906 on an even vaster scale. It would fully subside only in 1908 following the adoption of savage repressive measures by Prime Minister Stolypin.

“… The principal aim of the jacquerie was neither inflicting physical harm nor even appropriating land, but depriving landlords and other non-peasant landowners of the opportunity to earn a livelihood in the countryside – ‘smoking them out’, as the saying went. In the words of one observer: ‘The [peasant] movement was directed almost exclusively against landed properties and not against the landlord: the peasants had no use whatever for landlords but they did need the land.’ The notion was simple: force the landlords to abandon the countryside and to sell their land at bargain prices. To this end, the peasants cut down the landlord’s forests, sent cattle to graze on his pasture, smashed his machinery, and refused to pay rent. In some places, manors were set on fire…

“In an effort to stem the agrarian unrest, the government in early November reduced the due instalments of the redemption payments (payments for the land given the emancipated serfs in 1861) and promised to abolish them altogether in January 1907, but these measures did little to calm the rural districts.

“In 1905 and 1906 peasants by and large refrained from seizing the land they coveted from fear that they would not be allowed to keep it. They still expected a grand national repartition of all the non-communal land, but whereas previously they had looked to the Tsar to order it, they now pinned their hopes on the Duma. The quicker they drove the landlords out, they reasoned, the sooner the repartition would take place…

“The government faced one more trial of strength, this time with the radical left. In this conflict, there was no room for compromises, for the socialists would be satisfied with nothing less than a political and social revolution.

“The authorities tolerated the St. Petersburg Soviet, which continued to sit in session although it no longer had a clear purpose. On November 26, they order the arrest of Nosar, its chairman. A three-man Presidium (one of whose members was Leon Trotsky) which replaced Nosar resolved to respond with an armed uprising. The first act, which it was hoped would bring about a financial collapse, was an appeal to the people (the so-called Financial Manifesto), issued on December 2, urging them to withhold payments to the Treasury, to withdraw money from savings accounts, and to accept only bullion or foreign currency. The next day, [the Interior Minister] Durnovo arrested the Soviet, putting some 260 deputies (about one-half of its membership) behind bars. Following these arrests a surrogate Soviet assembled under the chairmanship of Alexander Helphand (Parvus), the theoretician of ‘permanent revolution’. On December 6, the St. Petersburg Soviet issued a call for a general strike to being two days later. The call went unheeded, even though the Union of Unions gave it its blessing.

“The socialists were more successful in Moscow. The Moscow Soviet, formed only on November 21 by intellectuals of the three principal socialist parties, decided to press the revolution beyond its ‘bourgeois’ phase. Their followers consisted of semi-skilled workers, many of them employed in the textile industry, professionally and culturally less mature than their counterparts in the capital. The principal force behind this effort was the Moscow Bolshevik Committee. The Moscow rising was the first occasion in the 1905 Revolution when the socialists took the lead. On December 6, the Moscow Soviet voted to begin the following day an armed insurrection for the purpose of overthrowing the tsarist government, convoking a Constituent Assembly, and proclaiming a democratic republic.

“On December 7, Moscow was paralyzed: the strike was enforced by Soviet agents who threatened with violence anyone who refused to cooperate. Two days later, government forces launched an attack on the insurgents; the latter responded with urban guerilla tactics. The arrival of the Semeonovskii Regiment, which used artillery to disperse the rioters, settled the issue. On December 18 the Executive Committee of the Moscow Soviet capitulated. Over 1,000 people lost their lives in the uprising and whole areas of the ancient capital were gutted…”[[133]](#footnote-133)

An important role in turning the tide against the revolutionaries was played by Metropolitan Vladimir of Moscow. Already at his ordination, he had 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.”[[134]](#footnote-134) Now 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, have 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…”[[135]](#footnote-135)

One of these was undoubtedly Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) of Finland, the future first Soviet patriarch. 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.’”[[136]](#footnote-136)

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. 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). Having such sympathies, it is not surprising that he was not liked by the Royal Family.[[137]](#footnote-137)

## 15. THE CHURCH AND THE JEWS

The disorders in the southern cities which have been called Jewish pogroms began immediately after the proclamation of the Manifesto. The general pattern of the disorders 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”.[[138]](#footnote-138) 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.

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 – two hundred 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 – one thousand 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.”[[139]](#footnote-139) 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.”[[140]](#footnote-140) This analysis is also supported by Senator Kuzminsky, who concluded that “the October disturbances and disorders [in Odessa] were caused by factors of an undeniably revolutionary character and were crowned by a pogrom of Jews exclusively as a result of the fact that it was the representatives of this nationality who took the dominant part in the revolutionary movement”.[[141]](#footnote-141)

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…’*”[[142]](#footnote-142)

Many representatives of the Church played an important and laudable role in the disturbances, protecting the Jews against the wrath of the people. Thus in Kiev Metropolitan Flavian tried to restrain the patriotic crowds. And 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.[[143]](#footnote-143)

Another hero was Archbishop Plato, 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 pathway 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…”[[144]](#footnote-144)

In spite of the courage displayed by these churchmen in defending the Jews, many liberals accused the Church of “anti-semitism” on the grounds of her principled rejection of the religion of the Talmud and the membership of many churchmen in the monarchist popular movement called “the Black Hundreds”. This movement has been the subject of much vilification in Soviet and Western sources as the mainstay of “anti-semitism” in the Russian people. In fact, it played little part in the revolution of 1905, becoming more important in 1906-07, and was not so much anti-semitic as anti-Talmudist, anti-revolutionary and pro-monarchical.

Famous churchmen who supported the Union included Metropolitan Vladimir of Moscow, Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Volhynia, St. John of Kronstadt, the future Hieromartyr John Vostorgov and the future confessor of the Catacomb Church Elder Theodosius of Minvody. However, not all the Church establishment supported it. In particular, Metropolitan Anthony (Vadkovsky) of St. Petersburg was opposed, and was suspected by many of being a closet liberal.[[145]](#footnote-145)

Both Archbishop Anthony and St. John of Kronstadt rejected the accusation of anti-semitism and condemned the pogroms. Thus Archbishop Anthony wrote: “… It is unpleasant to talk about oneself, but if you ask anyone who is close to me or knows me well: what is he most interested in? they would tell you: monasticism, communion with the Eastern Churches, the struggle with Latinism, the transformation of the theological schools, the creation of a new direction of Orthodox theology [in opposition to scholasticism], the Yedinoverie [Old Ritualists in union with the Orthodox Church], the typicon of Divine services, Slavophilism, Orthodoxy in Galicia… etc. But no one would name Judophobia as one of my most important interests…

“… Concerning the Jews I delivered and published a sermon in 1903 (against pogroms), thanks to which the pogroms that enveloped the whole of the south-western region did not take place in Volhynia in that year. In 1905 in the sixth week of the Great Fast the Jews in Zhitomir shot at portraits of his Majesty and were beaten for that by the inhabitants of the suburb. The day before Palm Sunday I arrived from Petersburg and in Holy Week again delivered a speech against the pogrom that was being prepared for the first day of Pascha. This pogrom did not take place, and only after the murder by a Jewish hireling of the popular police-officer Kuyarov on the evening of Thomas Sunday, when I was leaving Zhitomir for Petersburg, did fights begin with the Jews, who later said that ‘the government deliberately summoned our hierarch to Petersburg because while he was in the city they did not beat us’. In 1907 I published in a newspaper, and then a brochure with the article: ‘The Jewish question and the Holy Bible’, which has now been reissued in Yiddish. All this, however, did not stop the liberals from printing about me that I was going in cross processions to incite pogroms. Meanwhile, all pogroms have ceased in Volhynia since the Pochaev Union of the Russian People was formed in 1906…

“… If they are talking about the limitation of rights [of the Jews], not for the highest motives of defending the poor Little Russians from Jewish exploiters, but out of hatred for the latter, then this is truly disgusting, but if the patriots do not hate the Jews, but love and pity them, but do not want to give horns to a cow that butts, then this is reasonable, just and humane…”[[146]](#footnote-146)

Archbishop Anthony laid the blame for the pogroms not only on the Jews, but more widely on the liberal-atheist spiritual climate that had been building up in Russia over generations, and which affected all nationalities. Already in 1899 he had rebuked the liberal, “unchurched” part of the Russian population as follows: “It is no longer a people, but a rotting corpse, which takes its rotting as a sign of life, while on it, or in it, live only moles, worms and foul insects… for in a living body they would find no satisfaction for their greed, and there would be nothing for them to live on”.[[147]](#footnote-147)

One of the problems of the Black Hundredist movement was its poor leadership, which gave it a bad name and doomed it to ineffectiveness. Thus “The Union of the Russian People” was led by A. Dubronin, who was only superficially Orthodox. When interviewed by the Cheka, Dubronin called himself a “communist monarchist”, and 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.” He was for the tsar, but against hierarchy. And he wanted to rid the empire of “the Germans”, that is, that highly efficient top layer of the administration which proved itself as loyal to the empire as any other section of the population. The future Protomartyr John Vostorgov, one of the founders of the Union, considered Dubronin an enemy of the truth…

Another problem for the monarchists was the paradoxicality of the idea of a monarchical party in a monarchical State. A major advantage of a monarchical system is its avoidance of the divisiveness of party politics; the tsar stands above the various interests and lobbies and classes and reconciles them in obedience to his own person. But the October manifesto appeared to divide ultimate power between the Tsar and the Duma. And this made party politics inevitable. For there could never be a 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 such it was a struggle for the very heart of Russia.

## 16. THE PRE-CONCILIAR CONVENTION

In 1889 the heretical but highly influential philosopher Vladimir Soloviev had written that “the Eastern Church had renounced its own power” in order to put it into the hands of the State. “He especially accused the Orthodox Church herself of having become a ‘national Church’ and of having thereby lost the right to represent Christ, to Whom had been confided all power in heaven and on earth. ‘In every country reduced to a national Church,’ he wrote, ‘the secular government (be it autocratic or constitutional) enjoys the absolute plenitude of all authority, and the ecclesiastical institution figures only as a special minister dependent on the general administration of the State.’”[[148]](#footnote-148)

This statement was an exaggeration. Nevertheless, there was enough truth in it to elicit a movement for “the liberation of the Church from the State” among the Church’s intelligentsia. Paradoxically, it was Tsar Nicholas himself, who, in 1901, started the process by removing the phrase about recognising the tsar as “the supreme judge” from the oath that all hierarchs had to swear at their consecration. We have seen how this process then progressed, from the religio-philosophical meetings of 1901 to the decree of toleration in 1905. However, while the aim was laudable, and indeed of primary importance, the management of the process presented many problems; and in March, 1905 the Tsar postponed the convening of a Council to reform the administration of the Church and Church-State relations.

However, as the political situation began to stabilize, “already at the end of the same year,” as E.E. Alferev writes, “on December 27, he 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.”[[149]](#footnote-149)

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.
* 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.
* 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.
* It must think of giving priests [who have been widowed before the age of 45] the right to remarry.”[[150]](#footnote-150)

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”.[[151]](#footnote-151)

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…

## 17. TURMOIL IN THE WESTERN BORDERLANDS

One reason for the ineffectiveness of the Pre-Conciliar Convention was that many of the problems that the Church faced could not be solved by decisions of the Church alone, but only – in the present state of Church-State relations – by the State. A particularly burning issue in this respect was the resurgence of the activity of heretics in various regions, but particularly in the western borderlands, in the wake of the April Decree on religious toleration. Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Volhynia addressed this problem in his report to the Convention entitled “On Freedom of Confession”:

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

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

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

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

“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 edinovertsy, 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 to annihilate Russia as an historical fact, as an historical force; it means carrying out a great violation on the thousand-year-old people than the Tatar khans or the usurpers of the Time of Troubles carried out…”[[152]](#footnote-152)

This speech was clearly critical of the government. And yet Archbishop Anthony was no liberal, and in February, 1907 he wrote as follows about the monarchy: “Perhaps there are countries which are best ruled not by tsars, but by many leaders. But our kingdom, which consists of a multitude of races, various faiths and customs that are hostile to each other, can stand only when at its head there stands one Anointed of God, who gives account to nobody except God and His commandments. Otherwise all the races that inhabit the Russian land would go against each other with knives, and would not be pacified until they had themselves destroyed each other, or had submitted to the power of the enemies of Russia. Only the White Tsar is venerated by all the peoples of Russia; for his sake they obey the civil laws, go into the army and pay their taxes. Our tsars are the friends of the people and preservers of the holy faith, and the present Sovereign Nicholas Alexandrovich is the meekest and quietest of all the kings of the whole world. He is the crown of our devotion to our native land and you must stand for him to your last drop of blood, not allowing anybody to diminish his sacred power, for with the fall of this power, Russia also will fall…

“Russian man, lend your ear to your native land: what does it tell you? ‘From the righteous Princess Olga, from the equal-to-the-apostles Vladimir until the days of Seraphim of Sarov and to the present day and to future ages all the wise leaders of my people think and say the same,’ that is what the land will reply to you… ‘They taught their contemporaries and their descendants one and the same thing: both the princes, and the tsars, and the hierarchs who sat on the Church sees, and the hermits who hid amidst the forest and on the islands of the sea, and the military commanders, and the warriors, and the boyars, and the simple people: they all taught to look on this life as the entrance courtyard into the future life, they all taught to use it in such a way as not to console the flesh, but to raise the soul to evangelical virtue, to preserve the apostolic faith unharmed, to keep the purity of morals and truthfulness of speech, to honour the tsars and those placed in authority by them, to listen to and venerate the sacred monastic order, not to envy the rich, but to compete with the righteous ones, to love to work the land as indicated by God to our race through Adam and Noah, and to turn to other crafts only out of necessity or because of a special talent; not to borrow the corrupt habits of foreigners, their proud, lying and adulterous morals, but to preserve the order of the fatherland, which is fulfilled through chastity, simplicity and evangelical love; to stand fearlessly for your native land on the field of battle and to study the law of God in the sacred books.’ That is what our land teaches us, that is what the wise men and righteous ones of all epochs of our history entrusted to us, in which there was no disagreement between them, but complete unanimity. The whole of Rus’ thinks in the same way. But she knows that only the Anointed of God must preserve this spirit and defend it from enemies visible and invisible by his mighty right hand. And look he hardly stepped back from life when his popular privileges were snatched from him by deception and violence by his enemies and the enemies of the people. Yes, the Russian people thinks and feels one thing: in its eyes public life is a general exploit of virtue, and not the realm of secular pleasures, it is the laborious increase of the Kingdom of God amongst us ourselves and its implanting in the unenlightened tribes, and not the equalisation of all faiths and superstitions. The Orthodox people knows and feels this. It feels that without one ruling royal right hand it is impossible for our land of many tribes to exist. In it are 102 different faiths, 102 tribes that will now nourish malicious enmity against each other immediately they cease to feel the ruling right hand of the White Tsar above them. Let him hear out the reports of the people’s delegates, let him allow them to express their opinions on various matters of the kingdom. But the final decision will be made by him himself, and he will give an account for this only through his conscience before the Lord God. One only submission, one only limitation of his power is necessary to the people: that openly on the day of his crowning he should confess his Orthodox faith to God and the people in accordance with the Symbol of the Fatherland – so that he should not have human arbitrariness, but the evangelical law of God as his unfailing guide in his sovereign decisions and undertakings. That is the kingdom we need, and this is understood not only by Russian people, but also by people other faiths who live in our land with a healthy people’s reasoning, and not through lies and deceit: both Tatars and Kirgiz and the old Jews who believe in their own way, and the distant Tunguz. All of them know that shaking the Tsar’s Autocracy means beginning the destruction of the whole of Russia, which has been confirmed in the last three years…”[[153]](#footnote-153)

So the problem, according to Archbishop Anthony, was not in the institution of the monarchy, to which he was passionately attached, but in the Petrine system of Church-State relations, whereby “the government of the 18th century tore away the clergy from the people, driving the former into the ranks of a separate caste,” so that “the people was further and further estranged from Church literature and Church services” and heretical propaganda was able to gain a stronger and stronger influence among them. And yet how was the Petrine system to be reformed in order to give the Church more independence and influence among the people without further undermining the monarchy itself in those revolutionary times? This was the conundrum that faced all would-be reformers from the right end of the political spectrum, and the real reason why no truly effective reform was possible before the revolution…

In the meantime, Archbishop Anthony waged a noble battle against the heretics within his own diocese and also in defence of the Orthodox population further west, within the bounds of Austria-Hungary. For there the Hungarian government and the uniates tried by all means to prevent the return of the Carpatho-Russians to their ancestral Orthodox faith. This led to martyrdoms, such as that of the priest Maximus Sandovich, who had been ordained by Vladyka Anthony.[[154]](#footnote-154)

“Vladyka Anthony struggled with the unia and both by the printed word and in his sermons he often addressed this theme. He tried by all means to destroy the incorrect attitude towards the unia which had been established in Russia, according to which it was the same Orthodoxy, only commemorating the Pope of Rome. With profound sorrow and irritation he said: ‘They can in no way accept this simple truth, that the unia is a complete entry into the Roman Catholic church with the recognition of the Orthodox Church as a schism.., with the recognition of all the Latin saints and with a condemnation of the Orthodox saints as having been schismatics outside the true Church…’

“… Vladyka Anthony also laboured much to establish in Russian society an Orthodox attitude towards Catholicism. In educated Russian society and in ecclesiastical circles in the Synodal period of the Russian Church the opinion was widespread that Catholicism was one of the branches of Christianity which, as V.S. Soloviev taught, was bound at the end of time to unite into one Christianity with the other supposed branches – Orthodoxy and Protestantism, about which the holy Church supposedly prayed in her litanies: ‘For the prosperity of the Holy Churches of God and for the union of all’.

“The correct attitude towards Catholicism as an apostate heresy was so shaken that the Holy Synod under the influence of the Emperor Peter I and with the blessing of his favourite, the protestantising Metropolitan Theophan Prokopovich, allowed Swedish prisoners-of-war in Siberia to marry Russian girls with the obligatory conversion to Orthodoxy. Soon this uncanonical practice of mixed marriages became law and spread, especially in the western regions. In his diocese Vladyka Anthony strictly forbade the clergy to celebrate mixed marriages.

“Vladyka Anthony well knew that Catholic influence in the midst of the Russian clergy was introduced through the theological schools: ‘We have lost (an Orthodox attitude towards Catholicism) because those guides by which we studied in school and which constitute the substance of our theological, dogmatic and moral science, is borrowed from the Catholics and Protestants; we are left only with straight heterodox errors which are known to all and have been condemned by ecclesiastical authorities…’

“Seeing the abnormal situation of church life in subjugated Carpathian Rus’, Vladyka Anthony turned to the Ecumenical Patriarch Joachim III with a request to accept the Orthodox Galicians and Carpatho-Russians under his omophorion, since the Russian Synod for political reasons was unable to spread its influence there. The patriarch willingly agreed and appointed Vladyka Anthony as his exarch for Galicia and Carpathian Rus’. The Galicians, after finishing work in the fields and in spite of the great obstacles involved in crossing the border, sometimes with a direct danger to their lives, made pilgrimages in large groups to the Pochaev Lavra. Many Carpatho- Russians and Galicians entered the Volhynia theological seminary.

“Under the influence of all these undertakings, the Orthodox movement in these areas began to grow in an elemental manner with each year that passed. This elicited repressions on the part of the Austro-Hungarian government, which tried to suppress the movement. The persecution grew and soon Vladyka was forced to speak out in defence of the persecuted Christians. In August, 1913 he published an encyclical letter in which he eloquently portrayed all the woes and persecutions of the Orthodox population of the western regions. In going through the various instances of Catholics humiliating Orthodox, he cited the following example of the firmness of the persecuted and the cruelty of the persecutors: ‘Virgins who had gathered together to save their souls in fasting and prayer were stripped in winter and driven out onto a frozen lake, like the 40 martyrs of Sebaste, after which some of them soon died. Thus do they torture our Russians in Hungary and Austria in broad daylight in our civilized age…’

“But when massive arrests and tortures of the Orthodox began, and there was a trial of 94 Orthodox in Sihet, Vladyka Anthony composed a special prayer and petitions in the litanies, which were read in all the churches of the Volhynia diocese in the course of the whole period of the trial, which lasted for two months.

“This was the only voice raised in defence of the persecuted, not only in Russia but also throughout Europe.

“The Austro-Hungarian political circles, in agreement with the Vatican, undertook decisive measures to suppress the incipient mass return to Orthodoxy of the Carpatho-Russians and Galicians. It seems that they undertook diplomatic negotiations in St. Petersburg in order to remove the main cause of the movement that had arisen, Vladyka Anthony, from his Volhynia see.”[[155]](#footnote-155)

On May 20, 1914 Archbishop Anthony was duly transferred from the see of Volhynia to that of Kharkov… However, where human leaders fail, the King of kings intervenes. The outbreak of the First World War in 1914, and the success of the Russian offensive in Galicia in 1915, removed – temporarily, at any rate – many of the dangers which had arisen in the pre-war period and against which Archbishop Anthony had struggled. Patriotic emotion and reverence for the Tsar revived, and concern for the fate of the Orthodox Christians in Serbia and the south-west regions made the struggle, in the minds of many, into a holy war in defence of Orthodoxy against militant Catholicism and Protestantism.

## 18. GEORGIAN AUTOCEPHALY

Another region of the empire in which the government’s liberal decrees of 1905 caused problems was Georgia… Now the Georgian Church is much older than the Russian - it was granted autocephaly in the fourth century in accordance with a decision of the Council of Antioch. Her golden age took place from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries, until the arrival of the Mongols in the 1220s. Thereafter Georgian history consisted of a long succession of invasions by Mongols, Turks and Persians in which the country was repeatedly devastated and many thousands martyred for the Orthodox faith.

In the sixteenth century Georgia found herself in a terrible plight. For, as Ioseliani writes, “oppressed by internal discord, and by the dissensions of ambitious and unsettled princes, Georgia was again exposed to a severe persecution on the part of the Persians. These enemies of the Christian name ceased not to lay their sacrilegious hands on the riches of Iberia. The messengers of King Alexander to Moscow lamented the fearful misfortunes of their country, and represented how the great Shah-Abbas, having endeavoured to leave to himself the protection of the kingdom of Georgia, made in reality the Georgians enemies of the Russian Tzar.

“In the year 1587 King Alexander II, having declared himself a vassal of Russia, sent to Moscow the priests Joachim, Cyril, and others; and, pressed on all sides as he was by the Persians and the Turks, entreated with tears the Russian Tzar Theodore Iohannovitch to take Iberia under his protection, and thus to rescue her from the grasp of infidels. ‘The present disastrous times,’ wrote he, ‘for the Christian faith were foreseen by many men inspired by God. We, brethren of the same faith with the Russians, groan under the hand of wicked men. Thou, crowned head of the Orthodox faith, canst alone save both our lives and our souls. I bow to thee with my face to the earth, with all my people, and we shall be thine forever.’ The Tsar Theodore Iohannovitch having taken Iberia under his protection, busied himself earnestly in rendering her assistance and in works of faith. He sent into Georgia teachers in holy orders for the regulation of Church ceremonies, and painters to decorate the temples with images of saints; and Job, patriarch of all the Russias, addressed to the Georgian king a letter touching the faith. King Alexander humbly replied that the favourable answer of the Tsar had fallen upon him from Heaven, and brought him out of darkness into light; that the clergy of the Russian Church were angels for the clergy of Iberia, buried in ignorance. The Prince Zvenigorod, ambassador to Georgia, promised in the name of Russia the freedom of all Georgia, and the restoration of all her churches and monasteries.”[[156]](#footnote-156)

However, because of her internal and external troubles, Russia was not able to offer significant military aid to Georgia for some time. And so “in 1617,” writes A.P. Dobroklonsky, “Georgia was again subjected to destruction from the Persians: the churches were devastated, the land was ravaged. Therefore in 1619 Teimuraz, king of Kakhetia, Imeretia and Kartalinia, accepted Russian citizenship, and Persia was restrained from war by peaceful negotiations. But the peace was not stable. In 1634 the Persian Shah placed the Crown Prince Rostom on the throne of Kartalinia. He accepted Islam, and began to drive the Orthodox out of Kartalinia. The renewal of raids on Georgia had a disturbing effect on ecclesiastical affairs there, so that in 1637 an archimandrite, two priests and two icon-painters with a craftsman and materials for the construction of churches were sent from Moscow ‘to review and correct the peasants’ faith’. And in 1650 Prince Alexander of Imeretia and in 1658 Teimuraz of Kakhetia renewed their oath of allegiance to the Russian Tsar. Nevertheless, even after this the woes continued. Many Georgians, restricted by the Muslims in their homeland, fled to Russia and there found refuge. But Georgia did not receive any real help from Russia throughout this period.

“As regard the Orthodox Greeks who were suffering under the Turkish yoke, Russia gave them generous material assistance, and sometimes tried to ease the yoke of the Turkish government that was weighing on them…”[[157]](#footnote-157)

All this demonstrated that the Russian tsar and patriarch were now in essentially the same relationship with the Eastern Orthodox Christians as the Constantinopolitan emperors and patriarchs had been centuries before, and that Russia had taken the place of Constantinople in God’s Providential Plan for His Church, a fact which the Eastern Patriarchs were now ready to accept.

“The Russian army,” writes Lado Mirianashvili, “finally freed Georgia from the unremitting incursions at the end of the 18th century. In 1783 the kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti (central and eastern Georgia) concluded the Georgievsk treaty with Russia. According to the treaty Russia was to assume responsibility for protecting Georgia’s borders in return for the free movement of Russian troops within the country. But by 1801 Russia had abrogated the treaty and annexed Kartli-Kakheti. This was followed by the annexation of Samegrelo and Imereti (western Georgia) in 1803 and 1804, respectively. Within ten years 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 exarches 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.”[[158]](#footnote-158)

In spite of these abuses, there is little doubt that on the whole Georgia benefited from being part of the Russian empire. And Georgian saints of the nineteenth century, such as Elder Ilarion of Mount Athos, could be sincerely, even fiercely pro-Russian. Nevertheless, the trampling underfoot of an ancient Christian nation’s traditions could not go unopposed for long, and a movement to preserve the nation’s heritage and promote the cause of Georgian state independence and ecclesiastical autocephaly came into being under the leadership of the poet, historian and philosopher Ilia Chavchavadze, who was assassinated by revolutionaries in 1907.

Georgian *State* independence could not be considered then, since at a time of increasing nationalist and revolutionary tensions, it would only undermine the foundations of the whole Orthodox 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 cases, 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’.[[159]](#footnote-159)

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 phyletistic 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 recognised, 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, as we shall see later, 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.’[[160]](#footnote-160) 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.’[[161]](#footnote-161) 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 organisation 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 realisation 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…”[[162]](#footnote-162)

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 phyletistic argument: one (ethnic) nation – one Church. From the earliest times, the Orthodox Church has been organized on a *territorial* basis, following the demarcation of *states* rather than ethnic groups. In more recent centuries state boundaries have tended to correspond more and more closely to ethnic boundaries, so that we now talk of the Greek Church, the Russian Church, the Serbian Church, etc., as if we are talking about the Churches of the ethnic Greeks, Russians and Serbs exclusively. But this is a misleading way of speaking, and does not alter the essential principle, confirmed both in Holy Scripture and in Canon Law, that a local Church is the Church of all the people, *of all nationalities,* gathered together on one territory.

The attempt to substitute the ethnic principle for the territorial principle led, as we have seen, to a schism between the Greek and the Bulgarian Churches in 1872. It would lead to a schism between the Russian and the Georgian Churches in 1917, when Bishop Kirion and a Council of the Georgian Church re-established Georgian Church autocephaly on the basis of the ethnic principle. It would thereby divide the two Churches at precisely the moment when unity between Orthodox Christians of all races was vital in the face of the international communist revolution…

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.

## 19. THE BEILIS TRIAL AND THE JEWISH “BLOOD LIBEL”

In 1911, a Christian boy, Andrew Yushchinsky, was killed in Kiev. In connection with this, in 1913, the trial took place 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).[[163]](#footnote-163) 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.[[164]](#footnote-164)

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 Fitzlyon and Browning, “never forgot the ‘real grief’ of his family and relations when they discovered that his father had sent him to a Russian grammar school. His school uniform they found particularly irritating, sinful even. It was, they thought, ‘an apostate’s garb’, and his mother and grandmother cried bitterly every time they saw him in it.’ Again, ‘the Russian-Jewish revolutionary, Lev Deutsch, writing in 1923, clearly remembered the time when the Jews ‘considered it sinful to learn Russian, and its use was allowed only if absolutely essential and, of course, only for speaking to Christians (the goyim).’”[[165]](#footnote-165)

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.[[166]](#footnote-166) 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.’”[[167]](#footnote-167)

In 1906 the future Hieromartyr 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…”[[168]](#footnote-168)

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 fifteenth-century Italy.[[169]](#footnote-169) Moreover,the Orthodox Church has canonized at least one victim of such a murder, Child-Martyr Gabriel of Zverki, Belorussia, to whom Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) wrote a service in 1908.[[170]](#footnote-170) It is significant that in 1919 the Bolsheviks banned the chanting of hymns to the Child-Martyr Gabriel, whose relics reposed in the church of St. Basil the Blessed on Red Square.[[171]](#footnote-171)

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…”[[172]](#footnote-172)

It is the tendency of pro-semite authors to dismiss all this as “anti-semitic lies”. However, even if all the historical evidence of Jewish atrocities could be dismissed, it would be surprising indeed if a religion steeped in such hatred against Christ and Christians as Talmudic Judaism did not produce acts of hatred. As long as incitement to such acts exists in the “sacred” book of the Judaistic religion, there must be a presumption that some of its followers may be tempted to carry them out.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that Christians also acted with hatred and committed atrocities, as in the pogroms in the Rhineland in 1096 or in Spain leading to the expulsion of all the Jews from Spain in 1492, or in Russia before the revolution. Hatred of enemies is forbidden by the Gospel of Christ; so such acts, whether or not they were provoked by hatred on the Jews’ side, cannot be condoned. But the justified horror at Christian antisemitism which has become so de rigeur in the modern world, must always be balanced by a similar horror at the antigentilism and antichristianity of the Talmud, the most hateful of all “sacred” books.

Over a hundred well-documented cases of the murder of Christian children by the Jews for ritual purposes in various countries are cited by Oleg Platonov. Especially valuable is his citing of the evidence of Monk Neophytus, until the age of 38 a Jewish rabbi who then became a monk of the Greek Church, who 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 St. Petersburg 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 car that this son of yours should be devoted and zealous for our faith. Once more I adjure you: beware of trusting women, even your daughters, your wife and your mother, but trust only the son whom you consider worthy of trust.’ ‘O my son,’ he cried finally, ‘may the whole earth refuse to accept your corpse and thrust you out from its depths, if, even in conditions of the most extreme necessity, you reveal this secret of blood to anyone besides him of whom I have spoken. Even if you become a Christian for the sake of profit or for other reasons. See that you do not betray your father by giving away this divine secret which I have revealed to you today. Otherwise may my curse strike you at the very hour at which you sin, and may it accompany you all the days of your life until death and to the ages of ages.’

“May the Father Whom I have acquired in heaven and Who is the Lord Jesus Christ turn away these curses from the head of him who writes exclusively for the sake of the benefit of the Church and the triumph of the Truth.

“The bases of this barbaric custom are the following: 1) hatred for Christians, 2) superstition, and 3) faith in the spiritual reality of Christian blood. I shall explain each of these points.

“On the first reason, which is hatred for Christians.

“The Jews as it were from their mother’s breast instil hatred of Christianity into their sons from the earliest childhood. On receiving these convictions from their fathers over a whole series of generations, they are really and sincerely convinced that to despise Christians and even to kill them is very pleasing to God, thereby exactly justifying the words of Divine redemption: ‘everyone who kills you will think that he is thereby serving God’ (John 16.20).

“On the second reason, which is superstition.

“The second reason is based on the superstitious beliefs which the Jews hold and which relate to the sphere of magic, sorcery, the kabbala and other mysterious rites. They believe that Christian blood is necessary for these diabolical operations. Out of all these superstitions I will indicate only one, which concerns the curse of God that fell on the unhappy people of Israel and which was prophesied by Moses himself in the following expressions: ‘the Lord will strike you with Egyptian leprosy… a foul leprosy on the knees and shins from which you will not be able to be healed’ (Deuteronomy 28.27, 35).

“This terrible illness always was and is very common among the Jews – much more common than they think… And when the haham visits the sick who have been struck down by it, and gives them medicines, he at the same time sprinkles them with Christian blood, if he has any, as the only means of healing…

“On the third and principal reason, which is the faith of the Jews in the spiritual reality of Christian blood.

“The main reason which compels the Jews to kill Christians and collect their blood is the faith, secretly preserved especially by the hahams, or rabbis, that Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary from Nazareth, who was condemned by our ancestors to death on the Cross, is, in all probability, the true Messiah who was for so long expected and invoked by the patriarchs and prophets. There are enough prophecies to convince them of this; especially important is the passage from Jeremiah: ‘Be amazed, O heavens, tremble and be seized with horror, says the Lord, for two evils have My people committed: they have abandoned Me, the source of living water, and have cut out for themselves broken cisterns which cannot hold water’ (Jeremiah 2.12,13).

“This prophecy is well-known and is understood in its true meaning by many rabbis, as it was very well known by Annas and Caiaphas. But, like them, from pride and hardness of heart, the rabbis do not want to recognise it, and therefore, resorting to pitiful interpretations, they have composed new rules – a real parody on the most important mysteries of the Church, so as to be saved by Christian blood, in which they see the blood of the Messiah Himself.

“In consequence of their conviction… the Jews use Christian blood at circumcision, which represents baptism; at marriage, which corresponds to this mystery among the Christians; in the unleavened bread of Pascha, which represents the Eucharist; at burials, imitating holy unction; in their lament over the destruction of Jerusalem, which represents the mystery of repentance. This is the basis of the secret, which I knew and sometimes applied with extraordinary zeal. I shall stop on each of these explanations.

“Marriage. When a marriage is concluded between Jews, the bride and bridegroom prepare for it with a strict fast for 24 hours, abstaining even from water until the setting of the sun. It is then that the rabbi appears. He takes a just-boiled egg, removes the shell and divides it in half. Then he sprinkles it, not with salt, but with a special ash, which I will say more about later. He gives half of this sprinkled egg to each spouse.

“Let us now say what this ash is. It is used not instead of salt, but instead of fresh Christian blood, being in actual fact changed Christian blood. It is precisely with the blood left over from the sacrifices carried out for the feast of unleavened bread, the more the better, that the rabbis infuse a corresponding quantity of flax or cotton thread, then they dry it and burn it. The ash is kept in bottles that are carefully sealed and given to the synagogue’s treasurer. The latter distributes it gradually to the rabbis who ask for it, or for their own use, or for sending to those countries where it is impossible to obtain Christian blood, whether because there are no Christians there or because the police have been roused to be more watchful and the Christians more careful.

“In any case, fresh blood is always preferable, but it is necessary only for the unleavened bread, and in the case of insurmountable obstacles the indicated dark ash represents an acceptable substitute.

“Circumcision. A rabbi also appears for the circumcision of children on the eighth day after birth. He puts into a cup some of the best wine he can get hold of and pours one drop of Christian blood into it. It has been collected from torture, but if that is not available, some of the above-mentioned ash is used, into which a drop of the blood of the circumcised child is added. When this is well mixed with the wine, the rabbi immerses the finger of the child into the cup and says: ‘I declare to you, child: your life is in your blood.’ And he twice repeats this rite and these words.

“Here is a superstitious explanation which the rabbis give for this ceremony amongst themselves. The Prophet Ezekiel twice said: ‘”Live in your blood!” Thus I say to you: “Live in your blood!”’ (Ezekiel 16.6). By these words the prophet perhaps wanted to indicate the blood of Jesus Christ, Who freed from bonds the souls of the holy fathers who did not receive a water baptism; and in such a case the souls of the Jews, although also themselves deprived of the water of baptism, will be saved by the blood of a Christian baptised in water. But one of the reasons why this blood must be collected amidst the cruel sufferings of the victim is precisely the necessity of representing thereby the Passion of Christ. On the contrary, if the Prophet Ezekiel wanted to speak only about every man’s blood of circumcision, then the Jewish child will be saved by the power of the single drop of blood mixed by the rabbi in the wine with the Christian blood. What a pitiful nation!

“The anniversary of the taking of Jerusalem. The Jews again use the ash of which I have spoken on the ninth day of July, when they weep over the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. On this anniversary they use it in two ways: first, they wipe their forehead with it, which they thought would be unseemly to do with fresh blood, and secondly, they sprinkle an egg with it, and on that day every son of Israel without exception must eat a hard-boiled egg sprinkled with this ash…

“Death. A haham immediately goes to the house of him of whose death he just learned. He takes the white of an egg, mixes into it some Christian blood and a little ash and puts this mixture into the breast of the corpse, uttering the supposed words of Ezekiel: ‘I shall sprinkle you with pure blood and you will be cleansed from all your filthiness’ (Ezekiel 36.25). Ezekiel, it is true, said, not ‘pure blood’, but ‘pure water’… But by dint of this corruption of the text the Jews convince themselves that the dead man will undoubtedly be admitted to paradise.

“The feasts of Pascha and Purim. These two feasts demand the same blood ritual.

“On paschal days the Jews must eat unleavened bread, small breads prepared only by hahams, into which Christian blood has been poured. Everyone, nobles and simple people, young and old, even those without teeth, must taste of this bread, even if it only a crumb the size of an olive…

“The feast of Purim was established in memory of the deliverance from the dominion of Haman by means of Esther and Mordecai, as this is recounted in the book of Esther. As is known, this feast comes in February. The initiated Jews are then occupied, wherever they can, with seizing as many Christians as possible, especially children. However, in this night they sacrifice only one, reproducing the torments of Haman. But for this reason, while the body is hanging, all those present cover it with thousands of insults, as if they were addressing Haman himself. The collected blood is poured out by the rabbi into flour that has already been dissolved with honey, from which he then makes small breads in the form of a triangle for the sake of ridiculing the mystery of the Holy Trinity. These breads are meant, not for the Jews, but through boundless cunning they are distributed to the most eminent families, which must give them away – and these gifts are considered the height of kindness – to their friends from among the Christians. This rite is called the Bread of Purim.

“We should note that this rite does not require the application of too heavy tortures to the victim precisely because the collected blood does not have any other purpose than the one I have indicated.

“The rest of kidnapped Christians, however, are kept in secret hiding-places until the day of Pascha, which comes shortly after Purim. At this time they are all offered in sacrifice in the cruellest and most barbaric manner, and they collect their blood partly for the unleavened bread and partly for other necessities which come up in the course of the year and have been indicated above. These torments at Pascha have a definite aim – to renew the sufferings of Christ, and for that reason they must be carried out mainly on children who through their innocence and virginity better symbolise the Saviour.

“In these depressing pourings out of blood the words of Jeremiah written in prophecy about the Jews are justified: ‘Even on the hems of your clothes is found the blood of poor innocent people’ (Jeremiah 2.34), and still better the words of Ezekiel: ‘You eat with blood… and shed blood’ (Ezekiel 33.25). In consequence of these innumerable murders Israel was expelled from various states, in particular from Spain, thereby justifying another prophecy of Ezekiel: ‘Blood calls you to court’ (Ezekiel 30.6).”[[173]](#footnote-173)

Archbishop Anthony’s attitude to Jewish blood rituals in general, and the Beilis trial in particular, was expressed in an interview he gave to A. Chizhevsky. After reminding his readers of how, at the request of Rabbi Skomorovsky, he had twice, in 1903 and 1905, spoken up against the antisemite pogroms in Zhitomir, he went on: “But in both of the above-mentioned cases of my conversation with the rabbi, I decisively refused to say that I did not recognize the existence of ritual murders carried out by Jews, but on the contrary I expressed to my interlocutor my conviction that these murders exist, perhaps as belonging to one or another sect of the Jewish religion, perhaps as a secret of the highest spiritual government of the Jews, but there undoubtedly have been cases of ritual murders both in recent times and in antiquity.

“When my Jewish academic acquaintances pointed to the fact that Jewish law forbids the drinking of the blood even of animals, so that the thought of their mixing Christian blood with the paschal matsa was absurd, I replied that what seemed more probable to me was the link between the ritual killings and, not the Jewish feast of Pascha, but the feast that precedes it of ‘Purim’, in which the story of Esther, Haman and Mordecai is remembered, when the Persian king, having executed the enemy of the Jews, Haman, allowed them, 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…”[[174]](#footnote-174)

The Beilis trial polarized Russian society and, through the Jewish press, had international ramifications. Liberal opinion throughout the world pilloried Russia, which was now the country, supposedly, not only of the cruellest tyranny and retrograde religion, but also of systematic persecution and slander of the Jews. Unfortunately, these criticisms, though unjust, helped to create the very phenomenon they decried. Racial anti-semitism, as opposed to religious anti-Judaism and anti-Talmudism, had been rare in Russia – rarer than in most western countries. But in the decade that followed the Beilis trial, under the stress of war and revolution, real anti-semitism took root in Russia, with massacres far exceeding anything seen in the times of the tsars…

## 20. RASPUTIN

Kerensky said that “without Rasputin, there could have been no Lenin”… But no, Rasputin was not the cause of the Russian revolution: God would not have allowed the greatest Christian empire in history to fall because of the sinfulness of one man! Nevertheless, slanderous stories about the “elder’s” supposed sexual relationship with the Empress, and of his control of the Russian government through her, undoubtedly had a corrosive influence on the reputation of the monarchy during the war and hastened its demise.

Since the early 1990s there have been attempts to rehabilitate the reputation of Rasputin, notably by the historians Oleg Platonov and Alexander Bakhanov.[[175]](#footnote-175) We can sympathize with these attempts insofar as they are motivated by a desire to protect the reputation of the Tsar and Tsarina, which suffered so much because of their credulity in relation to Rasputin. Moreover, it is right to point out that many of those who attacked Rasputin in the dying days of the empire were motivated not so much by a desire to “save” the empire as by mercenary, egoistic and unpatriotic considerations that make their testimony highly dubious.

However, even after discounting these evilly-motivated testimonies, and taking into account the anti-monarchical bias of such “champions of the truth” about Rasputin as Guchkov and Rodzyanko, the evidence against Rasputin is too great and too varied to dismiss wholesale. In 1995 the historian and dramatist Edvard Radzinsky came into possession of the long-lost file of testimonies to the Extraordinary Commission set up by the Provisional Government in March, 1917 to investigate the truth or otherwise of accusations against the Royal Couple and those close to them.[[176]](#footnote-176) These testimonies, which include some by close friends of Rasputin, such as his publisher Filippov, as well as by others whose integrity and devotion to the Royal Couple cannot be doubted, and by several of his female victims, force us to the conclusion that, barring some of the wildest accusations, Rasputin was “guilty as charged”. Also impossible to reject wholesale are the very extensive police reports on Rasputin’s immoral behaviour. While Bakhanov among others has tried to dismiss even this evidence, Alexander Khitrov is right in pointing out that the police were, after the Tsar himself, the very first victims of the February revolution, and so cannot be accused of simply making up the whole story.[[177]](#footnote-177)

As the revolutionary threat receded (temporarily) after 1905, a new, more subtle and sinister threat appeared: theosophy, occultism, spiritism and pornography flooded into Russia.[[178]](#footnote-178) Also sharply on the rise, especially among the peasantry, were Protestant sects, as well as sectarian movements that hid among the Orthodox peasantry like the khlysty. The Siberian peasant Gregory Rasputin was symbolic of this trend, which undermined the foundations of Holy Rus’ just as surely as the anti-monarchism of the revolutionaries.

After a debauched youth, Rasputin repented and spent some years on pilgrimage, going from monastery to monastery. He then married and had children, but was recommended by a churchman to his colleagues in St. Petersburg. “Rasputin first appeared in St. Petersburg most probably in 1902, having by that time ‘won the heart’ of the Kazan bishop Chrisanthus, who recommended him to the rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, Bishop Sergius [Stragorodsky, the future patriarch]. The latter, in his turn, presented Rasputin to the professor, celibate priest Veniamin, and to the inspector of the Academy, Archimandrite Theophan.” [[179]](#footnote-179)

In November, 1905, Rasputin met the Tsar for the first time (probably through the mediation of the Montenegrin Grand Duchesses Militsa and Anastasia). The Royal Couple, and especially the Tsarina, had already shown their vulnerability to religious quacks in the affair of the French charlatan, “Monsieur Philippe” of Lyons. At that time Grand Duchess Elizabeth, the Tsarina’s sister had tried to open her eyes to the deception, but without success – she attributed her failure to her sister’s inability to distinguish between the true faith and the condition of religious exaltation.[[180]](#footnote-180) St. Elizabeth would also become a strong opponent of her sister’s “second Friend”, Rasputin. But the second Friend had a powerful weapon that the first Friend did not have – his extraordinary ability to heal the symptoms of the Tsarevich Alexei’s haemophilia, a closely guarded secret in the Royal Family and a cause of great anguish to his parents. As Pierre Gilliard, the Tsarevich’s tutor, said: “The illness of the Tsarevich cast a shadow over the whole of the concluding period of Tsar Nicholas II’s reign, and… was one of the main causes of his fall, for it made possible the phenomenon of Rasputin and resulted in the fatal seduction of the sovereigns who lived in a world apart, wholly absorbed in a tragic anxiety which to be concealed from the eyes of all.”

General V.N. Voeikov, commandant of the palace at Tsarskoye Selo and a close friend of the Royal Couple until the end, was sceptical about Rasputin from the beginning. But he witnessed to his healing power: “From the first time Rasputin appeared at the bed of the sick heir, alleviation followed immediately. All those close to the Royal Family were well acquainted with the case in Spala, when the doctors found no means of helping Alexis Nikolayevich, who was suffering terribly and groaning from pain. As soon as a telegram was sent to Rasputin on the advice of Vyrubova, and the reply was received, the pains began to decrease, his temperature began to fall, and soon the heir got better.

“If we take the point of view of the Empress-mother, who saw in Rasputin a God-fearing elder who had helped her sick son by his prayers – much should be understood and forgiven by every Russian devoted to the throne and the Homeland.

“The help he gave to the heir strengthened the position of Rasputin to such a degree at court that he no longer had need of the support of the [Montenegrin] Great Princesses and clergy. As a completely uneducated man, he was not able or did not want to hide this, and simply turned his back on his benefactors. Then there began denunciations against him; in the Synod they began a case to investigate the life and activity of Rasputin with the aim of demonstrating that he was a sectarian preaching principles harmful to Orthodoxy; while in society they began to speak about him as about a debauchee who cast a shadow on the empress by his appearances at court. The excuse for these conversations was disillusionment in Rasputin, who did not justify the hopes laid upon him.

“The stronger the campaign of denunciation against the Rasputin coming from the Duma, the more there developed in her Majesty the feeling that it was necessary to protect the man who was irreplaceable for the health of the heir: the influence of the empress on certain appointments can be explained by her desire to distance people who were dangerous to Rasputin from power.

“Taking full account of all this, Rasputin put on the mask of a righteous man at court, but outside it did not disdain to use the privileges of his position and to satisfy his sometimes wild instincts...”[[181]](#footnote-181)

Of particular significance was the relationship between Rasputin and Archimandrite, later Bishop Theophan.[[182]](#footnote-182)

Vladyka was at first impressed by the peasant, but became disillusioned with him after becoming convinced, from his own observations and from the confessions of his spiritual daughters, that the man was untrustworthy and sexually rapacious.

“After a while,” he testified to the Extraordinary Commission, “rumours reached me that Rasputin had resumed his former way of life and was undertaking something against us… I decided to resort to a final measure – to denounce him openly and to communicate everything to the former emperor. It was not, however, the emperor who received me but his wife in the presence of the maid of honour Vyrubova.

“I spoke for about an hour and demonstrated that Rasputin was in a state of spiritual deception… The former empress grew agitated and objected, citing theological works… I destroyed all her arguments, but she… reiterated them: ‘It is all falsehood and slander’… I concluded the conversation by saying that I could no longer have anything to do with Rasputin… I think Rasputin, as a cunning person, explained to the royal family that my speaking against him was because I envied his closeness to the Family… that I wanted to push him out of the way.

“After my conversation with the empress, Rasputin came to see me as if nothing had happened, having apparently decided that the empress’s displeasure had intimidated me… However, I told him in no uncertain terms, ‘Go away, you are a fraud.’ Rasputin fell on his knees before me and asked my forgiveness… But again I told him, ‘Go away, you have violated a promise given before God.’ Rasputin left, and I did not see him again.”

At this point Vladyka received a “Confession” from a former devotee of Rasputin’s. On reading this, he understood that Rasputin was “a wolf in sheep’s clothing” and “a sectarian of the khlyst type” who “taught his followers not to reveal his secrets even to their confessors. For if there is allegedly no sin in what these sectarians do, then their confessors need not be made aware of it.”

“Availing myself of that written confession, I wrote the former emperor a second letter… in which I declared that Rasputin not only was in a state of spiritual deception but was also a criminal in the religious and moral sense… In the moral sense because, as it followed from the ‘confession’, Father Gregory had seduced his victims.”

There was no reply to this letter. “I sensed that they did not want to hear me out and understand… It all depressed me so much that I became quite ill.” But in fact, Vladyka’s letter had reached the Tsar, and the scandal surrounding the rape of the children’s nurse, Vishnyakova, whose confessor was Vladyka, could no longer be concealed. Vishnyakova herself testified to the Extraordinary Commission that she had been raped by Rasputin during a visit to Verkhoturye Monastery in Tobolsk province, a journey undertaken at the empress’s suggestion. “Upon our return to Petrograd, I reported everything to the empress, and I also told Bishop Theophan in a private meeting with him. The empress did not give any heed to my words and said that everything Rasputin does is holy. From that time forth I did not see Rasputin, and in 1913 I was dismissed from my duties as nurse. I was also reprimanded for frequenting the Right Reverend Theophan.”

Another person in on the secret was the maid of honour Sophia Tyutcheva, grand-daughter of the famous poet. As she witnessed to the Commission, she was summoned to the Tsar.

“You have guessed why I summoned you. What is going on in the nursery?”

She told him.

“So you too do not believe in Rasputin’s holiness?”

She replied that she did not.

“But what will you say if I tell you that I have lived all these years only thanks to his prayers?”

Then he “began saying that he did not believe any of the stories, that the impure always sticks to the pure, and that he did not understand what had suddenly happened to Theophan, who had always been so fond of Rasputin. During this time he pointed to a letter from Theophan on his desk.”

“’You, your majesty, are too pure of heart and do not see what filth surrounds you.’ I said that it filled me with fear that such a person could be near the grand duchesses.

“’Am I then the enemy of my own children?’ the sovereign objected.

“He asked me never to mention Rasputin’s name in conversation. In order for that to take place, I asked the sovereign to arrange things so that Rasputin would never appear in the children’s wing.”

But her wish was not granted, and both Vishnyakova and Tyutcheva would not long remain in the tsar’s service…

It was at about this time that the newspapers began to write against Rasputin. And a member of the circle of the Grand Duchess Elizabeth Fyodorovna, Michael Alexandrovich Novoselov, the future bishop-martyr of the Catacomb Church, published a series of articles condemning Rasputin. "Why do the bishops,” he wrote, “who are well acquainted with the activities of this blatant deceiver and corrupter, keep silent?… Where is their grace, if through laziness or lack of courage they do not keep watch over the purity of the faith of the Church of God and allow the lascivious khlyst to do the works of darkness under the mask of light?" The brochure was forbidden and confiscated while it was still at the printer's, and the newspaper *The Voice of Moscow* was heavily fined for publishing excerpts from it.

Also disturbed by the rumours about Rasputin was the Prime Minister Peter Arkadievich Stolypin. But he had to confess, as his daughter Maria relates: “Nothing can be done. Every time the opportunity presents itself I warn his Majesty. But this is what he replied to me recently: ‘I agree with you, Peter Arkadievich, but better ten Rasputins than one hysterical empress.’ Of course, the whole matter is in that. The empress is ill, seriously ill; she believes that Rasputin is the only person in the whole world who can help the heir, and it is beyond human strength to persuade her otherwise. You know how difficult in general it is to talk to her. If she is taken with some idea, then she no longer takes account of whether it is realisable or not… Her intentions are the very best, but she is really ill…”

In November, 1910, Bishop Theophan went to the Crimea to recover from his illness. But he did not give up, and inundated his friend Bishop Hermogen of Saratov, the future hieromartyr, with letters. It was his aim to enlist this courageous fighter against freethinking in his fight against Rasputin. But this was difficult because it had been none other than Vladyka Theophan who had at some time introduced Rasputin to Bishop Hermogen, speaking of him, as Bishop Hermogen himself said, “in the most laudatory terms.” Indeed, for a time Bishop Hermogen and Rasputin had become allies in the struggle against freethinking and modernism.

Unfortunately, a far less reliable person then joined himself to Rasputin’s circle – Sergius Trophanov, in monasticism Iliodor, one of Bishop Theophan’s students at the academy, who later became a co-worker of Dzerzhinsky, a Baptist, married and had seven children. In an interview with the newspaper *Rech’* (January 9, 1913) Fr. Iliodor said: “I used to be a magician and fooled the people. I was a Deist.” He built a large church in Tsaritsyn on the Volga, and began to draw thousands to it with his fiery sermons against the Jews and the intellectuals and the capitalists. He invited Rasputin to join him in Tsaritsyn and become the elder of a convent there. Rasputin agreed.

However, Iliodor’s inflammatory sermons were not pleasing to the authorities, and in January, 1911 he was transferred to a monastery in Tula diocese. But he refused to go, locked himself in his church in Tsaritsyn and declared a hunger-strike. Bishop Hermogen supported him, but the tsar did not, and ordered him to be removed from Tsaritsyn.

When Rasputin’s bad actions began to come to light, Hermogen vacillated for a long time. However, having made up his mind that Vladyka Theophan was right, and having Iliodor on his side now too, he decided to bring the matter up before the Holy Synod, of which he was a member, at its next session. Before that, however, he determined to denounce Rasputin to his face.

This took place on December 16, 1911. According to Iliodor’s account, Hermogen, clothed in hierarchical vestments and holding a cross in his hand, “took hold of the head of the ‘elder’ with his left hand, and with his right started beating him on the head with the cross and shouting in a terrifying voice, ‘Devil! I forbid you in God’s name to touch the female sex. Brigand! I forbid you to enter the royal household and to have anything to do with the tsarina! As a mother brings forth the child in the cradle, so the holy Church through its prayers, blessings, and heroic feats has nursed that great and sacred thing of the people, the autocratic rule of the tsars. And now you, scum, are destroying it, you are smashing our holy vessels, the bearers of autocratic power… Fear God, fear His life-giving cross!”

Then they forced Rasputin to swear that he would leave the palace. According to one version of events, Rasputin swore, but immediately told the empress what had happened. According to another, he refused, after which Vladyka Hermogen cursed him. In any case, on the same day, December 16, five years later, he was killed…

Then Bishop Hermogen went to the Holy Synod. First he gave a speech against the khlysty. Then he charged Rasputin with khlyst tendencies. Unfortunately, only a minority of the bishops supported the courageous bishop. The majority followed the over-procurator in expressing dissatisfaction with his interference “in things that were not of his concern”.

Vladyka Hermogen was then ordered to return to his diocese. As the director of the chancery of the over-procurator witnessed, “he did not obey the order and, as I heard, asked by telegram for an audience with the tsar, indicating that he had an important matter to discuss, but was turned down.”

On receiving this rejection, Bishop Hermogen began to weep. Then he said: “They will kill the tsar, they will kill the tsar, they will surely kill him.”

The opponents of Rasputin now felt the fury of the Tsar. Bishop Hermogen and Iliodor were exiled to remote monasteries (Iliodor took his revenge by leaking forged letters of the Empress to Rasputin). And Vladyka Theophan was transferred to the see of Astrakhan. The Tsar ordered the secular press to stop printing stories about Rasputin. Before leaving the Crimea, Vladyka called on Rasputin’s friend, the deputy over-procurator Damansky. He told him: “Rasputin is a vessel of the devil, and the time will come when the Lord will chastise him and those who protect him.”

Later, in October, 1913, Rasputin tried to take his revenge on Bishop Theophan by bribing the widow of a Yalta priest who knew him to say that Vladyka had said that he had had relations with the empress. The righteous widow rejected his money and even spat in his face…

During the war, the influence of Rasputin became more dangerous. For, with the Tsar at the front, control of home appointments de facto came under the control of the Tsarina, who always turned to Rasputin and to those who were approved by him... Voeikov points out that from 1914 Vyrubova and Rasputin “began to take a greater and greater interest in questions of internal politics”, but at the same time argues that the number of appointments actually made by the Tsarina were few.[[183]](#footnote-183) But they included Prime Ministers, Interior Ministers and church metropolitans. It is hardly surprising, in those circumstances, that the reputation of the Royal Couple suffered...

Who, in the end, was Rasputin? Bishop Theophan’s opinion was that Rasputin had originally been a sincerely religious man with real gifts, but that he had been corrupted by his contacts with aristocratic society. Archbishop Anthony (Khraptovitsky) of Voronezh had a similar opinion. After having tea with him twice, Rasputin “revealed himself as a deceiver and intriguer”. But the Royal Couple, “surrounded as they were from all sides by flattery and slanders, decided that love for truth and honourableness remained only in the simple people, and therefore turned to ‘the people’s reason’…

“However, they forgot about the most important point in such a choice.

“I myself was raised in the countryside amidst middle-ranking landowners and close to the people, and I share all the positive declarations about the people’s reason and the people’s honourableness. But I insist on my conviction that a peasant is worthy of every respect as long as he remains a peasant. But if he enters the milieu of the masters, he will unfailingly be corrupted...”[[184]](#footnote-184)

Rasputin was killed on December 16, 1916 at the hands of Great Prince Dmitri Pavlovich Romanov, Prince Felix Yusupov and a right-wing member of the Duma, Purishkevich. Yusupov lured him to his flat on the pretext of introducing him to his wife, the beautiful Irina, the Tsar’s niece. He was given madeira mixed with poison (although this is disputed), but this did not kill him. He was shot twice, but neither did this kill him. Finally he was shot a third time and pushed under the ice of the River Neva.[[185]](#footnote-185)

The Tsar refused to condone the killing, which he called murder. But Yusupov was justified by his close friend, Great Princess Elizabeth Fyodorovna, who said that he only done his patriotic duty – “you killed a demon,” she said. Then, as Yusopov himself writes in his *Memoirs*, “she informed me that several days after the death of Rasputin the abbesses of monasteries came to her to tell her about what had happened with them on the night of the 30th. During the all-night vigil priests had been seized by an attack of madness, had blasphemed and shouted out in a voice that was not their own. Nuns had run down the corridors crying like hysterics and tearing their dresses with indecent movements of the body…”[[186]](#footnote-186)

Rasputin was a symbol of the majority, peasant stratum of the Russian population in the last days of the empire. Though basically Orthodox and monarchist, it was infected with spiritual diseases that manifested themselves in the wild behaviour of so many peasants and workers after the revolution. The support of the peasants kept the monarchy alive just as Rasputin kept the tsarevich alive, stopping the flow of blood that represented the ebbing spiritual strength of the dynasty. “Rasputin,” writes Radzinsky, “is a key to understanding both the soul and the brutality of the Russia that came after him. He was a precursor of the millions of peasants who, with religious consciousness in their souls, would nevertheless tear down churches, and who, with a dream of the reign of Love and Justice, would murder, rape, and flood the country with blood, in the end destroying themselves...”[[187]](#footnote-187)

But while Rasputin and the majority of Russians descended into madness, it was a different story for the royal family that had put their trust in them. For they became holy martyrs... Thus “the child, “who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron… was caught up to God and His throne” (Revelation 12.5)...

## 21. THE BALKAN WARS

In 1908 two new ingredients were cast into Balkan cauldron that started the pot boiling again: Austria-Hungary’s annexation of Bosnia, which angered the Serbs and the Russians, but which they were unable to do anything about, and the Masonic revolution in Turkey by the “Committee of Union and Progress” (CUP), otherwise known as “the Young Turks”.

“The Young Turks,” writes Dominic Lieven, “were the products of the Western-style schools and colleges created by the Ottoman regime from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. The movement’s core often consisted of army officers but included many civilian professionals as well. They had many similarities with Russian revolutionaries of their time and with later Third World radicalism. Their great enemy was their country’s backwardness, which they blamed on the Ottoman regime and, usually, on religion, which they saw as the main cause of the people’s ignorance, sloth and conservatism. Their own creed was a rather crude belief in science and materialism, combined with a linguistic and ethnic Turkish nationalism based on European models. They were populists but also great Jacobin elitists, convinced that it was the new Westernized elite’s duty to lead the nation to prosperity and power. They were seldom themselves of traditional upper-class origin, and their radicalism owed much to the sense that their own professional merit went unnoticed by a regime whose rulers promoted clients on the basis of personal connection and political loyalty.”[[188]](#footnote-188)

“In 1906,” writes Misha Glenny, “small conspiracies arose inside the Empire. Cells loyal to the subversive project began to form inside the army in Salonika and Damascus. These then multiplied, escaping the body of the armed forces to infect parts of the Ottoman administration – officials in the post and telegraph office, in the schools and in the judicial system. In Salonika, many Jews, and a few Armenians, Greeks and Bulgarians were also recruited into this embryonic resistance. The organization in Damascus, *Vatan* (Fatherland), was not remotely as influential as its counterpart in Salonika. But it is worth nothing that one of the co-founders of the Damascus conspiracy was Mustafa Kemal, a young, strong-minded officer from Salonika.”[[189]](#footnote-189)

The CUP’s stronghold was the Army in Macedonia, which had learned much from the discipline and conspiratorial techniques of the Bulgarian and Macedonian guerrillas. In fact, some of the rebel soldiers in Macedonia formed pacts with the Albanians, and with the Bulgarian and Serbian guerrillas they were supposed to be fighting.[[190]](#footnote-190) The result was a stunning victory for the revolution: the Sultan was deposed in 1909, and by 1913 the CUP was in complete control of the empire.

The Young Turks at first renounced nationalism so as to bring as many members of other nationalities of the multi-national empire onto its side. 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’…”[[191]](#footnote-191)

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. On July 23, 1908, the same day as the celebrations in Salonika, they restored the Midhat constitution to the empire…

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 Abdulhamid. ‘The old espionage had returned, the extortion had never ceased, the oppression against non-Moslems had now acquired a fresher and more sinister vigour, for the measure of freedom that each nationality had once enjoyed was now being ruthlessly crushed by a heretofore unknown chauvinism.’”[[192]](#footnote-192)

As for the goodwill that the Young Turks offered to the Orthodox Christians, this “had been offered subject to extremely onerous conditions. 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.”[[193]](#footnote-193)

Tsar Nicholas II knew better than any Balkan Christian the true significance of the events of 1908, and the great danger they posed for the whole of Orthodoxy. Basically, the whole vast region of the Ottoman Empire had fallen under the power of Orthodoxy’s greatest enemy, the revolution. And the Serbs, Bulgarians and 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.

All three states were rapidly rearming themselves. As a result, all were deeply in debt to western arms manufacturers (the Serbs to French ones, the Bulgarians to German ones). And, in spite of their rivalries over Macedonia, all were more ready to enter into commercial agreements with each other than turn for help to any great power, including Russia. But they failed to realize – or did not want to take into account – the fact that any war with Turkey would inevitably draw Austria into the conflict in some way or other, since Austria now owned Bosnia - which had to pose a threat at any rate to Serbia’s expansionist plans. Moreover, in alliance with Austria was a new and very powerful enemy – Germany, which had been making significant inroads into the Ottoman Empire through its railway projects, and which was reorganizing the Ottoman Army under the leadership of German generals.

In 1894, in order to counter the increasing economic and military power of the German empire, and the threat posed to the Balkan Slavs by the German-Austrian alliance, Russia had formed an alliance with France; and in 1907 these Russia and France were joined by Britain – a remarkable turn-round in view of Britain’s long-standing hostility to Russia.

“The division of Europe into two military alliances,” writes Dominic Lieven, “made it almost certain that any conflict between great powers [for example, over the Balkans] would engulf the entire continent. Nevertheless, in the first decade of Nicholas’s reign Russia’s relations with Berlin and Vienna were friendly. This was in part because much of Petersburg’s attention was devoted to the Far East, which in turn made it easier to agree with Austria on a policy of supporting the status quo in the Balkans.

“Russia’s defeat by Japan in 1904-05 and the subsequent Russian revolution of 1905-06 changed matters very much for the worse. Awareness of Russian impotence encouraged first Germany and then Austria to defend their interests in the Moroccan Crisis of 1905-06 and in the 1908-09 Bosnian crisis [when Austria annexed Bosnia and Russia was powerless to do anything about it] in a more aggressive manner than would otherwise have been the case…”[[194]](#footnote-194)

The situation was made more difficult for the Tsar by the rise, within Russia, of a powerful coalition of liberals and nationalists who wanted a more aggressive policy in the Balkans. “Between 1907 and 1914 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. 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…”[[195]](#footnote-195)

But the Tsar had to resist the liberal-nationalist wave; for he knew that Russia was not ready for war – in fact, foreign war might well trigger internal revolution. For that reason he wanted to restrain the hotheads in the Balkans. But the problem was: the Balkan hotheads did not see it that way. As one Bulgarian statesman, interviewed by the journalist Leon Trotsky, said soon after the First Balkan War: “We must, of course, say this 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 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’…”[[196]](#footnote-196)

One result of the Young Turk revolution was the stirring of unrest in Albania: as the Balkan Orthodox became increasingly independent, the Albanians also sought autonomy. But the new regime in Constantinople refused them this. So it was logical to expect that they would side with the Greeks, Bulgarians and Serbs who were rapidly rearming in order to overthrow the Turkish yoke once and for all. However, the Balkan Orthodox had claims on Albanian-occupied lands: Scutari in the north (Montenegro), Kosovo in the east (Serbia) and “Northern Epirus” in the south (Greece). So they planned to unite amongst themselves and rise up in war against the Ottomans and Albanians.

The First Balkan War broke out when Montenegro invaded Northern Albania in October, 1912.

The war was opposed by Orthodox Russia. Edvard Radzinsky writes: “The tsar understood how that impudent disruption of the status quo in the Balkans would ignite an explosion of indignation among the great powers. The minister of foreign affairs was instructed to persuade Montenegro to end its occupation of the fortress [of Shkodra or Scutari]. But [King Nikolai] knew of the bellicose mood in Petersburg and of the support of Grand Duke Nikolai, the ‘dread uncle’, and he callously continued the siege of Scutari.

“[In October, 1912 Montenegro declared war on Turkey and invaded Northern Albania.And then**]** on 5 (18 NS) October Serbia and Bulgaria entered the war against Turkey, followed by Greece the day after. And the Turkish army sustained defeat after defeat. News of the successes of the Balkan alliance – of their brothers in the faith – against the Turkish Moslems gave rise to an outpouring of joyous nationalism in Russia. There were continual demonstrations in Petersburg bearing the slogan, ‘A Cross of Holy Sophia’… Everyone was again caught up in the old dream of the Russian tsars: of taking Constantinople back by force from Turkey – Constantinople, the ancient capital of Byzantium, from which Rus had adopted its Christian faith.

“The response was immediate. The Austrians and Germans threatened war.

“And again the Balkan boiler was about to blow up the whole world.

“On 10 and 29 November and on 5 December 1912, the Council of Ministers met in Petersburg. And the situation of a few years before was repeated. Russian society wanted to fight: the demands for military assistance to its ‘Balkan brothers’ were unanimous, and the registering of volunteers began. Even Rasputin’s friend Filippov was for war at the time. And there was no Stolypin powerful enough to overcome public opinion (or, more accurately, public insanity). War was again at the very threshold. And once again it would be a world war. The Austrian fleet and the ships of the great powers had already blockaded the Montenegrin coast. General mobilization was anticipated in Russia. Speaker of the State Duma Rodzyanko counselled the tsar to fight.

“And then the tsar suddenly demonstrated character: he resolutely moved against public opinion. He demanded that the minister of foreign affairs put pressure on Montenegro. And on 21 April 1913 the Montenegrin king, after many hours of persuasion, consented to withdraw from Scutari in return for monetary indemnification. And the Russian foreign minister, 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.”[[197]](#footnote-197)

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.” But this is to ignore the fact that the tsar had already shown similar firmness during the Bosnian annexation crisis of 1908, and that his behaviour was perfectly consistent with his beliefs – that it was not in Russia’s interests to go to war to defend the territorial ambitions of the Balkan Slavs. Only in 1914 would he be forced to submit to the call for war. But the situation then, as we shall see, was different: Russia was not called to help the Serbs in some madcap aggression, but to *defend* them from annihilation in a just war…

The First Balkan War ended in victory and substantial territorial gains for the Balkan Orthodox, leaving the Turks control of only a small corner of Europe close to Constantinople. As for the other losers, the Albanians, on December 20, 1912 the Great Powers, under Austrian pressure, agreed to create an independent principality of Albania. The Russians accepted only reluctantly, and secured most ofKosovo and its mixed Serb and Albanian population for Serbia. From January to March, 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…[[198]](#footnote-198)

But the Bulgarian King Ferdinand was unhappy with the distribution of the spoils of victory, especially in Macedonia, and attacked Greece and Serbia. This led to the outbreak of the Second Balkan War in 1913, which ended with the victory of Greece, Serbia, Romania and Turkey over Bulgaria. In ten weeks’ fighting during the two wars about 200,000 soldiers were killed. The money that Bulgaria and Serbia had been pouring into their armed forces since the 1880s finally paid off in a series of brilliant victories using all the means of modern technology – and the western powers were impressed.

Less impressive, however, were the atrocities committed. Thus “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* [*četniks],* others that the corpses had been brought down to the bridge by the waters of the Vardar. What was clear was that these headless men had not been killed in battle.’ In Skopje, the chief instigator of the massacres was the Black Hand, which set up its headquarters close to the Russian consulate in a building soon known as the Black House. The Black Hand, with its network of agents, had escaped the control of the military authorities and was increasingly assuming the role of an informal government of ‘liberated Old Serbia’. After several weeks, the government in Belgrade started to appoint civilian administrators to these territories, but those who refused to submit to the demands of the Black Hand and the *četniks* were scared. 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.”[[199]](#footnote-199)

Thus, as Tim Judah, writes, “ethnic cleansing” - unfortunately very common before the Balkan Wars – revived during them: “The Carnegie Endowment’s account of the crushing of the Albanian revolt in Kosovo is also important because in 1913 as in 1941 or the 1990s it was quite clear to all involved what the purpose of ethnic cleansing was:

“’Houses and whole villages are reduced to ashes, unarmed and innocent populations massacred *en masse*, incredible acts of violence, pillage and brutality of every kind – such were the means which were employed by the Serbo-Montenegrin soldiery, with a view to the entire transformation of the ethnic character of regions inhabited exclusively by Albanians.

“’We thus arrive at the second characteristic feature of the Balkan wars, a feature which is the necessary correlative of the first. Since the population of the countries about to be occupied knew, by tradition, instinct and experience, what they had to expect from the armies of the enemy and from the neighbouring countries to which these armies belonged, they did not await their arrival, but fled. Thus generally speaking, the army of the enemy found on its way nothing but villages which were either half deserted or entirely abandoned. To execute the orders for extermination, it was only necessary to set fire to them. The population, warned by the glow from these fires, fled all in haste. There followed a veritable migration of peoples, for in Macedonia, as in Thrace, there was hardly a spot which was not, at a given moment, on the line of march of some army or other. The Commission everywhere encountered this second fact. All along the railways interminable trains of carts drawn by oxen followed one another; behind them came emigrant families and, in the neighbourhood of the big towns, bodies of refugees were found encamped.’

“Just as conversion had been accepted as a means to escape death in earlier times, in some places it once again became an issue. When the Montenegrins captured the village of Plav, Rebecca West, whose pro-Serbian bent somewhat undermines her otherwise masterly account of Yugoslavia in the 1930s, characteristically dismisses a major massacre as an ‘unfortunate *contretemps*’. During this little misunderstanding a former Muslim cleric, now converted to Orthodoxy and a major in the Montenegrin Army, demanded that his former congregation convert. They refused and so 500 of them were shot. In another incident, some Macedonian villagers had their church surrounded by Serbian soldiers during the Sunday service. On emerging they found that a table had been set up on which was a piece of paper and a revolver. Either they could sign that they were Serbs rather than Bulgarians – or they could die. They chose the former option.”[[200]](#footnote-200)

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. It was especially fierce between the Greeks and the Bulgarians. The Greek army had reached the great prize of Salonika only a few hours before the Bulgarians, which upset the Bulgarians. Then, only a few months later, war broke out between the former allies - the Second Balkan War had begun.

A Carnegie Endowment report describes some of 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*.”[[201]](#footnote-201)

It is sometimes asserted that the Christian commandment to love our enemies cannot be applied in a war situation. For it is necessary to obey lawful authorities and fight the enemies of the State. However, 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).

According to Niall Ferguson, the Balkan Wars “had revealed both the strengths and the limits of Balkan nationalism. Its strength lay in its ferocity. Its weakness was its disunity. The violence of the fighting much impressed the young Trotsky, who witnessed it as a correspondent for the newspaper *Kievskaia mysl*. Even the peace that followed the Balkan Wars was cruel, in a novel manner that would become a recurrent feature of the twentieth century. It no longer sufficed, in the eyes of nationalists, to acquire foreign territory. Now it was peoples as well as borders that had to move. Sometimes these movements were spontaneous. Muslims fled in the direction of Salonika as the Greeks, Serbs and Bulgarians advanced in 1912; Bulgarians fled Macedonia to escape from invading Greek troops in 1913; Greeks chose to leave the Macedonian districts ceded to Bulgaria and Serbia by the Treaty of Bucharest. Sometimes populations were deliberately expelled, as the Greeks were from Western Thrace in 1913 and from parts of Eastern Thrace and Anatolia in 1914. In the wake of the Turkish defeat, there was an agreed population exchange: 48,570 Turks moved one way and 46,764 Bulgarians the other across the new Turkish-Bulgarian border. Such exchanges were designed to transform regions of ethnically mixed settlement into the homogeneous societies that so appealed to the nationalist imagination. The effects on some regions were dramatic. Between 1912 and 1915, the Greek population of (Greek) Macedonia increased by around a third; the Muslim and Bulgarian population declined by 26 and 13 per cent respectively. The Greek population of Western Thrace fell by 80 per cent; the Muslim population of Eastern Thrace rose by a third. The implications were distinctly ominous for the many multi-ethnic communities elsewhere in Europe…

“The alternative to outright war was to create a new South Slav state through terrorism. In the wake of the annexation of Bosnia, a rash of new organizations sprang up, pledged to resisting Austrian imperialism in the Balkans and to liberate Bosnia by fair means or foul…”[[202]](#footnote-202)

The Balkan Wars of 1912-13 constituted a political and military victory for the Balkan Orthodox (except Bulgaria), but a major spiritual defeat for Orthodoxy. Russia had managed to avoid a world war while not betraying her co-religionists. But internal as well as external factors made it increasingly difficult for the Tsar to hold the twin monsters of revolutionary nationalism and internationalist revolution at bay. Moreover, it was now clear that the Balkan Orthodox not only considered themselves as completely independent of any “Third Rome”, but were determined to go their own, egotistical ways regardless of the consequences for world peace and the interests of the Orthodox commonwealth as a whole. Judgement was about to descend upon the world, and it would begin at the House of God (I Peter 4.17)…

## 22. THE SALT LOSES ITS SAVOUR

Long before the Jews began to join terrorist organizations, or the Masonic intelligentsia to weave their plots against the tsar, the Russian Orthodox people began to fall away from the faith. This was mentioned by Saints Seraphim of Sarov and Tikhon of Zadonsk; and St. Ignatius Brianchaninov spoke about “hypocrisy”, “scribes and Pharisees” and “the salt losing its savour”. By the eve of the revolution this decline was still more noticeable.

The Church hierarchy was corrupted by renovationists such as Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) and Bishop Antoninus (Granovsky). There were few bishops who spoke out openly against the revolutionary madness.

In the monasteries it was the same story. There were still holy monks and nuns, and the rich crop of monastic martyrs after the revolution showed that the pre-revolutionary sowing was by no means all bad. Nevertheless, the future Elder Gabriel of Seven Lakes was warned by St. Ambrose of Optina “to go wherever he please, so as only not to live in Moscow”, where monasticism was at such a low level.[[203]](#footnote-203) A generation later, in 1909, St. Barsanuphius of Optina said: “Contemporary monasticism strives in all things to fulfil its own will. Abba Dorotheus says: ‘I know of no other fall for a monk than as a consequence of his own will.’”[[204]](#footnote-204) The ignorance and superstition of the name-worshipping monks did not grow on an empty place; and pseudo-elders such as Rasputin and Iliodor could not have flourished in a more truly pious society.

A particular characteristic of the pre-revolutionary period – and a propaganda gift for the revolutionaries - was the excessive expenditure of the rich and their flagrant immorality. The Romanovs – with the shining exception of the Tsar and Tsarina, Great Princess Elizabeth and some others – were among the worst sinners. The increasing hard-heartedness of wealthy Russian Christians to the poor was bewailed by many leading churchmen, such as St. John of Kronstadt. Both rich and poor tended to forget the Christian teaching on social inequality, namely, that it is an opportunity for the rich to show compassion and for the poor to display patience. [[205]](#footnote-205)

But the rich in every age have been corrupt. What of the poor? In the villages and factories, as we have seen, revolutionary propaganda made deep inroads. Although only a minority of peasants took part in the burning of landowners’ estates in the 1905 revolution, by 1917 the experience of the war and the lying propaganda directed against the Tsar and his family had increased the numbers of deserters, thieves and arsonists. In the elections to the Constituent Assembly in 1918 ***80%*** of the population voted for socialist deputies. [[206]](#footnote-206) Moreover, support for the Bolsheviks in the elections, as Richard Pipes writes, “came not from the region of Jewish concentration, the old Pale of Settlement, but from the armed forces and the cities of Great Russia, which had hardly any Jews”.[[207]](#footnote-207) So blame for the Russian revolution must fall on Russians as well as Jews, and not only the aristocratic or Masonic Russians, but on large swathes of the Christian working population.

F. Vinberg writes: “Everyone was guilty! Both the higher circles of the nobility, and the major and minor merchants, and the representatives of science, and the servant classes, and in particular the adulterers of the word, the corrupters of thought, many Russian writers of the last decades, lawyers and professors: for all these categories of Russian citizens there can be no forgiveness for the great crime they committed.”[[208]](#footnote-208) And so Ivan Solonevich’s words applied to all sections of the population: “With the substitution of faith in absolute Good with faith in relative sausages, everything else also begins to take on a relative character, including man. With the loss of faith in God, loss of faith in man is also lost. The Christian principle, ‘love your neighbour as yourself’, for your neighbour is *also* a part of absolute Good, is exchanged for another principle: ‘man is a means for the production of sausages’. The feeling of absolute morality is lost… Consequently faith ceases to exist not only in man generally, but also in one’s ‘neighbour’ and even in the neighbour himself. And then begins mutual extermination…”[[209]](#footnote-209)

Contrary to popular conceptions, the roots of the Russian revolution are not to be sought in economic or political circumstances. Looking deeper, we may see them in “the mystery of iniquity” foretold by the prophets to reach the acme of its power in the last times. This is the mystery of satanic *rebellion* that arises from within the People of God and leads them to reject the God-established order in Church and State.

As Joseph de Maistre wrote: “There have always been some forms of religion in the world and wicked men who opposed them. Impiety was always a crime, too… *But only in the bosom of the true religion can there be real impiety…* Impiety has never produced in times past the evils which it has brought forth in our day, for its guilt is always directly proportional to the enlightenment which surrounds it… Although impious men have always existed, there never was before the eighteenth century, and in the heart of Christendom, *an insurrection against God.*”[[210]](#footnote-210)

De Maistre was speaking, of course, about the French revolution, and for him the true religion that was the object of the wrath of the French revolutionaries was – Catholicism. However, we know that Catholicism is only a heresy and schism from the true religion – Orthodox Christianity. It is therefore to the insurrection against God within the heart of Orthodox Christianity – that is, to the Russian revolution – that we must look for the summit of evil that the world has yet seen – always excepting, of course, the killing of God Himself by the Jews. The crime was the worse in that the Tsar whom the revolutionaries killed as being the representative of Christianity was probably the most genuine Christian that has ever sat upon a Christian throne. Not only did he not exploit his people in any way: he brought them immeasurable benefits, both spiritual and material, building churches, canonizing saints, spreading the truth faith, strengthening the economy, helping the poor, introducing just legislation and finally laying down his crown and life in order to save his people from civil war.

When the revolution finally came, and people saw the demonic horror they had voted for, many repented. They realized that they were reaping the fruits of what their own indifference had sown. As Hieromartyr Damascene, Bishop of Glukhov, wrote: “The absence of zeal in Christians and of a firm confession of their faith makes many of our enemies (who do not, of course, consciously arise up against the Holy Spirit) to see in Christianity – hypocrisy, and in the Church – an organization of exploiters. In the same way, the absence in us of Christian zeal can be seen as an indirect reason why those who are perishing in the darkness of atheism and the spite of anti-theism leave the Church. It goes without saying that real, especially spiteful ‘rising up against the Lord and against His Christ’ has other, deeper, age-old reasons. Still, if such a significant quenching of the spirit of faith and love amidst believers in the preceding age had not taken place, the faithful servants of the prince of darkness would not have found among us so many voluntary and involuntary helpers. It was said at one Masonic congress: ‘Russia has preserved the most ardent love for our eternal Enemy, and He Whose name I do not want to name will send a horde of His invisible powers to the defence of the Russian people’… And it was decided in counter-action to this to implant lack of faith in Russia…”[[211]](#footnote-211)

The Lord would indeed have sent “a horde of His invisible powers to the defence of the Russian people” – if they had been worthy of it. But they were not. And so instead of “the mystery of piety”, there triumphed “the mystery of iniquity”. For, as St. John Maximovich explained: “The sin against him [the Tsar] and against Russia was perpetrated by all who in one way or another acted against him, who did not oppose, or who merely by sympathizing participated in those events which took place forty years ago. That sin lies upon everyone until it is washed away by sincere repentance…”[[212]](#footnote-212)

Archbishop Averky (Taushev) of Syracuse continues the theme: “It is small consolation for us that the Royal Family was killed directly by non-Russian hands, non-Orthodox hands and non-Russian people. Although that is so, *the whole Russian people* is guilty of this terrible, unprecedented evil deed, insofar as it did not resist or stand against it, but behaved in such a way that the evil deed appeared as the natural expression of that mood which by that time had matured in the minds and hearts of the undoubted majority of the unfortunate misguided Russian people, beginning with the ‘lowers’ and ending with the very ‘tops’, the upper aristocracy.”[[213]](#footnote-213)

## 23. THE NAME-WORSHIPPING HERESY

At the beginning of the 20th century the Greek and Russian monks on Mount Athos were not on friendly terms. “The Greeks cannot speak with equanimity about the Russians,” wrote I.I. Sokolov, “while the Russians do not speak with approval about the Greeks. The former complain about the unlawful seizure by the Russians of Greek monasteries, cells and lands, while the Russians speak about violence and oppression on the part of the Greeks. And as time passes, mutual dissatisfaction grows, and spitefulness flames up more strongly. We can say that now [at the beginning of the 20th century] we are witnessing a repetition, to some degree, of what happened in the 1870s, during the infamous Greek-Russian law-suit to do with the St. Panteleimon monastery. There can be no doubt that leaven from this suit has not died out, and now in the quarrel between the Greek and Russian monks on Athos we must see a reflection of the earlier turmoil. Ten years ago one could see a certain calm in the mutual dissatisfaction of the Athonite population, but it turns out that this was the calm before a storm that has now broken out ‘in the great wilderness of Athos’ to quite a significant degree. What is it about?

“In the gradual increase in the numbers of Russian monks on Athos the Greeks see a blow to Hellenism. There was a time, and not so long ago, not more than 30-40 years ago, when there were very few Russian monks on Athos; they had no constant, well-organised refuge, they were poor, and deprived of influence on Athonite affairs. Now their position has changed unrecognisably by comparison with the past. There are now more Russian monks than the Greeks themselves. They have well constructed monasteries and cells, and the main thing – they are rich and do not spare money on acquiring new possessions. They are gradually increasing in numbers and are ready to take over the whole of the Holy Mountain, and squeeze the Greeks completely out. This Russian advance on Athos is based, according to the opinion of the Greeks, on national-political motives: it is the march of Panslavism against Hellenism. It is well-known how attached the Greeks are to their nation, how they preserve all the centres of Hellenism, how they defend every pound of their native soil. And here we are talking about one of the most prominent refuges of Hellenism, the acropolis of the Greek nation, where the Hellenist standard was unfurled already in Byzantine times, and did not disappear in the Turkish era as a consequence of the special international-political position of Athos. Hence arises the enmity which appears in the fact that the Greek monasteries try not to sell to the Russian monks a single clump of land, surround the use of the cells with various obstacles, deprive the elders in the cells of the right of bequeathing them to their disciples, charge inordinate prices for cells and kalyvas, etc. Is such an attitude of the Greeks to the Russians just?

“We think that the enmity of the Greeks towards the Russians is unjustly motivated by considerations of a political nature. The political slant given to Russian monasticism on Athos is an artificial, false thing, which does not correspond to the real strivings of the Russians on Athos. Panslavism, which the Greeks talk about in relation to the Russian Athonites, is a myth, an empty word, having no definite content. It was created by the immoderately passionate fantasy of the Athonites – or more accurately, of the Athenian intriguers from the Greeks, who see enemies of Hellenism in its most recent formation everywhere: this is a common phenomenon among peoples that are feverish with political tendencies after their birth or rebirth to new public life. The Greeks saw the advance of Panslavism into the East already in the 1870s, when the notorious case of St. Panteleimon’s flared up, but even they did not have a clear idea about it, which is why Panslavism was for them some kind of scarecrow. In this respect the matter has not changed even at the present time. Moreover, it would be strange to impute political tendencies to people coming from our remote villages and settlements, who have set off for Athos with exclusively religious aims. After all, Russian Athos can without exaggeration be called ‘the peasants’ kingdom’. There are very few intelligentsy here – perhaps 50 out of 4000 monks in all. There are also few from the ranks of the upper and lower middle classes, who differ very little from the peasants, so that on Athos the peasantry is the dominant and even the all-engulfing element. The inhabitants of our villages and settlements set off for Athos exclusively for religious motives – to pray and save themselves: what have they to do with politics? And then politicising requires a corresponding intellectual preparation, which the Greek monks possess, but the Russians do not. Justice requires us to say that among the Russian monks of Athos there are very few educated people, the majority are semi-literate: what have they to do with politics? While the leaders of the monks, penetrated with the same ideas of prayer and salvation, are so burdened with the administration of the brotherhood and the complex monastic economy that politics is impossible for them…”[[214]](#footnote-214)

However, while this semi-literacy of the Russian monks made involvement in politics difficult for them, it presented another danger that was soon to reveal itself – a weakness in theological debate and vulnerability to heresy…

This danger became a reality with the publication, in 1907, by Schema-monk Hilarion, of a book on the Jesus prayer entitled *On the Mountains of the Caucasus*. This book was at first well-received and passed the spiritual censor; but later its claim that the name of God *is* God- more precisely, that the Name of God as uttered in the Jesus prayer is not only holy and filled with the grace of God, but is holy *in and of itself*, being *God Himself -* elicited criticism. Soon monastic opinion in Russia was polarised between those who, like the monks of the Kiev Caves Lavra, approved of the book and its name-worshipping thesis (imiabozhie in Russian), and those, like the monks of the Pochaev Lavra and the Optina Desert, who rejected it. The heresy was condemned by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1912 (Charter No. 8522 of Patriarch Joachim III to Mount Athos, dated September 12) and 1913 (Charter No. 758 of Patriarch German V to Mount Athos, dated February 15), and by the Russian Holy Synod in 1913 (Epistle of May 18, and Decree of August 27, No. 7644)[[215]](#footnote-215).

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.”[[216]](#footnote-216) 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.’ (decree N 1443 of May 8, 1914)”.

Of course, this decree did not constitute a “justification” of the name-worshippers’ teaching, especially in view of the fact that *on the same day* the Office, led by Metropolitan Macarius, affirmed that name-worshipping – *“the new false-teachings on the names of God proclaimed by Schema-Monk Hilarion and Anthony Bulatovich”* – was a heresy (decree N 1442 of May 8, 1914). Moreover, in rejecting “any deification of the very letters and sounds and any chance thoughts about God”, Bulatovich was obliged also to renounce his words in the *Apology*: “Every mental representation of a named property of God is the Name of God [and therefore, according to the name-worshippers, God Himself]”, “the contemplation of the His name is God Himself”, “the conscious naming of God is God Himself”, “Every idea about God is God Himself”, “we call the very idea of God – God”. But did he in fact repent?

Unfortunately, the repentance of the name-worshippers turned out to be fictional. Bulatovich did not repent, but 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 the *Confession of faith in God and in the Name of God*, but deceived Metropolitan Macarius (who was probably under pressure from the Over-Procurator Sabler, who was in turn under pressure from the fervent name-worshippers 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 (decree N 4136 of May 10-24, 1914), which confirmation was again confirmed by decree N 2670 of March 10, 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 Hieromonk Gregory (Lourié), who supports the heretical views of Bulatovich, considers him to be a saint, and those who oppose his ideas, including several hieromartyrs of the Russian Church to be “enemies of the Name”!

Reasons for the failure to stamp out the heresy included the comparatively weak defence of the truth produced by the Greek and Russian theologians[[217]](#footnote-217), 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, and the whole debate soon acquired political overtones, with the democratic and socialist left generally taking the side of the name-worshippers and the monarchists taking the side of the Orthodox.[[218]](#footnote-218)

In 1918 Patriarch Tikhon indicated that the controversy needed further study “in essence” at a future Pan-Russian (or Ecumenical) Council. But this did not mean, as some have claimed, that the Church had not delivered its verdict on the question. She has delivered her verdict: but the reasons for that verdict need to be more extensively elaborated, and the “positive” teaching of the Church on the relationship between the uncreated and the created in prayer needs to be expounded still more clearly and thoroughly.[[219]](#footnote-219)

## 24. SARAJEVO

Most western historians now agree that the first responsibility for the outbreak of the First World War rested with Austria and Germany. The Austrians were looking for an opportunity to crush Serbia once for all. And the Germans used the Austro-Serbian war as an excuse to attack Russia and halt her rise to predominance in Europe.[[220]](#footnote-220) The Austrians wanted to crush Serbia because they perceived the greatest threat to their Empire, which was composed of a patchwork of small peoples, all striving for advantages against each other, to reside in a union of some of those peoples against the central government. And the greatest such threat came from the potential union of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes into a Yugoslav State with its capital in Belgrade… In fact, as David Stephenson writes, “the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes were beginning to co-operate as the Yugoslav enthusiasts intended. By 1914 a terrorist campaign had started in Croatia as well as Bosnia. But the most exasperating characteristic of the agitation was Serbia’s support for it, at any rate after the 1903 coup that installed King Peter in Belgrade. Previously a secret treaty had given Austria-Hungary a veto over Serbian foreign policy. Now Serbia became more independent and its stance more nationalist. In the ‘pig war’ of 1906-11 Austria-Hungary retaliated by boycotting Serbia’s exports of livestock, but the Serbs found alternative markets and turned from Vienna to Paris as their main artillery supplier. Similarly, despite Austrian hopes in 1908 that annexing Bosnia-Herzegovina would dispel South Slav dreams of unification, covert Serb support for Bosnian separatism persisted. The next upheaval came in 1912-13, when Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Montenegro defeated Turkey in the First Balkan War before Bulgaria attacked its former allies and was defeated in its turn in the Second. Austrian pressure limited the Serbs’ success by forcing them to evacuate the Adriatic coast (where they had hoped to win sea access) and by sponsoring the creation of Albania as a new state to counterbalance them. None the less, the wars heightened the threat on Austria-Hungary’s south-eastern borders. Turkey and Bulgaria were weakened as potential Austrian allies, and in the second war Romania fought alongside Serbia. From being Austria-Hungary’s secret partner, Bucharest became another enemy, eyeing the Romanian speakers in Transylvania. Finally, Franz Joseph’s new foreign minister, Leopold Berchtold, concluded from the Balkan Wars that working with the other powers through the Concert of Europe achieved little. He got results when in spring 1913 he threatened to use force unless Serbia’s ally, Montenegro, transferred the town of Scutari to Albania, and again in October when he demanded that Serbia itself should evacuate Albanian territory. By this stage many Austro-Hungarian leaders agreed with Conrad that only violence could solve the Serbian problem. The main exceptions were [the Hungarian leaders] Tisza and Franz Ferdinand – and after the Sarajevo assassinations, Tisza alone.

“This context helps to explain why the Austrians used the assassinations to force a war they already considered unavoidable. The outrage confirmed Berchtold and Franz Joseph in support of Conrad’s views. Tisza was won over by an agreement that Austria-Hungary would not annex more South Slavs, by evidence that Romania would stay neutral, and - above all – by new that Germany encouraged military action. Given Russia’s position, this latter was indispensable. Austria-Hungary had long competed with the Russians in south-eastern Europe, but in 1897 the two powers reached an understanding to keep the Balkans ‘on ice’, and for a decade, while the Russians focussed their attention on Asia, they kept to it. Here again, however, the Bosnian annexation crisis, if a short-term triumph, exacerbated Austria-Hungary’s plight in the longer term. In 1908 the Russians, still reeling from their defeat by Japan, could do nothing to support their fellow Slavs in Serbia, but they did not forget their humiliation. In 1912, by contrast, they helped to create the Serb-Bulgarian ‘Balkan League’ that attacked Turkey in the First Balkan War, and they mobilized thousands of troops in order to deter Austria-Hungary from intervening. Although the Russians urged Serbia to compromise in the Scutari and Albanian crises of 1913, they were clearly becoming more assertive. By 1914 almost all the Austro-Hungarian leaders expected war against Serbia to mean a war against Russia as well, and without German encouragement they would not have risked one. And whereas the Austrians were so focused on their Balkan dilemmas that they accepted a general European war without even seriously discussing it, the Germans were much more conscious of what they were doing. It is ultimately in Berlin that we must seek the keys to the destruction of peace…”[[221]](#footnote-221)

It is ironic that it should have been the murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand by the Bosnian Serb Gavrilo Princip that gave the Austrians and Germans their chance. For the archduke, following the cautious diplomacy of his father, the Emperor Franz Joseph, had repeatedly opposed plans to go to war with Serbia[[222]](#footnote-222), and had suggested giving the Slavs equal power with the Germans and Hungarians in the Austrian empire. More than ironic, and deeply symbolic, was the date of the murder, June 28. For this was the date of the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, when a Serb had assassinated the Turkish sultan. The Austrian archduke now took the place of the Turkish sultan, and once again the survival of Serbia as an independent kingdom was at stake…

Stephenson writes: “It was the Habsburg monarchy’s response to Sarajevo that caused a crisis. Initially all it seemed to do was order an investigation. But secretly the Austrians obtained a German promise of support for drastic retaliation. On 23 July they presented an ultimatum to their neighbour, Serbia. Princip and his companions were Bosnians (and therefore Habsburg subjects), but the ultimatum alleged they had conceived their plot in Belgrade, that Serbian officers and officials had supplied them with their weapons, and that Serbian frontier authorities had helped them across the border. It called on Serbia to denounce all separatist activities, ban publications and organizations hostile to Austria-Hungary, and co-operate with Habsburg officials in suppressing subversion and conducting a judicial inquiry. The Belgrade government’s reply, delivered just within the forty-eight hours deadline, accepted nearly every demand but consented to Austrian involvement in a judicial inquiry only if that inquiry was subject to Serbia’s constitution and to international law. The Austrian leaders in Vienna seized on this pretext to break off relations immediately, and on 28 July declared war. The ultimatum impressed most European governments by its draconian demands, although if Serbian complicity was indeed as alleged the substance of the document was arguably moderate…”[[223]](#footnote-223)

This last remark is misleading: the Austrian document was immoderate in the extreme and demanded an interference in the affairs of a sovereign state that was unprecedented and unjustified even if the Austrian charge – that Belgrade had supported the terrorists – had been true. But it was not. As Rebecca West writes: “It is clear, and nothing could be clearer, that certain Serbian individuals supplied the [Bosnian] conspirators with encouragement arms. But this does not mean that the Serbian Government was responsible…

“There were overwhelming reasons why the Serbian Government should not have supported this or any other conspiracy. It cannot have wanted war at that particular moment. The Karageorges must have been especially anxious to avoid it. King Peter had just been obliged by chronic ill-health to appoint his son Alexander as regent and it had not escaped the attention of the Republican Party that the King had had to pass over his eldest son, George, because he was hopelessly insane. Mr. Pashitch and his Government can hardly have been more anxious for a war, as their machine was temporarily disorganized by preparations for a general election. Both alike, the royal family and the Ministers, held disquieting knowledge about the Serbian military situation. Their country had emerged from the two Balkan wars victorious but exhausted, without money, transport, or munitions, and with a peasant army that was thoroughly sick of fighting. They can have known no facts to offset these, for none existed. Theoretically, they could only rely on the support of France and Russia, and possibly Great Britain, but obviously geography would forbid any of these powers giving her practical aid in the case of an Austrian invasion.

“In fact, the Karageorges and the Government knew perfectly well that, if there should be war, they must look forward to an immediate defeat of the most painful sort, for which they could receive compensation only should their allies, whoever they might be, at some uncertain time win a definite victory. But if there should be peace, then the Karageorges and the Government could consolidate the victories they had won in the Balkan wars, develop their conquered territory [the Serbs had doubled their territory and increased their population from 2.9 to 4.4 million], and organize their neglected resources. Admittedly Serbia aimed at the ultimate absorption of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and the South Slav provinces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. But this was not the suitable moment. If she attained her aims by this method she would have to pay too heavy a price, as, in fact, she did. No country would choose to realize any ideal at the cost of the destruction of one-third of her population. That she did not so choose is shown by much negative evidence. At the time the murder was committed she had just let her reservists return home after their annual training, her Commander-in-chief was taking a cure at an Austrian spa, and none of the Austrian Slavs who had fought in the Balkan War and returned home were warned to come across the frontier. But the positive evidence is even stronger. When Austria sent her ultimatum to Serbia, which curtly demanded not only the punishment of the Serbians who were connected with the Sarajevo attentat, but the installation of Austrian and Hungarian officers in Serbia for the purpose of suppressing Pan-Slavism, Mr. Pashitch bowed to all the demands save for a few gross details, and begged that the exceptions he had made should not be treated as refusals but should be referred for arbitration to The Hague Tribunal. There was not one trace of bellicosity in the attitude of Serbia at this point.”[[224]](#footnote-224)

Moreover, the Serbs had warned the Austrian minister in charge of the Sarajevo visit that a plot was afoot. And, as Stephenson 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…”[[225]](#footnote-225) In any case, justice required that the trial of the assassins should take place before it could be concluded that the Serbian Government was guilty. But in fact the trial began a full ten weeks after Austria declared war on Serbia. And then nothing implicating the Serbian government was discovered. As Princip said: “Anyone who says that the inspiration for this attentat came from outside our group is playing with the truth. We originated the idea, and we carried it out. We loved the people. I have nothing to say in my defence.”[[226]](#footnote-226)

“Before dispatching their ultimatum to Belgrade the Austrians sent the head of Berchtold’s private office, Count Hoyos, to Germany. Hoyos convened a memorandum from Berchtold and a letter from Franz Joseph, both of which strongly hinted at war with Serbia without being explicit. But when the German Emperor Wilhelm II met Hoyos on 5 July, he responded that Austria-Hungary must ‘march into Serbia’, with Germany’s backing even if war with Russia resulted. The next day the German chancellor (head of government), Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg, reaffirmed the message. Following this secret assurance – usually referred to as the ‘blank cheque’ – Wilhelm went cruising in the Baltic, while Bethmann and his foreign minister Gottliev von Jagow urged the Austrians first to send the ultimatum and then to declare war without delay, while advising them to disregard British proposals to refer the crisis to a conference. Only on 28-29 July, after Austria-Hungary had declared war on Serbia, did the Germans urge Vienna to compromise. But once it became clear that Russia was supporting Serbia and had started military preparations the Germans plunged ahead, issuing ultimatums to Russia and its ally, France, on 31 July and declaring war on them on 1 and 3 August respectively. By simultaneously demanding that Belgium should allow free passage for German troops they also brought in Britain, which declared war on Germany on 4 August. Germany willed a local war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, deliberately raised a continental war against France and Russia, and finally actually started one…”[[227]](#footnote-227)

So the Germans and Austrians were indeed the aggressors and the guilty ones. In a deeper sense, however, the Serbian and other Balkan nations were guilty of having encouraged, over a period of generations, that nationalist-revolutionary mentality which, among many other factors, brought down the civilized world. Thus it is fact denied by nobody that Princip and his fellow conspirators were helped by the secret nationalist society known as the “Black Hand”.

“This society,” writes West, “had already played a sinister part in the history of Serbia. It was the lineal descendant of the group of officers who had killed King Alexander and Queen Draga and thus exchanged the Obrenovitch dynasty for the Karageorgevitsh. The Karageorges, who had played no part in this conspiracy, and had had to accept its results passively, have never resigned themselves to the existence of the group, and were continually at odds with them. The ‘Black Hand’ was therefore definitely anti-Karageorgevitch and aimed at war with Austria and the establishment of a federated republic of Balkan Slavs. Their leader was a man of undoubted talent but far too picturesque character called Dragutin Dmitriyevitch, known as ‘Apis’, who had been for some time the head of the Intelligence Bureau of the Serbian General Staff.”[[228]](#footnote-228)

‘Apis’, besides taking part in the regicide of 1903, confessed to participation in plots to murder King Nicholas of Montenegro, King Constantine of Greece, Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany and King Ferdinand of Bulgaria![[229]](#footnote-229) 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 Stephenson writes, “Serbia’s army and intelligence service were out of control.”[[230]](#footnote-230) They were brought back under control only three years later, after the nation had gone through fire and water. In 1917 ‘Apis’ was tried and executed…

## 25. GERMANY AND RUSSIA

The most important destabilising factor in European politics before 1914, besides the South Slav problem, was the increasing economic and military power of the German empire. In order to counter this, Russia formed an alliance with France in 1894, which was later joined by Britain. “The division of Europe into two military alliances,” writes Dominic Lieven, “made it almost certain that any conflict between great powers would engulf the entire continent. Nevertheless, in the first decade of Nicholas’s reign Russia’s relations with Berlin and Vienna were friendly. This was in part because much of Petersburg’s attention was devoted to the Far East, which in turn made it easier to agree with Austria on a policy of supporting the status quo in the Balkans.

“Russia’s defeat by Japan in 1904-05 and the subsequent Russian revolution of 1905-06 changed matters very much for the worse. Awareness of Russian impotence encouraged first Germany and then Austria to defend their interests in the Moroccan Crisis of 1905-06 and in the 1908-09 Bosnian crisis in a more aggressive manner than would otherwise have been the case. In Berlin’s defence, however, it does need to be stressed that Germany did not seize the opportunity offered by Russia’s weakness to impose its domination on Europe, as it could easily have done at any time between 1905 and 1909. The Russian government, acutely aware both of its international vulnerability and of its lack of prestige at home, became over-fearful of Austrian aggression in the Balkans after 1909, against which it helped to organize a league of Balkan states. The latter’s existence in turn contributed to instability in the Balkan peninsula and to Russo-Austrian tensions. The tsarist regime’s position was also challenged by the emergence of liberal-nationalist political parties in Russian which asserted their patriotic credentials by stressing Russia’s mission in the Balkans and contrasting their own support for that mission with the government’s caution and cowardice. Under all these pressures, a gap opened between Petersburg’s strong rhetorical defence of its international interests and its actual willingness to stand up for these interests when challenged. Russia’s rivals were thereby rather encouraged to discount Petersburg’s pronouncements and to believe that pressure would bring rewards. This mattered in 1914.

“In the period 1911-14 the Ottoman empire appeared to be on the verge of disintegration. Defeat by the Italians in 1911-12 and then by the Balkan League in 1912-13 was accompanied by political turmoil in Constantinople. The fate of the Ottoman lands and of the Balkans affected the interests of all the major European powers and had major implications for the European balance of power. As regards the Balkans, the powers most involved were Austria and Russia. Both general staffs attached great importance to the support of the Balkan states’ armies in the event of a European war. The likelier the latter became, the more this priority obsessed Petersburg and Vienna. For the Russians, Constantinople and the Straits possessed huge strategic and economic importance. In the event of a great power rival controlling the Straits, Russia’s Black Sea trade and ports would be at the latter’s mercy, as would the grain exports on which the empire’s commerce and finances rested. Constantinople was also important to Austria, but still more so was the threat of Balkan nationalism to domestic stability within the multi-ethnic Habsburg empire. The Balkan wars of 1912-13 had greatly enlarged Serbian and Rumanian territory, together with the ambitions and self-confidence of Serbian and Rumanian nationalists. The Habsburg Monarchy contained large and discontented Serbian and Rumanian minorities. In 1914 Vienna feared that it would soon lose all its influence over the independent Balkan states, which in turn would contribute to its inability to control the Slav and Rumanian populations of the Monarchy. In more general terms, the rulers of the Habsburg state believed that a reassertion of the empire’s power and vitality was essential in order to overawe its potential foreign and domestic enemies, and to contradict the widely prevalent assumption that the Monarchy was moribund and doomed to disappear in the era of nationalism and democracy. The Austrian ultimatum to Serbia of July 1914 was, of course, also designed to punish Belgrade for the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand: more basically, however, it aimed to turn Serbia into an Austrian protectorate and to reassert the Habsburg regime’s power and prestige both in the Balkans and at home.

“The Austrian ultimatum to Serbia faced the Russian government with a terrible dilemma. In 1914 Russia’s rulers did not want war. Whatever hankering Nicholas II may ever have had for military glory had been wholly dissipated by the Japanese war. That conflict had taught the whole ruling elite that war and revolution were closely linked. Though war with Germany would be more popular than conflict with Japan had been, its burdens and dangers would also be infinitely greater. Russian generals usually had a deep respect for the German army, to which on the whole they felt their own army to be inferior. Above all, Russian leaders had every reason to feel that time was on their side. In strictly military terms, there was good reason to postpone conflict until the so-called ‘Great Programme’ of armaments was completed in 1917-18. In more general terms, Russia already controlled almost one-sixth of the world’s land surface, whose hitherto largely untapped potential was now beginning to be developed at great speed. It was by no means only Petr Stolypin who believed that, given 20 years of peace, Russia would be transformed as regards its wealth, stability and power. Unfortunately for Russia, both the Germans and the Austrians were well aware of all the above facts. Both in Berlin and Vienna it was widely believed that fear of revolution would stop Russia from responding decisively to the Austro-German challenge: but it was also felt that war now was much preferable to a conflict a decade hence.

“In fact, for the Russian government it was very difficult not to stand up to the Central Powers in July 1914. The regime’s legitimacy was at stake, as were the patriotism, pride and self-esteem of the key decision-makers. Still more to the point was the conviction that weakness would fatally damage Russia’s international position and her security. If Serbia became an Austrian protectorate, that would allow a very significant diversion of Habsburg troops from the southern to the Russian front in the event of a future war. If Russia tamely allowed its Serbian client to be gobbled up by Austria, no other Balkan state would trust its protection against the Central Powers. All would move into the latter’s camp, as probably would the Ottoman empire. Even France would have doubts about the usefulness of an ally so humiliatingly unable to stand up for its prestige and its vital interests. Above all, international relations in the pre-1914 era were seen to revolve around the willingness and ability of great powers to defend their interests. In the age of imperialism, empires that failed to do this were perceived as moribund and ripe for dismemberment. In the judgement of Russian statesmen, if the Central Powers got away with the abject humiliation of Russia in 1914 their appetites would be whetted rather than assuaged. At some point in the near future vital interest would be threatened for which Russia would have to fight, in which case it made sense to risk fighting now, in the hope that this would deter Berlin and Vienna, but in the certainty that if war ensued Serbia and France would fight beside Russia, and possibly Britain and certain other states as well.”[[231]](#footnote-231)

When all is said and done, there can be no doubt that the First World War was initiated by Catholic Austria-Hungary and Protestant Germany against Orthodox Serbia and Russia. The proof of the guilt of the western powers, and of the sincere desire of the Orthodox powers to avert war by all honourable means is contained in the telegrams exchanged between Tsar Nicholas and the Serbian regent, Prince Alexander in the last hours before the catastrophe.

Prince Alexander, who had commanded the First Serbian Army in the Balkan wars, wrote to Tsar Nicholas: “The demands of the Austro-Hungarian note unnecessarily represent a humiliation for Serbia and are not in accord with the dignity of an independent state. In a commanding tone it demands that we officially declare in *Serbian News,* and also issue a royal command to the army, that we ourselves cut off military offensives against Austria and recognize the accusation that we have been engaging in traitrous intrigues as just. They demand that we admit Austrian officials into Serbia, so that together with ours they may conduct the investigation and control the execution of the other demands of the note. We have been given a period of 48 hours to accept everything, otherwise the Austro-Hungarian embassy will leave Belgrade. We are ready to accept the Austro-Hungarian demands that are in accord with the position of an independent state, and also those which would be suggested by Your Majesty; everyone whose participation in the murder is proven will be strictly punished by us. Certain demands cannot be carried out without changing the laws, and for that time is required. We have been given too short a period… They can attack us after the expiry of the period, since Austro-Hungarian armies have assembled on our frontier. It is impossible for us to defend ourselves, and for that reason we beseech Your Majesty to come as soon as possible to our aid…”

To this the Tsar replied on July 14/27: “In addressing me at such a serious moment, Your Royal Highness has not been mistaken with regard to the feelings which I nourish towards him and to my heart-felt disposition towards the Serbian people. I am studying the present situation with the most serious attention and My government is striving with all its might to overcome the present difficulties. I do not doubt that Your Highness and the royal government will make this task easier by not despising anything that could lead to a decision that would avert the horrors of a new war, while at the same time preserving the dignity of Serbia. All My efforts, as long as there is the slightest hope of averting bloodshed, will be directed to this aim. If, in spite of our most sincere desire, success is not attained, Your Highness can be assured that in no case will Russia remain indifferent to the fate of Serbia.”

Austria invaded Serbia the next day, which was followed by Russia’s partial mobilization. However, the Tsar made one last appeal to the Kaiser: “I foresee that very soon I shall be overwhelmed by the pressure brought upon me and forced to take extreme measures which will lead to war.” On July 30 the Kaiser replied that he was neutral in the Serbian question (which he was not). Sazonov then advised the Tsar to undertake a full mobilization because “unless he yielded to the popular demand for war and unsheathed the sword in Serbia’s behalf, he would run the risk of a revolution and perhaps the loss of his throne”. Nicholas was shocked: “Just think of the responsibility you’re advising me to assume!” he replied. But, with great reluctance, he gave the order for full mobilization on July 31. Germany then declared war on Russia on July 19 / August 1, the feast of St. Seraphim of Sarov.

It was not simply fear of popular opinion in favour of war that moved the Tsar to make his fateful decision. He knew that if resisting popular national feeling could lead to revolution, an unsuccessful war would lead to it still more surely. The decisive factor in his decision was the obligation to defend Serbia, which was tied to Russia not only by ties of blood, but by the Orthodox Faith. And if one good thing came out of the First World War it was the strengthening of that 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.”

As the Serbian Bishop Nicholas (Velimirovich) of Zhicha, wrote: “Great is our debt to Russia. The debt of Serbia to Russia, for help to the Serbs in the war of 1914, is huge – many centuries will not be able to contain it for all following generations. This is the debt of love, which without thinking goes to its death, saving its neighbour. ‘There is no greater love than this, that a man should lay down his life for his neighbour.’ These are the words of Christ. The Russian Tsar and the Russian people, having taken the decision to enter the war for the sake of the defence of Serbia, while being unprepared for it, knew that they were going to certain destruction. The love of the Russians for their Serbian brothers did not fear death, and did not retreat before it. Can we ever forget that the Russian Tsar, in subjecting to danger both 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 wroth 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 lay down his own head, for which his children and millions of his subject lay down their heads…”[[232]](#footnote-232)

## 26. THE WAR AND THE REVOLUTION

The First World War represented a last chance for the Orthodox Russian Empire and the Orthodox commonwealth in general to re-establish its unity under the Tsar, to see the western heretics, both Catholics and Protestants, for the spiritual threat they really were[[233]](#footnote-233), and to expiate their sins before God. The outcome of the military struggle was secondary to these primary, spiritual concerns. As it turned out, Russia and Romania lost that struggle, while their allies Serbia and Greece emerged on the winning side in spite of very heavy losses (Bulgaria fought on the German side, and so lost in the end).

There were certainly spiritual gains. The outbreak of the war seemed to unite the Russian people in defence of “Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality”; and many sons of the Fatherland died good deaths in a good cause. In 1915 after the Tsar himself took on the mantle of commander-in chief, the Russian armies routed the Austrians and reunited Austrian Galicia, with its Orthodox population, to the Orthodox empire, thereby completing “the gathering of the Russian lands” that had been the aim of the Russian tsars for so many generations.

But the recovery was short-lived, and soon Russian armies were retreating. Poland was abandoned, giving traitors within the Duma the opportunity to raise their defeatist and anti-Orthodox voices against the Lord and against His Anointed. The matter was not helped by major errors in military and domestic policy. For example, during the retreat from Poland and Belorussia it was decided to evacuate the Jews who were particularly numerous in that region (it was the Pale of Settlement) because it was suspected that many of them were spying for the enemy. Whether these suspicions were justified or not, the evacuation clogged up roads and railways, and supplies and troops that were desperately needed for the front could not get through the chaos. A still more serious consequence was that the authorities, instead of using the loss of the Pale to keep large numbers of the chief enemies of the empire outside the empire, imported them into the major cities of the heartland at just the moment when revolution was in the air…

The roots of that revolution have usually been seen in lack of freedom, economic poverty and social inequality. Poverty and inequality, of course, existed, and they increased during the Great War, as in every war and in every combatant country. But Russia during the reign of the Tsar Nicholas II, far from being an exceptionally poor country by historical standards, was distinguished rather by its rapidly increasing wealth – in all classes of the population.

More important in the immediate pre-revolutionary generations than the existence of poverty and inequality as such was the increasing hard-heartedness of wealthy Russian Christians to the poor – and the increasing refusal of the poor, under the influence of atheist propaganda, to accept their lot with Christian patience. Both rich and poor tended to forget the Christian teaching on social inequality, namely, that it is an opportunity for the rich to show compassion and for the poor to display patience. For, as Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich wrote, “it is God’s desire that men be unequal in externals: riches, power, status, learning, position and so forth. But he does not recommend any sort of competitiveness in this. God desires that men compete in the multiplying of the inner virtues.”[[234]](#footnote-234)

As for 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”.[[235]](#footnote-235) This view was echoed by foreign observers, such as Sir Maurice Baring: “There is no country in the world, where the individual enjoys so great a measure of personal liberty, where the ‘liberté de moeurs’ is so great, as in Russia; where the individual man can do as he pleases with so little interference or criticism on the part of his neighbours, where there is so little moral censorship, where liberty of abstract thought or aesthetic production is so great.”[[236]](#footnote-236)

Anti-monarchism was only one of the forms of that great rebellion which possessed Russia at this time. Others included theosophy, occultism, spiritism, pornography and Freemasonry.[[237]](#footnote-237)

In 1922 the Mason Boris Telepneff, Russian Assistant Consul in Paris, wrote: “At the beginning of 1906 about fifteen Russians, well-known for their social and political activities, mostly members of the constitutional-democratic party, joined French Lodges; some became members of the Grand Orient, but the majority entered two Lodges under the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite – “Kosmos” and “Mount-Sinai”. On returning to Russia, they formed two provisional Lodges, “The Polar Star” in Petersburg and “Regeneration” in Moscow. In May, 1908, both Lodges were solemnly opened by two members of the High Council of the Grand Orient, specially sent for that purpose from Paris. At the same time the Grand Orient of France established two Lodges, one in Petersburg (“Phoenix”) and one in Moscow. Russian Lodges obtained the right to establish further Lodges without interference from Paris, and accordingly in 1908 and 1909 two more Lodges were opened. “The Iron Ring” in Nizhni-Novgorod and one in Kiev. The existence of Masonic Lodges was discovered by the Russian Government in 1909; it also became known to the authorities that they were of French origin. It was then decided by the Russian Lodges to suspend work, and this was done accordingly until 1911, when some of their members decided to renew their activities with due prudence. One would not call these activities Masonic in any sense, as their chief aim was purely political – the abolition of the autocracy, and a democratic regime in Russia; they acknowledged allegiance to the Grand Orient of France. This political organization comprised about forty Lodges in 1913. In 1915-1916 disagreements arose between their members who belonged to two political parties (the constitutional democrats and the progressives) and could not agree on a common policy. Ten Lodges became dormant. The remaining thirty Lodges continued to work, and took part in the organization of the 1917 March revolution and in the establishment of the Provisional Government. Their political aim being attained, the organisation began to decay; twenty-eight Lodges existed on the eve of the Bolshevik revolution, and since then most of their members have left Russia.”[[238]](#footnote-238)

“Telepneff reported that two Russian Lodges had been formed in Paris under the auspices of the Grand Lodge of France while a Russian Lodge existed in Berlin, the Northern Star Lodge, under a warrant of the Grand Lodge of the Three Globes.

“Futile attempts to re-establish Russian Freemasonry met with the mandate of the 4th Congress of the Communist International in Moscow which required all Communist Masons to sever their lodge membership. They could not be considered for important posts in the new reign until two years after their severance. In 1925 Telepneff wrote that ‘regular Masonic activities of every description have ceased in Russian proper, due to the severe restrictions imposed by the Bolshevik authorities’.”[[239]](#footnote-239)

"An independent lodge of the so-called Martiniste Rite was formed… under the name of 'The Cross and the Star'…, which suspended its work in 1916. Other Martiniste lodges opened ... 'Apollonius' in St Petersburg (1910), 'St John' in Moscow (1911), 'St Andrew' in Kiev (1912). A very curious lodge existed among the Russian Navy League, calling themselves 'Philaletes'; beside philanthropic and intellectual work, it pursued a political aim in opposition to that of the Grand Orient lodges, namely the support of the monarchy of Nicholas II. Probably this movement arose in connection with the Paris branch of the Swiss Order of the Chevaliers 'Philaletes' which established two lodges in St. Petersburg: 'The Pyramid of the North' and 'The Star of the North'. Both pursued studies of mysticism and symbolism." (Boris Telepneff, An Outline of the History of Russian Freemasonry, cited by Angel.)[[240]](#footnote-240)

The Duma leaders Rodzyanko and Guchkov, who were prominent in the plot to force the Tsar to abdicate, were Masons. So were the leaders of the Provisional Government - as Tsuyoshi Hasegawa writes: “Five members, Kerensky, N.V. Nekrasov, A.I. Konovalov, M.I. Tereshchenko and I.N. Efremov are known to have belonged to the secret political Masonic organization.”[[241]](#footnote-241) Kerensky belonged to the “Grand Orient of the Peoples of Russia” and the Scottish Rite (32nd degree).[[242]](#footnote-242)

Most dangerous of all were those Orthodox Church activists who sought to reform Church life on Protestantizing, renovationist lines. In 1917 the future Hieromartyr Nicon, Archbishop of Vologda, said: “In recent times we have been infected with the fashion for every kind of change; we philosophise too much and we apply the measure of our own philosophising to the Church herself, forgetting that she is the Kingdom that is not of this world, as the Lord said to Pilate, that its basic principles are unchanging, that to touch them is criminal, that they are eternal, as is the Church herself, and that he who rejects them has already left the Church and ceased to be a Christian... That is what all our ‘renovationists’, ‘revivalists’ and ‘transformers’ of Church life must remember, if they want to remain faithful sons of the Orthodox Church. If they are her sons, then from them is required first of all filial obedience, otherwise they will turn out to be self-called, and capable of creating a schism in the depths of the Church.”[[243]](#footnote-243)

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A similar malady was to be found in all the Orthodox nations during the war… Thus in 1916 two-thirds of Romania was occupied by the Germans, Austro-Hungarians, Bulgarians and Turks. King Ferdinand I (1865-1927) withdrew to Iaşi, while Germany appointed a military governor for Wallachia. The Germans then introduced a decree that Christmas of 1916 and New Year’s Day of 1917 should be celebrated according to the western calendar. On December 29, 1916 (Old Style) Archimandrite Galaction (Cordun) wrote to Metropolitan Primate Conon: “The issue that today preoccupies all strata of Romanian society in the territories under foreign occupation is, without doubt, the introduction of the Gregorian Calendar, imposed on us by the German government for use by our Church, even after the passing of the New Year and our Orthodox Theophany. From the standpoint of the traditional law and practice observed in the Eastern Orthodox Church from time immemorial, this innovation, which does not involve, in and of itself, an immutable dogma, but rather a difference of eleven or thirteen days between one calendar and the other, will nonetheless be a great moral blow for our Orthodox people, but, at the same time, a huge success for the Roman Catholic Church, whose hand can be seen here, too, in that, by availing herself of the German authorities, she is now endeavouring to force us to adopt her calendar, especially in the present circumstances, when the mission of the occupying body and its concerns are directed towards something totally different from what Romanians celebrate at Pascha, Christmas, and New Year, and especially when we can anticipate that even the occupation of our territory will not remain in effect once peace has been established and measures are taken to ensure the proper administration of our territory.”

It was not only the Catholics that Fr. Galaction feared, but also the “renegades” from the ranks of the Orthodox: “In the hand that is trying to orchestrate this arrangement, I can detect hiding with the greatest of caution under the mask of Catholicism the shadows of those renegades from our ranks who left because their exaggerated personal expectations were not fulfilled. Serving the cause of the enemy Church in this way, they are yearning to win there some miserable glory and a recompense greater than the thirty pieces of silver, the price of selling the traditions of the Lord’s Church. For this reason, as Your Eminence’s humble servant, I declare that you must energetically defend our traditional rights, and that I am ready to defend you, even at the price of my life, sacrificing the last drop of my blood out of respect for our ecclesiastical institutions and for the traditions inherited from our forefathers. Therefore, Your Eminence, make a grand gesture. Stretch forth your Archpastoral staff and defend with all courage the holy treasure that is entrusted to you. You are living in an age and in a situation in which you can no longer expect anything from the world. Out of respect for the position that you occupy, you must be willing to unite with the Lord in the struggle to preserve what He has established. If you come forth to fight with zeal, you will revive the memory of the great Metropolitans and patriots of our past, who were ready to die defending our traditional rights and ecclesiastical traditions with their pastoral staffs.”[[244]](#footnote-244)

In another pastoral letter, Archimandrite Galaction wrote further about the Judases among the Romanian Orthodox clergy during the German occupation, and prophesied about the coming period of unparalleled suffering in the history of Orthodox Church: “The deadly enemies of the truth and of the teachings of Christ are proudly rising again: the firmament of His Church is becoming covered more and more by dark clouds portending a storm. The time has come for Christ to gather again with His Disciples in hidden chambers for fear of the Jews. In these days, it seems that He will come again to the Garden of Gethsemane and to Golgotha for His Passion. He is waiting for help, but there is no help, because if those in positions of leadership today were ordered to imprison the representatives of Christ and demolish His Churches, they would do so with a clear conscience, convinced that they had merely fulfilled an obligation imposed on them by the ordeal through which both of our vital institutions, the Church and the State, are passing.

“In these hard days for us, there are servants of the Altar, like Annas and Caiaphas, who bear the titles of Bishops and Priests and who, for the security of their personal lives (since the security that comes from the Lord’s Church, in Whose Name they were Consecrated as servants, is of no further interest to them), have loudly declared that the Church of Christ and His institutions have grown old and are no longer relevant to our progressive times! There are Judases who, first with calumnies and then with betrayals, wish to humiliate the Lord and His Church, and as many disciples as they can find, they will seize and hand over to the authorities.

“O beloved, Golgotha is lifted up anew, for Christ is coming to be crucified again. The crowd will look at this sight with indifference, and it would not be surprising if at one point they would want to shout for a new teacher to replace Christ, because the old laws are obsolete and no longer have any relevance to our progressive times. And the disciples of the Lord, His followers on earth, where are they? Most of them were frozen by the terror of the moment and are in the same impasse as the Disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, unable to do anything. Burdened by the admission of their own weakness, they are wailing, crying, and indignant; they try to smite with a sword, but, now knowing how to handle weapons, cut the ear of Malchus the servant, and at the end, all run to hide from fear of the ruler or to deny any knowledge of this man, that is, they do not know the Church of Christ and are completely foreign to Her commandments and traditions.

“This is happening because those who have been called to represent the Lord are in the deep sleep of death, while His vineyard is left unattended, the fences are down, the diggers have started to ruin it, and the guards are asleep. The Apostle is calling us, to let us know that the time has come to wake up and chase away the diggers, to mend the fence around the vineyard, and then to confess loudly and without fear that the Church of the Lord is one, holy, venerable, and unblemished, like a bride adorned with all of Her teachings, institutions, and ancestral traditions. If we happen to encounter any resistance, we should come out to fight with an open heart, knowing that our weapon is the word of our Lord, Who, according to His unerring assurance, will be with us unto the end of the ages; in His hands lies the chance of our success when we fight for the Church and the truth.

“Christ died, but He resurrected with much more glory, and now He is among us and ‘dieth no more; death had no more dominion over Him’.”[[245]](#footnote-245)

“For his opposition to the interference in Church affairs by the German occupying forces, [Archimandrite Galaction] was detained on January 18/31, 1917, by the German Central Police and interned as a hostage... This was the beginning of sufferings for the man who would become the founder of the Hierarchy of the Old Calendar Church of Romania. In a communiqué from the German Central Police, No. 10591, dated July 27, 1917 (New Style), he was accused of ‘activity damaging to German interests, in blatant contradiction to his Apostolic mission, which renders impossible his reinstatement in the position that he has occupied until now.’”[[246]](#footnote-246)

## 27. THE PLOT

In September, 1915 a plot to overthrow the Russian State was hatched by a “Committee of National Salvation”, which on September 8 issued “Disposition Number 1”. “It affirmed that there were two wars going on in Russia – against a stubborn and skilful enemy from outside and a no less stubborn and skilful enemy from inside. The attainment of victory over the external enemy was unthinkable without a prior victory over the internal enemy. By the latter they had in mind the ruling dynasty. For victory on the internal front it was necessary… immediately to appoint a supreme command staff, whose basic core consisted of Prince G.E. Lvov, A.I. Guchkov and A.F. Kerensky.”[[247]](#footnote-247)

It was from these plotters that the core of the Provisional Government was eventually formed. But there were many others who helped by trying to undermine the resolve of the Tsar, whether or not they formed part of the formal conspiracy. Thus “before the February coup,” writes Yana Sedova, “in the Russian empire there were more and more attempts on the part of individual people to ‘open the eyes of his Majesty’ to the internal political situation.

“This ‘search for truth’ assumed a particularly massive character in November, 1916, beginning on November 1, when Great Prince Nicholas Mikhailovich arrived at Stavka to have a heart-to-heart conversation with his Majesty…

“Very many considered it their duty to ‘open the eyes of his Majesty’: Great Princes Nicholas and Alexander Mikhailovich, Nicholas Nikolayevich and Paul Alexandrovich, the ministers Ignatiev and Pokrovsky, Generals Alexeyev and N.I. Ivanov, the ambassadors of allied governments Buchanan and Paléologue, the president of the Duma M. Rodzyanko, Protopresbyter of the army and navy G. Shavelsky, the court commandant V.N. Voejkov, the chief representative of the Red Cross P.M. Kaufmann-Turkestansky, the official A.A. Klopov, the dentist S.S. Kostritsky…

“This is far from a complete list. It includes only conversations, but many addressed his Majesty in letters or try to influence the Empress (Great Prince Alexander Mikhailovich both spoke with his Majesty and sent him a very long letter and spoke with the Empress). ‘It seemed,’ wrote Rodzyanko later, ‘that the whole of Russia was beseeching his Majesty about one and the same thing, and it was impossible not to understand and pay heed to the pleas of a land worn out by suffering’.

“But what did ‘the whole of Russia’ ask about? As a rule, about two things: the removal of ‘dark powers’ and the bestowing of ‘a ministry of confidence’. The degree to which the boundaries between these two groups was blurred is evident from the fact that the Duma deputy Protopopov at first considered himself a candidate for the ‘ministry of confidence’, but when his Majesty truly appointed him a minister, the name of Protopopov immediately appeared in the ranks of the ‘dark powers’. By the ‘dark powers’ was usually understood Rasputin and his supposed protégés. Few began to think at that time that ‘the Rasputin legend’ was invented, and not invented in vain.

“It was less evident what the ‘ministry of confidence’ was. For many this term had a purely practical meaning and signified the removal from the government of certain ministers who were not pleasing to the Duma and the appointment in their place of Milyukov, Rodzyanko and other members of the Duma.

“But the closer it came to the February coup, the more demands there were in favour of a really responsible ministry, that is, a government which would be formed by the Duma and would only formally be confirmed by his Majesty. That a responsible ministry was no longer a real monarchy, but the end of the Autocracy was not understood by everyone. Nobody at that time listened to the words of Scheglovitov: ‘A monarchist who goes with a demand for a ministry of public confidence is not a monarchist’.

“As for the idea of appointed people with no administrative experience, but of the Duma, to the government in conditions of war, this was evidently thought precisely by those people. All these arguments about ‘dark forces’ and ‘a ministry of confidence’ first arose in the Duma and were proclaimed from its tribune. Evidently the beginning of the mass movements towards his Majesty in November, 1916 were linked with the opening of a Duma session at precisely that time. These conversations were hardly time to coincide with the opening of the Duma: rather, they were elicited by the Duma speeches, which were distributed at the time not only on the pages of newspapers, but also in the form of leaflets. ‘We,’ wrote Shulgin later, ‘ourselves went mad and made the whole country mad with the myth about certain geniuses, ‘endowed with public confidence’, when in fact there were none such…’

“In general, all these conversations were quite similar and usually irrelevant. Nevertheless, his Majesty always listened attentively to what was expressed in them, although by no means all his interlocutors were easy to listen to.

“Some of them, like many of the Great Princes and Rodzyanko, strove to impose their point of view and change his political course, demanding a ministry endowed with confidence or even a responsible ministry. His Majesty listened to them in silence and thanked them for their ‘advice’.

“Others, like General Alexeyev or S.S. Kostritsky, were under the powerful impression (not to say influence) of the Duma speeches and political agitation, which the truly dark forces who had already thought up the February coup were conducting at the time. Those who gave regular reports to his Majesty and whom he trusted were subjected to particularly strong pressure. If they began a heart-to-heart conversation, his Majesty patiently explained to them in what he did not agree with them and why.

“There existed a third category which, like P.M. Kaufmann, got through to his Majesty, even though they did not have a report to give, so as to tell him ‘the whole bitter truth’. They did not clearly know what they wanted, and simply said ‘everything that had built up in their souls’. Usually they began their speeches with the question: could they speak to him openly (as if his Majesty would say no to such a question!), and then spoke on the same two subjects, about the ‘dark powers’ and the government, insofar as, by the end of 1916, the same things, generally speaking, had built up in all their souls. The speech of such a ‘truth-seeker’ usually ended in such a sad way (Kaufmann just said: ‘Allow me: I’ll go and kill Grishka!’) that his Majesty had to calm them down and assure them that ‘everything will work out’.

“One cannot say that his Majesty did not listen to his interlocutors. Some ministers had to leave their posts precisely because of the conversations. For example, on November 9, 1916 his Majesty wrote to the Empress that he was sacking Shturmer since nobody trusted that minister: ‘every day I hear more and more about him. We have to take account of that.’ And on the same day he wrote in his diary: ‘My head is tired from all these conversations’.

“By the beginning everyone noticed his tiredness, and his interlocutors began more often to foretell revolution to him. If earlier he could say to the visitor: ‘But you’ve gone out of your mind, this is all in your dreams. And when did you dream it? Almost on the very eve of our victory?! And what are you frightened of? The rumours of corrupt Petersburg and the babblers in the Duma, who value, not Russia, but their own interests?’ (from the memoirs of Mamantov) and the conversation came to an end – now he had to reply to the most senseless attacks. And he replied. To the rumours of betrayal in the entourage of the Empress: ‘What, in your opinion I’m a traitor?’ To the diagnosis made by the Duma about Protopopov: ‘When did he begin to go mad? When I appointed him a minister?’ To the demand ‘to deserve the confidence of the people’: ‘But is it not that my people has to deserve my confidence?’ However, they did not listen to him…

“Of course, they all saw that these conversations did not go down easily with his Majesty, especially if he had more than one in a day, as happened on February 10, 1917. However, the conversations continued. All this could not have a good influence on the Emperor: after all, his subjects repeated to him that he was mistaken, that there was no way of avoiding revolution. Not in vain, on March 2, when all the army commanders demanded his abdication, did his Majesty say that ‘he does not want to hinder anyone’. And before this he had one more very important (although not the last) conversation, an argument even with General Ruzsky, who demanded that the Tsar agreed to accept the formula, ‘The king reigns, but the government rules’, and the Emperor was forced to explain to him the bases of monarchical power. ‘I am responsible before God and Russia for everything that has happened and will happen’, said his Majesty. ‘It doesn’t matter whether there will be ministers responsible before the Duma and the State Council. I will never be in the situation when, seeing that what is being done by the ministers is not for the good of Russia, I can agree with them, comforting myself with the thought that the matter is not my concern, it is not my responsibility…’”[[248]](#footnote-248)

Meanwhile, on February 14, 1917 Kerensky declared at a session of the State Duma: “The historical task of the Russian people at the present time is the task of annihilating the medieval regime immediately, at whatever cost… How is it possible to fight by lawful means against those whom the law itself has turned into a weapon of mockery against the people?... There is only one way with the violators of the law – their physical removal.”[[249]](#footnote-249)

And yet there were still those who saw clearly that the future of the Church and of Russia depended on the survival of the Autocracy. Thus members of the Yekaterinoslav section of the Union of the Russian People, headed by their president, Obraztsov, wrote to the chancellery of the Over-Procurator on February 23: “The gates of hell will not prevail over the Church of Christ, but the destiny of Orthodoxy in our fatherland is indissolubly bound up with the destiny of the Tsarist Autocracy. Remembering on the Sunday of Orthodoxy the merits of the Russian Hierarchs before the Church and the State, we in a filial spirit dare to turn to your Eminence and other first-hierarchs of the Russian Church: by your unanimous blessings and counsels in the spirit of peace and love, strengthen his Most Autocratic Majesty to defend the Sacred rights of the Autocracy, entrusted to him by God through the voice of the people and the blessing of the Church, against which those same rebels who are encroaching against our Holy Orthodox Church are now encroaching.”[[250]](#footnote-250)

But the leaders of the Church did not respond to this appeal. And it was this failure of the Church to support the Tsar in the moment of his greatest need that, more than any other single factor, doomed Russia to subjection to the rule of the Antichrist…

## 28. THE ABDICATION OF THE TSAR

“Terrible and mysterious,” wrote Metropolitan Anastasy, second leader of the Russian Church Abroad, “is the dark visage of the revolution. Viewed from the vantage point of its inner essence, it is not contained within the framework of history and cannot be studied on the same level as other historical facts. In its deepest roots it transcends the boundaries of space and time, as was determined by Gustave le Bon, who considered it an irrational phenomenon in which certain mystical, supernatural powers were at work. But what before may have been considered dubious became completely obvious after the Russian Revolution. In it everyone sensed, as one contemporary writer expressed himself, the critical incarnation of absolute evil in the temper of man; in other words, the participation of the devil – that father of lies and ancient enemy of God, who tries to make man his obedient weapon against God – was clearly revealed.”[[251]](#footnote-251)

The event that triggered the revolution was the abdication of Tsar Nicholas. “For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work,” says St. Paul; “only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way” (II Thessalonians 2.7). Since “he who restrains”, according to the interpretation of St. John Chrysostom and the Holy Fathers, is lawful monarchical power, the removal of that power must usher in “the mystery of lawlessness”, the revolution.

On February 21, a 14-year-old Kievan novice, Olga Zosimovna Boiko, fell into a deep trance which lasted for exactly forty days and during which many mysteries were revealed to her. One of these was the coming abdication of the Tsar. And she saw the following: “In blinding light on an indescribably wonderful throne sat the Saviour, and next to Him on His right hand – our sovereign, surrounded by angels. His Majesty was in full royal regalia: a radiant white robe, a crown, with a sceptre in his hand. And I heard the martyrs talking amongst themselves, rejoicing that the last times had come and that their number would be increased.

“They said that they would be tormented for the name of Christ and for refusing to accept the seal [of the Antichrist], and that the churches and monasteries would soon be destroyed, and those living in the monasteries would be driven out, and that not only the clergy and monastics would be tortured, but also all those who did not want to receive ‘the seal’ and would stand for the name of Christ, for the Faith and the Church.”[[252]](#footnote-252)

The abdication of Tsar Nicholas on March 2, 1917 (old style) was the single most important event in modern history; its consequences are still reverberating to the present day. And yet it remains in many ways shrouded in mystery.

For there is no consensus on several critical questions raised by it, such as: Did the Tsar in fact abdicate? Did he have the right to abdicate? Was he right to abdicate?

In the months leading up to the abdication, as we have seen, the Tsar was put under increasing pressure by the political and military leaders of Russia. They were convinced that his abdication in favour of a government “responsible to the people”, i.e. a constitutional monarchy or parliamentary democracy, would bring peace and prosperity to the country. But Nicholas, with his deeper knowledge of God’s ways and his country’s needs, was doubtful, repeatedly asking: "Are you confident that my abdication will save Russia from bloodshed?"

They reassured him that it would. But the Tsar knew the quality of the men who were advising him. As he sadly wrote in his diary on the day of his abdication: "All around me I see cowardice, baseness and treason."[[253]](#footnote-253) And again, on the same day, while holding a bundle of telegrams from the Corps of Generals and even from his own uncle, he said: "What is left for me to do when everyone has betrayed me?"

And indeed, there was very little he could do. He could probably continue to defy the will of the social and political élite, as he had done more than once in the past. But could he defy the will of his generals?[[254]](#footnote-254) Perhaps he could count on the support of some military units. But the result would undoubtedly be a civil war, whose outcome was doubtful, but whose effect on the war with Germany could not be doubted: it would undoubtedly give the Germans a decisive advantage at a critical moment when Russia was just preparing for a spring offensive.

This last factor was decisive: the Tsar would not contemplate undermining the war effort for any reason. For the first duty of an Orthodox Tsar after the defence of the Orthodox faith is the defence of the country against external enemies. And so, after an entire night spent in prayer, he laid aside the crown for his country’s sake.

For, as he wrote: "I am ready to give up both throne and life if I should become a hindrance to the happiness of the homeland." And again he said: "There is no sacrifice that I would not make for the real benefit of Russia and for her salvation."

He informed the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Alexeev by telegram: “During the days of the great struggle against the external foe which, in the space of almost three years, has been striving to enslave our Native Land, it has pleased the Lord God to send down upon Russia a new and difficult trial. The national disturbances that have begun within the country threaten to reflect disastrously upon the further conduct of the stubborn war. The fate of Russia, the honour of our heroic army, the well-being of the people, the entire future of our precious Fatherland demand that the war be carried out to a victorious conclusion, come what may. The cruel foe is exerting what remains of his strength, and nor far distant is the hour when our valiant army with our glorious allies will be able to break the foe completely. In these decisive days in the life of Russia, We have considered it a duty of conscience to make it easy for Our people to bring about a tight-knit union and cohesion of all our national strength, in order that victory might be the more quickly attained, and, in agreement with the State Duma We have concluded that it would be a good thing to abdicate the Throne of the Russian State and to remove Supreme Power from Ourselves. Not desiring to be separated from Our beloved Son, We transfer Our legacy to Our Brother Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovich, and bless Him to ascend the Throne of the Russian State. We command Our Brother to conduct State affairs fully and in inviolable unity with the representatives of those men who hold legislative office, upon those principles which they shall establish, swearing an inviolable oath to that effect. In the name of our ardently beloved Native Land We call upon all faithful sons of the Fatherland to fulfil their sacred duty before it, by submitting to the Tsar during the difficult moment of universal trials, and, aiding Him, together with the representatives of he people, to lead the Russian State out upon the path of victory, well-being and glory. May the Lord God help Russia. Pskov. 2 March, 15.00 hours. 1917. Nicholas.” [[255]](#footnote-255)

It has been argued that the telegram was not an abdication, but a final coded appeal to the army to support him. But such a supposition cannot be reconciled with the plain meaning of the text. And since all agree on the crystal-clear sincerity of Nicholas’ character, there is no reason not to believe it.

It has also been argued that the “abdication” had no legal force because there was no provision for abdication in the Fundamental Laws. Thus, as Michael Nazarov points out, the Basic Laws of the Russian Empire, which had been drawn up by Tsar Paul I and which all members of the Royal Family swore to uphold, “do not foresee the abdication of a reigning Emperor (‘from a religious… point of view the abdication of the Monarch, the Anointed of God, is contrary to the act of His Sacred Coronation and Anointing; it would be possible only by means of monastic tonsure’ [N. Korevo]). Still less did his Majesty have the right to abdicate for his son in favour of his brother; while his brother Michael Alexandrovich had the right neither to ascend the Throne during the lifetime of the adolescent Tsarevich Alexis, nor to be crowned, since he was married to a divorced woman, nor to transfer power to the Provisional government, or refer the resolution of the question of the fate of the monarchy to the future Constituent Assembly.

“Even if the monarch had been installed by the will of such an Assembly, ‘this would have been the abolition of the Orthodox legitimating principle of the Basic Laws’, so that these acts would have been ‘juridically non-existent’, says Zyzykin (in this Korevo agrees with him). ‘Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich… performed only an act in which he expressed his personal opinions and abdication, which had an obligatory force for nobody. Thereby he estranged himself from the succession in accordance with the Basic Laws, which juridically in his eyes did not exist, in spite of the fact that he had earlier, in his capacity as Great Prince on the day of his coming of age, sworn allegiance to the decrees of the Basic Laws on the inheritance of the Throne and the order of the Family Institution’.

“It goes without saying that his Majesty did not expect such a step from his brother, a step which placed the very monarchical order under question…”[[256]](#footnote-256)

On the other hand, Archpriest John Vostorgov considered the transfer of power lawful: “Our former Emperor, who has abdicated from the throne, transferred power in a lawful manner to his brother. In his turn the brother of the Emperor, having abdicated from power until the final decision of the Constituent Assembly, in the same lawful manner transferred power to the Provisional Government, and to that permanent government that which be given to Russia by the Constituent Assembly. And so we now have a completely lawful Provisional Government which is the powers that be, as the Word of God calls it. To this power, which is now the One Supreme and All-Russian power, we are obliged to submit in accordance with the duty of religious conscience; we are obliged to pray for it; we are obliged also to obey the local authorities established by it. In this obedience, after the abdication of the former Emperor and his brother, and after their indications that the Provisional Government is lawful, there can be no betrayal of the former oath, but in it consists our direct duty.”[[257]](#footnote-257)

And yet confusion and searching of consciences continued. Thus on July 24, some Orthodox Christians wrote to the Holy Synod “ardently beseeching” them “to explain to us in the newspaper *Russkoe Slovo* what... the oath given to us to be faithful to the Tsar, Nicholas Alexandrovich, means. People are saying in our area that if this oath is worth nothing, then the new oath to the new Tsar [the Provisional Government?] will be worth nothing. Which oath must be more pleasing to God. The first or the second? Because the Tsar is not dead, but is alive and in prison…”[[258]](#footnote-258)

M.A. Babkin points out that Great Prince Michael’s statement contained the sentences: “I made the firm decision to accept supreme power only if that would be the will of our great people, to whom it belongs in the Constituent Assembly to establish the form of government and the new basic laws of the Russian State. Therefore I ask all citizens of the Russian Realm to submit to the Provisional Government until the Constituent Assembly by its decision on the form of government shall express the will of the people”.

“We can see,” continues Babkin, “that the talk was not about the Great Prince’s abdication from the throne, but about the impossibility of his occupying the royal throne without the clearly expressed acceptance of this by the whole people of Russia. Michael Alexandrovich presented the choice of the form of State government (in the first place – between people power and the monarchy) to the Constituent Assembly. Until the convening of the Constituent Assembly he entrusted the administration of the country to the Provisional Government ‘which arose on the initiative of the State Duma’.”[[259]](#footnote-259)

Since Great Prince Michael had presented the choice of the form of State government to the Constituent Assembly, many firm opponents of the revolution – for example, Hieromartyr Andronicus, Archbishop of Perm – were prepared to accept the Provisional Government on the grounds that it was just that – provisional. They were not to know that the Constituent Assembly would hardly be convened before it would be dissolved by the Bolsheviks, and therefore that the monarchical order had come to an end. So the results of the Tsar’s abdication for Russia were different from what he had hoped and believed. Instead of an orderly transfer of power from one member of the royal family to another, Great-Prince Michael also abdicated, the Constituent Assembly was not convened, and the whole dynasty and autocratic order collapsed. And instead of preventing civil war for the sake of victory in the world war, the abdication was followed by defeat in the world war and the bloodiest civil war in history, followed by unprecedented sufferings and persecutions of the faith for generations.

Indeed, in retrospect we can see that this act brought to an end to the 1600-year period of the Orthodox Christian Empire that began with St. Constantine the Great. “He who restrains” the coming of the Antichrist, the Orthodox Christian Emperor, “was removed from the midst” (II Thessalonians 2.7) – and very soon “the collective Antichrist”, Soviet power, began its savage torture of the Body of Holy Russia. St. John of Kronstadt had said that Russia without the Tsar would no longer even bear the name of Russia, and would be “a stinking corpse”. And so it proved to be…

So was the Tsar right to abdicate, if there was no provision for such an act in law and if the results of his decision were so catastrophic for Russia?

The saints were ambiguous in their utterances. Thus Blessed Pasha of Sarov, who had foretold his destiny at the glorification of St. Seraphim, said: “Your Majesty, descend from the throne yourself”.[[260]](#footnote-260) But Blessed Duniushka of Ussuruisk said: “The Tsar will leave the nation, which shouldn’t be, but this has been foretold to him from Above. This is his destiny. There is no way that he can evade it.”[[261]](#footnote-261) And another great eldress, Blessed Matrona of Moscow (+1952), said: “In vain did Emperor Nicholas renounce the throne, he shouldn’t have done that. They forced him to do it. He was sorry for the people, and paid the price himself, knowing his path beforehand.”[[262]](#footnote-262)

## 29. THE CHURCH AND THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION

Why did the Church not intervene in this great crisis, as she had intervened on many similar occasions in Russian history? After all, on the eve of the revolution, she had canonized St. Hermogen, Patriarch of Moscow in the Time of Troubles, as if to emphasize that, just as St. Hermogen had refused to recognize the false Demetrius as a legitimate political authority, so the time was coming when it would again be necessary to distinguish between true and false political authorities. So surely the Church would stand up against Bolshevism and in defence of the monarchy as St. Hermogen did then?

However, the Synod showed itself to be at a loss at this critical moment. At its session of February 26, it refused the request of the assistant over-procurator, Prince N.D. Zhevakhov, to threaten the creators of disturbances with ecclesiastical punishments.[[263]](#footnote-263) Then, on February 27, it refused the request of the over-procurator himself, N.P. Rayev, that it publicly support the monarchy. Ironically, therefore, that much-criticised creation of Peter the Great, the office of Over-Procurator of the Holy Synod, proved more faithful to the Anointed of God at this critical moment than the Holy Synod itself…

“On March 2,” writes Babkin, “the Synodal hierarchs gathered in the residence of the Metropolitan of Moscow. They listened to a report given by Metropolitan Pitirim of St. Petersburg asking that he be retired (this request was agreed to on March 6 – M.B.). The administration of the capital’s diocese was temporarily laid upon Bishop Benjamin of Gdov. But then the members of the Synod recognized that it was necessary immediately to enter into relations with the Executive committee of the State Duma. On the basis of which we can assert that the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church recognized the Provisional Government even before the abdication of Nicholas II from the throne. (The next meeting of the members of the Synod took place on March 3 in the residence of the Metropolitan of Kiev. On that same day the new government was told of the resolutions of the Synod.)

“The first triumphantly official session of the Holy Synod after the coup d’état took place on March 4. Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev presided and the new Synodal over-procurator, V.N. Lvov, who had been appointed by the Provisional government the previous day, was present. Metropolitan Vladimir and the members of the Synod (with the exception of Metropolitan Pitirim, who was absent – M.B.) expressed their sincere joy at the coming of a new era in the life of the Orthodox Church. And then at the initiative of the over-procurator the royal chair… was removed into the archives… One of the Church hierarchs helped him. It was decided to put the chair into a museum.

“The next day, March 5, the Synod ordered that in all the churches of the Petrograd diocese the Many Years to the Royal House ‘should no longer be proclaimed’. In our opinion, these actions of the Synod had a symbolical character and witnessed to the desire of its members ‘to put into a museum’ not only the chair of the Tsar, but also ‘to despatch to the archives’ of history royal power itself.

“The Synod reacted neutrally to the ‘Act on the abdication of Nicholas II from the Throne of the State of Russia for himself and his son in favour of Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich’ of March 2, 1917 and to the ‘Act on the refusal of Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich to accept supreme power’ of March 3. On March 6 it decreed that the words ‘by order of His Imperial Majesty’ should be removed from all synodal documents, and that in all the churches of the empire molebens should be served with a Many Years ‘to the God-preserved Russian Realm and the Right-believing Provisional Government’.”[[264]](#footnote-264)

But was the new government, whose leading members were Masons[[265]](#footnote-265), really “right-believing”? Even leaving aside the fact of their membership of Masonic lodges, which is strictly forbidden by the Church, the answer to this question has to be: no. When the Tsar opened the First State Duma in 1906 with a moleben, the Masonic deputies sniggered and turned away, openly showing their disrespect both for him and for the Church. And now the new government, while still pretending to be Christian, openly declared that it derived its legitimacy, not from God, but from the revolution. But the revolution cannot be lawful, being the incarnation of lawlessness.

On March 7, with the support of Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) of Finland, the newly appointed Over-Procurator, Prince V.E. Lvov[[266]](#footnote-266), transferred the Synod’s official organ, *Tserkovno-Obschestvennij Vestnik (Church and Society Messenger)*, into the hands of the “All-Russian Union of Democratic Orthodox Clergy and Laity”, a left-wing grouping founded in Petrograd on the same day and led by Titlinov, a professor at the Petrograd Academy of which Sergius was the rector.[[267]](#footnote-267) Archbishop (later Patriarch) Tikhon protested against this transfer, and the small number of signatures for the transfer made it illegal. However, in his zeal to hand this important Church organ into the hands of the liberals, Lvov completely ignored the illegality of the act and handed the press over to Titlinov, who promptly began to use it to preach his Gospel of “Socialist Christianity”, declaring that “Christianity is on the side of labour, not on the side of violence and exploitation”.[[268]](#footnote-268)

Also on March 7, the Synod passed a resolution “On the Correction of Service Ranks in view of the Change in State Administration”. In accordance with this, a commission headed by Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) was formed that removed all references to the Tsar in the Divine services. This involved changes to, for example, the troparion for the Church New Year, where the word “Emperor” was replaced by “people”, and a similar change to the troparion for the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. Again, on March 7-8 the Synod passed a resolution, “On Changes in Divine Services in Connection with the Cessation of the Commemoration of the Former Ruling House”. The phrase “*formerly* ruling” (tsarstvovavshego) implied that there was no hope of a restoration of any Romanov to the throne.

Then, on March 9, the Synod addressed all the children of the Church: “The will of God has been accomplished. Russia has entered on the path of a new State life. May God bless our great Homeland with happiness and glory on its new path… For the sake of the many sacrifices offered to win civil freedom, for the sake of the salvation of your own families, for the sake of the happiness of the Homeland, abandon at this great historical moment all quarrels and disagreements. Unite in brotherly love for the good of Russia. Trust the Provisional Government. All together and everyone individually, apply all your efforts to this end that by your labours, exploits, prayer and obedience you may help it in its great work of introducing new principles of State life…”

But was it true that “the will of God has been accomplished”? Was it not rather that God had allowed the will of *Satan* to be accomplished, as a punishment for the sins of the Russian people? And if so, how could the path be called a “great work”? As for the “new principles of State life”, everyone knew that these were revolutionary in essence…

Indeed, it could be argued that, instead of blessing the Masonic Provisional Government in its epistle of March 9, the Synod should have applied to it the curse pronounced in 1613 against those who would not obey the Romanov dynasty: “It is hereby decreed and commanded that God's Chosen One, Tsar Michael Feodorovich Romanov, be the progenitor of the Rulers of Rus' from generation to generation, being answerable in his actions before the Tsar of Heaven alone; and should any dare to go against this decree of the Sobor - whether it be Tsar, or Patriarch, or any other man, - may he be damned in this age and in the age to come, having been sundered from the Holy Trinity...”

Babkin writes that the epistle of March 9 “was characterised by B.V. Titlinov, professor of the Petrograd Theological Academy, as ‘an epistle blessing a new and free Russia’, and by General A.I. Denikin as ‘sanctioning the coup d’état that has taken place’. To the epistle were affixed the signatures of the bishops of the ‘tsarist’ composition of the Synod, even those who had the reputation of being monarchists and ‘black hundredists’, for example, Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow. This witnessed to the ‘loyal’ feelings of the Synodal hierarchs…”[[269]](#footnote-269)

Why did the hierarchs sanction the coup so quickly? Probably in the hope of receiving internal freedom for the Church. This is hinted at in a declaration of six archbishops to the Holy Synod and Lvov on March 8: “The Provisional Government in the person of its over-procurator V.N. Lvov, on March 4 in the triumphant opening session of the Holy Synod, told us that it was offering to the Holy Orthodox Russian Church full freedom in Her administration, while preserving for itself only the right to halt any decisions of the Holy Synod that did not agree with the law and were undesirable from a political point of view. The Holy Synod did everything to meet these promises, issued a pacific epistle to the Orthodox people and carried out other acts that were necessary, in the opinion of the Government, to calm people’s minds…”[[270]](#footnote-270)

Lvov broke his promises and proceeded to act like a tyrant, which included expelling Metropolitan Macarius from his see. It was then that Metropolitan repented of having signed the March 9 epistle. And later, after the fall of the Provisional Government, he said: “They [the Provisional Government] corrupted the army with their speeches. They opened the prisons. They released onto the peaceful population convicts, thieves and robbers. They abolished the police and administration, placing the life and property of citizens at the disposal of every armed rogue… They destroyed trade and industry, imposing taxes that swallowed up the profits of enterprises… They squandered the resources of the exchequer in a crazy manner. They radically undermined all the sources of life in the country. They established elections to the Constituent Assembly on bases that were incomprehensible to Russia. They defiled the Russian language, distorting it for the amusement of half-illiterates and sluggards. They did not even guard their own honour, violating the promise they had given to the abdicated Tsar to allow him and his family free departure, by which they prepared for him inevitable death…

“Who started the persecution of the Orthodox Church and handed her head over to crucifixion? Who demanded the execution of the Patriarch? Was it those whom the Duma decried as ‘servants of the dark forces’, labelled as enemies of the freedom of the Church?... No, it was not those, but he whom the Duma opposed to them as a true defender of the Church, whom it intended for, and promoted to the rank of, over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod – the member of the Provisional Government, now servant of the Sovnarkom – Vladimir Lvov.”[[271]](#footnote-271)

Lvov was indeed thoroughly unsuited for the post of over-procurator – he ended up as a renovationist and enemy of Orthodoxy. In appointing him the Provisional Government showed its true, hostile attitude towards the Church. It also showed its inconsistency: having overthrown the Autocracy and proclaimed freedom for all people and all religions, it should have abolished the office of over-procurator as being an outdated relic of the State’s dominion over the Church. But it wanted to make the Church tow the new State’s line, and Lvov was to be its instrument in doing this. Hence his removal of all the older, more traditional hierarchs, his introduction of three protopriests of a Lutheran orientation into the Synod and his proclamation of the convening of an All-Russian Church Council – a measure which he hoped would seal the Church’s descent into Protestant-style renovationism, but which in fact, through God’s Providence, turned out to be the beginning of the Church’s true regeneration and fight back against the revolution…

Meanwhile, the Council of the Petrograd Religio-Philosophical Society went still further, denying the very concept of Sacred Monarchy. Thus on March 11 and 12, it resolved that the Synod’s acceptance of the Tsar’s abdication “does not correspond to the enormous religious importance of the act, by which the Church recognized the Tsar in the rite of the coronation of the anointed of God. It is necessary, for the liberation of the people’s conscience and to avoid the possibility of a restoration, that a corresponding act be issued in the name of the Church hierarchy *abolishing the power of the Sacrament of Royal Anointing, by analogy with the church acts abolishing the power of the Sacraments of Marriage and the Priesthood.”[[272]](#footnote-272)*

Fortunately, the Church hierarchy rejected this demand. For not only can the Sacrament of Anointing not be abolished, since it is of God: even the last Tsar still remained the anointed Tsar after his abdication. As Shakespeare put it in *Richard II*, whose plot is closely reminiscent of the tragedy of the Tsar’s abdication:

*Not all the water in the rough rude sea*

*Can wash the balm off from an anointed king;*

*The breath of worldly men cannot depose*

*The deputy elected by the Lord.*

For since the power of the anointed autocrat comes from God, not the people, it cannot be removed by the people. The converse of this fact is that if the people attempt to remove the autocrat for any other reason than his renunciation of Orthodoxy, then they themselves sin against God and deprive themselves of His Grace. That is why St. John of Kronstadt had said that if Russia were to be deprived of her tsar, she would become a “stinking corpse”. And so it turned out: as a strictly logical and moral consequence, “from the day of his abdication,” as St. John Maximovich wrote, “everything began to collapse. It could not have been otherwise. The one who united everything, who stood guard for the truth, was overthrown…”[[273]](#footnote-273) For, as St. John said in another place: “The Tsar was the embodiment of the Russian people’s… readiness to submit the life of the state to the righteousness of God: therefore do the people submit themselves to the Tsar, because he submits to God. Vladyka Anthony [Khrapovitsky] loved to recall the Tsar’s prostration before God and the Church which he makes during the coronation, while the entire Church, all its members, stand. And then, in response to his submission to Christ, all in the Church make a full prostration to him.”[[274]](#footnote-274)

In agreement with this, the philosopher Ivan Alexandrovich Ilyin wrote: “Faithfulness to the monarchy is a condition of soul and form of action in which a man unites his will with the will of his Sovereign, his dignity with his dignity, his destiny with his destiny… The fall of the monarchy was the fall of Russia herself. A thousand-year state form fell, but no ‘Russian republic’ was put in its place, as the revolutionary semi-intelligentsia of the leftist parties dreamed, but the pan-Russian disgrace foretold by Dostoyevsky was unfurled, and a failure of spirit. And on this failure of spirit, on this dishonour and disintegration there grew the state Anchar of Bolshevism, prophetically foreseen by Pushkin – a sick and unnatural tree of evil that spread its poison on the wind to the destruction of the whole world. In 1917 the Russian people fell into the condition of *the mob*, while the history of mankind shows that the mob is always muzzled by *despots* and *tyrants…*

“The Russian people unwound, dissolved and ceased to serve the great national work – and woke up under the dominion of internationalists. History has as it were proclaimed a certain law: *Either one-man rule or chaos* is possible in Russia; Russia is not capable of a republican order. Or more exactly: the existence of Russia demands *one-man rule* – either a religiously and nationally strengthened one-man rule of honour, fidelity and service, that is, a *monarchy,* or one-man rule that is atheist, conscienceless and dishonourable, and moreover *anti-national and international*, that is, a *tyranny.*”[[275]](#footnote-275)

However, the democratic wave continued, and the Church was carried along by it. The hierarchy made some protests, but these did not amount to a real “counter-revolution”. Thus on April 14, a stormy meeting took place between Lvov and the Synod during which Lvov’s actions were recognised to be “uncanonical and illegal”. At this session Archbishop Sergius apparently changed course and agreed with the other bishops in condemning the unlawful transfer of *Tserkovno-Obshchestvennij Vestnik*. However, Lvov understood that this was only a tactical protest. So he did not include Sergius among the bishops whom he planned to purge from the Synod; he thought – rightly - that Sergius would continue to be his tool in the revolution that he was introducing in the Church. The next day Lvov marched into the Synod at the head of a detachment of soldiers and read an order for the cessation of the winter session of the Synod and the retirement of all its members *with the single exception of Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) of Finland*.[[276]](#footnote-276) Thus in little more than a month since the coup, the Church was in the hands of a lay dictator, who had single-handedly dismissed her most senior bishops in the name of the “freedom of the Church”… Here we see a striking difference in the way in which the Provisional Government treated secular or political society, on the one hand, and the Church, on the other. While Prince G.E. Lvov, the head of the government, refused to impose his authority on anyone, whether rioting peasants or rampaging soldiers, granting “freedom” – that is, more or less complete licence – to any self-called political or social “authority”, Prince V.E. Lvov, the over-procurator, granted quite another kind of “freedom” to the Church – complete subjection to lay control…

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Meanwhile, the turmoil in both Church and State in Russia gave the opportunity to the Georgian Church to reassert its autocephalous status, which it had voluntarily given up over a century before. On March 12, without the agreement of the Holy Synod of the Russian Church, and in spite of the protests of the exarch of Georgia, Archbishop Platon, a group of Georgian bishops proclaimed the autocephaly of their Church and appointed Bishop Leonid (Okropiridze) of Mingrelia as locum tenens of the Catholicos with a Temporary Administration composed of clergy and laity.[[277]](#footnote-277) The Russian Synod sent Bishop Theophylact to look after the non-Georgian parishes in Georgia. But he was removed from Georgia, and the new exarch, Metropolitan Cyril (Smirnov), was not allowed into the capital. The result was a break in communion between the two Churches.[[278]](#footnote-278)

In the same month of March the Russian government ceased subsidising the American diocese. The ruling Archbishop Eudocimus (Mescheriakov) went to the All-Russian Council in August, leaving his vicar, Bishop Alexander (Nemolovsky) of Canada, as his deputy. But then Protopriest John Kedrovsky with a group of renovationist priests tried to remove Bishop Alexander and take power into their own hands “without submitting to imperial power or hierarchical decrees”.[[279]](#footnote-279)

On April 29, the new Synod headed by Archbishop Sergius proclaimed the principle of the election of the episcopate, the preparation for a Council and the establishment of a Preconciliar Council. This Address triggered a revolution in the Church*.* The revolution consisted in the fact that all over the country the elective principle with the participation of laymen replaced the system of “episcopal autocracy” which had prevailed thereto. In almost all dioceses Diocesan Congresses elected special “diocesan councils” or committees composed of clergy and laity that restricted the power of the bishops. The application of the elective principle to almost all ecclesiastical posts, from parish offices to episcopal sees, resulted in the removal of several bishops from their sees and the election of new ones in their stead. Thus Archbishops Basil (Bogoyavlensky) of Chernigov, Tikhon (Nikanorov) of Kaluga and Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kharkov were removed. Archbishop Joachim (Levitsky) of Nizhni-Novgorod was even arrested and imprisoned for a time before being shot. The retirement of Archbishop Alexis (Dorodnitsyn) of Vladimir was justified by his earlier closeness to Rasputin. The others were accused of being devoted to the Autocracy.[[280]](#footnote-280)

Although the spirit behind this revolutionary wave was undoubtedly anti-ecclesiastical in essence, by the Providence of God it resulted in some changes that were beneficial for the Church. Thus the staunchly monarchist Archbishop Anthony, after being forced to retire, was later reinstated at the demand of the people. Again, Archbishop Tikhon (Bellavin) of Lithuania was elected metropolitan of Moscow (the lawful occupant of that see, Metropolitan Macarius, was later reconciled with him), and Archbishop Benjamin (Kazansky) was made metropolitan of Petrograd. However, there were also harmful changes, such as the election of Sergius Stragorodsky as Archbishop of Vladimir.

In the countryside, meanwhile, “there was a strong anti-clerical movement: village communities took away the church lands, removed priests from the parishes and refused to pay for religious services. Many of the local priests managed to escape this fate by throwing in their lot with the revolution.”[[281]](#footnote-281) However, several priests were savagely killed – the martyrdom of the Church began, not with the Bolshevik coup, but with the liberal democratic revolution.

However, in the Local Council of the Russian Church that began in August, decrees were passed reversing to some extent the decrees on the election of bishops and on the role of the laity in the parishes that had proved to be harmful.[[282]](#footnote-282)

From June 1 to 10 the All-Russian Congress of clergy and laity took place in Moscow with 800 delegates from all the dioceses. As Shkarovskii writes, it “welcomed the revolution, but expressed the wish that the Church continue to receive the legal and material support of the state, that divinity continue to be an obligatory subject in school, and that the Orthodox Church retain its schools. Consequently, a conflict soon broke out with the government. The Synod protested against the law of 20 June which transferred the [37,000] parish church schools to the Ministry of Education. A similar clash occurred over the intention to exclude divinity from the list of compulsory subjects.”[[283]](#footnote-283)

The transfer of the church schools to the state system was disastrous for the Church because the state’s schools were infected with atheism. It would be one of the first decrees that the coming Council of the Russian Orthodox Church would seek (unsuccessfully) to have repealed…

In general, the June Congress carried forward the renovationist wave; and although the June 14 decree “On Freedom of Conscience” was welcome, the government still retained de jure control over the Church. Even when the government allowed the Church to convene its own All-Russian Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in August, it retained the right of veto over any new form of self-administration that Council might come up with. Moreover, the Preconciliar Council convened to prepare for the forthcoming Council was to be chaired by the Church’s leading liberal, Archbishop Sergius…

With the Tsar gone, and the Church led by liberals and treated with contempt by the State, it is not surprising that the conservative peasant masses were confused. Thus a telegram sent to the Holy Synod on July 24, 1917 concerned the oath of loyalty that the Provisional Government was trying to impose on them: “We Orthodox Christians ardently beseech you to explain to us in the newspaper *Russkoye Slovo* what constitutes before the Lord God the oath given by us to be faithful to the Tsar, Nicholas Alexandrovich. People are saying amongst us that if this oath is worth nothing, then the new oath to the new Tsar is also worth nothing.

“Is that so, and how are we to understand all this? Following the advice of someone we know, we want this question decided, not by ourselves, but by the Governing Synod, so that everyone should understand this in the necessary way, without differences of opinion. The zhids [Jews] say that the oath is nonsense and a deception, and that one can do without an oath. The popes [priests] are silent. Each layman expresses his own opinion. But this is no good. Again they have begun to say that God does not exist at all, and that the churches will soon be closed because they are not necessary. But we on our part think: why close them? – it’s better to live by the church. Now that the Tsar has been overthrown things have got bad, and if they close the churches it’ll get worse, but we need things to get better. You, our most holy Fathers, must try to explain to all of us simultaneously: what should we do about the old oath, and with the one they are trying to force us to take now? Which oath must be dearer to God. The first or the second? Because the Tsar is not dead, but is alive in prison. And is it right that all the churches should be closed? Where then can we pray to the Lord God? Surely we should not go in one band to the zhids and pray with them? Because now all power is with them, and they’re bragging about it…”[[284]](#footnote-284)

The hierarchy had no answers to these questions…

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What could it have done? It could and should have rallied round the sacred principle of the Orthodox Autocracy and used its still considerable influence among the people to restore monarchical rule. As Bishop Diomedes writes: “It was necessary in the name of the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church to persuade the Ruling House not to leave the Russian State to be destroyed by rebels, and to call all the rebels to repentance by anathematizing them with the 11th anathema of the Sunday of Orthodoxy.”[[285]](#footnote-285)

A clear precedent existed: in the recently canonized Patriarch Hermogen’s call to liberate Russia from foreign Catholic rule and restore a lawful monarchy in 1612. Like Hermogen, the Holy Synod in 1917 could have called the Russian people to arms against those who had in effect *forced* the abdication of both the Tsar and Great Prince Michael, and who were therefore, in effect, rebels against lawful authority and subject to anathema. It could have approached any member of the Romanov dynasty – with the exception of Grand Duke Cyril Vladimirovich, who had already declared his allegiance to the revolution - with an invitation that he ascend the throne.

But the opportunity was lost. The years of anti-monarchist propaganda had done their work: some hierarchs supported the revolution, others rejected it, but the Synod as a whole sided with its supporters. It was simply not prepared to lead the people in such a way as to oppose the rebels and protect the monarchical principle. Of course, following the example of St. Hermogen in this way would have been very difficult, requiring great courage; and blessing a civil war in the midst of a world war would of course have been extremely bold… But it was not impossible…

There was another alternative, less radical than the one just mentioned, but honourable and more in accordance with the manifestos of the two last Tsars. As Babkin writes, this alternative “was laid out in the actions and sermons of Bishop Andronicus (Nikolsky) of Perm and Kungur. On March 4 he addressed an archpastoral epistle ‘to all Russian Orthodox Christians’ in which, having expounded the essence of the ‘Acts’ of March 2 and 3, he characterized the situation in Russia as an ‘interregnum’. Calling on everyone to obey the Provisional Government in every way, he said: “We shall beseech the all-Merciful One [God – M.B.] to establish authority and peace on the earth, that He not leave us long without a Tsar, like children without a mother… May He help us, as three hundred years ago He helped our forefathers, to receive a native Tsar from Him, the All-Good Provider, in a unanimous and inspired manner. Analogous theses were contained in the sermon that the Perm archpastor gave in his cathedral church on March 5.

“On March 19 Bishop Andronicus and the Perm clergy in his cathedral church and in all the city churches swore an oath of allegiance and service to the Russian state themselves and brought the people to swear it in accordance with the order established by the Provisional Government. But while swearing allegiance to the Provisional Government as a law-abiding citizen, Vladyka Andronicus actively conducted monarchical agitation, pinning his hopes of a ‘regeneration’ of the only temporarily ‘removed’ from power tsarist administration on the Constituent Assembly.

“The ‘dangerous activity’ of the Perm archpastor (this is precisely how it was evaluaged by the local secular authorities and in the office of the Synod) drew the attention of the Committee of social security and the Soviet of workers’ and soldiers’ deputies of the city of Perm, from whom on March 21 a telegram was sent to the over-procurator of the Holy Synod complaining that ‘Bishop Andronicus in a sermon compared Nicholas II to Christ in His Passion, and called on the flock to have pity on him.’ In reply, on March 23, the over-procurator demanded of the rebellious bishop that he give an explanation and account of his activity, which was directed to the defence of the old order and ‘to re-establishing the clergy against the new order’.

“The correspondence elicited between the Bishop of Perm and the over-procurator by his ‘counter-revolutionary’ activity was completed on April 16 when Bishop Androniucs said in a detailed letter of explanation: ‘Michael Alexandrovich’s act of abdication that legalized the Provisional Government declared that after the Constituent Assembly we can have a tsarist administration, like any other, depending on what the Constituent Assembly says about it... I have submitted to the Constituent Assembly, and I will submit to a republic, if that is what the Constituent Assembly declares. But until then not one citizen is deprived of the freedom to express himself on any form of government for Russia; otherwise even the Constituent Assembly would be superfluous if someone has already irreversibly decided the question on Russia’s form of government. As I have already said many times, I have submitted to the Provisional Government, I submit now and and I call on everyone to submit… I am perplexed on what basis you find it necessary… to accuse me ‘of stirring up the people not only against the Provisional Government, but also against the spiritual authorities in general’.”

Babkin cites many examples of priests and parishes praying simultaneously for the Tsar and the Provision Government until the end of April. All these instances were based on the theoretical possibility, pointed out by Bishop Andronicus, that the Constituent Assembly could vote for a restoration of the monarchy. And so, he concludes, since, in March, 1917 “the monarchy in Russia, in accordance with the act of Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich, continued to exist as an institution”, the Synod should have acted as if there was an “interregnum” in the country.[[286]](#footnote-286)

The weakness of the Church at this critical moment was the result of a long historical process. Having been deprived of its administrative independence by Peter the Great, the Church hierarchy was not ready to stand alone against the new regime and in defence of the monarchical principle in March, 1917. Instead, in the early days of March, it hoped that, in exchange for recognizing it and calling on the people to recognize it, it would receive full administrative freedom… But it was deceived: when Lvov came to power, he began to act like a tyrant worse than the old tsarist over-procurators. And then a wave of democratization began at the diocesan and parish levels… Thus was the prophecy of St. Ignaty (Brianchaninov) fulfilled: “Judging from the spirit of the times and the intellectual ferment, we must suppose that the building of the Church, which has already been wavering for a long time, will collapse quickly and terribly. There will be nobody to stop this and withstand it. The measures undertaken to support [the Church] are borrowed from the elements of the world hostile to the Church, and will rather hasten her fall than stop it…”[[287]](#footnote-287)

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If the Church hierarchy, traditionally the main support of the Autocracy, faltered, it is not surprising that the people as a whole faltered, too.

I.L. Solonevich writes: “I remember the February days of our great and bloodless [revolution] – how great a mindlessness descended on our country! A 100,000-strong flock of completely free citizens knocked about the prospects of Peter’s capital. They were in complete ecstasy, this flock: the accursed bloody autocracy had come to an end! Over the world there was rising a dawn deprived of ‘annexations and contributions’, capitalism, imperialism, autocracy and even Orthodoxy: now we can begin to live! According to my professional duty as a journalist, overcoming every kind of disgust, I also knocked about among these flocks that sometimes circulated along the Nevsky Prospect, sometimes sat in the Tauris palace, and sometimes went to watering holes in the broken-into wine cellars. They were happy, this flock. If someone had then begun to tell them that in the coming third of a century after the drunken days of 1917 they would pay for this in tens of millions of lives, decades of famine and terror, new wars both civil and world, and the complete devastation of half of Russia, - the drunken people would have taken the voice of the sober man for regular madness. But they themselves considered themselves to be completely rational beings…”[[288]](#footnote-288)

And so we must conclude that in March, 1917 the Church – de facto, if not de jure - renounced Tsarism, one of the pillars of Russian identity for nearly 1000 years. With the exception of a very few bishops, such as Macarius of Moscow and Andronicus of Perm, the hierarchy hastened to support the new democratic order. As Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) writes: “There were few who understood at that moment that, in accepting this coup, the Russian people had committed the sin of oath-breaking, had rejected the Tsar, the Anointed of God, and had gone along the path of the prodigal son of the Gospel parable, subjecting themselves to the same destructive consequences as he experienced on abandoning his father.”[[289]](#footnote-289)

However, the fact that Tsarism was renounced only de facto and not de jure means that Bishop Diomedes’ thesis that the whole Church lost grace in 1917 is false. The pusillanimity of individual hierarchs, however senior or numerous, does not amount to heresy. Nevertheless, that a very serious sin – the sin of treason, of oath-breaking – had been committed in the name of the Church cannot be denied…

The only question remaining was: could the Church cleanse herself of this sin at the Council which, thanks to the Provisional Government, it convened in August, and, thus cleansed and strengthened by the Grace of God, lead the people out of the abyss of the revolution?

## 30. THREE VISIONS OF 1917

In demonstrating this understanding of the Orthodox Autocracy in the whole manner of his self-sacrificial life, the Tsar actually preserved the ideal of the Orthodox Autocracy for future generations, handing it over “for safe-keeping”, as it were, to God and His Most Holy Mother. For on the very day of his abdication, the Mother of God appeared to the peasant woman Eudocia Adrianovna and said to her: “Go to the village of Kolomenskoye; there you will find a big, black icon. Take it and make it beautiful, and let people pray in front of it.” Eudocia found the icon at 3 o’clock, the precise hour of the abdication. Miraculously it renewed itself, and showed itself to be the “Reigning” icon of the Mother of God, the same that had led the Russian armies into war with Napoleon. On it she was depicted sitting on a royal throne dressed in a dark red robe and bearing the orb and sceptre of the Orthodox Tsars, as if to show that the sceptre of rule of the Russian land had passed from earthly rulers to the Queen of Heaven…[[290]](#footnote-290)

We learn more about the significance of this icon from a revelation given in a series of dreams in 1917 to Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow, who alone in the Church's hierarchy had refused to accept the Provisional Government because of his oath of allegiance to the Tsar: "I saw a field. The Saviour was walking along a path. I went after Him, crying,

"'Lord, I am following you!'

"Finally we approached an immense arch adorned with stars. At the threshold of the arch the Saviour turned to me and said again:

"'Follow me!'

And He went into a wondrous garden, and I remained at the threshold and awoke. Soon I fell asleep again and saw myself standing in the same arch, and with the Saviour stood Tsar Nicholas. The Saviour said to the Tsar:

"'You see in My hands two cups: one which is bitter for your people and the other sweet for you.'

"The Tsar fell to his knees and for a long time begged the Lord to allow him to drink the bitter cup together with his people. The Lord did not agree for a long time, but the Tsar begged importunately. Then the Saviour drew out of the bitter cup a large glowing coal and laid it in the palm of the Tsar's hand. The Tsar began to move the coal from hand to hand and at the same time his body began to grow light, until it had become completely bright, like some radiant spirit. At this I again woke up. Falling asleep yet again, I saw an immense field covered with flowers. In the middle of the field stood the Tsar, surrounded by a multitude of people, and with his hands he was distributing manna to them. An invisible voice said at this moment:

"'The Tsar has taken the guilt of the Russian people upon himself, and the Russian people is forgiven.'"

Many have doubted the idea that the Russian people could be forgiven through the Tsar. However, A.Ya. Yakovitsky has expressed the following interesting interpretation. The aim of the Provisional Government was to create the conditions for elections to the Constituent Assembly, which would finally have rejected the monarchical principle. But this would also have brought the anathema of the Zemsky Sobor upon the whole of Russia, because the anathema invoked a curse on the Russian land if it ever rejected the Romanov dynasty. Now the vision of Metropolitan Macarius, according to Yakovitsky, shows that through his martyric patience the Tsar obtained from the Lord that the Constituent Assembly should not come to pass – through the overthrow of the Provisional Government by the Bolsheviks in October, 1917. Moreover, his distributing manna to the people is a symbol of the distribution of the Holy Gifts of the Divine Liturgy. So the Church hierarchy, while it wavered in its loyalty in 1917, did not finally reject monarchism, and so did not come under anathema and was able to continue feeding the people spiritually. In this way the Tsar saved and redeemed his people.

Returning to the Reigning icon, Yakovitsky quotes S. Fomin on the significance of her blood-red robe: “The symbol of this icon is clear for spiritual eyes: through innumerable sufferings, blood and tears, and after repentance, the Russian people will be forgiven and Royal power, preserved by the Queen of Heaven herself, will undoubtedly be returned to Russia. Otherwise, why should the Most Holy Mother of God have preserved this Power?”[[291]](#footnote-291)

“With this it is impossible to disagree,” continues Yakovitsky. “The sin committed can be purified only by blood. But so that the very *possibility of* ***redemption*** should arise, some other people had to receive power over the people that had sinned, as Nebuchadnezzar received this power over the Jewish people (as witnessed by the Prophet Jeremiah), or Baty over the Russian people (the first to speak of this after the destruction was the council of bishops of the Kiev metropolia)… Otherwise, the sufferings caused by fraternal blood-letting would only deepen the wrath of God…”[[292]](#footnote-292)

So redemption could be given to the Russian people only if they expiated their sin through the sufferings of martyrdom and repentance, and provided that they did not willingly, through a Constituent Assembly, reject the Orthodox Autocracy in principle. The Tsar-Martyr laid the foundation to this redemption by his petition before the throne of the Almighty. The New Martyrs built on this foundation through their martyric sufferings.

And yet redemption, as revealed in the restoration of the Orthodox Autocracy, has not yet come. And that because the third element – the repentance of the whole people – has not yet taken place. In the same fateful year of 1917 Elder Nectarius of Optina prophesied about this: "Now his Majesty is not his own man, he is suffering such humiliation for his mistakes. 1918 will be still worse. His Majesty and all his family will be killed, tortured. One pious girl had a vision: Jesus Christ was sitting on a throne, while around Him were the twelve apostles, and terrible torments and groans resounded from the earth. And the Apostle Peter asked Christ:

"'O Lord, when will these torments cease?'

"And Jesus Christ replied: 'I give them until 1922. If the people do not repent, do not come to their senses, then they will all perish in this way.'

"Then before the throne of God there stood our Tsar wearing the crown of a great-martyr. Yes, this tsar will be a great-martyr. Recently, he has redeemed his life, and if people do not turn to God, then not only Russia, but the whole of Europe will collapse..."

So when would the final redemption come? To Archbishop Theophan was revealed the answer through the Holy Elders of Valaam: "I do not speak from myself. But that which I have heard from the God-inspired elders, that I have passed on...

“The Lord will have mercy on Russia for the sake of the small remnant of true believers. In Russia, the elders said, in accordance with the will of the people, the Monarchy, Autocratic power, will be re-established. The Lord has forechosen the future Tsar. He will be a man of fiery faith, having the mind of a genius and a will of iron. First of all he will introduce order in the Orthodox Church, removing all the untrue, heretical and lukewarm hierarchs. And many, very many - with few exceptions, all - will be deposed, and new, true, unshakeable hierarchs will take their place. He will be of the family of the Romanovs according to the female line. Russia will be a powerful state, but only for 'a short time'... And then the Antichrist will come into the world, with all the horrors of the end as described in the Apocalypse."[[293]](#footnote-293)

Having described three true, God-given visions of 1917, it will not be out of place to mention a false, satanic vision that was nevertheless to play an important role in Church life later in the century.

In 1917, on the thirteenth day of the month of May, and for six months thereafter the Virgin Mary supposedly appeared to three shepherd girls in Fatima, Portugal. The girls were entrusted with “three secrets”, the second of which is the most important. This supposedly revealed that, in order to avoid terrible calamities in the world and the persecution of the Catholic Church, the Virgin will ask for the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart. If her request is granted, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace. If not, then she [Russia] will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecution of the Church. “The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, various nations will be annihilated. In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me, and she shall be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world.”

Now from the point of view of the Orthodox Saints and Holy Fathers (and even of some of the Catholic “saints”, such as John of the Cross), these visions and revelations are clear examples of demonic deception and not to be trusted. In May, 1917 it was not difficult to see that Russia was descending into chaos, and the devil used the opportunity to try and persuade people that the chaos could be averted only through the submission of Russia to his tool, the Catholic Church. Not surprisingly, the Vatican seized on these “revelations” and in 1930 pronounced them worthy of trust; and every Pope since then has been committed to belief in the Fatima phenomenon.

# PART 2. REAPING THE WHIRLWIND (1917-1925)

## 31. THE NEW RUSSIAN SYNOD

After the Tsar’s abdication, writes Bishop Gregory Grabbe, “everything happened amazingly quickly. The Synod could meet only when everything was already over, and almost immediately its membership was changed, while V.N. Lvov, a not completely normal fantasist, was appointed over-procurator. There were few who understood the whole significance of what had happened at that moment. Events were evaluated in society only from a political point of view and proceeded from a condemnation of everything that was old. The religio-moral side of what had happened could not be presented in a single organ of the press. Unlimited freedom was presented only for the criticism and condemnation of everything connected with the Church. There were few who understood at that moment that, in accepting this coup, the Russian people had committed the sin of oath-breaking, had rejected the Tsar, the Anointed of God, and had gone along the path of the prodigal son of the Gospel parable, subjecting themselves to the same destructive consequences as he experienced on abandoning his father.”[[294]](#footnote-294)

The Holy Synod was soon to learn what that new government really represented. Instead of the separation between Church and State that had been promised and so many Church leaders longed for, Lvov immediately began to act like a new dictator worse than any of the over-procurators of the Tsarist period. During his first appearance at the Synod on March 4, he removed the Royal Throne (it was placed in a museum). Two days later he secured the forced retirement of the Metropolitan of Petrograd, Pitirim (Oknov), on the grounds that he had been placed in his see by Rasputin.

On March 7 the Holy Synod declared: “On March 7 the over-procurator explained to us that the Provisional Government considers itself endowed with all the prerogatives of the Tsar’s power in Church matters. It is not that he, the over-procurator, remains de facto the master and boss, as under the previous regime: for an indefinite time until the convening of a Council he also turns out to be the absolute controller of Church matters. In view of such a radical change in the relations of the State power to the Church, the signatories do not consider it possible for them to remain in the Holy Synod, although, of course, they retain a filial obedience to it and in due submission to the Provisional Government.”

However, within a few hours the authors of the declaration had changed their decision about their presence in the Synod. In the following days they continued to discuss the situation and pointed out to the government “the uncanonical and unlawful” manner of acting of the new over-procurator. But this was the end of the conflict between the Holy Synod and the Provisional Government. And although on March 10 at a session of the government Lvov suggested that it was desirable to renew the composition of the members of the Synod, it was decided to accomplish the changes gradually…[[295]](#footnote-295)

The next hierarch to go was the highly-respected Metropolitan of Moscow, Macarius, Apostle of the Altai. But it required a personal visit to Moscow by Lvov to stir up opposition to the metropolitan among his priests and laity. He was retired by the Synod see on March 20, together with Metropolitan Pitirim, Archbishop Barnabas of Tobolsk and Archbishop Ambrose of Sarapul.[[296]](#footnote-296)

The government went still further. On April 7, it ordered the house arrest of Metropolitan Macarius in the Holy Trinity – St. Sergius monastery. He prepared for publication an appeal to the hierarchs requesting that they recognize his retirement as invalid and again restore him to the see of Moscow. On the eve of Pascha he went from the Holy Trinity – St. Sergius monastery to Moscow with a letter to be handed in to one of the secretaries of the Moscow Consistory. In his letter he declared that in view of the cessation of the commemoration of his name by the majority of the clergy of the Moscow diocese, he was declaring all those clergy to be banned from serving from April 10 (*Russkoe Slovo [The Russian Word]*, April 8/21, 1917)…

Soon Metropolitan Macarius was removed beyond the bounds of the Moscow diocese to the Nikolo-Ugreshsky monastery. But instead of this he turned up in the Holy Trinity – St. Sergius monastery.[[297]](#footnote-297)

Metropolitan Macarius was never reconciled with his forced and uncanonical retirement. As he later wrote: “They [the government] corrupted the army with their speeches. They opened the prisons. They released onto the peaceful population convicts, thieves and robbers. They abolished the police and administration, placing the life and property of citizens at the disposal of every armed rogue… They destroyed trade and industry, imposing taxes that swallowed up the profits of enterprises… They squandered the resources of the exchequer in a crazy manner. They radically undermined all the sources of life in the country. They established elections to the Constituent Assembly on bases that are incomprehensible to Russia. They defiled the Russian language, distorting it for the amusement of half-illiterates and sluggards. They did not even guard their own honour, violating the promise they had given to the abdicated Tsar to allow him and his family free departure, by which they prepared for him inevitable death…

“Who started the persecution on the Orthodox Church and handed her head over to crucifixion? Who demanded the execution of the Patriarch? Was it those whom the Duma decried as ‘servants of the dark forces’, labelled as enemies of the freedom of the Church?... No, it was not those, but he whom the Duma opposed to them as a true defender of the Church, whom it intended for, and promoted to, the rank of over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod – a member of the Provisional Government, now servant of the Sovnarkom – Vladimir Lvov.”[[298]](#footnote-298)

Already on March 7, with the support of the liberal Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) of Finland, Lvov had transferred the Synod’s official organ, *Tserkovno-Obschestvennij Vestnik (Church and Society Messenger)*, into the hands of the “All-Russian Union of Democratic Orthodox Clergy and Laity”, a left-wing grouping founded in Petrograd on the same day of March 7 and led by Titlinov, a professor at the Petrograd Academy of which Sergius was the rector.[[299]](#footnote-299) Archbishop (later Patriarch) Tikhon protested against this transfer, and the small number of signatures for the transfer made it illegal. However, in his zeal to hand this important Church organ into the hands of the liberals, Lvov completely ignored the illegality of the act and handed the press over to Titlinov, who promptly began to use it to preach his Gospel of “Socialist Christianity”, declaring that “Christianity is on the side of labour, not on the side of violence and exploitation”.[[300]](#footnote-300)

On April 14, a stormy meeting took place between Lvov and the Synod during which Lvov’s actions were denounced as “uncanonical and illegal”. At this session Archbishop Sergius apparently changed course and agreed with the other bishops in condemning the unlawful transfer. However, Lvov understood that this was only a tactical protest. So he did not include Sergius among the bishops whom he planned to purge from the Synod. He thought – rightly - that Sergius would continue to be his tool in the revolution that he was introducing in the Church.

The next day Lvov marched into the Synod at the head of a detachment of soldiers and read an order for the cessation of the winter session of the Synod and the retirement of all its members *with the single exception of Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) of Finland*.[[301]](#footnote-301) The Synodal members removed were: Metropolitan Vladimir (Bogoyavlensky) of Kiev, Archbishops Tikhon (Belavin) of Lithuania, Arsenius (Stadnitsky) of Novgorod, Michael (Ermakov) of Grodno, Joachim (Levitsky) of Nizhni-Novgorod and Basil (Bogoyavlensky) of Chernigov, and Protopresbyters Alexander Dernov and George Shavelsky. In their place for the summer session were appointed Archbishop Platon (Rozhdestvensky), exarch of Georgia, Archbishop Agathangelus (Preobrazhensky) of Yaroslavl, Bishop Andrew (Ukhtomsky) of Ufa, Bishop Michael (Bogdanov) of Samara, Protopresbyter Nicholas Liubimov, rector of the Dormition cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin, Professor-Protopriests Alexander Smirnov and Alexander Rozhdestvensky and Protopriest Theodore Filonenko.[[302]](#footnote-302) Thus in little more than a month since the coup, the Church had been effectively placed in the hands of a lay dictator. So much for the principle of freedom of religion!

On April 29, the new Synod headed by Archbishop Sergius accepted an Address to the Church concerning the establishment of the principle of the election of the episcopate, and the preparation for a Council and the establishment of a Preconciliar Council. This Address triggered a revolution in the Church*.* The revolution consisted in the fact that all over the country the elective principle with the participation of laymen replaced the system of “episcopal autocracy” which had prevailed thereto. In almost all dioceses Diocesan Congresses elected special “diocesan councils” or committees composed of clergy and laity that restricted the power of the bishops. The application of the elective principle to almost all ecclesiastical posts, from parish offices to episcopal sees, resulted in the removal of several bishops from their sees and the election of new ones in their stead. Thus Archbishops Basil (Bogoyavlensky) of Chernigov, Tikhon (Nikanorov) of Kaluga and Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kharkov were removed. Archbishop Joachim (Levitsky) of Nizhni-Novgorod was even arrested and imprisoned for a time before being shot. The retirement of Archbishop Alexis (Dorodnitsyn) of Vladimir was justified by his earlier closeness to Rasputin. The others were accused of being devoted to the Autocracy.[[303]](#footnote-303)

A year later, on March 20 / April 2, 1918, a group of 87 members of the All-Russian Church Council declared that after the February revolution there had arisen “spiritual-revolutionary executive committees that did not recognize lawful ecclesiastical authority. After the April (1917) diocesan congresses in many diocese revolutionary diocesan councils were elected in many dioceses. They were directed and encouraged by the former over-procurator Lvov to carry out self-willed and lawless and actions and speeches. These councils have not been dissolved to this day, and during the year of their revolutionary activity some of them have subjected the dioceses to ecclesiastical anarchy and are now the ardent assistants of the socialist-Bolsheviks, the destroyers of the foundations of the Church.”[[304]](#footnote-304)

Although the spirit behind this revolutionary wave, as witnessed by this declaration, was undoubtedly anti-ecclesiastical in essence, by the Providence of God it resulted in changes that were beneficial for the Church. Thus the staunchly monarchist Archbishop Anthony, after being forced to retire, was later reinstated at the demand of the people. Again, Archbishop Tikhon (Bellavin) of Lithuania was elected metropolitan of Moscow (the lawful occupant of that see, Metropolitan Macarius, was later reconciled with him), and Archbishop Benjamin (Kazansky) was made metropolitan of Petrograd. However, there were also harmful changes, such as the replacement of Archbishop Alexis of Vladimir by – Archbishop Sergius.[[305]](#footnote-305)

The turmoil in both Church and State in Russia gave the opportunity to the Georgian Church to reassert its autocephalous status, which it had voluntarily given up over a century before. On March 12, without the agreement of the Holy Synod of the Russian Church, and in spite of the protests of the exarch of Georgia, Archbishop Platon, a group of Georgian bishops proclaimed the autocephaly of their Church and appointed Bishop Leonid (Okropiridze) of Mingrelia as locum tenens of the Catholicos with a Temporary Administration composed of clergy and laity.[[306]](#footnote-306) The Russian Synod sent Bishop Theophylact to look after the non-Georgian parishes in Georgia. But he was expelled from the country. And the new exarch, Metropolitan Cyril (Smirnov), was not allowed into the capital. The result was a break in communion between the two Churches.[[307]](#footnote-307)

In the same month of March the Russian government ceased subsidising the American diocese. The ruling Archbishop Eudocimus (Mescheriakov) went to the All-Russian Council in August, leaving his vicar, Bishop Alexander (Nemolovsky) of Canada, as his deputy. But then Protopriest John Kedrovsky with a group of renovationist priests tried to remove Bishop Alexander from administering the diocese and take power into their own hands “without submitting to imperial power or hierarchical decrees”.[[308]](#footnote-308)

From June 1 to 10 an All-Russian Congress of clergy and laity took place in Moscow consisting of 800 delegates from all the dioceses. As Shkarovskii writes, it “welcomed the revolution, but expressed the wish that the Church continue to receive the legal and material support of the state, that divinity continue to be an obligatory subject in school, and that the Orthodox Church retain its schools. Consequently, a conflict soon broke out with the government. The Synod protested against the law of 20 June which transferred the [37,000] parish church schools to the Ministry of Education. A similar clash occurred over the intention to exclude divinity from the list of compulsory subjects.”[[309]](#footnote-309)

The transfer of the 37,000 church-parish schools to the State was disastrous for the Church because the state’s schools were infected with atheism. It would be one of the first decrees that the coming Council of the Russian Orthodox Church would seek (unsuccessfully) to have repealed…

In general, the June Congress carried forward the renovationist wave; and although the June 14 decree “On Freedom of Conscience” was welcome, the government still retained de jure control over the Church. Even when the government allowed the Church to convene its own All-Russian Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in August, it retained the right of veto over any new form of self-administration that Council might come up with. Moreover, the Preconciliar Council convened to prepare for the forthcoming Council was to be chaired by the Church’s leading liberal, Archbishop Sergius. Thus it looked as if the All-Russian Council would finally seal the break with the pre-revolutionary past and bring the Russian Church into the mainstream of twentieth-century ecclesiastical life, by which the liberals meant, in effect, her Protestantization. However, by the Providence of God, it was not to be…

## 32. TWO CRETANS: VENIZELOS AND METAXAKIS

What Kerensky was for Russia, the Cretan nationalist and Freemason Eleutherios Venizelos was for Greece, coming to power in Athens in 1917 through a military coup d’etat, forcing King Constantine to resign in favour of his son Alexander and changing the allegiance of the Greek government towards the Allied Powers.[[310]](#footnote-310)  Venizelos lied to the Greek people, raised their hopes of conquest and glory – his aim was a Greece “on two continents, washed by five seas” - and then dashed them to the ground in a pitiless manner.

“At the end of the century,” writes Margaret Macmillan, “as Crete freed itself from Turkish rule and then joined Greece, Venizelos was prominent in the struggle. By 1910 he was prime minister. In the Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913 he manoeuvred on the international stage with such success that Greece emerged with a large swathe of territory in the north, from Epirus in the west to Macedonia and part of Thrace in the east. The new territories more than doubled its size. As soon as Venizelos signed the 1913 Treaty of Bucharest, which confirmed Greece’s gains, he said, ‘And now let us turn our eyes to the East’.

“The East meant Ottoman Turkey. So much of the Greek past lay there: Troy and the great city states along the coast of Asia Minor – Pergamum, Ephesus, Halicarnassus. Herodotus, the father of history, was born there, and so was Hippocrates, the father of medicine. On Lesbos, Sappho had written her poetry and at Samos, Pythagoras had invented geometry… The Byzantine empire and Christianity added another layer of memories and another basis for claims; for a thousand years since Constantine became the first Christian emperor, his successors had sat in his city of Constantinople (today Istanbul), speaking Greek and keeping alive the great traditions. The Greek Orthodox patriarch still lived there, not in Athens. Santa Sophia, now a mosque, was the church built by the great Justinian in the sixth century. Centuries-old prophecies foretold that the city would be redeemed from the heathen Turks; generations of Greeks had longed for this.

“Venizelos wrote to the powers in Paris that Greece did not want Constantinople. Perhaps an American mandate might be desirable. Privately, he assured his intimates that Greece would soon achieve its dream; once the city was out of Turkish hands, the Greeks, with their natural industry and dynamism, would rapidly dominate it. ‘The Turks’, he told [the British Prime Minister] Lloyd George, ‘were incapable of administering properly such a great city and port.’ During the Peace Conference Venizelos lost no opportunity to emphasize how very Greek the city was.

“For all that Greece, and Greek society, bore the imprint of its Ottoman past, Venizelos spoke for many Greeks when he insisted that his people were part of the modern, Western world. The Greeks would naturally civilize the backward Turks, just as the British or French were civilizing Africans and Asians. Why, he argued, one had only to look at the Greek birth rate (especially in Crete); the fact that it was the highest in the world demonstrated clearly the virility of the Greek nation. In 1919, he claimed, there were about 2 million Greeks living under Turkish rule.

“The correct figure was probably closer to one and a half million. Not all of that number, however, despite what Venizelos claimed, thought of themselves as part of a greater Greece. All through Ottoman Turkey there were Greek colonies, some, like those in Pontus around Trebizond on the south shore of the Black Sea, had been founded so long ago that their inhabitants spoke a barely recognizable Greek. In the interior there was little [external] difference between Greek and Turk. Perhaps as many as 400,000… Greeks were distinguished from their Turkish neighbours solely by their religion and by the fact that they used Greek characters to write Turkish words. It was mainly in the great ports, Smyrna (today’s Izmir) and Constantinople, that Greek nationalism meant something.

“In the decades before 1914 thousands of Greeks migrated to Turkey looking for work and opportunity. They brought with them the hopes of their countrymen that the Turkish Greeks could be redeemed, for Greek culture, perhaps for a greater Greece. Changes in Turkey itself stimulated Greek nationalism. When the Young Turks seized power in 1908 the old easy tolerance the Ottomans had shown to minorities was doomed and in 1912 and 1913, when Muslim refugees fled from the Balkans back to Turkey, reprisals started there against Christian minorities. Even so, before the Great War Venizelos was cautious about talk of protecting the Turkish Greeks or of bringing them into union with Greece; his country had to recover from the Balkan wars and absorb its conquests. Indeed in 1914 Venizelos was prepared to negotiate a peaceful exchange of populations, Greeks from Thrace and Asia Minor for Turks from Greece. The exchange, eight years later, was neither negotiated nor peaceful.

“The First World War changed the picture completely. The Ottomans chose the losing side, Venizelos and Greece the winning one. By 1919 even Ottoman Turkey seemed fated to disappear. The extent of the victory and the power of Greece’s friends were intoxicating; Greek newspapers talked of the ‘the realization of our dreams’. Only Constantinople was not mentioned because the censors forbade it. In reality, Turkey was defeated but far from finished; Greece’s friends were neither as powerful nor as steadfast as Venizelos assumed; and Greece itself was deeply divided between supporters and enemies of Venizelos.

“The divisions were a legacy of Greece’s entry into the war. Although Venizelos had been outspokenly pro-Ally from the start, King Constantine, who was married to the German emperor’s sister and, more importantly, was a realist, wanted to keep Greece neutral. The king and his supporters were also immune to the heady vision of a greater country; ‘a small but honourable Greece’ was their preference. A prolonged political crisis between 1915 and 1917 saw Venizelos driven from office; in 1916 he set up a provisional government in defiance of the king, which brought half of Greece into the war; and in 1917 Constantine in turn was forced to leave Greece. A reunited Greece entered the war on the Allied side, but the unity was as thin as the excuses that Venizelos now used to round up his opponents. Government, judiciary, civil service, army, even the Orthodox Church, were all purged, leaving a deep rift in Greek society that endured for a generation.

“In the Allied camp these actions, if they were noticed at all, did little damage to Venizelos’ reputation. He had bravely allowed British and French troops to land at Salonika (today Thessaloniki) when Greece was still neutral; he had spent millions that Greece could not afford on the military; and Greek troops had not only fought in the war but had gone off to help Allied anti-Bolshevik forces in Russia. He was a loyal ally, completely in sympathy with the West and its values, and opposed to German militarism. Venizelos, wisely, quoted Wilsonian principles whenever possible; he became an enthusiastic supporter of the League of Nations.

“He was one of the stars of the Peace Conference [in Paris], the ‘biggest man he met’, said Wilson with unwonted enthusiasm. He held dinner tables spellbound with stories of life in the Cretan mountains as a guerrilla, of how he had taught himself English by reading *The Times* with a rifle resting on his knees. And always the conversation included references to the glorious past and great future of Greece. ‘The whole,’ reported Nicolson, the young British diplomat, ‘gives us a strange medley of charm, brigandage, welt-politik, patriotism, courage, literature – and above all this large muscular smiling man, with his eyes glinting through spectacles, and on his head a square skull-cap of black silk’.

“On 3 February 1919 Venizelos got his chance to present Greece’s case to the Supreme Council. He came with his notes, his statistics, even photograph albums, showing happy Greek fishermen on the islands he wanted. That morning and the following day he was so reasonable, so persuasive. History, language, religion and of course, with a nod to the Americans, self-determination – he used them all. It was quite simple, he argued; in Europe Greece must have the southern part of Albania (North Epirus as he preferred to call it) and, further east, between the Aegean and the Black Sea, Thrace (at the very least the western part), a few islands and a huge piece of Asia Minor stretching from a point halfway along the south shore of the Sea of Marmara almost 400 miles down to the southern coast of Asia Minor to Smyrna. He pointed out that Greece was not asking for Constantinople. He complimented the Italians and made flattering references to the work of American teachers in his part of the world. It was a masterly performance – such amazing strength and tactfulness of argument combined’, in the opinion of a junior British diplomat. It was also dangerous – to Greece, to the Greeks and to the future peace of the Middle East. In that moment of triumph at the Peace Conference Venizelos lit a fuse that led to the catastrophic destruction of ancient Greek communities in Turkey and an enduring hostility that still exists today between Greece and Turkey…”[[311]](#footnote-311)

Venizelos’ destructive work in the State was complemented in the Church by his fellow Cretan and nephew Emmanuel Metaxakis, later Patriarch Meletios IV.[[312]](#footnote-312)

Meletios “was born on September 21, 1871 in the village of Parsas on the island of Crete. He entered the Seminary of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem in 1889. He was tonsured with the name Meletios and ordained a hierodeacon in 1892. He completed the theological courses at Holy Cross and was assigned as secretary to the Holy Synod in Jerusalem by Patriarch Damian in 1900. In 1908 Meletios was evicted from the Holy Land by Patriarch Damian, along with the then administrator Chrysostom, later Archbishop of Athens, for ‘activity against the Holy Sepulchre’. Meletios Metaxakis was then elected Metropolitan of Kition [in Cyprus] in 1910.”[[313]](#footnote-313)

This election is surprising in view of the fact that the Cypriots only elect fellow Cypriots to the sees of their Church. It is explained by the fact that the Archbishop of Cyprus at that time, Cyril, who later introduced the new calendar into Cyprus, was a Mason, and probably helped the advancement of his fellow-Mason. For Metaxakis, according to Masonic sources, had become a Mason in 1909.[[314]](#footnote-314)

Bishop Photius continues: “In the years before the war Metropolitan Meletios began successful talks in New York with representatives of the Episcopal Church of America, with the intention of ‘expanding mutual relations between the two Churches’.[[315]](#footnote-315) After the death of Patriarch Joachim III on June 13, 1912, Meletios was nominated as a candidate for the Patriarchal Throne in Constantinople. However, the Holy Synod decided that Meletios could not canonically be registered as a candidate.”[[316]](#footnote-316)

In 1916 MeLETIOS left his Cypriot flock and headed for Greece. On November 10/23, 1916 a Greek Minister, Andrew Mikhalakopoulos, wrote to President Venizelos, arguing for the necessity of a radical reform of the Greek Church that would bring her closer to the West. And he suggested that Meletios, a fervent Venizelist, would be a suitable agent of this reform.

His letter amounted to nothing less than a proposed wholesale reformation of the Orthodox Church in a Protestant direction, its transformation into “Protestantism of the Eastern rite”:

“Mr. President, I told you a long time ago in the Council of Ministers that after we had brought to a successful conclusion the national struggle that you have undertaken, it would be necessary, for the good of the country, for you to take care of another, equally important, struggle, that of modernizing our religious affairs… To head this truly revolutionary reform, you will need a far-seeing Hierarch, one almost like you in politics. You have one: We are talking of the Hierarch from Cyprus [Meletios Metaxakis]. Under your guidance, he will become the Venizelos of the Church of Greece.

“What are the elements that will require reform (once the political revolution has removed Archbishop Procopius of Athens and those like him) in intellectual and monastic circles, when there will have been put in place an ecclesiastical Hierarchy and a universal Synod, or perhaps only a Greek Synod…?

“1) Abolition of the Fasts, which today are a simple formality. Nobody keeps the Fasts, except one who has nothing to eat. The English and the Germans, and even the northern Italians, who have been liberated from religious fanaticism, eat well, and by eating well they are working well and building a good race. Nourishment brings the necessary strength to work, work brings profit, and profit brings good nourishment. I do not think that the Italians of the north are worse than those of the south, whom the momentous propaganda of the Dante Alighieri Society has not succeeded in snatching from the claws of religious prejudice.

“2) Modernization of the different ceremonies and Liturgies. Less presence of the Priest, the Psaltes, and the Deacon, and increased presence of the expository preacher. What can people who attend religious ceremonies really understand… from these hours that they spend and from standing upright? Nothing. If the Priest were obligated to recite two or three hymns… and to teach during a half-hour period, the listeners would derive much more benefit from this in a very short time, from the social, moral, and patriotic point of view.

“3)… The Priests, by being educated at special schools, will have learned, not the meaning of [a certain phrase from the Liturgy, which Michalakopoulos is not familiar with either, since he misquotes it]…, but how to speak to the people in an intelligible way about sobriety, savings…, love of one’s country, even about the political duties of their listeners, etc., etc.

“4) We will abolish the different Feasts of Saint Athanasios, Saint Andrew, and so on and so forth, which are nothing but an excuse for idleness. A holiday on Sunday and two or three holidays per year will be quite satisfactory for the sluggards. In the villages, holidays are more numerous than workdays… Hence, idleness and its harmful consequences: drunkenness, gambling, and crime, during the time that remains free in the day after the Liturgy. Obviously, it is not possible (unfortunately) to make the idea of holiness disappear… Once there fell into my hands a French book, which my taste for reading made me read, the title of which was *Preacher’s Panorama*; a large tome… We will publish a book of this type, fruit of the collaboration of good Church and lay writers. And the word ‘holy’ will disappear…

“5) The monasteries, the source of all corruption and of all the abuses of fortune and morals, will be abolished. Their lands will pass into the hands of the peasants…

“Of course, all the foregoing is just a very small part of the program. Many other things will need to be reformed… They will tell you, Mr. President, that putting such an undertaking into effect is an arduous thing; that the people will rise up against the new Iconoclasts; that a revolution will rise up against the impious. Nothing of the kind will happen, from the moment that your own prestige increases… If we succeed on the national level, then the other purge, the interior purge, will follow, and no one will be capable of provoking any troubles… The ecclesiastical Hierarchy that we will train to prepare the reform will have to respond to the need for regulating our religious affairs, following the abolition of the Turkish state and the reduction of the area in which the Oecumenical Patriarchate exercises its jurisdiction…”[[317]](#footnote-317)

## 33. THE MOSCOW COUNCIL OF 1917-18

One of the few good acts of the Provisional Government was its giving permission for the convening of the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church. “Preparations began on 29 April, 1917, “when the pre-Conciiar Assembly of the Holy Synod was constituted, consisting of sixty-two members. This assembly was comprised of ten working groups, each headed by a bishop. The pre-Conciliar Assembly in its turn based its work on the proceedings of the 1905-06 pre-Conciliar Committee, and on those of the 1912-14 pre-Conciliar Conference.”[[318]](#footnote-318) The Council held three sessions; the first from August 15 to December 9, 1917, the second from January 20 to April 7, 1918 and the third from June 19 t September 7, 1918 (old style).

The Council, assembled in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow. On August 19 Metropolitan Tikhon (Bellavin) of Moscow was elected as chairman. 564 delegates attended the first session, including eighty bishops and 299 laymen. On the one hand, it included among the delegates such open Freemasons as Lvov, and on the other, it excluded such pious hierarchs as Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow because of his monarchist views. However, in spite of this and other flaws, it was the first Council in the history of the Russian Church since 1666, and was to prove to be a critical point of repose, refreshment and regrouping for the Church before the terrible trials that awaited her.

At the beginning there was little sign that more than a minority of the delegates understood the full apocalyptic significance of the events they were living through. On August 24, and again on October 20, the Council issued statements condemning the increasing violence, theft and sacrilege against churches, monasteries and priests that had been increasing ever since February.[[319]](#footnote-319) In general, however, revolutionary sentiment was dominant. According to Princess Urusova, the Council even decreed that there should be no discussion of “politics” – that is, no condemnation of the revolution. Instead property questions were discussed. But then a professor from Belorussia said: “We should not be discussing these questions now! Russia is perishing, the throne is mocked. Without an Anointed of God, an Orthodox Tsar, she will soon fall under the power of darkness.” But he could not continue his speech since he had touched “politics”…[[320]](#footnote-320)

At first the Council, while condemning the moral degeneration taking place in the country, did not indicate the act that had opened the path to this: the nation’s – and the Synod’s – betrayal of the Tsar and Tsarism. As N. Kusakov writes, “I have long asked myself: why did the Council not demand of the Provisional Government the immediate release of the Royal Family from under guard? Why did Metropolitan Pitirim of Petrograd and Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow remain in prison under the Provisional Government during the days of the Council? The cold breath of February blew in the corridors of the Council.”[[321]](#footnote-321)

On October 21, during Vespers in the Dormition cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin, two people dressed in soldiers’ uniforms went up to the shrine and relics of St. Hermogen, Patriarch of Moscow, threw off the covers and began to remove the vestments. When taken to the commissariat, they told the police that “now there is freedom and everyone can do anything he wants”. Three days later a penitential moleben was carried out in front of the shrine with the holy relics. The next day, the October revolution took place. St. Hermogen, who been canonized by the Church only a few years before, was notable for his refusal to recognize the government of the False Demetrius, and for his call to the nation to rise up in arms against it. For those with eyes to see, the incident at his shrine just before the coming to power of the Bolsheviks was a sign that the time had come to act in his spirit, against another false or anti-government.

The Council seemed to understand this, for after the Bolsheviks came to power on October 25, a new spirit of defiance began to prevail in it, a spirit that became still stronger after the Bolsheviks dispersed the Constituent Assembly in January. One of the delegates, Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris and Western Europe, described the change thus: “Russian life in those days was like a sea tossed by the storm of revolution. Church life had fallen into a state of disorganization. The external appearance of the Council, because of the diversity of its composition, its irreconcilability and the mutual hostility of its different tendencies and states of mind, was at first matter for anxiety and sadness and even seemed to constitute a cause for apprehension… Some members of the Council had already been carried away by the wave of revolution. The intelligentsia, peasants, workers and professors all tended irresistibly to the left. Among the clergy there were also different elements. Some of them proved to be ‘leftist’ participants of the previous revolutionary Moscow Diocesan Congress, who stood for a thorough and many-sided reform of church life. Disunion, disorder, dissatisfaction, even mutual distrust… – such was the state of the Council at first. But – O miracle of God! – everything began gradually to change… The disorderly assembly, moved by the revolution and in contact with its sombre elements, began to change into something like a harmonious whole, showing external order and internal solidarity. People became peaceable and serious in their tasks and began to feel differently and to look on things in a different way. This process of prayerful regeneration was evident to every observant eye and perceptible to every participant in the Council. A spirit of peace, renewal and unanimity inspired us all…”[[322]](#footnote-322)

The Council coincided with the most momentous events in Russian history: the war with Germany, the fall of the Provisional Government and the Bolshevik coup, the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly and the beginning of the Civil War. On all these events it was able to make declarations that expressed the opinion of Believing Russia. In a real sense, in the absence of any other representative assembly, it was the voice of Russia – or, at any rate, of that large proportion of the population which had not been engulfed by the revolutionary frenzy. As for the Bolsheviks, whose decrees with regard to the Church were either ignored or outrightly defied by the Council, they made no serious attempt to impede its work…

### 1. The Restoration of the Patriarchate

The pre-conciliar council in June had expressed itself strongly against the restoration of the patriarchate. And on September 1, the government, not waiting for the verdict of the Constituent Assembly, had declared that Russia was a republic. And so when the proposal to restore the patriarchate was introduced on October 11 by the future Hieromartyr Bishop Metrophanes of Astrakhan, it met with considerable opposition on the grounds that it was a reactionary measure. However, the Bolshevik revolution in October coincided, paradoxically, with a rise in support for the idea, largely owing to the energetic support by Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) and Archimandrite Hilarion (Troitsky). On October 28 the motion was carried, and on October 30 the first ballot to elect a Patriarch produced the following result: for Archbishop Anthony – 101 votes; for Archbishop Cyril of Tambov (the future hieromartyr and first-hierarch of the Catacomb Church) - 27; for the new Metropolitan of Moscow Tikhon – 23; for Metropolitan Platon – 22; for Archbishop Arseny of Novgorod – 14; for Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev, Archbishop Anastasy of Kishinev and Protopresbyter George Shavelsky – 13; for Archbishop Sergius of Vladimir – 5; for Archbishop James of Kazan, Archimandrite Hilarion and A.D. Samarin, a former over-procurator – 3. The other fifteen candidates received one or two votes. At the second ballot on November 1 three candidates were elected: Archbishop Anthony (159), Metropolitan Arsenius of Novgorod (199) and Metropolitan Tikhon of Moscow (162).

On November 5, lots were drawn. Metropolitan Eulogius writes: “Everybody shivered in expectation of whom the Lord would call… At the end of the moleben Metropolitan Vladimir went up to the analoy, took the casket, blessed the people with it, broke the cord with which the casket was bound and removed the seal. The venerable elder, Hieroschemamonk Alexis, the hermit of Zosima desert (not far from the Trinity-St. Sergius monastery), came out of the altar; he had been taking part in the Council for the sake of ecclesiastical obedience. He crossed himself three times and, without looking, took the piece of paper from the casket. Metropolitan Vladimir read it carefully: ‘Tikhon, Metropolitan of Moscow’. It was as if an electric spark had run through the worshippers… The refrain of the metropolitan rang out: ‘Axios!’, which was drowned in the unanimous ‘Axios!!… Axios!…’ of the clergy and people. The choir together with the worshippers began to chant: ‘We praise Thee, O Lord…’”[[323]](#footnote-323)

Thus was the wish of one of the peasant delegates fulfilled: “We have a tsar no more; no father whom we love. It is impossible to love a synod; and therefore we, the peasants, want a Patriarch.” Archbishop Hilarion said in triumph: “The eagle of Petrine autocracy, shaped in imitation of the West, tore asunder the Patriarchate, that sacred heart of Russian Orthodoxy. The sacrilegious hand of the impious Peter pulled down the senior hierarch of the Russian Church from his traditional seat in the Dormition Cathedral. The Council, by the authority given it by God, has once more placed the patriarch of Moscow in the chair, which belongs to him by inalienable right.”[[324]](#footnote-324)

Metropolitan Tikhon was duly enthroned on November 21 in the Kremlin cathedral of the Dormition to the sound of rifle fire from the battle for Moscow outside. With the enthronement of the patriarch, as Sergius Firsov writes, “an historical event took place – the Orthodox Church received its canonical head, whose voice had not been heard for a whole 217 years. Not only formally, but effectively this was the closing of the last page in the history of the Synodal period.”[[325]](#footnote-325)

According to the new constitution of the Russian Church agreed at the Council, the Church’s supreme organ was the Sacred All-Russian Council, composed of bishops, clergy and laity, which was to be periodically convoked by the Patriarch but to which the Patriarch himself was responsible. Between Councils, the Patriarch administered the Church with the aid of two permanent bodies: the Synod of Bishops, and the Higher Church Council, on which parish clergy and laity could sit. Questions relating to theology, religious discipline and ecclesiastical administration were to be the prerogative of the Synod of Bishops, while secular-juridical, charity and other church-related social questions were to be the prerogative of the Higher Church Council. On December 7 the Holy Synod was elected, and on December 8 – the Higher Church Council.

On January 25, the Council heard that Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev had been murdered by the Bolsheviks. These events concentrated minds on the danger the Patriarch was in; and on the same day the Council immediately passed a resolution entrusting him with the drawing up of the names of three men who could serve as locum tenentes of the Patriarch in the event of his death and before the election of a new Patriarch. This measure was not strictly canonical but was felt to be necessary in the circumstances of incipient civil war. These names were to be kept secret - on February 3/16 Prince Trubestkoj said that there had been “a closed session of the Council” to discuss this question, and that “it was decreed that the whole fullness of the rights of the Patriarch should pass to the locum tenens”, and that “it is not fitting to speak about all the motivation behind the decision taken in an open session”.[[326]](#footnote-326)

The Patriarch’s will was revised by him towards the end of 1924, and was published only after his death in 1925. It was read out in the presence of sixty hierarchs and declared: “In the event of our death our patriarchal rights and obligations, until the canonical election of a new Patriarch, we grant temporarily to his Eminence Metropolitan Cyril (Smirnov). In the event of the impossibility, by reason of whatever circumstances, of his entering upon the exercise of the indicated rights and obligations, they will pass to his Eminence Metropolitan Agathangel (Preobrazhensky). If this metropolitan, too, does not succeed in accomplishing this, then our patriarchal rights and obligations will pass to his Eminence Peter (Polyansky), Metropolitan of Krutitsa.”

Since both Metropolitans Cyril and Agathangel were in exile at the time of the Patriarch’s death on the feast of Annunciation, 1925, Metropolitan Peter became the patriarchal locum tenens.

Patriarch Tikhon’s choice turned out to be inspired, although Metropolitan Peter was not well known at the time of the Council. As Regelson comments: “That the first-hierarchical authority in the Russian Church after the death of Patriarch Tikhon was able to be preserved was thanks only to the fact that one of the patriarchal locum tenentes Patriarch Tikhon chose in 1918 was Metropolitan Peter, who at the moment of the choice was only a servant of the Synod! Many hierarchs were amazed and disturbed by his subsequent swift ‘career’, which changed him in the course of six years into the metropolitan of Krutitsa and Kolomna… But it was precisely thanks to the extraordinary nature of his destiny that he turned out to be the only one chosen by the Patriarch (in actual fact, *chosen by the Council, as entrusted to the Patriarch*) who was left in freedom at the moment of the death of Patriarch Tikhon. It is difficult even to conjecture how complicated and, besides, tragic would have been the destiny of the Russian Church if the wise thought of the Council and the Patriarch had not been realized in life.”[[327]](#footnote-327)

### 2. The Attitude towards Soviet power

The Council refused to recognize the legitimacy of Soviet power. Thus when, on the day after the coup, October 26, Lenin nationalized all land, making the Church’s and parish priests’ property illegal, the Council addressed a letter to the faithful on November 11, calling the revolution “descended from the Antichrist and possessed by atheism”: “Open combat is fought against the Christian Faith, in opposition to all that is sacred, arrogantly abasing all that bears the name of God (II Thessalonians 2.4)… But no earthly kingdom founded on ungodliness can ever survive: it will perish from internal strife and party dissension. Thus, because of its frenzy of atheism, the State of Russia will fall… For those who use the sole foundation of their power in the coercion of the whole people by one class, no motherland or holy place exists. They have become traitors to the motherland and instigated an appalling betrayal of Russia and her true allies. But, to our grief, as yet no government has arisen which is sufficiently one with the people to deserve the blessing of the Orthodox Church. And such will not appear on Russian soil until we turn with agonizing prayer and tears of repentance to Him, without Whom we labour in vain to lay foundations…”[[328]](#footnote-328)

This recognition of the real nature of the revolution came none too early. On November 15, a peasant, Michael Efimovich Nikonov, wrote to the Council: “We think that the Most Holy Synod made an irreparable mistake when the bishops went to meet the revolution. We do not know the reasons for this. Was it for fear of the Jews? In accordance with the prompting of their heart, or for some laudable reasons? Whatever the reason, their act produced a great temptation in the believers, and not only in the Orthodox, but even among the Old Ritualists. Forgive me for touching on this question – it is not our business to judge that: this is a matter for the Council, I am only placing on view the judgement of the people.

“People are saying that by this act of the Synod many right-thinking people were led into error, and also many among the clergy. We could hardly believe our ears at what we heard at parish and deanery meetings. Spiritual fathers, tempted by the deception of freedom and equality, demanded that hierarchs they dislike be removed together with their sees, and that they should elect those whom they wanted. Readers demanded the same equality, so as not to be subject to their superiors. That is the absurdity we arrived at when we emphasized the satanic idea of the revolution. The Orthodox Russian people is convinced that the Most Holy Council in the interests of our holy mother, the Church, the Fatherland and Batyushka Tsar, should give over to anathema and curse all self-called persons and all traitors who trampled on their oath together with the satanic idea of the revolution. And the Most Holy Council will show to its flock who will take over the helm of administration in the great State. We suppose it must be he who is in prison [the Tsar], but if he does not want to rule over us traitors,… then let it indicate who is to accept the government of the State; that is only common sense. The act of Sacred Coronation and Anointing with holy oil of our tsars in the Dormition Cathedral [of the Moscow Kremlin] was no simple comedy. It was they received from God the authority to rule the people, giving account to Him alone, and by no means a constitution or some kind of parliament of not quite decent people capable only of revolutionary arts and possessed by the love of power…

“Everything that I have written here is not my personal composition alone, but the voice of the Russian Orthodox people, the 100-million-strong village Russia in which I live.”[[329]](#footnote-329)

Many people were indeed disturbed by such questions as: had the Church betrayed the Tsar in March 1917? Were Christians guilty of breaking their oath to the Tsar by accepting the Provisional Government? Should the Church formally absolve the people of their oath to the Tsar?

The leadership of the Council passed consideration of these questions, together with Nikonov’s letter, to a subsection entitled “On Church Discipline”. This subsection had several meetings in the course of the next nine months, but came to no definite decisions…[[330]](#footnote-330)

The Council’s decree of December 2, “On the Legal Status of the Russian Orthodox Church”, ruled, on the one hand, that the State could issue no law relating to the Church without prior consultation with and approval by her, and on the other hand, that any decree and by-laws issued by the Orthodox Church that did not directly contradict state laws were to be systematically recognized by the State as legally binding. Church holidays were to remain state holidays, blasphemy and attempts to lure members of the Church away from her were to remain illegal, and schools of all levels organized and run by the Church were to be recognised by the State on a par with the secular schools. It is clear from this decree that the Church was determined to go Her own way in complete defiance of the so-called “authorities”.

On December 17 (n.s.), there was a new decree on the land committees, according to which land, “including all monastery lands, were removed into the hands of the state.” On December 24 there was issued a decree closing all theological academies, seminaries and schools and transferring them and all their property to the Commissariat of Education. On December 31, ecclesiastical marriage was deprived of its legal status and civil marriage introduced in its place.[[331]](#footnote-331)

As if to test the decree “On the Legal Status of the Russian Orthodox Church”, on January 13, Alexandra Kollontai, the People’s Commissar of Social Welfare (and Lenin’s mistress), sent a detachment of sailors to occupy the Alexander Nevsky monastery and turn it into a sanctuary for war invalids. They were met by an angry crowd of worshippers and in the struggle which followed one priest, Fr. Peter Skipetrov, was shot dead.[[332]](#footnote-332)

According to Orlando Figes, Lenin was not yet ready for a confrontation with the Church, but Kollontai’s actions forced his hand.[[333]](#footnote-333)  On January 20 a law on freedom of conscience, later named the “Decree on the Separation of the Church from the State and of the School from the Church”, was passed (it was published three days later in *Izvestia*). This was the Bolsheviks’ fiercest attack yet on the Church. It forbade religious bodies from owning property (all property of religious organizations was declared to be the heritage of the people), from levying dues, from organizing into hierarchical organizations, and from teaching religion to persons under 18 years of age. Ecclesiastical and religious societies did not have the rights of a juridical person. The registering of marriages was to be done exclusively by the civil authorities.

Thus, far from being a blow struck *for* freedom of conscience, it was, as the Council put it, a decree on freedom *from* conscience, and an excuse for large-scale pillaging of churches and murders, often in the most bestial manner.[[334]](#footnote-334)

Fr. Alexander Mazyrin points out that this decree in effect deprived the Church of its rights as a legal person. “This meant that de jure the Church ceased to exist as a single organization. Only local religious communities could exist in legal terms, the authorities signing with them agreements on the use of Church property. The Eighth Department of the People’s Commissariat of Justice, which was due to put into practice Lenin’s decree, was officially dubbed the ‘Liquidation’ Department. It was the elimination of the Church, not its legalization as a social institution, that was the aim pursued by the ‘people’s commissars’ government.”[[335]](#footnote-335)

On January 19 / February 1, Patriarch Tikhon, anticipating the decree, and even before the Council had reconvened[[336]](#footnote-336), issued his famous anathema against the Bolsheviks: “By the power given to Us by God, we forbid you to approach the Mysteries of Christ, we **anathematise** you, if only you bear Christian names and although by birth you belong to the Orthodox Church. We also adjure all of you, faithful children of the Orthodox Church of Christ, not to enter into any communion with such outcasts of the human race: ‘Remove the evil one from among you’ (I Corinthians 5.13).” The decree ended with an appeal to defend the Church, if necessary, to the death. For “the gates of hell shall not prevail against Her” (Matthew 16.18).[[337]](#footnote-337)

The significance of this anathema lies not so much in the casting out of the Bolsheviks themselves, as in the command to the faithful to have no communion with them. In other words, the government were to be regarded, not only as apostates from Christ (that was obvious), but also as having no moral authority, *no claim to obedience whatsoever* – an attitude taken by the Church to no other government in the whole of Her history.[[338]](#footnote-338) Coming so soon after the Bolsheviks’ dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, it indicated that now that constitutionalism had proved its uselessness in the face of demonic barbarism, it was time for the Church to enter the struggle in earnest…[[339]](#footnote-339)

It has been argued that the Patriarch’s decree did not anathematise Soviet power as such, but only those who were committing acts of violence and sacrilege against the Church. However, this argument fails to take into account several facts. First, the patriarch himself, in his declarations of June 16 and July 1, 1923, repented precisely of his “anathematisation of Soviet power”.[[340]](#footnote-340) Secondly, even if the decree did not formally anathematise Soviet power as such, since Soviet power sanctioned and initiated the acts of violence, the faithful were in effect being exhorted to having nothing to do with it. And thirdly, in his Epistle to the Council of People’s Commissars on the first anniversary of the revolution, November 7, 1918, the Patriarch obliquely but clearly confirmed his non-recognition of Soviet power, saying: “It is not our business to make judgments about earthly authorities. Every power allowed by God would attract to itself Our blessing *if it were truly ‘the servant of God’, for the good of those subject to it, and were ‘terrible not for good works, but for evil’* (Romans 13.3,4). *But now to you, who have used authority for the persecution of the innocent,* We extend this Our word of exhortation… “[[341]](#footnote-341)

It was important that the true significance of the anathema for the Church’s relationship with the State be pointed out. This was done immediately after the proclamation of the anathema, when Count D.A. Olsufyev pointed out that at the moleben they had just sung ‘many years’ to the powers that be – that is, to the Bolsheviks whom they had just anathematized! “I understand that the Apostle called for obedience to all authorities – but hardly that ‘many years’ should be sung to *them*. I know that his ‘most pious and most autocratic’ [majesty] was replaced by ‘the right-believing Provisional Government’ of Kerensky and company… And I think that the time for unworthy compromises has passed.”[[342]](#footnote-342)

On January 22 / February 4 the Patriarch’s anathema was discussed in a session of the Council presided over by Metropolitan Arsenius of Novgorod, and the following resolution put forward by a special commission attached to the Conciliar Council was officially accepted by the Council: “The Sacred Council of the Orthodox Russian Church welcomes with love the epistle of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, which punishes the evil-doers and rebukes the enemies of the Church of Christ. From the height of the patriarchal throne there has thundered the word of excommunication [preschenia] and a spiritual sword has been raised against those who continually mock the faith and conscience of the people. The Sacred Council witnesses that it remains in the fullest union with the father and intercessor of the Russian Church, pays heed to his appeal and is ready in a sacrificial spirit to confess the Faith of Christ against her blasphemers. The Sacred Council calls on the whole of the Russian Church headed by her archpastors and pastors to unite now around the Patriarch, so as not to allow the mocking of our holy faith.”[[343]](#footnote-343)

At this session A.A. Vasiliev said: “We thank the Lord for giving us what we have been waiting for – that is, finally to hear the true Church voice of our Most Holy Father and Patriarch. For the first time in this year of disorder, a truly ecclesiastical word, a word spoken with regard to the events about which nothing has been said up to now. And a pastoral judgement delivered on all those who are guilty of these events… Our Christian conscience must suggest to each of us what concessions he can and cannot make, and when he must lay down his life for the truth. People are puzzled about precisely who is subject to this ban which his Holiness the Patriarch speaks about in his epistle. After all, it is not just since yesterday, and not since the coming of the Bolsheviks, that we have been experiencing a real satanic attack on the Church of Christ, these fratricides, fights and mutual hatred. At the very beginning of the revolution the authorities carried out an act of apostasy from God (voices: “Right!”). Prayer was banned in the armies, banners with the cross of Christ were replaced by red rags. It is not only the present powers that be that are guilty of this, but also those who have already departed from the scene. We shall continue to hope that the present rulers also, who are now shedding blood, will depart from the scene.”[[344]](#footnote-344)

Then Fr. Vladimir Vostokov spoke: “In this hall too much has been said about the terrible things that have been suffered, and if we were to list and describe them all, it this huge hall would be filled with books. So I am not going to speak about the horrors. I want to point to the root from which these horrors have been created. I understand this present assembly of ours as a spiritual council of doctors consulting over our dangerously ill mother, our homeland. When doctors come up to treat a sick person, they do not stop at the latest manifestations of the illness, but they look deeper, they investigate the root cause of the illness. So in the given case it is necessary to reveal the root of the illness that the homeland is suffering. From this platform, before the enlightener of Russia, the holy Prince Vladimir, I witness to my priestly conscience that the Russian people is being deceived, and that up to this time no-one has told them the whole truth. The moment has come when the Council, as the only gathering that is lawful and truly elected by the people must tell the people the holy truth, fearing nobody except God Himself…

“The derailing of the train of history took place at the end of February, 1917; it was aided first of all by the Jewish-Masonic global organization, which cast into the masses the slogans of socialism, the slogans of a mythical freedom… So much has been said here about the terrors brought upon the country by Bolshevism. But what is Bolshevism? – the natural and logical development of Socialism. And Socialism is – that antichristian movement which in the final analysis produces Bolshevism as its highest development and which engenders those phenomena completely contrary to the principles of Christian asceticism that we are living through now.

“Unfortunately, many of our professors and writers have arrayed Socialism in beautiful clothes, calling it similar to Christianity, and thereby they together with the agitators of revolution have led the uneducated people into error. Fathers and brothers! What fruits did we expect of Socialism, when we not only did not fight against it, but also defended it at times, or almost always were shyly silent before its contagion? We must serve the Church by faith, and save the country from destructive tendencies, and for that it is necessary to speak the truth to the people without delay, telling them what Socialism consists of and what it leads to.

“The Council must say that in February-March a violent coup took place which for the Orthodox Christian is oath-breaking that requires purification through repentance. We all, beginning with Your Holiness and ending with myself, the last member of the Council, must bow the knee before God, and beseech Him to forgive us for allowing the growth in the country of evil teachings and violence. Only after sincere repentance by the whole people will the country be pacified and regenerated. And God will bestow upon us His mercy and grace. But if we continue only to anathematize without repenting, without declaring the truth to the people, then they will with just cause say to us: You, too, are guilty that the country has been reduced to this crime, for which the anathema now sounds out; you by your pusillanimity have allowed the development of evil and have been slow to call the facts and phenomena of state life by their real names!

“Pastors of the Church, search out the soul of the people! If we do not tell the people the whole truth, if we do not call on them now to offer nationwide repentance for definite sins, we will leave this conciliar chamber as turncoats and traitors of the Church and the Homeland. I am so unshakably convinced of what I say now that I would not hesitate to repeat it even if I were on the verge of death. It is necessary to regenerate in the minds of people the idea of a pure central authority – the idea that has been darkened by the pan-Russian deception. We overthrew the Tsar and subjected ourselves to the Jews! [Voices of members of the Council: ‘True, true…’] The only salvation for the Russian people is a wise Russian Orthodox Tsar. Only through the election of a wise, Orthodox, Russian Tsar can Russia be placed on the good, historical path and re-establish good order. As long as we will not have a wise Orthodox tsar, there will be no order among us, and the people’s blood will continue to be shed, and the centrifugal forces will divide the one people into hostile pieces, until the train of history is completely destroyed or until foreign peoples enslave us as a crowd incapable of independent State life…

“We all must unite into one Christian family under the banner of the Holy and Life-Creating Cross and under the leadership of his Holiness the Patriarch, to say that Socialism, which calls people as if to brotherhood, is an openly antichristian and evil phenomenon, that the Russian people has become the plaything of the Jewish-Masonic organizations behind which the Antichrist is already visible in the form of an internationalist tsar, that by playing on false freedom, the people is forging for itself slavery to the Judaeo-Masons. If we say this openly and honestly, then I do not know what will happen to us, but I know that Russian will be alive!”[[345]](#footnote-345)

On March 12, 1918 the Council reaffirmed the patriarch’s anathema, proclaiming: “To those who utter blasphemies and lies against our holy faith and Church, who rise up against the holy churches and monasteries, encroaching on the inheritance of the Church, while abusing and killing the priests of the Lord and zealots of the patristic faith: ***Anathema*”** (Act 94)**.**

The Bolshevik decree on the separation of Church and State elicited strong reactions from individual members of the Council. Thus one exclaimed: “We overthrew the tsar and subjected ourselves to the Jews!” And another said: “The sole means of salvation for the Russian nation is a wise Orthodox Russian tsar!” In reply to this remark, Protopriest Elijah Gromoglasov said: “Our only hope is not that we may have an earthly tsar or president… but that there should be a heavenly Tsar, Christ”.[[346]](#footnote-346)

The section of the Council appointed to report on the decree made the following recommendations: “The individuals wielding the governmental authority audaciously attempt to destroy the very existence of the Orthodox Church. In order to realize this satanic design, the Soviet of People’s Commissars published the decree concerning the separation of the Church from the State, which legalized an open persecution not only of the Orthodox Church, but of all other religious communions, Christian or non-Christian. Not despising deceit, the enemies of Christ fraudulently put on the appearance of granting by it religious liberty.

“Welcoming all real extension of liberty of conscience, the Council at the same time points out that by the provisions of the said decree, the freedom of the Orthodox Church, as well as of all other religious organizations and communions in general, is rendered void. Under the pretence of ‘the separation of the Church from the State’, the Soviet of People’s Commissars attempts to render impossible the very existence of the churches, the ecclesiastical institutions, and the clergy.

“Under the guise of taking over the ecclesiastical property, the said decree aims to destroy the very possibility of Divine worship and ministration. It declares that ‘no ecclesiastical or religious association has the right to possess property’, and ‘all property of the existing ecclesiastical and religious associations in Russia is declared to be national wealth.’ Thereby the Orthodox churches and monasteries, those resting-places of the relics of the saints revered by all Orthodox people, become the common property of all citizens irrespective of their credal differences – of Christians, Jews, Muslims and pagans, and the holy objects designated for the Divine service, i.e. the holy Cross, the holy Gospel, the sacred vessels, the holy miracle-working icons are at the disposal of the governmental authorities, which may either permit or not (as they wish) their use by the parishes.

“Let the Russian people understand that they (the authorities) wish to deprive them of God’s churches with their sacred objects! As soon as all property of the Church is taken away, it is not possible to offer any aid to it, for in accordance with the intention of the decree everything donated shall be taken away. The support of monasteries, churches and the clergy alike becomes impossible.

“But that is not all: in consequence of the confiscation of the printing establishments, it is impossible for the Church independently to publish the holy Gospel as well as other sacred and liturgical books in their wonted purity and authenticity.

“In the same manner, the decree affects the pastors of the Church. Declaring that ‘no one may refuse to perform his civil duties on account of his religious views’, it thereby constrains them to fulfil military obligations forbidden them by the 83rd canon of the holy Apostles. At the same time, ministers of the altar are removed from educating the people. The very teaching of the law of God, not only in governmental, but even in private schools, is not permitted; likewise all theological institutions are doomed to be closed. The Church is thus excluded from the possibility of educating her own pastors.

“Declaring that ‘the governmental functions or those of other public-juridical institutions shall not be accompanied by any religious rites or ceremonies,’ the decree thereby sacrilegiously sunders all connections of the government with the sanctities of the faith.

“On the basis of all these considerations, the holy Council decrees:

“1. The decree published by the Soviet of People’s Commissars regarding the separation of the Church from the State represents in itself, under the guise of a law declaring liberty of conscience, an inimical attempt upon the life of the Orthodox Church, and is an act of open persecution.

“2. All participation, either in the publication of the law so injurious to the Church, or in attempts to put it into practice, is not reconcilable with membership of the Orthodox Church, and subjects all transgressors belonging to the Orthodox communion to the heaviest penalties, to the extent of excommunicating them from the Church (in accordance with the 73rd canon of the holy Apostles, and the 13th canon of the Seventh Ecumenical Council).”[[347]](#footnote-347)

These recommendations were then adopted by the Council as its official reply to the decree (February 7). In the same spirit, on April 15 the Council decreed: “Clergymen serving in anti-ecclesiastical institutions, as well as those who put into effect the decrees on freedom of conscience which are inimical to the Church and similar acts, are subject to being banned from serving and, in the case of impenitence, are deprived of their rank.”[[348]](#footnote-348)

Although, as we have said, it was unprecedented for a Local Church to anathematize a government, there have been occasions in the history of the Church when individual hierarchs have not only refused to obey or pray for a political leader, but have actually prayed *against* him. Thus in the fourth century St. Basil the Great prayed for the defeat of Julian the Apostate, and it was through his prayers that the apostate was killed, as was revealed by God to the holy hermit Julian of Mesopotamia. Neither St. Basil nor his friend, St. Gregory the Theologian, recognised the rule of Julian the Apostate to be legitimate.[[349]](#footnote-349) Moreover, they considered that Gregory’s brother, St. Caesarius, should not remain at the court of Julian, although he thought that, being a doctor, he could help his relatives and friends through his position there.[[350]](#footnote-350) These and other examples show that, while the *principle* of authority *as such* is from God (Romans 13.1), individual authorities or rulers are sometimes not from God, but are only *allowed* *to exist* by Him, in which case the Church must offer resistance to them out of loyalty to God Himself.[[351]](#footnote-351)

As Bishop Gregory (Grabbe), the foremost canonist of the Russian Church Abroad, wrote: “With regard to the question of the commemoration of authorities, we must bear in mind that now we are having dealings not simply with a pagan government like Nero’s, but with the apostasy of the last times. Not with a so far unenlightened authority, but with apostasy. The Holy Fathers did not relate to Julian the Apostate in the same way as they did to the other pagan Emperors. And we cannot relate to the antichristian authorities in the same way as to any other, for its nature is purely satanic.”[[352]](#footnote-352)

There were some who took the anathema very seriously and fulfilled it to the letter. Thus in 1918, the clairvoyant Elder Nicholas (Parthenov), later Hieromartyr Bishop of Aktar, “following the anathema contained in the Epistle of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, and not wishing to enter into relations with ‘the outcasts of the human race’, went into reclusion…”[[353]](#footnote-353) In general, however, the Church and the People paid no attention to it – which must be counted as perhaps the major reason why the revolution gained strength and survived for generations to come…

The Council had exhorted the faithful to protect church property, and soon there were reports of people mobbing the officials and soldiers detailed to carry out the decree. Several hundred thousand people marched through Petrograd in protest. As Michael Shkarovskii writes: “Numerous religious processions, some of which were fired upon, took place in the towns; services in defence of the patriarchate were held in public places and petitions were sent to the government. There followed a mass religious upsurge in Russia. From 1918, thousands of new converts, including some prominent intellectuals, joined the now persecuted Orthodox Church. And an ‘All-Russian Union of United Orthodox Parishes’ was also formed.

“The Sovnarkom had expected its decree to be implemented quickly and relatively painlessly, but this was prevented first and foremost by the opposition of millions of peasants, who supported the expropriation of church and monastic property but were against making births, marriages and deaths a purely civil affair, depriving parishes of their property rights, and dropping divinity from the school curriculum. Peasants thus resisted Bolshevik efforts to break the ‘unshakable traditions’ of ‘a life of faith’ in the Russian countryside. The implementation of the law was also hindered by the lack of suitable officials to carry it out, and by the inconsistence of the local authorities’ understanding of the law.”[[354]](#footnote-354)

A Barmenkov wrote: “Some school workers began to interpret [the principle of Church-School separation] as a transition to secular education, in which both religious and anti-religious propaganda in school would be excluded. They supposed that the school had to remain neutral in relation to religion and the Church. A.V. Lunacharsky and N.K. Krupskaia spoke against this incorrect interpretation…, emphasising that in the Soviet state the concept of the people’s enlightenment had unfailingly to include ‘a striving to cast out of the people’s head religious trash and replace it with the light of science.’”[[355]](#footnote-355)

“On March 14/27,” writes Peter Sokolov, “still hoping that the existence of the Church could be preserved under the communist regime and with the aim of establishing direct relations with the higher state authorities, a Church deputation set out in the name of the Council to the Council of People’s Commissars in Moscow. They wanted to meet Lenin personally, and personally present him with their ideas about the conditions acceptable to the Church for her existence in the state of the new type.” This initiative hardly accorded with the anathema against the Bolsheviks, which forbade the faithful from having any relations with them. It was therefore unsuccessful. “The deputation was not received by Lenin. The commissars (of insurance and justice) that conversed with it did not satisfy its requests. A second address to the authorities in the name of the Council that followed soon after the first unsuccessful audience was also unsuccessful…”[[356]](#footnote-356)

The Council made two other decisions relating to Soviet power and its institutions. On April 15 it decreed: “Clergymen serving in anti-ecclesiastical institutions… are subject to being banned from serving and, in the case of impenitence, are deprived of their rank”. On the assumption that “anti-ecclesiastical institutions” included all Soviet institutions, this would seem to have been a clearly anti-Soviet measure.

However, on August 15, 1918, the Council took a step in the opposite direction, declaring invalid all defrockings based on political considerations, applying this particularly to Metropolitan Arsenius (Matsevich) of Rostov and Priest Gregory Petrov. Metropolitan Arsenius had indeed been unjustly defrocked in the reign of Catherine II for his righteous opposition to her anti-Church measures. However, Petrov had been one of the leaders of the Cadet party in the Duma in 1905 and was an enemy of the monarchical order. How could his defrocking be said to have been unjust in view of the fact that the Church had officially prayed for the Orthodox Autocracy, and Petrov had worked directly against the fulfilment of the Church’s prayers? The problem was: too many people, including several hierarchs, had welcomed the fall of the Tsarist regime. If the Church was not to divide along political lines, a general amnesty was considered necessary. But if true recovery can only begin with repentance, and repentance must begin with the leaders of the Church, this decree amounted to covering the wound without allowing it to heal.

As Bishop Dionysius (Alferov) of Novgorod writes, the Council could be criticized for its “weakening of Church discipline, its legitimization of complete freedom of political orientation and activity, and, besides, its rehabilitation of the Church revolutionaries like Gregory Petrov. By all this it doomed the Russian Church to collapse, presenting to her enemies the best conditions for her cutting up and annihilation piece by piece.

“That this Council… did not express the voice of the complete fullness of the Russian Church is proved by the decisions of two other Councils of the time: that of Karlovtsy in 1921, and that of Vladivostok in 1922.

“At the Karlovtsy Council remembrance was finally made of the St. Sergius’ blessing of the Christian Sovereign Demetrius Donskoj for his battle with the enemies of the Church and the fatherland, and of the struggle for the Orthodox Kingdom of the holy Hierarch Hermogenes of Moscow. The question was raised of the ‘sin of February’, but because some of the prominent activists of the Council had participated in this, the question was left without detailed review. The decisions of this Council did not receive further official development in Church life because of the schisms that began both in the Church Abroad and in the monarchist movement. But the question of the re-establishment of the Orthodox Kingdom in Russia had been raised, and thinkers abroad worked out this thought in detail in the works, first of Prince N.D. Zhevakhov and Protopriest V. Vostokov, and then, more profoundly, in the works of Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev), Professor M.V. Zyzykin, Archimandrite Constantine Zaitsev, V.N. Voejkov and N.P. Kusakov.

“The Church-land Council in Vladivostok, which is now almost forgotten, expressed itself more definitely, recognizing the Orthodox autocracy to be the only lawful authority in Russia.”[[357]](#footnote-357)

### 3. The Commemoration of the Holy New Martyrs

On April 18 / May 1, in a decree entitled “On Measures Elicited by the Ongoing Persecution of the Orthodox Church”, the Council resolved:

“1. To establish the raising in church during Divine services of special petitions for those who are now being persecuted for the Orthodox Faith and Church and those who have completed their lives as confessors and martyrs…

“3. To establish throughout Russia a yearly prayerful commemoration on January 25 [the day of the martyrdom of Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev], or on the Sunday following (in the evening), of all the confessors and martyrs who have fallen asleep in the present year’s savage persecutions.

“4. To organize on the Monday of the second week of Pascha, in all parishes where confessors and martyrs for the Faith and the Church finished their lives, cross processions to the places of their burial, where triumphant pannikhidas are to be celebrated with the specific verbal glorification of their sacred memory…”[[358]](#footnote-358)

Points 3 and 4 of this decree remained a dead letter for most of the Soviet period. However, in November, 1981 the Russian Church Abroad canonized the new martyrs, and since then devotion to the new martyrs and observance of their feasts steadily increased inside Russia, leading, as some have thought, to the fall of communism in 1991.

Thus the glorification of the new martyrs, which began in April, 1918, may be said to have been the earnest of, and first step towards, the resurrection of Russia. It implicitly condemns the attitude of the Sovietized Moscow Patriarchate, which for most of the twentieth century declared that the new martyrs and confessors were “political criminals” worthy of derision rather than praise.

### 4. The New Calendar and Ecumenism

On January 19, 1918 (o.s.), the Soviet State introduced the new calendar into Russia. Thinking “to change times and laws” (Daniel 7.25), a Decree of the Council of People’s Commissars dated January 24, 1918 ordered that the day after January 31, 1918 would be February 14, not February 1.

By a remarkable coincidence, on the same day, January 19, the Patriarch anathematised the Bolshevik State, calling on the faithful Orthodox to have no communion with “these outcasts of humanity” in any way whatsoever. A few days later the Patriarch’s anathema was confirmed by the Church Council then in session in Moscow. In view of this rejection of the legitimacy of the State, it is not surprising that the Church also rejected the State’s change of calendar.

Protopriest Alexander Lebedev writes: “The Sobor [Council] addressed the issue three days after the Decree was signed, at its 71st Session on January 27, 1918. The need for a prompt decision by the Church on how to relate to the civil calendar change was clear – the change was to take place four days later.

“It was decided to send the issue to a Joint Session of two separate Sections of the Sobor – the Section on Divine Services and the Section on the Relationship of the Church to the State.

“This Joint Session of the two Sections met two days later, on January 29, 1918 and heard two major reports, one by Professor S.S. Glagolev, entitled ‘A Comparative Evaluation of the Julian and Gregorian Styles’, and one by Prof. I.I. Sokolov, entitled, ‘The Attitude of the Orthodox East to the Question of the Reform of the Calendar’.

“Neither of these presentations in any way supported the introduction into Church life of the Gregorian Calendar – quite the contrary. Prof. Glagolev concluded, ‘The Gregorian Calendar, in addition to being historically harmful, is astronomically useless’… Professor Sokolov concluded: ‘Therefore, the controlling voice of the Orthodox East, both Greek and Slavic, is expressed as being not only against the Gregorian calendar, as a creature of the inimical to it [the Orthodox East] Catholic West, but also against a neutral or corrected calendar, because such a reform would deleteriously affect the ecclesiastical life of the Orthodox peoples.’

“Finally, the Joint Session of the two Sections prepared a Resolution on the issue of calendar reform.

“It decreed that the Church must stay with the Julian calendar, basing its decision on the following:

“1) There is no reason for the Church not to have a separate ecclesiastical calendar different from the civil calendar.

“2) The Church not only is able to preserve the Old Calendar, - at the present time it would be impossible for it to move to the new calendar.

“3) The introduction of the new calendar by the Russian Church would cause it to break unity with all of the other Orthodox Churches. Any change in the calendar can only be done by mutual agreement of all the Orthodox Churches.

“4) It is impossible to correlate the Orthodox Paschalion with the Gregorian Calendar without causing grave disruption to the Typicon.

“5) It is recognized that the Julian Calendar is astronomically inaccurate. This was noted already at the Council of Constantinople in 1583. However, it is incorrect to believe that the Gregorian Calendar is better suited for ecclesiastical use.

“In conclusion, the Joint Session resolved to maintain the Julian Calendar.

“The Council, in full session, approved this Resolution of the Joint Session.”[[359]](#footnote-359)

This was an important decree in view of the patriarch’s later temporary acceptance of the new calendar, and its acceptance by several Local Churches.

On August 16, it was announced that a department for the reunification of the Christian Churches was being opened: “The Sacred Council of the Orthodox Russian Church, which has been gathered and is working in conditions that are so exceptionally difficult for the whole Christian Church, when the waves of unbelief and atheism threaten the very existence of the Christian Church, would take upon itself a great responsibility before history if it did not raise the question of the unification of the Christian Churches and did not give this question a fitting direction at the moment when not only one Christian confession, but the whole of Christianity is threatened by huge dangers on the part of unbelief and atheism.

“The task of the department is to prepare material for a decision of the present Council on this question and on the further development of the matter in the inter-Council period…”[[360]](#footnote-360)

On September 20, the last, 170th session of the Council, the project for a commission on the reunification of the Churches was reviewed and confirmed by the Council. The president of the department on the unification of the Churches, Archbishop Eudocimus (Meschersky) of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands, said: “I am very sad that the report has come at such a difficult time, when the hours of our sacred union in this chamber are coming to an end, and when at the end of work my thoughts are becoming confused and I cannot report to you everything that I could tell you. From our point of view, the Council should have directed its attention at this question long ago. If the Church is alive, then we cannot remain in the narrow limits she has existed in up to now. If we have no courage to preach beyond the bounds of our fatherland, then we must hear the voice coming from there to us. I have in mind the voice of the Anglo-American Episcopalian Churches, who sincerely and insistently seek union or rapprochement, and do not find any insurmountable obstacles on the path to the indicated end. Considering the union of the Christian Churches to be especially desirable in the period of intense struggle with unbelief, crude materialism and moral barbarism that we are experiencing now, the department suggests to the Sacred Council that it adopt the following resolution:

“‘1. The Sacred Council of the Orthodox Russian Church, joyfully beholding the sincere strivings of the Old Catholics and Anglicans for union with the Orthodox Church on the basis of the teaching and traditions of the Ancient-Catholic Church, blesses the labours and endeavours of the people who work to find paths towards union with the named friendly Churches.

“‘2. The Council directs the Holy Synod to organize a permanent Commission attached to the Holy Synod with branches in Russia and abroad for the further study of the Old Catholic and Anglican questions, to explicate by means of relations with the Old Catholics and Anglicans the difficulties that lie on the path to union, and possible aids to the speedy attainment of the final end.’”

The decisions of the Council of a theological or dogmatic significance were subject to confirmation by a special assembly of bishops. At the last such assembly, on September 22, 1918, this decision was not reviewed. It is possible that for that reason the “Resolution regarding the unification of the Churches” did not enter the official “Collection of the Decrees and Resolutions of the Sacred Council of the Orthodox Russian Church of 1917-1918”.[[361]](#footnote-361)

In September, 1918 the Bolsheviks shut down the Local Council and initiate the “Red Terror”, probably the most intense and large-scale persecution of the Orthodox Church since the time of Diocletian. This was probably the reason why the Resolution was not reviewed and not put into practice. There may also have been a deeper, providential reason: that this Resolution was not pleasing to God, in that it threatened to open the doors of the Russian Church to the heresy of ecumenism, of which the Anglicans were the leaders, at precisely the moment of her greatest weakness…

This conclusion is supported by the fact that in the inter-war years, and right up to General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1961, the Russian Church – with the exception of the Paris Russian Exarchate of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the American Metropolia - took no direct part in the ecumenical movement. The other Churches, on the other hand, and especially the Greek Churches, were deeply involved from the early 1920s, and recognized Anglican Orders at an early stage.[[362]](#footnote-362)

Paradoxically, therefore, the Red Terror saved Russia from ecumenism until the 1960s, when the communists decided to order the official Russian Church into the ecumenical movement for entirely political reasons.

## 34. THE MURDER OF THE TSAR

In 1918 the Tsar was alone, imprisoned and abandoned by all except his closest family and a few servants who shared his imprisonment. He bitterly repented of his decision to abdicate…

The Bolsheviks had been very fortunate. At one time the Party had once been so thoroughly penetrated by Tsarist agents as to make its success extraordinarily improbable.[[363]](#footnote-363) Again, Kornilov’s attempted coup, and Kerensky’s reaction to it, had played into their hands at a critical time. But it was one thing for the Bolsheviks to have won power: it was quite another thing to keep it. Everybody was against them, even the other socialist parties, who felt – rightly – that they had been tricked into surrendering power to them at the Congress of Soviets in October.

That the Bolsheviks hung on to power in their first year was probably owing to three factors. First, they decided very quickly not to nationalize the land that the peasants had seized from the landowners, thus neutralizing the appeal of their main political opponents, the Social Revolutionaries. Secondly, on December 20, 1917 the Cheka, with Feliz Dzerzhinsky at its head, was founded in order to defend “the fruits of October” by all means possible, including the most extreme cruelties. And thirdly, in spite of strong opposition within the Party and throughout the country, Lenin moved to neutralize the external threat coming from his own paymasters, the Germans.

In March, 1918 the Bolsheviks took Russia out of the First World War in the most shameful way possible: they signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany, depriving Russia of about a quarter of her territory, a third of her population and a half of her industry. It was immediately denounced by Patriarch Tikhon, but justified by Lenin on the grounds that now Soviet Russia could recuperate while Germany and the Western Powers fought each other. The Tsar had promised that he would never sign a unilateral truce with Germany – and kept his promise. Lenin promised to take Russia out of the war – and did so on the worst possible terms, in order to turn the international war into a civil war fought, not against Germans (of whom Lenin was, after all, a paid agent[[364]](#footnote-364)), but against Russians. That war had already begun in the south of the country, where the White armies, having survived a difficult first winter, were gathering their strength.

The critical question was: were the Whites going to fight under the banner of Orthodoxy and Tsarism or not? Tsarism meant, not Tsar Nicholas necessarily, who had abdicated, but the monarchical principle. However, the physical presence of Tsar Nicholas, whether as the actual ruler or as the senior representative of the old dynasty, was important. As long as the Tsar was alive, the possibility of a just and successful war against Bolshevism under the banner of Orthodoxy and Tsarism still existed. That is why the attempts to rescue the Tsar from captivity were not romantic side-shows, but critically important. And that is why the Bolsheviks proceeded to kill the Tsar…For, as Trotsky wrote: “In essence this decision was inevitable. The execution of the tsar and his family was necessary, not simply to scare, horrify and deprive the enemy of hope, but also to shake up our own ranks, show them that there was no going back…” [[365]](#footnote-365)

And so, on the night of July 17, 1918 Blessed Maria Ivanovna, the fool-for-Christ of Diveyevo, began to shout and scream: “The Tsar’s been killed with bayonets! Cursed Jews!” That night Tsar Nicholas II was shot in Yekaterinburg together with Tsarina Alexandra, the Tsarevich Alexis, the Tsarevnas Olga, Tatiana, Maria and Anastasia, and several family servants in a decidedly Judaist-ritualistic manner. Strange cabbalistic symbols were found on the walls of the room where the crime took place which have been deciphered to mean: "Here, by order of the secret powers, the Tsar was offered as a sacrifice for the destruction of the state. Let all peoples be informed of this."[[366]](#footnote-366)

The Royal Family had given a wonderful example of truly Christian love in their lives; and in their deaths they showed exemplary patience and love for their enemies. Thus Martyr-Great-Princess Olga Nikolayevna wrote from Tobolsk: "Father asks the following message to be given to all those who have remained faithful to him, and to those on whom they may have an influence, that they should not take revenge for him, since he has forgiven everyone and prays for everyone, that they should not take revenge for themselves, and should remember that the evil which is now in the world will be still stronger, but that it is not love that will conquer evil, but only love..." And in the belongings of the same holy martyr were found the following verses by S. Bekhteyev:

*Now as we stand before the gates of death,*

*Breathe in the lips of us Thy servants*

*That more than human, supernatural strength*

*To meekly pray for those that hurt us.*

The next day, at Alapayevsk, Great Princess Elizabeth was killed together with her faithful companion, the Nun Barbara, and several Great Princes.

On hearing the news of the Tsar’s murder, Patriarch Tikhon immediately condemned it. He had already angered the government by sending the Tsar his blessing in prison; and he now celebrated a pannikhida for him, blessing the archpastors and pastors to do the same. Then, on July 21, he announced in the Kazan cathedral: “We, in obedience to the teaching of the Word of God, must condemn this deed, otherwise the blood of the shot man will fall also on us, and not only on those who committed the crime…”[[367]](#footnote-367)

However, the people as a whole did not condemn the evil deed. The result was a significant increase in their suffering…

The murder of the Tsar and his family was not the responsibility of the Bolsheviks only, but of all those who, directly or indirectly, connived at it. As St. John Maximovich explained: “The sin against him and against Russia was perpetrated by all who in one way or another acted against him, who did not oppose, or who merely by sympathizing participated in those events which took place forty years ago. That sin lies upon everyone until it is washed away by sincere repentance…”[[368]](#footnote-368)

Shortly after the murder, some members of the Council suggested to the Patriarch that he take refuge abroad, so that he not share in the fate of the Tsar. “The flight of the Patriarch,” replied his Holiness, “would play into the hands of the enemies of the Church. Let them do with me what they want.”

On August 8, 1918, in an address “to all the faithful children of the Russian Orthodox Church”, the Patriarch said: “Sin has fanned everywhere the flame of the passions, enmity and wrath; brother has risen up against brother; the prisons are filled with captives; the earth is soaked in innocent blood, shed by a brother’s hand; it is defiled by violence, pillaging, fornication and every uncleanness. From this same poisonous source of sin has issued the great deception of material earthly goods, by which our people is enticed, forgetting the one thing necessary. We have not rejected this temptation, as the Saviour Christ rejected it in the wilderness. We have wanted to create a paradise on earth, but without God and His holy commandments. God is not mocked. And so we hunger and thirst and are naked upon the earth, blessed with an abundance of nature’s gifts, and the seal of the curse has fallen on the very work of the people and on all the undertakings of our hands. Sin, heavy and unrepented of, has summoned Satan from the abyss, and he is now bellowing his slander against the Lord and against His Christ, and is raising an open persecution against the Church.”[[369]](#footnote-369)

This address characterized Socialism in similar terms to those used by Dostoyevsky’s Grand Inquisitor, as the temptation to create bread out of stones which Christ rejected in the wilderness. Rather than seeking paradise in heaven and with God through the fulfilment of His commandments, the Socialists “have wanted to create a paradise on earth, but without God and His holy commandments”. The result has been hell in this life and (to quote from the anathema) “the fire of Gehenna in the life to come”.

This partially met the criticisms levelled against the Patriarch and the Council by Count Yuri Alexandrovich Olsufyev and Protopriest Vladimir Vostokov, that the essence of Socialism as an antichristian heresy had been hardly touched upon. The incompatibility between Socialism and Christianity was never doubted by the apostles of Socialism. Religion was to Marx “opium for the people”, and to Lenin – “spiritual vodka”. Lenin wrote that “every religious idea, every idea of a god, even flirting with the idea of God is unutterable vileness of the most dangerous kind”.[[370]](#footnote-370) And in 1918 he said to Krasin: “Electricity will take the place of God. Let the peasant pray to electricity; he’s going to feel the power of the central authorities more than that of heaven.”[[371]](#footnote-371)

The Bolsheviks always showed special ferocity towards the Church. Thus on May 1, 1919 Lenin sent a secret instruction toe the head of the Cheka, Dzerzhinsky: “arrest… popes [priests] as counter-revolutionaries and saboteurs, shoot them mercilessly everywhere. And as many as possible.”[[372]](#footnote-372)

As for morality, in his address to the Third All-Russian congress of the Union of Russian Youth in October, 1920, Lenin wrote: "In what sense do we reject morality and ethics? In the sense in which it is preached by the bourgeoisie, which has derived this morality from the commandments of God. Of course, as regards God, we say that we do not believe in Him, and we very well know that it was in the name of God that the clergy used to speak, that the landowners spoke, that the bourgeoisie spoke, so as to promote their exploitative interests. Or… they derived morality from idealistic or semi-idealistic phrases, which always came down to something very similar to the commandments of God. All such morality which is taken from extra-human, extra-class conceptions, we reject. We say that it is a deception, that it is a swindle, that it is oppression of the minds of the workers and peasants in the interests of the landowners and capitalists. We say that our morality is entirely subject to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat. Our morality derives from the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat."[[373]](#footnote-373)

Thus, as Alexander Solzhenitsyn says: “Within the philosophical system of Marx and Lenin, and at the heart of their psychology, hatred of God is the principal driving force, more fundamental than all their political and economic pretensions. Militant atheism is not merely incidental or marginal to Communist policy. It is not a side-effect, but the central pivot…”[[374]](#footnote-374)

That militant atheism was the central pivot of Marxism-Leninism was to become abundantly evident in the next seventy years. However, it was already clearly manifest in the murder of the Tsar and his family. By his abdication in favour of himself and his son, the Tsar had already renounced all claims to power, so his murder could have had no political advantage in view, but was an act of pure malice. It was a trampling on the symbol of the old theocracy by the representatives of the new satanocracy, and an important signal from the new authorities to the people – a signal that there was no turning back. As Trotsky wrote: “In essence this decision was inevitable. The execution of the tsar and his family was necessary, not simply to scare, horrify and deprive the enemy of hope, but also to shake up our own ranks, show them that there was no going back.”[[375]](#footnote-375)

Thus the Council was not altogether consistent in its attitude to the Bolsheviks. Moreover, it did not openly declare its loyalty to the monarchical order, and even removed the anathema against those who denied the mystical basis of the power of the Orthodox rulers from the service of the Triumph of Orthodoxy. And so in 1922 Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) wrote: “If the Council was at fault in anything, it was perhaps in failing to express with sufficient force its condemnation of the revolution and the overthrow of his Majesty. Who will be able to deny that the February revolution was as God-hating as it was anti-monarchist? Who can condemn the Bolshevik revolution and at the same time approve of the Provisional government?”[[376]](#footnote-376)

Perhaps the best commentary on this tragic event came a few months earlier when the future Hieromartyr John Vostorgov delivered the sermon "On Meatfare Sunday and the anniversary of the revolution": "The Russian monarchy, fanned by faith and the mystical Divine anointing, like ancient Israel, had great tasks and the greatest calling from God, the greatest religious destiny, which compelled many to serve it in a religious spirit. It is impossible to serve any other power in this way. A certain mystical and providential atmosphere surrounded it, as it did the ancient God-chosen Israel, the ancient theocracy and God-anointed theocratic kingdom. But let us admit the bitter truth - in its bearers it often departed from its destiny, and often, too often repeated the words of the ancient Israel which so embittered the Prophet Samuel and God Himself: 'Give me a king, *such as the pagan peoples have*'. It began to take its content and spirit from unchristian sources; it changed its nature. The people often turned to it only as a weapon for the exercise of power, for the sake of earthly and personal ends; one estate often unrighteously suppressed the others; 'it chained the Church of God to the footstool of vain earthly power'; the spiritual enlightenment of the people was forgotten; it often tried to ingratiate itself with the enemies of Christ, it went along its historical path in accordance with their command, and, when it was necessary, under the influence of indistinct murmurings from below, to make compromises, it always hastened to compromise something of the Church's breadth of action... And the judgement of God was accomplished! It placed its hope on the nobles, and gave them most privileges in life, but the nobles betrayed it and sold it and formed, together with the intelligentsia, who were mainly from their own estate, a political party which for a hundred years corrupted the people, struggled for power and yearned hungrily for power, sparing no expense, until it prepared a rising of the people, although it itself collapsed, in accordance with the judgement of God, under the ruins of the great fall of the old order. The monarchy leaned on the officials, but the officials turned out to be hirelings, changing stripes with the greatest ease and adopting any colour so long as they preserved their own position. It leaned on the bourgeoisie and the wealthy classes, supporting their prosperity and capital in every way possible, but the bourgeoisie used the money it had gained under the protection of the monarchy to nourish only its enemies. It placed its hope on the terrible strength of the army, but the army leaders betrayed it, while the officers, a year ago, rushed around and celebrated before our eyes in automobiles draped by soldiers, students and girl-students, to the shouts of everyone in the street, with red flags of rebellion... on the eve of their own, most terrible destruction. It placed its hope on the representatives of the Church, but they, instead of taking a back seat in view of the judgement of God and the sin of man, and at any rate keeping quiet, got frightened and sent telegrams from here, from royal Moscow, welcoming the coup, and drove out their own hierarchs and in a humiliating fashion called upon and enthroned over themselves a new power foreign to the Church. And so - it is accomplished! The judgement of God has thundered out. And just as Saul was chosen by God and then rejected, so has it happened with our monarchy. It is fallen before our eyes incomprehensibly easily, and now we, after all that has happened, in view of the common collapse of life, understand the words of the ancient prophet: 'You have destroyed yourself, O Israel, for your only reliance was on Me. Where is your king now? Let him save you in all your cities. Where are your judges, about whom you used to say: "Give us a king and superiors." *And I have given you a king in My wrath, and removed him in My displeasure****'*** (Hosea 13.9-11).

"... The former authority has voluntarily abdicated from power and, one must say, has departed in silence, behaving up to now with the greatest moral dignity. All the cries of hatred against it have gradually died down, and in this year all the *personal* accusations against it have collapsed one after the other.

"Those who seized power after the overthrow of the monarch have carried out their own will. They are responsible for it before history, before the people, before God. But God has allowed them to carry out their reward both on us and on themselves. Just like the ancient peoples who had been instruments of the punishment of Israel, they have split up endlessly in front of our eyes, overthrowing each other, and in the course of a year they have covered the distance which in antiquity would have required five hundred years.

"Immediately declaring themselves outside God and every religion, they have constructed a tower of Babylon and a Babylonian babble and have arrived at mutual incomprehension and complete division. Monomakh's cap has turned out to be heavy. It was easy to scramble onto the throne of power, but it has turned out to be very difficult to remain sitting on it, as it is in general difficult to sit on the point of a sword or bayonet... And God, O God! How terrible has your righteousness judgement been in this year. Everybody has received his due reward and chained himself with his own hands.

"The parties of the intelligentsia-noblemen - where are they? Beaten, driven out, persecuted! How they yearned for power, how they sought to be the members of the first provisional 'right-believing' - with the atheists Kerensky, Guchkov and Shingarev - government! How they revelled and triumphed in the intoxication of power, how they drowned in greetings, how they rejoiced in the supposedly bloodless revolution, how they buried Russia and the people with their addresses, appeals and calls! Where are they, those first rulers? Show me just one who is still in power! They are killed, in prisons, in exile, in trembling, in obscurity!...

"And everything of which they justly accused the old power they new rulers have repeated, only a thousand times worse. And in this what a Divine sentence is revealed, what shame before human history and what complete lack of any kind of justification! That is what happened to the first power, which constantly changed its members before it was destroyed by our present rulers, who came out of its ranks and were fed by it.

"... Before us appear avengers sent by God from outside - Wilhelm [the German Kaiser], and from within - the Bolsheviks. We repeat: they, too, are doing their own will, they are responsible for all their actions, all their cruelties, all the blood they have shed, all the violence they have committed, but God allows them to do their own evil will for the revelation of His own judgement. There is something terrible in all this, and something providential. They are weapons of the wrath of God, and Wilhelm has often said that. Like ancient Rome, iron-clad and bloody, pitiless and merciless, they have been enthroned over our ruined life. It is not delight in evil that speaks through my lips. You know, the prophet did not sympathize with Rome, of course, he did not rejoice in his coming - he only foretold Rome's coming with sorrow, and foretold the end of the people's history as if from a flood... But God judged and judges still, and before our consciousness there arises this thought: God exists, and His impartial judgement exists!

"And on the anniversary of the revolution I open the third chapter of the mysterious book. It has the inscription: 'And at the end of the time an end shall be put to the desolation' (Daniel 9.27).

"If Wilhelm and our present rulers do not understand the signs of the times, the terrible judgement of God will strike them here, while they are still on the earth. They themselves will be divided and will perish in civil war. 'And the word will be fulfilled': 'Let the sword enter into their own hearts, and let their bows be broken' (Psalm 36.15).

"... Just as Bolshevism was the logical consequence of socialism in its search for freedom, so the logical consequence and end of freedom will be anarchy, and it will come to us - black, terrible, mysterious and awful. It will sweep away the present rulers, it will once more reveal the terrible pages of the judgement of God. And this judgement of God will reveal to us openly that there is not and cannot be complete and absolute freedom for man, that it is limited and must be directed by the Law of God: like steam or a steam-engine in the absence of a good driver, it lead to the destruction of life; like a river which flows beyond its bed and over its banks, it turns life into a bog and a source of illnesses. And when the 'end from the flood' will appear before us, then will begin - if we repent, of course, and are worthy of life, and not of death, - the recreation of life. And this not only in Russia, but in the whole of humanity..."

## 35. THE CHURCH IN GEORGIA

The fall of the Russian Autocracy, and the sufferings of the Russian Church, as well as the general political turmoil created by the world war, gave the opportunity to several ecclesiastical separatist movements in the Russian borderlands to break free from the authority of the Russian Church. Thus on March 12, 1917, an Assembly of the bishops, clergy and laity of Georgia proclaimed the re-establishment of the autocephaly of the Georgian Church, which, as the Georgians claimed, had never been lawfully abolished. This led to a break in communion with the Russian Church. In the summer, however, “the Georgian Church sent a special deputation to the Most Holy Russian Synod to inform the Most Holy Synod about the re-establishment of the autocephaly of the Georgian Church and greet it. The Russian Synod through the mouth of Archbishop Sergius of Finland confirmed ‘that Russian Church consciousness has never been foreign to the thought of the necessity of returning to the Georgian Church her former constitution… If this thought has not been realised up to now, for this there were special reasons’ not depending on Church actors, but ‘now, in the days of the general liberating spring, Russian Church consciousness is ready to welcome the fulfilment … of the long-time dream’ of the Orthodox Georgians, and the Russian hierarchs hope ‘that God will order all for the good, and that certain roughnesses in this matter will be smoothed over’ and that at the forthcoming Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church a fraternal meeting of representatives of the two Churches is bound to take place in order to find a path to mutual understanding’.”[[377]](#footnote-377)

In September, while the Local Council of the Russian Church was just getting under way, a General Council of the Georgian Church confirmed the Acts of the March Council, and on October 1 Bishop Kirion Sadzaguelachvili was enthroned as Catholicos-Patriarch in Tbilisi by three vicar bishops over the protests of three Georgian hierarchs: Demetrius (Abashidze) of Simferopol, Antony of Gori and Nazarius (Lezhavy). The Provisional Government confirmed this election, and soon the Georgians proclaimed an independent socialist republic.[[378]](#footnote-378) Kirion immediately seized the exarchal house (the exarch was away) and ordered the portraits of the Tsar and the previous exarchs to be removed. After his first and last liturgy as Catholicos, he fell ill – he had been poisoned (according to one source, he poisoned himself). He recovered, but not completely, and went for complete recovery to the monastery of St. Anthony, near Martkopi, in the foothills of the Caucasus mountains. There, on June 28 (or June 13/26), 1918, he was either murdered[[379]](#footnote-379) or shot himself.[[380]](#footnote-380)

However, this fact was covered up, and on July 7 he was given a triumphant burial in the Zion cathedral.

Meanwhile, on December 29 / January 11, 1918, Patriarch Tikhon protested against the re-establishment of Georgian autocephaly, pointedly addressing Kirion as only a bishop. Georgia, he wrote, had united with Russia more than a century before, and from that time the highest ecclesiastical authority in Georgia had belonged to the Holy Synod. However, when, in 1905, an attempt was made to restore the autocephaly of the Georgian Church, the Holy Synod in 1906 decreed that this question should be handed over for discussion at the All-Russian Council, the decisions of which the Georgian hierarchs were obliged to wait for. “According to canon law, the agreement and permission of the Mother [kiriarkhal’noj] Church to the autocephaly of the other Local Church which before was subject to her jurisdiction is required. Usually the Church which is seeking independence addresses the Mother Church with her request, and, on the basis of data of a political and ecclesiastical character, seeks her agreement to the reception of autocephaly. The request is directed in the name of both the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of the country, and also of the people; it must be a clearly expressed declaration concerning the general and unanimous desire to receive ecclesiastical independence. That is how it was in Greece, in Serbia and in Romania, but it was not like that in Bulgaria, where the well-known schism arose. And it was also not like that, unfortunately, in the Transcaucasus in 1917… In pointing out your errors and mistakes, we suggest to you, Most Reverend Bishops, that you submit to the demands of the ecclesiastical canons and, following the canonical order, appear at the All-Russian Sacred Council, and, recognising your errors, convey your desire concerning the autocephaly of the Georgian Church to the court of the whole All-Russian Council, so that you may not be subjected to the judgement of the canons and not fall into the great and terrible sin of alienation from the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church…”[[381]](#footnote-381)

When the Civil War began, the Georgians refused to help the Whites. For a few months the British occupied the country. They were succeeded by the Mensheviks with whom the Church was able to live in peace. On August 5, 1919 Catholicos Leonid again wrote to Patriarch Tikhon, pointing out that while Georgia had voluntarily joined Russia politically in 1800, there had never been a desire for such a union ecclesiastically. “The abolition of the autocephaly of the Georgian Church was an act of force carried out by the secular powers contrary to ecclesiastical laws. But the Russian Church, instead of protesting against these abuses of the secular rulers, accepted the lordship over the Autocephalous Georgian Church that had been handed to it by the secular authorities. After that every protest on the part either of hierarchs or of laymen against the arbitrary abolition of the independence of the Georgian Church and the russification of the Georgians was suppressed by the secular authorities. Since recently the Russian Synod did not support the hierarchs of Georgia when, in 1905, they submitted a request in relation the re-establishment of the autocephaly of their Church, they decided on their own initiative to proclaim the independence of their Church. But even after this act they were filled with the desire to be in unity of faith and love, which is why they consider the exarch of Georgia, Archbishop Plato, to be the hierarch-locum tenens of the Russian Church in the Caucasus in those dioceses that are beyond the boundaries of the Georgian Church… And we now hope, Most Holy Vladyko, ‘that God will order all for the good, and that certain roughnesses in this matter will be smoothed over’, and it is not our fault that we did not meet fraternally at the Local Council of the Russian Church – in spite of the promise of the over-procurator A.V. Kartashev, nobody ‘fraternally’ invited us to the Council, as the representatives of the Churches of Constantinople, Greece, Serbia, and others were invited… Your Holiness’ invitation to us to appear before the All-Russian Sacred Council and admit our supposed errors is inappropriate and pointless - there is no error in our actions. And if beyond all expectation there would turn out to be such, then for their extirpation every Church has a means that is well-known to Your Holiness: the unfailing ‘grace of the Holy Spirit, through which righteousness is rationally contemplated by the priests of Christ and firmly upheld….’ As regards those ‘roughnesses’ about which his Reverence Sergius, the first in rank in the Holy Synod spoke, and which truly took place between you and us, they have been elicited by the interference of worldly bosses into the affairs of the Church one hundred years ago… But, Your Beatitude, you know that all this ‘has taken place not according to Church rules, but according to other human motivations’, and for that reason, having restored canonical order in the Churches of Georgia and Russia, we shall take diligent care ‘that from now on nothing of the sort should take place’ (First Ecumenical Council, canon 21). And this is the more possible and necessary in that by the mercy of God the past has gone, and now everything is new (II Corinthians 5.17).”[[382]](#footnote-382)

This last remark somewhat spoiled the otherwise strong canonical case presented by the Georgians. At that time, the Russians were undergoing the most terrible persecution in history, so they naturally looked on their present sufferings as the wrath of God rather than His mercy. The Georgians’ viewing the revolution as “the mercy of God” that made “everything new” betrayed that they, too, were caught up, at least to some extent, in the revolutionary frenzy of those days…

But the Georgians were soon to share in the sufferings of their brothers in the faith. In February, 1921 the Bolsheviks, at the initiative of the Georgians Stalin and Ordzhonikidze, invaded, and after a short war of three weeks took control of the country. Soon the Church was deprived of juridical status, and churches and monasteries began to be closed…

“On February 7, 1922,” writes Fr. Elijah Melia, “Catholicos Ambrose sent to the Interallied Conference at Genoa (the highest degree of international jurisdiction at that time) a letter of protest in which, recalling the moral obligations towards the nation of his charge, he protested in the name of the people of Georgia, deprived of their rights, against the foreign occupation and demanded the intervention of civilized humanity to oppose the iniquity committed against Georgia. He was arrested in February 1923 with Archbishop Nasaire and all the members of his Council. Their trial, which took place under conditions of semi-liberty, greatly stirred up the country.

“There were three accusations: 1) the 1922 letter to the Genoa Conference, 2) the concealment of the historic treasures of the Church in order to preserve them from passing into the hands of the State and 3) the prohibition imposed [by the] Governmental Commission for Religion against the redemption of precious objects in favour of the starving. Archbishop Nasaire was assassinated during the trial [on September 1, 1924], most probably in order to impress the others accused. All the members of his Council showed their solidarity with the Catholicos Ambrose, who conducted himself heroically, assuming the entire responsibility for his acts, which he declared to have been in conformity with his obligations and with the tradition of the Church of Georgia in similar cases. He was condemned to eight years imprisonment. Two members of his Council were given five and two years respectively. The Catholicos was liberated before the term of his imprisonment was over. He died on March 29, 1927.

“In August 1924, a general insurrection broke out, organized by all the active forces of the nation – the higher ranks of the army, the political parties, the university, the ecclesiastics, the population as a whole. But the uprising was doomed to fail, for the plot had been betrayed. The repression created thousands of victims. Groups of partisans still operated for some time…”[[383]](#footnote-383)

## 36. THE CHURCH IN BESSARABIA

One of the consequences of the Russian revolution was that Russian Moldavia (Bessarabia), 60% of whose population was Romanian, was united to the Romanian State. Before the revolution, writes Barbara Jelavich, “Romanians as such did not face prejudice, and there were Romanian as well as Russian large landowners. The widespread discontent was economic and social more than national. The position of the peasants was regulated by the Russian emancipation laws of the 1860s and subsequent reform measures, but, as in other parts of Russia, these had not solved the basic agrarian problems. Since conditions were roughly the same in the Regat, independent Romania did not hold a great attraction for the peasant majority. The main demand of all peasants was a breakup of the large estates and a distribution of their lands…

“Because of these conditions, the Russian revolutions in March and November 1917 were bound to have a great effect. They influenced not only the disaffected peasants, but also the many soldiers in the province who had deserted the rapidly disintegrating Russian army… As early as July 1917 the peasants began to seize the land; by the end of the year they had appropriated about two-thirds.

“In October 1917 a provisional government for Bessarabia was organized, with its center at Kishinev… This government remained in control of the province from November 1917 to November 1918. In December 1917 it declared itself the Democratic Moldavian Republic and expressed the desire to join a Soviet federative republic…”[[384]](#footnote-384)

However, in view of the discussions that had begun between the Soviet and German governments, this decision disturbed the Allied Powers, and with the approval of France the Romanian army invaded the province. On March 27, the Moldavian parliament, surrounded by Romanian soldiers, voted for the union of Bessarabia with Romania. It was suggested to Archbishop Anastasy (Gribanovsky) of Kishinev that he join the Romanian Church; but he refused.

In May he left the province, and the Kishinev archiepiscopate fell under the jurisdiction of the Romanian Church.[[385]](#footnote-385) On June 14, the Romanian Synod appointed Bishop Nicodemus (Muntianu) of Khush as deputy locum tenens of the see of Kishinev (he later became Patriarch of Romania). He began to “Romanize” the Bessarabian Church, introduced the Romanian language into the Kishinev seminary and in some monasteries replaced Russian and Ukrainian superiors with Romanian ones.

In October, 1918 Patriarch Tikhon wrote to Metropolitan Pimen of Moldavia and Suceava, the president of the Synod of the Romanian Church, protesting strongly at the anticanonical seizure of the Kishinev diocese by the Romanian Church, “which by her unilateral decision taken without the agreement of the Russian Church did not have the right to determine the destiny of the Kishinev diocese by submitting it to her power after Orthodox Bessarabia had constituted an indivisible part of the Russian ecclesiastical body for the last one hundred years. This way of acting on the part of the Romanian Holy Synod contradicts at the same time the spirit of Christian love, the age-old canonical decrees and the sacred customs of the Orthodox Church. Pointing to the supposed fact that political union always brings with it a union of the Churches cannot in the given case serve as a justification for the Romanian ecclesiastical authority, first, because it is not itself justified by history, and secondly, because such a point of view rests on a confusion of the nature of ecclesiastical and political life, which are different by their very essence… Moreover, the act of joining Bessarabia to the Romanian kingdom, as we said before, is far from generally recognised from the international point of view and can be subject to review at the final tally of the results of the world war.”

The Patriarch’s Epistle ended with a warning: “If the Romanian Church, in spite of the objections we have raised, tries by force to strengthen the position in its favour, we will be forced to break all fraternal and canonical communion with the Romanian Synod and bring the present matter before the judgement of the other Orthodox Churches.”[[386]](#footnote-386)

The Romanians paid no attention to this admonition, and in 1919 placed in the see of Kishinev Archimandrite Gurias (Grossu), a Russian priest of Moldavian extraction, and a graduate of the Kiev Academy.[[387]](#footnote-387)

Thus, as K.V. Glazkov writes, “while with one hand the Romanian authorities mercilessly destroying the communist opposition (for example, mass punitive operation were undertaken against Bolsheviks in the army, and Romanian units took part in the suppression of the red revolution in 1918 in Hungary), with the other hand they suppressed every kind of dissidence. A number of deputies of the Popular Assembly who were opponents of the union of Bessarabia and Romania were shot, after which the National Assembly itself was dissolved, while on the same day the pro-Romanian deputies triumphantly overthrew the monuments to Tsars Alexander I and Alexander II in the capital. In January, 1920, the White armies of General Bredov…, in whose carts were fugitives, women and children, were shot from Romanian machine-guns as they approached the Dniester. In this way the new authorities in Bessarabia spoiled for good their relations with the Russians.

“We should note that from the very beginning the Russian hierarchy and clergy, as if foreseeing the possibility of church-political disturbances, adopted quite a cold attitude to the inclusion of Bessarabia into Romania. This act was even condemned by Archbishop Anastasy (Gribanovsky) of Kishinev and Khotyn (latter first-hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad). Hoping for the speedy victory of the White movement, the representatives of the Bessarabian Church together with the zemstvo took part in the creation of a Committee for the liberation of Bessarabia. Therefore the Romanian Synod began the canonical submission of the Bessarabian diocese by demanding that Vladykas Anastasy, Gabriel and Dionysius separate from the Russian Orthodox Church in spite of the protests of Patriarch Tikhon. When the hierarchs refused to do this, the Romanian military units arrested them and exiled them from the country. But the believers were told that the hierarchs had left their diocese voluntarily. In the place of Metropolitan Anastasy there arrived from Bucharest the Romanian Archbishop Nicodemus; he was met by the clergy and laity by no means in a friendly manner. The ecclesiastical authorities [of the Russian Church] Abroad did not recognise the lawfulness of the union of the Kishinev diocese to the Romanian Church. It was violence, deceit and transgression of the Church canons, and not at all the commandments of God, that were laid at the foundation of their actions on the territory of Bessarabia by the Romanian civil and ecclesiastical authorities. How could the coming events unfold except in conditions of further imposition of terror?

“In the Kishinev spiritual seminary and spiritual schools the Romanian authorities removed the teaching of Russian and Church Slavonic languages, clearly intending to create a situation in which in Bessarabia as a whole there would remain no priests able to serve in Church Slavonic. Also, Church Slavonic service books were removed from the churches, and the priests were banned from delivering sermons in Russian. Direct physical persecution began against the zealots for the language of Saints Cyril and Methodius. In the village of Rechul the nuns of the local monastery were beaten with birch-rods by Romanian gendarmes for taking part in services in Church Slavonic, while an old priest of the village of Goreshte who was suspected of sympathizing with the opposition was tortured with wet lashes until he lost consciousness, after which he went mad. It may be that the whole guilt of the priest consisted in the fact that he, like many true patriots, did not want to commemorate the Romanian king, his family and the Synod at the liturgy.

“The majority of the zealots for Church Slavonic as the liturgical language were Russians, but many Moldavian priests and laypeople fought steadfastly against forcible Romanianization. ‘The Moldavians,’ reported the Romanian counter-intelligence of Beltsky uyezd, ‘are hostile to the Romanian administration, they avoid the Romanian clergy…, they threaten the priests when they commemorate the name of the king in church.’…

“In July, 1922 there was formed in Kishinev a multi-national ‘Union of Orthodox Christians’. Soon Bessarabian patriots came to lead the Union. They were closely linked with the Russian communion in Kishinev. According to certain information, Russian monarchists led by General E. Leontovich took part in the organization of the Union. In 1924 the re-registration of another organisation took place – the Orthodox Brotherhood of Alexander Nevsky, which was led by activists of Moldavian, Gagauz and Russian nationalities – Protopriest Michael Chakir, Priest Nicholas Lashku and K.K. Malanetsky, etc. All these were branded by the secret police as ‘ardent pan-Russists’, while the brotherhood was called the centre for the preservation and propaganda of Russian monarchist ideas…”[[388]](#footnote-388)

## 37. THE CHURCH IN THE UKRAINE

After leading the rite of the enthronement of Patriarch Tikhon, Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev returned to his flock, his heart heavy with forebodings about the future. Already in March, on his first return to Kiev after the February revolution, he had had to hold back the waves of incipient revolution. For an "Executive Committee of clergy and laymen" was organized in Kiev at this time, and a "Commissar for ecclesiastical affairs" was appointed. The longsuffering Orthodox city of Kiev, which had witnessed in the many centuries of its history all manner of hideous events and changes, was shocked at the spectacle of an Orthodox parish priest in the role of a revolutionary commissar, "a policeman in a riassa" as he was called.[[389]](#footnote-389)

In a dialogue with representatives of the executive committee, Metropolitan Vladimir stated candidly that "the Executive Committee of clergy and laymen is an illegitimate institution which is trying gradually to expand its power and to usurp prerogatives which do not belong to it." However, in spite of this his opinion of the new organ of the Kievan Church which had been formed as a result of the revolution, Metropolitan Vladimir did not refuse in principle to work with its members to lead the Church in a new direction. He gave his blessing for "the Executive Committee of clergy and laymen" to convene, in Kiev on April 12, 1917, a "Congress of the clergy and laymen of the Kievan diocese", which was for reasons that remain unclear transformed into "the Ukrainian congress of the clergy and laymen of the Kievan diocese".

Metropolitan Vladimir had a negative opinion of this congress. During it bishops were publicly insulted in a manner unheard of in the Orthodox Christian world; clerics in attendance branded them as "parasites". Metropolitan Vladimir likewise had a negative opinion of the resolutions which this congress passed, among which was the declaration that "the autonomous Ukraine must have a Ukrainian church which is independent of the Synod." He also opposed the formation by this congress of a so-called advisory committee to the Metropolitan of Kiev.

This is how the members of this committee characterized the metropolitan's attitude towards them in their account of a meeting which took place on July 1, 1917: "At this meeting, in the presence of three vicar bishops, the metropolitan expressed what can only be called a hostile attitude toward the Church Committee in such clear and candid terms that all of its members wished to leave the metropolitan's inhospitable chambers. One of the committee members (Archpriest E.A. Kapralov) suggested that they do so and that it be recorded in the minutes that the metropolitan's attitude precluded any possibility of cooperative and fruitful labour."

The metropolitan's feelings were best expressed in an "archpastoral address" which he published in early August, 1917, on the eve of the convocation of an extraordinary congress of the Kievan diocese: "The great misfortune of our times is that people consider it to be a virtue to have a liberal attitude toward matters of faith and morality. Many consider it their duty to implant such a liberal attitude toward faith and morality in the souls of the Russian people... To justify themselves, they present arguments that seem to merit our attention. They say: every man can judge religious matters from his own point of view and freely express his convictions, whatever they may be, according to his conscience, and he must respect the religious convictions of others. No one will object to freedom of religion and of the conscience. One must not, however, forget that Christian faith is not a human invention, but rather the word of God, and it cannot be changed to suit people's concepts. If people's convictions stand in opposition to the Divine truth, is it reasonable to recognize these convictions, to consider them correct and to guide one's life by them? We must, of course, be tolerant of those who do not agree with us, and bear with even those who have clearly gone astray, but we must turn away from their errors, and prove that they are unfounded. The pastors of the Christian Church and all sincere followers of Christ's teachings should consider this their duty...

"Our local and rapidly growing sorrows add to the misfortune experienced by the whole of the Russian land. I am speaking about a tendency which has surfaced in southern Russia and which threatens to destroy the peace and unity of the Church. It is terrible for us even to hear people talk about separating the churches of southern Russia from the one Orthodox Church of Russia. After their long cooperation, can there be any grounds for such aims? What is their origin? Did not the preachers who spread Orthodoxy throughout Russia come from Kiev? Among the God-pleasing brethren of the Kiev-Caves Lavra do we not see men who came from all corners of Holy Russia? Is it not true that the Orthodox of southern Russia have laboured in all parts of Russia, serving the Church and as scholars in various fields? And conversely, is it not true that the Orthodox of northern Russia have laboured for salvation in various professions in southern Russia? Did they not erect the one great Russian Orthodox Church together? Could the Orthodox of southern Russia possibly reproach the Orthodox of northern Russia for falling away from the faith in some way or for distorting the teachings of faith and morality? Certainly not. Based on my personal experience I can testify that in all the dioceses where God has allowed me to serve, the Orthodox teachings of faith and morality are kept pure and unchanged, and there is everywhere unity in the Church's teachings and liturgical practices. Why should there be any separation? Where will it lead? Indeed, only the enemies both without and within will have cause to rejoice. Our love for our native soil should not suppress and stifle our love for the whole of Russia and for the one Russian Orthodox Church."

The metropolitan concluded by appealing to the clergy and laymen to "take every possible measure to promote unity among themselves and with the whole of the Russian Orthodox Church," and to "devote serious thought and proper preparation to the upcoming congress, thoroughly to discuss the issues presented there, and pass resolutions which are correct, legal, beneficial and which merit implementation."

However, the congress, which took place on August 8 and 9, 1917, took an entirely different direction. On August 9, the metropolitan was so offended by the proceedings of the congress that he fell seriously ill and had to leave the meeting immediately. In a defiant public statement, the delegates interpreted the metropolitan's departure as escapism and an expression of his lack of respect for the meeting.

In October, 1917, the Provisional Government fell. The Ukrainian government wished to use the change to turn their autonomous status into one of full independence. And the same tendencies were strongly present in the Church. A special committee in charge of convening a Council of the Orthodox clergy and lay people of the Ukraine was organized in Kiev in mid-November of 1917 according to a resolution passed at the third Cossack military assembly. Archbishop Alexis Dorodnitsyn (formerly of Vladimir), who was in retirement in the Kiev Caves Lavra, stood at the head of this committee, which was joined by representatives from among the clergy of Kiev (Fathers Lipkovsky, Tarnavsky, Filipenko and others). They played active roles in the above-mentioned organizations, such as the Executive Committee, Church Advisory Council to the Metropolitan of Kiev, etc.

At a meeting on November 23, the committee "discussed the present position of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine now that the Ukrainian government is being separated from the government of Russia, and took into account the pronouncement of the Russian Patriarch, who might extend his authority to include the Ukrainian Church as well". They passed a whole series of resolutions, which amounted to sweeping changes in the status and administration of the Church in the Ukraine. The organizational committee was renamed "the provisional Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council", and an executive committee established to convene a provisional Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council was proclaimed "the provisional government of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church". It was also decided that this new ecclesiastical government should appoint commissars to all the dioceses of the Ukraine. The priest Fr. Pashchevsky was appointed commissar of the Kievan diocese. And the chairman of the Council, Archbishop Alexis, was forbidden to go to Moscow, where he had been summoned to become the abbot of a monastery by Patriarch Tikhon.

On November 24, a general meeting of the Orthodox parish councils of Kiev was convened at which these moves towards Ukrainian ecclesiastical autocephaly were condemned and the fear was expressed that an autocephalous Church might join the uniates and come under the Pope.

A few days later the metropolitan arrived in Kiev. On December 4 a meeting convened by the Union of Orthodox Parish Councils was held under the presidency of the metropolitan and attended by Metropolitan Platon of Georgia. In the days that followed several attempts were made by the autocephalists to remove Metropolitan Vladimir and his vicar bishops from Kiev. At one point, sharply reversing course, a member of the Church Rada called Fomenko, accompanied by a soldier, offered him the post of Patriarch of the Ukrainian Church, while at the same time demanding one hundred thousand rubles from the coffers of the metropolia. It was only with difficulty that the unwanted night visitors were removed.

At the end of the month another delegation came to the metropolitan and demanded that he leave Kiev. He replied with emotion: "I am not afraid of anyone or anything. I am at all times prepared to give my life for Christ's Church and for the Orthodox faith, to prevent its enemies from mocking it. I will suffer to the very end in order to preserve Orthodoxy in the very place where it first took root in Russia."

And then, going up to one member of the delegation and pointing at his heart, he said: "Do you know that the first revolutionary was the devil, and you are making a revolution in the Church of Christ?"

Then he wept bitterly.

The metropolitan considered the convening of an All-Ukrainian Council untimely in view of the Bolshevik seizure of power. Nevertheless, he was forced to prepare for the opening of a new Council, and opened its first session on January 7, 1918 with a moleben on Sophia square and a welcoming speech to the delegates. The metropolitan was unanimously elected to the chairmanship of the Council, and attended every single meeting until the civil war broke out in Kiev.

Artillery shells began to fall on the Kiev Caves Lavra on January 15 and continued for several days. However, the metropolitan continued with his religious duties, displaying great calm. On January 23, he celebrated his last Divine Liturgy with the brotherhood of the Lavra. That evening, after occupying Kiev, the Bolsheviks took control of the Lavra, and violence began. Armed people burst into the churches with hats on their heads and cigarettes between their teeth. With shouting and swearing they conducted searches even during Divine services, and mocked the holy things. They stripped old monks and took off their shoes outside. Then they mocked them and cut them with whips. Officers who were found in the Lavra were killed. In spite of all the commotion, the metropolitan served an akathist to the Dormition of the Mother of God in the great church of the Lavra, which proved to be his last service on earth. Then he and Bishop Theodore of Priluki moved to the altar of the lower church, which was dedicated to St. Michael, first metropolitan of Kiev. On January 25 / February 7 he was martyred by the Bolsheviks, the first bishop-martyr of the revolution…

In March, 1918, after the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Kiev was surrendered to the Germans. But after the defeat of Germany in the world war Petlyura captured Kiev, after which Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev, Archbishop Eulogius of Volhynia, Bishop Nicodemus of Chigirinsk, Archimandrite Vitaly (Maximenko) and others were arrested and handed over to the Poles. In August, 1919, Kiev was liberated by the Whites, and with the help of pressure from the Western powers, the prisoners were released by the Poles. As the Red Army regained the upper hand, Metropolitan Anthony set off for the Kuban, where he became honorary president of the Higher Church Authority that had been formed there. Later he emigrated and became first-hierarch of the Russian Church in Exile.

In 1920 an “Independent Union of Ukrainian Orthodox Parishes” was formed, which convoked the first council of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church in October, 1921. Metropolitan Michael (Ermakov) appeared at the Sophia cathedral and called on those present not to introduce a scandal into Church life, and pointed out that Patriarch Tikhon had “blessed Divine services in the Ukrainian language when that was desired by a majority of parishioners, including women, whom the Patriarch blessed to take part in Church work with full rights”. The metropolitan hoped that the delegates “will not transgress the Church canons or the will of his Holiness the Patriarch”. He did not give his blessing to the assembly, pointing out its anticanonicity, and suggested the participants to disperse to their homes.

When the metropolitan had departed, on October 23 the participants proceeded to a so-called “conciliar consecration”. That is, since no bishops had joined them, they were forced to create bishops for themselves in a manner that no other Orthodox Church recognized as canonical, earning for themselves the title of the “Lypkovsky samosvyaty” after the first “bishop” to be thus consecrated, Basil Lypkovsky. As Lypkovsky himself wrote: “30 priests and all the laymen – as many as could fit into the walls of the Sophia cathedral - took part in the consecration. At the moment of consecration a wave of enthusiasm ran through the crowd. The members of the council and all those present put their hands on each other’s shoulders until a chain of hands went up to the priests who surrounded me.” Then they took Lipkovsky to the relics of Great Martyr Mercurius and placed on his head the dead head of the saint. That is how Lypkovsky became a “bishop”. On October 24 and 30 several other bishops were consecrated. The Council also introduced a married episcopate and second marriages for priests. [[390]](#footnote-390)

Later in the 1920s a second autocephalist movement was initiated by Bishop Theophilus (Buldovsky) of Lubensk, who received consecration in the Patriarchal Church at a time when the Lypkovsky schism was declining, but who later separated from the Church on the same basis of Ukrainian nationalism and united the remnants of the Lypkovsky schism to his own.

One of the most popular patriarchal priests in the Ukraine at this time was Fr. Basil (Zelentsov), a disciple of Archbishop Theophan of Poltava. It was largely through his influence that Buldovsky’s schism was rejected by the mass of the people.

In 1922 Fr. Basil was put on trial on a political charge. In his speech at the end of the trial he said that he was loyal to Soviet power insofar as “it, like everything else, is sent to us from above… But where the matter touches the Faith of Christ, the churches of God and human souls, there I have fought, do now fight, and will continue to fight to my last breath with the representatives of this power. It would be shamefully sinful for me, as a warrior of Christ, who bear this cross on my breast, to defend myself personally at a time when the enemies have taken up arms and declared war against Christ Himself.”

After his consecration to the episcopate in 1925, Bishop Basil continued to wage a spiritual war against the Bolsheviks, publicly calling them “apostates from God, violators, blasphemers of the Faith of Christ, murderers, a satanic power, blood-suckers, destroyers of freedom and justice, fiends from hell”. He constantly called on the people “to make them no allowances, to make no compromises with them, to fight and fight with the enemies of Christ, and not to fear tortures and death, for sufferings from Him are the highest happiness and joy”. In 1930 he suffered martyrdom in Moscow for his rejection of sergianist neo-renovationism.[[391]](#footnote-391)

Although the Ukrainian autocephalists were a clearly schismatic movement, they did not share the modernist ideology of the Muscovite renovationists, and entered into union with them only in the autumn of 1924, evidently with the aim of securing the recognition of their own autocephaly from Constantinople, with whom the renovationists were in communion. That is why it was not until January 5, 1924 that the patriarch extended his anti-renovationist anathema of 1923 to the autocephalists. Even then, the autocephalists showed little animosity towards the patriarch, and in the Second All-Ukrainian Council of 1925 the Synod issued an epistle calling for the review of Patriarch Tikhon’s defrocking by the renovationists. [[392]](#footnote-392)

Although the Ukrainian autocephalists were now largely controlled by Soviet agents, in January, 1930 the authorities convoked a council which dissolved the whole of their Church organization. [[393]](#footnote-393)

## 38. THE RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR

The Patriarch continued to manifest the defiant spirit of the Moscow Council in relation to Bolshevism. Thus on October 26, 1918 he wrote to the Sovnarkom: “’All those who take up the sword will perish by the sword’ (Matthew 26.52). This prophecy of the Saviour we apply to you, the present determiners of the destinies of our fatherland, who call yourselves ‘people’s commissars’. For a whole year you have held State power in your hands and you are already preparing to celebrate the anniversary of the October revolution, but the blood poured out in torrents of our brothers pitilessly slaughtered in accordance with your appeals, cries out to heaven and forces us to speak to you this bitter word of righteousness.

“In truth you gave it a stone instead of bread and a serpent instead of a fish (Matthew 7.9, 10). You promised to give the people, worn out by bloody war, peace ‘without annexations and requisitions’. In seizing power and calling on the people to trust you, what promises did you give it and how did you carry out these promises? What conquests could you renounce when you had brought Russia to a shameful peace whose humiliating conditions you yourselves did not even decide to publish fully? Instead of annexations and requisitions our great homeland has been conquered, reduced and divided, and in payment of the tribute imposed on it you will secretly export to Germany the gold which was accumulated by others than you… You have divided the whole people into warring camps, and plunged them into a fratricide of unprecedented ferocity. You have openly exchanged the love of Christ for hatred, and instead of peace you have artificially inflamed class enmity. And there is no end in sight to the war you have started, since you are trying to use the workers and peasants to bring victory to the spectre of world revolution… It is not enough that you have drenched the hands of the Russian people in the blood of brothers, covering yourselves with contributions, requisitions and nationalisations under various names: you have incited the people to the most blatant and shameless looting. At your instigation there has been the looting or confiscation of lands, estates, factories, houses and cattle; money, objects, furniture and clothing are looted. At first you robbed the more wealthy and industrious peasants under the name of ‘bourgeois’, thereby multiplying the numbers of the poor, although you could not fail to realise that by devastating a great number of individual citizens the people’s wealth is being destroyed and the country itself ravaged.

“Having seduced the dark and ignorant people with the opportunity of easy and unpunished profit, you darkened their consciences and drowned out in them the consciousness of sin. But with whatever names you cover your evil deeds – murder, violence and looting will always remain heavy sins and crimes that cry out to heaven for revenge.

“You promised freedom. Rightly understood, as freedom from evil, that does not restrict others, and does not pass over into licence and self-will, freedom is a great good. But you have not given that kind of freedom: the freedom given by you consists in indulging in every way the base passions of the mob, and in not punishing murder and robbery. Every manifestation both of true civil and the higher spiritual freedom of mankind is mercilessly suppressed by you. Is it freedom when nobody can get food for himself, or rent a flat, or move from city to city without special permission? Is it freedom when families, and sometimes the populations of whole houses are resettled and their property thrown out into the street, and when citizens are artificially divided into categories, some of which are given over to hunger and pillaging? Is it freedom when nobody can openly express his opinion for fear of being accused of counter-revolution?

“Where is freedom of the word and the press, where is the freedom of Church preaching? Many bold Church preachers have already paid with the blood of their martyrdom; the voice of social and state discussion and reproach is suppressed; the press, except for the narrowly Bolshevik press, has been completely smothered. The violation of freedom in matters of the faith is especially painful and cruel. There does not pass a day in which the most monstrous slanders against the Church of Christ and her servers, and malicious blasphemies and sacrilege, are not published in the organs of your press. You mock the servers of the altar, you force a bishop to dig ditches (Bishop Hermogen of Tobolsk), and you send priests to do dirty work. You have placed your hands on the heritage of the Church, which has been gathered by generations of believing people, and you have not hesitated to violate their last will. You have closed a series of monasteries and house churches without any reason or cause. You have cut off access to the Moscow Kremlin, that sacred heritage of the whole believing people… It is not our task to judge earthly powers; every power allowed by God would attract to itself Our blessing if it were in truth a servant of God subject to the good, and was ‘terrible not for good deeds, but for evil’ (Romans 13.3,4). Now we extend to you, who are using your power for the persecution of your neighbours and the destruction of the innocent, Our word of exhortation: celebrate the anniversary of your coming to power by liberating the imprisoned, by stopping the blood-letting, violence, destruction and restriction of the faith. Turn not to destruction, but to the establishment of order and legality. Give the people the rest from civil war that they desire and deserve. Otherwise ‘from you will be required all the righteous blood that you have shed’ (Luke 11.51), ‘and you who have taken up the sword will perish by the sword’.”[[394]](#footnote-394)

It was at about this time that the Russian Civil War broke out. The Bolsheviks defeated the Whites attacking them from all directions. It was the bloodiest conflict in human history to that date, causing the deaths of up to twenty million people according to some estimates, eight or nine million according to others.

The defeat of the Whites has been attributed to many factors – the Reds’ occupation of the centre, the Whites’ difficulties of communication, the fitful intervention of the western powers, the betrayal of the Whites by the Poles…

Certainly the Reds did *not* represent a formidable opponent at first. Having destroyed the old Imperial army, it was extremely difficult for them to build up an effective new army. By the spring of 1920 80% of the officer corps was staffed by former tsarist officers, who services were retained only by the threat that their families would be massacred if they did not comply. Even so, there were very many desertions to the Whites – 1.76 million in 1919 alone, the Whites’ most successful year.[[395]](#footnote-395)

But the sad and most fundamental fact was that, as Elder Aristocles of Moscow (+1918) said, “The spirit [among the Whites] is not right.” For many of them were aiming, not at the restoration of Orthodoxy and the Orthodox tsardom, but at the reconvening of the Constituent Assembly or the restoration of the landowners’ lands. Although this conclusion is disputed by some,[[396]](#footnote-396) the evidence is in its favour. Not that there was not a hard core of truly believing, monarchist Orthodox Christians in the White armies. But they failed because Russia as a whole was not worthy of the restoration of the Orthodox autocracy.

Of course, as noted above, if the White armies approaching Yekaterinburg from the East in July, 1918 had managed to rescue the Tsar and his family alive, the task of the Whites would have been easier – which is precisely why the Reds killed them. But even a living Tsar would probably have availed little in view of the fact that in their majority neither the White soldiers nor the populations whose interests they sought to represent were monarchists. Thus in 1919, when the Romanov Great Princes who were in the Crimea approached General Denikin with a request to enter the ranks of the White Army, they were refused. “The reasons,” writes Prince Felix Yusupov, “were political: the presence of relatives of the imperial family in the ranks of the White Army was not desirable. The refusal greatly upset us…”[[397]](#footnote-397)

Again, as Michael Nazarov points out, “there sat in the White governments at that time activists like, for example, the head of the Archangel government Tchaikovsky, who gave to the West as an explanation of the Bolshevik savageries the idea that ‘we put up with the destructive autocratic regime for too long,… our people were less educated politically than the other allied peoples’?”[[398]](#footnote-398)

Again, the leading White General A.I. Denikin said: “It is not given us to know what state structure Russia would have accepted in the event of the victory of the White armies in 1919-20. I am sure, however, that after an inevitable, but short-lived struggle of various political tendencies, a normal structure would have been established in Russia based on the principles of law, freedom and private property. And in any case – no less democratic than that which the reposed Marshal [Pisludsky] introduced in Poland…”[[399]](#footnote-399)

Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) commented: “Unfortunately, the most noble and pious leader of this [the White] army listened to those unfitting counsellors who were foreign to Russia and sat in his Special council and destroyed the undertaking. The Russian people, the real people, the believing and struggling people, did not need the bare formula: ‘a united and undivided Russia’. They needed neither ‘Christian Russia’, nor ‘Faithless Russia’, nor ‘Tsarist Russia’, nor ‘the Landowners’ Russia’ (by which they will always understand a republic). They needed the combination of the three dear words – ‘for the Faith, the Tsar and the Fatherland’. Most of all, they needed the first word, since faith rules the whole of the state’s life; the second word was necessary since the tsar guards and protects the first; and the third was needed since the people is the bearer of the first words.”[[400]](#footnote-400)

Not having firmly Orthodox and monarchical convictions, but rather, as V. Shambarov writes, “a complete absence of a political programme”[[401]](#footnote-401), the Whites were bound to be disunited amongst themselves and weak in opposing Red propaganda in their rear. This was especially evident on the northern front, where Red propaganda was effective amongst both the White Russians and the British.[[402]](#footnote-402) But it was hardly less true on the other fronts.

In this failure, the Whites lost their own major weapon in the propaganda war. For as Trotsky said: “If the White Guardists had thought of unfurling the slogan of the kulaks’ Tsar, we would not have lasted for two weeks…” So anti-monarchism not only destroyed the monarchy: it destroyed any chance of delivering Russia from the Bolshevik nightmare.

St. John Maximovich summed up the situation: “If the higher military leaders, instead of beseeching his Majesty ‘on their knees’ to abdicate, had carried out what they were bound to do in accordance with their oath, the artificially incited rebellion would have been suppressed and Russia would have been saved… A terrible sin before God and a state crime was carried out. God only knows the extent to which any of them expiated their sin. But there was hardly any open repentance. After the fall of the Provisional Government, and the loss of the power it had seized, there was a call to struggle for Russia. But although it elicited noble feelings among many and a corresponding movement, there was no expression of repentance on the part of the main criminals, who continued to think of themselves as heroes and saviours of Russia. Meanwhile, Trotsky in his *Memoirs* admitted that they (the Soviets) feared above all the proclamation of a Tsar, since then the fall of Soviet power would have been inevitable. However, this did not happen, the ‘leaders’ were also afraid. They inspired many to struggle, but their call was belated and their courage did not save Russia. Some of them laid down their lives and shed their blood in this struggle, but far more innocent blood was shed. It continues to be poured out throughout Russia, crying out to heaven.”[[403]](#footnote-403)

Another weakness of the Whites was their failure to curb anti-semitic excesses in their ranks, especially among the Cossacks. However, as Pipes writes, “while the Cossack detachments of the Southern Army committed numerous atrocities (none can be attributed to the Volunteer army), a careful reckoning of the pogroms by Jewish organizations indicates that the worst crimes were the work of independent gangs of Ukrainians.”[[404]](#footnote-404)

Hatred of Jews was common to all classes of society, of all ideological persuasions. Historians have paid more attention to atrocities committed by the Whites than to those committed by the Reds. Nevertheless, the fact remains that shameful acts of plunder, torture and rape were committed by the Whites. And while, as Pipes goes on to say, “it is incorrect to lay wholesale blame for the massacres of the Jews on the White Army, it is true that Denikin [commander of the Volunteer Army] remained passive in the face of these atrocities, which not only stained the reputation of his army but also demoralized it…

“Personally, Denikin was not a typical anti-Semite of the time: at any rate, in his five-volume chronicle of the Civil War he does not blame the Jews either for Communism or for his defeat. On the contrary, he expresses shame at their treatment in his army as well as the pogroms and shows awareness of the debilitating effect these had on the army’s morale. But he was a weak, politically inexperienced man who had little control over the behaviour of his troops. He yielded to the pressures of anti-Semites in his officer corps from fear of appearing pro-Jewish and from a sense of the futility of fighting against prevailing passions. In June 1919 he told a Jewish delegation that urged him to issue a declaration condemning the pogroms, that ‘words here were powerless, that any unnecessary clamor in regard to this question will only make the situation of Jews harder, irritating the masses and bringing out the customary accusations of “selling out to the Yids”.’ Whatever the justice of such excuses for passivity in the face of civilian massacres, they must have impressed the army as well as the population at large that the White Army command viewed Jews with suspicion and if it did not actively encourage pogroms, neither was it exercised about them…

“The only prominent public figure to condemn the pogroms openly and unequivocally was the head of the Orthodox Church, Patriarch Tikhon. In an Epistle issued on July 21, 1919, he called violence against Jews ‘dishonor for the perpetrators, dishonour for the Holy Church’.”[[405]](#footnote-405)

Paradoxically, the population was probably more anti-Bolshevik in the Red-occupied areas than elsewhere – because they had had direct experience of Bolshevik cruelty.

As General A.A. von Lampe writes, “the border regions, which naturally attracted to themselves the attention of those Russians who did not want to submit to the dictatorship established in the centre, *did not know Bolshevism,* that is, they probably did not know the results of its practical application on the skin of the natives. They had not experienced the delights of the Soviet paradise and were not able to exert themselves fully to avoid the trials and torments that were coming upon them.

“The population of these provinces, of course, knew the war that was exhausting the whole of Russia. The population also knew the revolution, which gave them the so-called ‘freedoms’!… The population, with the complicity of the soldiers, who had known on the front only the declaration of *rights*, but not the *obligations* of the soldier, knew only about their rights and did not at all represent to themselves that all these rights were bound up with certain obligations.

“On the territory of this population a real war was being waged, a civil war with its gunfights that did not always hit only those who were fighting in the direct line of fire; with its repressions, not only in relation to people and their property, but also to the settlements themselves, which sometimes, in the course of a battle, were mercilessly and inexorably razed to the ground… The population had to sacrifice their rights and their comforts. The White army was not that equipped and organized army that we are accustomed to imagine when we pronounce that word; immediately on coming into contact with the population it was forced to take from it fodder, horses, reserves of food and, finally, the people themselves!

“War on a given territory always brings with it many deprivations and sufferings. War, and in particular civil war, *feeds itself and supplements itself!* And, of course, the population could not welcome this; it, as I have already said, thought not about its responsibilities, but only about its rights, and it expected from the Whites only the immediate restoration of order and normal conditions of life, not thinking on its side to offer it any help at all.

“The whole sum of *unpleasantnesses* brought by the drawn-out war was very sharply experienced by the population; and at the same time it was being forcibly corrupted by the Red and socialist propaganda promising them deliverance from all these woes, promises of complete prosperity and complete dominion, promises which, as we know, have seduced not only Russia, but are disturbing no small part of the population of the whole world to this day…

“All this came down to the fact that the inconveniences caused by the Whites *ranged the population against them*…

“The Reds threatened and threatened very unambiguously to take *everything* and in fact took *a part* – the population was deceived and… relieved. The Whites promised legality, and took only a little – and the population was embittered…

“The Reds promised *everything*, the Whites only that which was fitting *according to the law…*

“The Reds had terror and machine-guns as arguments and measures of persuasion; the Whites threatened – *with the law…*

“The Reds decisively rejected everything and raised arbitrariness into a law; the Whites, in rejecting the Reds, of course could not also reject the methods of arbitrariness and violence employed by the Reds…

“The population demanded nothing from the Reds since the only thing they could wish for once they had fallen into their hands was peace, and they did not, of course, demand that! But from the Whites the population demanded… a miracle, they demanded that the Whites, with one wave of their white hands, should remove all the blood from Russia…”[[406]](#footnote-406)

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The civil war presented Patriarch Tikhon with a cruel dilemma. On the one hand, he obviously wanted the Whites to win. On the other hand, if he blessed the White armies this would have been seen as equivalent to a call to the population in the Red-occupied areas to rise up against their oppressors, which would have led to further massive bloodshed.

It is probably for the latter reason that in mid-1918, in spite of the pleas of his close advisor, Prince G.I. Trubetskoy, the Patriarch refused to bless a White general in the south, saying that he was not engaging in politics. But he did bless the one Orthodox general who had not betrayed his oath to the Tsar, General Theodore Keller. Moreover, in Siberia, the White armies under Admiral A.V. Kolchak, the most monarchist of the White leaders and their formal head, were close to the Church, and received a secret blessing...

In November, 1918, in view of the lack of communication with the Patriarch, an autonomous Temporary Higher Church Authority (THCA) was formed under the leadership of Archbishop Sylvester of Omsk. At the request of Admiral Kolchak, it moved to Omsk, and sent 2000 out of the 3500 clergy living on the territories occupied by Kolchak’s armies to serve in the armies as military chaplains. In April, 1919 a Council of the THCA took place in Omsk which anathematised the leaders of the Bolshevik party and ordered the commemoration of Kolchak during Divine services as the Supreme Ruler of Russia. In an address to the clergy the Council declared: “The pastors of the Church have the moral right to struggle against Bolshevism, and nobody must look on this struggle as unfitting to the Church, as the Church’s interference into political and social affairs of the State.”[[407]](#footnote-407)

Kolchak believed that the Orthodox Church combined with an authoritarian system of power based on theocratic principles would help him stabilize the situation in Siberia. “The spiritual power of the soldiers has weakened,” he said. “Political slogans and the ideas of the Constituent Assembly and of an undivided Russia no longer have any effect. Much more comprehensible is the struggle for the faith, and this only religion can do.”[[408]](#footnote-408)

Perhaps for this reason, in January, 1919 the Patriarch appeared to reverse his apolitical stance, at any rate in relation to the Siberian armies. For to Admiral Kolchak he sent a disguised priest with a tiny photograph of an icon of St. Nicholas and the following message: “As is well known to all Russians and, of course, to your Excellency, before this Icon, revered by the whole of Russia, every day on December 6, the day of the Winter Nicholas feast, there was a prayer service, which ended with the whole people chanting: ‘Save, O Lord, Thy people…’ with all the worshippers on their knees. And then on December 6, 1917, after the October revolution, the people of Moscow, faithful to the faith and tradition, at the end of the prayer service, chanted on their knees: ‘Save, O Lord…’ Soldiers and police came up and drove away the worshippers, and fired at the Icon from rifles and weapons. The holy hierarch on this icon on the wall of the Kremlin was depicted with a cross in his left hand and a sword in his right. The bullets of the fanatics flew around the holy hierarch without touching the God-pleaser anywhere. However, fragments of shells from the explosions tore off the plaster on the left side of the Wonderworker, which destroyed almost the whole of the left side of the holy hierarch on the Icon with the hand in which was the cross. On the same day, on the orders of the powers of the antichrist this Holy Icon was draped with a big red flag with a satanic emblem. It was firmly attached to the lower and side edges. On the wall of the Kremlin the inscription was made: ‘Death to the Faith – the Opium of the People’. On December 6 in the next year, many people gathered for the prayer service, which was coming to its end undisturbed by anyone! But when the people fell on their knees and began to chant: ‘Save, O Lord…’ the flag fell from the Icon of the Wonderworker. The atmosphere of prayerful ecstasy cannot be described! One had to see it, and he who saw it remembers it and feels it to this day. There was chanting, sobbing, cries and hands raised on high, rifle fire, many were wounded, many were killed… and… the place was cleared. The next day, early in the morning, with My Blessing, it was declared in front of the whole people what the Lord had shown through His God-pleaser to the Russian people in Moscow on December 6, 1918.

“I am sending you a photographic copy of the Wonderworking Icon as my blessing to you, Your Excellency, in your struggle with the temporary atheist power over the suffering people of Russia… I ask you, honoured Alexander Vasilyevich, look how the Bolsheviks succeeded in striking out the left hand of the God-pleaser with the cross, which demonstrates as it were the temporary trampling of the Orthodox faith… But the punishing sword of the God-pleaser has remained as a help and blessing to your Excellency in your Christian struggle for the salvation of the Orthodox Church in Russia.”[[409]](#footnote-409)

However, this anti-Soviet stance was not maintained. On October 8, 1919, much to the sorrow of the Whites, the Patriarch issued a decree entitled “On the non-interference of the clergy in the civil war”, in which he called on the clergy to “refrain from participation in political parties and demonstrations”, and to submit to the “orders” of the Soviet authorities. “People point out that with a change in authority the Church servers sometimes welcome this change with the ringing of bells and the organization of triumphant services and various ecclesiastical festivities. But if this happens in some places, it takes place either at the demand of the new authorities themselves, or in accordance with the desire of the masses of the people, but not at all at the initiative of the Church servers, who in accordance with their rank must stand higher and beyond all political interests. They must remember the canonical rules of the Holy Church, by which She forbids Her servers from interfering in the political life of the country, and from belonging to any parties, and still more from making service rites and sacred actions into an instrument of political demonstrations.[[410]](#footnote-410)

This statement marks the beginning of a significant shift in the Church’s attitude from one of open enmity towards the Bolsheviks to qualified neutrality and civil obedience. *Izvestia* commented on it as follows: “The Patriarch and the circles around him have evidently become convinced of the solidity of Soviet power and become more cautious. [Soviet power], of course, is not expecting that the Patriarch should invite the clergy subject to him to express sympathy for Soviet power. The most that these circles are capable of is neutrality. Such tactics are recommended by the Patriarch’s appeal… In any case, the epistle of the Patriarch is characteristic in this respect, that it involuntarily confirms the strength of Soviet power, and that the Orthodox clergy are now too frightened to quarrel with it openly.”[[411]](#footnote-411)

This shift in attitude took place when Denikin’s Volunteer Army looked on the point of breaking through to Moscow. So we cannot excuse it on the grounds that the Patriarch thought that the Reds were going to win the war. More probably, the Patriarch realised that the Whites were motivated, not so much by the positive ideal of Orthodoxy as by the negative ideal of anti-Bolshevism – and only that which is truly positive and spiritual can merit the blessing of God and His Church.

It may well have been right for the Patriarch not to follow the example of St. Hermogen and call the people to rise up against Bolshevism. Nevertheless, the failure of the Church to issue an unequivocal condemnation of Bolshevism was a weakness that her enemies were quick to exploit. The Patriarch’s anti-Soviet statements were construed as dabbling in politics; while his refusal to bless the White armies was construed as the equivalent of a blessing on the Soviet State…

However, even if the Church did not expose the evil of Bolshevism with complete clarity, the Bolsheviks were providing their own proofs of their antichristianity by their behaviour. Thus Shkarovskii writes: “The spread of civil war was accompanied by a hardening of Bolshevik anti-religious policies. The RKP(b) anticipated that religious faith and the Church would soon die away completely, and that with a ‘purposeful education system’ and ‘revolutionary action’, including the use of force, they could be overcome fairly quickly. At a later stage Soviet atheist literature referred to this period as ‘Sturm und Drang’. In the programme adopted at the Eighth RKP(b) Congress in March 1919, the party proposed a total assault on religion, and talked of the coming ‘complete disappearance of religious prejudice’.

“In order to attain this goal the authorities brought in ever-increasing restrictions. On 3 April 1919 the Commissariat of Justice decreed that voluntary monetary collections among the faithful were permissible ‘only for the needs of a particular church building’. At the beginning of 1919 a complete ban was introduced on religious instruction for anybody under the age of 18. Existing monasteries were only permitted to function if they turned themselves into labour communes or workshops. The closure of cloisters began at the end of 1918. By 1921, 722 monasteries had been nationalized, over half of those existing in Russia. From the summer of 1918 the authorities waged a campaign to destroy ‘holy relics’. This offended the faithful and was a crude intervention in the affairs of the Church, an attempt to regulate its way of life and worship. In the spring of 1919 these actions became widespread, and became a means of conducting anti-religious propaganda by deeds. On 14 March the Commissariat of Justice decreed that they should be welcomed. The authorities also looked upon the Church as a ready source of additional state funds. In 1919 they began a speculative trade in valuable artefacts, including items which they had seized from churches….

“… Despite all the obstacles placed in its way, the Orthodox Church was able to conserve its structure during the civil war. Thousands of small churches which were supposed to have been closed down, even in the capitals, continued to function, as did religious schools. Charitable works continued, and religious processions took place, until the autumn of 1921 in Petrograd.

“A very small number of priests served in the Red Army. The right-wing section of the clergy was active in its support of the White cause… Military chaplains served with the White armies – Kolchak had around 2,000, Denikin had more than 1,000, and Wrangel had over 500. All this provided further ammunition for the Bolsheviks’ anti-clerical campaign. During 1920 state bodies continued the tactic of excluding religion from all aspects of life. A circular issued by the People’s Commissariat of Justice on 18 May resulted in almost all the diocesan councils being liquidated in Russia. A further 58 holy relics were uncovered by the summer.[[412]](#footnote-412) On 29 July the Sovnarkom approved a proposal from the justice commissariat ‘On the Countrywide Liquidation of Relics’. However, the authority of the Church prevented this proposal from being carried out in full. Eight months late, on 1 April 1921, a secret circular issued by the commissariat admitted defeat on this score. By the autumn of 1920 the nationalization of church property had been completed. A report produced by the Eighth Department of the Commissariat of Justice stated that 7,150 million roubles, 828,000 desiatiny of church lands, and 1,112 buildings for rent had been expropriated by the state.”[[413]](#footnote-413)

Still more staggering than the material losses in this period were the losses in lives. Thus in 1918-19, according to Ermhardt, 28 bishops and 1,414 priests were killed[[414]](#footnote-414); according to Edward E. Roslof, estimates of numbers of clergy killed between 1918 and 1921 range from 1434 to 9000[[415]](#footnote-415); while by the end of 1922, according to Shumilin, 2233 clergy of all ranks and two million laymen had been executed.[[416]](#footnote-416) These figures prove the truth of Vladimir Rusak’s assertion: “The Bolsheviks’ relationship to the Church was realized independently of legislation. Violence, bayonets and bullets – these were the instruments of the Bolsheviks’ ‘ideological’ struggle against the Church.”[[417]](#footnote-417)

However, as Shkarovskii writes, “the first wave of attacks on religion had not brought the results which had been expected by such Bolshevik theorists as N.I. Bukharin. The majority of the population of Russia remained religious, for all the barbaric methods which had been tried to tear people away from the Church. The patriarchate also emerged from the civil war undefeated.”[[418]](#footnote-418)

Moreover, with the suppression of all military and political opposition to the Bolsheviks, the Church remained the only significant anti-communist force in the country.[[419]](#footnote-419) So the Bolsheviks were compelled to resort to a kind of warfare that had a far more sophisticated ideological content...

## 39. THE SECOND GREEK REVOLUTION

At the same time as the revolution in Russia, Greece was undergoing its own revolution, both political and ecclesiastical. Though less bloody, its results were hardly less disastrous for the Greek people. For in the space of a few years they lost their monarchy, their army, a large part of their Church and a vast part of their ancestral lands in Asia Minor.

The revolution began, as in Russia, with a military coup engineered by Venizelos in 1917, which belatedly brought the Greeks onto the side of the Allies, thereby allowing them to be counted as a victor nation at Versailles. It was followed, in 1918, by the uncanonical defrocking of the traditionalist Metropolitan Theocletus of Athens “for having instigated the anathema against Eleutherios Venizelos”. Two years later, Theocletus was vindicated. But the damage was done: Meletios Metaxakis was recalled from America and enthroned as Archbishop of Athens in November, 1918.[[420]](#footnote-420)

“While still Archbishop of Athens,” writes Fr. Srboliub Miletich, “Metaxakis visited Great Britain together with a group of his supporters. Here he conducted talks on unity between the Anglican Church and the Orthodox Churches. At that time he set up the famous ‘Greek Archdiocese of North America’. Until then there had been no separate jurisdictions in America, but only parishes consisting of ethnic groups, including Greeks, and officially under the jurisdiction of the Russian bishop. With the fall of Imperial Russia and the Bolshevik seizure of power, the Russian Church found herself isolated and her dioceses outside Soviet Russia lost their support. Archbishop Meletios’ foundation of a purely Greek ethnic diocese in America became the first in a whole series of divisions which followed. As a result, various groups demanded and received the support of their national Churches.”[[421]](#footnote-421)

Meletios immediately started commemorating Venizelos at the Liturgy instead of the King. This led to an ideological schism within the Synod between the Venizelists and the Royalists. The latter included St. Nectarius of Pentapolis and Metropolitan Germanus of Demetrias, the future leader of the True Orthodox Church. Almost simultaneously, Patriarch Germanus V of Constantinople was forced into retirement as a result of the stormy protest of Orthodox Greeks against what they saw to be his compromising politics in relation to the Turkish authorities.[[422]](#footnote-422)

Now the Greek government wanted to introduce the western, Gregorian calendar into Greece. And so Meletios promptly, in January, 1919, raised this question in the Church. The only obstacle to the introduction of the new calendar, he declared, was the Apostolic Canon forbidding the celebration of Pascha at the same time as the Jewish Passover or before the spring equinox. But since, he went on, “the government feels the necessity of changing to the Gregorian calendar, let it do so without touching the ecclesiastical calendar.” And he set up a Commission to investigate the question.[[423]](#footnote-423)

The Commission was set up with Metropolitan Germanus of Demetrias, the future leader of the True Orthodox Church, as the representative of the hierarchy. In May 20, 1919, on the initiative of Meletios Metaxakis, the Synod raised the question of changing to the new calendar. Meletios told the Synod: “The situation in Russia has changed, and the possibility of becoming closer to the West has become more real. We consider it necessary to introduce a rapid calendar reform.”

However, the Commission headed by Metropolitan Germanus was more cautious: “In the opinion of the Commission, the change of the Julian calendar provided it does not contradict canonical and dogmatic bases, could be realised on condition that all the other Orthodox Autocephalous Churches agree, and first of all, the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate, to which it would be necessary to present the initiative in any action in this sphere, so long as we do not change to the Gregorian calendar, but compose a new, more scientifically exact Gregorian calendar, which would be free from the inadequacies of both of the calendars – the Julian and the Gregorian – at present in use.”[[424]](#footnote-424)

“One of the committee members who voted in favour of this position,” writes Fr. Basile Sakkas, “was Chrysostom Papadopoulos, then an Archimandrite and Professor of Theology at the University of Athens.”[[425]](#footnote-425) He it was who, as Archbishop of Athens, introduced the new calendar into the Greek Church in 1924…

When these conclusions had been read out, Meletios changed his tune somewhat: “We must not change to the Gregorian calendar at a time when a new and scientifically perfect calendar is being prepared. If the State feels that it cannot remain in the present calendar status quo, it is free to accept the Gregorian as the European calendar, while the Church keeps the Julian calendar until the new scientific calendar is ready.”[[426]](#footnote-426)

Two things are clear from these events of 1919. First, Meletios was very anxious to accommodate the government if he could. And yet he must have realized that blessing the adoption of the new calendar by the State would inevitably generate pressure for its introduction into the Church as well. Secondly, while he did not feel strong enough to introduce the new calendar into the Church at that time, he was not in principle against it, because he either did not understand, or did not want to understand, the reasons for the Church’s devotion to the Julian calendar, which have nothing to do with scientific accuracy, and all to do with faithfulness to the Tradition and Canons of the Church and the maintenance of Her Unity.

The new calendar was not the only innovation Meletios wanted to introduce: what he wanted, writes Metropolitan Ephraim of Boston, “was an Anglican Church with an eastern tint, and the faithful people in Greece knew it and distrusted everything he did. While in Athens, he even forbade the chanting of vigil services (!) because he considered them out of date and a source of embarrassment when heterodox – especially Anglicans – visited Athens. The people simply ignored him and continued to have vigils secretly.”[[427]](#footnote-427)

However, the heart of Greek Orthodoxy was not Athens, but Constantinople. It was necessary for Venizelos to get his own man on the throne of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. That man would eventually be Metaxakis; but in the meantime, until Metaxakis could be transferred, he needed someone else to stir up the kind of nationalist ferment he needed.

Fortunately for Venizelos, the patriarchal locum tenens in 1919, Metropolitan Dorotheus of Prussa, was just the right man for the job. He introduced two important and closely related innovations in the conduct of the patriarchate towards the Ottoman Empire, on the one hand, and the western heresies, on the other. Thus on January 21, 1919, protected by a Greek-Cretan regiment stationed in the city, Dorotheus proceeded to abolish the teaching of Turkish in Greek schools. Then, on March 16, a resolution for “Union with Greece” was passed in the Constantinopolitan churches, after which the patriarchate and the Greeks refused to communicate with the Sublime Porte. When the Greeks also refused to participate in the November elections, the break with the Turkish authorities was complete.

The patriarchate had in effect carried out a political coup d’état against the Ottoman Empire, thereby reversing a 466-year tradition of submission to the Muslims the political sphere…[[428]](#footnote-428)

Since such a daring coup required political and military support from outside, the patriarchate set about making friends with those to whom, from a religious point of view, it had always been inimical. Thus in January, 1919, a Greek-Armenian conference was held to coordinate the activities of the two groups in the city. [[429]](#footnote-429) Then, in the summer, Metropolitan Nicholas of Caesarea in the name of the patriarchate accepted the invitation of the Joint Commission of the World Conference on Faith and Order, a forerunner of the World Council of Churches, to participate in its preliminary conference in Geneva the following year. He said that the patriarchate was “thereby stretching out a hand of help to those working in the same field and in the same vineyard of the Lord”. This statement, which in effect recognized that the western heretics belonged to the True Church, was probably the first statement from the Ecumenical Patriarchate explicitly endorsing the great heresy of *ecumenism*.

“The ideologue of ecumenism,” writes Archbishop Averky, “which is the natural consequence of the nostalgia of the Protestant world for the Church that they have lost, was the German pastor Christopher Blumhardt, whom the Protestants call for that reason ‘the great prophet of the contemporary world’. He called all the Protestants to unity for ‘the construction of the Kingdom of God on earth’, but he died before the organization of the ecumenical movement, in 1919. His fundamental idea consisted of the proposition that ‘the old world has been destroyed, and a new one is rising on its ruins’. He placed three problems before Christianity: 1) the realization of the best social structure, 2) the overcoming of confessional disagreements and 3) the working together for the education of the whole world community of nations with the complete liquidation of war.

“It was in these three points that the aims of ecumenism were formulated by the present general secretary of the Council of the ecumenical movement, Visser-t-Hooft, who saw the means for their realization in the Church’s pursuit of social aims. For this it is first of all necessary to overcome confessional differences and create one church. The renewed one church will have the possibility of preparing the way for the triumph of Socialism, which will lead to the creation of one world State as the Kingdom of God on earth…”[[430]](#footnote-430)

This project elicited the first public debate on the question of the nature of the unity of the Church and the ecumenical movement between leading representatives of the Western and Orthodox Churches. Participants in the debate were, on the one hand, Mr. Robert Gardiner, secretary of the Joint Commission, and, on the other hand, Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kharkov and Archimandrite, later Archbishop Hilarion (Troitsky). In the course of this debate, Archimandrite Hilarion wrote:

“I could ask you this question: Do you and I belong to the one Church of Christ? In answering it you undoubtedly would mention the insignificance of our dogmatic differences and the virtually negligible difference in rites. For me, however, the answer is determined not by considerations of dogmatic disagreements but by the evident fact: there is no ecclesiastical unity in grace between us…

“The principal truth of Christianity, its great mystery – the Incarnation of the Son of God – is acknowledged by all Christian creeds, yet this alone cannot fuse them into one Church. For, according to the Apostle James (2.19), the devils also believe; as attested by the Gospel, they confessed their faith like the Apostle Peter did (Matthew 16.16; 8.26; Mark 1.24; Luke 8.28). But do they belong to one Church of Christ? On the other hand, the Church community undoubtedly embraces people who do not know the dogmas of the Council of Chalcedon and who are unable to say much about their dogmatic convictions…

“If the question of the belonging or non-belonging to the Church be formulated in terms of theological dogma, it will be seen that it even cannot be resolved in a definite way. Just how far should conformity to the Church’s ideas go in dogmatic matters? Just in what is it necessary to agree and what kind of disagreement ensues following a separation from the Church? How are we to answer this question? And who has so much authority as to make the decision stand? Perhaps you will point to the faith in the incarnate Son of God as the chief characteristic of belonging to the Church. Yet the German Protestants are going to argue against the necessity of even this feature, since in their religion there are to be found even such ministers who openly deny the Divinity of the Saviour.

“Christ never wrote a course in dogmatic religion. Precise formulations of the principal dogmas of Christianity took place centuries after the earthly life of the Saviour. What, then, determined the belonging to the Church in those, the very first, times of the historical existence of Christianity? This is attested to in the book of the Acts of the Apostles: ‘Such as should be saved were added to the Church’ (2.45; 6.13-14). Membership of the Church is determined by the unity with the Church. It cannot be otherwise, if only because the Church is not a school of philosophy. She is a new mankind, a new grace-filled organism of love. She is the Body of Christ. Christ Himself compared the unity of His disciples with the organic unity of a tree and its branches. Two ‘bodies’ or two trees standing side by side cannot be organically related to each other. What the soul is to the body, the Holy Spirit is to the Church; the Church is not only one body but also One Spirit. The soul does not bring back to life a member which has been cut off, and likewise the vital sap of a tree does not flow into the detached branch. A separated member dies and rots away. A branch that has been cut off dries up. These similes must guide us in a discussion of the unity of the Church. If we apply these similes, these figures of a tree and a body, to the Church, any separation from the Church, any termination of the unity with the Church will turn out to be incompatible with membership of the Church. It is not the degree of the dogmatic dissent on the part of the separated member that is important; what is significant in the extreme is the fact of separation as such, the cessation itself of the unity with the Church. Be it a separation on the basis of but a rebellion against the Church, a disciplinary insubordination without any dogmatic difference in opinion, separation from the Church will for the one who has fallen away have every sad consequence.

“Not only heretics but schismatics, too, separate themselves from the Church. The essence of the separation remains the same.”[[431]](#footnote-431)

The Ecumenical Patriarchate would have done well to listen to the reasoning of their Russian co-religionists. However, the time was past when Constantinople could be seriously influenced by the views of the Russian Church; the fall of the Russian empire and Constantinople’s temporary freedom from the Ottoman yoke encouraged the Phanar to take the lead in proclaiming the new heresy of Ecumenism. In any case, the Russians, already under extreme pressure from the Bolsheviks, were soon to become preoccupied with the modernist schism of the “Living Church” renovationists, which left the Greek renovationists free to pursue their own modernist designs without serious interference from the other Orthodox Churches…

So in January, 1920, Metropolitan Dorotheus and his Synod issued what was in effect a charter for Ecumenism. This encyclical was the product of a conference of professor-hierarchs of the Theological School at Khalki, led by Metropolitan Germanus of Seleucia (later of Thyateira and Great Britain).

It was addressed “to all the Churches of Christ everywhere”, and declared that “the first essential is to revive and strengthen the love between the Churches, not considering each other as strangers and foreigners, but as kith and kin in Christ and united co-heirs of the promise of God in Christ.”

It went on: “This love and benevolent disposition towards each other can be expressed and proven especially, in our opinion, through:

“(a) the reception of a single calendar for the simultaneous celebration of the great Christian feasts by all the Churches;

“(b) the exchange of brotherly epistles on the great feasts of the single calendar..;

“(c) close inter-relations between the representatives of the different Churches;

“(d) intercourse between the Theological Schools and the representatives of Theological Science and the exchange of theological and ecclesiastical periodicals and writings published in each Church;

“(e) the sending of young people to study from the schools of one to another Church;

“(f) the convening of Pan-Christian conferences to examine questions of common interest to all the Churches;

“(g) the objective and historical study of dogmatic differences..;

“(h) mutual respect for the habits and customs prevailing in the different Churches;

“(i) the mutual provision of prayer houses and cemeteries for the funeral and burial of members of other confessions dying abroad;

“(j) the regulation of the question of mixed marriages between the different confessions;

“(k) mutual support in the strengthening of religion and philanthropy.”[[432]](#footnote-432)

The unprecedented nature of the encyclical consists in the facts: (1) that it was addressed not, as was Patriarch Joachim’s encyclical, to the Orthodox Churches only, but to the Orthodox and heretics together, as if they were all equally “co-heirs of God in Christ”; (2) that the proposed rapprochement was seen as coming, not through the acceptance by the heretics of the Truth of Orthodoxy and their sincere repentance and rejection of their errors, but through other means; and (3) the proposal of a single universal calendar for concelebration of the feasts, in contravention of the canonical law of the Orthodox Church. There is no mention here of the only possible justification of Ecumenism from an Orthodox point of view – the opportunity it provides of conducting missionary work among the heretics. On the contrary, as we have seen, one of the first aims of the ecumenical movement was and is to *prevent* proselytism among the member-Churches.

From this time the Ecumenical Patriarchate became an active participant in the ecumenical movement, sending representatives to its conferences in Geneva in 1920, in Lausanne in 1927 and in Edinburgh in 1937.[[433]](#footnote-433) The World Conference on Faith and Order was organized on the initiative of the American Episcopalian Church; and the purpose of the Joint Commission’s approaches to the Churches was that “all Christian Communions throughout the world which confess our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior” should be asked “to unite with us in arranging for and conducting such a conference”.[[434]](#footnote-434)

The real purpose of the 1920 encyclical was political, to gain the support of the western heretics, and especially the Anglicans, in persuading their governments to endorse Dorotheus’ and Venizelos’ plans for Greek control of Constantinople and Smyrna and its hinterland. Thus on February 24, 1920, Dorotheus wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury: “We beseech you energetically to fortify the British government… in its attempts to drive out the Turks [from Constantinople]. By this complete and final expulsion, and by no other means, can the resurrection of Christianity in the Near East and the restoration of the church of Hagia Sophia be secured.”[[435]](#footnote-435)

The tragedy of the Greek position was that, in spite of the support of the Anglican Church for Dorotheus, and of Lloyd George for Venizelos, the Allies never committed themselves to the creation of a Greek kingdom in Asia Minor. The reason was obvious: it would have meant full-scale war with Turkey – an unattractive prospect so soon after the terrible losses of the Great War, and when British troops were still fighting in Soviet Russia and other places. From the Allied Powers’ point of view, their troops were stationed in Constantinople, not as a permanent occupation force, but only in order to protect the Christian minority.

In fact, the Greeks, by their fiercely nationalist attitude, antagonized the Turks and led to the creation of a powerful Turkish nationalist movement, which eventually destroyed the centuries-old Greek civilization in Asia Minor. The Greeks forgot that one nationalism inevitably elicits another, equal and opposite nationalism... If they had been less aggressive, they may well have attained at least some of their aims without war and without sacrificing their faith to the Anglicans...

That they were sacrificing the faith is evident from the fact that in 1922 the Ecumenical Patriarchate officially recognized the validity of Anglican orders[[436]](#footnote-436); and they were followed in 1923 by the Churches of Cyprus[[437]](#footnote-437) and Jerusalem.[[438]](#footnote-438)

It was not only the Greeks who were flirting with the Anglicans at this time. In 1920 Anglican emissaries promised large sums of money to the impoverished Patriarchate of Antioch in return for recognizing the lawfulness of their priesthood. No promises were made, but from the U.S.A. a delegation led by Metropolitan Gerasimus (Messara) was sent to take part in a conference of Anglican bishops in Portland, Oregon, where this question was raised. Archdeacon Anthony Bashir, who accompanied Metropolitan Gerasimus and later became leader of the Antiochian Church in America, was promised a salary if he, on being ordained, would promise to work among the Orthodox for the rapprochement of the Churches. However, the hopes of the Anglicans were not realised at this time…[[439]](#footnote-439)

## 40. THE RUSSIAN CHURCH IN EXILE

The Russian Church in Exile grew out of the chaos of the civil war… By 1920, the White armies, only fitfully supported by the western powers, were in full retreat on all fronts. “The final evacuation of the Crimea,” writes Douglas Smith, “took place in mid-November 1920 under General Wrangel. As they prepared to leave, Wrangel invited to join them all those who would be in danger were they fall into the enemy’s hands. In the span of a few days, 146,000 people – twice the expected number – were placed on boats and sent out over the waters of the Black Sea to Constantinople. Wrangel embarked from Sevastopol on the cruiser *General Kornilov* on the fourteenth. ‘We cannot foretell our future fate,’ he told his fellow exiles. ‘May God grant us strength and wisdom to endure this period of Russian misery, and to survive it.’

“The Russians who fled the approaching Red Army were not exaggerating the danger. Although Mikhail Frunze, the Red commander, had issued generous surrender terms, approximately fifty thousand people – most members of the former privileged classes – were shot or hanged during the final weeks of 1920. As the Red Army moved into the Crimea, the Cheka began registering the cities’ inhabitants and dividing them into three categories: those to be shot; those to be sent to concentration camps; those to be spared. All former White officers were ordered to appear for registration and promised safety. The several thousand who complied were arrested and then taken out over the course of several nights and murdered. No one was safe...

“The killing of former White officers across Russia continued until 1922, despite an amnesty of June 1920 extended to all White officers and soldiers. In Yekaterinodar, about three thousand officers were shot; in Odessa as many as two thousand; in Yekaterinburg, twenty-eight hundred. The worst, however, was in the Crimea, where as many as fifty thousand officers and officials were executed. Justification, after a fashion, for the executions was made with a November 1921 modification to the June 1920 amnesty, according to which all those who had voluntarily fought with the White armies for ‘the goal of defending their class interests and the bourgeois order’ were no longer covered by the amnesty and were henceforth to be deemed ‘outcasts’.

“Around the time the White Army under Wrangel was abandoning the fight, the White forces collapsed in Siberia. Ataman Semenov was run out of his capital in Chita on October 22, 1920, and what remained of his forces fled to Manchuria. In one of the most bizarre chapters of the civil war, Baron Ungern-Sternberg, a Baltic nobleman and former lieutenant of Semenov’s, set up a murderous, occultic base in Outer Mongolia for attacking Soviet Russia. He was overthrown in 1921, captured, and executed. The last White outpost was in Vladivostok, ruled by one of Kolchak’s generals [General Diterichs] until his defeat by the Red Army in later October 1922. With that, the White forces had been crushed, and the civil war was truly over.”[[440]](#footnote-440)

A.F. Traskovsky writes: “The part of the Russian Orthodox Church which was abroad already had quite a long history before the formation of ROCOR. In Western Europe Russian Orthodox churches had been built beginning from the eighteenth century at Russian embassies and holy places that were often visited by Russians on trips abroad. In the East, thanks to the missionary activities of the Russian Orthodox Church missions were founded in China and Japan that later became dioceses, as well as a mission in Jerusalem. The spread of Orthodoxy in Alaska and North America also led to the creation of a diocese. In the “Statute concerning the convening of an Emigration Assembly of the Russian Churches”, mention was made that in 1921 there were 15 emigration regions which had Russian bishops and 14 districts where there were Russian Orthodox parishes but no bishops. The regions included: North America, Japan, China, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, France, Italy, Serbia, Bulgaria, Turkey and the Far East. The districts included: Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, England, Switzerland, Czechia, Hungary, Austria, Romania, Palestine, Greece and the city of Bizert in Tunisia. All the emigration missions, parishes and dioceses were in canonical submission to the higher ecclesiastical authorities in Russia – the Holy Ruling Synod until the restoration of the patriarchate in 1917, and his Holiness the Patriarch after 1917. But then after the revolution there began the Civil War and anarchy. The Bolsheviks began to persecute the Church. The majority of emigration missions and dioceses found themselves either deprived of the possibility of normal relations with the higher ecclesiastical authorities of Russia, or such relations were exceptionally difficult. Moreover, in Russia itself many dioceses were cut off by the front from his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon (Bellavin)’s leadership. After the defeat of the White army, a huge flood of émigrés flooded abroad, amongst whom were not a few representatives of the clergy, including bishops and metropolitans. On the shoulders of the clerics who were abroad and the clergy who had emigrated lay the burden of care for the spiritual nourishment of the huge Russian diaspora. That was the situation in which the part of the Russian Church that was abroad found itself on the eve of the formation of the Church Abroad.

“What was the prehistory of the Russian Church Abroad? Her beginnings went back to 1919, in Russia. In Stavropol in May, 1919 there took place the South Russian Church Council headed by the oldest hierarch in the South of Russia, Archbishop Agathodorus of Stavropol. There took part in the Council all the bishops who were on the territory of the Voluntary army, the members of the All-Russian Ecclesiastical Council and four people from each diocesan council. At the Council there was formed the Higher Church Administration of the South of Russia (HCA of the South of Russia), which consisted of: President – Archbishop Metrophanes of Novocherkassk, Assistant to the President – Archbishop Demetrius of Tauris, Protopresbyter G. Shavelsky, Protopriest A.P. Rozhdestvensky, Count V.V. Musin-Pushkin and Professor of theology P.V. Verkhovsky. In November, 1919 the Higher Church Administration was headed by Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev and Galich, who had arrived from Kiev. [[441]](#footnote-441)

“The aim of the creation of the HCA was the organization of the leadership of church life on the territory of the Volunteer army in view of the difficulties Patriarch Tikhon was experiencing in administering the dioceses on the other side of the front line. A little earlier, in November, 1918, an analogous Temporary Higher Church Administration had been created in Siberia headed by Archbishop Sylvester of Omsk. Later, a part of the clergy that submitted to this HCA emigrated after the defeat of Kolchak’s army and entered the composition of the Chinese dioceses of the Russian Orthodox Church. The HCA of the South of Russia, like the Siberian HCA, was, in spite of its self-government, nevertheless in canonical submission to his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, and in this way Church unity was maintained.

“After the defeat of the armies of Denikin, in the spring of 1920 the head of the HCA of the South of Russia, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), was evacuated from Novorossiysk to Constantinople[[442]](#footnote-442), and was then for a time in a monastery on Mount Athos. However, in September, 1920, at the invitation of General Wrangel, he returned to Russia, to the Crimea, where he continued his work. The final evacuation of the HCA of the South of Russia took place in November, 1920, together with the remains of Wrangel’s army.[[443]](#footnote-443) On the steamer ‘Alexander Mikhailovich’ there set out from the Crimea to Constantinople the leaders of the HCA and a large number of simple priests.

“On arriving in Constantinople, as Archbishop Nicon (Rklitsky) indicates in his *Biography of Metropolitan Anthony*, Metropolitan Anthony ‘first considered that from now on all the activities of the Russian Higher Church Administration should be brought to an end and all the care for the spiritual welfare of the Russian Orthodox people should be taken upon herself by the Church of Constantinople and the Local Orthodox Churches in whose bounds the Russian Orthodox people found themselves.’ However, as soon became clear, the realization of this variant became extremely problematic in view of the fact that huge masses of Russian refugees did not know the language and customs of those countries to which they had come, and the nourishment of such a large flock by priests speaking other languages (for example Greeks) presented very many problems. Moreover, the numerous émigré Russian clergy, who were fully able to deal with these problems, would not be involved. Therefore it was decided to continue the activities of the Higher Church Administration.

“In order to work out a plan of further action, the first session of the HCA outside the borders of Russia took place on November 19, 1920…[[444]](#footnote-444) Metropolitan Dorotheus [*locum tenens* of the Ecumenical patriarchal throne] gave his agreement [to the HCA’s decisions] and the HCA of the South of Russia was transformed into the Higher Church Administration Abroad.

“Literally the day after the above-mentioned session, on November 20, 1920, an event took place in Moscow that had an exceptional significance for the Russian Church Abroad – his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon passed decree № 362 concerning the self-governance of church dioceses in the case of a break of communications between this or that diocese and his Holiness the Patriarch for external reasons over which they had no control (what they had in mind was war or repression by the authorities). This is the decree’s main content:

“’1. With the blessing of his Holiness the Patriarch, the Holy Synod and the Higher Church Council, in a joint session, judged it necessary… to give the diocesan Hierarch… instructions in case of a disconnection with the higher church administration or the cessation of the activity of the latter…

“’2. If dioceses, as a result of the movement of the front, changes of state boundaries, etc., find themselves unable to communicate with the higher church administration or the higher church administration itself together with his Holiness the Patriarch for some reason ceases its activity, the diocesan hierarch will immediately enter into relations with the hierarchs of neighbouring dioceses in order to organize a higher instance of church authority for several dioceses in the same conditions (in the form of a temporary higher church government or metropolitan region, or something similar).

“’3. The care for the organization of the higher church authority for the whole group who are in the situation indicated in point 2 is the obligatory duty of the eldest ranked hierarch in the indicated group…’

“This wise decree of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, which was passed in conditions of anti-church terror, was given to the foreign bishops a year after its passing with the help of Bishop Meletius of Nerchensk. It served as the canonical basis for the formation of the Russian Church Abroad, since the émigré clergy were in the situation indicated in points 2 and 3.

“Meanwhile the HCA in Constantinople continued to work out a plan for further action. At the sessions of April 19-21, 1921, it was decided to convene a ‘Congress of the representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad to unite, regulate and revive church activity abroad’, which was later renamed the ‘Russian Church Council Abroad’, also known in the literature as the Karlovtsy Council. Soon, at the invitation of Patriarch Demetrius of Serbia, the HCA led by Metropolitan Anthony moved to Sremskie Karlovtsy in Serbia – a fraternal country which in the course of many years proved to be a safe haven for the leadership of the Church Abroad.”[[445]](#footnote-445)

According to Andrei Psarev, already at the meeting of the HCA on April 21 it was decided to move to Serbia, and “the next meeting was convened already in Serbia on 22 July, 1921. “It is noteworthy that the Higher Church Administration did not find it necessary to request a blessing for the move; they simply notified the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The patriarchate, however, judging by the aforementioned edict, saw the situation differently: they believed that the Russian church exiles had been accepted in canonical subordination. It follows that in order to move to another Orthodox Church, the Russian exiles needed to ask for a canonical release from their new supreme authority. It is my belief that… these events laid the foundation for the canonical conflict between the Patriarchate of Constantinople and ROCOR…”[[446]](#footnote-446)

Possibly; and it was certainly true that, according to a decree issued by Metropolitan Anthony on January 11/24, 1924 the HCA was founded as the successor of HCA of the South of Russia “by the resolution of the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate N 9084 of December 20, 1920, on the foundation of the proposals of all eight Russian bishops in Constantinople, under the protection of the Ecumenical Patriarchate”. Moreover, Metropolitan Dorotheus had said to Metropolitan Anthony: “Under your direction, the patriarchate gives its agreement to all your initiatives, for the patriarchate knows that Your Eminence will do nothing contrary to the canons.”[[447]](#footnote-447) This certainly looks like canonical subordination – albeit with a large degree of freedom. However, it was the later attempts by Constantinople to create autocephalous Churches on territories formerly dependent on the Russian Church that created the real conflict.

In any case, there is no doubt that ROCOR found greater sympathy among the Serbs than among the Greeks. As Victor Salni and Svetlana Avlasovich write, “Serbia repaid mercy [Russia’s defence of Serbia in 1914] with mercy. Alexander I never identified Russia with her new communist government. Being a deeply believing Orthodox man, King Alexander could not contemplate the destiny of Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church without pain… During the Civil war, by command of the Monarch of Yugoslavia, a Serbian corps of volunteers was formed in the South of Russia to fight against the Bolsheviks. When the civil war was lost and the remains of the Volunteer Army, thanks to the efforts of General Wrangel, were saved and left their homeland, Alexander I magnanimously stretched out his hand of help and received those who were without a homeland, the Russian refugees who were needed by nobody, and gave them the opportunity to set themselves up, work and live in this country. The young Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes needed cultural and intellectual forces. It well understood this, but it did not give refuge to Russian people out of avaricious motives – it strove to repay good with good, to repay the joyful hospitality it received from Russia when it was a political émigré, and for help in the war.”[[448]](#footnote-448)

The Serbian Church gave quasi-autocephalous status to ROCOR on the basis of the 39th canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council. As her Council declared on December 6, 1927: “According to the canons of the Holy Orthodox Church, when an Orthodox hierarchy with its flock as a result of persecutions moves with its flock onto the territory of another Church, it has the right to independent organization and administration. As a consequence of this it is necessary to recognize that the Russian Church hierarchy on the territory of the Serbian Church also has this right.”

Meanwhile, at the end of 1920, 200,000 Russian refugees with the retreating remnants of the White armies in Siberia crossed from Siberia into China. Among them were six bishops and many priests. This large colony of Russians recognized the authority of the HCA in Serbia.[[449]](#footnote-449)

The canonical status of ROCOR was unique in the history of the Orthodox Church. She always called herself a part of the Local Russian Church - that part which was situated outside Russia and had jurisdiction exclusively outside Russia (point 1 of the Polozhenie or Statute of ROCOR). And yet she had dioceses and parishes on all six continents of Europe, North and South America, Asia, Africa and Australia, and was in canonical submission to none of the Local Orthodox Churches already existing in those places. Moreover, at the beginning of the 1990s, when she returned to Russia, she claimed jurisdiction in Russia as well! And so ROCOR was, in effect, a world-wide jurisdiction claiming to have jurisdiction in every part of the globe, but which claimed to be only a part of one Local Church, the Russian!

This clearly anomalous situation was justified on a temporary basis, - until the fall of communism in Russia, according to the Polozhenie, and, at least for a time, such established Local Churches as Serbia and Jerusalem recognized her. The situation was seen as justified on the grounds, first, of the extraordinarily difficult situation of the three million or so Russian Orthodox scattered around the world, whose spiritual and physical needs had to be met by Russian-speaking pastors. And secondly, on the grounds of the critical situation in the Orthodox Church as a whole, when even the leaders of Orthodoxy were falling into heresy.

On October 13, 1921, in response to a request from ROCOR, the Russian Holy Synod and Higher Church Council under the presidency of Patriarch Tikhon issued resolution № 193, which declared: “(1) In view of the inappropriateness of submitting to the Higher Church Administration of the Russian Church Abroad all the Orthodox churches and communities of the Moscow Patriarchate beyond the borders of Soviet Russia, to leave this Administration with its former privileges, without spreading the sphere of its activities onto the Orthodox Churches in Poland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which preserve their presently existing form of Church administration, (2) also to turn down the petition for the creation of a post of deputy of his Holiness the Patriarch abroad, as being unnecessary, and (3) to accept the news of the proposed convening of a Council of the Russian Orthodox churches abroad on October 1 old style.”[[450]](#footnote-450)

## 41. ÉMIGRĒ COUNCILS

The First All-Emigration Council opened in Sremskie Karlovtsy on November 21, 1921. Eleven Russian and two Serbian bishops took part; twenty-four Russian bishops who could not attend the Council sent telegrams recognizing its authority. Clergy, monastics and laity also took part in the Council – 163 people in all.[[451]](#footnote-451) Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) was the president of the Council, and Patriarch Demetrius of Serbia its honorary president. However, when the Bulgarian Metropolitan Stefan of Sophia arrived, bringing a greeting from the Bulgarian Holy Synod, this upset the Patriarch of Serbia, whose relations with the Bulgarians were not good. So he did not come, while Metropolitan Stefan immediately returned to Bulgaria.

Bishop Seraphim (Sobolev), who was in charge of the Russian communities in Bulgaria, reported to the Council about the great difficulty of their position in Bulgaria because of the Bulgarian schism and the impossibility of concelebrating with the Bulgarian clergy. The hierarchs discussed this matter from all sides and declared that they would like to restore communion with the Bulgarian Church, but could not exceed their canonical prerogatives without the participation of the other Local Churches, and in particular of the Church of Constantinople. In spite of that, continuing the practice of the Russian Church and basing themselves on the canons (71, 81, 88 and 122 of Carthage), the delegates allowed the Russian priests and deacons to serve all kinds of Divine services and sacraments with the bishops and clergy of the Bulgarian Church, and they also allowed the Russian bishops to serve with the Bulgarian clergy. Between bishops only joint serving of molebens, pannikhidas, etc. was allowed, but “in no way the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and other holy sacraments of the Orthodox Church”.[[452]](#footnote-452)

The Council issued two Epistles, one addressed to the Russian emigration, and the other to the Genoa conference. The first epistle declared: “May [God] return to the All-Russian throne his Anointed One, strong in the love of the people, a lawful tsar from the House of the Romanovs”. 51 delegates voted for this motion, but 32 abstained, including Archbishop Evlogy of Paris, Bishop Benjamin of Sebastopol and most of the clergy. Evlogy abstained because they thought this was a political question beyond the competence of a Church Council.[[453]](#footnote-453) Ironically, he later joined the Moscow Patriarchate, which allowed the Bolsheviks to take control of church life…[[454]](#footnote-454) Archbishop Anastasy of Kishinev also voted against, but for different reasons: he was not anti-monarchist, but did not want the Romanovs to be designated as the only possible monarchs. The hierarchs were split in two, two-thirds of the clergy abstained, and the Epistle was issued only thanks to the votes of the laity.

The second epistle called on the statesmen assembled at Genoa to initiate a kind of crusade to drive the Bolsheviks out of Russia.

“At the Karlovtsy Council,” writes Bishop Dionysius (Alferov), “remembrance was finally made of St. Sergius’ blessing of the Christian Sovereign Demetrius Donskoj for his battle with the enemies of the Church and the fatherland, and of the struggle for the Orthodox Kingdom of the holy Hierarch Hermogenes of Moscow. The question was raised of the ‘sin of February’, but because some of the prominent activists of the Council had participated in this, the question was left without detailed review. The decisions of this Council did not receive further official development in Church life because of the schisms that began both in the Church Abroad and in the monarchist movement. But the question of the re-establishment of the Orthodox Kingdom in Russia had been raised, and thinkers abroad worked out this thought in detail in the works, first of Prince N.D. Zhevakhov and Protopriest V. Vostokov, and then, more profoundly, in the works of Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev), Professor M.V. Zyzykin, Archimandrite Constantine Zaitsev, V.N. Voejkov and N.P. Kusakov.”

The strongly monarchist tone of the Karlovtsy Council marks an important step in the spiritual recovery of the Russian Church. St. John of Kronstadt had said that Russia without a Tsar would be “a stinking corpse”. But this truth had been largely lost in the chaos and confusion of the revolution. As we have seen, the Holy Synod in February, 1917 had done little, if anything, to protect the monarchy. And the Councils that took place during the Civil War shied clear of any commitment to monarchism. As A.A. Kostriukov writes: “Both the Stavropol Council and the HTCA created by it tried to adopt a restrained political position. While speaking out against the Bolshevik dictatorship, the leadership of the Church in the south of Russia distanced itself from the monarchy and tried to stand on democratic principles. So as not to destroy the fragile peace between the representatives of various parties represented in the White armies.

“Recalling this period, Protopriest Vladimir Vostokov wrote in 1922: ‘In May, 1919 the South Russian Council in Stavropol under the presidency of Archbishop Metrophanes, and through the exceptional participation of Protopriest [George] Shavelsky, who at that time was working in agreement with the chief of staff General Romanovsky, did not allow those members to speak who tried to express themselves definitively in relation to ‘socialism’ and ‘the internationalist executioners’. And the word ‘Tsar’ was feared at the Council like fire.’

“According to the witness of Protopriest Vladimir Vostokov, even the open condemnation of regicide and the appeal to the people to repent of this sin dates to the period when the HTCA of the South-East of Russia was already in the Crimea. However, ‘not even the Crimean Church administration resolved on appealing’ for the reestablishment of the monarchy’.”[[455]](#footnote-455)

However, final defeat in the Civil War and the experience of exile gave the Karlovtsy Council, which was in many ways the successor to the Stavropol Council, the spiritual freedom to speak openly for the restoration of the monarchy. And the Russian Church in Exile continued to preserve the traditions of monarchism until the very end of its existence. This position was, however, intensely feared by the Bolsheviks, for whom the threat of the restoration of the monarchy remained real for many years. And so, under pressure from the Bolsheviks, Patriarch Tikhon resolved: “To close the Council (it was already closed), and to recognise the resolutions of the Karlovtsy Council as having no canonical significance in view of its invasion into the political sphere which does not belong to it. To demand the materials of the Council abroad, so as to judge on the degree of guilt of the participants in the Council.” The Synod added: “To enter into discussion of the activity of those responsible for the Council, and to give them over to ecclesiastical trial after the establishment of the normal life of the Russian Synod.”[[456]](#footnote-456)

In defence of the Karlovtsy Council’s position, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) said: “If by politics one understands all that touches upon the life of the people, beginning with the rightful position of the Church within the realm, then the ecclesiastical authorities and Church councils must participate in political life, and from this point of view definite demands are made upon it. Thus, the holy hierarch Hermogenes laid his life on the line by first demanding that the people be loyal to Tsar Basil Shuisky, and when the Poles imprisoned him he demanded the election of Tsar Michael Romanov. At the present time, the paths of the political life of the people are diverging in various directions in a far more definite way: some, in a positive sense, for the Faith and the Church, others in an inimical sense; some in support of the army and against socialism and communism, others exactly the opposite. Thus the Karlovtsy Council not only had the right, but was *obliged to bless the army* for the struggle against the Bolsheviks, and also, following the Great Council of Moscow of 1917-1918, to condemn socialism and communism.”[[457]](#footnote-457)

Probably the last open and free manifestation of old, Holy, Monarchist Russia on Russian soil was the Zemsky Sobor that took place in Vladivostok from July 23 to August 10, 1922.

“It recognized the cause of the revolution to be the sins of the Russian people and called for repentance, proclaiming the only path of salvation for Russia to be the restoration of a lawful Orthodox monarchy. The Council resolved that ‘the right to establish Supreme power in Russia belongs to the dynasty of the House of Romanov’. That is, the Council recognized the Romanov Dynasty to be still reigning in spite of the troubles, and for a short time re-established the Fundamental laws of the Russian empire in the Amur district (until the final conquest of the region by the Reds).

“Accordingly it was decided that the Amur State formation free from the Bolsheviks should be headed by a representative of the Dynasty. For the transitional period General Michael Konstantinovich Diterichs was elected as Ruler. Patriarch Tikhon, who was in Moscow, was unanimously elected as the honourable president of the Council. The widowed Empress Maria Fyodorovna wrote a welcoming telegram to the Sobor in reply.

“In order no. 1 dated August 8, 1922 Lieutenant-General Diterichs wrote: ‘For our sins against the Anointed of God, Emperor Nicholas II, who was martyred with the whole of his Family by Soviet power, a terrible time of troubles has struck the Russian people and Holy Rus’ has been subjected to the greatest destruction, pillaging, torment and slavery by atheist Russians and thieves and robbers of other races, led by infidels of Jewish race who have even renounced their Jewish faith…

“’Here, at the edge of the Russian land, in the Amur region, the Lord has placed a single thought and faith into the hearts and minds of everyone gathered at the Zemsky Sobor: there can be no Great Russia without a Sovereign, without an Anointed of God of inherited succession. And here in the Amur region, as we, the last people of the Russian land, are gathered in a small body, but one strong in faith and national spirit, we are set the task and the duty and the good intention of directing all our service to preparing the way for him – our future God-seer.’

“And here are the words of the last order of General Diterichs of October 17, 1922 before his departure from Russia under the pressure of the Reds: ‘I believe that Russia will return to the Russia of Christ, the Russia of the Anointed of God, but I believe that we were unworthy of this mercy from the Supreme Creator…’”[[458]](#footnote-458)

## 42. THE ASIA MINOR CATASTROPHE

In May, 1919, the Italians, having withdrawn from the Paris Peace Conference, began to occupy parts of Turkey – Antalya in the south and Marmaris in the west. The other Great Powers were alarmed. This gave Venizelos his chance. As Margaret Macmillan writes, “he had been working hard from the start of the Peace Conference to press Greek claims, with mixed success. Although he tried to argue that the coast of Asia Minor was indisputably Greek in character, and the Turks in a minority, his statistics were highly dubious. For the inland territory he was claiming, where even he had to admit that the Turks were in a majority, Venizelos called in economic arguments. The whole area (the Turkish provinces of Aidin and Brusa and the areas around the Dardanelles and Izmir) was a geographic unit that belonged to the Mediterranean; it was warm, well watered, fertile, opening out to the world, unlike the dry and Asiatic plateau of the hinterland. The Turks were good workers, honest, in their relations, and a good people as subjects’, he told the Supreme Council at his first appearance in February. ‘But as rulers they were insupportable and a disgrace to civilisation, as was proved by their having exterminated over a million Armenians and 300,000 Greeks during the last four years.’ To show how reasonable he was being, he renounced any claims to the ancient Greek settlements at Pontus on the eastern end of the Black Sea. He would not listen to petitions from the Pontine Greeks, he assured House’s assistant, Bonsal: ‘I have told them that I cannot claim the south shore of the Black Sea, as my hands are quite full with Thrace and Anatolia.’ There was a slight conflict with Italian claims, but he was confident the two countries could come to a friendly agreement. They had, in fact, already tried and it had been clear that neither was prepared to back down, especially on Smyrna.

“The thriving port of Smyrna lay at the heart of Greek claims. It had been Greek in the great Hellenic past and in the nineteenth century had become predominantly Greek again as immigrants from the Greek mainland had flocked there to take advantage of the new railways which stretched into the hinterland and opportunities for trade and investment. The population was at least a quarter of a million before the war and more Greeks lived there than in Athens itself. They dominated the exports – from figs to opium to carpets – which coursed down from the Anatolian plateau in Asia Minor. Smyrna was a Greek city, a centre of Greek learning and nationalism – but it was also a crucial part of the Turkish economy.

“When Venizelos reached out for Smyrna and its hinterland, he was going well beyond what could be justified in terms of self-determination. He was also putting Greece into a dangerous position. Taking the fertile valleys of western Asia Minor was perhaps necessary, as he argued, to protect the Greek colonies along the coast. From another perspective, though, it created a Greek province with a huge number of non-Greeks as well as a long line to defend against anyone who chose to attack from central Anatolia. His great rival General Metaxas, later dictator of Greece, warned of this repeatedly. ‘The Greek state is not today ready for the government and exploitation of so extensive a territory.’ Metaxas was right.”[[459]](#footnote-459)

The Italians and the Americans were against the Greek claims on Smyrna; but the British and the French were sympathetic. The deadlock was resolved when the Italians walked out of the Peace Conference and landed troops on the coast of Western Asia Minor. This gave Lloyd George his chance to intervene on behalf of Venizelos. The Americans were won over, and the Greeks were told that they could land in Smyrna and “wherever there is a threat of trouble or massacre”.[[460]](#footnote-460) “The whole thing,” wrote Henry Wilson, the British military expert, “is mad and bad”.[[461]](#footnote-461)

Lord Curzon, the soon-to-be British Foreign Minister, was also worried, though he was far from being a Turkophile. As he said: “The presence of the Turks in Europe has been a source of unmitigated evil to everybody concerned. I am not aware of a single interest, Turkish or otherwise, that during nearly 500 years has benefited from that presence.”[[462]](#footnote-462) “That the Turks should be deprived of Constantinople is, in my opinion, inevitable and desirable as the crowning evidence of their defeat in war, and I believe that it will be accepted with whatever wrathful reluctance by the Eastern world.” “But,” he went on, “when it is realized that the fugitives are to be kicked from pillar to post and that there is to be practically no Turkish Empire and probably no Caliphate at all, I believe that we shall be giving a most dangerous and most unnecessary stimulus to Moslem passions throughout the Eastern world and that sullen resentment may easily burst into savage frenzy”. And he called the landing in Smyrna “the greatest mistake” that had been made in Paris.[[463]](#footnote-463)

The landing took place on May 15, 1919. Unfortunately, it was handled badly, and some hundreds of Turkish civilians were killed. Although the Greeks arrested those responsible and did all they could to make amends, international opinion, stirred up by Turkish propaganda and the thoroughly pro-Turkish American representative in Constantinople, Admiral Bristol, began to turn against them, ignoring the mass slaughter of Greeks in Western Asian Minor, Pontus and the Caucasus.

On May 16, Kemal Ataturk slipped out of Constantinople on an Italian pass, and arrived in Samsun to organize the nationalist movement that eventually defeated the Greeks and created the modern state of Turkey. By the end of the year he had created a new capital in Ankara. Although, on May 20, the Allies had recognized the Sultan, and not Ataturk, as Turkey’s legitimate ruler, the Italians were already secretly negotiating with Ataturk, and the French were not slow to follow suit. Only the British – more precisely, Lloyd George – continued to support Venizelos.

On June 14, Venizelos asked the Supreme Council to allow the Greeks to extend their occupation zone. However, the western powers said no. They were exhausted from more than four years of war, had already been demobilizing their armies around the globe, and with the defeat of the Whites in Russia, this process accelerated. The last thing they wanted was another full-scale war with the Turks. Besides, the Americans were concerned that their Standard Oil Company should have large concessions in Mesopotamia, which they believed Ataturk could give them, and the French wanted an intact Turkey in order to pay back her pre-war loans. The British toyed with the idea of supporting an independent Kurdistan in Ataturk’s rear, but by the spring of 1920 this plan was dropped. Soon they also abandoned their protectorates in Georgia and Baku.

In April, 1920, the Sultan’s government appealed to the allies to help him fight Ataturk, but the allies refused. In fact, the French were already arming Ataturk by this time. In spite of this, in May, the terms of the Treaty of Sèvres, which were harsh on Turkey, were announced. They ceded Smyrna to the Greeks, founded a free Armenia, created a free Kurdistan, divided up the eastern part of Asia Minor into French, Italian and British occupation zones, ceded Mesopotamia and the Straits to Britain, Syria to France, maintained Constantinople as an international city, and reduced the Turkish army to a token force. But none of this was going to become reality… The Treaty also ignored the territorial concessions to Russia that had been agreed during the Great War. This incensed the Soviets, who now began to support Kemal…

As the Turkish nationalist forces advanced westwards, they encountered British troops about one hundred miles from Constantinople. The British drove them off, but called for reinforcements. There were no British reinforcements, so it had to be Greek ones. In June, Lloyd George and the Supreme Council, agreed to Venizelos’ plans to move inland from Smyrna to relieve the pressure exerted by Kemal on the British at Chanak. “The British high commissioner in Constantinople wrote angrily to Curzon: ‘The Supreme Council, thus, are prepared for a resumption of general warfare; they are prepared to do violence to their own declared principles; they are prepared to perpetuate bloodshed indefinitely in the Near East, and for what? To maintain M. Venizelos in power in Greece for what cannot in the nature of things be more than a few years at the outside.’ Curzon agreed completely: ‘Venizelos thinks his men will sweep the Turks into the mountains. I doubt it will be so.’”[[464]](#footnote-464)

At first, however, the Greeks did well. They defeated the Turks at Chanak (present-day Canakkale) and seized Eastern Thrace. By August, 1920, 100,000 soldiers had penetrated 250 miles inland. But the alarmed Allies then sent token forces of their own to separate the Greeks from the Turks. Harold Nicolson wrote: “By turning their guns against the Greeks – their own allies – the Great Powers saved Kemal’s panic-stricken newly-conscripted army at the eleventh hour from final destruction.”[[465]](#footnote-465)

In October, the French signed a treaty with Ataturk’s government, which enabled them to withdraw their troops from Cilicia, which freed more Turkish troops for the Greek front. The Turks were now receiving supplies from the Italians, the French and the Soviets, and began to regroup in the centre of the country…

In November Venizelos and his liberal party suffered a stunning and quite unexpected defeat in the Greek elections. King Constantine returned to power. This made no difference to the war because the king felt honour-bound to try and finish what Venizelos had begun. Or rather, it made things worse, because the king then conducted a purge of pro-Venizelos officers which weakened the army at a critical time. Moreover, the Allies were enraged, because Constantine was the son-in-law of Kaiser Wilhelm and had shown sympathies for the Germans during the war.

On March 25, 1921, on the one-hundredth anniversary of the Greek revolution, meetings took place in 500 Cypriot churches, and petitions were addressed to the English authorities that Cyprus should be reunited with Greece. At the same time the Greek army in Asia Minor began its advance on Ankara. Very soon they had won control of the whole of the western escarpment of the Anatolian plateau. However, on March 31 the Turks conducted a successful counter-attack.

The Greeks would have been well-advised to seek peace at this point, but they did not. Massacres were taking place of Turks in the Greek-controlled region, and of Greeks in the Turk-controlled region. Passions were too high for either side to contemplate peace.

In the summer King Constantine arrived in Smyrna, and it was agreed to resume the advance. In August the Greeks arrived at the summit of Mount Tchal, overlooking Ankara. However, they were in a poor state, hungry, diseased and in danger of having their lines of communication cut by Turkish irregulars. The Turks counter-attacked, and September 11 the Greeks retreated to the west bank of the Sakarya river. “For approximately nine months,” wrote Sir Winston Churchill, “the Turks waited comfortably in the warmth while the Greeks suffered throughout the icy-cold of the severe winter.”[[466]](#footnote-466)

Finally, on August 26, 1922, the Turks began a general offensive. The Greek army was routed.

Early in September the Turkish army entered Smyrna, the Greek Metropolitan Chrysostom (a Freemason) was murdered and the city deliberately set on fire.[[467]](#footnote-467)

At this moment Lord Beaverbrook arrived in Constantinople on a special mission for the British. On learning the facts, he told the American Admiral Bristol: “Our behaviour to the Greeks was rotten! We have behaved to them with dirty duplicity! They were prompted and supported by us in beginning their campaign. But we abandoned them without support at their most critical moment so that the Turks could exterminate them and destroy them forever! Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister, supported them and prompted them himself to make the landing at Smyrna. He supported them with every means except for giving them money which his Treasury did not have to give. And now we are leaving them exposed to disaster!” Then he turned to Admiral Bristol: “And what are you doing in this matter?”[[468]](#footnote-468)

The Allies were doing nothing: allied ships in Smyrna were ordered to observe strict “neutrality”, and the Greek government failed to send any of its own. It took the heroic efforts of a Methodist minister from New York, Asa Jennings, to galvanize the Greeks and the Allies into action, and a massive evacuation began. But very many were not evacuated, and were left to the tender mercies of the Turks…

The Greek government fell, the king resigned, Prime Minister Gounaris was executed together with six army leaders[[469]](#footnote-469), and Colonels Nicholas Plastiras and Stylianus Gonatas took control. But the evacuation continued, and hundreds of thousands were rescued from certain death either through fire or at the hands of the Turks. Nevertheless, it is calculated that 100,000 Greeks died in Smyrna, with many thousands of other nationalities, while 160,000 were deported into the interior in terrible conditions.[[470]](#footnote-470)

The “Great Idea” of Greek nationalism was dead, drowned in a sea of blood…

## 43. METAXAKIS AS PATRIARCH

With the fall of Venizelos, his brother Mason and Cretan Metaxakis also fell. In February, 1921, he returned to America, campaigning on behalf of Venizelos, and presenting the novel argument that all the Orthodox in America should be under the Patriarchate of Constantinople because of Canon 28 of the Fourth Ecumenical Council.[[471]](#footnote-471) He immediately returned into communion with the Anglicans. Thus the Greek ambassador in Washington reported to the prefect in Thessalonica that on December 17, 1921, “vested, he took part in a service in an Anglican church, knelt in prayer with the Anglicans before the holy table, which he venerated, gave a sermon, and blessed those present in the church” of the heretics.[[472]](#footnote-472)

Meletios won over the epitropos of the Greek Archdiocese, Rodostolos Alexandros, and the two of them first broke relations with the Church of Greece and then, at a clergy-laity conference in the church of the Holy Trinity, New York, declared the autonomy of the Greek Archdiocese from the Church of Greece, changing its name to the grandiloquent: “Greek Archbishopric of North and South America”. This was more than ironical, since it had been Metaxakis himself who had created the archdiocese as a diocese of the Church of Greece when he had been Archbishop of Athens in 1918!

Metaxakis’ new diocese broke Church unity in another way, in that it was done without the blessing of the Russian Church, which until then had included all the Orthodox of all nationalities in America under its own jurisdiction. And once the Greeks had formed their own diocese, other nationalities followed suit. Thus on August 14, 1921 Patriarch Gregory of Antioch asked Patriarch Tikhon’s blessing to found a Syrian diocese in North America. Tikhon replied on January 17, 1922 that the Antiochian Patriarch would first have to get the agreement of the Russian bishops in America…[[473]](#footnote-473)

Meanwhile, the Patriarchate in Constantinople was still beating the nationalist drum. In December, 1920, it called for the resignation of the king for the sake of the Hellenic nation, and even considered excommunicating him! Then, in March, a patriarchal delegation headed by Metropolitan Dorotheus travelled to London, where they met Lord Curzon, the British foreign secretary, King George V and the archbishop of Canterbury – the first such trip to the West by the senior prelate of Orthodoxy since Patriarch Joseph’s fateful participation in the council of Florence in 1438. And there, like Joseph, Dorotheus had a heart attack and died, just as he was to receive the honorary vice-presidency of the World Congress for the friendship of the World through the Churches.[[474]](#footnote-474)

The terrible tragedy suffered by the Greek nation at this time must be attributed in no small part to the nationalist-ecumenist politics of Dorotheus and his Synod – a classic example of the destructive consequences of the intrusion of political passions into the life of the Church. There followed a prolonged struggle for control of the patriarchate between the Royalist and Venizelist factions, which ended in the enthronement, on January 24, 1922, of Meletius Metaxakis as patriarch of Constantinople – in spite of the ban laid on him by the Greek Church! He sailed into Constantinople under the Byzantine flag.

How had this happened?

Bishop Photius of Triaditsa writes: “Political circles around Venizelos and the Anglican Church had been involved in Meletius’ election as Patriarch. Metropolitan Germanus (Karavangelis) of the Holy Synod of Constantinople wrote of these events, ‘My election in 1921 to the Ecumenical Throne was unquestioned. Of the seventeen votes cast, sixteen were in my favour. Then one of my lay friends offered me 10,000 lira if I would forfeit my election in favour of Meletius Metaxakis. Naturally I refused his offer, displeased and disgusted. At the same time, one night a delegation of three men unexpectedly visited me from the “National Defence League” and began to earnestly entreat me to forfeit my candidacy in favour of Meletius Metaxakis. The delegates said that Meletius could bring in $100,000 for the Patriarchate and, since he had very friendly relations with Protestant bishops in England and America, could be useful in international causes. Therefore, international interests demanded that Meletius Metaxakis be elected Patriarch. Such was also the will of Eleutherios Venizelos. I thought over this proposal all night. Economic chaos reigned at the Patriarchate. The government in Athens had stopped sending subsidies, and there were no other sources of income. Regular salaries had not been paid for nine months. The charitable organizations of the Patriarchate were in a critical economic state. For these reasons and for the good of the people [or so thought the deceived hierarch] I accepted the offer…’ Thus, to everyone’s amazement, the next day, November 25 [December 8], 1921, Meletius Metaxakis became the Patriarch of Constantinople.

“The uncanonical nature of his election became evident when, two days before the election, November 23 [December 6, 1921], there was a proposal made by the Synod of Constantinople to postpone the election on canonical grounds. The majority of the members voted to accept this proposal. At the same time, on the very day of the election, the bishops who had voted to postpone the election were replaced by other bishops. This move allowed the election of Meletius as Patriarch. Consequently, the majority of bishops of the Patriarchate of Constantinople who had been circumvented met in Thessalonica. [This Council included seven out of the twelve members of the Constantinopolitan Holy Synod and about 60 patriarchal bishops from the New Regions of Greece under the presidency of Metropolitan Constantine of Cyzicus.] They announced that, ‘the election of Meletius Metaxakis was done in open violation of the holy canons,’ and proposed to undertake ‘a valid and canonical election for Patriarch of Constantinople.’ In spite of this, Meletius was confirmed on the Patriarchal Throne.”[[475]](#footnote-475)

Two members of the Synod then went to Athens to report to the council of ministers. On December 12, 1921 they declared the election null and void. One of the prominent hierarchs who refused to accept this election was Metropolitan Chrysostom (Kavourides) of Florina, the future leader of the True Orthodox Church. The Sublime Porte also refused to recognize the election, first because Meletius was not an Ottoman citizen and therefore not eligible for the patriarchate according to the Ottoman charter of 1856, and secondly because Meletius declared that he did not consider any such charters as binding insofar as they had been imposed by the Muslim conquerors.[[476]](#footnote-476)

On December 29, 1921, the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece under the presidency of Metropolitan Germanus of Demetrias deposed Metaxakis for a series of canonical transgressions and for creating a schism, declared both Metaxakis and Rodostolos Alexandros to be schismatics and threatened to declare all those who followed them to be similarly schismatic. However, in spite of this second condemnation, Meletius was enthroned as patriarch on January 22, 1922. And as a result of intense political pressure his deposition was uncanonically lifted on September 24, 1922![[477]](#footnote-477)

At his enthronement, Metaxakis declared: “I devote myself to the service of the Church, so that from its first see aid may be given, as far as possible, to the development of closer, friendly ties with the heterodox Christian Churches of the East and the West, so as to push forward the unification of the ones with the others.”[[478]](#footnote-478)

Thus there arrived at the peak of power one of the men whom Metropolitan Chrysostom (Kavourides) called “these two Luthers of the Orthodox Church”. The other one, Archbishop Chrysostom (Papadopoulos) of Athens, would come to power very shortly. He would say something even more shocking in his enthronement speech: “For cooperation with heterodox Christians there is no need for preliminary conditions or… dogmatic unity, for the unity of Christian love is sufficient”.[[479]](#footnote-479) In this way the Masons through the power of money gained control of the senior patriarchate in Orthodoxy, guaranteeing its loyalty to the ecumenical movement.

The insecurity of Meletius’ position did not prevent him from trying to execute his nationalist-ecumenist plans. His intentions were clear from his enthronement speech: “I give myself to the service of the Church, so as from her first throne to assist in the development, as far as this is possible, of closer friendly relations with the heterodox Christian Churches of the East and West, to push forward the work of unification between them and others.” Then, on August 3, his Synod recognised the validity of Anglican orders.

In 1923 Cyprus and Jerusalem followed suit, showing how quickly Ecumenism could spread once it had taken hold in Constantinople.[[480]](#footnote-480)

Within the next few years, Meletius and his successor, Gregory VII, undertook the wholesale annexation of vast territories belonging to the jurisdiction of the Serbian and Russian Patriarchates. Basing his actions on a false interpretation of the 28th canon of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, which supposedly gave all the “barbarian lands” into the jurisdiction of Constantinople, he and his successor created the following uncanonical autonomous and autocephalous Churches:-

**1. Western Europe**. On April 5, 1922, Meletius named an exarch for the whole of Western and Central Europe, Metropolitan Germanus of Thyateira and Great Britain. In 1923 he suggested to Metropolitan Eulogy of Paris and his flock that he submit to Metropolitan Germanus. In a letter dated March 28, 1923, Metropolitan Eulogy declined.[[481]](#footnote-481) By the time of Gregory VII’s death in November, 1924, there was an exarchate of Central Europe under Metropolitan Germanus of Berlin, an exarchate of Great Britain and Western Europe under Metropolitan Germanus of Thyateira, and a diocese of Bishop Gregory of Paris. In the late 1920s the Ecumenical Patriarch received into his jurisdiction Metropolitan Eulogy, who had just created a schism in the Russian Church Abroad, and who sheltered a number of influential heretics, such as Nicholas Berdiaev and Fr. Sergius Bulgakov, in the theological institute of St. Sergius in Paris.[[482]](#footnote-482)

**2. Finland***.* In February, 1921 Patriarch Tikhon granted the Finnish Church, led by Archbishop Seraphim (Lukyanov), autonomy within the Russian Church. In 1922, Meletius offered to Seraphim to ordain the renovationist priest Herman (Aava) as his vicar-bishop, and receive autocephaly from the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The excuse given here was that Patriarch Tikhon was no longer free, “therefore he could do as he pleased” (Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky)). Seraphim refused, declaring his loyalty to Patriarch Tikhon and the Russian Church Abroad. In spite of this, and under the strong pressure of the Finnish authorities, Herman was consecrated Bishop of Sortavala in Constantinople. This undermined the efforts of the Orthodox to maintain their position vis-à-vis the Lutherans. Then, for refusing to learn the Finnish language in three months, Archbishop Seraphim was imprisoned on the island of Konevets by the Finnish government, while Patriarch Gregory VII raised Bishop Herman to the rank of metropolitan. Despite the protests of Patriarch Tikhon, the new metropolitan, under pressure from the government, annulled the right of the monasteries to celebrate Pascha according to the Julian calendar. Then began the persecution of the confessors of the Old Calendar in the monastery of Valaam (see below).

“Even more iniquitous and cruel,” writes Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), “was the relationship of the late Patriarch Gregory and his synod towards the diocese and the person of the Archbishop of Finland. The Ecumenical Patriarch consecrated a vicar bishop for Finland, the priest Aava, who was not only not tonsured, but not even a rasophore. Moreover, this was done not only without the agreement of the Archbishop of Finland, but in spite of his protest. By these actions the late Patriarch of Constantinople violated a fundamental canon of the Church – the sixth canon of the First Ecumenical Council [and many others], which states, ‘If anyone is consecrated bishop without the consent of his metropolitan, the Great Council declares him not to be a bishop.’ According to the twenty-eighth canon of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, the patriarch cannot even place a bishop in his diocese without the approval of the local metropolitan. Based on precisely this same canon, the predecessors of Gregory vainly attempted to realize his pretensions and legalize their claims to control. This uncanonical ‘bishop’ Aava, once consecrated as bishop, placed a monastic klobuk on his own head, and thus costumed, he appeared in the foreign diocese of Finland. There he instigated the Lutheran government to persecute the canonical Archbishop of Finland, Seraphim, who was respected by the people. The Finnish government previously had requested the Ecumenical Patriarch to confirm the most illegal of laws, namely that the secular government of Finland would have the right to retire the Archbishop. The government in fact followed through with the retirement, falsely claiming that Archbishop Seraphim had not learned enough Finnish in the allotted time. Heaven and earth were horrified at this illegal, tyrannical act of a non-Orthodox government. Even more horrifying was that an Orthodox patriarch had consented to such chicanery. To the scandal of the Orthodox and the evil delight of the heterodox, the highly dubious Bishop Germanus (the former Fr. Aava) strolled the streets of Finland in secular clothes, clean-shaven and hair cut short, while the most worthy of bishops, Seraphim, crudely betrayed by his false brother, languished in exile for the remainder of his life in a tiny hut of a monastery on a stormy isle on Lake Ladoga.”[[483]](#footnote-483)

On November 14/27, 1923, Patriarch Tikhon and the Russian Holy Synod, after listening to a report by Archbishop Seraphim decreed that “since his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon has entered upon the administration of the Russian Orthodox Church, the reason for which the Patriarch of Constantinople considered it necessary temporarily to submit the Finnish Church to his jurisdiction has now fallen away, and the Finnish eparchy must return under the rule of the All-Russian Patriarch.”[[484]](#footnote-484)

However, the Finns did not return to the Russian Church, and they remain to this day the most modernist of all the Orthodox Churches, being the only Church that has adopted the Western paschalion.

**3. Estonia***.* In February, 1919, after the martyrdom of Bishop Plato of Revel, Bishop Alexander (Paulus) of Porkhov was transferred to his see and raised to the rank of archbishop. Patriarch Tikhon then granted a broad measure of autonomy to the parts of the former Pskov and Revel dioceses that entered into the boundaries of the newly formed Estonian state. On September 23, 1922, the Estonian Church under Archbishop Alexander petitioned to be received under the Ecumenical Patriarchate and to be granted autocephaly. On March 10, 1940, in a letter to Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky), Metropolitan Alexander wrote that this decision was taken under strong political pressure from the State authorities at a time when news was constantly coming from Soviet Russia about the very difficult position of Patriarch Tikhon and the Russian Church, *and in reply to an appeal from Patriarch Meletius IV*.[[485]](#footnote-485)

**4. Latvia***.* In June, 1921 Patriarch Tikhon granted the Latvian Church autonomy under its Latvian archpastor, Archbishop John of Riga, who was burned to death by the communists in 1934. In March, 1936, the Ecumenical Patriarch accepted the Church of Latvia within his own jurisdiction. On March 29 Metropolitan Germanus of Thyateira and Great Britain headed the consecration of the garrison priest Augustine (Peterson) as Metropolitan of Riga and All Latvia.[[486]](#footnote-486)

**5. Poland***.* Historically speaking, Polish Catholicism had traditionally been one of the most formidable enemies of Russian Orthodoxy. This tendency was renewed in the decades before the Second World War. Thus in 1921 Patriarch Tikhon appointed Archbishop Seraphim (Chichagov) to the see of Warsaw, but the Poles, whose armies had defeated the Red Army the year before, did not grant him entry into the country. So on September 27 the Patriarch was forced to accept the Poles’ candidate, Archbishop George (Yaroshevsky) of Minsk. However, he appointed him his exarch in Poland, not metropolitan of Warsaw (that title remained with Archbishop Seraphim). Moreover, he refused Archbishop George’s request for autocephaly on the grounds that very few members of the Polish Church were Poles and the Polish dioceses were historically indivisible parts of the Russian Church.[[487]](#footnote-487) Instead, he granted the Polish Church autonomy within the Russian Church.[[488]](#footnote-488)

On January 24, 1922 Archbishop George convened a Council incluing Archbishops Dionysius (Valedinsky) and Panteleimon (Rozhnovsky). Under pressure from the authorities, Bishop Vladimir also joined them. Pekarsky, an official of the ministry of religious confessions, tried to make the Russian hierarchs sign the so-called “Temporary Rules”, which the ministry had drawn up and which envisaged far-reaching government control over the Orthodox Church in Poland. On January 30 the “Temporary Rules” were signed by Archbishops George and Dionysius, but not by Archbishop Panteleimon and Bishop Vladimir. On the same day Patriarch Tikhon issued a decree transferring Archbishop George to the see of Warsaw and raising him to the rank of metropolitan; for it was clear that the Poles would never grant entrance into Warsaw to Metropolitan Seraphim (Chichagov), who had the reputation of being an extreme rightist. However, the titular promotion of Archbishop George by no means signified that the patriarch supported his intentions, for in the decrees there is no mention of ecclesiastical autocephaly, nor of exarchal rights. Consequently, as was confirmed by the patriarch in 1925, he was simply one of the diocesan bishops in Poland, and not metropolitan “of all Poland”.[[489]](#footnote-489)

Liudmilla Koeller writes: “The Polish authorities restricted the Orthodox Church, which numbered more than 3 million believers (mainly Ukrainians and Byelorussians).[[490]](#footnote-490) In 1922 a council was convoked in Pochaev which was to have declared autocephaly, but as the result of a protest by Bishop Eleutherios [Bogoyavlensky, of Vilnius] and Bishop Vladimir (Tikhonitsky), this decision was not made. But at the next council of bishops, which gathered in Warsaw in June, 1922, the majority voted for autocephaly, with only Bishops Eleutherios and Vladimir voting against. A council convoked in September of the same year ‘deprived Bishops Eleutherios and Vladimir of their sees. In December, 1922, Bishop Eleutherios was arrested and imprisoned.”[[491]](#footnote-491)

Eleutherios was later exiled to Lithuania. Two other Russian bishops, Panteleimon (Rozhnovsky) and Sergius (Korolev), were also deprived of their sees. The three dissident bishops were then expelled from Poland.

In November, 1923, Metropolitan George was killed by an opponent of his church politics, Archimandrite Smaragd (Laytshenko), and was succeeded by Metropolitan Dionysius “with the agreement of the Polish government and the confirmation and blessing of his Holiness Meletius IV [Metaxakis]”. Patriarch Tikhon rejected this act as uncanonical.[[492]](#footnote-492) On November 13, 1924 Patriarch Gregory VII signed a *Tomos* “on the recognition of the Orthodox Church in Poland as autocephalous”. The *Tomos* significantly declared: “The first separation from our see of the Kievan Metropolia and from the Orthodox Metropolias of Latvia and Poland, which depended on it, and also their union to the holy Moscow Church, took place by no means in accordance with the prescription of the holy canons, nor was everything observed that had been established with regard to the complete ecclesiastical autonomy of the Kievan metropolitan who bears the title of exarch of the Ecumenical Throne”. Hereby the patriarch indirectly laid claim to Ukraine as his canonical territory, in spite of the fact that it had been under Russian rule for two-and-a-half centuries. And yet, in contradiction with that, he affirmed as the basis of his grant of autocephaly to the Polish Church the fact that “the order of ecclesiastical affairs must follow political and social forms”, basing this affirmation on the 17th Canon of the Fourth Ecumenical Council and the 38th canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council.[[493]](#footnote-493)

Michael Woerl has pointed out that “the EP was paid 13 million Polish Zlotys by the Roman Catholic Polish government to grant autocephaly to the Polish Orthodox Church, a condition of which was adoption of the New Calendar.”[[494]](#footnote-494)

**5. Hungary and Czechoslovakia***.* According to the old Hungarian law of 1868, and confirmed by the government of the new Czechoslovak republic in 1918 and 1920, all Orthodox Christians living in the territory of the former Hungarian kingdom came within the jurisdiction of the Serbian Patriarchate. That meant that they were served by Bishops Gorazd of Moravia and Dositheus of Carpatho-Russia (Gorazd was consecrated on September 25, 1921 in Belgrade by Patriarch Demetrius of Serbia, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev and two Serbian bishops).[[495]](#footnote-495)

However, on September 3, 1921, the Orthodox parish in Prague elected Archimandrite Sabbatius to be their bishop. When the Serbian Synod refused to consecrate Sabbatius, he, without the knowledge of his community, set off for Constantinople, where on March 4, 1923, he was consecrated “archbishop” of the newly created Czechoslovakian branch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which included Carpatho-Russia. Then, on April 15, 1924, the Ecumenical Patriarch established a metropolia of Hungary and All Central Europe with its see in Budapest (although there was already a Serbian bishop there).

“The scandal caused by this confusion,” writes Z.G. Ashkenazy, “is easy to imagine. Bishop Sabbatius insisted on his rights in Carpatho-Russia, enthusiastically recruiting sympathizers from the Carpatho-Russian clergy and ordaining candidates indiscriminately. His followers requested that the authorities take administrative measures against priests not agreeing to submit to him. Bishop Dositheus placed a rebellious monk under ban – Bishop Sabbatius elevated him to igumen; Bishop Dositheus gathered the clergy in Husta and organized an Ecclesiastical Consistory – Bishop Sabbatius enticed priests to Bushtin and formed an Episcopal Council. Chaos reigned in church affairs. Malice and hatred spread among the clergy, who organized into ‘Sabbatiites’ and ‘Dositheiites’.

“A wonderful spiritual flowering which gave birth to so many martyrs for Orthodoxy degenerated into a shameful struggle for power, for a more lucrative parish and extra income. The Uniate press was gleeful, while bitterness settled in among the Orthodox people against their clergy, who were not able to maintain that high standard of Orthodoxy which had been initiated by inspired simple folk.”[[496]](#footnote-496)

**6. Turkey.** While creating uncanonical new Churches on the territory of other Local Orthodox Churches (he also invited the Russians in America to come under his omophorion, but they refused), Meletius contrived to support a schism on his own canonical territory. Thus in the autumn of 1922, Metropolitan Procopius of Konium, to whom all the churches of Anatolia were subject, with two titular bishops and two priests separated from the patriarchate and created his own Synod of the “Turkish Orthodox Church”. Since the new Church was strongly supported by the government of Ataturk, Meletius considered it inappropriate to ban it. Instead, he suggested the creation of an autonomous Turkish Church subject to the patriarchate, and he promised to introduce the Turkish language into the Divine services.[[497]](#footnote-497)

In 1938 Bishop John (Maximovich) of Shanghai reported to ROCOR’s All-Diaspora Council: “Increasing without limit their desires to submit to themselves parts of Russia, the Patriarchs of Constantinople have even begun to declare the uncanonicity of the annexation of Kiev to the Moscow Patriarchate, and to declare that the previously existing southern Russian Metropolia of Kiev should be subject to the Throne of Constantinople. Such a point of view is not only clearly expressed in the *Tomos* of November 13, 1924, in connection with the separation of the Polish Church, but is also quite thoroughly promoted by the Patriarchs. Thus, the Vicar of Metropolitan Eulogius in Paris, who was consecrated with the permission of the Ecumenical Patriarch, has assumed the title of Chersonese; that is to say, Chersonese, which is now in the territory of Russia, is subject to the Ecumenical Patriarch. The next logical step for the Ecumenical Patriarchate would be to declare the whole of Russia as being under the jurisdiction of Constantinople…

“In sum, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, in theory embracing almost the whole universe, and in fact extending its authority only over several dioceses, and in other places having only a superficial supervision and receiving certain revenues for this; persecuted by the government at home and not supported by any governmental authority abroad; having lost its significance as a pillar of truth and having itself become a source of division, and at the same time being possessed by an exorbitant love of power – represents a pitiful spectacle which recalls the worst periods in the history of the See of Constantinople.”[[498]](#footnote-498)

Logically, after such a report, one would have expected ROCOR to break all relations with the Ecumenical Patriarchate. But intermittent communion continued for several decades…

## 44. SECRET AGENTS IN CASSOCKS

The Bolsheviks believed that the roots of religion lay in poverty and ignorance, so that the elimination of these evils would naturally lead to the withering away of religion. This being the case, they could not believe that religious belief had any deeper roots in the nature of things. Therefore, writes Roslof, “the party explicitly rejected ‘God-building’, an attempt by its own members to develop a ‘socialist religion of humanity’. Led by A.V. Lunacharskii, Leonid Krasin, and Bogdanov (A.A. Malinovskii), Bolshevik God-builders maintained that the proletariat would create a non-transcendent, earth-centered religion to complement its formation of the ultimate human society. Only this group within the party ‘recognized that religion’s power lay in its response to people’s psychic needs and argued that a revolutionary movement could not afford to ignore these’.”[[499]](#footnote-499)

In May, 1921 Lenin supported a resolution calling for the replacement of the religious world-view by “a harmonious communist scientific system embracing and answering the questions to which the peasants’ and workers’ masses have hitherto sought answers in religion.” At the same time he said that the Bolsheviks must “definitely avoid offending religious sensibilities”. The result was the suspension of the “dilettantist” anti-religious commissions (Lenin’s phrase) that had existed thereto, and their replacement by a Commission on the Separation of Church and State attached to the Politburo which lasted until 1929 under the Jew Emelian Yaroslavsky and whose aim was clearly the extirpation of all religion. The importance of this Commission in the Bolsheviks’ eyes was clearly indicated by the extreme secrecy in which its protocols were shrouded and by the active participation in it, at one time or another, of all the top party leaders. The strategy of the Commission was directly defined, at the beginning by Lenin, and later – by Stalin.[[500]](#footnote-500)

An important aspect of the Commission’s strategy was “divide and rule”. For while physical methods continued to be applied, the Bolsheviks recognized that the Church could not be defeated by direct physical assault alone, and that they needed subtler methods including the recruitment of agents among the clergy and the creation of schisms among them.

Thus already in December, 1920, T. Samsonov, head of a secret department of the Cheka, the forerunner of the KGB, wrote to Dzerzhinsky that “communism and religion are mutually exclusive… No machinery can destroy religion except that of the [Cheka]. In its plans to demoralize the church the Cheka has recently focussed its attention on the rank and file of the priesthood. Only through them, by long, intensive, and painstaking work, shall we succeed in destroying and dismantling the church completely.”[[501]](#footnote-501)

“According to archival data,” writes Fr. Victor Potapov, “the politics of enrolling the clergy began de facto already in the first years of Soviet power. This is what one of these Cheka documents, dated 1921, says about this:

“’The question of having agents and informers among the clergy is the most difficult one in the Cheka both because of the difficulty of carrying out the work and because for the most part the Cheka has paid little attention to it up to now…

“There is no doubt that we have to stir them up and shift them from their places. And to realise this aim more quickly and efficiently it is necessary at the beginning to take the following measures:

“’1. Use the clergy themselves for our own ends, especially those who have an important position in Church life – hierarchs, metropolitans, etc., forcing them under threat of severe punishment to distribute among their clergy this or that instruction that could be useful to us, for example: the cessation of forbidden agitation with regard to [Soviet anti-ecclesiastical] decrees, the closure of monasteries, etc.

“’2. Clarify the character of individual bishops and vicars, encouraging their desires and plans.

“’3. It is proposed that informers be recruited among the clergy after some acquaintance has been gained with the clerical world and the character traits of each individual servant of the cult has been clarified. This material can be gained in various ways, but mainly through removing correspondence at searches and through personal acquaintance with the clerical environment.

“’It is necessary to interest this or that informer among the clergy with material rewards, since only on this soil is it possible to come to an agreement with the popes. It is impossible to hope for their benevolent attitude to Soviet power, while subsidies in money and in kind will undoubtedly also bind them to us more in another respect – namely, in that he will an eternal slave of the Cheka, fearing that his activity will be unmasked.

“’The recruitment of informers is carried out, and must be carried out, by frightening them with the threat of prison and the camps for insignificant reasons, for speculation, the violation of the rules and orders of the authorities, etc.

“’True, a fairly unreliable method can be useful only if the object of recruitment is weak and spineless in character. Above all attention must be paid to the quality, and not to the quantity, of the informers. For only when those recruited are good informers and the recruitment has been carried out with care can we hope to draw from this or that environment the material that we need’ (TsA KGB f.1, op. 5, por. № 360, 1921, secret section, l. 6; signature: Assistant to the person authorized, So VChK).’”[[502]](#footnote-502)

“One revealing incident,” writes Roslof, “involved Lenin, Lunacharskii, Dzerzhinskii, and [the schismatic] Bishop [Vladimir] Putiata. On April 6, 1921, Lunacharskii wrote to Dzerzhinskii about Metropolitan Sergii Stragorodskii, who had been arrested and sat in Butyrkii Prison. Lunacharskii suggested that Sergii might be useful in Putiata’s ‘mission’ in Kazan, the details of which were not given. Dzerzhinskii forwarded this letter for comments from one of his subordinates, M.Ia. Latsis, who rejected Sergii’s suitability for the task. Dzerzhinskii then sent a note to Latsis asking him to write a report on Lunacharskii’s letter to Lenin, adding, ’In my opinion, the church is falling apart. We must help this process but by no means allow the church to regenerate itself and take some renewed form. Therefore, the Cheka and no one else should direct the government’s policy toward church disintegration. Official or unofficial relations between the party and priests are not permitted. Only the Cheka can manoeuver toward the unique goal of disintegration among the priests. Any connection whatever by other agencies with priests casts a shadow on the party. This is a most dangerous matter that only our specialists will be capable of handling.’[[503]](#footnote-503)

“This reply did not please Lunacharskii. In a telegram on May 9, 1921, he asked Lenin to meet briefly with Putiata. Lenin refused to receive the archbishop and asked Lunacharskii to give him a written report on the case. Lunacharskii responded quickly. He explained that Krasikov had started working with Putiata with the intention of exploring possible uses of the internal church feud begun by the archbishop. Lunacharskii became involved and communicated directly with Putiata at a time when Metropolitan Sergii was in prison.

“Archbishop Vladimir explained that (Sergii) was ready to transfer to the side of the so-called ‘Soviet church’, i.e. of the clergy determinedly and emphatically supporting the present regime and leading the battle with the patriarch. Archbishop Vladimir insisted that if Sergii were freed, Vladimir would acquire an extremely strong assistant in the task of destroying the official church.

“Lunacharskii at first did not want to interfere but was convinced by a colleague of Krasikov that Sergii would indeed join the ‘leftist’ clergy. After being released, Sergii took up the case for restoring Putiata to his former church position, from which he had been expelled for ‘ecclesiastical Bolshevism’. Tikhon derailed this move by Sergii by insisting on a vote by all Orthodox bishops on the question. Putiata then suggested a new strategy by which he would be installed as the head of a new Soviet Orthodox Church centered in Kazan. He claimed support for his views from many other bishops.”[[504]](#footnote-504)

The movement for a “Soviet Orthodox Church” was gathering pace… It was supported by Trotsky, who in a protocol of the secret section of the Cheka discussed recruiting clergy with money to report on themselves and others in the Church and to prevent anti-Bolshevik agitation.[[505]](#footnote-505)

## 45. THE REQUISITIONING OF CHURCH VALUABLES

But it was the Volga famine of 1921-22, in which about 25 million people were starving, and 15 million more were under threat, and more than one million actually died[[506]](#footnote-506), that provided the Bolsheviks with their first opportunity to create a major schism in the Church.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn writes: “At the end of the civil war, and as its natural consequence, an unprecedented famine developed in the Volga area… V.G. Korolenko, in his *Letters to Lunacharsky* explains to us Russia’s total, epidemic descent into famine and destitution. It was the result of productivity having become reduced to zero (the working hands were all carrying guns) and the result, also, of the peasants’ utter lack of trust and hope that even the smallest part of the harvest might be left to them. Yes, and someday someone will also count up those many carloads of food supplies rolling on and on for many, many months to Imperial Germany, under the terms of the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk – from a Russia which had been deprived of a protesting voice, from the very provinces where famine would strike – so that Germany could fight to the end in the West.

“There was a direct, immediate chain of cause and effect. The Volga peasants had to eat their children because we were so impatient about putting up with the Constituent Assembly.

“But political genius lies in extracting success even from the people’s ruin. A brilliant idea was born: after all, three billiard balls can be pocketed with one shot. *So now let the priests feed the Volga region!* They are Christians. They are generous!

“1. If they refuse, we will blame the whole famine on them and destroy the Church.

“2. If they agree, we will clean out the churches.

“In either case, we will replenish our stocks of foreign exchange and precious metals.

“Yes, and the action was probably inspired by the actions of the Church itself. As Patriarch Tikhon himself had testified, back in August, 1921, at the beginning of the famine, the Church had created diocesan and all-Russian committees for aid to the starving and had begun to collect funds. But to have permitted any *direct* help to go straight from the Church into the mouths of those who were starving would have undermined the dictatorship of the proletariat. The committees were banned, and the funds they had collected were confiscated and turned over to the state and to the treasury. The Patriarch had also appealed to the Pope in Rome and the Archbishop of Canterbury for assistance – but he was rebuked for this, too, on the grounds that only the Soviet authorities had the right to enter into discussions with foreigners. Yes, indeed. And what was there to be alarmed about? The newspapers wrote that the government itself had all the necessary means to cope with the famine.

“Meanwhile, in the Volga region they were eating grass, the soles of shoes and gnawing at door jambs. And, finally, in December [27], 1921, Pomgol – the State Commission for Famine Relief – proposed that the churches help the starving by donating church valuables – not all, but those not required for liturgical rites. The Patriarch agreed. Pomgol issued a directive: all gifts must be strictly voluntary! On February 19, 1922, the Patriarch issued a pastoral letter permitting the parish councils to make gifts of objects that did not have liturgical and ritual significance.

“And in this way matter could again have simply degenerated into a compromise that would have frustrated the will of the proletariat, just as it once had been by the Constituent Assembly, and still was in all the chatterbox European parliaments.

“The thought came in a stroke of lightning! The thought came – and a decree followed! A decree of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on February 26: *all* valuables were to be requisitioned from the churches – for the starving!”[[507]](#footnote-507)

This decree annihilated the voluntary character of the offerings, and put the clergy in the position of accessories to sacrilege. And so on February 28, in order to resolve the perplexities of the faithful, the Patriarch decreed: “… In view of the exceptionally difficult circumstances, we have admitted the possibility of offering church objects that have not been consecrated and are not used in Divine services. Now again we call on the faithful children of the Church to make such offerings, desiring only that these offerings should be the response of a loving heart to the needs of his neighbour, if only they can provide some real help to our suffering brothers. But we cannot approve of the requisitioning from the churches, even as a voluntary offering, of consecrated objects, whose use for purposes other than Divine services is forbidden by the canons of the Ecumenical Church and is punished by Her as sacrilege – laymen by excommunication from Her, and clergy by defrocking (Apostolic Canon 73; Canon 10 of the First-Second Council).”[[508]](#footnote-508)

This compromise decree represents the first major concession made by the Church to Soviet power. Thus no less an authority than the holy Elder Nectarius of Optina said: “You see now, the patriarch gave the order to give up all valuables from the churches, but they belonged to the Church!”[[509]](#footnote-509)

At the beginning of March, with the approval of the whole Politburo (Lenin, Molotov, Kamenev and Stalin), Trotsky formed a “completely secret” commission to mastermind the requisitioning.

On March 11 he wrote to the Politburo: “This commission must secretly prepare the political, organizational and technical aspects of the matter at the same time. The actual removal of the valuables must begin already in March and then be completed in the shortest possible time… I repeat: this commission is a complete secret. Formally, the requisitioning in Moscow will take place under the direct orders of the Central Committee of Pomgol… Our whole strategy at this time must be aimed at a schism in the clergy over the concrete question of the requisitioning of valuables from the churches. Since the question is a burning one, the schism on this basis can and must acquire a very burning character, and that part of the clergy which will support the requisitioning and aid it will no longer be able to return to Patriarch Tikhon’s clique. Therefore I suggest that a block consisting of this section of the priesthood should be temporarily admitted into Pomgol, especially since it is necessary to avert any suspicion and doubts with regard to whether the requisitioning of valuables from the churches will be spent on the needs of the starving.”[[510]](#footnote-510)

On March 13, the Politburo accepted Trotsky’s suggestion. “Moreover,” writes Gregory Ravich, “the commission was ordered ‘to act with maximal cruelty, not stopping at anything, including executions on the spot (that is, without trial and investigation), in cases of necessity summoning special (for which read: punitive) units of the Red Army, dispersing and firing on demonstrations, interrogations with the use of torture’ and so on. The commission’s members were, besides Trotsky, Sapronov, Unschlicht, Medved and Samoilov-Zemliachka. It literally rushed like a hurricane through Russia, sweeping away… everything in its path.”[[511]](#footnote-511)

Soon clashes with believers who resisted the confiscation of church valuables took place. 1414 such clashes were reported in the official press. The first took place in the town of Shuye on March 15. Five Christians were killed and fifteen wounded, as a result of which two priests and a layman were condemned and executed. In 1921-23, 2,691 married priests, 1,962 monks, 3,447 nuns and an unknown number of laymen were killed on the pretext of resistance to the seizure of church valuables in the country as a whole.[[512]](#footnote-512) According to another estimate, the anti-ecclesiastical campaign cost the lives of 28 bishops and 1,215 priests - over 8000 people altogether.[[513]](#footnote-513) According to a third estimate, up to 10,000 believers were killed.[[514]](#footnote-514) According to yet another, in the parishes some 2,700 priests and 5,000 monks and nuns perished.[[515]](#footnote-515)

On March 19, Lenin sent a long letter to the Politburo marked “Top Secret. No Copies to be Made”: “It is precisely now and only now, when there is cannibalism in the famine-stricken areas and hundreds if not thousands of corpses are lying along the roads, that we can (and therefore must) carry out the confiscation of valuables with fanatical and merciless energy and not hesitate to suppress any form of resistance… It is precisely now and only now that the vast majority of the peasant masses will either support us or at least will be unable to give any decisive support to those… who might and would want to try to resist the Soviet decree. We must confiscate in the shortest possible time as much as possible to create for ourselves a fund of several hundred million roubles… Without this fund, government work.. and the defence of our positions in Genoa are absolutely unthinkable… Now our victory over the reactionary clergy is guaranteed… It is precisely now that we must wage a decisive and merciless war with the black-hundreds clergy and crush their opposition with such cruelty that they will not forget it for many decades… The more members of the reactionary bourgeoisie we manage to shoot the better.”[[516]](#footnote-516)

Concerning the Patriarch, however, Lenin said: “I think it is expedient for us not to touch Patriarch Tikhon himself, although he is undoubtedly heading this entire rebellion of slave-owners.” As for the leader of the campaign, Lenin wanted Trotsky - “but he should at no time and under no circumstances speak out [on this matter] in the press or before the public in any other manner”. This was probably, as Richard Pipes suggests, “in order not to feed rumors that the campaign was a Jewish plot against Christianity,”[[517]](#footnote-517) because Trotsky was a Jew, and the high proportion of Jews in the Bolshevik party had aroused the people’s wrath against them.

On March 20 there was a session of the Politburo “consisting of L.B. Kamenev, I.V. Stalin, L.D. Trotsky and V.M. Molotov. The Directive [on the requisitioning of church valuables] was sent to all the provincial committees. In accordance with it the requisitioning had to begin with the church at whose head was the clergy loyal to the authorities. The times of the requisitioning were determined and the composition of the commission. Great attention was paid to agitation and creating a schism in the ranks of the clergy. The requisitioning of valuables was carried out as a large-scale military operation with the participation of GPU workers, the People’s Commissariat of Justice, the Revolutionary Tribunals and military subunits. In general the huge role played by Trotsky should be noted; although remaining in the shadows, he was the de facto director of the whole operation…”[[518]](#footnote-518)

In addition to being the head of the requisitioning commission, Trotsky also headed the commission for their monetary realization. And in a submission to this commission he wrote on March 23: “For us it is more important to obtain 50 million in 1922-23 for a certain mass of valuables than to hope for 75 million in 1923-24. The advance of the proletarian revolution in just one of the large countries of Europe will put a stop to the market in valuables… Conclusion: we must proceed as fast as possible…”[[519]](#footnote-519) However, the Bolsheviks failed to get the money they wanted – the sale of church valuables fetched only about $1.5 million, or between $4 and $10 million according to another estimate.[[520]](#footnote-520) At the same time, Bukharin admitted to having spent nearly $14 million on propaganda during the famine.[[521]](#footnote-521)

As for helping the starving, “since the American Relief Administration had more food piled up in Russia’s ports than could be distributed, the confiscation of Church valuables had little or nothing to do with ameliorating the plight of the starving. A well-publicised disbursement of one million rubles realised from Church valuables derived from a confiscation campaign itself funded to the tune of ten times that amount… By late 1922 the regime was exporting nearly a million tons of grain, which suggests that the confiscations of Church valuables had had nothing to do with famine relief.”[[522]](#footnote-522)

If the primary motive of the Bolsheviks in the requisitioning campaign was in fact to destroy the Church, then they must be judged to have failed – the Church emerged even stronger spiritually from her fiery ordeal. The blood of the martyrs was already starting to bring forth fruit as thousands of previously lukewarm Christians returned to the Church.

## 46. THE RENOVATIONIST COUP

Throughout the Civil War and the Bolsheviks’ first savage onslaught against the Church, the Church had remained united against the external foe while her internal enemies fell silent. However, the crisis elicited by the requisitioning of church valuables gave a golden opportunity to theinternal enemies of the Church – the renovationist heretics. The roots of renovationism are to be found in the liberal-democratic ideas that came to prominence in Church circles at the beginning of the century.

Philip Walters writes: “During the early 20th Century, in pre-revolutionary Russia, many groups of intellectuals, philosophers and churchmen began voicing their concern over the plight of the Orthodox Church in its enforced alliance with a reactionary State. It is possible to discover many lines of continuity between the democratic and socialist aims of these men and the aims of the men of the Living Church (also known as Renovationists). There is also a certain amount of personal continuity: for example, the so-called ‘Group of Thirty-Two’ reformist priests, who were active between 1905 and 1907, reappeared after the February Revolution of 1917 as the ‘League of Democratic Orthodox Clergy and Laymen’, a group which stood against the increasing conservatism of the Orthodox Church, and which included among its members one or two men who later became prominent in the Living Church.

“B.V. Titlinov’s book, *Novaia Tserkov’ (The New Church),* written in 1922, contains an apology for Renovationist ideology. Titlinov declares that the new movement is not a revolution or a reformation, which would imply a definite break with the historical Church, but a reform which remains true to the original spirit of Orthodoxy. The basic task of the Living Church is to ‘do away with those accretions which have been introduced into Orthodox worship during the period of union between the Church and the [Tsarist] State’. Titlinov calls for ‘priestly creativity’ in the liturgy and for its celebration as in the early Church amidst the congregation. There must be ethical and moral reform in society, involving opposition to capitalism. Bishops should be elected from the lower clergy and should be allowed to marry. The Living Church, he claims, accepts the October Revolution as consonant with the aims of Christian truth.

“There are three basic ideological strands in Renovationism: a political strand, concerned with promoting loyalty to the Soviet regime; an organizational strand, concerned with the rights of the lower clergy and with the administration of the Church; and an ethical strand, concerned with making Church services more accessible to the masses and with moral and social reform. The first strand was characteristic of the Living Church movement as a whole…When the Living Church movement split into various factions, the second ideological strand was taken up chiefly by the followers of V.D. Krasnitsky, and the third by the groups which followed Bishop Antonin Granovsky and A.I. Vvedensky.”[[523]](#footnote-523)

The idea of splitting the official Church hierarchy by promoting the renovationists appears to have originated in 1921 with Lunacharsky, who since the early 1900s had been instrumental in developing a more subtle, less physically confrontational approach to the problem of eradicating religion.[[524]](#footnote-524) And at the beginning of the 1920s Trotsky said: “Let those popes who are ready to cooperate with us become leaders in the Church and carry out all our instructions, calling on the believers to serve Soviet power.”[[525]](#footnote-525)

That the Bolsheviks planned on using the *internal* enemies of the Church at the same time that they exerted *external* pressure through the confiscation of her valuables is clear from a project outlined by Trotsky to a session of the Politburo attended by Kamenev, Stalin and Molotov on April 2: “The agitation must not be linked with the struggle against religion and the Church, but must be wholly directed towards helping the starving” (point 5); “we must take a decisive initiative in creating a schism among the clergy”, taking the priests who speak in support of the measures undertaken by Soviet power “under the protection of state power” (point 6); “our agitation and the agitation of priests loyal to us must in no case be mixed up”, but the communists must refer to “the significant part of the clergy” which is speaking against the inhumanity and greed “of the princes of the Church” (point 7); spying is necessary “to guarantee complete knowledge of everything that is happening in various groups of clergy, believers, etc.” (point 8); the question must be formulated correctly: “it is best to begin with some church led by a loyal priest, and if such a church does not exist, then with the most significant church after careful preparation” (point 9); “representatives of the loyal clergy must be allowed to be registered in the provinces and in the centre, after the population is well informed that they will have every opportunity to check that not one article of the church heritage goes anywhere else than to help the starving” (point 13).

In actual fact, according to a secret instruction, all church valuables taken from “the enemies of Soviet power” were to be handed over, not to Pomgol or the starving, but to the Economic administration of the OGPU.[[526]](#footnote-526)

The Bolsheviks were counting on a modernist or “renovationist” faction in the Russian Church to provide them with their “loyal” clergy. Already in the revolutionary years of 1905 and 1917, the renovationists-to-be had reared their heads with a long list of demands for modernist reform of the Church. And in March, 1918, Professor Titlinov, who was later to become one of the main ideologists of renovationism, founded a newspaper in Petrograd which criticized the Patriarch’s anathematization of Soviet power.[[527]](#footnote-527) But the plotters had to wait until the spring of 1922, when both Patriarch Tikhon and Metropolitan Benjamin were in prison in connection with the confiscation of church valuables, before they could seize power in the Church.

The spiritual calibre of the renovationists, or the “Living Church”, as their main faction was called, can be gauged from the career of perhaps their most moderate leader, Bishop Antonin Granovsky. In 1905 he had been such a thorn in the side of the Church that the Holy Synod retired him. Thereafter he refused to mention the Tsar’s name in Divine services, and in 1907 he even declared that the Tsarist regime was satanic. In 1921 he was again retired by Patriarch Tikhon for introducing innovations on his own authority into the Divine services. In 1922 he accepted a Soviet invitation to be a member of Pomgol, and in the same year he appeared as a witness for the government in the trial of the 54 Shuye Christians who had resisted the confiscation of church valuables. And yet Granovsky himself characterized his fellow-plotters as “the sewer of the Orthodox Church”, the rebellion of power-hungry priests pursuing their class interests against the bishops and monks.[[528]](#footnote-528)

And indeed, this anti-monasticism was, with their socialism, one of the main characteristics of the renovationists. Fr. George Florovsky called it “Protestantism of the Eastern Rite”.[[529]](#footnote-529) Thus Titlinov wrote that the major task of the “Living Church” was “to free church life from the influence of the monastic episcopate and transfer the administration of church affairs into the hands of the white [married] clergy.”[[530]](#footnote-530)

And so Soviet power was perhaps justified – in this respect, if in no other – in counting, in E. Lopeshanskaya’s words, “on the classically Marxist ‘inner contradictions’ and ‘class struggle’, which by its ideology was necessarily bound to arise everywhere – including the Church – between the black [monastic] and white [married] clergy, between the hierarchs and the priests, for the income of the Church.”[[531]](#footnote-531)

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The first shots in the battle were fired in Petrograd, which was a stronghold of renovationism as it had been of the Bolshevik revolution. According to Levitin and Shavrov, the initiative here came from the Petrograd party chief, Zinoviev, who suggested to Archpriest Alexander Vvedensky that his group would be the appropriate one for an eventual concordat between the State and the Church.[[532]](#footnote-532) Vvedensky then joined Archpriest Vladimir Krasnitsky and Bishop Antonin Granovsky in plotting to overthrow the Patriarch.

The leader of the Patriarchal Church in Petrograd was Metropolitan Benjamin, who had actually come to an agreement with the local authorities concerning the voluntary handing over of church valuables. These authorities evidently did not yet understand that the real purpose of the Soviet decree was not to help the starving but to destroy the Church. Having conferred with the central authorities in Moscow, however, they reneged on their agreement with the metropolitan.[[533]](#footnote-533)

Then, on March 24, a letter signed by twelve people, including the future renovationist leaders Krasnitsky, Vvedensky, Belkov, Boyarsky and others, appeared in *Petrogradskaia Pravda* (it was reprinted five days later in *Izvestia*). The letter defended the measures undertaken by the Soviet government and distanced the authors from the rest of the clergy.

The clergy reacted strongly against this letter at a clergy meeting, during which Vvedensky gave a brazen and threatening speech. However, the metropolitan succeeded in calming passions sufficiently so that it was decided to enter into fresh negotiations with the authorities, the conduct of these negotiations being entrusted to Vvedensky and Boyarsky. They proceeded to win an agreement according to which other articles or money were allowed to be substituted for the church valuables…

On March 22-23 Trotsky wrote: “The arrest of the Synod and the Patriarch is necessary, but not now, but in about 10-15 days… In the course of this week we must arrange a trial of priests for stealing church valuables (there are quite a few facts)… The press must adopt a frenzied tone, giving [evidence of] a heap of priestly attempts in Smolensk, Petrograd, etc…”[[534]](#footnote-534)

On April 1 the Patriarch was placed under house arrest…

The first instinct of the Russian Church in the face of Soviet power, as manifested in its anathematization at the 1917-18 Council, has never been extinguished among Russian Christians. It continued to manifest itself both at home and abroad (for example, in the First All-Emigration Council of the Russian Church Abroad in 1921), both in the early and the later decades of Soviet power (for example, among the "passportless" Christians of the Catacomb Church). However, it was very soon tempered by the realisation that such outright rejection of Soviet power on a large scale could be sustained only by *war* - and after the defeat of the White Armies in the Civil War there were no armies left to carry on the fight against the Bolsheviks.

Therefore from the early 1920s a new attitude towards Soviet power began to evolve among the Tikhonite Christians: loyalty towards it as a political institution ("for all power is from God"), and acceptance of such of its laws as could be interpreted in favour of the Church (for example, the law on the separation of Church and State), combined with rejection of its atheistic world-view (large parts of which the renovationists, by contrast, accepted). In essence, this new attitude involved accepting that the Soviet State was not Antichrist, as the Local Council of 1917-18 and the Russian Church Abroad had in effect declared, but Caesar, no worse in principle than the Caesars of Ancient Rome, to whom the things belonging to Caesar were due. This attitude involved the assertion that it was possible, in the Soviet Union as in Ancient Rome, to draw a clear line between politics and religion.

But in practice, even more than in theory, this line proved very hard to draw. For to the early Bolsheviks there was no such dividing line; for them, *everything* was ideological, everything had to be in accord with their ideology, there could be no room for disagreement, no private spheres into which the state did not pry. Thus unlike most of the Roman emperors, who allowed the Christians to order their own lives so long as they showed loyalty to the state (which the Christians were eager to do), the Bolsheviks insisted in imposing their own ways upon the Christians in every sphere: in family life (civil marriage only, divorce on demand, children spying on parents), in education (compulsory Marxism), in economics (dekulakization, collectivization), in military service (the oath of allegiance to Lenin), in science (Lysenkoism), in art (socialist realism), and in religion (the requisitioning of valuables, registration, commemoration of the authorities at the Liturgy, reporting of confessions by the priests). Resistance to any one of these demands was counted as "anti-Soviet behaviour", i.e. *political* disloyalty. Therefore it was no use protesting one's political loyalty to the regime if one refused to accept just one of these demands. According to the Soviet interpretation of the word: "Whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one has become guilty of all of it" (James 2.10), such a person was an *enemy of the people*.

In view of this, it is not surprising that many Christians came to the conclusion that there was no gain, and from a moral point of view much to be lost, in accepting a regime that made such impossible demands, since the penalty would be the same whether one asserted one's loyalty to it or not. And if this meant living as an outlaw, so be it… Nevertheless, the path of total rejection of the Soviet state required enormous courage, strength and self-sacrifice, not only for oneself but also (which was more difficult) for one's family or flock. It is therefore not surprising that, already during the Civil War, the Church began to soften her anti-Soviet rhetoric and try once more to draw the line between politics and religion. This is what Patriarch Tikhon tried to do in the later years of his patriarchate - with, it must be said, only mixed results. Thus his decision to allow some, but not all of the Church's valuables to be requisitioned by the Bolsheviks in 1922 not only did not bring help to the starving of the Volga, as was the intention, but led to many clashes between believers and the authorities and many deaths of believers.

The decision to negotiate with the Bolsheviks only brought confusion and division to the Church. Thus on the right wing of the Church there were those, like Archbishop Theodore of Volokolamsk, who thought that the patriarch had already gone too far; while on the left wing there were those, like Archbishop Hilarion of Verey, who wanted to go further. The basic problem was that the compromises were always one-sided; the Bolsheviks always took and never gave; their aim was not peaceful co-existence, but the complete conquest of the Church. And so, as a "Letter from Russia" put it many years later: "It's no use our manoeuvring: there's nothing for us to preserve except the things that are God's. For the things that are Caesar's (if one should really consider it to be Caesar and not Pharaoh) are always associated with the quenching of the Spirit..."[[535]](#footnote-535)

However, the Patriarchal Church remained Orthodox under Patriarch Tikhon and his successor, Metropolitan Peter, for two major reasons: first, because the leaders of the Church did not sacrifice the lives of their fellow Christians for the sake of their own security or the security of the Church organisation; and secondly, because, while the Soviet regime was recognised to be, in effect, Caesar rather than Pharaoh, no further concessions were made with regard to the communist *ideology.*

On May 3, at a secret midnight meeting of the presidium of the GPU – Ushinsky, Menzhinsky, Yagoda, Samsonov and Krasikov – it was decided “to summon Tikhon and demand of him that he publish within 24 hours the expulsion from the Church, defrocking and removal from their posts of the above-mentioned clergy [the leaders of the Russian Church in Exile]. If Tikhon refuses to carry out the above-mentioned demands, he is to be immediately arrested and accused of all the crimes he has committed against Soviet power.”[[536]](#footnote-536)

“This proposal,” writes Rayfield, “went to Trotsky and Stalin, who had the Politburo resolve [on May 4] ‘1) to bring Tikhon to trial; 2) to apply the death penalty to the priests’.”[[537]](#footnote-537)

On May 5, the following dialogue took place when he appeared for the last time as a witness in the case of the 54 Moscow clergymen:

President: “You ordered that your appeal calling on the people to disobey the authorities [this was the statement on church valuables] should be read out to the whole people.

Patriarch: “The authorities well know that in my appeal there was no call [to the people] to resist the authorities, but only to preserve their holy things, and in the name of their preservation to ask the authorities to allow their value to be paid in money, and, by helping their starving brothers in this way, to preserve their holy things.”

President: “Well, this call will cost the lives of your faithful servants.”

At this point the patriarch pointed to those on trial and said: “I always said and continue to say… that I alone am guilty of everything, and this is only my Christian army, obediently following the commands of the head sent to her by God. But if a redemptive sacrifice is necessary, if the death of innocent sheep of the flock of Christ is necessary” – at this point the voice of the Patriarch was raised and it became audible in all the corners of the huge hall, and he himself as it were grew tall as, addressing the accused, he raised his hands and blessed them, loudly and distinctly pronouncing the words – ‘I bless the faithful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ to go to torment and death for Him’. The accused fell on their knees. Both the judges and the prosecutors fell silent… The session did not continue that evening. In the morning the verdict was pronounced: 18 priests were to be shot. When they were being led out of the hall, they began to chant: “Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and to those in the tombs bestowing life.”[[538]](#footnote-538) The prosecutor also declared that the tribunal “establishes the illegality of the existence of the organization called the Orthodox hierarchy”. And so the whole of the Russian Orthodox Church was placed beyond the law![[539]](#footnote-539)

That evening, at GPU headquarters, T.P. Samsonov and V.R. Menzhinsky asked the patriarch to say what punitive measures he was taking in relation to the clergy abroad, and in particular Metropolitans Anthony and Eulogius. Menzhinsky even suggested that the Patriarch invite the metropolitans to Moscow to demand “a personal explanation”, to which the Patriarch replied: “They will hardly come here.” At the same interrogation it was demanded of the Patriarch that he issue a directive to the clergy abroad that they hand over all the Church Abroad’s property to representatives of Soviet power.[[540]](#footnote-540) It was therefore under extreme pressure that on the same day of May 5, Patriarch Tikhon convened a meeting of the Holy Synod and the Higher Church Council, at which he declared (decree № 347) that “neither the epistle, nor the address of the Karlovtsy Synod [to the Genoa conference] express the voice of the Russian Church”. And he ordered the dissolution of the Church in Exile’s Higher Church Administration and the transfer of all power over the Russian refugees in Europe to Metropolitan Eulogy of Paris.[[541]](#footnote-541)

Decree № 347 has been used by the Sovietized Moscow Patriarchate and its satellites to cast doubts on the canonicity of the Russian Church Abroad. However, the ukaz that ROCOR received did not have the Patriarch’s signature and was signed only by Archbishop Thaddeus of Astrakhan![[542]](#footnote-542)

As Igumen Luke points out: “If one reads the decree one will see that it contains nothing concerning violation of canons by the Higher Church Administration and nowhere declares it to be uncanonical. No one, not even Metropolitan Eulogy accepted the authority of the document. The Patriarch in assigning Metropolitan Eulogy to head the parishes in Western Europe ‘overlooked’ the fact that there were eight other dioceses in the Church Abroad and said nothing about their leadership. This and other confused aspects of the decree only support the universal opinion that it was issued under pressure from the Bolsheviks who desired by all means to weaken the anti-Communist voice from abroad. Upon receiving notification of his appointment as ruling bishop in Europe Metropolitan Eulogy wrote to Metropolitan Anthony: ‘This decree amazed me by its suddenness and simply shocks one by the possible confusion it could bring into church life’ (exactly what the communists wanted and continue to desire in order to eliminate any opposition to their control of the Church). ‘There is no doubt that the decree was issued under pressure by the Bolsheviks.’ Metropolitan Eulogius continues, ‘I do not recognize this document as having any authority even though it might have been written and signed by the Patriarch. This document is political and not ecclesiological…’”[[543]](#footnote-543)

In any case, the Patriarch did not actually anathematise the émigré bishops, nor remove any of them from their sees, so the action which was designed to placate the Bolsheviks only served to anger them.

The leaders of the Russian Church in Exile took the view – and in this they were at first supported, as we have seen, by Metropolitan Eulogy[[544]](#footnote-544) – that the patriarch had been acting under duress at the time. So they acted in order formally to obey the Patriarch’s decree, while in effect ignoring it. They dissolved the Higher Church Administration and created a Synod of Bishops presided over by Metropolitan Eulogy in its place. The Patriarch, as if in tacit acknowledgement of this, issued no further condemnation of the Synod Abroad and acted in future as if he fully recognized its authority.[[545]](#footnote-545)

On the evening of May 6 the Patriarch came back from an interrogation, exhausted. Fr. Michael Polsky writes that the Patriarch said:

“‘This time they interrogated me really strictly…’

“’What will happen to you?’ asked one anxiously.

“’They promised to cut off my head,’ replied the Patriarch with his usual geniality.”

The next day he served in the village of Bogorodsk with Fr. Michael. “He served the liturgy – as always, with not the slightest trace of nervousness or even tension in prayer. Looking at him, who was preparing himself for prison, and perhaps also for execution (that was a serious threat at the time), I involuntarily remembered the words of Christ: ‘The prince of this world come, and will find nothing of his own in Me’. Let them accuse, they will find nothing, he will be innocent…”[[546]](#footnote-546)

The same day, the Patriarch was placed under house arrest. According to his will, the temporary administration of the Church should now have passed to Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan. But since he was in prison, the next hierarch according to the will, Metropolitan Agathangel of Yaroslavl, should have taken over.

On May 9 the Patriarch was told the verdict of the court on the Muscovite clergy (11 condemned to be shot) and then told that he himself was to be brought to trial.

The interrogation again revolved around the Church Abroad. The Patriarch gave in and wrote: “I did not consider Anthony Khrapovitsky, Metropolitan of Kiev, to be an enemy of the workers-and-peasants’ power. But now, judging from his speeches in the foreign press – *Novoe Vremia* and others – I find that he, Anthony Khrapovitsky is an accursed enemy of the worker-peasant toiling masses of Russia. The anti-Soviet and interventionist speeches of Anthony Khrapovitsky became known to me only from March, 1922, perhaps from February.”[[547]](#footnote-547)

On May 12, accompanied by two chekists, the renovationist priests Vvedensky, Belkov and Kalinovsky (who, as the Patriarch pointed out, had but a short time before renounced holy orders), visited the Patriarch at the Troitsky podvorye, where he was confined, and told him that they had obtained permission for the convening of a Council, but on condition that he resigned from the patriarchal throne. The Patriarch replied that the patriarchy weighed on him like a cross. “I would joyfully accept it if the coming Council removed the patriarchy from me, but now I am handing power to one of the oldest hierarchs and will renounced the administration of the Church.” The Patriarch rejected the candidacies of some modernist bishops and appointed Metropolitan Agathangel as his deputy.[[548]](#footnote-548)

“However,” writes Krivova, “the authorities did not allow Metropolitan Agathangel to leave for Moscow. Already on May 5, 1922 V.D. Krasnitsky had arrived at the Tolga monastery where the metropolitan was living, and demanded that he sign the appeal of the so-called ‘Initiative Group of Clergy’. The metropolitan refused to sign the appeal. Then, two days later, his signature declaring that he would not leave was taken from him, and a guard was placed outside his cell and a search was carried out.

“After Agathangel there remained in Moscow only three of the members of the Holy Synod and HCA, but they were not empowered to take any kind of decision that would be obligatory for the whole Church. Thus the path to the seizure of Church power by the renovationists was open. Using Tikhon’s temporary concession and the impossibility of Metropolitan Agathangel’s taking the place of the Patriarch, the renovationists declared that Tikhon had been removed and in an arbitrary manner seized power. Arriving on May 15, 1922 at a reception with M.I. Kalinin, they understood that Metropolitan Agathangel’s departure to Moscow was hardly possible. The next day the renovationists sent a letter to M.I. Kalinin, in which they declared that ‘in view of Patriarch Tikhon’s removal of himself from power, a Higher Church Administration is formed, which from May 2 (15) has taken upon itself the conducting of Church affairs in Russia.”[[549]](#footnote-549)

On May 17 the Pope offered to buy back all the requisitioned valuables and hand them over to the leader of the Catholics in Russia, Archbishop Tseplyak. Chicherin considered the proposal tempting, but noted that “the transfer of Church objects to the Catholics will elicit a storm in Russia”. The Pope’s proposal was rejected.[[550]](#footnote-550)

On May 18 the renovationists complained to the Patriarch that in consequence of the existing circumstances, Church business remained unattended to. They demanded that he entrust his chancery to them until Metropolitan Agathangel’s arrival in Moscow, in order that they might properly classify the correspondence received. The Patriarch yielded, and inscribed their petition with the following resolution: “The undersigned persons are ordered to take over and transmit to the Right Reverend Metropolitan Agathangel, upon his arrival in Moscow, all the Synodical business with the assistance of secretary Numerov.”[[551]](#footnote-551) The next day, the Patriarch was transferred under house arrest to the Donskoj monastery, and the renovationists took over his residence in the Troitsky podvorye.

On May 27, Trotsky wrote to Lenin: “The separation of the Church from the State, which we have established once and for all, by no means signifies that the state is indifferent to what is happening in the Church”. He spoke about “loyal and progressive elements in the clergy” and set the task of “raising the spirit of the loyal clergy” in indirect ways – through the press. He complained that “the editors of *Pravda* and *Izvestia* are not taking sufficient account of the huge historical importance of what is happening in the Church and around her”. Trotsky fully understood the importance of this, “the most profound spiritual revolution in the Russian people”.

Lenin commented: “True! A thousand times true!”[[552]](#footnote-552)

However, the renovationists and communists still had to neutralize the threat posed by Metropolitan Agathangel. So Krasnitsky was sent to Yaroslavl and placed a number of conditions before the Patriarch’s lawful deputy that amounted to his placing himself in complete dependence on the renovationists. When the metropolitan rejected these conditions, the renovationists spread the rumour that he “was not hurrying” to fulfil the Patriarch’s command.

“Metropolitan Agathangel’s behaviour,” write Levitin and Shavrov, “would indeed have appeared quite incomprehensible if it had not been for one detail: for a month now E.A. Tuchkov and Metropolitan Agathangel had been conducting secret negotiations. E.A. Tuchkov, whom the Higher Church Administration considered their main support in negotiations with the metropolitan, expressed the desire to separate as quickly as possible from this unsolid institution [the HCA] and support Agathangel. However, a series of concessions was expected from Agathangel; he had to declare that he was renouncing Patriarch Tikhon’s political line. After a month’s negotiations, seeing that no progress was being made, Metropolitan Agathangel unexpectedly addressed the Russian Church with an appeal [dated June 5/18, 1922, № 214], which was printed by some underground printing-press and very quickly distributed in Moscow and the other cities…

“E.A. Tuchkov was taken completely by surprise. The HCA was also shocked. Metropolitan Agathangel was immediately arrested and sent into exile, to the Narymsk region. However, the appearance of this appeal showed that the unprincipled line of V.D. Krasnitsky was meeting with a sharp rejection in ecclesiastical circles…”[[553]](#footnote-553)

Agathangel wrote that the renovationists had “declared their intention to revise the dogmas and moral teaching of our Orthodox Faith, the sacred canons of the Holy Ecumenical Councils and the Orthodox Typicon of Divine services given by the great ascetics of Christian piety”, and gave the bishops the right to administer their dioceses independently until the restoration of a canonical Higher Church Authority: “Deprived for a time of higher leadership, you must now administer your dioceses independently in accordance with the Scriptures, with the Church canons, your conscience and your hierarchical oath, until the re-establishment of the Higher Church Authority. Finally, carry out your work, for which you previously asked the permission of the Holy Synod, and in doubtful cases turn to my humility.”[[554]](#footnote-554) It is noteworthy that this was addressed to *all* the bishops of the Russian Church, including those abroad, and so implicitly disavowed the decision of May 5 disbanding the Higher Church Administration Abroad.

Metropolitan Agathangel was immediately arrested. Now both the patriarch and his only lawful deputy were in prison…

The metropolitan’s reference to the renovationists’ revising the dogmas and moral teachings of the Faith, as well as the canons and services, was correct. Thus in its “Reform Programme”, the renovationists called for “the re-establishment of the evangelical teaching of the first Christians, with a deliberate development of the teaching concerning the human nature of Christ the Saviour and a struggle with the scholastic corruption of Christianity.” And one of the subsections of the programme bore the title: “The terrible judgement, paradise and hell as moral concepts”.[[555]](#footnote-555)

Moreover, at their first Council, the renovationists declared: “Freedom of religious propaganda (in addition to freedom to propagate antireligious ideas) enables believers to defend the value of their purely religious convictions in ideal circumstances. Therefore adherents of the Church cannot regard Soviet power as the realm of Antichrist. On the contrary, the Council draws attention to the fact that Soviet power is the sole entity in the world that is in a position to realize the Kingdom of God.”[[556]](#footnote-556)

Fr. Basil Redechkin writes that the renovationists “united the leaders of various rationalist tendencies. Therefore various voices were heard: some denied the Holy Icons, others – the sign of the Cross, others – the Holy Relics, others denied all the sacraments except baptism, while yet others tried to overthrow the veneration of our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and even the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said about the All-holy Virgin Mary: ‘She is a simple woman, just like all women, and her son was, of course, only a man, and not God!’ And the ‘livers’ created a completely atheist ‘symbol of faith’ to please the God-fighting, antichristian authorities. It was published in the journal *Zhivaia Tserkov’* in 1925, and was composed of thirty articles. This ‘symbol’ began with the words: ‘1. I believe in one power that created the world, the heavens and the earth, the visible and invisible worlds. 2. In one catholic humanity and in it (in the man) Jesus Christ.’

“And it is completely understandable that after this they should declare that the Canonical rules by which the Holy Church has been guided for two thousand years: the rules of the Holy Apostles, of the Ecumenical and Local Councils and of the Holy Fathers – ‘have become infinitely outdated’ and have ’repealed’ themselves… So the ‘liver-renovationists’, wanting to walk ‘in step with the times’,… introduced a married episcopate, allowed widowed priests to marry a second and even a third time, and took other liberties.”[[557]](#footnote-557)

## 47. METROPOLITAN BENJAMIN OF PETROGRAD

The focus now shifts back to Petrograd. On May 25 Vvedensky appeared before Metropolitan Benjamin with a document signed by the renovationist Bishop Leonid, which said that he, “in accordance with the resolution of Patriarch Tikhon, is a member of the HCA and is sent to Petrograd and other cities on Church business”. The metropolitan, not seeing the signature of the Patriarch, refused to accept it.

The next day, at the Sunday Liturgy, an Epistle from the metropolitan was read in all the churches of Petrograd, in which he anathematised the rebellious priest Alexander Vvedensky and Eugene Belkov and also those with them for trampling on the rights of the patriarch and removing him from his see. “According to the teaching of the Church,” the Epistle said, “a diocese that is for some reason deprived of the possibility of receiving instructions from its Patriarch, is ruled by its bishops, who remains in spiritual union with the Patriarch… The bishop of Petrograd is the Metropolitan of Petrograd. By obeying him, you will be in union with him and will be in the Church.”

The next day chekists arrived at the residence of the metropolitan and arrested him. Meanwhile, Vvedensky took over the chancellery. Without turning a hair, he went up to the hierarch for a blessing. “Fr. Alexander,” said the metropolitan peacefully, “you and I are not in the Garden of Gethsemane”. And without blessing the schismatic, he calmly listened to the statement about his arrest.[[558]](#footnote-558)

On the same day, Metropolitan Benjamin was brought to trial together with 86 other people. They were accused of entering into negotiations with Soviet power with the aim of annulling or softening the decree on the requisitioning of church valuables, and that they were “in a plot with the worldwide bourgeoisie and the Russian emigration”. He was given many chances to save himself in a dishonourable manner. Thus even before the trial Vvedensky and the commandant of the Petrograd GPU Bakayev had come to him in prison and given him the choice: either revoke the ban on Vvedensky or face trial. But the metropolitan refused to revoke the ban, thus signing his own death warrant.

Vvedensky now assembled the vicar-bishops, Nicholas, Innocent and Benedict, in his flat and tried to pressure them into asking the metropolitan to revoke the ban. But they all resisted the pressure, and dispersed to their homes.

The next day, June 4, the newspapers reported that Vicar-Bishop Alexis (Simansky) of Yamburg had removed the ban from Vvedensky. “I recognize,” he wrote in an appeal, “that the decree of Metropolitan Benjamin on the unlawful acts of Protopriest Alexander Vvedensky and the other persons mentioned in the epistle of Vladyka Metropolitan has lost its validity, and I recognize them as being restored to communion with the Church.” And he called himself the “direct and lawful successor to Vladyka Metropolitan Benjamin”.

According to A. Levitin and V. Shavrov, Alexis did this because the chekists threatened him that if he disobeyed Metropolitan Benjamin would be shot.[[559]](#footnote-559) But this seems highly unlikely, first because Metropolitan Benjamin was shot anyway, and secondly because Bishop Alexis showed himself to be pro-Soviet from this time until his death in the rank of patriarch… In any case, not only was Alexis here usurping the power of the metropolitan: neither he alone nor all the vicar-bishops together had the right to remove the ban placed by Metropolitan Benjamin, who was still alive and accessible, even though he was in prison.[[560]](#footnote-560)

Bishop Alexis now formed, with Bishop Nicholas (Yarushevich), the “Petrograd autocephaly”, which for six months commemorated neither the renovationists nor the Patriarch. M.V. Shkarovsky writes: “The ‘Petrograd autocephaly’ by the fact of its six-month, de facto legal existence demonstrated the possibility of the existence of canonical church structures recognized by the organs of State power in the conditions of Soviet reality, and to a definite degree prepared the way travelled by the leadership of the Moscow Patriarchate at the end of the 1920s.”[[561]](#footnote-561) That is, comments Fr. Alexis Lebedev, “in fact there they worked out the Sergianist model of ‘changing the content without changing the external forms’” of Orthodoxy.[[562]](#footnote-562)

Later, faced with his extreme unpopularity because of his betrayal of Metropolitan Benjamin, Bishop Alexis was forced to ask the renovationist HCA to relieve him of his administration of his diocese, and was soon sent into exile for three years… However, even after his return from exile Bishop Alexis did not finally break with the renovationists. The Petrograd clergy, with few exceptions, continued to distrust him.[[563]](#footnote-563)

During his trial, the judges hinted to Metropolitan Benjamin that he save himself by naming “the authors” of the proposition he had sent to Pomgol. The metropolitan again refused, saying: “I alone did it – I thought everything over; I formulated, wrote and sent the proposition myself. I did not allow anybody else to participate in deciding matters entrusted to me as archpastor.”

The renovationists Krasnitsky and Vvedensky testified against Metropolitan Benjamin during the trial, which was staged in what had been the Club of the Nobility. Three witnesses came forward to defend the metropolitan. They were immediately arrested, so no-one else came forward.

Once the prosecutor Krasikov prophetically remarked: "The whole of the Orthodox Church is a counter-revolutionary organization. It follows that the whole Church should be put in prison!" In the thirties this is precisely what happened, when the whole of the True Church was either imprisoned or driven underground.

During the trial, Metropolitan Benjamin said: “I of course reject all the accusations made against me and once again triumphantly declare (you know, perhaps I am speaking for the last time in my life) that politics is completely alien to me. I have tried as far as I have been able to only a pastor of human souls. And now, standing before the court, I calmly await its sentence, whatever it may be, well remembering the words of the apostle: ‘Take care that you do not suffer as evil-doers, but if any of you suffer as a Christian, thank God for it’ (I Peter 4.15-16).

The defence lawyer Y.S. Gurovich delivered an eloquent speech, in which he said: "If the metropolitan perishes for his faith, for his limitless devotion to the believing masses he will become more dangerous for Soviet power than now... The unfailing historical law warns us that faith grows, strengthens and increases on the blood of martyrs."[[564]](#footnote-564)

Gurovich’s speech was greeted by tumultuous applause. Then the final word was given to the defendants (there were sixteen in all). When the metropolitan rose to speak, he first expressed sorrow at being called an "enemy of the people". "I am a true son of my people," he said. "I love, and always have loved, the people. I have dedicated my whole life to them and I felt happy to see that they - I mean the common people - repaid me with the same love. It was the Russian people who raised me to the high position I have been occupying in our Russian Church."

This was all that he had to say about himself. The rest of his speech dealt with the defence of the others. Referring to some written documents and other facts, he exhibited extraordinary memory, logic and calmness.

A reverent silence followed the metropolitan's speech, which was broken by the presiding judge. He addressed the metropolitan in a gentler tone of voice than before, as if he also was affected by the spiritual strength of the defendant. "All this time," he said, "you have spoken about others; the tribunal would like to hear about yourself."

The metropolitan, who had sat down, rose, looked at the presiding judge in a puzzled way, and asked in a low, clear voice: "About myself? But what else can I tell you about myself? One more thing perhaps: regardless of what my sentence will be, no matter what you decide, life or death, I will lift up my eyes reverently to God, cross myself and affirm: 'Glory to Thee, my Lord; glory to Thee for everything.'"

On July 5, Metropolitan Benjamin was convicted of “organizing a counter-revolutionary group having set himself the aim of struggling with Soviet power”. In a letter written from prison, the metropolitan expressed the essence of what was to become the position of the Catacomb Church a few years later: “The reasonings of some, perhaps outstanding pastors are strange… – ‘we must preserve the living forces’, that is, for their sake, we must abandon everything! Then what is Christ for? It is not the Platonovs, the Chuprins, the Benjamins and their like who save the Church, but Christ. That point on which they are trying to stand is destruction for the Church; it is not right to sacrifice the Church for oneself.”[[565]](#footnote-565)

The metropolitan was shot on the night of August 12 to 13, 1922. Bishop Alexis, it is said, on hearing the news, “sobbed like a child”. And yet he never reversed the act whereby he betrayed the metropolitan to his death…

## 48. THE RENOVATIONIST COUNCIL OF 1923

In Russia the renovationist schismatics continued to gain ground throughout 1922. On June 16, three important hierarchs joined them, declaring: “We, Metropolitan Sergius [Stragorodsky] of Vladimir and Shuya, Archbishop Eudocimus of Nizhegorod and Arzamas and Archbishop Seraphim of Kostroma and Galich, having studied the platform of the Temporary Church Administration and the canonical lawfulness of its administration, consider it the only lawful, canonical, higher church authority, and all the instructions issuing from it we consider to be completely lawful and obligatory. We call on all true pastors and believing sons of the Church, both those entrusted to us and those belonging to other dioceses, to follow our example.”[[566]](#footnote-566)

Sergius’ vicar, Bishop Barnabas (Belyaev) turned for advice to the Diveyevo eldress Maria Dmitrievna. “Hold on to the Holy Church,” she said. Vladyka did, and, rejecting renovationism, remained faithful to the True Church in the catacombs until his death in 1963.

Metropolitan John (Snychev) wrote: “We do not have the right to hide from history those sad and staggering apostasies from the unity of the Russian Church which took place on a mass scale after the publication in the journal ‘Living Church’ of the epistle-appeals of the three well-known hierarchs. Many of the hierarchs and clergy reasoned naively. Thus: ‘If the wise Sergius has recognized the possibility of submitting to the Higher Church Administration, then it is clear that we, too, must follow his example.’”[[567]](#footnote-567)

The GPU gave valuable aid to the renovationists, arresting and sending into exile all the clergy who remained faithful to the Patriarch. Also, by the end of 1922 and beginning of 1923 they had handed over to them nearly two-thirds of the functioning churches in the Russian republic and Central Asia, as well as many thousands in the Ukraine, Belorussia and Siberia – almost 20,000 churches.[[568]](#footnote-568) However, these figures exaggerated the true strength of the renovationists, in that their churches were almost empty while the patriarchal churches were filled to overflowing.

On November 23 / December 6, 1922 Patriarch Tikhon anathematized the renovationists and the “Higher Church Administration” created by them as being “an institution of the Antichrist, in which are the sons of resistance to the Divine Truth and the holy canons of the Church”. This measure was repeated on December 7/20, 1923.

In April, the government announced that the Patriarch was about to go on trial on charges arising from the trials of the 54 in Moscow and of Metropolitan Benjamin in Petrograd the previous year. D. Volkogonov writes: “Tikhon, imprisoned in Donskoi monastery, was being subjected to the standard treatment: interrogation, threats, pressure and bribes. The interrogations went on even after Lenin had lost his faculties, as his instructions on Church affairs continued to be carried out to the letter.”[[569]](#footnote-569)

International opinion now began to make itself felt in support of Patriarch Tikhon. On April 10, 1923 G.V. Chicherin reported to Stalin that the Anglo-Saxons were as interested in Orthodoxy as they were in Catholicism, and that the execution of the Patriarch would be disadvantageous in all respects.[[570]](#footnote-570) On April 21, Dzerzhinsky proposed to the Politburo that the Tikhon’s trial be postponed. The Politburo agreed - the trial was postponed to June 17. On May 8, the British foreign minister Lord Curzon issued an ultimatum to the Soviets, demanding, among other things, a cessation of religious persecution and the liberation of Patriarch Tikhon, otherwise there would be a new intervention against the USSR. This was supported by an outcry in the British and American press. The conflict was resolved by the end of June, when the Soviets agreed to pay compensation for the shooting of two English citizens and the Patriarch was released from prison.[[571]](#footnote-571)

One reason why the Soviets postponed the trial of the Patriarch was that they wanted the renovationists to condemn him first. This they duly did… At their first renovationist council, which they called “the second All-Russian Local Council of the Russian [Rossijskoj] Orthodox Church”, which met in the cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow on April 29, 1923, Protopriest A. Vvedensky declared that “the Marxists, the Communists and Soviet power are working for the fulfilment of the commandments of Christ”. The council officially declared that “Church people must not see in Soviet power the power of the Antichrist. On the contrary, the council directs attention to the fact that Soviet power is the only power in the world that is aiming, by state means, to realize the ideals of the kingdom of God. Therefore each believing churchman must be not only an honourable citizen, but also must by all means struggle, together with Soviet power, to realize the ideals of the Kingdom of God on earth.”[[572]](#footnote-572)

The council members were no less approving of Lenin himself: “We must turn with words of deep gratitude to the government of our state, which, in spite of the slanders of foreign informers, does not persecute the Church… The word of gratitude and welcome must be expressed by us to the only state in the world which performs, without believing, that work of love which we, believers, do not fulfil, and also to the leader of Soviet Russia, V.I. Lenin, who must be dear also to church people…”[[573]](#footnote-573)

“We should note,” writes Sergius Shumilo, “that it was precisely at this time, at the beginning of 1923, that a blasphemous farce was staged with the approval of the Soviet government in Moscow under the name of ‘the trial of God’. In this regard the Soviet press informed that on January 10, 1923, in the club of the Moscow garrison, in the presence of Trotsky and Lunacharsky, there took place ‘a session of the political tribunal to deliver a verdict on God’. Five thousand red army soldiers took part in the ‘verdict on God’. The decision to deliver ‘a verdict on God’ ‘was greeted with stormy applause by the meeting of five thousand red army soldiers’.”[[574]](#footnote-574)

The renovationist council tried Patriarch Tikhon in absentia, and deprived him both of his orders and of his monasticism, calling him thenceforth “layman Basil Bellavin”. The restoration of the patriarchate was called “a definitely political, counter-revolutionary act”, and was therefore abolished and replaced by a synod. Further resolutions were adopted allowing white clergy to become bishops and priests to remarry, and introducing the Gregorian calendar.

When the decisions of the council were taken to the Patriarch for his signature, he calmly wrote: “Read. The council did not summon me, I do not know its competence and for that reason cannot consider its decision lawful.”[[575]](#footnote-575)

Forty-six out of the seventy-three bishops who attended the council signed the decree condemning the Patriarch. One of them, Joasaph (Shishkovsky), told Fr. Basil Vinogradov how this happened. “The leaders of the council Krasnitsky and Vvedensky gathered all those present at the ‘council’ of bishops for this meeting. When several direct and indirect objections to these leaders’ proposal to defrock the Patriarch began to be expressed, Krasnitsky quite openly declared to all present: ‘He who does not immediately sign this resolution will only leave this room straight for the prison.’ The terrorized bishops (including Joasaph himself) did not find the courage to resist in the face of the threat of a new prison sentence and forced labour in a concentration camp and… signed, although almost all were against the resolution. None of the church people had any doubt that the ‘council’s’ sentence was the direct work of Soviet power and that now a criminal trial and bloody reprisal against the Patriarch was to be expected at any time.”[[576]](#footnote-576)

However, already at this 1923 council the renovationist movement was beginning to fall apart. The 560 deputies were divided into four groups: the supporters of Krasnitsky (the Living Church), of Vvedensky (the Ancient-Apostolic Church), of Antonin (Church Regeneration) and of Patriarch Tikhon. When Krasnitsky tried to take control of the council and reject any coalition between his group and the other renovationists, a schism amidst the schismatics was avoided only by strong behind-the-scenes pressure on his supporters from the communists, who succeeded in regrouping them under a “Holy Synod” led by Metropolitan Eudocimus.[[577]](#footnote-577)

It should be pointed out that Bishop Nicholas of Peterhof, the future Soviet “metropolitan”, betrayed Patriarch Tikhon at this time. On May 2, 1923 he wrote to Vvedensky from Butyrka prison begging him to help him and assuring him “again and again” that he submitted without reservation to the HCA and would obey the new metropolitan of Petrograd. “I await the Council with joy, believing that it will open a new era in the life of the Church”, and promised to obey all its decisions. He demanded a strict trial and deposition for Patriarch Tikhon “for all his crimes”. And he vowed to serve not only the renovationist church but also “our great Workers-Peasants Authority”.[[578]](#footnote-578)

## 49. THE GREEK CHURCHES AND THE NEW CALENDAR

After the new revolutionary government took power in Greece, all the hierarchs who had condemned the election of Meletius Metaxakis changed their minds, and, as Stavros Karamitsos writes, “quickly hastened, one after the other, to recognize Meletius, except for two bishops, Sophronius of Eleutheropolis and our famous Chrysostom,… [who wrote in his *Apology*]: ‘I was then summoned, through the bishop of Kavala Chrysostom, to appear before the Minister, who urged me with threats to recognize Meletius. I took no account of his threats and refused to knuckle under. Then, to avoid a second exile to the Holy Mountain, I departed to Alexandria to see my relatives and to recover from my distress. ’While in Alexandria, I received a summons from the Ecumenical Patriarchate to appear before the Holy Synod and explain why I did not recognize the election of Meletius as Ecumenical Patriarch. But..., being unable to appear in person before the Synod, I sent a letter justifying my refusal to recognize Meletius as the canonical Patriarch on the basis of the divine and sacred Canons. And while he was preparing to condemn and defrock me in my absence, he was driven from his throne by the Turks for scandalously mixing his spiritual mission with anti-Turkish politics…’”[[579]](#footnote-579)

However, the mood in Constantinople had begun to turn against Meletius nearly a year before that, in the wake of the events of August-September, 1922, when the terrified Greeks began to leave at the rate of 3000 a day. One of those who left at this time was Hierodeacon Basil Apostolides. As Fr. Jerome of Aegina he was to become one of the great figures of the True Orthodox Church. He gave as reason for his departure to the Patriarch his fear that the Turks would force the clergy to take off their cassocks – a prophecy that was fulfilled twelve years later.[[580]](#footnote-580)

“The second fall of Constantinople” took place for the same reason as the first fall in 1453 – the attempt of the Church to achieve union with the western heretics.

The first concrete step towards that union was to be the adoption of the new, papist calendar… Already at the beginning of 1923, a Commission had been set up on the initiative of the government to see whether the Greek Church could accept the new calendar. The Commission reported: “Although the Church of Greece, like the other Autocephalous Orthodox Churches, is inherently independent, they are firmly united and bound to each other through the principle of the spiritual unity of the Church, composing one and one only Church, the Orthodox Church. Consequently none of them can separate itself from the others and accept the new calendar without becoming schismatic in relation to them.”

On the basis of this report a royal mandate was issued decreeing, among other things, that “the Julian Calendar is to remain in force as regards the Church and religious feasts in general”, and that “the national festival of the 25th of March and all the holidays laid down by the laws are to be regulated according to the Julian Calendar.”[[581]](#footnote-581)

On February 3, Meletius Metaxakis wrote to the Church of Greece, arguing for the change of calendar at his forthcoming Pan-Orthodox Council “so as to further the cause, in this part of the Pan-Christian unity, of the celebration of the Nativity and Resurrection of Christ on the same day by all those who are called by the name of the Lord.”[[582]](#footnote-582) The revolutionary government of Greece under Colonel Plastiras then removed Metropolitan Theocletus I of Athens from office. Shortly afterwards, on February 25, Archimandrite Chrysostom Papadopoulos, was elected Metropolitan of Athens by three out of a specially chosen Synod of only five hierarchs – another ecclesiastical coup d’état. During his enthronement speech, Chrysostom said that for collaboration with the heterodox “it is not necessary to have common ground or dogmatic union, for the union of Christian love is sufficient”.[[583]](#footnote-583)

As one of the members of the commission which had rejected the new calendar, Chrysostom might have been expected to resist Meletius’ call. But it seems that the two men had more in common than the fact that they had both been expelled from the Church of Jerusalem in their youth; for on March 6 Chrysostom and his Synod accepted Meletius’ proposal and agreed to send a representative to the forthcoming Council. Then, on April 16, he proposed to the Hierarchy that 13 days should be added to the calendar, “for reasons not only of convenience, but also of ecclesiastical, scientifically ratified accuracy”. This in spite of the fact that only three months before, in a report to the Department of Religions of Greece, he had said: “The Greek Church and other Autocephalous Churches, in spite of their independence, are closely linked to each other by the principle of the spiritual unity of the church, they all constitute one Orthodox Church and cannot separate from the rest and accept the new calendar without becoming schismatics in the eyes of the others…”

Five out of the thirty-two hierarchs – the metropolitans of Syros, Patras, Demetrias, Khalkis and Thera – voted against this proposal. Two days later, however, at the second meeting of the Hierarchy, it was announced that Chrysostom’s proposal had been “unanimously” approved, but “with absolutely no change to the Paschalion and Calendar of the Orthodox Church”. Moreover, it was decided that the Greek Church would approve of any decision regarding the celebration of Pascha made by the forthcoming Pan-Orthodox Council, provided it was in accordance with the Canons…[[584]](#footnote-584)

It was therefore with the knowledge that the Greek Church would support his proposed reforms that Meletius convened a “Pan-Orthodox Council” in Constantinople from May 10 to June 8, 1923, whose renovationist resolutions concerned the “correction” of the Julian calendar, a fixed date for Pascha, the second marriage of clergy, and various relaxations with regard to the clothing of clergy, the keeping of monastic vows, impediments to marriage, the transfer of Saints’ feasts from the middle of the week, and fasting. However, hardly more than ten people, and no official representatives of the Patriarchates, turned up for the council, so discredited was its convener.[[585]](#footnote-585)

Even Archbishop Chrysostom (Papadopoulos) had to admit: “Unfortunately, the Eastern Patriarchs who refused to take part in the Congress *rejected all of its* resolutions in toto *from the very outset*. If the Congress had restricted itself only to the issue of the calendar, perhaps it would not have encountered the kind of reaction that it did.” [[586]](#footnote-586)

Not only the Eastern Patriarchs in 1924, but also the Eastern Patriarchs since the sixteenth century, had rejected the new calendar. Chrysostom Papadopoulos knew this, because he himself had written in his *Church History*, now conveniently forgotten: “Still more officially, the new calendar was rejected by the Council of Constantinople convoked in 1593. The Council rejected the Gregorian calendar as an innovation which contradicted the canons and the order of the Church… Sophronius IV, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, … participated in the synodical commission convoked by Patriarch Jeremy II the Illustrious for the condemnation of the Gregorian calendar, whereby the Latin Church sought to lead the Orthodox astray.”[[587]](#footnote-587)

In his “Memorandum to the Holy Synod of the Hierarchy of Greece” (June 14, 1929), Metropolitan Irenaeus of Kassandreia wrote that the council was not “Pan-Orthodox” but “anti-Orthodox”: “It openly and impiously trampled on the 34th Apostolic Canon, which ordains: ‘It behoves the Bishops of every nation to know among them who is the first or chief, and to recognize him as their head, and to refrain from doing anything superfluous without his advice and approval… But let not even such a one do anything without the advice and consent and approval of all. For thus will there be concord, and God will be glorified through the Lord in the Holy Spirit: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit’. He replaced the Julian calendar with the Gregorian in spite of all the prohibitions relating to it; he decided to supersede the Paschalion which had been eternally ordained for the Orthodox Church by the decision of the First Ecumenical Council, turning to the creation of an astronomically more perfect one in the observatories of Bucharest, Belgrade and Athens; he allowed clerics’ hair to be cut and their venerable dress to be replaced by that of the Anglican Pastors; he introduced the anticanonical marriage and second marriage of priests; he entrusted the shortening of the days of the fast and the manner of their observance to the judgement of the local Churches, thereby destroying the order and unity that prevailed in the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches of the East. Acting in this way, he opened wide the gates to every innovation, abolishing the distinctive characteristic of the Eastern Orthodox Church, which is its preservation, perfectly and without innovation, of everything that was handed down by the Lord, the Apostles, the Fathers, and the Local and Ecumenical Councils.”[[588]](#footnote-588)

What made the council’s decisions still less acceptable was the reason it gave for its innovations, viz., that changing the Paschalion “would make a great moral impression on the whole civilized world by bringing the two Christian worlds of the East and West closer through the unforced initiative of this Orthodox Church…”[[589]](#footnote-589)

Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) called the calendar innovation “this senseless and pointless concession to Masonry and Papism”.[[590]](#footnote-590) And Archbishop Nicon wrote: “The most important decrees of the Congress were the decisions to change to the new style [calendar] and to allow the clergy to marry a second time. The Alexandrian, Antiochian and Jerusalem Churches did not participate in the Congress, considering its convening untimely [and Meletius an uncanonical usurper]. But its decrees were rejected by them as being, according to the expression of the Alexandrian Patriarch, ‘contrary to the practice, tradition and teaching of our most Holy Mother Church and presented under the pretext of being slight modifications, which are probably elicited by the demands of the new dogma of “Modernism”’ (epistle to the Antiochian Patriarch, 23 June, 1923). The representatives of the Russian Church Abroad [Archbishops Anastasy and Alexander], and after them the Council of Bishops, reacted completely negatively to these reforms.”[[591]](#footnote-591)

The false council caused rioting in the streets of Constantinople, and the Orthodox population sacked the patriarchal apartments and physically beat Meletius himself… In fact, the position of the patriarchate was already so vulnerable, that during the Lausanne conference (1922-23), which decided on the massive exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey, the Turkish delegation officially demanded the removal of the patriarchate from Constantinople in view of its disloyalty to the Turkish government in the course of the past war. And the Italian president of the exchange of populations subcommission, G.M. Mantagna, even suggested that “the removal of the Patriarchate [from Constantinople] would not be too high a price to pay for the conclusion of an agreement.” However, the French delegation, supported by the Greeks, suggested that the patriarchate remain in Constantinople but be deprived of its former political power. And on January 10, 1923 the British Lord Curzon said that the removal of the patriarchate from Constantinople would be a shock to the whole civilised world.

The British, whose troops were still occupying Constantinople and probably prevented a massacre there similar to that which had taken place in Smyrna, suspected the hand of the Vatican in this proposal to remove the patriarchate. For, as the advisor to the Archbishop of Canterbury on Near Eastern questions, J.A. Douglas, said: “No one with the slightest knowledge of the Near East can doubt that Rome is bitterly hostile to the Phanar, and reckons a disaster to it as an institution to be a great thing.”[[592]](#footnote-592)

Venizelos then came up with a compromise proposal that the patriarchate remain in Constantinople but that he would do all he could to remove his nephew Metaxakis from it, a proposal that the Turks reluctantly agreed to.[[593]](#footnote-593) Meletius agreed to his resignation, but suggested its postponement until the conclusion of the peace negotiations, in June, 1923. On July 10, harassed by both Venizelos and the Turkish government, and challenged for his see by the newly formed “Turkish Orthodox Church” of Papa Euthymius, Meletius withdrew to Mount Athos. On September 20, he resigned officially.

On December 6, a new patriarch, Gregory VII, was enthroned. On the very next day, the “Turkish Orthodox” priest Papa Euthymius together with Metropolitan Cyril of Rodopolis and his supporters burst into the Phanar, drove out all the inhabitants and declared that they would not leave the Phanar until a “lawful” patriarch was elected and Gregory renounced the throne. Two days, after an order came from Ankara, the Turkish police escorted them out, and the Phanar was returned to Patriarch Gregory.[[594]](#footnote-594) The irony was that, only a few years earlier, the patriarchate had broken with the Turkish authorities on the grounds of Greek nationalism. Now the patriarchate owed its rescue from the hands of Turkish ecclesiastical nationalists to – the Turkish authorities…

Lausanne and the events that followed spelled the end of Greek nationalist dreams, and the beginning of the end of Constantinople as a Greek city…

But Metaxakis’s notorious career was not over yet. Platonov writes that after “hiding with his Masonic protectors in England” for a few years, in 1926, on the death of Patriarch Photius of Alexandria, “with the financial and organisational support of the secret world powers-that-be, Meletius was put forward as second candidate for the throne of Alexandria. The first claimant was Metropolitan Nicholas of Nubia. According to established practice, the first candidate should have been proclaimed patriarch. However, the Egyptian authorities under pressure from the English confirmed the ‘election’ of Meletius. Using his power, the new Alexandrian patriarch-mason introduced the Gregorian calendar [in 1926], causing a serious schism in the Alexandrian Church.”[[595]](#footnote-595)

This had major repercussions on the relationship between Constantinople and ROCOR. On March 30, 1924 the Ecumenical Patriarch appointed a commission composed of three metropolitans which told Archbishop Anastasy that in carrying out ordinations and divorces he was exceeding his prerogatives. Nevertheless, no specific ordinations were discussed, but instead it was demanded of Anastasy that he should (a) not speak out against Soviet power, (b) cease commemorating Patriarch Tikhon, and (c) recognize Bolshevik power.[[596]](#footnote-596) So the Ecumenical Patriarch by 1924 was what we should now call renovationist-sergianist as well as ecumenist!

At the same time the patriarchate tried to detain Metropolitan Anthony on Mount Athos…

“On 30 April 1924,” writes Psarev, “the Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople adopted a decision: they suspended Russian Archbishops Anastasy and Alexander, who were in Constantinople, and directed that all Russian clerics serving in Turkey were to consider themselves directly subordinate to the Patriarchate of Constantinople; and they informed the Serbian Patriarch that the Russian bishops located within Serbian canonical territory did not have the right to minister to Russian exiles.

“The Serbian Orthodox Church, however, had a different outlook on the plight of Russian bishops. In the reply from the Council of Bishops of the Serbian Church to the Patriarchate of Constantinople dated 9 December 1924 they stated: ’The Holy Council of Bishops, as the supreme authority of the autocephalous united Serbian Church, gave its assent to a request from His Eminence Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich, during a council session held on 18/31 August 1921… which authorized the creation of a higher church authority of [Russian] bishops to manage church affairs for the Russian colony and exiles living on the territory of our [Serbian] jurisdiction. In doing so, the Serbian Council carried out its responsibilities in a spiritual manner that leaves us satisfied that we have fulfilled our apostolic responsibilities. Thus, we have accepted the Russian exiles, who because of circumstances have ended up in our spiritual realm, under our patronage, with the permission of state authorities. We have also willed that they be ministered to by their own priests and bishops who know best their spiritual needs and blessed church traditions. Thus, on the basis of canon law, they have the right to organize an autocephalous [autonomous?] church authority by their own free will.’”[[597]](#footnote-597)

After Meletius’ expulsion from the City, it was Chrysostom Papadopoulos who took the lead in introducing the new calendar. He did so with great haste and an extraordinary display of power politics that suggested (in view of his recent opposition to the calendar change) that certain very powerful extra-ecclesiastical interests – the Greek government is the obvious candidate, but some have also discerned International Masonry and the Roman Papacy behind it – were exerting pressure on him. But the way in which he was able to sweep aside the resistance not only of his own hierarchy, but also of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, suggests that the pressure was not only on him but on almost all the Greek hierarchs at this time.

The Council began with the decision by the revolutionary Greek government to suspend the old Constitutional Law in accordance with which the Greek Church had been administered for the previous 70 years. According to the new Law, passed on December 14, 1923, the Hierarchy would meet only once a year, and between sessions would be represented by the Archbishop of Athens alone. Metropolitans would have to retire at 65, which conveniently neutralized the influence of the older and more conservative hierarchs. Invested now with almost dictatorial powers, Chrysostom convened a meeting of the Hierarchy, which, on December 24, voted to thank the government for emancipating it from the previous administrative system (!), and, on December 27, decided to introduce the new calendar with the agreement of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. There was no mention, this time, of the need to seek the other Orthodox Churches’ agreement.

It was clear that the decision to change the calendar was imposed by the government. Thus at the meeting of December 24, Nicholas Plastiras, the President of the Council of the “Revolutionary Government”, said to the hierarchs: “The Revolution requests you, then, my respected Hierarchs, to leave all personal preference to one side and proceed to purge the Church… The Revolution hopes that a useful work for the new generation will result from your labours, and that it will reckon itself happy to see the rebirth of the Church being set in motion… Consequently, it wishes you not to limit yourselves to the ancestral Canons, but to proceed to radical measures.”[[598]](#footnote-598)

It is striking how similar were the programs of the renovationists in Greece and Russia at this time. Both proposed a complete reformation of the Church with a very similar agenda. And both were pushed from behind by the Revolution…

On January 4, 1924, Chrysostom wrote to the Ecumenical Patriarch asking, in a rather lordly tone, for his agreement to the calendar change. He said that it was “sad” that the other Orthodox Churches had not agreed to this, but did not suggest that this might be an impediment. The Patriarch replied on February 14 in a much more sycophantic tone, suggesting that the change should take place on March 10 (henceforth March 23), but asking that he be informed of the agreement of the other Orthodox Churches. Chrysostom immediately telegraphed his agreement to this date, and asked the Patriarch to inform his metropolitans in the New Territories about it.

His haste was probably elicited by the Alexandrian Patriarch Photius’ message to the Ecumenical Patriarch on January 15: “Your announcement that, without any real cause or dogmatic or canonical reasons, the brotherly advice and entreaties of the four Apostolic Thrones has been rejected, and the ‘reform of the calendar’ has taken place, caused us great grief and surprise. You are in danger of alienating all the Orthodox peoples of the Church. Therefore I suggest the convening of a council to examine the question. Taking into consideration the letters from the Churches of Romania and Serbia, we abide in these things which have been dogmatized in former Synodal Congresses, and we reject every addition or any change of the calendar before the convocation of an Ecumenical Council, which alone is capable of discussing this question, concerning which Ecumenical Council we propose a speedy convocation.”

On February 16 Chrysostom telegraphed Photius, saying that an Ecumenical Council could not be convened immediately, and that the calendar change was an urgent necessity “for the sake of millions of Orthodox people”. After asking him to change the calendar on March 10, he added, rather craftily, that there would be no change in the Paschalion, for such a change would have to be referred to an Ecumenical Council (as if the addition of 13 days to the calendar was a much less important change that did not require a conciliar decision). But Photius was not persuaded…

The other patriarchs spoke out strongly against the calendar reforms. Thus Patriarch Damian of Jerusalem and his Synod wrote: “The most holy Mother of the Churches is unable to accept the change at present because of the disadvantageous position in which, as is well known, she finds herself in relation to the Latins in the holy places, and because of the dangers of proselytism.” And Patriarch Gregory of Antioch and his Synod wrote: “Political factors produced the change of the calendar even though the whole of the Eastern Church keeps to the Julian calendar. The tendency to change the canons represents a great danger in our eyes.” And Patriarch Demetrius of Serbia wrote: “We have indicated the necessity of postponing for the time being the council that has been convened in order that the question be examined before an Ecumenical Council so as to decide on a single calendar for all the Orthodox Churches.”[[599]](#footnote-599)

On March 3, Chrysostom wrote to all the Hierarchs of the Church of Greece that “in accordance with the decision of the Holy Synod the Church of Greece has accepted the correction of the Julian calendar defined by the Ecumenical Patriarch, according to which March 10 is to be considered and called March 23…” Finally, on March 4, he completed his coup, asking the Foreign Ministry to “send urgent telegrams to the Blessed Patriarchs of Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria and Serbia, and the Archbishops of Romania and Cyprus, informing them that the Church of Greece has accepted the decision of the Ecumenical Patriarchate concerning the convergence of the ecclesiastical and political calendar, calling March 10 March 23, and to inform the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople that the Church of Greece had put his decision into effect.”[[600]](#footnote-600)

As we have seen, the Ecumenical Patriarch accepted the change, albeit with the proviso that it should be with the agreement of all the Orthodox Churches. This acquiescence is largely explained by the very weak position of the patriarchate in the wake of the Asia Minor catastrophe. For it was economically dependent on the Greek Church and could not afford to disagree.

In fact, Patriarch Gregory VII was personally opposed to the change. But he accepted it because, as he told the Holy Synod: “Unfortunately, the change in the calendar was imposed by the Greek government.”[[601]](#footnote-601) For as the tomosof November 13, 1924 declared: “The conduct of Church affairs must be compatible with the political and social forms”!…

On Sunday, March 10, 1924 (March 23, according to the new calendar) the State Church of Greece and the Patriarchate of Constantinople adopted the new calendar. On that day, the future hierarch-confessor of the True Orthodox Church, Archimandrite Germanus (Varykopoulos) was serving the Divine Liturgy in his church of St. Alexander in Palaion Faliron. Having come to the end of the Liturgy, he commemorated “the holy 13 days whose memory we celebrate!”[[602]](#footnote-602)

On March 25, 1924 (new calendar), two important events took place simultaneously in Athens. The great feast of the Annunciation was celebrated according to the new calendar by Archbishop Chrysostom (Papadopoulos). And the Greek monarchy was abrogated (without a vote) by the revolutionary government.

As Nicholas Kraniotakis wrote: “Under strict orders, and to the sound of trumpets, the soldiers detached the Crown from the Cross and threw it to the ground! And Greek democracy was born!...”[[603]](#footnote-603)

This is another indication of the close spiritual link between events in Greece and in Russia. In both, political anti-monarchism was joined to religious renovationism. In Greece since 1917 the anti-monarchists and renovationists had been led by Venizelos in the State and Metaxakis in the Church.[[604]](#footnote-604) Moreover, Meletius had been helped by the fact that in Russia the so-called “Living Church” had come to power in 1922 with a very similar programme of modernistic reforms to his own. And on the occasion of his election as Patriarch of Alexandria, the synod of the “Living Church” wrote to him: “The Holy Synod recalls with sincere best wishes the moral support which Your Beatitude showed us while you were yet Patriarch of Constantinople by entering into communion with us as the only rightfully ruling organ of the Russian Orthodox Church.”[[605]](#footnote-605)

On April 6, 1924, a vast crowd gathered in the courtyard outside the Annunciation cathedral. The next day the newspaper *Vradini* *(Evening News)* reported: “The priests have been forbidden, under pain of defrocking, to liturgise or chant the troparia of the Annunciation today. Also forbidden is the ringing of the bells of the Russian cathedral (in Phillelinon Street), and today’s celebration of the Liturgy at the metochion of the Holy Sepulchre, although the Patriarchate of Jerusalem has not accepted the new calendar.

“In spite of all the measures taken, multitudes of the faithful inundated the metropolitan cathedral from afternoon to late at night, and at their persistent entreaty one priest was found who chanted a paraklesis, being ‘obedient,’ as he said, ‘to the threats of the people’. The wardens wanted to close the church, but in view of the fanaticism of the worshippers the cathedral remained open into the night. Three miracles took place at the metropolitan cathedral… Seven-year-old Stasinopoulos, a deaf-mute and paralytic since birth, was brought by his mother to the icon of the Mother of God, convulsed by spasms. A little while later he arose amidst general compunction, pronounced the words “mama-granny-papa” and began to walk.

“A little later a seventeen-year-old paralytic was healed, and… a hard-working deaf-mute. The latter spoke yesterday for the first time in thirty years, declaring that he would not go to work today. Although the cathedral wardens know the names of these two, they refuse to publish them, affirming that no miracle has taken place, although the contrary is confessed by the whole congregation.”

Another newspaper, *Skrip*, reported on the same day: “Movement inside the cathedral was impossible. The faithful listened to the vespers, and after the dismissal anxiously discussed the change in the worshipping calendar and the transfer of the feast of the Annunciation. “Two thousand pious Christians, together with women and children, unanimously proclaimed their adherence to the holy dogmas of religion, which the democrats have come to change, and one voice was heard: ‘We will not become Franks! We are Orthodox Christians, and we will remain Orthodox Christians!’”

Similar scenes, and similar miracles, took place in other regional centres, such as Nauplion, Tripolis, Thessalonica and Corinth. The secular authorities everywhere supported the new ecclesiastical regime. But the faithful Christians, obeying the teachings of the holy Fathers and imitating the Christians of old who in similar situations broke communion with the innovators, themselves broke off all ecclesiastical communion with the innovating Church of Greece. They prayed at home or in country chapels, served by a very small number of priests, including some from Mount Athos, who were continually persecuted by the police at the instigation of Chrysostom Papadopoulos.

From the beginning the Lord showed by many signs and wonders that He was with the adherents of the Orthodox Calendar. Thus a miracle took place on January 6, 1925 – that is, the eve of the feast of the Nativity of Christ according to the Orthodox Calendar and the feast of the Theophany according to the new. The parishioners of the new calendar church of the Holy Apostles in Acropolis were following the Divine Liturgy. Suddenly they saw that tears were flowing from the eyes of the icon of the Mother of God, and blood from the heads of the Apostles. The amazed parishioners were not slow to see in this a sign of God’s anger at “the change in religion”, that they were baptizing Christ when He had not yet been born. The church authorities sent an archimandrite to convince the people that it was no sign from God but “an effluence from the wood, which is fir and is acted upon by excessive heat or also by… cold”! The archimandrite was laughed off the ambon. Finally, the authorities closed the church, preventing worshippers from entering. Today the church is denuded of icons and visited only by… tourists![[606]](#footnote-606)

## 50. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CALENDAR CHANGE

The adoption of the new calendar by the Church of Greece in 1924 came at a very vulnerable time for the Orthodox Church as a whole. The outward position of the Church had changed radically in the previous ten years. The Russian empire was gone, and the Ecumenical and the Moscow patriarchates, to which the vast majority of Orthodox Christians belonged, were fighting both external foes (the Bolsheviks and the Turks) and internal schism (“the Living Church” and “the Turkish Orthodox Church”). Neither the remaining Eastern patriarchates, on the one hand, nor the Serbian patriarchate and the Russian Church Abroad, on the other, could take the place occupied by the Russian empire and the Ecumenical patriarchate in the preceding centuries. It followed that if, as was (temporarily) the case, none of the hierarchs of the Greek Church would reject the calendar change and break communion with the Archbishop of Athens, there was only one force remaining that could take up the banner of truth – the people.

The position of the laity in the Orthodox Church has often been misunderstood. In Orthodoxy, the laypeople are neither the inert, impotent, blindly obedient mass of the Roman Catholics, nor the all-powerful, revolutionary horde of the Protestants. There are two vital functions which can only be performed by canonically consecrated clergy: the administration of the sacraments, including the ordination of bishops and priests, and the definition of the faith, including the position of the Church in relation to heretics and schismatics. But while the laity cannot take the leading role in these two functions, they do have an important confirmatory role in them. Thus strictly speaking a bishop or priest cannot celebrate the Divine Liturgy without the presence of at least one layman. Likewise a bishop cannot ordain a priest without the consent of the people (expressed by shouting “axios!” or “he is worthy!”). And a definition of the faith that is rejected by the people will remain a dead letter. Thus we read: “I shall judge the bishop and the layperson. The sheep are rational and not irrational, so that no layman may ever say: ‘I am a sheep, and not a shepherd, and I give no account of myself, but the shepherd shall see to it, and he alone shall pay the penalty for me.’ For even as the sheep that follows not the good shepherd shall fall to the wolves unto its own destruction, so too it is evident that the sheep that follows the evil shepherd shall acquire death; for he shall utterly devour it. Therefore it is required that we flee from destructive shepherds.”[[607]](#footnote-607)

In the long struggle with the western heresies, the Orthodox had never found themselves so bereft of clerical leadership as in 1924. The signing of the uniate council of Lyons in 1274 had been largely the work of the emperor and his stooge, John Beccus; and there were many clergy who resisted the Unia, which in any case lasted only eight years (to 1282). The position after the council of Florence was more serious: St. Mark of Ephesus was the only Greek hierarch who refused to sign the Unia. And it lasted for a longer period of time (1438-80). There followed a long period in which, although there were some latinizing (and protestantizing) patriarchs, the Church as a whole remained united against the western peril. Thus when the new calendar was introduced by the Pope in 1582 in order to create divisions among the Orthodox, it was synodically condemned no less than eight times: in 1583, 1587, 1593, 1722, 1827, 1848, 1895 and 1904. Towards the end of this period ecumenist tendencies, as we have seen, began to increase in the Orthodox Churches, but opposition to the new calendar remained strong.

However, already in their encyclical of 1848, the Eastern Patriarchs had indicated the people’s role: “With us neither Patriarchs nor Councils could ever introduce anything new, because the defender of religion is the very body of the Church, or the people itself, who wanted their religion to remain forever unchanged and in accord with the religion of their Fathers.” The question that arose in 1924[[608]](#footnote-608), therefore, was: did the people (and a handful of clergy) have the right to separate from all the innovating bishops and, in the absence of any hierarchs to support them in their struggle, declare themselves to be the truly Orthodox Church? The answer supplied by the Holy Tradition of the Church was a clear: yes. While certain functions that can only be performed by bishops, such as the ordination of priests, are temporarily suspended in such a situation, the Church does not cease to exist, and remains there, and only there, where the True Faith is confessed. For “where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them”, said the Bishop of bishops, the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 18.20).

Moreover, the 15th canon of the First-and-Second Council of Constantinople praises those who break with a heretical bishop even before his synodical condemnation. Indeed, there are several cases in the Church’s history of holy men either breaking immediately with heretical bishops – St. Hypatius in the fifth century, for example; or dying out of communion with all the bishops of the Church and yet being praised and glorified by succeeding generations – St. Maximus the Confessor in the seventh century, for example, and St. Arsenius of Paros in the nineteenth. Since the Churches of Constantinople, Greece, Romania, Finland, the Baltic States and Poland adopted the new calendar in 1924, there was no way the laity in these Churches could remain in communion with the other Churches keeping the old calendar unless they broke communion with their innovating hierarchs.

“But why such a fuss,” say the new calendarists, “over a mere ‘thirteen days’ difference?” Because the Apostle Paul said: "Hold the traditions" (II Thessalonians 2.15), and the tradition of the "old" Orthodox calendar was sealed by the fathers of the First Ecumenical Council and sanctified by many centuries of usage. To change the calendar, therefore, would be to break communion, not only with our brethren who keep the old calendar on earth, but also with all the saints who worship together with us in heaven.

It is in this rupture of communion that the major crime consists; for, as St. John Chrysostom says, "exactness in the keeping of times is not as important as the crime of division and schism".[[609]](#footnote-609) And again: “To tear asunder the Church means nothing less, than to fall into heresy. The Church is the house of the Heavenly Father, One Body and One Spirit."[[610]](#footnote-610)

The supreme aim of our life in Christ is unity in heaven and on earth, in time and in eternity - "that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us" (John 17.21); and anything which disrupts that unity is anathema to us. According to the Holy Fathers, schism is no less abhorrent and deadly a sin than heresy. Even martyrdom, writes St. Cyprian of Carthage, followed by St. John Chrysostom[[611]](#footnote-611), cannot wipe out the sin of him who divides the Body of Christ. For as Christ is one, so is His Church one; indeed, the one Christ cannot be separated from the one Church in that “the full and perfect Christ”, in St. Augustine’s phrase, “is Head and Body” together.[[612]](#footnote-612)

“Since the Church,” writes Fr. Justin Popovich, “is catholically one and a unique theanthropic organism for all worlds, she cannot be divided. Any division would signify her death… According to the united position of the Fathers and the Councils, the Church is not only one but unique, because the one unique God-man, her Head, cannot have many bodies. The Church is one and unique because she is the body of the one unique Christ. A division in the Church is ontologically impossible, for which reason there has never been a division in the Church, only a division from the Church. According to the word of the Lord, the Vine is not divided; but only those branches which voluntarily refuse to bring forth fruit fall away from the ever-living Vine and are dried up (John 15.1-6). At various times heretics and schismatics have been separated and cut off from the one undivided Church of Christ; they have subsequently ceased to be members of the Church and united with her theanthropic body. Such were, first of all, the Gnostics, then the Arians and Spirit-fighters, then the Monophysites and Iconoclasts, and finally the Roman Catholics and Protestants and Uniates and all the rest of the heretical and schismatic legion.”[[613]](#footnote-613)

The Athonite Elder Augustine writes: “It is a dogma of the Faith that the Church is not only Holy, Catholic and Apostolic, but also One, so that even though the Churches are seen to be many, one and one only is the Church composed of the many that are seen in different places. This is the teaching of the Holy Creed, this is the message of the Divine Scriptures, the Apostolic Tradition, the Sacred councils and the God-bearing Fathers. From this we conclude that the union of the Church is a most important dogma of the Faith.

“We have seen… that St. Constantine and the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council re-established both the inner and the outer unity of the Church, which is why the joyful autocrat cried out: ‘I have reaped a double victory, I have both re-established inner peace through the common confession of the Faith and brought the separation which existed before into the unity of the Church through the common celebration of Pascha.’

“This, then, is unity, as we are assured by the Acts of the First Council, an inner unity and an outer unity, and neither can the first be a true unity without the second, nor can the second exist without the first. The relationship between them is like that of faith to works and works to faith. The one without the other is dead. Thus inner unity without outer unity is dead, and outer unity without inner unity is dead. And the first is defined by the common confession of the Faith, and the second by the visible harmony in accordance with the laws and institutions of the Church, both constituting the one and only true unity, the essential unity of the Church.”[[614]](#footnote-614)

In 1968 Abbot Philotheus Zervakos of Paros[[615]](#footnote-615) wrote to the new calendar bishop Augustine of Florina: “Since the old calendar is a written tradition, and since the new one is an innovation of papist and masonic origin, whoever despises the old calendar and follows the new is subject to anathema. Every excuse and justification is unjustified and ‘excuses in sins’…

“Last Sunday I had to go to the peak of All Saints and the Prophet Elijah… and as I was kneeling in front of their venerable icon I tearfully besought them to reveal to me which calendar I the wretched one should follow together with my brethren, my spiritual children and all the Orthodox Christians. Before I had finished my humble and pitiful petition, I heard a voice inside me saying: ‘you must follow the old calendar which the God-bearing Fathers who brought together the seven holy Ecumenical Councils and supported the Orthodox Faith handed down to you, and not the new calendar of the popes of the West, who have divided the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and despised the Apostolic and patristic traditions’!!!

“At that moment I felt such emotion, such joy, such hope, such courage and greatness of soul as I have hardly ever felt in the hour of prayer in the whole of my life…

“Do not suppose that following the papist calendar is a small thing. It [The Orthodox Julian calendar] is a tradition and as such we must guard it or we shall be subject to anathema. ‘If anyone violates any tradition, written or unwritten, let him be anathema’, declares the Seventh Ecumenical Council… This is not the time to continue to be silent… don’t delay, hurry.”[[616]](#footnote-616)

And he added that Chrysostom Papadopoulos had told him during a meeting: “If only I hadn’t gone through with it, if only I hadn’t gone through with it. This perverse Metaxakis has got me by the throat”![[617]](#footnote-617)

On August 7, 1930 Metaxakis headed a delegation from the Churches of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Greece, Cyprus and Poland to the Lambeth conference of Anglican bishops. There they officially, on the basis of a report by the Anglicans recognising the priesthood to be a sacrament, declared that the Anglicans had Apostolic Succession.[[618]](#footnote-618)

But Metaxakis did not escape retribution. In 1935, he tried to acquire the see of Jerusalem, too, but failed. It is said that he then went out of his mind, and six days later, grinding his teeth and wringing his hands, he died, groaning: “Alas, I have divided the Church, I have destroyed Orthodoxy.”[[619]](#footnote-619) He lied to the end; for he destroyed only himself, while the True Church will prevail over the gates of hell…

## 51. THE RELEASE OF PATRIARCH TIKHON

On June 11, 1923 Yaroslavsky, president of the Antireligious Commission, wrote to the Politburo and Stalin: “It is necessary immediately to pass the following resolution on the case of Tikhon: 1) the investigation of Tikhon’s case must be continued without a time limit; 2) Tikhon must be informed that the penalty meted out to him may be commuted if: (a) he makes a special declaration that he repents of the crimes he has committed against Soviet power and the working and peasant masses and that he now has a loyal attitude to Soviet power; (b) he admits the justice of his being made to answer in court for these crimes; (c) he walls himself openly and firmly from all counter-revolutionary organisations, especially White Guard and Monarchist organisations, both civil and religious; (d) he expresses his sharply negative attitude to the new Karlovtsy Synod and its participants; (e) he expresses his negative attitude to the attacks by Catholic clergy (in the person of the Pope, also the Bishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Constantinople Meletius); (f) he expresses his agreement with some reforms in the ecclesiastical sphere (for example, the new style). If he agrees, we should release him and transfer him to the Valaam podvorye, without forbidding him ecclesiastical activity.” On the same day, Yaroslavsky wrote: “A short motivation for the proposal regarding Tikhon. 1) It is necessary that there should be some sort of step that would justify our putting forward Tikhon’s case, otherwise the impression will be created that we were have been *frightened* by the threats of Whiteguardism. 2) From conversations with Tikhon it has become clear that with some pressure and some promises he will go along with these proposals. 3) If he agrees, these statements of his will have enormous political significance: they will completely confuse the plans of all the émigré gangs; they will strike a blow against all those organisations that were oriented on Tikhon; Tikhon will become a guarantee against an increase in the influence of the HCA [the renovationists]; his personal influence will be compromised by his ties with the GPU and his admissions; his statements against the Bishop of Canterbury, Meletius, Anthony and the Pope will be a slap in the face first of all to the English government and will deprive England’s declarations in defence of Tikhon of all significance in European circles; and finally, his agreement with even one of these reforms (he has agreed to recognise the new, Gregorian calendar) will make him a ‘heretic’ – an innovator in the eyes of the True Orthodox. The HCA will thereby preserve its former position together with a significant diminution in its influence.”[[620]](#footnote-620)

At the beginning of June, the Patriarch fell ill, and was transferred from the Donskoy monastery to the Taganka prison. There he was able to receive only official Soviet newspaper accounts of the Church struggle, which greatly exaggerated the successes of the renovationists. But the newspapers said otherwise – and the Patriarch was deceived. As he said: “Reading the newspapers in prison, with each passing day I was more and more horrified that the renovationists were taking the Church into their hands. If I had known that their successes were so meagre and that the people was not following them, I would never have come out of prison.”[[621]](#footnote-621)

Feeling that his presence at the helm of the Church was absolutely necessary, and that of his two enemies, the renovationists and the communists, the renovationists were the more dangerous, the Patriarch decided to make concessions to the government in order to be released. Thus on June 16 and again on July 1 he issued his famous “confession” to the Supreme Court of the RSFSR, in which he repented of all his anti-Soviet acts (including the anathema against the Bolsheviks), and “finally and decisively” set himself apart “from both the foreign and the internal monarchist White-guard counter-revolutionaries”, saying that from now on he was “not an enemy of Soviet power”.[[622]](#footnote-622)

With this confession in their pockets, the authorities suggested to the patriarch that he leave the USSR. The patriarch replied: “I am not going anywhere. I shall suffer here together with my people and carry out my duty to the limit determined by God.”[[623]](#footnote-623)

Tikhon was released on June 27, 1923, and his appearance in public – he had aged terribly in prison – was enough to send the Living Church into a sharp and irreversible decline.[[624]](#footnote-624) They remained dangerous as long as they retained the favour of the authorities; but by 1926 the authorities were already turning to others (the Gregorians, then Metropolitan Sergius) as better suited for the task of destroying the Church. And by the end of the Second World War the last remaining renovationists had been absorbed into the neo-renovationist Soviet Moscow Patriarchate.

On the next day the patriarch wrote: “I am, of course, not such a venerator of Soviet power as the Church renovationists, headed by the Higher Church Council, declare themselves to be, but on the other hand I am not such an enemy of it as people present me to be. If in the first year of the existence of Soviet power I sometimes permitted sharp attacks against it, I did this in consequence of my education and the orientation that prevailed in the Council at that time. But with time much began to change and become clear, and now, for example, it is necessary to ask Soviet power to intercede in the defence of the offended Russian Orthodox in Poland and in Grodno region, where the Poles have closed Orthodox churches. However, already at the beginning of 1919 I tried to wall the Church off from Tsarism and intervention, and in September of the same year I appealed to the archpastors and pastors not to intervene in politics…”[[625]](#footnote-625)

Although some have criticized the patriarch’s declaration as in effect the beginning of what became known as “sergianism”[[626]](#footnote-626), the great majority of the church people understood that it was issued under duress in order to take pressure off the Church. Besides, it was issued only in the patriarch’s name, not in the name of the Church. Moreover, as Archbishop Nicon (Rklitsky) writes: 1) it did not annul the anathema in the name of the Russian Orthodox Church on Soviet power, 2) he did not declare himself a friend of Soviet power and its co-worker, 3) it did not invoke God’s blessing on it, 4) it did not call on the Russian people to obey this power as God-established, 5) it did not condemn the movement for the re-establishment of the monarchy in Russia, and 6) it did not condemn the Whites’ struggle to overthrow Soviet power. By his declaration Patriarch Tikhon only pointed to the way of acting which he had chosen for the further defence and preservation of the Russian Orthodox Church. How expedient this way of acting was is another question,… but in any case Patriarch Tikhon did not cross that boundary which had to separate him, as head of the Russian Orthodox Church, from the godless power.”[[627]](#footnote-627)

In his defence, the patriarch said: “I wrote that from now on I was not an enemy of Soviet power. But I did not write that I was a friend of Soviet power…”[[628]](#footnote-628) Moreover, he managed to write to Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), as it were replying to the perplexities elicited by his words on “walling himself off” from the “counter-revolution” of the Church Abroad: “I wrote this for the authorities, but you sit and work.”[[629]](#footnote-629) In other words, the Church was not to take his words seriously…

On July 2/15 the Patriarch anathematized the Living Church, declaring: “They have separated themselves from the body of the Ecumenical Church and deprived themselves of God’s Grace, which resides only in the Church of Christ. Consequently, all arrangements made during our absence by those ruling the Church, since they had neither legal right nor canonical authority, are non-valid and void, and all actions and sacraments performed by bishops and clergymen who have forsaken the Church are devoid of God’s grace and power; the faithful taking part in such prayers and sacraments shall receive no sanctification thereby, and are subject to condemnation for participating in their sin…”[[630]](#footnote-630)

This was the signal for a sharp decline in the strength of the renovationists. Large numbers of parishes, especially in such important urban centres as Petrograd[[631]](#footnote-631) and Voronezh[[632]](#footnote-632), now renounced renovationism, and influential renovationist hierarchs such as Metropolitan Sergius hastened (and yet not very quickly, as Hieromartyr Bishop Damascene of Glukhov pointed out[[633]](#footnote-633)) to make public confession to the Patriarch.

The patriarch received Sergius in the following way. He explained that it was his Christian duty to forgive him, but that since his guilt was great before the people also, he had to repent before them, too. Then he would receive him with joy and love. And so he stood throughout the liturgy in simple monastic garments without his Episcopal mantia, klobuk, panagia, and cross. At the end of the liturgy he was led by the Patriarch out onto the amvon where he bowed to the people three times, after which the Patriarch restored to him his panagia, cross, white klobuk, mantia, and staff.[[634]](#footnote-634)

Some sergianists have tried to show that Sergius did not really share the renovationist position.[[635]](#footnote-635) However, Sergius’ published statements, especially his epistle of June 16, 1922, contradict this view. Moreover, the renowned Elder Nectarius of Optina prophetically said that, even after his repentance, the poison of renovationism was in him still.[[636]](#footnote-636)

“Honour and glory to the late patriarch,” wrote Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) in 1925, “that, with all his good-natured condescension towards people, with all his yearning for peace, he never gave an inch of ground to this barren ‘living church’, but received penitents from her according to the rite for the reception of heretics and schismatics, and re-consecrated churches which were returned from them to their lawful pastors as churches ‘defiled by heretics’.”[[637]](#footnote-637)

The decline of the renovationists after the Patriarch’s coming out of prison have led some to suppose that the price of that release, his “repentance” for his anti-Sovietism, was a price worth paying. However, the Patriarch bitterly repented of his “repentance”; he said that if he had known how weak the Living Church really was, he would not have signed the “confession” and would have stayed in prison.[[638]](#footnote-638) And when he was asked why he had said that he was no longer an enemy of the Soviet government, he replied: “But I did not say that I was its friend...”[[639]](#footnote-639)

While we can make excuses for the Patriarch, whose position was extraordinarily difficult, there is no doubt that his “repentance” was a blow to the Church. Thus in a report dated December 12, 1923 to his superior, T.D. Deribas, Tuchkov wrote: “The second significant moment in the work of the Section was the accomplishment of the ‘repentance of Tikhon’, which as you are probably aware, made an extremely unfavourable impression on the Russian monarchists and the right-leaning elements in general, who had seen in Tikhon, up to this time, an adamant anti-Soviet figure.”[[640]](#footnote-640)

We see a striking parallel between the destinies and decisions of Patriarch Tikhon and Tsar Nicholas here. Both were peacemakers, ready to lay down their own lives for the sake of their flock. Both, in the interests of saving lives, made fateful decisions which they came bitterly to regret – the Tsar his decision to abdicate the throne, and the Patriarch his decision to “repent” of his anti-Soviet behaviour. But in spite of these mistakes, both were granted the crown of life from the Lord, Who looks on the heart and intentions of men, forgiving them their unintended consequences…

Some have seen a less flattering parallel between Patriarch Tikhon and his successor, Metropolitan Sergius. We shall discuss Sergius in detail later. Suffice it to say at this point that, whatever compromises Patriarch Tikhon made, he never did them to spare himself, but only others, and he never betrayed his colleagues to death by calling them “counter-revolutionaries”…

In August, 1923 the renovationists, led now by Metropolitan Eudocimus (Meschersky), held their second council, at which their most radical measures were repealed, the name of their organization changed to “the Russian (russkoj as opposed to rossijskoj) Orthodox Church”, and a traditional-sounding “synod” was appointed as their governing organ.

This did not stop the rot from the renovationists’ point of view, and their strength continued to decline. Nevertheless, the patriarch was still seen, as Protopriest Lev Lebedev writes, “as *a criminal* whose accusation *had not been removed…*For violating this ban, according to the circular of Narkomiust № 254 of December 8, 1923, those guilty (that is, those who would continue to consider the Patriarch the head of the Church and commemorate him during the Divine services) were subjected to *the punishment appointed for criminals* – three years in the camps! But in spite of everything the people, the priests and deacons *continued to commemorate him*!”[[641]](#footnote-641)

## 52. THE RUSSIAN CHURCH AND THE NEW CALENDAR

On June 11, 1923, Yaroslavsky wrote to the Politburo: “Tikhon must be informed that the penalty meted out to him may be commuted if… *he expresses his agreement with some reforms in the ecclesiastical sphere (for example, the new style).*” On September 18 the Antireligious Commission decreed: “To recognize as appropriate that Tikhon and co. should in the first instance bring forward the new style into the church, disband the parish councils and introduce the second marriages of the clergy…”[[642]](#footnote-642)

Why was the new calendar and the other reforms important to the Bolsheviks? Because, as Yaroslavsky explained: “his agreement with even one of these reforms (he has agreed to recognise the new, Gregorian calendar) will make him a ‘heretic’ – an innovator in the eyes of the True Orthodox.”[[643]](#footnote-643) But in 1918, as we have seen, the Local Council of Moscow rejected the innovation.

However, the pressure from the Bolsheviks continued, and as early as January 21, 1919 the patriarch wrote to the patriarch of Constantinople suggesting various options with regard to the calendar.[[644]](#footnote-644) On September 24, 1923 he convened a Council of bishops which took the decision to introduce the new calendar on October 2/15. The Patriarch explained his decision to adopt the new calendar as follows: “This demand was repeated many times, and was reinforced by the promise of a more benevolent attitude on the part of the Government towards the Orthodox Church and Her institutions in the case of our agreement and the threat of a deterioration in these relations in the case of our refusal.”[[645]](#footnote-645) He also pointed to considerations of unity with the other Orthodox Churches; for he had been falsely informed by Tuchkov that all the other Churches had adopted the new style, whereas in fact all the Churches except Constantinople, Greece and Romania had objected to the change. Also, in a letter to Abbot Paulinus of Valaam dated October 6 he justified the introduction of the new style on the grounds that it introduced no innovation in faith, and the Orthodox Paschalion remained in force.[[646]](#footnote-646)

The Patriarch’s epistle explaining the change was read out in the Moscow Pokrov monastery on October 14. However, the decree on the introduction of the new style was sent out only to the deans of Moscow: the diocesan bishops did not receive it, since Archbishop Hilarion had obtained permission from Tuchkov not to send it to the provinces as long as the patriarchal epistle explaining the change had not been printed. So the new style was only introduced in Moscow and, as we shall see, in Valaam.

However, on November 8, when the Patriarch learned from Archbishop Anastasy in Constantinople that the patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem and Serbia, as well as ROCOR, were against the change, and when he saw that the Russian people were also strongly opposed to his decree, he reversed his decision “temporarily”, making use of the fact that his epistle on the calendar change had not been published.[[647]](#footnote-647) In spite of this, agents of the government posted up notices of the now annulled decree on the introduction of the new calendar. But the people saw in this the clear interference of the State, and so no attention was paid to the decree.[[648]](#footnote-648)

“It is interesting,” writes Fr. Alexander Papertov, “that a similar situation appeared in the Georgian Orthodox Church. In 1928 at the Tbilisi Council of the Georgian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Christopher and his hierarchs decided to introduce the new style into the Georgian Church. But the reform fell through. It was rejected by the people and by the majority of the simple priests.”[[649]](#footnote-649)

“At the request of the Soviet Central Executive Committee”, writes Monk Nicholas, “Patriarch Tikhon delivered a written declaration on the question of the calendar reform, dated September 17/30, 1924, in which he recounted the entire history of its short-lived use in Russia. (The declaration fills six pages of small print.) The following are some of the main points made by St. Tikhon:

“1) Patriarch Tikhon begins by stating that the Julian calendar itself is not a dogma of faith of the Church and could, in theory and principle, be altered.

“2) The common consent of all the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches would be required in order to lawfully introduce the new calendar. Besides, the Julian calendar has been hallowed by centuries of liturgical use by the whole Church, and no one Local Church can replace it unilaterally.

“3) And it must be introduced not only lawfully, but also painlessly, and that could only be achieved with the consent of the believing people. According to the teaching of the Orthodox Church, the guardians of the purity of the faith and of the patristic traditions are not only the head of the Church, nor all the hierarchs combined, but the entire body of the Church, including the faithful laity, to whom belong established rights and a voice in ecclesiastic affairs. The head of one of the Local Churches, and the Patriarch of Russia, in particular, is not the Pope of Rome, enjoying absolute and boundless power. He cannot govern the people of God tyrannically, not asking their consent, and not taking into consideration their religious conscious, their beliefs, practices and skills. History demonstrates that compelling the people of God, rather than convincing them, always fails.

  “4) The All-Russian Sobor of 1917–1918 had agreed in principle that such a reform was possible, but only in union with the other Orthodox Churches. A commission had been set up, a letter was sent to the Ecumenical Patriarch, but no response was received — no doubt due to the poor communications with the outside world at that time.

“5) The so-called ‘Pan-Orthodox Congress’ was not an Ecumenical Council; not all the Local Churches were represented. Thus, its resolutions could only be implemented if they were approved by an Ecumenical Council, or by the Synod of each of the Local Churches separately. Despite the fact that the majority of representatives did not approve of the calendar change, Patriarch Meletius, violating Catholic unity, introduced the new style into his Patriarchate. The Renovationists in Russia embraced this change.

  “6) Tuchkov kept insisting on the reformation. Considering the change possible in principle, *mistakenly* hoping that the common people would obediently accept the change (since, having no means of contact with the Orthodox East, I had been led to believe that this change had been agreed upon by all the Orthodox Churches), I decided to call upon the Russian Church to adopt the new calendar as of October 1, 1923, and I issued the appropriate encyclical.

  “7) This caused great agitation in the Church; the Patriarchate was inundated by delegations and letters from throughout the land asking us to refrain from introducing the new calendar. Therefore, to the great joy of the faithful, we issued a resolution on October 26 / November 8, 1923 [i.e., three weeks after the change] to ‘temporarily postpone’ the obligatory introduction of the Gregorian calendar.

  “8) Thereupon, our chancery was sealed by agents from the government, who seized the undelivered copies of my previous encyclical, which was posted throughout Moscow without my knowledge or consent. Archbishop Hilarion, my closest associate, was arrested and sent to Solovki. The common faithful saw this as the State interfering in the internal affairs of the Church.

  “9) In December of 1923 I gave permission to the local ruling hierarchs to allow the celebration of Christmas according to the new style for the sake of the working masses who had been given their holidays at that time. Almost no one made use of this permission, which prompted us to appeal to the Commissar of Justice, Kursky, with the request not to insist on the introduction of the new style for liturgical use. And we received from him an oral assurance that the civil authorities were not at all interested in that.

  “10) In addition to the reasons for the common folk resisting the new calendar, there are two other circumstances which make it very difficult to enact:

  “a) The Renovationist schism has compromised the new style itself, since they were the first to introduce its use in the Church.

  “b) The very strong conviction among the faithful that such a reform is being implemented not by the Church herself for her own good, but under pressure from the civil authorities. The faithful do not appreciate the meddling of the civil authorities in the affairs of the Church, even when that government is well disposed toward the Church and protects it, but when the meddling government is one that has many times declared its anti-religious aims, then this increases the people resistance two-fold.

“11) At present the government is once again strongly insisting on the introduction of the new calendar. Taking into consideration our previous experiences, *we are compelled to declare that we absolutely do not find it possible to repeat them.*

“12) Rather than insist upon the Church changing to the new style reckoning, it would cause no loss to the Government to simply recalculate the state holidays to coincide with the old style Church feasts: e. g., instead of December 25 (new style), declare January 7 (new style) a day off from work. Just as the government already celebrates the anniversary of the October Revolution not on October 25 (new style), but on November 7. [Touché, St. Tikhon!]

“13) Rumors have reached us that in 1925 an Ecumenical Council will be held to mark the 1,600th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council at Nicea. If such a council is convoked canonically, then it would be best to raise this question then. Once the new style has been accepted by the entire Catholic Church, then perhaps we can prevail upon the faithful in Russia to accept it too, *if* the Orthodox bishops, appointed by me, and whom the faithful trust and follow, will have the freedom of abiding in their dioceses, of communicating with their flock, and of religious direction of the clergy and parishes found in canonical communion with me.”[[650]](#footnote-650)

After the Patriarch recovered from his mistake, he and the Russian Church as a whole set themselves firmly against the new calendar…

And so in 1924 Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev, the second hierarch in rank after the Patriarch and President of the Synod of Bishops of ROCOR, set off on a seven-month trip to the East to muster support against the renovationist reforms among his friends from before the revolution – Patriarchs Photius of Alexandria, Gregory of Antioch and Damian of Jerusalem. He also visited Mount Athos. The three Eastern patriarchs, together with Patriarch Demetrius of Serbia, spoke out strongly against the new calendar and the other reforms introduced by their colleague in Constantinople. In view of this, Metropolitan Anthony entertained hopes that even the patriarch of Constantinople would reverse course. Thus in a “sorrowful message” to Gregory VII’s successor, Constantine VI, dated February 4/17, 1925, he both defended Patriarch Tikhon and compared Meletius and Gregory to the heretical patriarchs of Constantinople condemned by the Seven Ecumenical Councils: “The history of the Church in general and of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in particular has hardly ever before known such crude violations by the patriarchs of the universal canons and rules of general human justice… It is on this same path of disobedience to the Holy Church and the canons that the two last predecessors of your Holiness descended.”[[651]](#footnote-651)

Nevertheless, in October of the same year, during the celebrations dedicated to the 1600th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea in Oxford, Metropolitans Anthony and Eulogius concelebrated with Metropolitan Germanus of Thyateira and Great Britain of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. And so, in spite of ROCOR’s condemnation of the new calendar, and Archbishop Anastasy’s pointed departure from the “Pan-Orthodox Council” of 1923 after its first session and concelebration with the leading Romanian Old Calendarist, Hieromonk Glycerius, Metropolitan Anthony did not take the decisive and canonically correct course adopted by the Greek and Romanian Old Calendarists of breaking communion with the renovationists. In 1925 he even took part, with the patriarch of Constantinople, in the enthronement of the new calendarist Freemason Miron as patriarch of Romania. And in 1930 he refused a request of Russians living in Romania to join ROCOR.[[652]](#footnote-652) So it is not surprising that his actions were ultimately unsuccessful: the patriarch of Constantinople never abandoned the new calendar, and the Churches of Alexandria and Antioch both, in time, accepted it.

In 1926, writing to the Russian Athonite Hieroschemamonk Theodosius of Karoulia, Metropolitan Anthony explained his refusal to break communion with the new calendarists as follows: “You know the 13th, 14th and 15th canons of the First-and-Second Council, which speaks about separating oneself from a Bishop or Patriarch after his conciliar condemnation. And then there is the canon (the 15th), which says that that clergyman is worthy, not of condemnation, but of praise, who breaks with links with him [the heretic] for the sake of a heresy condemned by the holy councils or fathers…, and besides ‘when he (that is, the first-hierarch) preaches heresy publicly and teaches it openly in the Church’. But this, glory to God, neither P[atriarch] Basil [III of Constantinople] nor [Archbishop] Chrysostom [of Athens] have done yet. On the contrary, they insist on keeping the former Paschalion, for only it, and not the Julian calendar itself was covered by the curse of the councils. True, P[atriarch] Jeremiah in the 15th [correct: 16th] century and his successor in the 18th anathematised the calendar itself, but this curse: 1) touches only his contemporaries and 2) does not extend to those who are frightened to break communion with him, to which are subjected only those who transgress the canonical Paschalion. Moreover (this needs to be noted in any case), the main idea behind the day of Pascha is that it should be celebrated by all the Christians (that is, the Orthodox) on one and the same day throughout the inhabited world. True, I myself and my brothers do not at all sympathise with the new calendar and modernism, but we beseech the Athonite fathers not to be hasty in composing letters (Romans 14). – Do not grieve about our readiness to go to the C[onstantinople] Council. Of course, there will be no council, but if there is, and if we go, as St. Flavian went to the robber cou[ncil], then, of course, we will keep the faith and deliver the apostates to anathema. But as long as the last word has not been spoken, as long as the whole Church has not repeated the curses of Patriarch Jeremiah at an ecumenical council, we must retain communion, so that we ourselves should not be deprived of salvation, and, in aiming at a gnat, swallow a camel…”[[653]](#footnote-653)

In another letter he admitted that akriveia was on Fr. Theodosius’ side, but argued in favour of oikonomia: “It is in vain that you torment your conscience with doubts about continuing to be in communion with the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate. Present this matter to the judgement of the hierarchs, and until it has taken place remain in communion…”[[654]](#footnote-654)

However, the wording of the 16th century Councils that anathematised the new calendar does not support the metropolitan’s interpretation: “Whoever does not follow the customs of the Church,… but wishes to follow the Gregorian Paschalion and Menaion,… let him be anathema.” Moreover, there is no word about the anathema applying only to the generation of the anathematisers. In general, anathemas, as expressing the unchanging decision of God with regard to something that is *eternally false*, are necessarily applicable in all places and at all times.

One ROCOR bishop who disagreed with Metropolitan Anthony’s liberal attitude to this question was Archbishop Theophan of Poltava. He wrote: “Question. Have the pastors of the Orthodox Church not made special judgements concerning the calendar?

“Answer. They have, many times – with regard to the introduction of the new Roman calendar – both in private assemblies and in councils.

“A proof of this is the following. First of all, the Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II, who lived at the same time as the Roman calendar reform, immediately, in 1582, together with his Synod condemned the new Roman system of chronology as not in agreement with the Tradition of the Church. In the next year (1583), with the participation of Patriarchs Sylvester of Alexandria and Sophronius VI of Jerusalem, he convened a Church Council. This Council recognised the Gregorian calendar to be not in agreement with the canons of the Universal Church and with the decree of the First Ecumenical Council on the method of calculating the day of Holy Pascha.

“Through the labours of this Council there appeared: a Conciliar tome, which denounced the wrongness and unacceptability for the Orthodox Church of the Roman calendar, and a canonical conciliar Decree – the Sigillion of November 20, 1583. In this Sigillion all three of the above-mentioned Patriarchs with their Synods called on the Orthodox firmly and unbendingly, even to the shedding of their blood, to hold the Orthodox Menaion and Julian Paschalion, threatening the transgressors of this with anathema, cutting them off from the Church of Christ and the gathering of the faithful…

“In the course of the following three centuries: the 17th, 18th and 19th, a whole series of Ecumenical Patriarchs decisively expressed themselves against the Gregorian calendar and, evaluating it in the spirit of the conciliar decree of Patriarch Jeremiah II, counselled the Orthodox to avoid it…

“Question. Is the introduction of the new calendar important or of little importance?

“Answer. Very important, especially in connection with the Paschalion, and it is an extreme disorder and ecclesiastical schism, which draws people away from communion and unity with the whole Church of Christ, deprives them of the grace of the Holy Spirit, shakes the dogma of the unity of the Church, and, like Arius, tears the seamless robe of Christ, that is, everywhere divides the Orthodox, depriving them of oneness of mind; breaks the bond with Ecclesiastical Holy Tradition and makes them fall under conciliar condemnation for despising Tradition…

“Question. How must the Orthodox relate to the new calendarist schismatics, according to the canons?

“Answer. They must have no communion in prayer with them, even before their conciliar condemnation…

“Question. What punishment is fitting, according to the Church canons, for those who pray with the new calendarist schismatics?

“Answer. The same condemnation with them…”[[655]](#footnote-655)

## 53. THE ROMANIAN CHURCH AND THE NEW CALENDAR

The Romanian Church had already been tempted by the new calendar in 1864, when Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza “convoked a Church Synod at which he recommended that the Romanian Orthodox Church change from the Julian Calendar to the Gregorian Calendar. Also present at this Synod was Saint Calinic of Cernica (1787-1868), one of the most dauntless strugglers for the triumph of the truth and for the preservation of the True Faith. He was categorically opposed to the calendar innovation and exclaimed as he was leaving the hall in which the Synod was meeting: ‘I will not be reckoned with transgressors!’ Thus, the Prince did not succeed in implementing this recommendation, which had been imposed on him by Freemasons.”[[656]](#footnote-656)

However, Cuza succeeded in getting some leading hierarchs sent to foreign heterodox institutions for training. Among them was Metropolitan Miron (Cristea), a former uniate, who on December 17, 1923, as head of the Romanian Orthodox Church, wrote to the Patriarch of Constantinople that the Romanian Church accepted the decision of the “Pan-Orthodox Council” on the change of calendar, and that it would be applied in 1924.[[657]](#footnote-657)

And so in Romania, the new calendar was introduced in the same year as in Greece, October 1, 1924 becoming October 14.

In reward for this, on February 4, 1925, the Romanian Church was proclaimed a patriarchate by Constantinople, and on November 1 Metropolitan Miron was enthroned as patriarch of Romania. Then he changed the date of Pascha in 1926 and 1929 to bring it into conformity with the western Paschalion.

The new calendar innovation was pushed through by Alexandru Lapedatu, the Minister of Cults.

Nicolae Iorga, the future President of the Council of Ministers writes that it “did not bring about the expected results. People were beaten even in front of altars, and on the following day, after these desperate measures, the congregations were mostly empty, and the few people who were present – mainly clergy – were content to listen to proceedings of the driest imperial tradition.”[[658]](#footnote-658)

“These,” as Constantin Bujor writes, “were reports written in advance, in which the Faithful ‘begged’ for the use of the Gregorian Calendar in the Church, just as the peasants of Romania later ‘begged’ to enter en masse the collective agricultural cooperatives patterned after Soviet collective farms, according to the Congress of the Romanian Workers’ Party of February 18-20/March 3-5, 1949. Iorga continues: ‘Nevertheless, this decision to adopt the Western Calendar was taken too lightly and without recognition of the complex, conservative, and mystical psychology of the people, and it provoked a schism that still continues not only in Basarabia but also in the mountainous regions of old Moldavia.’ The population living in the extensive mountain regions remained steadfast in the ancestral Orthodox Tradition, from one generation to the next, from great-grandparents to grandparents, parents, children, and grandchildren, and so on, by recounting stories about the sacrifices made in the past, in the hope that such sufferings would leave memories and kindle the flame of the traditional Orthodox Faith everywhere. The press of this period mentions an eloquent declaration in this regard from some of the Faithful living in the vicinity of Cluj: ‘We, the whole village, will not abandon the Tradition and Faith into which we were born. It is up to the Priests to decide which religion they wish to join; we will have no part in this. But if we find that any of them want to introduce innovations here, such a one will no longer be our Priest.’”[[659]](#footnote-659)

In fact, only one hierarch rejected the calendar innovation - Metropolitan Visarion (Puiu) of Bucovina, who went into exile and died in Paris in 1964.[[660]](#footnote-660)

Resistance to the reform was particularly strong in Bessarabia, where, as we have seen, there had already been strong resistance to the union with Romania and the removal of Church Slavonic from the churches.

“The patriotically minded Bessarabian population,” writes Glazkov, “who took a very cautious attitude to any attempt by the Bessarabian authorities to liquidate the national particularities of the Moldavian people, met the reform with protests. ‘The Union of Orthodox Christians’ immediately condemned Metropolitan Gurias, who carried out the decision of the Synod, and began an active campaign against the new calendar style by publishing apologetic literature and conducting popular meetings and processions. Some of the Bessarabian priests who considered the reform of the calendar to be uncanonical supported the protests of the laity and rejected the Gregorian calendar. Around the churches where the Church Slavonic language and the Julian calendar were preserved (for example, the church of the Alexander Nevsky brotherhood), there gathered priests and laity. Thus in April, 1926 thousands of believers gathered at the church of St. Panteleimon in Kishinev for a pannikhida for Tsar-Martyr Nicholas II. Some priests openly celebrated all the feasts according to the old style in front of a large number of believers, which was defined by the authorities as rebellion, for many lay Old Calendarists were subjected to direct humiliations by the new style clergy. There was an attempt to build, in Kishinev, a church in direct submission to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who had remained faithful to the old style. According to the police, the majority of the population resisted the ecclesiastical reform, only individual parishes passed over to the Gregorian calendar. It is noteworthy that if, at the beginning, the civil authorities were quite conciliatory towards the Old Calendarists, allowing them to celebrate Pascha and other Church feasts according to the old and new styles, the official Romanian Church authorities took upon themselves police-fiscal functions in exposing and repressing them…”[[661]](#footnote-661)

In Bessarabia, the leadership of the movement against the new style had been taken up by the white clergy and the city intelligentsia. In other parts of Romania, however, the leaders were the monks. Out of the 14,000 parish priests, almost none stood up against the calendar reform.

The only exception to this, as Metropolitan Blaise writes, was “Archimandrite Galaction (Cordun), who at that time was serving as parish priest in the metropolitan cathedral in Bucharest and who used to preach there when there was no bishop.

“… Fr. Galaction, who later became our first metropolitan, fought against the reform, but was unable to do anything, since he was only an archimandrite. He was very capable, and had studied in Petersburg with the future Patriarchs Alexis of Moscow and Cyril of Bulgaria, graduating with the degree of doctor of theology. Later, in 1935, he was consecrated to the episcopate – they thought he had changed his views. Three bishops who had been consecrated before the change of calendar participated in the consecration, so [apostolic] succession was not broken…

“This is what happened, for example, in Neamţ monastery, where St. Paisius Velichkovsky was once the abbot. When the reform took place there were about 200 monks in the monastery, 80 of whom were clergy. This was the biggest monastery in Romania. It was here that the strongest movement against the new style arose. Two months before the reform the abbot warned the brotherhood: be careful, reforms are coming, do not accept them. This was as it were a prophecy. But out of the 80 hieromonks only 30 (not counting the monks) were against the reform; and of these 30 only 6 stood out openly in opposition – the rest did not separate for material reasons. By a decree of the metropolitan of Moldavia all the clergy who did not accept the new style were threatened with deposition, exile from the monastery and confiscation of their property – the man would be outlawed. Then a small group of monks with the most devoted and zealous priests left the monastery, and it is from this group that our Church begins its history. Neamţ monastery as a whole accepted the new style, later they also renounced St. Paisius’ rule, for the keeping of which the monastery was renowned. Our monastery of Slatioara, which is not far from Neamţ, inherited this rule and tradition.

“Here are the names of the (clerical) inhabitants of the monastery who resisted all their lives: Hieromonk Fr. Glycerius (later metropolitan)[[662]](#footnote-662), Hierodeacon David (the first abbot of the monastery at Slatioara), Hieromonk Pambo, Fr. Baruch, Fr. Gimnasius, Fr. Zosima, Fr. Gamaliel, Fr. Damascene, who died in the woods near the monastery. We also know the names of other monks of Neamţ who resisted the new style. There were also nuns: Mother Macaria, who was the helper of the abbess of the biggest women’s monastery in the country, Agapia, which became new calendarist (it now has 450 nuns), and who with her nuns founded the first women’s monastery in our Church.

“The small groups of clergy and monastics of these men’s and women’s monasteries – the purest, who had God in their hearts and not their property -- rejected the reforms and were driven out of the monasteries, being forced to live in the world. The pious laity who supported them became like bees constructing hives, the churches, while these clerics were like queen-bees. That was how our Church came into being.”[[663]](#footnote-663)

“Two months before the calendar change,” writes Metropolitan Blaise, “something very momentous happened in the great Church of the Neamţ Monastery. It was on the Eve of the Dormition of the Mother of God. The Ecclesiarch went to the Church to prepare all that was needed and to light the candles and kandelia for the Midnight Service. The weather was calm, with clear skies and numerous stars; no cloud was in sight. Suddenly, a great bolt of lightning came down from the heavens and, passing through a window in the dome of the Church, struck in front of the Miracle-working Icon of the Mother of God. It hit the stone floor, and a section of stone collapsed; from the impact, the candlestand that was affixed to this slab in front of the Icon was knocked over. [Cf. the words of the Lord in Revelation (2.5): “Repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place”]. When the Fathers and Brothers came to Church, the Priest who was serving told them what had happened; seeing the damage done by the lightning strike, they all concluded that it was a Divine sign.

“Here is another incident. When Father Glycherie reached the Coroi Ravine, a spiritual uneasiness overcame him. One night, after lengthy prayer, he was beset by heavy thoughts. ‘How is it possible,’ he said, ‘that in our country many Priests with advanced theological training, together with a large number of intellectuals, are leaving the Old Calendar, as it was bequeathed to the people by the Holy Fathers of the Orthodox Church, who have honoured it from times of old? Should I not abandon the Old Calendar and be one of these? Am I making a mistake before God by not changing?’ Late in the night, he had a beautiful vision: from the West, a dark cloud appeared; it tried to cover the whole world and was moving furiously towards the East, howling like a monster. In front of the cloud, a powerful storm formed, adorned with a chain as black as tar, on which black Crosses appeared. Everyone was frightened. But looking towards the East, he saw a snow-white cloud, glittering like gold; before it was a chain of gold, from which there were hanging Crosses of gold.

“A choir of Hierarchs also appeared – all with golden vestments, - walking towards the black cloud. In a designated place, the two clouds collided and the dark cloud fell; and in its place, a sea of water appeared, engulfing the earth…”[[664]](#footnote-664)

In 1926, two shepherds, Ioan and Mihail Urzică found Hieromonk Pamvu and Monks Galaction and Veniamin hiding in the Coroi Ravine. They then led them to Fr. Glycherie and Fr. David. The Old Calendarist monks were received with rejoicing by the faithful of Vānători, and it was decided to build a church. When it was built, Fr. Glycherie appointed Hieromonk Pamvu and his Monks Galaction and Veniamin to look after it. In this way a beginning was made to the Old Calendarist movement in Romania. In spite of continual persecution by the police and the new calendarists, it flourished. By 1936 Fr. Glycherie had built about forty large churches, most of them in Moldavia.

Metropolitan Cyprian writes: “The Romanian Patriarchate, both in 1926 and 1929, celebrated Pascha with the Latins, constituting an infringement of the Orthodox tradition of centuries. Indeed, on the second occasion that this was done, Patriarch Miron, having the undivided support of the Uniate (Greek-Catholic) prime minister, Julius Maniu, and several others among the clergy, compelled all of the Romanian Metropolises to proceed with the common celebration of Pascha with the Papists, a fact which evoked great commotion in the ranks of the Romanian Church. Metropolitan Gurias of Bessarabia openly criticized Miron and, ignoring the Patriarchal decree, ordered his churches to celebrate with the other autocephalous Orthodox Churches (i.e. with the entire Orthodox world, with the exception of the innovative Church of Finland). Patriarch Miron’s action also scandalized these other Orthodox Churches, many of which reacted in protest. As well, the White Russian clergy of Bucharest took a particularly strong position during those trying days, ignoring the Patriarchal order and celebrating Pascha in accordance with the traditional canonical decrees.”[[665]](#footnote-665)

The Romanian monks on Mount Athos fully supported their co-religionists in the homeland. Two hieromonks returned from the Holy Mountain to support their co-religionists in the homeland. However, the new calendarists prepared counter-measures. Thus in 1930, “there arrived in the Moldavian skete [of the Forerunner] from Romania one of the skete’s hieromonks, Simeon, a fifty-year-old who had been sent by Patriarch Miron to propagandise the new style on Athos. He brought with him a lot of money… from Romania. He also brought with him from Romania a lawyer, who was armed with an agreement obtained in Athens to conduct negotiations over the return of the metochion on the island of Thasos. The skete-dwellers received him with honour. They promised to gather the brotherhood and speak to them in the church about accepting the new style. But they prepared a trap for him. They summoned him to the hall, cut off his beard and pigtail, took the money sent for propaganda, put a jacket and hat on him and drove him out… He appealed to the police in Karyes for help, but they replied that this did not come within the compass of their responsibilities. This was the end of the propaganda for the new style on Athos. This was already the Romanians’ second piece of trickery. The first time they had received a letter from the patriarch suggesting that they change to the new style. The skete-dwellers, on receiving this letter, served a triumphant all-night vigil, and, on the next day, a liturgy with a moleben, after which they pronounced an anathema on the patriarch, composing an official document which they sent on to him.”[[666]](#footnote-666)

In the 1920s and 1930s many Romanians fled from the new calendarists in Romania and Bessarabia. They constituted the majority of the new postulants in the Russian monasteries of the Holy Land.[[667]](#footnote-667) Among these was the famous priest-hermit Fr. John the Romanian (+1960), who never concelebrated with the new calendarists and whose relics are still incorrupt…

## 54. THE FALL OF RENOVATIONISM

On September 30, 1924 Patriarch Tihon wrote to the Soviet government: “Orthodox bishops appointed by me either are not allowed into their dioceses, or are thrown out from them at their first appearance there, or are subjected to arrest and even their chancellery and archive is sealed and made inaccessible.”[[668]](#footnote-668) And yet the Church, while lacking a central rudder on earth, remained governed by her Head in heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ. Moreover, even if the Patriarch could not effectively administer the Church, the very fact of his existence at the head of her administrative structure was of great importance in holding the Church together. For the commemoration of the Patriarch in the Divine Liturgy was the outward and visible sign of faithfulness to Orthodoxy and freedom from the dark forces of the revolution.

In addition to the introduction of the new calendar, the GPU agent Tuchkov placed several demands before the Patriarch after his release from prison. The first was that he should commemorate the Soviet authorities during the Divine services. The following form of commemoration was established in January, 1924: “For the Russian land and its authorities”.[[669]](#footnote-669) Fr. Basil Vinogradov, who was entrusted with the distribution of the order round the parishes, said that Tikhon issued it under pressure from Bishop Hilarion (Troitsky).[[670]](#footnote-670) However, in the parishes, instead of the word “authorities” (vlastyekh) the similar-sounding word “regions” (oblastyekh) was substituted. Soon the whole phrase was dropped.[[671]](#footnote-671)

Although the Patriarch had yielded on the question of commemoration, he adamantly refused, according to Vladimir Rusak, “to recognize the principle which was imposed on him of registering clergy and church communities and of agreeing with the authorities about appointing bishops, and in general he rejected any measures which meant the interference of the State in the inner affairs of the Church,” in which refusal he was strongly supported by Bishop Hilarion.[[672]](#footnote-672)

Tuchkov also demanded that the Patriarch enter into communion with the renovationists - a difficult demand to resist because, apart from external pressures, some of the Patriarch’s closest assistants, such as Bishop Hilarion (Troitsky), were in favour of concessions for the sake of church unity. But at this point the former rector of the Moscow Theological Academy and superior of the Danilov monastery in Moscow, Archbishop Theodore (Pozdeyevsky) of Volokolamsk, came to the rescue of the beleaguered Patriarch.

Archbishop Leontius of Chile writes: “The whole Orthodox episcopate and people venerated him [Vladyka Theodore] for his principled, uncompromising and straight position in relation to Soviet power. He considered that until the Orthodox Church received the right to a truly free existence, there could be no negotiations with the Bolsheviks. The authorities were only deceiving them, they would fulfil none of their promises, but would, on the contrary, turn everything to the harm of the Church. Therefore it would be better for his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon to sit in prison and die there, than to conduct negotiations with the Bolsheviks, because concessions could lead, eventually, to the gradual liquidation of the Orthodox Church and would disturb everyone, both in Russia and, especially, abroad. [He said this] at a time when his Holiness the Patriarch had been released from prison. Archbishop Theodore honoured and pitied his Holiness, but was in opposition to him. In spite of the persistent request of his Holiness that he take part in the administration of the patriarchate, he refused.

“He did not receive those bishops who had discredited themselves in relation to the ‘Living Church’. He had little faith in their repentance. Only firm bishops were received in the Danilov monastery, and lived there often. Sometimes there were as many as ten or more. All those who had been released from prison or were returning from exile found refuge there. The brotherhood consisted of principled and highly cultured people. Not a few of them became confessor-bishops. The strict spiritual school of Vladyka Theodore left a special imprint on the monastery. With the exception of two novices the whole brotherhood of the Danilov monastery carried their confessing cross in a staunch and worthy manner. In those years the monastery churches of the Danilov, Donskoy and Simonov monasteries were always full of people. As were the parish churches. But one could already feel that this situation was coming to an end… And when his Holiness came out of prison the arrests of bishops did not cease.”[[673]](#footnote-673)

On being released from prison, in the summer of 1923, the Patriarch convened a Council of Bishops in the St. Michael’s church of the Donskoy monastery. Gubonin writes: “’The Little Council’ took place in connection with some bishops’ raising the question of the expediency of the patriarch’s administering the Church after his release from prison, since he was due to appear as a defendant in the civil courts. Reasons were produced in favour of his being kept away from the administration until the trial.”[[674]](#footnote-674)

Moreover, one of the bishops claimed that his Holiness had compromised himself as head of the Church by showing himself incapable of averting in a timely manner the appearance of the renovationist rebellion and by allowing the catastrophic disintegration of the Russian Church. However, several of the “Danilovite” hierarchs at the Council expressed themselves clearly and forcefully in defence of the patriarch, declaring that his activity had been blameless. As a result, the rebellion against the patriarch was suppressed, and the Council officially declared its filial obedience and gratitude to his Holiness for the burdens he had undertaken for the Church. Moreover, he was asked not to abandon his post, but to continue bearing the cross of leadership. Later the patriarch sent a letter to Archbishop Theodore thanking him for the line the “Danilovite” bishops had taken at the Council.

Another confrontation between the “left wing” of the Patriarchal Church, represented by Bishop Hilarion and Archbishop Seraphim (Alexandrov), and the “right wing” represented by Archbishop Theodore, took place when the patriarch convened a meeting to discuss a renovationist proposal for the re-establishment of unity. The price the heretics were demanding was the patriarch’s voluntary abdication from his patriarchal rank…

“In spite of the insulting tone of the [renovationists’] epistle,” writes Protopriest Vladislav Tsypkin, “the patriarch was ready to enter into negotiations with the renovationists for the sake of the salvation of those who had gone astray and church peace. In this he was supported by the Temporary Patriarchal Synod. Archbishops Seraphim (Alexandrov), Tikhon (Obolensky) and Hilarion (Troitsky) opened negotiations with the pseudo-metropolitan Eudocimus concerning conditions for the restoration of church unity. [But] the former rector of the Moscow Theological Academy and superior of the Danilov monastery, Archbishop Theodore of Volokolamsk, was decisively opposed to such negotiations…

“At the end of September, 1923, 27 Orthodox bishops met in the Donskoy monastery to discuss the results of the negotiations with the pseudo-metropolitan Eudocimus concerning the dissolution of the schism. Archbishop Theodore did not appear at the meeting, but many of his supporters who believed as he did participated in it…”[[675]](#footnote-675)

Bishop Gervasius of Kursk wrote about this Council: “At the end of his short report, Archbishop Seraphim (Alexandrov) remarked that it would be very desirable to have the presence of Archbishop Theodore (Pozdeyevsky) at the meeting, since he was a learned bishop who was popular in Moscow. An official invitation was given to the archbishop, but he did not reply and did not appear himself at the assembly. But if Archbishop Theodore was not there, his fervent supporters and admirers were. Thus Bishop Ambrose, formerly of Vinnitsa, a vicariate of Podolsk [and in 1923 bishop of Podolsk and Bratslav], who admired and held the same views as Archbishop Theodore, gave a speech which touched on the essence of Archbishop Seraphim’s report. He began his speech approximately as follows: ‘I am surprised why you, your Eminence, should call Eudocimus a metropolitan. Do you recognize him to be a lawful hierarch?’ A secret ballot was taken on the project for reconciliation and union with the renovationists, and by a majority of votes the project was defeated and the assembly was dissolved.

“Archbishop Theodore lived at that time, as was well known, in the Danilov monastery, which was the residence of several extremely conservative and staunch bishops… Archbishop Theodore severely criticized Bishop Hilarion and told me that he would destroy Patriarch Tikhon and the Church, and that in the patriarch was all salvation. If there were no Patriarch Tikhon, then the authorities would abolish the patriarchate completely, and without the patriarchate there would be disaster for the Church…”[[676]](#footnote-676)

Although the Patriarch jokingly called the “Danilovites” “the clandestine Synod”, he continued to express his warm appreciation for their stand. Thus in October, 1923, he offered Vladyka Theodore the see of Petrograd with promotion to the rank of archbishop. Vladyka Theodore declined the offer.

“In November, 1923,” writes Vladimir Rusak, “[Tuchkov] summoned Patriarch Tikhon (until then all negotiations had been conducted through Bishop Hilarion) and in a peremptory manner suggested that he accept the head of the renovationist-‘synodalists’, Metropolitan Eudocimus (Meschersky) and work out with him a joint declaration on reconciliation (of the Orthodox and the renovationists). The Patriarch’s refusal, declared Tuchkov, would be seen as a counter-revolutionary assault, and he would again be arrested…’

“Patriarch Tikhon, of course, categorically rejected this demand and declared that nobody in the world would force him to acts which his conscience rejected…”[[677]](#footnote-677)

But in February, 1924 the antireligious commission resumed the offensive by declaring that the Patriarchal Synod could be legalized on condition that it allowed into its ranks persons “well known to the OGPU”. In March, the commission entrusted Tuchkov with the task of persuading Tikhon to allow the president of the “Central Committee” of the “Living Church”, Krasnitsky, into the Synod. Tuchkov promised the Patriarch that if he agreed to this, the Synod would be registered. We now know from recently published archival data that Krasnitsky was indeed “well known to the OGPU”, and even suggested to it a whole programme for the annihilation of Patriarch Tikhon and his supporters.[[678]](#footnote-678) The aim of the OGPU was to create a union between the two Churches that would allow the communists to have ultimate control. On April 9, the Patriarch succeeded in obtaining an audience with Kalinin and Rykov, who had taken Lenin’s place as President of the Sovnarkom. Rykov promised to lessen the pressure on religious organizations, reduce the taxes on churches and the clergy and even free some hierarchs from prison. It looked for a short time as if the new head of the Soviet government might be introducing a “thaw” in Church-State relations.[[679]](#footnote-679)

However, on May 19, the Patriarch, “for the sake of peace and the good of the Church, as an expression of patriarchal mercy”, agreed to admit Krasnitsky into communion, and on May 21, he was officially included, together with several other renovationists, in the Higher Church Council.[[680]](#footnote-680) Also appointed to the Synod on this day, immediately after the Patriarch himself, was Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky)… But Krasnitsky soon showed his true face by moving into the Patriarch’s residence in the Donskoy monastery without asking him, and by demanding that he retain the title “Protopresbyter of All Russia” accorded him by the renovationist council of 1923.[[681]](#footnote-681) Then Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan, on returning from exile, persuaded the Patriarch to exclude Krasnitsky from the Higher Church Council, after which Tuchkov dropped his demand. [[682]](#footnote-682)

Meanwhile, on April 18 the renovationists tried a new tack: they voted to ease the difficult situation of the Ecumenical Patriarch in Ataturk’s Turkey by offering him to settle freely in one of the cities of Russia in exchange for his accepting all the decrees of their 1923 council. On May 6, Patriarch Gregory duly obliged, “removed” Patriarch Tikhon from administering the Russian Church, called on him to retire, and decided to send a delegation to Moscow to investigate and “to bring peace and end the present anomaly”. As we have seen, he also demanded “that the Russian Metropolitan Anthony and Archbishop Anastasy, who were residing Constantinople at the time, cease their activities against the Soviet regime and stop commemorating Patriarch Tikhon. Receiving no compliance from them, Patriarch Gregory organized an investigation and suspended the two bishops from serving. He asked Patriarch Demetrius [of Serbia] to close down the Russian Council of Bishops in Sremsky-Karlovtsy, but Demetrius refused…”[[683]](#footnote-683)

“The initiative of Constantinople with regard to this question,” writes Gubonin, “had been elicited by the provocative and lying ‘information’ from the renovationist Synod concerning a supposed ‘Tikhonite schism’ in the Russian Orthodox Church (that is, among them – the renovationists) and the supposedly universal desire among the clerical leaders (that is, of the renovationist-synodalists) to bring peace into the difficult situation that had been created with the cooperation of the lofty authority of the Ecumenical Vladyka (since, they said, all means had already been exhausted and they had no other hope!).

“Taking into account the complete isolation of the Russian Church from communion with the external world at that time, the falsely informed Patriarch Gregory VII fell into this renovationist trap, but was stopped in time by the sobering epistle of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon.”[[684]](#footnote-684)

The Patriarch wrote to Gregory: “Attached to the letter of your Holiness’ representative in Russia, Archimandrite Basil Dimopoulo, of June 6, 1924, № 226, I received the protocols of four sessions of the Holy Constantinopolitan Synod of January 1, April 17, April 30 and May 6 of this year, from which it is evident that your Holiness, wishing to provide help from the Mother Great Church of Christ of Constantinople, and ‘having exactly studied the course of Russian Church life and the differences and divisions that have taken place – in order to bring peace and end the present anomalies’, … ‘having taken into consideration the exceptional circumstances and examples from the past’, have decided ‘to send us a special Commission, which is authorized to study and act on the spot on the basis and within the bounds of definite orders which are in agreement with the spirit and tradition of the Church’.

“In your Holiness’ instructions to the members of the Mission one of the main points is your desire that I, as the All-Russian Patriarch, ‘for the sake of the unification of those who have cut themselves off and for the sake of the flock, should sacrifice myself and immediately resign from the administration of the Church, as befits a true and love-filled pastor who cares for the salvation of many, and that at the same time the Patriarchate should be abolished, albeit temporarily, because it came into being in completely abnormal circumstances at the beginning of the civil war and because it is considered a major obstacle to the reestablishment of peace and unity’. Definite instructions are also given to the Commission regarding which tendencies [factions] they should rely on in their work.

“On reading the indicated protocols, we were in no small measure disturbed and surprised that the Representative of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the head of the Constantinopolitan Church, should without prior contact with us, as the lawful representative and head of the whole of the Russian Orthodox Church, interfere in the inner life and affairs of the Autocephalous Russian Church. The Holy Councils... have always recognized the primacy in honour, but not in power, of the Bishop of Constantinople over the other Autocephalous Churches. Let us also remember the canon that ‘without being invited, bishops must not pass beyond the boundaries of their own jurisdiction for the sake of ordination or any other ecclesiastical affair.’ For that reason any attempt by any Commission without consulting me, the only lawful and Orthodox First-Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, and without my knowledge, is unlawful and will not be accepted by the Russian Orthodox peoples, and will bring, not pacification, but still more disturbance and schism into the life of the Russian Orthodox Church, which has suffered much even without this. This will be to the advantage only of our schismatics – the renovationists, whose leaders now stand at the head of the so-called (self-called) Holy Synod, like the former archbishop of Nizhegorod Eudocimus and others, who have been defrocked by me and have been declared outside the communion of the Orthodox Church for causing disturbance, schism and unlawful seizure of ecclesiastical power.

“I, together with the whole mass of Russian Orthodox believers, and with all my flock, very much doubt that your Holiness has, as you declare, ‘studied exactly the course of Russian church life’. I doubt it because You have not once turned to me for documentary explanations of who is the true and real cause of disturbance and schism.

“The whole Russian Orthodox people long ago pronounced its righteous word concerning both the impious meeting which dared to call itself a Council in 1923, and the unhappy leaders of the renovationist schism… The people is not with the schismatics, but with their lawful Orthodox Patriarch. Allow me also to be sceptical about the measure your Holiness suggests for pacifying the Church – that is, my resignation from the administration of the Church and the abolition, albeit temporary, of the Patriarchate in Rus’. This would not pacify the Church, but cause a new disturbance and bring new sorrows to our faithful Archpastors and pastors who have suffered much even without this. It is not love of honour or power which has forced me to take up the cross of the patriarchy again, but the consciousness of my duty, submission to the will of God and the voice of the episcopate which is faithful to Orthodoxy and the Church. The latter, on receiving permission to assemble, in July last year, synodically condemned the renovationists as schismatics and asked me again to become head and rudder of the Russian Church until it pleases the Lord God to give peace to the Church by the voice of an All-Russian Local Council….

“The brother in Christ of your beloved Holiness, Patriarch Tikhon.”[[685]](#footnote-685)

Gregory abandoned his plans to send a mission to Russia, but relations between the two Churches continued to be frosty. When Metropolitan Peter came to power in Russia in April, 1925, he was presented with a letter from Patriarch Basil III which called on the “Old Churchmen” to unite with the renovationists. His comment was: “We still have to check whether this Patriarch is Orthodox…”

Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) was also sceptical; he reacted to Constantinople’s recognition of the renovationists as follows: “Let them recognize them; the renovationists have not become Orthodox from this, only the Patriarchs have become renovationists!”[[686]](#footnote-686)

Another of the Eastern Patriarchs who supported the renovationists was Constantine IV of Jerusalem. At Pascha, 1923 the holy fire did not descend into the Holy Sepulchre when he entered it. The Arab crowd was so enraged that they killed him…[[687]](#footnote-687) However, in February, 1924, a delegation of the Jerusalem Patriarchate visited Russia and come to a more objective evaluation of the situation. Its head, Constantine Grigoriades, expressed his support for Patriarch Tikhon and condemned the renovationists.[[688]](#footnote-688)

But the Greek patriarchs continued to hedge their bets between the Russian Churches. Thus on July 10, 1927, Patriarch Damian of Jerusalem wrote to the renovationist synod recognizing it as “the only lawful bearer of Higher Ecclesiastical Authority on the territory of the USSR”.[[689]](#footnote-689) But then his successor, Patriarch Basil III, although a Freemason[[690]](#footnote-690), broke communion with the Living Church in 1929 – only to enter into communion with the by now neo-renovationist Metropolitan Sergius!

If the Moscow Council of 1917-18 established the basic position of the Church vis-à-vis the State, the renovationist council of 1923 revealed the basic modes of attack employed by the State against the Church, and thus provided the Church with valuable experience for the still fiercer struggles ahead.

These basic modes of attack were:-

**1. Control of the Central Church Administration***.* Like the State, the Church in Her post-revolutionary structure was a highly centralized organism. The astonishing success of the Living Church in its early stages was partly the result of its usurpation of the central administration and the confusion this engendered in the faithful. The Patriarch was in prison, and some reports said that he had resigned, others – that he had been killed. Although Metropolitan Agathangel, circulated a secret order directing the bishops to rule their dioceses independently in accordance with the Patriarch’s ukaz no. 362 of November 7/20, 1920, the habit of looking to the centre for all major directives was difficult to break. This habit was broken, for some, only after the still greater shock of the events of 1927, when another unscrupulous hierarch, Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky), took control of the central administration of the Church.

**2. The Façade of Canonical Orthodoxy***.* At first the renovationists put on a mask of canonical Orthodoxy, claiming to have received power by legal transfer from the Patriarch. But soon they – mistakenly - threw off this mask; and, as we have seen, the crudity of their attacks on the Faith and monasticism repelled the people. In future, the GPU would take care that their candidate for the leadership of the Russian Church would have at least the appearance of canonical and dogmatic Orthodoxy.

**3. The Lure of State Legalization***.* In spite of the Patriarch’s “confession”, the Patriarchal Church never received legalization by the State during his lifetime. This meant that the Church was always as it were in the wilderness, without the favour and security enjoyed by the renovationists.

The depths to which the renovationists were prepared to go in order to win this security is illustrated by the pannikhida they celebrated for Lenin after his death, in which they described his soul as “essentially Christian”! In the same vein was Vvedensky’s speech to the 1923 council, in which he said: “We must turn to the government with words of deeply felt gratitude. The Church is not persecuted, whatever the calumnies of the foreign propagandists may say. Everyone in Russia can voice his conviction. We must direct this message of thanks to the only Government in the world, which, though it does not believe in God, yet acts in accordance with love, which is more than we, who believe, can claim for ourselves.”[[691]](#footnote-691)

Ironically, therefore, as Fr. Aidan Nichols writes, the renovationists came “to resemble the pre-Revolutionary establishment in their spirit of subordination to the State.”[[692]](#footnote-692) The Patriarchal Church, however, gained in spiritual authority. For, already in the early 1920s, the view was current that the faithful were living, in the Patriarch’s words, “in the years of the triumph of Satan and of the power of the Antichrist”. So the “Living Church”, in coming to terms with Soviet power, was, as the Patriarch said, “an institution of the Antichrist”.[[693]](#footnote-693) The Patriarchal Church, on the other hand, was like the woman fleeing into the wilderness from the red dragon (Revelation 12), and it was still to her that the faithful children of the Church clung for refuge… However, in absolute terms the number of Russian Orthodox Christians was still falling, especially in the countryside. Satisfied with the Bolshevik promises of land, most of the peasants became cooler towards the Church; By 1925 the numbers of those attending Divine services had shrunk to a third of that before the revolution.[[694]](#footnote-694)

Moreover, while the renovationist church organization was on the retreat, renovationism as such was by no means dead. As one Catacomb bishop wrote: “In the 1920s the renovationists, while promoting their reformist teaching, were only carrying out an experiment… These open demands and programmes proclaimed by renovationism were in the simple form too sharp for the majority of simple believers to accept. And so the mass of the Orthodox people moved away from them…

“Through these ‘experimenters’ [the atheists] were able to convince themselves that this method was bad. What the renovationists were not able to do immediately, the Moscow Patriarchate was able to do at the beginning of the 1930s – gradually, beginning with the actions of Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky). That which the renovationists and livingchurchmen tried to do openly, the Moscow Patriarchate was able to accomplish secretly, quietly and at first glance without being noticed. In this way they introduced a complete renovation into the life of the Church…”[[695]](#footnote-695)

# PART 3. THE GATES OF HELL (1925-1941)

## 55. THE REPOSE OF PATRIARCH TIKHON

Early in 1925 Archbishop Seraphim (Lukyanov) wrote to Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky): “His Holiness Tikhon is getting better after a third bold attempt on his life, but he has become very weak and is terribly exhausted. He frequently serves and receives people every day. They come to him from all corners of Russia. He has the following rule: every day he receives not more than 50 people; he speaks with no more than 10 hierarchs, and not longer than 5 minutes with the others. Sometimes in consequence of his weakness he receives people lying on a sofa. He has become much older and looks like a very old man. He has neither a Synod nor a chancellery around him. He avoids issuing written decrees so as to escape complications with the authorities. He has weakened not only physically, but also in his will – he has begun to make more concessions than he should, and is not firm. Therefore hierarchs often rebel openly against his decrees, and then he revokes his decisions.

“In Moscow there are now around 60 hierarchs who have been appointed to various dioceses by his Holiness, but who have been detained by the authorities. These hierarchs are not free and have no work. Their only occupation is to serve in various churches and thereby earn their bread, living somewhere and somehow…

“His Holiness Tikhon enjoys enormous authority and love. It is forbidden to commemorate his name, in some places people are even persecuted for commemorating it. He himself does not force anyone to commemorate his name, and now in Russia they usually pray thus: ‘For their Holinesses the Patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Moscow’…

“People in Russia are very unhappy with the political statements of the Karlovtsy Council; they consider that at this time hierarchs should wall themselves off from any political actions, since all this is blamed on the Patriarch. The attitude to those who have fled is in general negative. They are very much waiting for an Ecumenical Council, thinking for some reason that the union of the Anglicans and even of the Catholics will take place at it. Professor Dmitrievsky is even intending to go to the East for this. They are hoping that the foreign powers will force the Bolsheviks to let the Patriarch and the hierarchs go to the Council. They do not always have a good understanding of the situation of the autocephalous Churches and their attitude to our Church.

“The question of the new calendar has not died down and it has many supporters, especially in view of the fact that the Bolsheviks do not recognize the old feasts and the believers are very constrained when they go to services. It seems that the Bolsheviks again want to put pressure on the Patriarch to introduce the new style…”[[696]](#footnote-696)

Shortly before his death, on the Feast of the Annunciation, 1925, the Patriarch confided to his personal physician and friend, Michael Zhizhilenko, that he felt that the unceasing pressure of the government would one day force the leadership of the Church to concede more than was right, and that the true Church would then have to descend into the catacombs like the Roman Christians of old. And he counselled his friend, who was a widower, that when that time came, he should seek the monastic tonsure and episcopal consecration.[[697]](#footnote-697)

That time came in 1927 with the notorious declaration of Metropolitan Sergius; and Michael Zhizhilenko, following the advice of his mentor, was consecrated as the first bishop of the anti-sergianist Catacomb Church in 1928, for which he paid with his life in Solovki in 1931. Thus was the concept and even the name of the Catacomb Church foreseen by the Martyr-Patriarch himself; it was, and is the “Tikhonite” Church.

The concept of “the Catacomb Church” brings to mind the situation of the Christians in Roman times, and again during the iconoclast persecutions, when the Church was forced to live in a semi-legal or illegal position vis-à-vis the State. Such a move was to prove still more necessary under the militant atheists of the Soviet anti-State, whose enmity towards religion was much fiercer than that of the pagan Roman and heretical Greek emperors.

The idea that the Church might have to descend into the catacombs, in imitation of the Christians in early Rome, was suggested as early as 1909 by the future hieromartyr Metropolitan Joseph (Petrovykh) of Petrograd: “Now many are complaining about the hard times for the Church… Remembering the words of the Saviour with complete accuracy, we must expect still worse times for the Church… Without any exaggeration, she must truly live through a condition close to complete destruction and being overcome by the gates of hell. Perhaps with us, as in the land of freedom, America, they will drive the Name of Christ out of the schools. They will adapt prayer assemblies into ordinary meetings permitted by the police, as in that other land of freedom, France, and will convert the heritage of the Church, together with the very right of faith, into the property of the state. Perhaps the faith of Christ will again hide in the woods, the deserts, the catacombs, and the confession of the faith will be only in secret, while immoral and blasphemous presentations will come out into the open. All this may happen! The struggle against Christ will be waged with desperation, with the exertion of the last drop of human and hellish energy, and only then, perhaps, will it be given to hell and to mankind to assure us with complete obviousness of the unfailing power and might of the priceless promise of Christ: ‘I will build My Church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against her’ (Matthew 16.18).”[[698]](#footnote-698)

The first Catacomb Church hieromartyr was probably the married priest Timothy Strelkov. He was beheaded by the Bolsheviks in June, 1918. But then his severed head was miraculously restored to his body. He was forced to go into hiding for twelve years until he was caught and executed for the second time in 1930.[[699]](#footnote-699)

In 1918, Patriarch Tikhon himself had called on the faithful to form unofficial, quasi-catacomb brotherhoods to defend the Orthodox Faith. Shemetov writes: “The brotherhoods which arose with the blessing of the Patriarch did not make the parishes obsolete where they continued to exist. The brotherhoods only made up for the deficiencies of the parishes.”[[700]](#footnote-700)

In fact, the organization of unofficial, catacomb bodies like the brotherhoods became inevitable once it became clear that the God-hating State was bent on destroying the Orthodox Church. Thus according to Archbishop Lazarus (Zhurbenko), “the catacombs began in 1922, when renovationism began. The Optina elders blessed the Christians to go into the catacombs...”[[701]](#footnote-701)

Sergius Shumilo writes: “On May 8, 1922 the Moscow tribunal in the course of a trial of a group of clergy resolved that it ‘establishes the illegality of the existence of the organization called the Orthodox hierarchy’.

“Thus the Church headed by Patriarch Tikhon (called ‘the Tikhonite Church’ by the Bolsheviks) turned out to be outside the law. The universal repressions and mass closure of churches and monasteries had already, in the first years of Soviet power, compelled many church servers and believers to pass into an illegal situation. As the historian M. Shkarovsky note, ‘we can say that the Catacomb Church began its existence in an elemental way from the first months of Soviet power, when many believers were forced conduct a double, secret life… The concealment of holy things often became the first step to departing into the ‘catacombs’.

“Thus the closest co-struggler of Patriarch Tikhon, Metropolitan Benjamin (Kazansky) of Petrograd, already in the spring of 1922 blessed the creation in Petrograd of several illegal monastic communities. Gradually, in the course of the 1920s, practically the whole territory of the country, especially Russia and Ukraine, was covered by a net of small ‘house’ monasteries. Eyewitnesses remembered the elemental appearance of such illegal monasteries in the Tambov region:

“’After the closure of the monastery some nuns lived for a while close by and baked bread, others dispersed in different directions. The former monastic residents got together to buy themselves houses in the city. They lived together in small communities of between 4 and 6 people… receiving spiritual nourishment from persecuted church servers. Instead of one large monastery in Kursanov there appeared many small ones.’…

“In the words of M. Shkarovsky, ‘the appearance in the spring of 1922 of renovationism as the ruling tendency became the basic reason for the appearance of secret churches in which services were conducted in secret in a significant number of the country’s regions. Also, people who protested against the requisitioning of church valuables and zealots of Orthodoxy also departed into the ‘catacombs’… The transition to serving in secret was blessed by the well-known Optina Elder Nektary (Tikhonov). And the Danilov groups of hierarchs (so named for their dwelling in the monastery of St. Daniel of Moscow) became in practice the creators of a net of secret parishes and monasteries. It was headed by Archbishop Theodore (Pozdeyevsky) of Volokolamsk… The Danilovites were linked to Archbishop Andrew (Prince Ukhtomsky) of Ufa, who played an exceptionally important role in the creation of the Catacomb Church and who in the 1920s carried out ordinations (together with other hierarchs) of more than 10 secret bishops.’

“Patriarch Tikhon himself from prison blessed the departure of the Church into the ‘catacombs’ and the carrying out of secret ordinations. While under house arrest in the Donskoy monastery, the holy hierarch Tikhon was able from the balcony of his flat to shout to Archbishop Andrew (Ukhtomsky): ‘Vladyko, consecrate more hierarchs!’ As Bishop Sergius (Druzhinin) witnessed under interrogation, Patriarch Tikhon after his release used to say to every bishop who came to him: ‘The Bolsheviks want to shoot all the hierarchs and priests. So that the Church should not remain without an episcopate, and also without hierarchs, it is necessary to ordain to the priesthood and tonsure as monks as many as possible.’”[[702]](#footnote-702)

On April 7, 1925, Patriarch Tikhon reposed in the Lord – it is almost certain that he was poisoned.[[703]](#footnote-703) According to his cell-attendant, Constantine Pashkovich, his next to last words, uttered with an unusual severity, were: “Now I shall go to sleep deeply and for a long time. The night will be long, and very dark…”[[704]](#footnote-704)

Two hours before his repose, Metropolitan Peter brought him the text of a declaration written by Tuchkov for his signature. From a room in the hospital next to that in which the Patriarch lay, he could be heard repeating in an excited voice: “I cannot do this, I cannot do this.” It is very likely that the document which the Patriarch refused to sign was that which was published by *Izvestia* a week after his death as being supposedly his will and testament.

## 56. METROPOLITAN PETER OF KRUTITSA

On April 12, in the presence of over 50 bishops gathered from all over the country for his funeral, the deceased Patriarch’s genuine will of January 7, 1925 was read out. It said that in the event of the Patriarch’s death and the absence of the first two candidates for the post of patriarchal locum tenens, Metropolitans Cyril of Kazan and Agathangelus of Yaroslavl, “our patriarchal rights and duties, until the lawful election of a new patriarch,… pass to his Eminence Peter, metropolitan of Krutitsa.” At the moment of the Patriarch’s death, Metropolitans Cyril and Agathangelus were in exile and unable to rule the Church. Therefore the 59 assembled hierarchs decided that “Metropolitan Peter cannot decline from the obedience given him and… must enter upon the duties of the patriarchal locum tenens.”[[705]](#footnote-705)

However, not all even of the Orthodox bishops accepted Metropolitan Peter’s leadership.[[706]](#footnote-706) Thus Archbishop Andrew of Ufa, who had already proclaimed his diocese autocephalous on the basis of Patriarch Tikhon’s ukaz № 362 of November 7/20, 1920, declared: “I cannot recognize any leadership over myself, as a diocesan bishop, until a canonical Council. I am very firmly aware of my canonical duties, so as not to forget my rights to protect my flock from every unworthy ‘episcopate’ and from all dark powers plundering our spiritual sheep. Besides these considerations, I, on the basis of the 76th Apostolic Canon and the 23rd Canon of the Antiochian Council, cannot recognize the transfer of the administration of the whole Church by any secret spiritual testaments. This game with testaments is completely uncanonical.”[[707]](#footnote-707)

The transfer of ecclesiastical power by testaments was indeed unprecedented; but it had received the approval of the Council of 1917-18, so it could hardly be said to have violated the conciliar conscience of the Church. There would, however, come a time when “this game with testaments” would come to end, and the ukaz of 1920 would indeed become the basis of the Church’s structure. But for two more years at least the patriarch’s testament enabled the Russian Church to maintain a visible as well as a sacramental unity under the leadership of Metropolitan Peter. At the same time, there is no doubt that Metropolitan Peter, like Patriarch Tikhon before him, was distrusted by many churchmen, who suspected that he was too close to the communists.[[708]](#footnote-708)

According to A. Smirnov, “priests and monks in opposition to Patriarch Tikhon and Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa founded the first wave of underground communities and secret sketes and founded their own Hierarchy. Sergianism arose much later [in 1927]; the first catacombniks entered into conflict already with Patriarch Tikhon and Metropolitan Peter on the grounds that they were collaborators…”[[709]](#footnote-709)

The first need of the Church at that time was the convocation of a Council to elect a new Patriarch. But, of course, the GPU had no intention of allowing this. Their aim was a tamed Church – that is, a Church that accepted legalization from the government on the government’s terms. Or, failing that, another schism. And that only as a stage towards the Church’s final destruction; for, as the Central Committee member and leading party ideologist, I.I. Skvortsov-Stepanov, had said in 1922, although the schisms in the Church were in the party’s interests, in principle the party remained the enemy of all religion and would eventually struggle against all of them.[[710]](#footnote-710)

Encouraged by the Patriarch’s death, the renovationists energetically tried to obtain union with the Patriarchal Church in time for their second council, which was due to take place in the autumn of 1925. Their attempts were aided by the Soviet authorities, who put all kinds of pressures on the hierarchs to enter into union with the renovationists. Metropolitan Peter, however, proved to be, in the communists’ phrase, “a tough nut”, a rock against which the gates of hell surged in vain.

In an epistle dated July 28, 1925, after protesting against the propaganda of the uniates and sectarians, which was diverting attention away from the main battle against atheism, he rejected all overtures towards union with the renovationists. And he went on “At the present time the so-called new-churchmen more and more discuss the matter of reunion with us. They call meetings in cities and villages, and invite Orthodox clerics and laymen to a common adjudication of the question of reunion with us, and to prepare for their pseudo-council which they are convening for the autumn of this year. But it must be clearly recalled that according to the canonical rules of the Ecumenical Church such arbitrarily gathered councils as were the meetings of the ‘Living Church’ in 1923, are illegal.

“Thus the canonical rules forbid Orthodox Christians to take part in them and still more to elect representatives for such gatherings. In accordance with the 20th rule of the Council of Antioch, ‘no one is permitted to convene a Council alone, without those bishops who are in charge of the metropolitanates.’ In the holy Church of God only that is lawful which is approved by the God-ordained ecclesiastical government, preserved by succession since the time of the Apostles. All arbitrary acts, everything that has been done by the new-church party without the approval of the most holy Patriarch now at rest with God, everything that is now done without our approval – all this has no validity in accordance with the canons of the holy Church (Apostolic canon 34; Council of Antioch, canon 9), for the true Church is one, and the grace of the most Holy Spirit residing in her is one, for there can be no two Churches or two graces. ‘There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all’ (Ephesians. 4.4-6).

“The so-called new-churchmen should talk of no reunion with the Orthodox Church until they show a sincere repentance for their errors. The chief of these is that they arbitrarily renounced the lawful hierarchy and its head, the most holy Patriarch, and attempted to reform the Church of Christ by self-invented teaching (*The Living Church*, №№. 1-11); they transgressed the ecclesiastical rules which were established by the Ecumenical Councils (the pronouncements of the pseudo-council of May 4, 1923); they rejected the government of the Patriarch, which was established by the Council and acknowledged by all the Eastern Orthodox Patriarchs, i.e. they rejected that which the whole of Orthodoxy accepted, and besides, they even condemned him at their pseudo-council. Contrary to the rules of the holy Apostles, the Ecumenical Councils and the holy Fathers (Apostolic canons 17, 18; Sixth Ecumenical Council, canons 3, 13, 48; St. Basil the Great, canon 12), they permit bishops to marry and clerics to contract a second marriage, i.e. they transgress that which the entire Ecumenical Church acknowledges to be a law, and which can be changed only by an Ecumenical Council.

“The reunion of the so-called new-churchmen with the holy Orthodox Church is possible only on condition that each of them recants his errors and submits to a public repentance for his apostasy from the Church. We pray the Lord God without ceasing that He may restore the erring into the bosom of the holy Orthodox Church.”[[711]](#footnote-711)

The epistle had a sobering effect on many wavering clerics. As the renovationist *Vestnik Sviashchennago Sinoda (Herald of the Holy Synod)* was forced to admit: “Immediately Peter’s appeal came out, the courage of the ‘leftist’ Tikhonites disappeared.” So at their renovationist ‘council’ “Metropolitan-Evangelist” Vvedensky publicly accused Metropolitan Peter of involvement with an émigré monarchist plot, producing a patently forged denunciation by the renovationist “bishop” Nicholas of Latin America.[[712]](#footnote-712)

The Bolsheviks gave ready support to the renovationists in their battle against Peter. Thus S. Savelev writes: “On November 11, 1925, Yaroslavsky, Skvortsov-Stepanov and Menzhinsky [members of the commission for carrying out the decree on the separation of the Church from the State] were discussing Tuchkov’s report ‘On the future policy in connection with the death of Tikhon’. A general order was given to the OGPU to accelerate the implementation of the schism that had been planned amidst the supporters of Tikhon. Concrete measures were indicated with great frankness: ‘In order to support the group in opposition to Peter (the patriarchal locum tenens…) it is resolved to publish in *Izvestia* a series of articles compromising Peter, and to use towards this end materials from the recently ended renovationist council.’… The censorship and editing of the articles was entrusted to the party philosopher Skvortsov-Stepanov. He was helped by Krasikov (Narkomyust) and Tuchkov (OGPU). This trio was given the task of censuring the declaration against Peter which was being prepared by the anti-Tikhonite group. Simultaneously with the publication in *Izvestia* of provocative articles against the patriarchal locum tenens, the Anti-Religious commission ordered the OGPU ‘to initiate an investigation against Peter’.”[[713]](#footnote-713)

Meanwhile, Tuchkov initiated discussions with Peter with regard to “legalizing” the Church. This “legalization” promised to relieve the Church’s rightless position, but on the following conditions:-

1. the issuing of a declaration of a pre-determined content;

2) the exclusion from the ranks of the bishops of those who were displeasing to the authorities;

3) the condemnation of the émigré bishops; and

4) the participation of the government, in the person of Tuchkov, in the future activities of the Church.[[714]](#footnote-714)

However, Metropolitan Peter refused to accept these conditions or sign the text of the declaration Tuchkov offered him, thereby continuing to be a rock in the path of the atheists’ plans to seize control of the Church. For, as he once said to Tuchkov: “You’re all liars. You give nothing, except promises. And now please leave the room, we are about to have a meeting.”

On December 5, 1925 Metropolitan Peter composed a will in the event of his death. And on the next day he wrote another in the event of his arrest, indicating three deputies: Metropolitan Sergius of Nizhni-Novgorod, Metropolitan Michael of the Ukraine, and Archbishop Joseph of Rostov.[[715]](#footnote-715) On December 9, the Anti-Religious Commission (more precisely: “the Central Committee Commission for carrying out the decree on the separation of Church and State”) met and approved of the activities of the OGPU in inciting the Church groupings against each other. They also determined the timing of Metropolitan Peter’s arrest. And the next day, December 10, Metropolitan Peter was placed under house-arrest…[[716]](#footnote-716)

On December 12, Metropolitan Peter was imprisoned in the Lubyanka. The other possible locum tenentes, Metropolitans Cyril and Agathangel, had already been exiled. And nearly a month earlier, on November 19, a group of bishops living in Moscow and of like mind with him were also arrested: Archbishops Nicholas of Vladimir, Pachomius of Chernigov, Procopius of the Chersonese and Gurias of Irkutsk, and Bishops Parthenius of Ananievsk, Damascene of Glukhov, Tikhon of Gomel, Barsanuphius of Kargopol, Joasaph of Chistopol and others.[[717]](#footnote-717) The communists had removed the last canonical leaders of the Russian Church, and they were ready now to place their own candidate on the throne of the Russian first-hierarch…

## 57. THE MIRACLE OF THE CROSS IN THE SKY

A critical turning-point in the history of the Greek Church was the appearance of the sign of the Cross in the sky over the Old Calendarist monastery of St. John the Theologian near Athens. This greatly strengthened the faith of the people that God was with them in the struggle.

Bishop Lazarus (Puhalo) writes: “In 1925, on the eve of the Exaltation of the All-Honourable and Life-giving Cross of our Saviour, September 14 according to the Orthodox Church calendar [27 according to the new], the all-night vigil was served in the church of St. John the Theologian in suburban Athens. By 9 o’clock that evening, more than 2000 true Orthodox faithful had gathered in and around the church for the service, since very few true Orthodox churches had been accidentally left open by the civil authorities. Such a large gathering of people could not, however, go unnoticed by the authorities. Around eleven p.m. the authorities despatched a battalion of police to the church ‘to prevent any disorders which might arise from such a large gathering.’ The gathering was too large for the police to take any direct action or to arrest the priest at that time and so they mingled with the crowd of worshippers in the already over-flowing courtyard of the church.

“Then, regardless of the true motives for their presence, against their own will, but according to the Will which exceeds all human power, they became participants in the miraculous experience of the crowd of believers.

“At 11.30 [during the procession of the Litya] there began to appear in the heavens above the church, in the direction of the North-East, a bright, radiant Cross of light. The light not only illuminated the church and the faithful but, in its rays, the stars of the clear, cloudless sky became dim and the church-yard was filled with an almost tangible light. The form of the Cross itself was an especially dense light and it could be clearly seen as a Byzantine cross with an angular cross bar towards the bottom. This heavenly miracle lasted for half an hour, until midnight, and then the Cross began slowly to rise up vertically, as the cross in the hands of the priests does in the ceremony of the Exaltation of the Cross in church. Having come straight up, the Cross began gradually to fade away.

“Human language is not adequate to convey what took place during the apparition. The entire crowd fell prostrate upon the ground with tears and began to sing hymns, praising the Lord with one heart and one mouth. The police were among those who wept, suddenly discovering, in the depths of their hearts, a childlike faith. The crowd of believers and battalion of police were transformed into one, unified flock of faithful. All were seized with a holy ecstasy.

“The vigil continued until four a.m., when all this human torrent streamed back into the city, carrying the news of the miracle because of which they were still trembling and weeping.

“Many of the unbelievers, sophists and renovationists, realizing their sin and guilt, but unwilling to repent, tried by every means to explain away or deny this miracle. The fact that the form of the cross had been so sharply and clearly that of the Byzantine Cross (sometimes called the Russian Cross), with three cross-bars, the bottom one at an angle, completely negated any arguments of accidental physical phenomena.

“The fact that such an apparition of the cross also occurred during the height of the first great heresy[[718]](#footnote-718) must strike the Orthodox with an especial sense of the magnitude of the calendar question and of all that is connected with it. No sensible person can discuss this question lightly, with secular reasoning or with worldly arguments. Renovationists, like the Arians in 351, are left without extenuation or mitigation.”[[719]](#footnote-719)

There were many eyewitness accounts. Thus John Glymis, a retired police officer, witnesses: “I was one of the men from the Police Institute who were sent to stop the vigil that night, some fifty years ago, at the country Church of St. John the Theologian. The Old Calendarists were keeping vigil there, because it was the eve of the feast of the Exaltation of the Precious Cross [according to the Old Calendar]. Since many people had gathered – more than two thousand individuals – we did not attempt to seize the priest as we had been ordered, but we sat down quietly in the nearby court and waited for them to finish. At about 11.30 at night, we heard a loud and strange uproar coming from the shouts of the multitude. Without any delay, we ran to see what was happening – and we saw. The whole multitude of the faithful was in a state of excitement. Some were weeping and others, crying out ‘Lord, have mercy!’, were kneeling and had turned their eyes toward heaven, and yet others were fainting, overwhelmed with great emotion. Then we too looked and beheld the marvel: an enormous radiant Cross, very high above the church, was illumining the whole area. At first, we were seized with fear, but immediately we came to ourselves and, forgetting the purpose for which we had been sent, we fell to our knees and wept like little children. Of course, it is superfluous for me to tell you that, filled with emotion, we attended the rest of the vigil to the end – not as persecutors but as faithful Christians. In the morning when we returned to the Institute, we told everyone about the great marvel we had been deemed worthy to see. Afterwards there was an investigation and all of us swore under oath that we had seen the Precious Cross clearly, high in the sky.”

Another eye-witness, Athanasios Primalis, was driving a tram around Omonoia square. “Immediately I stepped on the brakes and stopped the vehicle. I stuck my head out of the tram door and I, the unworthy one, also saw the Precious Cross of our Lord – may His Name be glorified. It was shining over Mount Hymettus. I don’t remember how long this lasted. I know only one thing: the Precious Cross which I saw that night turned me into a different man. Since then, everyone in my family has become a faithful child of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians…”[[720]](#footnote-720)

However, on hearing of the miracle, the new calendarist bishops declared: “What appeared before the Old Calendarists, if it really appeared, was God's testimony that they are in great spiritual deception. The sign was telling them: 'Oh, unreasonable ones, do you not know that the Exaltation of the Holy Cross has passed? So many hundreds of thousands of people agree on the fact that today is September 26, and you are still thinking it is September 13 and the eve of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross! Why, unfaithful ones, do you celebrate the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on the 27th, when it is to be done on September 14?' So, that is what this could mean, if there was any appearance at all.”[[721]](#footnote-721)

But this was a desperate attempt by the new calendarists - the heavens spoke against them…

## 58. THE STRUGGLE ON MOUNT ATHOS

The centre of the struggle against the new calendar in the Greek-speaking lands was Mount Athos. In 1924, all the monasteries except Vatopedi stopped commemorating the Ecumenical Patriarch. On Great Thursday, 1926, 450 hieromonks and monks on Mount Athos led by the Romanian Fr. Arsenius Kotteas signed “The Sacred League of the Zealot Monks” for the defence of Orthodoxy against the new calendar. The League published its Constitutional Charter under the heading “The Anchor of Orthodoxy” until it was banned by a new Charter for Mount Athos ratified by the Greek government in 1927. This did not stop the zealot monks, however, who initiated a vigorous campaign against the new calendar throughout Greece. This led to the expulsion of nineteen zealots from the sketes of Vatopedi and Koutloumousiou in 1927. Some were allowed to circulate freely through Greece, while others were confined to a monastery in Mytilene on the island of Lesbos.

In 1926 the Athonite “Sacred League” was joined by the “Greek Religious Community of the True Orthodox Christians” in Athens in the struggle for the return of the Orthodox Calendar. On October 1, 1926, Hieromonk Matthew (Karpathakis), the confessor of three of the Athonite monasteries, went to Athens to help the True Orthodox there, and in 1929 the Sacred League sent two more hieromonks.[[722]](#footnote-722)

On April 24, 1926 the State Church of Greece issued an encyclical (№ 2398 / 2203) which declared that the True Orthodox had “separated from the Church and cut themselves off from the Body of Christ, drawing upon themselves condemnation and excommunication, not knowing or, perhaps, having forgotten, that he who does not listen to the Church is like a heathen and a publican (Matthew 18.17)… The decisions of the Church are absolutely obligatory; he who does not submit to them no longer belongs to her, he is deprived of the gifts of Divine Grace; he is separated and cut off from her and is subject to eternal torment…”

So for the “sin” of simply remaining exactly where they were, and keeping to the traditions of their ancestors since apostolic times, the True Orthodox were “subject to eternal torment”!

In 1927 a patriarchal committee succeeded in negotiating a compromise that was accepted under pressure by all the monasteries but not by all the monks. The committee assured the Athonites that the calendar reform was not final in that it had not been accepted by all the Orthodox Churches. Moreover, the issue was to be reconsidered at an impending Pan-Orthodox Council that would resolve the matter. In this way, the committee persuaded the Athonites to continue following the Old Calendar while commemorating the Ecumenical Patriarch, pending the resolution of the question by a Pan-Orthodox Council. The compromise was accepted by all the Athonite monasteries, but only partially by Esphigmenou, which did not resume the commemoration of the Patriarch but did continue to receive his representatives and to commune with other monasteries that commemorated him. Moreover, they continued to concelebrate at the cathedral of the Protatou in Karyes, where the Patriarch was commemorated. Later, in the 1970s, Esphigmenou would break completely with the Patriarchate.[[723]](#footnote-723)

However, many of the monks refused to accept the compromise. And to this day Mount Athos has remained a citadel of resistance to newcalendarism and ecumenism. Even if most of the monks now commemorate the Ecumenical Patriarch, Esphigmenou, with its 117 zealot monks, remains defiant.

The spirit of these zealot monks is well caught in the following excerpt from the life of the zealot monk Habbakuk “the barefoot”: “After the adoption of the new calendar, a large number of Athonite Fathers decided to stop commemorating their bishop, who was subject to the Patriarch, and to break communion with the latter and with every church that accepted the innovation of the new calendar or even continued to be in communion with the innovators. But the majority of the monks did not dare to subscribe to this decision; whence the schism which continues to this day and whose effects are felt more and more acutely. At the beginning, twenty-four monks from the monastery of the Great Lavra rebelled, among whom was the peaceable Habbakuk.

“The quarrel was so intense that shouting could be heard even in the courtyard of the monastery. For a place in which a tranquil calm had reigned only shortly before, it was a harsh trial that suddenly flared up. Father Habbakuk shut himself in his cell. Prayer-rope in his hand, he prayed without ceasing that God bring back peace to sorely tried Athos. The monks who were faithful to Tradition continued, as before, to work in the monastery, but since they could no longer accept the commemoration of the patriarch they were not in communion of prayer with the other Fathers and celebrated separately, in a large chapel which had been granted them. Soon Fr. Habbakuk was exiled for a certain period to Vigla, to the cave of St. Athanasius. But very quickly the Fathers, seeing how noble his cause was and how much they loved him, could not stand it any longer and asked for his recall to the monastery. This time he was given the service of nurse; he was attached to the great hospital which the Lavra had for the numerous old or sick members of the community…

“However, the evil one again lay in wait. Soon his position as an old calendarist brought the elder a second exile to the cave of St. Athanasius. It was not long, however, before the sick complained: the nurse who had replaced Fr. Habbakuk did not have the strength to follow the routine of his predecessor in the very testing service of helping the sick. For Fr. Habbakuk was known to have a very strong constitution, he was the most dedicated worker of them all and never felt tired. So the sick very quickly got him back through their supplications! And one should have seen the enthusiasm with which the monks and the sick, who all loved him, reserved for his return.

“At the beginning of 1927 the community wanted to put an end, once and for all, to the pitiless quarrel which would end by destroying the monastery. And to assure them of a better success, they sent a written invitation to the governor, asking him to come and preside over the synaxis of the elders which would debate the question of the zealots faithful to the calendar of the Fathers for the last time. At the suggestion of a brother doctor, Fr. Athanasius Kambanaou, who was himself a zealot, they had elected Fr. Habbakuk to represent these Fathers. All the elders were present with the governor in the chair.

“He immediately asked Habbakuk: ‘Father, how do you explain your deserting a community in the heart of which you had previously sown anarchy? And tell me: why are you not in communion with the other Fathers?’ Fr. Habbakuk replied with meekness and humility: ‘Has your Excellency the Governor read the holy canons of the *Rudder*?’ ‘And what does the *Rudder* say, Father?’ asked the other. Fr. Habbakuk replied promptly: ‘If you don’t know it, Sir, go and read it first. Then you can come and judge us.’

“Judging that this reply constituted a grave insult to authority, the synaxis immediately exiled its author to the holy monastery of Xeropotamou. Poor Habbakuk was driven out of his place of repentance for the third time.

“About two months later, he was recalled from his exile. That day, which was March 9, they even asked him to be present at an all-night vigil with the governor. And in the morning, immediately after the service which had lasted all night, the governor mounted his mule and hurried back in haste to Karyes. Then Fr. Habbakuk, seeing an opportunity to make him hear the voice of reason, took the animal by the halter and set off on the path with him. And as they were going along he spoke to him as he knew how. He explained to him in a gentle way which had its effect on the hearer why the Fathers of the Holy Mountain were opposed to the change in the calendar, and he made him see how the ecclesiastical texts formed a good basis and justification for such an opposition. Very soon the governor was moved by the simplicity and childlike enthusiasm which Habbakuk put in his words, as well as by his admirable mastery of Holy Scripture. And it did not take him long to come to the conclusion that he was dealing with a virtuous man who was in love with an ideal. So immediately he arrived at Karyes he asked for the zealot to be returned without delay to his home monastery. Some days later, the Great Lavra received Habbakuk into its bosom again.

“However, his return did not take place without disappointment. Of the zealot fathers who had been his companions in the struggle, almost all had fled, some of their own free will and others constrained by force. And the few who remained had hastened to rejoin the Catholicon. From then on, Fr. Habbakuk had no peace until the day when, with one of the brothers who also loved the virtues, he left the monastery…

“Thus it was his love for the apostolic Tradition of the Church, a pure and disinterested love which was proof against tribulations and penalties, that always made him struggle to discern the will of God in everything. It was this love that had merited him exile to Vigla. But he had his reward: for it was also there, in the solitude of Vigla, that he was granted a multitude of spiritual goods, goods which were clearly not earned without sweat and grief, but which were great gifts for all that.

“… One day a monk whom he loved very much, Fr. Ephraim who was from the Great Lavra like himself, asked why he had become a zealot. He was given a reply full of a frank realism: ‘Because God will call me to account; he will say: “Habbakuk, you knew the law of the Church, how did you come to trample it underfoot?’ And he added that the new calendar was a ‘sacrifice of Cain’.”[[724]](#footnote-724)

## 59. THE STRUGGLE ON VALAAM

Only in one part of the Russian Church outside Moscow was the new calendar ever introduced – in Finland, whose Church, as we have seen, had been taken away from the Russian Church by Patriarch Meletius of Constantinople.

Already on July 19, 1923 he moved to force the great Russian monastery of Valaam, which was now outside Russia and within the bounds of the Finnish State, to accept the new calendar, writing mendaciously to Archbishop Seraphim (Lukyanov) that the new calendar had been accepted “with the agreement and by means of a decision of all the Orthodox Churches”.[[725]](#footnote-725)

Moreover, since the Finnish Church had accepted the western paschalion, it was likely that that, too, would be imposed on the Valaam monks…

At a general assembly of the 600 brothers, writes Nun Angelina (Zhavoronkova), “Abbot Paulinus read out an epistle from Bishop Seraphim in which he said that both Patriarchs Meletius of Constantinople and Tikhon of Moscow blessed Valaam to change to the new style from October 4. Two days later Vladyka Seraphim arrived. He was met by the objections of the brotherhood and the request that they remain with the old style. This was refused to them, and less than two weeks later five of the protesting brothers were forcibly expelled from Valaam and deprived of the mantia.

“… On June 25, 1924 the new Bishop of Karelia visited Valaam. In November the Valaam monks presented him with a petition asking him to allow them to keep the celebration at any rate of Pascha according to the old style, but this, too, was refused them, and those who refused to obey the decrees of the Finnish Church were threatened with exile from Valaam.

“Fr. Michael [Popov] was the spiritual father of the brotherhood at this exceptionally difficult time for Valaam. He encouraged everyone to remain faithful to the traditions of the Holy Orthodox Church. He often served in distant sketes and deserts and encouraged other Fathers to follow him. His nearest disciple and follower, Elder Michael the Younger, at that time Fr. Timon, was one of the most zealous defenders of the Orthodox calendar right until 1939, when the Valaam brotherhood was forced to leave their beloved monastery.

“Secret resistance increased especially in 1925. Fr. Michael sent his spiritual children by night with prosphoras to Gethsemane skete for Fr. Timon and they unfailing fulfilled their obedience, covering six kilometres every night. From the first days of the resistance the Gethsemane skete had become the place where people gathered for services according to the Old Church Calendar.

“On the question of the calendar, the Valaam monks entered into correspondence with the Athonite zealots of Holy Orthodoxy, the so-called zealots, the elders of Karoulia, especially the learned monk Theodosius, who even wrote a whole composition about the importance of the calendar question. On Valaam Hieromonk Justinian, the main correspondent in this correspondence, was a disciple of Elder Michael. While Elder Theodosius was the last spiritual disciple by correspondence with Elder Theophanes the Recluse.

“In the evening on the eve of the monastery’s feast day of SS. Sergius and Herman of Valaam, September 10, 1925, Metropolitan Germanus of Thyateira, the representative of the Patriarch of Constantinople, arrived [from London]. Having gathered together the brethren, he declared that the new calendar was being introduced from now. On September 16 the brotherhood sent to Sortavala their own representatives in the persons of Fr. Michael, Fr. Joasaph the deputy, Fr. Jerome and the other older priests of the monastery to talk with Metropolitan Germanus. With tears they besought him to keep the old style in the monastery. In reply the metropolitan irritably shouted at them. On September 20 Metropolitan Germanus accompanied by Bishop Germanus arrived on the island to celebrate the all-night vigil. Half of the brotherhood did not come to the service. He called the brotherhood to peace and love.

“Immediately after this repressions began. The antimins were taken from all the skete churches. Fr. Timon was transferred from the Gethsemane skete to the main monastery. A little later Hieromonk Polycarp was exiled to Russia to almost certain death in the concentration camps for his published articles against the leadership of the monastery.”[[726]](#footnote-726)

“On September 25, 1925,” writes Schema-Monk Nicholas of Valaam, “there was a division of people in Valaam as to the ‘old’ and ‘new’ style. Many of the brothers remained true to the old style. Legal proceedings began. The church administration arrived; there was a court with Abbot Paulinus in charge. They began to summon the brothers one by one, and many were expelled from the monastery. Then my turn also came. I went into the room, and there sat Abbot Paulinus with others from the church administration. Father Abbot said, ‘Here is a slave of God; ask him.’ One of them said that he would speak and that everything should be recorded. They asked, ‘Do you accept Fr. Paulinus as Abbot?’ ‘Will you go to church services according to the new calendar?’ I could not answer this question; it was as if my tongue had become paralysed. They hesitated and said, ‘Well, why aren’t you answering?’ I couldn’t say anything. Then they said: ‘Well, go on, slave of God, and think this over.’

“I began to pray to the Mother of God, my ‘Surety’, in my heart. ‘Tell me and indicate my life’s path: Which side should I go to, the new or old style? Should I go to the cathedral or somewhere else?’ And I, the sinful one, prayed to the Mother of God during my obedience in the kitchen. When I finished my evening obedience, I went to my cell and thought in the simplicity of my heart, ‘Why don’t you answer me, Mother of God?’ But the grace of God did not abandon me, a sinner. He wants salvation for all. Suddenly the cathedral appeared before me, the same as it is: the same height, length and width. I was amazed at this miraculous apparition – how could it enter my small cell? But my inner voice said to me: ‘Everything is possible with God. There is nothing impossible for Him.’ ‘Well,’ I thought, ‘one must go to church in the cathedral according to the new style.’ Then, as I was thinking thus, a blue curtain came down from above, in the middle of which was a golden cross. The cathedral became invisible to me, and the inner voice said to me: ‘Go to the old style and hold to it.’ And I heard a woman’s voice coming from above the corner: ‘If you want to be saved, hold fast to the traditions of the Holy Apostles and the Holy Fathers.’ And then the same thing was repeated a second time, and the third time the voice said: ‘If you want to be saved, keep fast to the tradition of the Holy Apostles and Holy Fathers, but not these “wise” men.’ After this miracle, everything disappeared and I remained alone in my cell. My heart began to rejoice that the Lord had indicated the path of salvation to me, according to the prayers of the Mother of God.” [[727]](#footnote-727)

“On September 12, 1926,” continues Nun Angelina, “the former cathedral elders of Valaam, who had remained faithful to patristic Orthodoxy, were summoned to a new trial in Serdobol. The trial was pro forma, and 35 monks were condemned to exile, while the abbot was to deal with the rest, dispersing them among all the sketes.

“On October 9 the sentence was carried out. One of those exiled from Valaam, Hieromonk Nicander, the former spiritual father of the famed Lesna monastery, remembers:

“’We shall never forget that… sad day… Our own Abbot Paulinus and our own monastic brothers handed us over to the police… For the sake of temporary comfort, out of fear of men, they drowned out the voice of their conscience and transgressed the holy canons of the Church… The day of our exile that autumn was exceptionally quiet, Lake Ladoga was calm and the first powdery snow covered Valaam… By eight o’clock in the morning we had all gathered on the ferry… the Old Calendarist monks who remained, together with some unwilling new calendarists, came to say goodbye to us; not a few tears were shed on both sides. (Even the gendarme wept, remembered Fr. Philemon.)… How bitter it was for us to leave our native nest, but our souls were at peace, for we felt that we were suffering for the sake of righteousness and that God was with us.’

“On November 15 an Investigative Commission arrived at the monastery, and in the course of four days interrogated each of the brothers on their own, asking whether they recognised Bishop Germanus and whether they would serve with him. Fr. Michael was defrocked by a church court, removed from his obedience as Spiritual Father and exiled on December 15 to the distant St. Herman skete. (According to the words of Fr. Athanasius, who left memoirs of his elder, Fr. Michael was first exiled to Tikhvin island.) Thence he was transferred to the Skete of St. John the Forerunner in 1926, where he spent the following eight years [until his death on May 8, 1934], suffering from a weakness of the heart in the severe conditions of the strictest skete on Valaam. In that year 44 of the brothers were exiled and 48 left Valaam…”[[728]](#footnote-728)

In 1939, when the Soviets captured Old Valaam, the spiritual life of the great monastery came to an end…[[729]](#footnote-729)

## 60. THE ALBANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Although Albania had been overrun by several foreign armies during World War One, she still managed – just – to retain a certain independence. But national unity was a big problem. The lack of literacy, and the lack of a tradition of statehood, meant that rivalries between clans, and the refusal of certain religious, linguistic and ethnic minorities to accept incorporation into the new State continually undermined its unity.

In 1913 about 4.7% of the population was Greek-speaking, and considered themselves to belong to the Greek province of Northern Epirus, not Albania. There were also some Serbian Orthodox in the north-east around Shkodra, both Slavs and Albanians, who looked towards Yugoslavia, and whose needs had been served, since 1912, by an Archimandrite Victor (Mikhailovich), a Montenegrin appointed by the Metropolitan of Cetinje as Administrator of the Vicariate of Shkodra. According to Adit Bito, the Metropolitan claimed that Albania’s liberation from the Ottoman Empire implied that the Ecumenical Patriarchate had been expelled from the region, and so the Orthodox communities of Shkodra region should not be part of the Prizren diocese, which was still under the Ecumenical Patriarchate, but under the metropolia of Cetinje.[[730]](#footnote-730)

At the end of the world war the Ecumenical Patriarchate recognized the Serbian Patriarchate’s jurisdiction over the Prizren diocese, and therefore over Northern Albania, in a special *Tomos.* However, in 1922, in order to discourage separatist tendencies on the part of the Greek and Serbian minorities, Ahmet Bey Zogolli, successively interior minister, prime minister and first king of Albania, decreed that all clergy in the country (of all three religions: Muslim, Catholic and Orthodox) should be native Albanians.[[731]](#footnote-731) He also encouraged the creation of an autocephalous Albanian Orthodox Church.

In order to prevent this move, however, the Patriarchate of Serbia under its new Patriarch Demetrius consecrated Victor in June, 1922 as Vicar-Bishop of Scutari for the Serbian Orthodox living in Albania - which had the advantage of pitting the Serbian and Ecumenical Patriarchates against each other in a struggle for jurisdiction in Albania.[[732]](#footnote-732)

“This move,” writes Bito, “was coordinated with [the] Albanian authorities, through the mediation of a central figure of [the] Albanian Orthodox Movement, Archimandrite Visar Xhuvani. Yugoslav officials had promised to help him in the process of [the] Albanian Church’s Autocephaly recognition, in exchange [for] privileges [for] the Orthodox community in Shkodra. The Albanian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was declared in September 1922 in the Congress of Berat. Bishop Viktor entered Albania in December 1922, being permitted by the Albanian Authorities. However, the newly established High Church Council, which provisionally governed the Albanian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, rejected his installation as a local bishop. [The] Albanian Church’s Statute sanctioned that a bishop had to be Albanian citizen of two generations, as well as [that he] should have been elected [by] the High Church Council. Protests from [the] Albanian Orthodox media and the suspicion that [the] Serbian Patriarchate [had] acted in cooperation with its Ecumenical counterpart made [the] Albanian Authorities order Bishop Viktor [to] halt his activity in Shkodra. This development triggered a diplomatic conflict between Albania and Yugoslavia. [The] Yugoslav authorities deemed the Albanian act as illegal, as long as the Albanian Church had yet not been recognized as Autocephalous by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, an argument considered void by Tirana.”

Eventually, after the intervention of Italy, France and Great Britain, the Yugoslav authorities proposed that Bishop Victor “be aligned with the Albanian Orthodox Church. [The] Albanian authorities counter-proposed that Viktor could be accepted as a nonresident temporary visiting bishop. This proposal was refused [by] Italy, France and Great Britain, [and the] Yugoslav Government stated that the Church issue of Shkoder was between the Serbian and Albanian churches and not between the two governments. After a second intermediation from Archimandrite Visar Xhuvani, [the] Albanian Government and Church agreed to provisionally allow Bishop Viktor mass in Shkodra for his personal religious needs, but gradually he gained control of the local church, giving an end to the first phase of conflict between Albania and Yugoslavia on the Church issue of Shkodra.”[[733]](#footnote-733)

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At this point one of the most colourful figures in the history of World Orthodoxy appeared on the scene. On November 21, 1923 Archimandrite Theophan (Noli) was consecrated to the episcopate of the Autocephalous Church of Albania as Bishop of Durres. In 1924 he began official negotiations with the patriarchate of Constantinople restricting himself at first to demanding only Church autonomy. The patriarchate did not object to this in principle, but demanded that the language of Divine services in the Albanian Church should remain only Greek. The Albanians categorically rejected this, and relations with Constantinople worsened.[[734]](#footnote-734)

However, Bishop Theophan was much more than a church figure. He was also, according to Tomes, “leader of the Democratic Party, League of Nations delegate, Bachelor of Arts, biographer of Skanderberg, translator of Stendhal, Maupassant and Molière, liturgist, composer and orator. A stocky Tosk with a big beard jutting above his clerical collar, Bishop Noli had been an actor in Athens, a schoolmaster in Egypt, a lumberman in Buffalo, a canning-factory worker in New York, a cinema organist in Boston, and a student at Harvard before settling in Albania in 1921 at the age of thirty-nine. He was Orthodox purely in the confessional sense, and even that was questionable. Ordained a deacon by the Russian Orthodox archbishop of New York in 1908, Noli founded an Albanian Orthodox Church in the USA with himself as its sole priest. Privately, meanwhile, he claimed to be a Nietzschean and, at various times, labelled Christianity a capitalist instrument of enslavement and stated that the whole truth was in Omar Khayyam. He admitted submitting religion to politics in the best Albanian tradition. His church was intended to promote national consciousness among Christian Turks hitherto attached to Greek Orthodoxy. He translated the liturgy and made himself a bishop by persuading an assembly of Albanian-Americans to acclaim him as such in 1919. Despite his pioneering work, it was only with reluctance that the new native Albanian Orthodox Church accepted him. Some fanciful critics even alleged that he wore an artificial beard in order to look more Episcopal.

“During fourteen years in the USA, Noli had won pre-eminence within the Albanian community there, which numbered over twenty thousand. He went to London in 1913 to lobby for independence and campaigned for international recognition after the World War. It delighted foreigners to engage in intellectual discourse with an Albanian bishop. He was a complex man whose style was often self-mocking. Sometimes he sounded sure of his messianic significance; moments later, his tone might be flippantly cynical.”[[735]](#footnote-735)

In 1924 Noli led a successful insurrection against Zogu, who fled the country. Supported politically and financially by thousands of American Albanians, for émigré writers “Bishop Noli symbolised enlightenment, democracy and progress, while Zog connoted ignorance, autocracy and reaction”.

However, once in power, he “established a mixed military-civilian cabinet without reference to Parliament, and seemed in no hurry to hold elections. England was the curse of Europe, he said, as free institutions copied from Westminster were nothing but ‘a bloody farce’.”[[736]](#footnote-736)

Moreover, he made contact with the Soviets, who sent a mission to Tirana in December disguised as choristers! Noli continued to prove his communist credentials when, at the end of World War Two, he urged the Americans to recognize the communist Hoxha regime…[[737]](#footnote-737) This flirting with the Soviets enraged foreign governments, especially the Yugoslav King Alexander. And so with Yugoslav and White Russian backing Zog returned to power. Bishop Theophan was forced to flee to America, where he became the leader of the Albanian Orthodox in that country.[[738]](#footnote-738)

Zog controlled the new government, which came to resemble an Italian protectorate (the Italians paid more than the Yugoslavs). In 1928 he was proclaimed king of “a democratic, parliamentary, hereditary monarchy”. (Predictably this was denounced by Bishop Noli as “an odious crime against the Albanian people” and “a farce prepared at Rome and played at Tirana”.[[739]](#footnote-739)) “A cult of the Pelasgians and assertions that ancient Macedonia, Epirus and Illyria were all Albanian states enabled nationalistic historians to provide Zog with a list of precursors that included Achilles, Alexander the Great, Pyrrhus of Epirus, Queen Teuta of Illyria, Diocletian, Constantine the Great and Justinian…”[[740]](#footnote-740)

In 1925, the Albanian Archimandrite Vissarion (Govanni), who had been elected in 1922 during a “Great Albanian Orthodox Church Council”, was consecrated as the first national bishop of Albania by two hierarchs of ROCOR, Michael of Stavropol and Germogen of Yekaterinoslav in the monastery of St. Savvas. This probably took place with the knowledge of the Serbian Church authorities.[[741]](#footnote-741)

In February, 1929, Bishop Vissarion together with Bishop Victor (Mikhailovich) of the Serbian Orthodox Church, who had been living in Albania for several years, without any prior agreement with Constantinople, consecrated three bishops, all Albanians. These four bishops then formed a Synod of the Albanian Orthodox Church, which immediately elected Bishop Vissarion as its president and the archbishop of All Albania. Immediately after receiving confirmation from King Zog, the Synod proclaimed the Albanian Church autocephalous, of which event its first-hierarch promptly informed the other Orthodox Churches.

The Albanian Synod then accepted a constitution according to which “the official language of the Albanian Church is Albanian… The archbishop, bishops, regional hierarchal representatives, the great mitre-bearing econom, the chief secretary of the Holy Synod, and also the clergy that are the assistants and deputies of the Archbishop and bishops must be Albanians by blood and language and also Albanian subjects… All clergy mentioned in article 16 who are now in service with the Autocephalous Church of Albania, if they do not have the properties mentioned in the above-mentioned article, are deprived of their Church rank immediately the present Constitution comes into force.”[[742]](#footnote-742)

King Zog himself, though formally Muslim, was interested in religion only from a political point of view. The Roman Church worried him “because of his foreign connections, especially after the rapprochement between Mussolini and the Vatican. Italy did indeed subsidise Albanian Catholicism, and [the Italian diplomat Baron] Aloisi inspired a move to bring the Albanian Orthodox Church into communion with Rome: a Uniate church opened at Elbasan on 21 September, 1929. The same day, the King proclaimed a law on religious communities giving him control over appointments and finances.”[[743]](#footnote-743)

The Greek Albanians, meanwhile, were feeling aggrieved because the 1914 treaty on the status of Northern Epirus had not been fulfilled, and schools for Greek-speakers were being nationalised.

“Athens accused Tirana of violating minority rights and appealed to the League of Nations. Zog made concessions in 1934 but failed to halt the bitter war of words. At one point, he threatened to dismiss every Greek-Albanian in public service, and there was also talk of swamping the Greek minority district with refugees from Kosovo.

“When, eventually, the Permanent Court of International Justice gave its advisory opinion in favour of Greece, Albania complied in full and Greek private schools reopened. ‘A death blow’ to national unity, grumbled Zog.”[[744]](#footnote-744)

In April, 1937 the Ecumenical Patriarchate recognized the autocephaly of the Albanian Church, with certain qualifications.[[745]](#footnote-745) This was surprising in view of the anti-Greek bias of this Church. Quite apart from its illegal autocephaly and introduction of the new calendar, the blatant phyletism (nationalism) of this new Albanian Church would be sufficient to demonstrate its heterodoxy…

## 61. THE RISE OF METROPOLITAN SERGIUS

The events that followed the arrest and imprisonment of Metropolitan Peter in December, 1925 are not at all clear. We know that a struggle for power took place between a group of bishops led by Archbishop Gregory (Yatskovsky) of Yekaterinburg (Sverdlovsk), on the one hand, and Metropolitan Sergius of Nizhni-Novgorod (Gorky), on the other, a struggle which Sergius eventually won. It is usually considered that the Gregorians were the agents of the atheist authorities, whose plot was foiled by Sergius, and this may well have been the case.

However, it may be closer to the truth to say that the authorities were playing the two groups off against each other, and would have been happy with either outcome provided it gave them a more malleable church leader than Metropolitan Peter.

According to the more generally accepted version of events, on December 14, although unable to leave Nizhni-Novgorod at the time, Metropolitan Sergius, without consulting with any other senior bishop, announced that he was taking upn himself the rights and duties of the deputy of the Patriarchal locum tenens. However, he was prevented by the OGPU from coming to Moscow, many bishops refused to recognize him (for example, Archbishop Andrew of Ufa), and on December 22, 1925, a group of nine bishops led by Archbishop Gregory gathered at the Donskoy monastery.

The Grigorians, as they came to be called, gave a brief description of the succession of first-hierarchal power since 1917, and then declared concerning Metropolitan Peter: “It was not pleasing to the Lord to bless the labours of this hierarch. During his rule disorders and woes only deepened in the Holy Church… In view of this we… have decided to elect a Higher Temporary Church Council for the carrying out of the everyday affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church and for the preparation of a canonically correct Council… Moreover, we have firmly decided not to enter into any relationship or communion with the renovationists and renovationism in all its forms… Instead, we consider it our duty to witness to our complete legal obedience to the powers that be of the Government of the USSR and our faith in its good will and the purity of its intentions in serving the good of the people. We in turn ask them to believe in our loyalty and readiness to serve the good of the same people…”[[746]](#footnote-746)

These words clearly revealed the pro-Soviet inspiration of the group. The next day they sought legalisation from the GPU, and ten days later, on January 2, 1926, they received it. On January 7, *Izvestia* published an interview with Archbishop Gregory thanking the authorities.

On January 14, Metropolitan Sergius wrote to Archbishop Gregory demanding an explanation for his usurpation of power. Gregory replied on January 22, saying that while they recognized the rights of the three locum tenentes, “we know no conciliar decision concerning you, and we do not consider the transfer of administration and power by personal letter to correspond to the spirit and letter of the holy canons.”[[747]](#footnote-747) This was a valid point which was later to be made by several catacomb bishops. But Sergius wrote again on January 29, impeaching Gregory and his fellow bishops, banning them from serving and declaring all their ordinations, appointments, awards, etc., since December 22 to be invalid.

It was a moot question whether Sergius had the power to act in this way. On February 26, Archbishop Hilarion of Verey wrote to Sergius from prison: “The temporary ecclesiastical organ must unite, and not divide the episcopate, it is not a judge or punisher of dissidents – that will be the Council.”[[748]](#footnote-748) However, on March 18 Sergius wrote to Metropolitan Peter attempting to justify his “rights” as “first bishop”, able to ban bishops even before the Council. And he gave the similar actions of Patriarch Tikhon and Metropolitan Peter himself as precedents.[[749]](#footnote-749) But here he “forgot”, as he was to “forget” again later, that his own position was much weaker than that of the Patriarch or Metropolitan Peter, each of whom were recognized in their time by the majority of the episcopate as the true head of the Russian Church.

On January 29, three Grigorian bishops wrote to Metropolitan Peter claiming that they had not known, in their December meeting, that he had transferred his rights to Sergius, and asking him to bless their administration. The free access the Grigorians had to Peter during this period, and the fact that Sergius was at first prevented from coming to Moscow, suggests that the GPU, while not opposing Sergius, at first favoured the Gregorians as their best hope for dividing the Church.[[750]](#footnote-750)

On February 1 the Grigorians obtained an interview with Metropolitan Peter in prison, in which they asked him to annul Sergius’ rights as his deputy and, in view of Sergius’ inability to come to Moscow from Nizhni and the refusal of the other deputies, Michael of Kiev and Joseph of Rostov, to accept the deputyship, to hand over the administration of the Church to them. Fearing anarchy in the Church, Metropolitan Peter went part of the way to blessing the Grigorians’ undertaking. However, instead of the Grigorian Synod, he created a temporary “college” to administer the Church’s everyday affairs consisting of Archbishop Gregory, Archbishop Nicholas (Dobronravov) of Vladimir and Archbishop Demetrius (Belikov) of Tomsk, who were well-known for their firmness.

The Grigorians and Tuchkov, who was present at the meeting, were silent about the fact that Nicholas was in prison and that Demetrius could not come to Moscow. This conspiracy of silence again suggests that they were in league with each other.

Tuchkov proceeded to a further deception: he agreed to summon Demetrius from Tomsk, and even showed Peter the telegram – but never sent it. When Peter, feeling something was wrong, asked for the inclusion of Metropolitan Arsenius (Stadnitsky) in the college of bishops, Tuchkov again agreed and promised to sign Peter’s telegram to him. Again, the telegram was not sent.

It has been argued by Lev Regelson[[751]](#footnote-751) that Metropolitan Peter’s action in appointing deputies was not canonical, and created misunderstandings that were to be ruthlessly exploited later by Metropolitan Sergius. A chief hierarch does not have the right to transfer the fullness of his power to another hierarch as if it were a personal inheritance: only a Council representing the whole Local Church can elect a leader to replace him. Patriarch Tikhon’s appointment of three locum tenentes was an exceptional measure, but one which was nevertheless entrusted to him by – and therefore could claim the authority of – the Council of 1917-18. However, the Council made no provision for what might happen in the event of the death or removal of these three. In such an event, therefore, patriarchal authority ceased, temporarily, in the Church; and there was no canonical alternative, until the convocation of another Council, but for each bishop to govern his diocese independently while maintaining links with neighbouring dioceses, in accordance with the Patriarch’s ukaz no. 362 of November 7/20, 1920.

In defence of Metropolitan Peter it may be said that it is unlikely that he intended to transfer the fullness of his power to Metropolitan Sergius, but only the day-to-day running of the administrative machine. In fact he explicitly said this later, in his letter to Sergius dated January 2, 1930.[[752]](#footnote-752) Moreover, in his declaration of December 6, 1925, he had given instructions on what should be done in the event of his arrest, saying that “the raising of my name, as patriarchal locum tenens, remains obligatory during Divine services.”[[753]](#footnote-753) This was something that Patriarch Tikhon had not insisted upon when he transferred the fullness of his power to Metropolitan Agathangel in 1922. It suggests that Metropolitan Peter did not exclude the possibility that his deputy might attempt to seize power from him just as the renovationists had seized power from the patriarch and his locum tenens in 1922, and was taking precautions against just such a possibility.

The critical distinction here is that whereas the patriarchal locum tenens has, de jure, all the power of a canonically elected Patriarch and need relinquish his power only to a canonically convoked Council of the whole local Church, the deputy of the locum tenens has no such fullness of power and must relinquish such rights as he has at any time that the Council or the locum tenens requires it. Nevertheless, the important question remains: why did Metropolitan Peter not invoke ukaz no. 362 and announce the decentralization of the Church’s administration at the time of his arrest? Probably for two important reasons:

1. The restoration of the patriarchate was one of the main achievements of the Moscow Council of 1917-18, and had proved enormously popular. Its dissolution might well have dealt a major psychological blow to the masses, who were not always educated enough to understand that the Church could continue to exist either in a centralized (though not papist) form, as it had in the East from 312 to 1917, or in a decentralized form, as in the catacombal period before Constantine the Great and during the iconoclast persecution of the eighth and ninth centuries.

2. The renovationists – still the major threat to the Church in Metropolitan Peter’s eyes – did not have a patriarch, and their organization was, as we have seen, closer to the synodical, state-dependent structure of the pre-revolutionary Church. The presence or absence of a patriarch or his substitute was therefore a major sign of the difference between the true Church and the false for the uneducated believer.

There is another important factor which should be mentioned here. Under the rules imposed upon the Church administration by Peter the Great in the eighteenth century, the Ruling Synod was permitted to move bishops from one see to another, and even to retire, ban or defrock them, in a purely administrative manner. This was contrary to the Holy Canons of the Church, which envisage the defrocking of a bishop only as a result of a full canonical trial, to which the accused bishop is invited to attend three times. Peter’s rules made the administration of the Church similar to that of a government department – which is precisely what the Church was according to his *Reglament*. It enabled the State to exert pressure on the Church to move and remove bishops in the speediest and most efficient manner, without the checks and balances – and delays – that following the Holy Canons would have involved. This was bad enough in itself, even when the State was kindly disposed towards the Church. It was catastrophic when the State became the enemy of the Church after 1917…

Now Patriarch Tikhon, while not rescinding Peter’s rules, had opposed the pressure of the State, on the one hand, and had preserved the spirit of sobornost’, or conciliarity, on the other, consulting his fellow bishops and the people as far as possible. But the danger remained that if the leadership of the Church were assumed by a less holy man, then the combination of the uncanonical, Petrine government, on the one hand, and an increase of pressure from the State, on the other, would lead to disaster…

On February 4, 1926, Metropolitan Peter fell ill and was admitted to the prison hospital. A war for control of the Church now developed between the Grigorians and Sergius. The Grigorians pointed to Sergius’ links with Rasputin and the “Living Church”: “On recognizing the Living Church, Metropolitan Sergius took part in the sessions of the HCA, recognized the lawfulness of married bishops and twice-married priests, and blessed this lawlessness. Besides, Metropolitan Sergius sympathized with the living church council of 1923, did not object against its decisions, and therefore confessed our All-Russian Archpastor and father, his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, to be ‘an apostate from the true ordinances of Christ and a betrayer of the Church’, depriving him of his patriarchal rank and monastic calling. True, Metropolitan Sergius later repented of these terrible crimes and was forgiven by the Church, but that does not mean that he should stand at the head of the Church’s administration.”[[754]](#footnote-754)

All this was true; but these arguments were not strong enough to maintain the Grigorians’ position, which deteriorated as several bishops declared their support for Sergius. In particular, Archbishop Hilarion of Verey, who had been released from prison for talks with the GPU, refused to recognise the Grigorians – for which he received an extension of his sentence. Another bishop who strongly rejected the Grigorians was Basil of Priluki.

Yaroslavsky, Tuchkov and the OGPU had already succeeded in creating a schism between Metropolitan Sergius and the Grigorians. They now tried to fan the flames of schism still higher by releasing Metropolitan Agathangel, the second candidate for the post of patriarchal locum tenens, from exile and persuading him to declare his assumption of the post of locum tenens, which he did officially from Perm on April 18. They also decided, at a meeting in the Kremlin on April 24, to “strengthen the third Tikhonite hierarchy – the Temporary Higher Ecclesiastical Council headed by Archbishop Gregory, as an independent unit.”[[755]](#footnote-755)

On April 22, Metropolitan Sergius wrote to Metropolitan Peter at the Moscow GPU, as a result of which Peter withdrew his support from the Grigorians, signing his letter to Sergius: “the penitent Peter”. It would be interesting to know whether Sergius knew of Metropolitan Agathangel’s declaration four days earlier when he wrote to Peter. Hieromonk Damascene (Orlovsky) claims that Agathangel did not tell Sergius until several days later.[[756]](#footnote-756) But the evidence is ambiguous; for Gubonin gives two different dates for the letter from Agathangel to Sergius telling the latter of his assumption of the rights of the patriarchal locum tenens: April 18 and 25.[[757]](#footnote-757) If the later date is correct, then Sergius cannot be accused of hiding this critical information from Metropolitan Peter. If, however, the earlier date is correct, then Sergius already knew of Agathangel’s assumption of the rights of locum tenens, and his keeping quiet about this very important fact in his letter to Metropolitan Peter was highly suspicious. For he must have realized that Metropolitan Agathangel, having returned from exile (he actually arrived in his see of Yaroslavl on April 27), had every right to assume power as the eldest hierarch and the only patriarchal locum tenens named by Patriarch Tikhon who was in freedom at that time. In view of the very ruthless behaviour now displayed by Metropolitan Sergius, it seems likely that he deliberately decided to hide the information about Metropolitan Agathangel’s return from Metropolitan Peter.

In fact, with the appearance of Metropolitan Agathangel the claims of *both* the Grigorians *and* Sergius to supreme power in the Church collapsed. But Sergius, having tasted of power, was not about to relinquish it so quickly; and just as Metropolitan Agathangel’s rights as locum tenens were swept aside by the renovationists in 1922, so now the same hierarch was swept aside again by the former renovationist Sergius. The chronology of events reveals how the leadership of the Russian Church was usurped for the second time…

On April 30, Sergius wrote to Agathangel rejecting his claim to the rights of the patriarchal locum tenens on the grounds that Peter had not resigned his post. In this letter Sergius claims that he and Peter had exchanged opinions on Agathangel’s letter in Moscow on April 22 – but neither Sergius nor Peter mention Agathangel in the letters they exchanged on that day and which are published by Gubonin.[[758]](#footnote-758) Therefore it seems probable that Peter’s decision not to resign his post was based on ignorance of Agathangel’s appearance on the scene. Indeed, there can be little doubt that if he had known he would have immediately handed over the administration of the Church to Agathangel.

On May 13, Agathangel met Sergius in Moscow, where, according to Sergius, they agreed that if Peter’s trial (for unlawfully handing over his authority to the Grigorians} ended in his condemnation, Sergius would hand over his authority to Agathangel. However, Sergius was simply playing for time, in order to win as many bishops as possible to his side. And on May 16, he again wrote to Agathangel, in effect reneging on his agreement of three days before: “If the affair ends with Metropolitan Peter being acquitted or freed, I will hand over to *him* my authority, while your eminence will then have to conduct discussions with Metropolitan Peter himself. But if the affair ends with his condemnation, you will be given the opportunity to take upon yourself the initiative of raising the question of bringing Metropolitan Peter to a church trial. When Metropolitan Peter will be given over to a trial, you can present your rights, as the eldest [hierarch] to the post of Deputy of Metropolitan Peter, and when the court will declare the latter deprived of his post, you will be the second candidate to the locum tenancy of the patriarchal throne after Metropolitan Cyril.”[[759]](#footnote-759)

In other words, Sergius in a cunning and complicated way rejected Agathangel’s claim to be the lawful head of the Russian Church, although this claim was now stronger than Metropolitan Peter’s (because he was in prison and unable to rule the Church) and *much* stronger than Sergius’.

On May 20, Agathangel sent a telegram to Sergius: “You promised to send a project to the Bishops concerning the transfer to me of the authorizations of ecclesiastical power. Be so kind as to hurry up.” On the same day Sergius replied: “Having checked your information, I am convinced that you have no rights; [I will send you] the details by letter. I ardently beseech you: do not take the decisive step.” On May 21, Agathangel sent another telegram threatening to publish the agreement he had made with Sergius and which he, Sergius, had broken. On May 22, Sergius wrote to Peter warning him not to recognize Agathangel’s claims (the letter, according to Hieromonk Damascene (Orlovsky), was delivered personally by Tuchkov, which shows which side the OGPU was on!). However, Peter ignored Sergius’ warning and wrote to Agathangel on May 22 (and again on May 23), congratulating him on his assumption of the rights of patriarchal locum tenens and assuring him of his loyalty.

At this point Sergius’ last real canonical grounds for holding on to power – the support of Metropolitan Peter – collapsed.[[760]](#footnote-760) But Agathangel only received this letter on May 31, a (OGPU-engineered?) delay that proved to be decisive for the fortunes of the Russian Church. For on May 24, after Sergius had again written rejecting Agathangel’s claims, the latter wrote: “Continue to rule the Church… For the sake of the peace of the Church I propose to resign the office of locum tenens.”[[761]](#footnote-761) On the same day Sergius, savagely pressing home his advantage, wrote to the administration of the Moscow diocese demanding that Agathangel be tried by the hierarchs then in Moscow. When Agathangel eventually received Peter’s letter (which was confirmed by a third one dated June 9), he wrote to Sergius saying that he would send him a copy of the original and informing him that he had accepted the chancellery of the patriarchal locum tenens. And he asked him to come to Moscow so that he could take over power from him. But it was too late; Sergius was already in control of the Church’s administration and refused to come to Moscow saying that he had signed a promise not to leave Nizhni-Novgorod (although he had gone to Moscow only two weeks before!). And on May 30 / June 12, in a letter to Metropolitan Peter, Agathangel finally renounced all claims to the locum tenancy.

Why did Metropolitan Agathangel renounce the post of locum tenens at this point? The reason he gave to Sergius was his poor health; but some further light is shed on this question by Schema-Bishop Peter (Ladygin), who wrote that when Metropolitan Agathangel returned from exile, “everyone began to come to him. Then Tuchkov with some archimandrite came to Agathangel and began to demand from him that he hand over his administration to Sergius. Metropolitan Agathangel did not agree to this. Then Tuchkov told him that he would now go back into exile. Then Agathangel, because of his health and since he had already been three years in exile, resigned from the administration [the post of locum tenens] and left it to Peter of Krutitsa as the lawful [locum tenens] until the second candidate, Metropolitan Cyril, should return from exile. I heard about this when I personally went to him in Yaroslavl and he himself explained his situation to me. And he said that the canonical administration was now really in the hands of Cyril, and temporarily, until the return of Cyril, with Metropolitan Peter. He did not recognize Sergius or Gregory…”[[762]](#footnote-762)

Bishop Peter goes on to write: “I asked him: 'What must we do in the future if neither Cyril nor Peter will be around? Who must we then commemorate?' He said: 'There is still the canonical Metropolitan Joseph, formerly of Uglich, who is now in Leningrad. He was appointed by his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon as a candidate in case the Patriarch, I, Cyril and Anthony [Khrapovitsky] died.'“ Bishop Peter for a time commemorated Metropolitan Agathangel as locum tenens.[[763]](#footnote-763)

The astonishing extent of Sergius’ usurpation of power is revealed in his fifth letter to Agathangel, dated June 13, in which he refused to submit even to Metropolitan Peter insofar as the latter, “having transferred to me, albeit temporarily, nevertheless in full, the rights and obligations of the locum tenens, and himself being deprived of the possibility of being reliably informed of the state of ecclesiastical affairs, can neither bear responsibility for the course of the latter, nor, a fortiori, meddle in their administration… I cannot look on the instructions of Metropolitan Peter that have come out of prison as other than instructions or, rather, *as the advice of a person without responsibility* [italics mine – V.M.].”

A sergianist source comments on this letter: “It turns out that, once having appointed a deputy for himself, Metropolitan Peter no longer had the right to substitute another for him, whatever he declared. This ‘supple’ logic, capable of overturning even common sense, witnessed to the fact that Metropolitan Sergius was not going to depart from power under any circumstances.”[[764]](#footnote-764)

Sergius also said that Agathangel was given over to a hierarchical trial for his anticanonical act, for greeting which Metropolitan Peter “himself becomes a participant in it and is also subject to punishment”.[[765]](#footnote-765) In other words, Sergius, though only Metropolitan Peter’s deputy as locum tenens for as long as the latter recognized him as such, was not only usurping the rights of the full (and not simply deputy) locum tenens, but was also threatening to bring to trial, on the charge of attempting to usurp the locum tenancy, two out of the only three men who could canonically lay claim to the post![[766]](#footnote-766)

## 62. DIVISIONS WITHIN ROCOR

In 1926, sharp differences of opinion began to emerge between the first two members of the ROCOR Synod, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev and Archbishop Theophan (Bystrov) of Poltava. One of these, we have seen, concerned the new calendar, on which Archbishop Theophan took an uncompromising position, considering the new calendarists to be schismatics, while Metropolitan Anthony accepted them (including the new calendarist Church of Poland, which had broken away from the Russian Church). Another, still more important dispute concerned the Church’s teaching on redemption…

In 1926 there was published the second edition of Metropolitan Anthony’s *Dogma of Redemption,* an attempt to conceptualise the mystery of salvation by means of a sharp contrast between redemption understood as an act of supremely compassionate love in which the satisfaction of justice played no significant role, on the one hand, and redemption understood as unquestionably an act motivated by love but aiming essentially towards the satisfaction of God’s justice, being a sacrifice of God the Son to the Holy Trinity, the so-called “juridical theory”, on the other. The “juridical theory” was rejected by Metropolitan Anthony as “scholastic”, although it is the standard model of redemption to be found in the Holy Scriptures, the Holy Fathers and the Divine service-books of the Orthodox Church. According to him, the satisfaction of the justice of God was a “secondary, incidental aspect” of redemption; he sought to disengage, as it were, God’s justice from His love in the economy of salvation. In fact, our salvation, according to Metropolitan Anthony, was not accomplished by a restoration of justice between God and man, but simply through an outpouring of Christ’s compassionate love for man, as shown particularly in the Garden of Gethsemane, onto the whole of mankind. Metropolitan Anthony’s theory of redemption had already been sharply criticized before the revolution by Archbishop Victor of Vyatka, and had other critics in the Catacomb Church such as Archbishop Demetrius of Gdov and Hieromonk Theodore Andreyev.

Archbishop Theophan, supported by his vicar, Bishop Seraphim (Sobolev), disagreed with the metropolitan.[[767]](#footnote-767) He considered the so-called “juridical theory” to be Orthodox, and Metropolitan Anthony’s views on both redemption and original sin to be not Orthodox (he refrained from using the word “heretical”). While agreeing that God’s motivation was always, and supremely, love, Archbishop Theophan could not agree that justice was secondary and incidental to our salvation, insofar as salvation consists in the destruction of the sin that separates us from God, which was achieved through the restoration of justice between God and man through the Sacrifice on the Cross. Nor could he agree with the metropolitan’s attempt to reduce the importance of Golgotha by comparison with Gethsemane.

The issue first came to a head in a session of the Synod held in April, 1926. On the one hand, the Synod expressed its approval of Metropolitan Anthony’s *Catechism*. On the other hand, no decision was made to replace the *Catechism* of Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, the standard Catechism of the Russian Church, which Metropolitan Anthony criticised as “scholastic” but which Archbishop Theophan considered completely Orthodox.

Metropolitan Anthony’s views were also condemned by an official representative of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Protopriest Milosh Parenta, who wrote in that Church’s official organ: “When Metropolitan Anthony approaches a scientific-theological review and explanation of the dogmas, then either he insufficiently comprehends them, or he cannot avoid the temptation of, and enthusiasm for, modernism. The explanation of the dogma of Redemption offered by the author in his work openly destroys the teaching on this truth faithfully preserved by the Orthodox Church, and with it the Christian Religion itself, because the truth of the redemption together with the truth of Christ’s incarnation is its base and essence”. To which the editor added: “However, it is necessary to recognize that it is very difficult to analyse this work of the author, because in it there are often no definite and clear concepts, although there are many extended speeches which hide the concepts or say nothing, and because in part there are no logical connections in it, nor any strictly scientific exposition, nor systematic unity.”[[768]](#footnote-768)

The dispute rumbled on. Thus in letters to Hieroschemamonk Theodosius of Mount Athos, a theologian who took the side of Archbishop Theophan, Metropolitan Anthony expressed the suspicion that Archbishop Theophan was in “spiritual delusion”, and continued to reject “the juridical theory of Anselm and Aquinas, completely accepted by P[eter] Moghila and Metropolitan Philaret”. And again he wrote: “We must not quickly return to Peter Moghila, Philaret and Macarius: they will remain subjects for historians”.

For his part, Archbishop Theophan was unhappy that Metropolitan Anthony did not abandon his mistaken views on redemption, but only refrained from pressing for their official acceptance by the Synod. As he wrote on February 16/29, 1932: “Under the influence of the objections made [against his work], Metropolitan Anthony was about to take back his *Catechism*, which had been introduced by him into use in the schools in place of Metropolitan Philaret’s *Catechism*. But, as became clear later, he did this insincerely, and with exceptional persistence continued to spread his incorrect teaching *On Redemption* and many other incorrect teachings contained in his *Catechism.*”

The general approach taken thereafter towards Metropolitan Anthony’s *Dogma* was not to dispute it openly, and in any case not to call it a heresy.[[769]](#footnote-769)

An attempt to have it published again in Canada in the early 1970s was successfully foiled through the efforts of ROCOR hierarchs Averky, Andrew, Athanasius and Nektary (although it was published later in English).[[770]](#footnote-770)

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Archbishop Theophan and Bishop Seraphim again cooperated fruitfully in the struggle that ensued between the leadership of ROCOR and its West European diocese of ROCOR under Metropolitan Evlogy. The quarrel centred around the foundation of the St. Sergius Theological Institute in Paris, which was largely inspired and financed by a Masonic organization, the YMCA.[[771]](#footnote-771) The St. Sergius Institute became the breeding ground of a circle of heterodox theologians known as “the Paris school”, whose leading lights were Fr. Sergius Bulgakov, Nicholas Berdyaev, Semyon Frank, Lev Zander, Nicholas Lossky and Nicholas Zernov.

The Paris theologians were both theologically and politically liberal. Berdyaev, for example, “asserted that the struggle with communism was not pleasing to God and antichristian. Berdyaev was echoed by the no less ‘Orthodox’ [Semyon Ludwigovich] Frank, who, while attacking ‘the idol of politics’ and recognizing that the Bolsheviks were ‘not pleasing to God’, at the same time insisted that ‘hatred for the Bolsheviks’, as well as politics directed at their overthrow, was as displeasing to God as ‘the idol of the revolution’ itself.”[[772]](#footnote-772)

The Paris theologians were supported by Metropolitan Evlogy of Paris, and they in turn supported him. This symbiotic relationship, combined with the intrigues of the communists, laid the basis for the schism of the “Paris exarchate” from the Russian Church Abroad. The beginning of the schism was discernible in the session of ROCOR’s Hierarchical Council of June 30, 1926. Archbishop Theophan read a report linking the YMCA with Masonry, and the St. Sergius Theological Institute with the YMCA. In the same report Vladyka exposed the ecumenist teachings of several teachers at the Institute, including Bulgakov, Kartashev, Berdyaev and Zenkovsky. Then the question arose of separating the German diocese into a separate diocese from Metropolitan Evlogy’s West European diocese. Evlogy rebelled, insisting that either he was given autonomous rights in Western Europe or he would separate from the Synod. Not receiving the agreement of the other bishops, he went into schism, taking all his vicar-bishops and parishes with him. About sixty clergy, the majority in Western Europe, followed him into schism.[[773]](#footnote-773)

Archbishop Averky writes: “Archbishop Theophan was the first to expose and document the anti-Christian nature of certain so-called Christian organizations, some of which were eager to extend their influence to the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, and even to subjugate it to themselves somewhat by rendering financial assistance much needed by our refugees who had no stable sources of their own to draw from in exile. Vladyka Theophan himself categorically refused to accept the monthly allowance offered to him by these organizations, and did not approve of those who did, for he believed that this caused them to lose their spiritual freedom, and that in one way or another they would consequently be forced to do the will of their sponsors. Vladyka Theophan guarded his independence and spiritual freedom, preferring a beggarly existence to a secure situation. This discloses the most characteristic trait of our great pastor, a trait that he shared with the great Fathers of Christian antiquity: any compromise of conscience, no matter how small, was for him altogether inconceivable. In all of his actions and conduct, in his private life as well as in his service to the Church and society, he was utterly constant, never departing in any way from what his convictions dictated. Absolute incorruptibility, uncompromising honesty and straightforwardness, demand for unconditional loyalty to the true Church, to the Word of God, and to Patristic tradition – these were his hallmarks, ideals which guided his life and which he liked to see in other servants of the Church as well.”[[774]](#footnote-774)

In August, 1926, Archbishop Theophan wrote: “The real causes of the division are deeper than would appear at first glance. Two of them are especially significant. ‘They’ consider the Soviet authorities as ‘ordained by God’, but we consider them antichristian. On the basis of overwhelming documentary evidence, we recognized that the YMCA is a masonic organization. They consider it a Christian organization.” And he predicted: “Metropolitan Evlogy will not give in. Those around him are pushing him toward schism. We could let him have his way, but we cannot entrust the fate of Orthodoxy to him. He is ensnared in the nets of the YMCA. The YMCA in turn is having a demoralizing effect on student groups. In the magazine *The Way* № 5, Professor Berdyaev stated openly that the schism in the church is unavoidable and necessary. Metropolitan Evlogy is the only hierarch who ‘has raised his consciousness to the realization that it is necessary to reform Orthodoxy’, and he is therefore ‘a tool of God’s Providence’ in our days!”[[775]](#footnote-775)

However, Archbishop Theophan was not finding the support that he might have expected from Metropolitan Anthony. He protested against the publication of an epistle of Metropolitan Anthony dated July 22, 1926 to the secretary of the Russian Student Christian Movement, L. Liperovsky, which said that it was not forbidden to be an official of the YMCA.[[776]](#footnote-776)

Again, on February 29, 1927 he wrote a report to the ROCOR Synod to which he attached two reports of the “Russian Patriotic Society” and a report of four laymen protesting against the letter of Metropolitan Anthony published in *Vozrozhdenie*: “The clear and categorical resolution of the Council of 1926 on the YMCA was violated soon after the end of this Council not only by Metropolitan Eulogius together with the bishops subject to him (Archbishop Vladimir, Archbishop Seraphim and Bishop Benjamin), but also by the president of the Council himself, Metropolitan Anthony, as also by Archbishop Anastasy who followed his example. Believing Orthodox people were particularly disturbed by the written declarations on this question by the president of the Council Metropolitan Anthony which were published in the newspaper *Vozrozhdenie* (22 July, 1926 and 10 September, 1926) and in № 10 of the *Vestnik Russkogo Studencheskogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia*, in which he calls the resolution of the Council of 1926 with regard to the YMCA a simple ‘repetition of the response of the Council of 1921’ and based on the Council member’s ‘small knowledge’ of this question (letter of June 22, 1926 printed in the newspaper *Vozrozhdenie*. According to the witness of the composers of the Paris report, this kind of declaration of the president of the Council with regard to the resolution of the Council of 1926 on the question of the YMCA ‘is now interpreted by everyone as nothing other than a juridical annulment of their meaning and significance’ (pp. 9-10). On their side, the composers of the reports find that the president of the Council does not have the right to make declarations in the press annulling the meaning and significance of conciliar resolutions, both in general and in particular with regard to this question, and ask the Synod to confirm and, if possible, clarify the true meaning of the conciliar resolutions on the given question. Moreover, they declare that if they find no support in their struggle for the purity of Orthodoxy in the Synod, they will be forced ‘to seek, with the pastors faithful to Orthodoxy, ways of saving the Russian Church without the Synod and even in spite of it (Paris report, p. 16), following the example of the brotherhoods of the South-West of Russia in the 16th and 17th centuries…”[[777]](#footnote-777)

Vladyka Theophan “warned and admonished, but his warnings were not heeded in time and the subsequent reproach of those who broke away [Evlogy of Paris and Plato of America] not only had no positive results, but even deepened the division, as Vladyka had also foreseen. Such ecclesiastical schisms and divisions caused Vladyka to sorrow in his heart, to suffer in his soul and to grieve. Although he had at the very beginning identified the root of the problem, he did not always approve of the measures taken to stop the schisms and establish unity in the Church, and he indicated the errors sometimes made in so doing.”[[778]](#footnote-778)

Archbishop Seraphim of Finland wrote: “… If relations with Russia are impossible, then the dioceses abroad are canonically bound to have a temporary ecclesiastical authority, which was indicated by the Synod and Patriarch of Moscow in 1920 [in ukaz № 362]. In addition, I cannot understand why Metropolitan Evlogy, alone of all the diocesan hierarchs abroad, should continually have bad relations with the [ROCOR] Synod and threatens to make a schism (he has written about this to me many times). All the other hierarchs – of Japan, of China and of Harbin, and I, who rule the Finnish Church, have all voluntarily and peacefully submitted to the Councils and the Synod, although I, for example, am not bound to do this. After all, Metropolitan Evlogy is the same as all the other diocesan hierarchs, and the whole of the Church Abroad has never been subject to him. He was given to rule only the abroad part of the Petrograd diocese, and nothing more, and he can in no way be considered the head of the Church Abroad. I, for example, have occupied a more lofty see than all the other hierarchs, but I have never striven towards disunity or disobedience to the Synod…”[[779]](#footnote-779)

On January 26, 1927 the ROCOR Synod suspended Metropolitan Evlogy and his vicar bishops pending an ecclesiastical trial that was to take place at the next Council. On February 4, the Synod sent a circular letter to all the parishes in the Diocese of Western Europe in which it announced its decision of January 26 and exhorted the faithful not to commune with the suspended Metropolitan, bearing in mind that the validity of the Mysteries received might be placed in doubt.

There were schisms in many dioceses in Western Europe; in London, for example, where supporters of the two camps were about equally divided, two parishes sharing the same church but with different hierarchs were formed.[[780]](#footnote-780)

On September 8, the Council of Bishops convened an Episcopal Tribunal comprising twelve bishops to judge the case of Evlogy. He was condemned, and the Act of Sentence read, in part: “Every liturgical function performed by him is devoid of grace, the Mysteries administered by him are not Mysteries, and the ordinations he performs are anticanonical.”

The Council again appealed to the clergy of the Western European diocese, threatening them with canonical penalties, and Archbishop Seraphim, in the name of the Council, wrote a declaration to all the faithful of the Western European diocese that “it is absolutely forbidden, under pain of excommunication for schism, to remain in prayerful communion with Metropolitan Evlogy, Archbishop Vladimir, Bishop Sergius and their clergy, since the Mysteries administered by them are devoid of benefit.”[[781]](#footnote-781)

Unfortunately, Evlogy was under the strong influence of the Paris theologians, who supported him as he supported them. They encouraged him to remain in schism from ROCOR, knowing that ROCOR saw through their heretical ideas.

The most notorious of these ideas was Fr. Sergius Bulgakov’s heresy about the mythological, quasi-divine figure of Sophia, which was based, according to Archbishop Theophan in a letter written in 1930, “on the book of Fr. [Paul] Florensky, *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth*. But Florensky borrowed the idea of Sophia from V.S. Soloviev. And V.S. Soloviev borrowed it from the medieval mystics.

“In V.S. Soloviev Sophia is the feminine principle of God, His ‘other’. Florensky tries to prove that Sophia, as the feminine principle of God, is a special substance. He tries to find this teaching in St. Athanasius the Great and in Russian iconography. Protopriest Bulgakov accepts on faith the basic conclusions of Florensky, but partly changes the form of this teaching, and partly gives it a new foundation. In Bulgakov this teaching has two variants: a) originally it is a special Hypostasis, although not of one essence with the Holy Trinity (in the book *The Unwaning Light*), b) later it is not a Hypostasis but ‘hypostasisness’. In this latter form it is an energy of God coming from the essence of God through the Hypostases of the Divinity into the world and finding for itself its highest ‘created union’ in the Mother of God. Consequently, according to this variant, Sophia is not a special substance, but the Mother of God.

“According to the Church teaching, which is especially clearly revealed in St. Athanasius the Great, the Sophia-Wisdom of God is the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Here, in the most general terms, is the essence of Protopriest Bulgakov’s teaching on Sophia! To expound any philosophical teaching shortly is very difficult, and so it is difficult to expound shortly the teaching of the ‘sophianists’ on Sophia. This teaching of theirs becomes clear only in connection the whole of their philosophical system. But to expound the latter shortly is also impossible. One can say only: their philosophy is the philosophy of ‘panentheism’, that is, a moderate form of ‘pantheism’. The originator of this ‘panentheism’ in Russia is V.S. Soloviev.”

In 1935 both the Moscow Patriarchate and ROCOR condemned Sophianism as heretical, which forced Metropolitan Eulogius to create a commission to investigate Bulgakov’s teaching. Although the majority of the commission members were supporters of Bulgakov, the metropolitan also appointed to it Fr. Georges Florovsky, the foremost “conservative” at the institute, who was known to be opposed to Bulgakov’s teaching.

“Up to the time of the commission,” writes Andrew Blane, “each had expounded his views through lectures and writings, neither apparently inclined to rebut directly the opinions of the other. The closest that Florovsky had come to open reproach was his ‘harsh review’ in 1930 of a belated Western language edition of Father Pavel Florensky’s ‘psychological esoteric’ Sophian book on the Church,’ whose exposition was known to be generally aking to that promulgated by Bulgakov. Now as a member of the Metropolitan’s investigative commission, Florovsky could no longer avoid open assessment of Father Bulgakov’s Sophiological speculations. His conclusion was that however mistaken those views were, they could not be judged heretical. To begin with, Bulgakov had made no effort ‘to substitute his teaching for the teaching of the Church.’ And although ‘… a theologian is, of course, responsible,… theology should not be taken, or mistaken, for Church doctrine. I, for one,’ continued Father Georges, ‘would repudiate and reject critically the contentions of Bulgakov… And Zenkovsky never concealed that he said that the starting point of the whole theological system of Bulgakov was wrong… but it is a theological dispute.’ Another member of the commission, Father Chetverikov, took the same stance: ‘erroneous, yes; heretical, no.’ The other commission members, said Father Georges, were either of the view there was insufficient substance for the matter to be decreed a theological error, much less heresy, or that the whole matter was the artefact of ecclesiastical intrigue, and thereby called for full exoneration.

“The commission’s deliberations, according to Florovsky, were supposed to proceed in secrecty to assure a full airing of opinions, but regrettably the gist of the various members’ views became known to the Paris emigration on the morrow after the very first meeting. Without access to the details and nuances of the discussions, the wider public tended to view Florovsky’s and Chetverikov’s reluctance to absolve Bulgakov without some qualification as a veiled attempt to brand him a heretic. The remainder of the story as reported by Father Georges is equally unhappy: the majority never submitted its report, and it has never been explained why; a minority report, belatedly prepared by Father Chetverikov, with his and Florovsky’s signatures, was later turned over to the Metropolitan. The bishops of the Church were then assembled to consider the case, and a retractio was asked of Father Bulgakov. He complied, and so far as his jurisdictional superiors were concerned, the matter was closed.”[[782]](#footnote-782)

However, Bulgakov continued to be popular in Paris, and the influence of the Paris school in general continued to vitiate Russian Orthodox life for several decades to come. Florovsky, meanwhile, was forced to spend less and less time in Paris. Eventually he emigrated to America...

## 63. THE CHURCH DECENTRALIZED

On June 7, 1926 a group of bishops imprisoned in the former monastery of Solovki in the White Sea issued an epistle that squarely faced up to the problems of Church-State relations: “The signatories of the present declaration are fully aware of how difficult the establishment of mutually reliable relations between the Church and the State in the conditions of present-day actuality are, and they do not consider it possible to be silent about it. It would not be right, it would not correspond to the dignity of the Church, and would therefore be pointless and unpersuasive, if they began to assert that between the Orthodox Church and the State power of the Soviet republics there were no discrepancies of any kind. But this discrepancy does not consist in what political suspicion wishes to see or the slander of the enemies of the Church points to. The Church is not concerned with the redistribution of wealth or in its collectivization, since She has always recognized that to be the right of the State, for whose actions She is not responsible. The Church is not concerned, either, with the political organization of power, for She is loyal with regard to the government of all the countries within whose frontiers She has members. She gets on with all forms of State structure from the eastern despotism of old Turkey to the republics of the North-American States. This discrepancy lies in the irreconcilability of the religious teaching of the Church with materialism, the official philosophy of the Communist Party and of the government of the Soviet republics which is led by it.

“The Church recognizes spiritual principles of existence; Communism rejects them. The Church believes in the living God, the Creator of the world, the Leader of Her life and destinies; Communism denies His existence, believing in the spontaneity of the world’s existence and in the absence of rational, ultimate causes of its history. The Church assumes that the purpose of human life is in the heavenly fatherland, even if She lives in conditions of the highest development of material culture and general well-being; Communism refuses to recognize any other purpose of mankind’s existence than terrestrial welfare. The ideological differences between the Church and the State descend from the apex of philosophical observations to the region of immediately practical significance, the sphere of ethics, justice and law, which Communism considers the conditional result of class struggle, assessing phenomena in the moral sphere exclusively in terms of utility. The Church preaches love and mercy; Communism – camaraderie and merciless struggle. The Church instils in believers humility, which elevates the person; Communism debases man by pride. The Church preserves chastity of the body and the sacredness of reproduction; Communism sees nothing else in marital relations than the satisfaction of the instincts. The Church sees in religion a life-bearing force which does not only guarantee for men his eternal, foreordained destiny, but also serves as the source of all the greatness of man’s creativity, as the basis of his earthly happiness, sanity and welfare; Communism sees religion as opium, inebriating the people and relaxing their energies, as the source of their suffering and poverty. The Church wants to see religion flourish; Communism wants its death. Such a deep contradiction in the very basis of their Weltanschauungen precludes any intrinsic approximation or reconciliation between the Church and the State, as there cannot be any between affirmation and negation, between yes and no, because the very soul of the Church, the condition of Her existence and the sense of Her being, is that which is categorically denied by Communism.

“The Church cannot attain such an approximation by any compromises or concessions, by any partial changes in Her teaching or reinterpretation of it in the spirit of Communism. Pitiful attempts of this kind were made by the renovationists: one of them declared it his task to instil into the consciousness of believers the idea that Communism is in its essence indistinguishable from Christianity, and that the Communist State strives for the attainment of the same aims as the Gospel, but by its own means, that is, not by the power of religious conviction, but by the path of compulsion. Others recommended a review of Christian dogmatics in such a way that its teaching about the relationship of God to the world would not remind one of the relationship of a monarch to his subjects and would rather correspond to republican conceptions. Yet others demanded the exclusion from the calendar of saints ‘of bourgeois origin’ and their removal from church veneration. These attempts, which were obviously insincere, produced a profound feeling of indignation among believing people.

“The Orthodox Church will never stand upon this unworthy path and will never, either in whole or in part, renounce her teaching of the Faith that has been winnowed through the holiness of past centuries, for one of the eternally shifting moods of society…”[[783]](#footnote-783)

On June 10, Metropolitan Sergius issued an address to the archpastors, pastors and flock of the Russian Church in the same spirit, noting that there were certain irreconcilable differences between the Church and the State. At the same time, however, he argued for the necessity of the Church being legalized by the State: “The lack of free registration for our church government bodies is creating for the hierarchy many practical inconveniences, imparting to its activities a kind of secret and even conspiratorial character, which, in turn, generates all sorts of misunderstandings and suspicion. And he went on: “On receiving the right to a legal existence, we clearly take account of the fact that, together with rights, obligations are also laid upon us in relation to those authorities that give us these rights. And I have now taken upon myself, in the name of the whole of our Orthodox Old-Church hierarchy and flock, to witness before Soviet power to our sincere readiness to be completely law-abiding citizens of the Soviet Union, loyal to its government and decisively setting ourselves apart from all political parties and undertakings directed to the harm of the Union. But let us be sincere to the end. We cannot pass over in silence the contradictions which exist between us Orthodox people and the Bolshevik-Communists who govern our Union. They see their task to be the struggle against God and His authority in the hearts of the people, while we see the significance and aim of our entire existence in the confession of faith in God as well as in the widest dissemination and affirmation of that faith in the hearts of the people. They accept only the materialistic conception of history, while we believe in Divine Providence, in miracles, etc. Far from promising reconciliation of that which is irreconcilable and from pretending to adapt our Faith to Communism, we will remain from the religious point of view what we are, that is, Old Churchmen or, as they call us, Tikhonites…”[[784]](#footnote-784)

With regard to the émigré bishops, who were, as we have seen, among the most anti-Soviet of the Russian bishops, Metropolitan Sergius kept to the same position as his predecessors, rejecting the possibility of taking any sanctions against them: “We cannot assume punitive functions and apply ecclesiastical punishments for vengeance… To inflict ecclesiastical punishment upon the émigré clergy for their disloyalty to the Soviet Union would be wholly inappropriate and would give unnecessary occasion for people to speak of the Soviet regime compelling us to do so.”

A little later some ROCOR bishops asked Metropolitan Sergius to mediate in the dispute between their Synod and Metropolitan Evlogy of Paris, who refused to recognize the Synod’s authority. In his reply of September 12, 1926, Sergius refused “to be a judge in a case of which I know absolutely nothing… And in general, can the Moscow Patriarchate be the leader of the life of Orthodox émigrés?” No, he replied. And he called on the émigré bishops to create a single “central organ of Church administration which would be sufficiently authoritative to resolve all misunderstandings and differences, and which would have the power to cut off all disobedience, without recourse to our support. For grounds will always be found to suspect the authenticity of our instructions.”[[785]](#footnote-785)

And again in its letter of April, 1927, Sergius’ Synod said that to govern the Orthodox dioceses which have arisen abroad “from Moscow is in the ecclesiastical sense impossible due to the lack of legal forms of relations with them”, demonstrating in detail that the Moscow Ecclesiastical Authorities were unable to judge the hierarchs abroad because the canons did not permit an ecclesiastical trial for political crimes, and also because it was impossible formally to organize a correct canonical court.”[[786]](#footnote-786)

This letter is important as it constitutes a de facto recognition of ROCOR by the Moscow Patriarchate. That recognition was withdrawn only when ROCOR refused to accept Sergius’ demand, in 1927, that her hierarchs swear loyalty to the Soviet Union…

The increasing divisions in the Church required the convening of a Church Council and the election of a lawful patriarch. This was the only possible way to solve the problem according to Orthodox tradition. But the Council had to take place in secret because of the authorities’ obstructionist tactics.

“Such a secret Council,” writes Sergius Shumilo, “took place de facto in 1926 by means of the collection of the signatures… The initiators of this secret election of a patriarch were Bishops Paulinus (Kroshechkin), Cornelius (Sobolev) and Athanasius (Sakharov), who relied on the support of the exiled Solovki bishops. Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) at first refused to support this initiative of the episcopate. However, the signatures of 25 bishops in support of the carrying out of the election of a patriarch were collected. Besides, this undertaking received the written support of the bishops in exile on Solovki. In such a situation Metropolitan Sergius was forced to submit to the opinion of the majority, although he declined from active support of this conciliar undertaking. As Archbishop Cornelius (Sobolev) witnessed concerning this: ‘In my opinion, he [Metropolitan Sergius] was as it were not especially inclined to carry out the matter of the election of Cyril, but the situation and the canons obliged him to do this’.

“In the absence of lawful ecclesiastical power the growing disagreements between Metropolitan Agathangelus, Metropolitan Sergius, Archbishop Gregory and others, the carrying out of a secret Council and election at it of a canonical head of the Russian Church seemed the only exist from the dead-end that had emerged. Bishop Paulinus (Kroshechkin) clarified his actions as follows: ‘In view of the worrying situation of the Church it was desirable to begin the matter of the election of a patriarch’… By November, 1926 72 signatures had collected in support of the election of Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan as the all-Russian patriarch.

“However, the conciliar will of the episcopate of the Russian Church was simply not realized in life because of the opposition of Soviet power. During the final phase of the elective process two participants in the secret collection of signatures [messengers of Bishop Paulinus] were unexpectedly arrested. The OGPU now had in its hand almost all the documents of this enterprise that had not been sanctioned by the authorities, including election ballots with the signatures of bishops. The majority of the participants in the secret conciliar election were arrested and cast into prisons or camps. Metropolitan Cyril was also not allowed to execute his duties. On December 21, 1926 he was arrested by the organs of the OGPU and cast into prison for a new term (his term of exile had expired in the autumn of 1926). Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) was also arrested in connection with this affair. However, by contrast with the other hierarchs, he was very quickly released. As it turned out, the OGPU had been informed from the beginning about the secret elections of a patriarch and used this process for fresh repressions against the episcopate. There is an opinion that it was a planned provocation in which Metropolitan Sergius took part. But no confirmation of this version has yet been found…”[[787]](#footnote-787)

On December 8 Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd took over as Peter’s deputy, in accordance with the latter’s will of one year before.[[788]](#footnote-788) But Joseph was prevented from leaving Yaroslavl by the authorities, so he handed the leadership of the Church to his deputies: Archbishop Cornelius (Sobolev), Archbishop Thaddeus (Uspensky) and Archbishop Seraphim (Samoilovich) of Uglich. On December 29, Metropolitan Joseph was arrested, and on the same day Archbishop Seraphim wrote that he was taking upon himself the duties of the deputy of the patriarchal locum tenens.[[789]](#footnote-789)

In the same month of December, 1926, Tuchkov proposed to Metropolitan Peter, who was in prison in Suzdal, that he renounce his locum tenancy. Peter refused, and then sent a message to everyone through a fellow prisoner that he would “never under any circumstances leave his post and would remain faithful to the Orthodox Church to death itself”.[[790]](#footnote-790)

Then, on January 1, 1927, while he was in Perm on his way to exile on the island of Khe in Siberia, Metropolitan Peter confirmed Sergius as his deputy, being apparently unaware of the recent changes in the leadership of the Church.[[791]](#footnote-791) Though he came to regret this decision, Metropolitan Peter was not able to revoke it officially from his remote exile. And Metropolitan Sergius now acted as if he did not exist…

At the beginning of March, Archbishop Seraphim was summoned from Uglich to Moscow and interrogated for three days by the GPU. He was offered a Synod, and indicated who should be its members. Seraphim refused, and put forward his own list of names, which included Metropolitan Cyril.

“But he’s in prison,” they said.

“Then free him,” said the archbishop.

The GPU then presented him with the familiar conditions for legalization.

Arfed Gustavson writes: “He refused outrightly without entering into discussions, pointing out that he was not entitled to decide such questions without the advice of his imprisoned superiors. When he was asked whom he would appoint as his executive deputy he is said to have answered that he would turn over the Church to the Lord Himself. The examining magistrate was said to have looked at him full of wonder and to have replied:

“’All the others have appointed deputies…’

“To this Seraphim countered: ‘But I lay the Church in the hands of God, our Lord. I am doing this, so that the whole world may know what freedom Orthodox Christianity is enjoying in our free State.’”[[792]](#footnote-792)

This was a decisive moment, for the central hierarch of the Church was effectively declaring the Church’s decentralization…

And not before time. For with the imprisonment of the last of the three possible locum tenentes the last slender canonical basis for establishing a central administration for the Church before the convocation of a Local Council disappeared. But the communists would in no way allow the convocation of a Council... Now the system of deputies of the deputy of the locum tenens had no basis in Canon Law or precedent in the history of the Church. And if it was really the case that the Church could not exist without a first hierarch and central administration, then the awful possibility existed that with the fall of the first hierarch the whole Church would fall, too…

The communists also wanted a centralized administration; so Tuchkov now turned to Metropolitan Agathangel with the proposal that he lead the Church. He refused. Then he turned to Metropolitan Cyril with the same proposal. He, too, refused. The conversation between Tuchkov and Metropolitan Cyril is reported to have gone something like this:-

“If we have to remove some hierarch, will you help us in this?”

“Yes, if the hierarch appears to be guilty of some ecclesiastical transgression… In the contrary case, I shall tell him directly, ‘The authorities are demanding this of me, but I have nothing against you.’”

“No!” replied Tuchkov. “You must try to find an appropriate reason and remove him as if on your own initiative.”

To this the hierarch replied: “Evgeny Nikolayevich! You are not the cannon, and I am not the shot, with which you want to blow up our Church from within!”[[793]](#footnote-793)

## 64. THE RELEASE OF METROPOLITAN SERGIUS

On March 20 / April 2, 1927 Metropolitan Sergius was released from prison on condition that he did not leave Moscow. In fact, this was no punishment, for – even before his arrest he had not had the right to live in Moscow. However, the investigation of his case was not discontinued, showing that the authorities still wanted to keep him on a leash... Five days later, Archbishop Seraphim handed over to him the government of the Russian Church. And another six days later, on April 13, Metropolitan Sergius announced to Bishop Alexis (Gotovtsev), who was temporary administrator of the Moscow diocese, that he had assumed the post of deputy of the patriarchal locum tenens.[[794]](#footnote-794)

Meanwhile, Bishop Athanasius (Sakharov) was given a three-year term on Solovki for “being a member of a group of hierarchs headed by Metropolitan Sergius”.[[795]](#footnote-795) But why, then, was not Metropolitan Sergius himself imprisoned? Why give privileges to the head of the group while exiling the members of the group? At the same time, on March 28, Metropolitan Cyril was given another term in exile – and it is clear from the court records that the main reason was his secret election as patriarch, which Metropolitan Sergius had organized.[[796]](#footnote-796) Again, why was Cyril, who probably knew nothing about the election, exiled again, while Sergius, the organizer of the election, was released? Evidently Sergius had reached an agreement with the authorities, while Metropolitan Cyril had rejected any such agreement…

On May 16 Sergius asked the NKVD for permission to hold a preliminary meeting with six or seven hierarchs with a view to inviting them to become members of a Synod and then to petition the government for registration of the Synod. The NKVD immediately agreed, acknowledging receipt of one rouble for the certificate. “Thus a one-rouble certificate inaugurated the history of the legalized Moscow Patriarchate.”[[797]](#footnote-797)

On May 18 the meeting took place, and the hierarchs agreed to convert their meeting into a temporary Patriarchal Holy Synod. The members of this Synod, according to Archbishop Seraphim’s subdeacon, were precisely those hierarchs that had been suggested to Archbishop Seraphim, but whom he had rejected…

On May 20, the OGPU officially recognized this Synod[[798]](#footnote-798), which suggested that Metropolitan Sergius had agreed to the terms of legalization which Patriarch Tikhon and Metropolitan Peter had rejected. One of Sergius’ closest supporters, Bishop Metrophanes of Aksaisk, had once declared that “the legalization of the church administration is a sign of heterodoxy”. This legalization was certainly a sign of Sergius’ heterodoxy…

We have seen Sergius’ leading role in the first Church revolution in 1917 and in the second, renovationist one in 1922, when he officially declared the renovationists’ Higher Church Authority to be “the only canonical, lawful supreme ecclesiastical authority, and we consider all the decrees issuing from it to be completely lawful and binding”.[[799]](#footnote-799) In 1923 Metropolitan Sergius had supported the renovationists’ defrocking of Patriarch Tikhon as “a traitor to Orthodoxy”. True, on August 27, 1923, he was forced to offer public repentance for his betrayal of Orthodoxy in renovationism. But as Hieromartyr Damascene later pointed out, he had not been in a hurry to offer repentance…

Moreover, as the Catholic writer Deinber points out, “the fact of the liberation of Metropolitan Sergius at this moment, when the repressions against the Church throughout Russia were all the time increasing, when his participation in the affair of the election of Metropolitan Cyril (Smirnov), for which a whole series of bishops had paid with exile, was undoubted, immediately aroused anxiety, which was strengthened when, on April 9/22, 1927, Bishop Paulinus [Kroshechkin] was freed, and when, on April 25 / May 8, a Synod was unexpectedly convoked in Moscow. It became certain that between Metropolitan Sergius, during his imprisonment, and the Soviet government, i.e. the GPU, some sort of agreement had been established, which placed both him and the bishops close to him in a quite exceptional position relative to the others. Metropolitan Sergius received the right to live in Moscow, which right he had not enjoyed even before his arrest. When the names of the bishops invited to join the Synod were made known, then there could be no further doubts concerning the capitulation of Metropolitan Sergius before Soviet power. The following joined the Synod: Archbishop Sylvester (Bratanovsky) – a former renovationist; Archbishop Alexis Simansky – a former renovationist, appointed to the Petrograd see by the Living Church after the execution of Metropolitan Benjamin [Kazansky]; Archbishop Philip [Gumilevsky] – a former beglopopovets, i.e. one who had left the Orthodox Church for the sect of the beglopopovtsi; Metropolitan Seraphim [Alexandrov] of Tver, a man whose connections with the OGPU were known to all Russia and whom no-one trusted…”[[800]](#footnote-800)

In any case, on May 25 Metropolitan Sergius and his “Patriarchal Holy Synod” now wrote to the bishops enclosing the OGPU document and telling them that their diocesan councils should now seek registration from the local organs of Soviet power. Some hierarchs hastened to have their diocesan administrations legalized. But as it turned out, the OGPU was in no hurry to register diocesan councils before their membership had been established to the OGPU’s satisfaction… This was done, in the case of the Petrograd diocese, “to expose the enemies”, as the Petrograd comrades explained to Tuchkov.[[801]](#footnote-801)

“In 1929,” writes Fr. Alexander Mazyrin, “when the results were already obvious, [the Catacomb Church] Bishop Damascene (Tsedrik) wrote this in his ‘Letter to the Legalized Ones’: ‘Fathers and brothers! While it is still not too late, do think and look into the essence of the ‘legalization’ that was graciously granted to you, lest you should later bitterly repent of the mistake that all of you with Metropolitan Sergius at your head are now committing! What you are accepting under the name of ‘legalization’ is, in essence, an act of bondage that guarantees you no rights whatsoever, while imposing upon you some grievous obligations. It would be naïve to expect anything other than that. The Communist Soviet Power is frank and consistent. It openly declared itself hostile to religion and set the destruction of the Church as its goal. It has never ceased from stating openly and clearly its theomachistic tasks through its top governmental representatives and all of its junior agents. This is why it is very naïve and criminal to believe that the so-called legalization by the Soviets is even partially seeking the good of the Church.”[[802]](#footnote-802)

In June, 1927 Sergius wrote to Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris directing him to sign a declaration of loyalty to the Soviet power. He agreed, “but on condition that the term ‘loyalty’ means for us the apoliticisation of the émigré Church, that is, we are obliged not to make the ambon a political arena, if this will relieve the difficult situation of our native Mother Church; but we cannot be ‘loyal’ to Soviet power: we are not citizens of the USSR, and the USSR does not recognise us as such, and therefore the political demand is from the canonical point of view non-obligatory for us…”[[803]](#footnote-803)

On July 14, in ukaz № 93, Sergius demanded that all clergy abroad should sign a formal pledge to cease criticizing the Soviet government. He also stated that any clergyman abroad who refused to sign such would no longer be considered to be a part of the Moscow Patriarchate. This ukaz, which completely contradicted his previous ukaz of September 12, 1926, which blessed the hierarchs abroad to form their own independent administration, even included the actual text of the pledge that was to be signed: “I, the undersigned, promise that because of my actual dependence upon the Moscow Patriarchate, I will not permit myself in either my social activities nor especially in my Church work, any expression that could in the least way be considered as being disloyal with regard to the Soviet government.”[[804]](#footnote-804)

The clergy abroad were given until October 15 to sign this pledge. The ROCOR Council of Bishops, in their encyclical dated August 26, 1927, refused this demand and declared: "The free portion of the Church of Russia must terminate relations with the ecclesiastical administration in Moscow [i.e., with Metropolitan Sergius and his synod], in view of the fact that normal relations with it are impossible and because of its enslavement by the atheist regime, which is depriving it of freedom to act according to its own will and of freedom to govern the Church in accordance with the canons."[[805]](#footnote-805)

On September 13, Metropolitan Eulogius wrote to Sergius asking that he be given autonomy. On September 24 Sergius replied with a refusal.[[806]](#footnote-806)

The impossible demands that Sergius’ appeal for loyalty to the Soviet Union placed on hierarchs living outside the Soviet Union was pointed out by the future hieromartyr, Archbishop John of Latvia, to Metropolitan Eleutherius of Lithuania: “As far as I know you, your co-pastors and flock, the question of loyalty to the USSR and the openly antitheist authorities in power there can be resolved sincerely by you only in a negative sense. But if you and your flock were not such as I know you to be, the confession of loyalty to the USSR and the authorities in power there would still be impossible for you from a juridical point of view. Both you and your co-pastors and flock are obliged under oath to be faithful citizens of the Lithuanian Republic. Simultaneous fidelity both to Lithuania and the USSR is juridically unthinkable. But even if it were not a question of loyalty in the sense of fidelity to the USSR where the ‘appeal’ [of Metropolitan Sergius] was born, but in the sense of benevolence towards the USSR, then all the same you, as a faithful son of Lithuania, cannot in the future and in all cases promise benevolence towards the USSR…”[[807]](#footnote-807)

On July 5, 1928, the Hierarchical Synod of ROCOR decreed: “The present ukaz [of Sergius] introduces nothing new into the position of the Church Abroad. It repeats the same notorious ukaz of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon in 1922, which was decisively rejected by the whole Church Abroad in its time.”[[808]](#footnote-808) In response to this refusal, Metropolitan Sergius expelled the hierarchs of the Russian Church Abroad from membership of the Moscow Patriarchate. So the first schism between the Russian Church inside and outside Russia took place as a result of the purely political demands of Sergius’ Moscow Patriarchate.

ROCOR’s rejection of Sergius’ demands was supported by the Solovki bishops: “The epistle threatens those church-servers who have emigrated with exclusion from the Moscow Patriarchate on the grounds of their political activity, that is, it lays an ecclesiastical punishment upon them for political statements, which contradicts the resolution of the All-Russian Council of 1917-18 of August 3/16, 1918, which made clear the canonical impermissibility of such punishments, and rehabilitated all those people who were deprived of their orders for political crimes in the past.”[[809]](#footnote-809)

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Meanwhile, ominous events were taking place in Georgia. “Between June 21 and 27, 1927,” writes Fr. Elijah Melia, “a Council elected as Catholicos Christopher Tsitskichvili. On August 6 he wrote to the Ecumenical Patriarch Basil III who replied addressing him as Catholicos. The new Catholicos entirely changed the attitude of the ecclesiastical hierarchy towards the Soviet power, officially declared militant atheist, in favour of submission and collaboration with the Government.”[[810]](#footnote-810)

During a synodal session under the presidency of the new Catholicos, it was decided to introduce the new style into the Georgian Church. However, the reform was rejected by the people and the majority of the priests. So it fell through and was repealed within a few months.

All this, according to Boris Sokolov, took place under the influence of the head of the Georgian KGB, Laurence Pavlovich Beria, who wrote in 1929: “By our lengthy labours we succeeded in creating an opposition to Catholicos Ambrose and the then leading group in the Georgian Church, and… in January, 1927 we succeeded in completely wresting the reins of the government of the Georgian Church from the hands of Ambrose, and in removing him and his supporters from a leading role in the Georgian Church. In April, after the death of Catholicos Ambrose, Metropolitan Christopher was elected Catholicos. He is completely loyal to Soviet power, and already the Council that elected Christopher has declared its loyalty to the power and has condemned the politics and activity of Ambrose, and in particular, the Georgian emigration.”[[811]](#footnote-811)

There followed, as Fr. Samson Zateishvili writes, “the persecution of clergy and believers, the dissolution of monasteries, the destruction of churches and their transformation into warehouses and cattle-sheds… The situation of the Church in Georgia was, perhaps, still more tragic and hopeless [than in the Russian Church], insofar as the new trials were imposed on old, unhealed wounds which remained from previous epochs.”[[812]](#footnote-812)

In October, 1930, the future Archbishop Leontius of Chile wrote in his *Memoirs*: “I arrived in Tbilisi in the evening, and went straight with my letter to the cathedral church of Sion… The clergy of the cathedral were so terrified of the Bolsheviks that they were afraid to give me shelter in their houses and gave me a place to sleep in the cathedral itself.”[[813]](#footnote-813)

## 65. THE DECLARATION OF METROPOLITAN SERGIUS

As if taking his cue from the Georgians, on July 16/29, Metropolitan Sergius issued the infamous Declaration that has been the basis of the existence of the Sovietized Moscow Patriarchate ever since, and which was to cause the greatest and most destructive schism in the history of the Orthodox Church since the fall of the Papacy in the eleventh century.

Several points should be noted in this document. First Sergius pretended that Patriarch Tikhon had always been aiming to have the Church legalized by the State, but had been frustrated by the émigré hierarchs and by his own death. There is a limited truth in this – but it was not the émigré hierarchs that frustrated the patriarch, nor did he want the kind of legalization Sergius wanted…

Sergius continued: “At my proposal and with permission from the State, a blessed Patriarchal Synod has been formed by those whose signatures are affixed to this document at its conclusion. Missing are the Metropolitan of Novgorod, Arseny, who has not arrived yet, and Archbishop Sebastian of Kostroma, who is ill. Our application that this Synod be permitted to take up the administration of the Orthodox All-Russian Church has been granted. Now our Orthodox Church has not only a canonically legal central administration but a central administration that is legal also according to the law of the State of the Soviet Union. We hope that this legalization will be gradually extended to the lower administrative units, to the dioceses and the districts. It is hardly necessary to explain the significance and the consequences of this change for our Orthodox Church, her clergy and her ecclesiastical activity. Let us therefore thank the Lord, Who has thus favoured our Church. Let us also give thanks before the whole people to the Soviet Government for its understanding of the religious needs of the Orthodox population. At the same time let us assure the Government that we will not misuse the confidence it has shown us.

“In undertaking now, with the blessings of the Lord, the work of this Synod, we clearly realize the greatness of our task and that of all the representatives of the Church. We must show not only with words but with deeds, that not only people indifferent to the Orthodox Faith or traitors to the Orthodox Church can be loyal citizens of the Soviet Union and loyal subjects of the Soviet power, but also the most zealous supporters of the Orthodox Church, to whom the Church with all her dogmas and traditions, with all her laws and prescriptions, is as dear as Truth and Life.

“We want to be Orthodox, and at the same time to see the Soviet Union as our civil Fatherland, whose triumphs and successes are also our triumphs and successes, whose failures are our failures. Every attack, boycott, public catastrophe or an ordinary case of assassination, as the recent one in Warsaw, will be regarded as an attack against ourselves…”

Protopriest Lev Lebedev comments on this: “This murder in Warsaw was the murder by B. Koverd of the Bolshevik Voikoff (also known as Weiner), who was one of the principal organizers of the murder of the Imperial Family, which fact was well known then, in 1927. So Sergius let the Bolsheviks clearly understand that he and his entourage were at one with them in all their evil deeds up to and including regicide.”[[814]](#footnote-814)

Metropolitan Sergius continued: “Even if we remain Orthodox, we shall yet do our duties as citizens of the Soviet Union ‘not only for wrath but also for conscience’s sake’ (Romans 13.5), and we hope that with the help of God and through working together and giving support to one another we shall be able to fulfil this task.

“We can be hindered only by that which hindered the construction of Church life on the bases of loyalty in the first years of Soviet power. This is an inadequate consciousness of the whole seriousness of what has happened in our country. The establishment of Soviet power has seemed to many like some kind of misunderstanding, something coincidental and therefore not long lasting. People have forgotten that there are no coincidences for the Christian and that in what has happened with us, as in all places and at all times, the same right hand of God is acting, that hand which inexorably leads every nation to the end predetermined for it. To such people who do not want to understand ‘the signs of the times’, it may also seem that it is wrong to break with the former regime and even with the monarchy, without breaking with Orthodoxy… Only ivory-tower dreamers can think that such an enormous society as our Orthodox Church, with the whole of its organisation, can have a peaceful existence in the State while hiding itself from the authorities. Now, when our Patriarchate, fulfilling the will of the reposed Patriarch, has decisively and without turning back stepped on the path of loyalty, the people who think like this have to either break themselves and, leaving their political sympathies at home, offer to the Church only their faith and work with us only in the name of faith, or (if they cannot immediately break themselves) at least not hinder us, and temporarily leave the scene. We are sure that they will again, and very soon, return to work with us, being convinced that only the relationship to the authorities has changed, while faith and Orthodox Christian life remain unshaken… ”[[815]](#footnote-815)

An article in *Izvestia* immediately noted the essence of the declaration – a return to renovationism: “The far-sighted part of the clergy set out on this path already in 1922”.[[816]](#footnote-816)

So Sergius’ position, or “Sergianism”, was in essence “neo-renovationism”, and therefore subject to the same condemnation as the earlier renovationism of the “Living Church”. In 1937 Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan defined Sergius’ ecclesiastical organization as “in essence renovationist”. And as recently as November, 2008 the True Orthodox Church of Russia has defined sergianism as “a neo-renovationist schism”.[[817]](#footnote-817)

The radical error lying at the root of the declaration was the idea expressed in the last sentence, that in an antichristian state whose aim was the extirpation of all religion, it was possible to preserve loyalty to the State while “faith and Orthodox Christian life remained unshaken”. This presupposed that it was possible, in the Soviet Union as in Ancient Rome, to draw a clear line between politics and religion. But in practice, even more than in theory, this line proved impossible to draw. For the Bolsheviks, there was no such dividing line; for them, *everything* was ideological, everything had to be in accordance with their ideology, there could be no room for disagreement, no private spheres into which the state and its ideology did not pry. Unlike most of the Roman emperors, who allowed the Christians to order their own lives in their own way so long as they showed loyalty to the state, the Bolsheviks insisted in imposing their own ways upon the Christians in every sphere: in family life (civil marriage only, divorce on demand, children spying on parents), in education (compulsory Marxism), in economics (dekulakization, collectivization), in military service (the oath of allegiance to Lenin), in science (Darwinism, Lysenkoism), in art (socialist realism), and in religion (the requisitioning of valuables, registration, commemoration of the authorities at the Liturgy, reporting of confessions by the priests). Resistance to any one of these demands was counted as "anti-Soviet behaviour", i.e. *political* disloyalty. Therefore it was no use protesting one's political loyalty to the regime if one refused to accept just one of these demands. According to the Soviet interpretation of the word: "Whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one has become guilty of all of it" (James 2.10), such a person was an *enemy of the people*.

Metropolitan Sergius’ identification of his and his Church’s joys and sorrows with the joys and sorrows of Soviet communism placed the souls of the millions who followed him in the most serious jeopardy.[[818]](#footnote-818)

Only two months earlier the bishops imprisoned on Solovki had issued a statement affirming the loyalty of the Church to the Soviet State. But, as Danilushkin points out, “the tone of these affirmations was fundamentally different than in the Declaration of Metropolitan Sergius. Recognizing necessity – mainly the inevitability of civil submission to the authorities – they decisively protested against the unceremonious interference of the authorities into the inner affairs of the Church, the ban on missionary activity and the religious education of children, firmly expressing their position that in this sphere there could be no compromise on the part of the Church. Although the Declaration of Metropolitan Sergius recognized the religious persecutions in the USSR, it called, not the state, but the believers, to peace. In this consists the fundamental difference between the two documents…”[[819]](#footnote-819)

The publication of the Declaration was greeted with a storm of criticism. Its opponents saw in it a more subtle version of renovationism. Even its supporters and neutral commentators from the West have recognized that it marked a radical change in the relationship of the Church to the State. Thus Professor William Fletcher comments: “This was a profound and important change in the position of the Russian Orthodox Church, one which evoked a storm of protest.”[[820]](#footnote-820) According to the Soviet scholar Titov, “after the Patriarchal church changed its relationship to the Soviet State, undertaking a position of loyalty, in the eyes of the believers any substantial difference whatsoever between the Orthodox Church and the renovationists disappeared.”[[821]](#footnote-821) According to Archimandrite (later Metropolitan) John (Snychev), quoting from a renovationist source, in some dioceses in the Urals up to 90% of parishes sent back Sergius’ declaration as a sign of protest.”[[822]](#footnote-822) Again, Donald Rayfield writes: “In 1927… Metropolitan Sergi formally surrendered the Orthodox Church to the Bolshevik party and state.”[[823]](#footnote-823)

As was said above, the Declaration created the most serious schism in Orthodox Church history since the schism of the Papacy in 1054.[[824]](#footnote-824) If only a few had followed the traitor, the damage would have been limited to the loss of his soul and the souls of his followers. But in fact the majority followed him; which brought down the just retribution of God in the form of the worst persecution of the Church in history…

The first recorded verbal reaction of the anti-sergianists (or, as they now came to be called, the “True Orthodox Christians”) came from the bishops imprisoned on Solovki, and was written on September 14/27, the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, on the initiative of Bishop Basil of Priluki, who was later tortured to death for his opposition to sergianism. The epistle began by approving Sergius’ “affirmation of the loyalty of the Church in relation to Soviet power in everything that concerns civil legislation and administration”. However, it went on, “the subjection of the Church to the State’s decrees is expressed [in Sergius’ declaration] in such a categorical and sweeping form that it could easily be understood in the sense of a complete entanglement of Church and State…

“The Church cannot declare all the triumphs and successes of the State to be Her own triumphs and successes. Every government can occasionally make unwarranted, unjust and cruel decisions which become obligatory to the Church by way of coercion, but which the Church cannot rejoice in or approve of. One of the tasks of the present government is the elimination of all religion. The government’s successes in this direction cannot be recognized by the Church as Her own successes… The epistle renders to the government ‘thanks before the whole people to the Soviet government for its understanding of the religious needs of the Orthodox population’. An expression of gratitude of such a kind on the lips of the head of the Russian Orthodox Church cannot be sincere and therefore does not correspond to the dignity of the Church… The epistle of the patriarchate sweepingly accepts the official version and lays all the blame for the grievous clashes between the Church and the State on the Church…

“In 1926 Metropolitan Sergius said that he saw himself only as a temporary deputy of the patriarchal locum tenens and in this capacity as not empowered to address pastoral messages to the entire Russian Church. If then he thought himself empowered only to issue circular letters, why has he changed his mind now? The pastoral message of Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod leads the Church into a pact with the State. It was considered as such by its authors as well as by the government. Sergius’ action resembles the political activities of the ‘Living Church’ and differs from them not in nature but only in form and scope…”[[825]](#footnote-825)

According to different sources, 17 or 20 or 26 bishops signed this epistle. However, the majority of the bishops both on Solovki and on the mainland did not consider Sergius’ declaration a reason for immediately breaking communion with him. Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan wrote to an unknown person that the Solovki bishops wanted to wait for the repentance of Sergius “until the convening of a canonical Council… in the assurance that the Council could not fail to demand that of him”.[[826]](#footnote-826)

In time, however, the True Orthodox became the majority on Solovki, as was recognized by the famous philologist, D.S. Likhachev, who was for some time a prisoner in the island camps.[[827]](#footnote-827) He attributed this to the extraordinary influence of Bishop Victor (Ostrovidov) of Vyatka, who had been the first hierarch to break communion with Sergius. Other True Orthodox bishops on Solovki were Bishop Maximus of Serpukhov and Bishop Nectarius of Smolensk, while the sergianists were led by Archbishop Hilarion of Verey.

The question raised by Sergius’ Declaration and the Letter of the Solovki bishops was: in what sense, and to what extent, could the Church be “loyal” to Soviet power? The consensus of the confessing bishops was that during his first term as patriarchal locum tenens, in 1926, Sergius had not overstepped the mark of permissible loyalty, but that in his second term, in 1927, he had gone too far.

As Fr. Alexander Mazyrin writes, “The Church immediately felt that a change had taken place. At the beginning of 1928 Bishop Victor (Ostrovidov) wrote: ‘The loyalty of individual believers to the civil authorities is one thing. The inner dependence of the Church herself on the civil authorities is something different. In the first situation the Church keeps her spiritual freedom in Christ, while the believers become confessors during persecutions against the faith. In the second situation she (the Church) is only an obedient instrument for the realization of the political ideas of the civil authorities, while the confessors for the faith are now state criminals.’ ‘The True Orthodox Church must always be apolitical and spiritual, and for that reason can enter into no kind of active external struggle against Soviet power,’ wrote Bishop Victor in the autumn of 1927, thereby deducing the civil loyalty of the Church from her very nature.

“The difference between the loyalty in relation to the authorities of Patriarch Tikhon and Metropolitan Peter, on the one hand, and that of Metropolitan Sergius, on the other, was very intelligibly explained in June, 1930 by the Kievan oppositionist to the patriarchate, G.A. Kostkevich, in a letter to his correspondent abroad, A.P. Velmin, who was inclined to justify the politics of the locum tenens. Kostkevich wrote: ‘The Church was and will be loyal in relation to the authorities, it will not struggle with them, it will submit, recognize it, etc. But you did not want to understand and see… the difference between the epistles, letters and other things of the Patriarch and Metropolitan Paeter and the acts of Metropolitan Sergius. In the latter case there was a complete loyalty, recognition, submission that was not formal, but in essence, religious (the authorities are from God). But in the former case there was no servility, not renunciation of the Church’s inner freedom and independence, no forgetting of the righteousness of God; there was a division between the things of Caesar and the things of God. The patriarch, as is well known, himself commemorated the authorities.[[828]](#footnote-828) However, he never committed acts that defiled the dignity of the Church or which limited Her freedom. In appointing bishops, he did not ask the sanction of the GPU, he did not submit those displeasing to the government to ecclesiastical repressions. On the contrary, against the will of the government, he insisted on commemorating the exiled bishops and preserved their sees for them. Peter did the same. And how many people did the GPU exile because of this. After all, there is a boundary, - you will not dispute this, - where loyalty ends and servility (that damages the work of the Church) begins. This boundary was crossed by Metropolitan Sergius – this is so clear and obvious that I am amazed that your do not understand it.’

“The personnel politics of the locum tenens, and the laying of bans to please the authorities, were the main manifestations of the collaborationism of Metropolitan Sergius from the point of view of those who disagreed with him. In this the fiercest opponents of the locum tenens saw open support of the OGPU in the work of destroying the Church, and not simply civil loyalty in relation to the authorities. ‘Metropolitan Sergius capitulated before the GPU,’ wrote G.A. Kostkevich in 1930. ‘The citadel of Orthodoxy, the patriarchal throne, fell into the hands of the enemies of the Church. The struggle with the Church goes on not only from outside, and is carried out not only by those who wear the uniform of the GPU and have a party card, but also from within by those who have a panagia and cross on their breast, who walk in monastic vestments and Episcopal mantias.’ ‘The whole Church felt that Metropolitan Sergius had committed a crime, that he had handed over the administration of the Church into the power of the atheists, and was acting, and would act from now on, at the command of the GPU,’ wrote the priest Michael Polsky, who had fled from Russia. In reasonings of this kind perhaps the person who went further than anybody else was Archbishop Seraphim (Lukyanov) [of Paris], who declared in 1930: ‘”Your joys are our joys” – Metropolitan Sergius has said this openly. One of the first joys of Soviet power is the destruction of faith in God. The metropolitan, by sharing in the joy of destroying faith in God, is a God-fighter. He has not only fallen away from the Church, but is fighting against her. A simple truth that is terrifying in its clarity and simplicity.’”[[829]](#footnote-829)

## 66. THE SACRED STRUGGLE IN GREECE

Led by the Athonite confessors, the Old Calendarists continued to defy the innovators on the mainland and islands of Greece. At this time it remained a largely lay movement, with no bishops and only a few priests. But this did not lessen the zeal of the confessing Christians, and in response to their zeal the Lord continued to add more and more people to them.

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On October 25, 1925, four nuns from the monastery of St. Pelagia on the island of Tinos were sent for trial before an ecclesiastical court for breaking communion with the new calendarists. The court decreed that they should be exiled, but they ignored this order and continued to carry out missionary work among the pilgrims who came to venerate the wonder-working icon of the Mother of God on Tinos.

On April 14, 1926, three of them were sent for trial in Athens. During the trial, Bishop Sinesius of Thebes said to one of the nuns, Abbess Eupraxia, who was also his cousin: “If you do not repent and accept the decision of the Holy Synod concerning the calendar, I personally will take off your cassock.” “I grieve,” replied the abbess, “that kindred blood flows in our veins, and that you have broken your hierarchical oath. I will say just one thing to you: ‘I prefer to go to Paradise in coloured clothes but Orthodox, than to be in hell in my cassock but together with schismatics!’ Seven hierarchs under the presidency of Chrysostom Papadopoulos sentenced the nuns to be deprived of their monastic schema and excommunicated. Then the ten leading zealots in the monastery were expelled. But the rest continued the struggle.[[830]](#footnote-830)

In 1926, in the village of Nikiti in Khalkidiki, the True Orthodox priest, Archimandrite Hilarion Ouzounopoulos, was arrested and given three months in prison in spite of the resistance of his parishioners. Fr. Hilarion was called a “counter-revolutionary”. From this it is evident that the True Orthodox in Greece shared not only their name and their faith but even the form of their accusation with the True Orthodox of Russia.[[831]](#footnote-831)

At Christmas in the year 1926, Chrysostom Papadopoulos ordered the closing of the True Orthodox church of St. Parasceva, Aiantios on the island of Salamis. So the priest, Fr. Christopher Psillides, decided to celebrate the Divine Liturgy outside, opposite the doors of the church, in spite of the December cold. The ecclesiastical authorities on the island sent some sailors to the church to seize the priest, but after arriving and surrounding the worshippers they decided to disobey orders and go back.[[832]](#footnote-832)

In Thessalonica on the Sunday of the Samaritan woman, 1927, Fr. Stergius Liouras, the married priest of the True Orthodox Church of the Three Hierarchs, was arrested after the Liturgy on the orders of the new calendarist metropolitan. In 1935 he was again seized on the order of the same metropolitan and beaten by the police. He died a few days later.[[833]](#footnote-833)

On November 21, 1927, the local authorities moved to arrest the priest of the True Church in Mandra, Attica. However, the parishioners formed a wall to defend their pastor, and in the ensuing scuffle a young married woman, Catherine Routti, was fatally wounded. She died on November 28, the first martyr of the Old Calendarist movement in Greece.[[834]](#footnote-834)

On the Sunday of Orthodoxy, 1928, on the orders of Chrysostom Papadopoulos, police came to seize the priest of the True Orthodox church of St. Marina, Liopesi, Attica. The priest escaped, but several parishioners were taken to Koropi prison.[[835]](#footnote-835)

On April 22, 1928, Hieromonk Arsenius Sakellarios was taken to Lamia police station. Then the local new calendarist metropolitan put him on public trial, at which he was officially defrocked and the hair of his beard and head cut off. Then he was released.[[836]](#footnote-836)

On April 7, 1929, the Annunciation Liturgy at the True Orthodox church of the Annunciation, Kertezi, Kalavryta, was forbidden by the police because the priest did not have the permission of the local new calendarist metropolitan. The church was besieged, and the chief of police on horseback threatened to shoot the whole congregation. But the people refused to hand over their priest, saying, “We’ll all die with him”. The policeman took out his revolver, but the people stood firm. Eventually he had to give in.[[837]](#footnote-837)

In 1929, on the feast of St. George according to the new calendar, Fr. Nicholas, the new calendarist priest of the church of the Forerunner, Mesoropi, Pangaion was struck by the incongruity of celebrating the feast of St. George during the period of the Great Fast (something that never happens according to the Orthodox Calendar). He went to his local bishop and asked him for permission to celebrate the feast of St. George according to the Orthodox Calendar. The bishop gave permission. However, when Fr. Nicholas continued to celebrate according to the old calendar, a persecution was stirred up against him. As he felt the approach of death, he told his parishioners: “When I die and they stop you from burying me in the cemetery, bury me in my garden. But if they come and take my body away by force, I adjure you not to follow my funeral procession!” The new calendarists set the date of Fr. Nicholas’ trial for November, but he died on October 19. The new calendarists came to bury him, but his widow refused to hand over his body. Then the new calendarist bishop came to the town, and sent a priest to the widow. He, too, was rebuffed. Finally, the True Orthodox laypeople began to bury their pastor in his garden, as he had ordered. But then the bishop came with police and forbade the burial, ordering the police to seize the body. The parishioners at first resisted, but then, not wanting bloodshed, they kissed the body, threw some earth on it and then allowed it to be taken away.[[838]](#footnote-838)

Meanwhile, the Eastern Patriarchs were entering into communion with Metropolitan Sergius in Russia. After his church organization was legalized by the authorities in 1927, first Damian of Jerusalem, then Gregory of Antioch and then, in December, Basil III of Constantinople wrote to Sergius recognizing him – although Basil did not immediately break relations with the renovationists, who were not in communion with Sergius.[[839]](#footnote-839) Thus did the traitors of Orthodoxy in the Greek- and Russian-speaking Churches join hands over the tortured minds and bodies of the True Orthodox Christians in both countries.

## 67. THE SACRED STRUGGLE IN ROMANIA

In 1920, Carol, the heir to the Romanian throne, having been obliged to leave his first wife, Zisi Lambrino, was married to Princess Helen of Greece, who bore him the present king, Mihail.[[840]](#footnote-840) In 1922, however, he took as his mistress the Jewess Magda Lupescu. This was a public scandal, and in 1925 he was obliged both to resign his right of succession in favour of his son and leave the country. From the death of King Ferdinand in 1927 until 1930, as the king was a small boy, the country was ruled by a regency council which included Patriarch Miron and Carol’s younger brother Nicolae. Carol was recalled in 1930, and his former wife was forced into exile, while the king lived openly with Lupescu (he only married her after his exile from Romania in 1940). During this period, Patriarch Miron used his power as temporary prime minister to persecute the True Orthodox Christians of Romania.

“The first and foremost problem” for the True Orthodox, writes Constantin Bujor, “was the lack of Priests. Religious persecution against the clergy and Faithful was in full swing, especially in Moldavia. Great sacrifice and an unwavering will were needed in order to uphold the True Faith. The organization of the Old Calendar Church started with the construction of the Church in Vānători, Neamţ County, and afterwards in other places; and alongside this, religious assistance was provided for the Faithful in various localities in the houses of trustworthy Christians. In addition to Vānători and Rādăşeni, Brusturi, Răşca, Slătioara, Cucova, and Angheleşti were among the first places to oppose the calendar innovation, and strong communities of true believers formed in these localities. It was in Rādăşeni that Hieromonk Glicherie first established himself. At the outset, the Divine services were held in the village Church, but this situation was not allowed to continue. In normal circumstances, the Church could have been used by both the Old and the New Calendarist communities, because all of the Faithful had contributed to its construction. However, Father Haralambie Teodorus, the Priest who served the New Calendarist community, locked the Old Calendarists out of the Church and removed the clapper from the bell so as to prevent them from holding services. He incited the locals to pelt the Old Calendarist Faithful with rocks, and on one particular day he told them, ‘If you need a Church, go build your own.’

“This hatred was fomented by New Calendarist clergymen and subsequently degenerated into acts of violence and aggression. The celebration of Holy Pascha according to the Gregorian Paschalion in 1926 and 1929[[841]](#footnote-841) convinced the Faithful that the New Calendar was, in fact, just the first step in a process that had as its goal the destruction of the Orthodox ethos. In 1931, Hieromonk Glicherie came to Rādăşeni and began to organize an Old Calendar parish in response to a decision made by the local Faithful. On May 8/21, 1932, he blessed the place where the new Church of Saints Peter and Paul was to be built and laid the foundation stone. The Church was built out of wood in twenty-eight days, covered with sheet metal, and then stuccoed in a single day. But in June of that same year, the local New Calendarist Priest sent two men under the cover of darkness to set the Church on fire. However, the Church was saved by the father of Father Nicolae Onofrei, Vasile Onofrei, who was alerted and awakened. Along with Nicolae (then a child) and his two sisters, by barking dogs. One of the malefactors, Teodor Sandu, fell very ill later on and was carried on a stretcher to Church to ask for forgiveness. On October 14/27, 1933, the Church was Consecrated.

“In later 1930, Hieromonk Glicherie and Hierodeacon David went to Jerusalem to discuss with Patriarch Damianos of Jerusalem (1848-1931) the situation of the Romanian Orthodox Christians who wished to continue observing the Julian Calendar. The Patriarch blessed them to continue their struggle and to build and Consecrate new Churches, for which purpose he provided them with Holy Chrism. To this day, in the home of Father Nicholae Onofrei there is a photograph of Father Glicherie serving with Patriarch Damianos. On returning to Romania, Father Glicherie continued the struggle with greater zeal and invigorated the Old Calendar Church by building over thirty new Churches. He went to many places in the country, including Basarabia, accompanied by a group of monks from both Romania and Mount Athos, who helped him in convincing the Faithful to keep alive love, hope, and confidence in the power of the traditional Faith.

“For the service of blessing the site for a new Church or of Consecrating finished Churches, the Faithful, dressed in festal attire, would come on pilgrimage from all over the country in convoys of carriages. Led by Father Glicherie and his Synodeia, journeys to these sites were permeated with spiritual joy. Father Nicolae Onofrei remembers that when he was a child, he and his brother Onofrei Onofrei (later to become Metropolitan Silvestru [1924-1992]) were taken by their father (who later became a monk at the Slătioara Monastery with the name ‘Varlaam’) on such pilgrimages when Churches or sites for Churches were to be blessed. While travelling towards Oglinzi, Neamţ County, to bless the site for a new Church at Vadu in Moldavia, they met convoys of carriages from Mălini, Drăguşeni, and other places. Father Glicherie stood up and greeted the Faithful with ‘Christ is Risen!’, to which the crowd responded with ‘Truly He is Risen!’ so loudly that the entire Moldavian valley they were crossing echoed with the shouting. Because it was the Paschal season, the Faithful sang ‘Christ is Risen’ the entire way to the new Church. They were all overcome with spiritual joy and wanted to glorify God.

“This unity displayed by the Old Calendarist Faithful, which lent a note of greater splendour to their religious celebrations, was not viewed favourably by the authorities or the representatives of the official Church. Thus, on June 29/July 12, 1932, the Old Calendar Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, strong action was taken to stifle the celebration and especially to discourage the organization of such events. At the end of the service, the mayor of Rādăşeni, Costică Grigorescu, deceitfully and cunningly said, ‘All the men of your parish have to go to the Prefecture in Fălticeni in order to receive approval for the functioning of your Church.’ Since the people respected the mayor as being a sober individual, they joyfully left on foot for Fălticeni, a distance of two or three kilometres over a hill. Although Father Glicherie did not trust the mayor, he approved the departure of the people for Fălticeni, placing all his hope in God.

“After the Faithful had departed and had gone some distance, the Church was surrounded by forty gendarmes, all of them drunk, who had entered the courtyard in search of Father Glicherie. When he saw the danger, Father Glicherie ran into the backyard and hid among the potato plants. However, he was spotted by the gendarmes, who brutally pounced on him. They tried to haul him over the fence, but they were seen by a few nuns, who alerted Vasile Onofrei by their cries. Together with Toader Amariei and Anica Grecu, he sprang to Father Glicherie’s assistance and yelled at the gendarmes, ‘What are you doing in my backyard!’ One of the gendarmes answered with a warning shot; but as the gendarme tried to reload his gun, he lost his balance dodging Anica Grecu, who had lunged at him with a pitchfork. He was disarmed by Vasile Onofrei, who in turn freed Father Glicherie. During this vicious attack, the gendarmes brutally kicked Hieromonk Glicerie’s legs with their boots, leaving him with an incurable wound for the rest of his life. Vasile Onofrei hid the gun used by the gendarme and kept it for two weeks, intending to take it with him to the Ministry of Internal Affairs to denounce the abuses committed by the Gendarmerie.

“The Faithful who lived close to the Church made haste to alert the people by tolling the bells, and one of them went on horseback to catch up with the believers who had left for Fălticeni. Meanwhile, the Church was defended by women, who blocked the gate and prevented the gendarmes from entering the courtyard. The gendarmes withdrew only upon the return of those who had gone to the Prefecture and were now angry at having been deceived by the mayor. Later on, it turned out that the gendarmes had been hiding in the house of the New Calendarist Priest, Father Haralambie Teodoru, waiting for the Faithful to depart for Fălticeni. The same Father Teodoru had gotten the gendarmes drunk, thereby becoming an accomplice to their criminal action.”[[842]](#footnote-842)

There were other Old Calendarists in Romania besides Fr. Glycherie’s Church, such as Fr. Gamail Papil in Bessarabia.

## 68. THE BIRTH OF THE CATACOMB CHURCH

Although the church revolution engineered by Metropolitan Sergius and supported by the Soviets was conceived and first brought to fruition in the centre, in Moscow, it could not hope to succeed on a large scale if it did not also triumph in the other capital of Russian life, Petrograd – or Leningrad, as the communists now called it. The revolutionaries had good hopes of succeeding in Petrograd. After all, it had been the birthplace of the political revolution in 1917, and had also been pivotal in the renovationists’ church revolution in 1922-23. But by the Providence of God it was precisely in revolutionary Petrograd that the fight-back began. Let us go back a little in time to see how this came to pass.[[843]](#footnote-843)

By the end of 1925 the council of vicar-bishops that had ruled the Petrograd diocese since the martyrdom of Metropolitan Benjamin ceased its existence when Bishops Benedict (Plotnikov), Innocent (Tikhonov) and Seraphim (Protopopov) were arrested, leaving only Gregory (Lebedev). Also in the city were Bishops Sergius (Druzhinin) and Demetrius (Lyubimov). These three were all thoroughly Orthodox, and would lead the Catacomb Church after 1927 and suffer martyric deaths.

However, in the spring of 1926 there returned from exile two Petrograd vicar-bishops, Nicholas (Yarushevich) and Alexis (Simansky). Alexis “hurried to Moscow to Metropolitan Sergius, and found with him, who was also a former renovationist, complete mutual understanding. From Moscow Alexis returned [to Petrograd] with a resolution on the freeing of Bishop Gregory (Lebedev) of Schlisselburg from administration of the Leningrad diocese and on the appointment of Alexis himself as temporary administrator. He began to serve in the cathedral church of the Resurrection-on-the-Blood. However, the people distrusted him, while the majority of clergy began to oppose him, according to the witness of Protopriest Michael Cheltsov, who was the first who definitely and categorically expressed himself against Alexis, ‘not having the strength or right to recognize him for his very great sin against the Church and Metropolitan Benjamin and for his huge service to renovationism’.”[[844]](#footnote-844)

Bishops Alexis and Nicholas, together with a group of clergy led by Protopriest Nicholas Chukov, who became Metropolitan Gregory of Leningrad after the war, now represented the neo-renovationist tendency in the city; they wanted to improve relations with the Soviets and get the Church legalized by them.

Fr. Michael Cheltsov describes the incipient schism between these two groups of bishops: “Alexis, led by the group of Fr. Chukov and co., decided to push through the matter of negotiations with Soviet power over legalization through the common participation of all the bishops and even through a decision by the bishops alone. Gregory gave no reply to his invitation and did not go. Demetrius at first suggested going, and Gregory advised him to go. Sergius of Narva, flattered by this for him unexpected beckoning into the midst of the bishops, was staying with me and Bishop Demetrius and on our joint advice was at the meeting. The three bishops did not constitute an assembly. Alexis and Nicholas, who were both sympathetic to legalization and wanted it fervently, could not consider Sergius as their equal, and therefore without the other two considered that the meeting had not taken place. Sergius also spoke about the necessity of a meeting of all the bishops, but introduced the desire to bring to this meeting some of the city protopriests. The meeting ended with nothing. But for the two bishops – Alexis and Demetrius – it was clear that Gregory and Demetrius were not with them, but against them.”

“Two groups became clearly delineated: Alexis and Nicholas, and Gregory and Demetrius. Sergius, in view of his closeness to [Protopriest Basil] Veriuzhsky [rector of the zealot Cathedral of the Resurrection “on the Blood”] and to me, also joined the group of Gregory…”[[845]](#footnote-845)

In August, 1926 Bishop Alexis was transferred to the see of Novgorod, and Archbishop Joseph (Petrovykh) of Petrograd was appointed Metropolitan of Petrograd. This appointment was greeted with great joy by the faithful. However, the Soviets refused Joseph permission to stay in Petrograd - he served there only once, on September 12, the feast of St. Alexander Nevsky, - and exiled him to Ustiuzhna. He never returned to the city again… However, Metropolitan Joseph never relinquished his see and appointed the little-known Bishop Gabriel (Voyevodin) as his deputy.

Meanwhile, Bishop Alexis received permission from the Soviets to stay in Petrograd and began to serve in the churches of his friends in the city. This was opposed by Bishops Gregory and Demetrius, who obtained from Metropolitan Joseph that bishops from other sees (i.e. Alexis) should not be allowed to serve in the city without the permission of Bishop Gabriel. But “Alexis, raised by Metropolitan Sergius to the rank of archbishop, paid no attention to this decree and continued to serve in the churches of the city, without abandoning his intrigues against the persecuted hierarch [Metropolitan Joseph]. The clergy were upset, and there were rumours that Vladyka Joseph would not be coming back and that bishop Alexis would soon be appointed the ruling bishop in the rank of metropolitan.”[[846]](#footnote-846)

Early in 1927 Bishops Gregory and Gabriel were arrested and imprisoned. Since Metropolitan Joseph was still in exile in Ustiuzhna, Bishop Nicholas began to administer the diocese as being the senior bishop by ordination, and in April received official permission to do this from Metropolitan Sergius in Moscow. On his return to Petrograd, Bishop Nicholas began to act authoritatively and brusquely towards his fellow hierarchs, and in August he obtained the forcible retirement of Bishop Sergius from his see.

The previous month Metropolitan Sergius’ Declaration had been published, and Bishop Nicholas tried to get it distributed and read out in church. However, there was widespread resistance to this. When Fr. Nicholas Chukov read it out, there was a great commotion in the church. And when one of the deans, the future Hieromartyr Fr. Sergius Tikhomirov, received it, he immediately sent it back to Nicholas and resigned his deanery. “Whether the epistle was read out somewhere or not,” writes Fr. Michael Cheltsov, “the mood among the Peterites against Metropolitan Sergius and to a significant extent against our Nicholas was sharply negative. Their Orthodoxy, especially of the former, was subjected to powerful doubt, and trust in them was undermined. Our clergy, if they read the epistle, were all against it.”[[847]](#footnote-847)

However, it was not the Declaration so much as the actions of Metropolitan Sergius against Metropolitan Joseph that stirred the Petrograd flock into action. On September 17, 1927, Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod, probably acting under pressure from the authorities, transferred Metropolitan Joseph from Petrograd to Odessa. On September 28, Metropolitan Joseph wrote to Sergius that he refused to accept it, saying that he saw in it “an evil intrigue by a clique which did not want him to be in Leningrad”. Then he wrote to Tuchkov asking that he be allowed to administer the Leningrad diocese. Finally he wrote to Sergius again rebuking him and his Synod for “a woefully servile obedience to a principle alien to the Church”. He said that he regarded his transfer to the Odessa see as “anti-canonical, ill-advised and pleasing to an evil intrigue in which I will have no part”. Or, as he put it in 1930: “Summoned for this reason to Moscow, and learning that the transfer was elicited by intrigues on the part of individual members of the clergy, I declared that I found the ban for these reasons to be unlawful.”[[848]](#footnote-848)

On October 21, Sergius directed all the clergy in Russia to commemorate the Soviet authorities, and not the bishops who were in exile. This measure greatly increased the anxiety of the faithful. The commemoration of the Soviet authorities was seen by many as the boundary beyond which the Church would fall away from Orthodoxy. And the refusal to commemorate the exiled hierarchs implied that the hierarchs themselves were not Orthodox and constituted a break with the tradition of commemorating exiled hierarchs that extended back to the time of the Roman catacombs. Sergius was in effect cutting the faithful off from their canonical hierarchs.

One of the leaders of the opposition, the future martyr and possibly secret bishop, Mark Novoselov, saw in these events the third step in the revolution’s destruction of the Church. The first step was the revolution’s depriving the Church of Her civil protector, the Orthodox Christian Emperor in 1917, “thereby doubling the significance of the pastors”. The second step was its depriving the Church of the possibility of convening Councils, by which it “increased their [the pastors’] significance tenfold, since it made every bishop the real guardian of Orthodoxy in his province. The third step took place in 1927, when “under the form of the gift of legalization the Church was deprived of this Her head,” which increased the significance of the true pastors still more.

Sergius’ act of October 21 “depersonalized” the Liturgy, according to Mark, by “1) casting into the shade the person of Metropolitan Peter through (a) ceasing to commemorate him as ‘our Lord’ and (b) placing the name of Metropolitan Sergius next to it, that is, two names in one patriarchal place, which is both contrary to the spirit of the canons and deprives the name of the head of the Russian Church – and the personal name of Metropolitan Peter - of its very symbolical meaning; 2) introducing the commemoration of the impersonal name of the authorities, … and 3) casting into oblivion the names and persons who shone out in their confessing exploit.”[[849]](#footnote-849) Bishop Mark pointed out that, while transfers of bishops took place frequently in tsarist Russia, those were in the context of a single Church family, when Russia was as it were “one diocese”. But the transfers in Soviet times were far more dangerous; for when the people were deprived of the bishop whom they knew and loved, there was no guarantee that his replacement – if there was a replacement – would be Orthodox.

On October 25, Bishop Nicholas (Yarushevich) proclaimed in the cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ in Petrograd the decision of the Provisional Synod to transfer Metropolitan Joseph (Petrovykh) from Petrograd to Odessa (the secular authorities had already forbidden Metropolitan Joseph to return to the city). In the same decision Bishops Demetrius and Seraphim were forbidden to leave the diocese “without the knowledge and blessing” of Bishop Nicholas (Yarushevich). This caused major disturbances in Petrograd. However, Metropolitan Sergius paid no attention to the disturbances in Petrograd. Taking upon himself the administration of the diocese, he sent in his place Bishop Alexis (Simansky). So already, only three months after the declaration, the new revolutionary cadres were being put in place… Then, on October 31, Archimandrite Sergius (Zenkevich) was consecrated Bishop of Detskoe Selo, although the canonical bishop, Gregory (Lebedev), was still alive but languishing in a GPU prison. From that moment many parishioners stopped going to churches where Metropolitan Sergius’ name was commemorated, and Bishop Nicholas was not invited to serve.[[850]](#footnote-850)

On October 30 Metropolitan Joseph wrote to Sergius: “You made me metropolitan of Leningrad without the slightest striving for it on my part. It was not without disturbance and distress that I accepted this dangerous obedience, which others, perhaps wisely (otherwise it would have been criminal) decisively declined… Vladyko! Your firmness is yet able to correct everything and urgently put an end to every disturbance and indeterminateness. It is true, I am not free and cannot now serve my flock, but after all everybody understands this ‘secret’… Now anyone who is to any degree firm and needed is unfree (and will hardly be free in the future)… You say: this is what the authorities want; they are giving back their freedom to exiled hierarchs on the condition that they change their former place of serving and residence. But what sense or benefit can we derive from the leap-frogging and shuffling of hierarchs that this has elicited, when according to the spirit of the Church canons they are in an indissoluble union with their flock as with a bride? Would it not be better to say: let it be, this false human mercy, which is simply a mockery of our human dignity, which strives for a cheap effect, a spectre of clemency. Let it be as it was before; it will be better like that. Somehow we’ll get to the time when they finally understand that the eternal, universal Truth cannot be conquered by exiles and vain torments… One compromise might be permissible in the given case… Let them (the hierarchs) settle in other places as temporarily governing them, but let them unfailingly retain their former title… I cannot be reconciled in my conscience with any other scheme, I am absolutely unable to recognize as correct my disgustingly tsarist-rasputinite transfer to the Odessa diocese, which took place without any fault on my part or any agreement of mine, and even without my knowledge. And I demand that my case be immediately transferred from the competence of your Synod, in whose competence I am not the only one to doubt, for discussion by a larger Council of bishops, to which alone I consider myself bound to display unquestioning obedience.”

However, Metropolitan Sergius paid no attention to the disturbances in Petrograd. Taking upon himself the administration of the diocese, he sent in his place Bishop Alexis (Simansky). So already, only three months after the declaration, the new revolutionary cadres were being put in place… Then, on October 31, Archimandrite Sergius (Zenkevich) was consecrated Bishop of Detskoe Selo, although the canonical bishop, Gregory (Lebedev), was still alive but languishing in a GPU prison. From that moment many parishioners stopped going to churches where Metropolitan Sergius’ name was commemorated, and Bishop Nicholas was not invited to serve.

On December 12, they sent a delegation led by Bishop Demetrius and representing eight Petrograd bishops, clergy and academics to Moscow to meet Sergius. Here the conversation centred, not on Sergius’ canonical transgressions, but on the central issue of his relationship to Soviet power. At one point Sergius said: “By my new church policy I am saving the Church.” To which Archpriest Victorinus Dobronravov replied: “The Church does not have need of salvation; the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. You, yourself, Vladyka, have need of salvation through the Church.”[[851]](#footnote-851)

This dialogue encapsulated the heretical essence of Sergianism, namely, the idea that the Church founded by Christ and which He promised would prevail against the gates of Hades needed to be “saved” by the weak hand of man entering into agreements precisely with the gates of Hades. The Church is built on the rock of the true confession of the faith. If that rock is replaced by some more porous material that is in need of strengthening by man, then it ceases to be the Church and will collapse.

On December 15 Tuchkov, having received a secret report from Leningrad on this meeting with Sergius, wrote the following in his own handwriting: “To Comrade Polyansky. 1. Tell Leningrad that Sergius had a delegation with such-and-such suggestions. 2. Suggest that the most active laymen be arrested under some other pretences. 3. Tell them that we will influence Sergius that he ban certain of the oppositional bishops from serving, and let Yarushevich then ban some of the priests.”[[852]](#footnote-852)

After further delegations and dialogues in this vein, Bishops Demetrius of Gdov and Sergius of Narva separated from Sergius on December 26: “for the sake of the peace of our conscience we reject the person and the works of our former leader [predstoiatelia – Sergius was meant], who has unlawfully and beyond measure exceeded his rights”. This was approved by Metropolitan Joseph (who had been prevented from coming to Petrograd) on January 7.

In a letter to a Soviet archimandrite, Metropolitan Joseph rejected the charge of being a schismatic and accused Sergius of being a schismatic. He went on: “The defenders of Sergius say that the canons allow one to separate oneself from a bishop only for heresy which has been condemned by a Council. Against this one may reply that the deeds of Metropolitan Sergius may be sufficiently placed in this category as well, if one has in mind such an open violation by him of the freedom and dignity of the Church, One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. But beyond this, the canons themselves could not foresee many things, and can one dispute that it is even worse and more harmful than any heresy when one plunges a knife into the Church’s very heart – Her freedom and dignity?… ‘Lest imperceptibly and little by little we lose the freedom which our Lord Jesus Christ, the Liberator of all men, has given us as a free gift by His Own Blood’ (8th Canon of the Third Ecumenical Council)… Perhaps I do not dispute that ‘there are more of you at present than of us’. And let it be said that ‘the great mass is not for me’, as you say. But I will never consider myself a schismatic, even if I were to remain absolutely alone, as one of the holy confessors once was. The matter is not at all one of quantity, do not forget that for a minute: ‘The Son of God when He cometh shall He find faith on the earth?’ (Luke 18.8). And perhaps the last ‘rebels’ against the betrayers of the Church and the accomplices of Her ruin will be not only bishops and not protopriests, but the simplest mortals, just as at the Cross of Christ His last gasp of suffering was heard by a few simple souls who were close to Him…”[[853]](#footnote-853)

Sergius now began issuing bans against the True Orthodox bishops – which were ignored by the True Orthodox. On December 30 Archbishop Demetrius wrote to the Muscovite priest Fr. Alexander Sidorov, who had been threatened with defrocking: “May the Lord help you to remain in peace and unanimity in the firm confession of the purity and truth of the Orthodox faith, helping each other with love in everything. Do not be disturbed by any bans that the apostates from the faith of Christ are preparing for you. Any ban or defrocking of you by Metropolitan Sergius, his synod or bishops for your stand in the Truth has not reality for you. As long as there remains just one firmly Orthodox bishop, have communion with him. If the Lord permits it, and you remain without a bishop, then may the Spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit, be with you all, inspiring you to solve all the questions which you may encounter on your path in the spirit of True Orthodoxy.” Again, on January 4/17, 1928 he wrote “to Father Superiors”: “Metropolitan Sergius… has sinned not only against the canonical order of the Church, but also dogmatically against her person, blaspheming the holiness of the exploit of her confessors by suspecting that their Christian convictions were impure and supposedly mixed with politics, against her Catholicity – by their and the synod’s violent actions, against her Apostolicity – by subjecting the Church to secular orders and by the inner break with Metropolitan Peter (while preserving a false unity), who did not give Metropolitan Sergius the right to carry out his recent actions…”[[854]](#footnote-854)

Meanwhile, antisergianist groups were forming in different parts of the country. Thus between October 3 and 6 an antisergianist diocesan assembly took place in Ufa, and on November 8 Archbishop Andrew of Ufa issued an encyclical from Kzyl-Orda in which he said that “even if the lying Sergius repents, as he repented three times before of renovationism, under no circumstances must he be received into communion”. This encyclical quickly circulated throughout Eastern Russia and Siberia. Again, in November, Bishop Victor of Glazov broke with Sergius. He had especially noted the phrase in the declaration that “only ivory-tower dreamers can think that such an enormous society as our Orthodox Church, with the whole of its organisation, can have a peaceful existence in the State while hiding itself from the authorities.” To Sergius himself Bishop Victor wrote: “The enemy has lured and seduced you a second time with the idea of an organization of the Church. But if this organization is bought for the price of the Church of Christ Herself no longer remaining the house of Grace-giving salvation for men, and he who received the organization ceases to be what he was – for it is written, ‘Let his habitation be made desolate, and his bishopric let another take’ (Acts 1.20) – then it were better for us never to have any kind of organization. What is the benefit if we, having become by God’s Grace temples of the Holy Spirit, become ourselves suddenly worthless, while at the same time receiving an organization for ourselves? No. Let the whole visible material world perish; let there be more important in our eyes the certain perdition of the soul to which he who presents such pretexts for sin will be subjected.” And he concluded that Sergius’ pact with the atheists was “not less than any heresy or schism, but is rather incomparably greater, for it plunges a man immediately into the abyss of destruction, according to the unlying word: ‘Whosoever shall deny Me before men…’ (Matthew 10.33).”[[855]](#footnote-855)

Bishop Victor wrote: “It is necessary that Moscow should begin to act, and not merely passively endure the mockeries on the Orthodox Church. Then other dioceses will be encouraged.” However, in Moscow only a few parishes refused to recognize Metropolitan Sergius, and the true centre of the Catacomb Church remained Petrograd. Thus it was to Archbishop Demetrius in Petrograd that prominent Muscovites like Fr. Valentine Sventitsky referred. The clergy of Serpukhov under Bishop Maximus also saw Demetrius as their leader.[[856]](#footnote-856)

At the same time antisergianism began to develop in Ukraine with the publication of the “Kievan appeal” by Schema-Archbishop Anthony (Abashidze), Bishop Damascene of Glukhov and Fr. Anatolius Zhurakovsky. They wrote concerning Sergius’ declaration: “Insofar as the deputy of the patriarchal locum tenens makes declarations in the person of the whole Church and undertakes responsible decisions without the agreement of the locum tenens and an array of bishops, he is clearly going beyond the bounds of his prerogatives…”[[857]](#footnote-857) In December the Kievans were joined by two brother bishops – Archbishops Averky and Pachomius (Kedrov).[[858]](#footnote-858)

In Moscow, perhaps the most famous confessor was Protopriest Valendine Sventitky. Princess Natalia Urusova writes of him: “In the church of St. Nicholas the Great Cross, there was an old priest. Fr. Valentine Sventitsky, who was unbending in his firmness against the Bolsheviks and in his open opposition to Sergius and his decree. When he served the church was so full that masses of people stood not only on the staircase but also in the courtyard. Of course, the Bolsheviks would have killed him in exile if he had not fallen ill and died a natural death. His glory spread far, and the Bolshevik power, for which the end justified the means, needed to discredit him with a common lie before the believers. He was dying without coming to consciousness, and they printed in all the newspapers a letter supposedly written by him before his death, in which he addressed all his parishioners, beseeching them in his last moments to follow Metropolitan Sergius and recognize his decree and commemoration. A false signature was affixed to the letter. The Bolsheviks arranged a magnificent funeral for him. Many of the parishioners were led into deception and joined the sergianist church, but those with minds understood the new and diabolic cunning contained in the false signature. It was a terrible time, quite indescribable. Those who rejected the commemoration and did not agree to sign the demand linked with the decree were immediately arrested and shot, no matter how many they happened to be. As the rumour went, in the course of one month up to 10,000 people were shot in Moscow, beginning with a metropolitan and ending with readers, while laypeople were shot in their millions in Russia: some were imprisoned, others were exiled to the terrible conditions of the concentration camps of the North and Siberia. The Lubyanka in Moscow became a place of mass martyrdom. Passers-by tried to avoid passing by the GPU’s house of death because of the intolerable stench of death that spread to a great distance. The corpses were taken out at night; they tried to do this as secretly as possible, but did not succeed.”[[859]](#footnote-859)

The True Orthodox bishops in the Ukraine separated into two groups: the Josephites, who completely rejected all communion with the sergianists, and a group led by Schema-Archbishop Anthony (Abashidze), which rejected Sergius’ declaration, but remained in communion with both the Josephites and the Sergianists insofar as they all commemorated Metropolitan Peter at the liturgy.[[860]](#footnote-860)

Also in the Ukraine was the famous writer Sergius Alexandrovich Nilus, who wrote: “As long as there is a church of God that is not of ‘the Church of the evildoers’, go to it whenever you can; but if not, pray at home… They will say: ‘But where will you receive communion? With whom? I reply: ‘The Lord will show you, or an Angel will give you communion, for in ‘the Church of the evildoers’ there is not and cannot be the Body and Blood of the Lord. Here in Chernigov, out of all the churches only the church of the Trinity has remained faithful to Orthodoxy; but if it, too, commemorates the [sergianist] Exarch Michael, and consequently have communion in prayer with him, acting with the blessing of Sergius and his Synod, then we shall break communion with it.”

On February 6, 1928 the hierarchs of the Yaroslavl diocese, led by Metropolitan Agathangel, signed an act of separation from Metropolitan Sergius. Metropolitan Joseph also signed the document. Two days later he announced to his Petrograd vicars, pastors and flock that he was taking upon himself the leadership of the Petrograd diocese. This persuaded the authorities to arrest him on February 29, and send him again to the Nikolo-Modensky monastery. On March 11 Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod placed Metropolitan Joseph under ban. However, this did not prevent him from continuing to direct his two bishops in Petrograd, Archbishop Demetrius and Bishop Sergius, who also acted as a unifying focus for many True Orthodox in other parts of the country.

Thus was born the “Josephite” movement, the most important branch of the Catacomb Church in the inter-war years… In this birth in the winter of 1927-28 we can see the rebirth of the spirit of the 1917-18 Council. In the previous decade, first under Patriarch Tikhon and then under Metropolitan Peter, the original fierce tone of reproach and rejection of the God-hating authorities, epitomized above all by the anathematization of Soviet power, had gradually softened under the twin pressures of the Bolsheviks from without and the renovationists from within. Although the apocalyptic spirit of the Council remained alive in the masses, and prevented the Church leaders from actually commemorating the antichristian power, compromises continued to be made – compromises that were never repaid by compromises on the part of the Bolsheviks.

However, these acts did not cross the line separating compromise from apostasy. That line was passed by Metropolitan Sergius when he recognized *the God-cursed power to be God-established*, and ordered its commemoration while banning the commemoration of the confessing bishops. Already in the official church calendar for 1928 Sergius’ church was looking like a Sovietized institution through its inclusion among the feasts of the church of: the memory of the Leader of the Proletariat Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (on the 32nd Sunday after Pentecost), the Overthrow of the Autocracy (in the Third Week of the Great Fast), the memory of the Paris Commune (the same week), the Day of the Internationale and the Day of the Proletarian Revolution.[[861]](#footnote-861)

At this point the spirit of the 1918 Council flared up again in all its original strength. For, as a “Letter from Russia” put it many years later: “It’s no use our manoeuvring; there’s nothing for us to preserve except the things that are God’s. For the things that are Caesar’s (if one should really consider it to be Caesar and not Pharaoh) are always associated with the quenching of the Spirit.”[[862]](#footnote-862)

Again, as Protopresbyter Michael Polsky wrote: “The Orthodoxy that submits to the Soviets and has become a weapon of the worldwide antichristian deception is not Orthodoxy, but the deceptive heresy of antichristianity clothed in the torn raiment of historical Orthodoxy…”[[863]](#footnote-863)

## 69. THE MARTYRDOM OF THE CATACOMB CHURCH

From the beginning Metropolitan Sergius declared his opponents to be politically motivated. Thus in his Declaration he said: “The establishment of Soviet power seemed to many to be a kind of misunderstanding, accidental and therefore not long-lasting… To such people, who do not wish to understand ‘the signs of the times’, it may seem that it is impossible to break with the previous regime, and even with the monarchy, without breaking with Orthodoxy.” On December 31 he and his Synod declared: “Only those wish to be in administrative separation from us who cannot renounce the idea of Christianity as an external force and are inclined to see the triumph of Christianity in the world only in the domination of Christian peoples over non-Christian ones” – in other words, in capitalist imperialism. Again, to the Petrograd delegation he said in the same month: “You are hindered from accepting my appeal by a political counter-revolutionary ideology.”[[864]](#footnote-864)

The truth, however, was that it was Sergius, not his opponents, who were motivated by political considerations – in particular, his need to please his political communist masters. So the accusations were hypocritical. In any case, if his opponents’ crimes were political, it was not for him to impose ecclesiastical bans on them – as he himself had recognized in 1926.

And yet this is precisely what he did, as we have seen. Moreover, he went so far as to call the Catacomb Church graceless. On August 6, 1929 his synod declared: “The sacraments performed in separation from Church unity… by the followers of the former Metropolitan Joseph (Petrovykh) of Leningrad, the former Bishop Demetrius (Lyubimov) of Gdov, the former Bishop Alexis (Buj) of Urazov, as also of those who are under ban, are also invalid, and those who are converted from these schisms, if they have been baptized in schism, are to be received through Holy Chrismation.”[[865]](#footnote-865)

However, as even the sergianist Bishop Manuel (Lemeshevsky) had to admit, these “schismatics” were among the finest hierarchs of the Russian Church: “It is the best pastors who have fallen away and cut themselves off, those who by their purity in the struggle with renovationism stood much higher than the others.”[[866]](#footnote-866)

How many bishops supported Sergius?

According to Sergius Shumilo, “in a letter to his deputy, Archbishop Demetrius (Lyubimov) of Gdov, Metropolitan Joseph (Petrovich) of Petrograd wrote that already by the beginning of 1928 26 bishops had separated from Metropolitan Sergius. By the beginning of the 1930s, they already numbered about 40. Gradually their number increased still further All these hierarchs had zealously opposed renovationism and remained faithful to Patriarch Tikhon in 1922-1923 (let us recall that in 1922 only 36 bishops remained faithful to the ‘Tikhonite’ church, while 37 (headed by Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) and Alexis (Simansky) recognized the renovationist ‘HCA’.”[[867]](#footnote-867)

According to another estimate, out of the approximately 150 Russian bishops in 1927, 80 declared themselves definitely against the declaration, 17 separated from Sergius but did not make their position clear, and 9 at first separated but later changed their mind.[[868]](#footnote-868) These figures probably do not take into account all the secret bishops consecrated by the Ufa Autocephaly… In 1930 Sergius claimed he had 70% of the Orthodox bishops (not including the renovationists and Gregorians), which implies that about 30% of the Russian episcopate joined the Catacomb Church.[[869]](#footnote-869) According to the Catholic Bishop Michel D’Herbigny, once the Vatican’s representative in Russia, three quarters of the episcopate separated from him; but this is probably an exaggeration.[[870]](#footnote-870)

In 1929, the Bolsheviks began to imprison the True Orthodox on the basis of membership of a “church monarchist organization” called “True Orthodoxy”. The main case against the True Orthodox was called the case of “The All-Union Counter-Revolutionary Church Monarchist Organization, ‘the True Orthodox Church’”. I.I. Osipova notes that the numbers of True Orthodox Christians arrested between 1929 and 1933 exceeded by seven times the numbers of clergy repressed from 1924 to 1928.[[871]](#footnote-871) In 1929 5000 clergy were repressed, three times more than in 1928; in 1930 – 13,000; in 1931-32 – 19,000.[[872]](#footnote-872)

It is hardly a coincidence that this persecution of the Church took place against the background of collectivization and a general attack on religion[[873]](#footnote-873) spearheaded by Yaroslavsky’s League of Militant Godless (who numbered 17 million by 1933).

Vladimir Rusak writes: “1928, the beginning of collectivisation. Stalin could no longer ‘leave the Church in the countryside’. In one interview he gave at that time he directly complained against ‘the reactionary clergy’ who were poisoning the souls of the masses. ’The only thing I can complain about is that the clergy was not liquidated root and branch,’ he said. At the 15th Congress of the party he demanded that all weariness in the anti-religious struggle be overcome.”[[874]](#footnote-874)

Also in 1928, economic cooperatives and all philanthropic organizations were banned.[[875]](#footnote-875) Then came the real killer, collectivization, which, together with the artificially induced famine that followed, claimed as many as 14 million lives. Collectivization can be seen as an attempt to destroy religion in its stronghold, the countryside, by destroying the economic base of village life and forcing all the villagers into communes completely dependent on the State. The peasants, led by their priests, put up a fierce opposition to it, and many were brought to trial and sentenced to the camps.

In 1929, writes Rusak, “about 15 hierarchs who did not share the position of Metropolitan Sergius were arrested. Metropolitan Cyril, the main ‘opponent’ of Metropolitan Sergius, was exiled to Turukhansk in June-July. The arrest procedure looked something like this: an agent of the GPU appeared before a bishop and put him a direct question: what is your attitude to the Declaration of Metropolitan Sergius? If the bishop replied that he did not recognize it, the agent drew the conclusion: that means that you are a counter-revolutionary. The bishop was arrested.”[[876]](#footnote-876)

W. Husband writes: “On 8 April 1929, the VtsIK and Sovnarkom declaration ‘On Religious Associations’ largely superseded the 1918 separation of church and state and redefined freedom of conscience. Though reiterating central aspects of the 1918 separation decree, the new law introduced important limitations. Religious associations of twenty or more adults were allowed, but only if registered and approved in advance by government authorities. They retained their previous right to the free use of buildings for worship but still could not exist as a judicial person. Most important, the new regulations rescinded the previously guaranteed [!] right to conduct religious propaganda, and it reaffirmed the ban on religious instructions in state educational institutions. In effect, proselytising and instruction outside the home were illegal except in officially sanctioned classes, and religious rights of assembly and property were now more circumscribed.”[[877]](#footnote-877)

“Henceforth,” writes Nicholas Werth, “any activity ‘going beyond the limits of the simple satisfaction of religious aspirations’ fell under the law. Notably, section 10 of the much-feared Article 58 of the penal code stipulated that ‘any use of the religious prejudices of the masses… for destabilizing the state’ was punishable ‘by anything from a minimum three-year sentence up to and including the death penalty’. On 26 August 1929 the government instituted the new five-day work week – five days of work, and one day of rest – which made it impossible to observe Sunday as a day of rest. This measure deliberately introduced ‘to facilitate the struggle to eliminate religion’.

“These decrees were no more than a prelude to a second, much larger phase of the antireligious campaign. In October 1929 the seizure of all church bells was ordered because ‘the sound of bells disturbs the right to peace of the vast majority of atheists in the towns and the countryside’. Anyone closely associated with the church was treated like a kulak and forced to pay special taxes. The taxes paid by religious leaders increased tenfold from 1928 to 1930, and the leaders were stripped of their civil rights, which meant that they lost their ration cards and their right to medical care. Many were arrested, exiled, or deported. According to the incomplete records, more than 13,000 priests were ‘dekulakised’ in 1930. In many villages and towns, collectivisation began symbolically with the closure of the church, and dekulakization began with the removal of the local religious leaders. Significantly, nearly 14 percent of riots and peasant uprisings in 1930 were sparked by the closure of a church or the removal of its bells. The antireligious campaign reached its height in the winter of 1929-30; by 1 March 1930, 6,715 churches had been closed or destroyed. In the aftermath of Stalin’s famous article ‘Dizzy with Success’ on 2 March 1930, a resolution from the Central Committee cynically condemned ‘inadmissible deviations in the struggle against religious prejudices, particularly the administrative closure of churches without the consent of the local inhabitants’. This formal condemnation had no effect on the fate of the people deported on religious grounds.

“Over the next few years these great offensives against the church were replaced by daily administrative harassment of priests and religious organizations. Freely interpreting the sixty-eight articles of the government decree of 8 April 1929, and going considerably beyond their mandate when it came to the closure of churches, local authorities continued their guerrilla war with a series of justifications: ‘unsanitary condition or extreme age’ of the buildings in question, ‘unpaid insurance’, and non-payment of taxes or other of the innumerable contributions imposed on the members of religious communities. Stripped of their civil rights and their right to teach, and without the possibility of taking up other paid employment – a status that left them arbitrarily classified as ‘parasitic elements living on unearned wages’ – a number of priests had no option but to become peripatetic and to lead a secret life on the edges of society.”[[878]](#footnote-878)

Although the believers could not stop the might of the totalitarian state, God sometimes put the persecutors to flight. Thus the Catacomb Christian P.M. writes: “I want to tell about the miracles of God of which I was a witness. In our village they closed the church and made it into a club. And then they declared that they would be showing a film – this was the first opening of the club. In the church everything was as it had been before, even the iconostasis was standing with its icons. They put in benches, hung up a screen and began to show the film. About half an hour passed, and then suddenly the people began to shout. Those who were at the back jumped up and rushed towards the exit, while those in front fell on the floor or crawled under the benches. What had happened? As many people later recounted, the holy Great Martyr George came out of an icon that was on the iconostasis on a horse, and taking a spear, galloped at the people, who began to flee in fear. But that was not the end of it. Somehow they got at any rate some of the people together again and continued to show the film. It was being shown by a mechanic and his assistant. And suddenly up in the choir they began to sing the Cherubic hymn – and so loudly that the film was scarcely audible. At that point they decided that some believers had climbed up and wanted to interrupt the showing of the film. So about seven members of the Komsomol and the assistant climbed up in order to catch them all and bring them down. But then they said that when they had climbed up the stairs the singing stopped, and they rejoiced – the believers had got frightened and fallen silent. But when they climbed up into the choir they saw that it was empty. They stood in bewilderment and could not understand how the singers could have run away. And then suddenly in the midst of them unseen singers began to sing the Cherubic hymn. Pursued by an unknown fear, they rushed to get out, not knowing the way, pushing and shoving each other. The assistant mechanic, who was running in front, suddenly fell down, and everyone ran over him since there was no other way because of the narrowness of the place. Having run down, they rushed out into the street. Now the showing was finally abandoned. The assistant mechanic was ill for a month and died, while the mechanic left, and nobody wanted to go to work in the club as a mechanic for any money. So from that time they stopped having a cinema in it.”[[879]](#footnote-879)

This persecution began to arouse criticism in the West, from Pope Pius XI and the Archbishop of Canterbury. On February 14, 1930 the Politburo decided “to entrust to Comrades Yaroslavsky, Stalin and Molotov the decision of the question of an interview” to counter-act these criticisms. The result was two interviews, the first to Soviet correspondents on February 15 and published on February 16 in *Izvestia* and *Pravda* in the name of Sergius and those members of his Synod who were still in freedom, and a second to foreign correspondents three days later. In the first interview, which is now thought to have been composed entirely by the Bolsheviks with the active participation of Stalin, but whose authenticity was never denied by Sergius[[880]](#footnote-880), it was asserted that “in the Soviet Union there was not and is not now any religious persecution”, that “churches are closed not on the orders of the authorities, but at the wish of the population, and in many cases even at the request of the believers”, that “the priests themselves are to blame, because they do not use the opportunities presented to them by the freedom to preach” and that “the Church herself does not want to have any theological-educational institutions”.[[881]](#footnote-881)

This interview, writes Fr. Stefan Krasovitsky, “was especially absurd and scandalous in the eyes of the simple people in that the universally venerated chapel of the Iveron Icon of the Mother of God had just been destroyed. As N. Talberg writes, ‘the Russian people, fearing not even the chekists, demonstrated their attitude to him (Metropolitan Sergius)… When Metropolitan Sergius went to serve in one of the large churches of Moscow, the crowd whistled at him in the streets, which had never happened before in spite of the most desperate agitation of the atheists. Bishop Pitirim, one of those who had signed the declaration in the press, was also whistled at and met in the same way. *Paris-Midi* for March 5 (№ 1392) informed its readers of the insults Metropolitan Sergius had been subjected to by his flock in Moscow. *Vozrozhdenie* for March 6 (№ 178) printed the report of the Berlin *Lokale Anzeiger* to the effect that when Metropolitan Sergius ‘came out of the altar to serve the Liturgy, the crowd began to whistle and showered him with brickbats: “traitor”, “Judas”, “coward”, etc. The noise was so great that Metropolitan Sergius was not able to serve and went into the crowd to pacify them. But the aroused parishioners tried to tear his vestments from him, spat at him and wanted to take off his patriarchal cross. Metropolitan Sergius had to leave the church. He tried to serve the Liturgy in another church, but the believers boycotted his service.’ The Roman newspaper *Today* (№ 64), reporting the same incident, added that ‘not one person’ appeared at the service arranged by Metropolitan Sergius for the other church.”[[882]](#footnote-882)

Commenting on the interview, Archbishop Andrew of Ufa wrote: “Such is the opinion of the false-head of the false-patriarchal church of Metropolitan Sergius… But who is going to recognize this head after all this? For whom does this lying head remain a head, in spite of his betrayal of Christ?… All the followers of the lying Metropolitan Sergius… have fallen away from the Church of Christ. The Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church is somewhere else, not near Metropolitan Sergius and not near ‘his Synod’.”[[883]](#footnote-883)

According to Archbishop Bartholomew (Remov), who never joined the Catacomb Church, bu who knew Church life in Moscow well, the whole activity of Metropolitan Sergius was carried out in accordance with the instructions of the Bolsheviks…[[884]](#footnote-884)

Religious life did not cease but rather intensified in the underground. Wandering clergy served the faithful in secret locations around the country. Particular areas buzzed with underground activity. Thus Professor Ivan Andreyevsky testified that during the war he personally knew some 200 places of worship of the Catacomb Church in the Leningrad area alone. Popovsky writes that the Catacomb Church “arose in our midst at the end of the 20s. First one, then another priest disappeared from his parish, settled in a secret place and began the dangerous life of exiles. In decrepit little houses on the outskirts of towns chapels appeared. There they served the Liturgy, heard confessions, gave communion, baptized, married and even ordained new priests. Believers from distant towns and regions poured there in secret, passing on to each other the agreed knock on the door.”[[885]](#footnote-885)

In these conditions of extreme persecution, it was almost impossible to unite the scattered groups of True Orthodox under a common leadership. But attempts were made… Thus we can infer from a remark of Hieromartyr Maximus, Bishop of Serpukhov, that there was *some* Catacomb Council in 1928 that anathematized the Sergianists.[[886]](#footnote-886) Another source has described a so-called “Nomadic Council” attended at different times by over 70 bishops in 1928 which likewise anathematized the Sergianists.

However, hard evidence for the existence of this council has proved hard to obtain[[887]](#footnote-887), and there are some reasons for suspecting the authenticity of the description of the proceedings.[[888]](#footnote-888)

A “little Council” of Catacomb bishops took place in Archangelsk in 1935. They met in order to approve an epistle issued in December, 1933 by Archbishop Seraphim of Uglich placing Metropolitan Sergius under ban for the anti-church actions he had committed since 1927: “We declare Metropolitan Sergius, who has violated the purity of the Orthodox faith, who has distorted the dogma of Salvation and of the Church, and who has caused a schism and blasphemed against the Church of Christ and Her confessors, and in scattering the Church has also blasphemed against the Holy Spirit, to be deprived of communion in prayer with us and with all the Orthodox bishops of the Russian Church. We commit him to ecclesiastical trial and ban him from serving. The bishops who think like Metropolitan Sergius are accepted by us into canonical and prayerful communion in accordance with the rite of reception from renovationism.” One of those participating in this Council was Archbishop Theodore of Volokolamsk.[[889]](#footnote-889)

## 70. ROCOR AND METROPOLITAN SERGIUS

Probably late in 1927, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) wrote: "Now everywhere two epistles are being published in the newspapers and are being read in many churches which until recently were Orthodox – epistles of two, alas, former beloved pupils of mine with whom I was once in agreement, Metropolitans Sergius and Eulogius, who have now fallen away from the saving unity of the Church and have bound themselves to the enemies of Christ and the Holy Church – the disgusting blaspheming Bolsheviks, who have submitted themselves in everything to the representatives of the Jewish false teaching which everywhere goes under the name of communism or materialism… Let these new deceivers not justify themselves by declaring that they are not the friends of the Bolsheviks and Jews who stand at the head of the Bolshevik kingdom: in their souls they may not be their friends, but they have submitted, albeit unwillingly, to these enemies of Christ, and they are trying to increase their power not only over the hapless inhabitants of Holy Russia, but also over all Russian people."

In an encyclical of August 27, 1927 the ROCOR council of Bishops pointed out that “the higher church authority in Russia finds itself in grave captivity to the enemies of the Church”; the council has decided to sever relations with the Moscow church authorities ‘in view of the impossibility of having normal relations with it and in view of its captivity to the God-fighting authorities, which are depriving it of freedom in the expression of its will and in the canonical government of the Church’”.

On September 1, 1927, Archbishop Theophan of Poltava wrote: “It is impossible to recognize the epistle of Metropolitan Sergius as obligatory for ourselves. The just-completed Council of Bishops rejected this epistle. It was necessary to act in this way on the basis of the teaching of the Holy Fathers on what should be recognized as a canonical power to which Christians must submit. St. Isidore of Pelusium, having pointed to the presence of the God-established order of the submission of some to others everywhere in the life of rational and irrational beings, draws the conclusion: ’Therefore we are right to say that the thing in itself, I mean power, that is, authority and royal power, have been established by God. But if a lawless evildoer seizes this power, we do not affirm that he has been sent by God, but we say that he, like Pharaoh, has been *permitted* to spew out this cunning and thereby inflict extreme punishment on and bring to their senses those for whom cruelty was necessary, just as the King of Babylon brought the Jews to their senses.’ (*Works,* part II, letter 6). Bolshevik power in its essence is an antichristian power and there is no way that it can recognized as God-established.”[[890]](#footnote-890)

On September 5, the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR declared:

“1. The abroad part of the all-Russian Church must cease relations with the Moscow church authorities in view of the impossibility of normal relations with them and in view of its enslavement to the atheist Soviet power which deprives it of its freedom in its administration of the Church.

“2. So as to free our hierarchy in Russia from responsibility for the non-recognition of Soviet power by the abroad part of our Church, until the re-establishment of normal relations with Russia and until the liberation of our Church from the persecutions of Soviet power, the abroad part of our Church must administer itself in accordance with the sacred canons, the definitions of the Sacred Council of the All-Russian Local Orthodox Church of 1917-18 and the decree of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon and the Higher Administrative Council of November 7/20, 1920, with the help of the Hierarchical Synod and the Council of Bishops, under the presidency of Metropolitan Anthony of Kiev.

“3. The abroad part of the Russian Church considers itself to be an inseparable, spiritually-at-one branch of the Great Russian Church. It does not separate itself from its Mother Church and does not consider itself autocephalous. As before, it considers its head to be the Patriarchal Locum Tenens Metropolitan Peter and commemorates his name in Divine services.

“4. If there will come a decree of Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod on the exclusion of the abroad bishops and clergy who do not want to sign their loyalty to the Soviet government from the clergy of the Moscow Patriarchate, this decree will be uncanonical.”

On May 9, 1928 Metropolitan Sergius threatened to ban the ROCOR hierarchs if they did not dissolve their Administration. On June 20, his Synod issued another ukaz to the Church Abroad declaring that any clergyman who recognized the Moscow Synod but did not accept Soviet citizenship would be removed from his post. [[891]](#footnote-891) Nobody obeyed this ukaz…

On August 28, 1928, Metropolitan Anthony issued “the completely definitive declaration of our Synod of Bishops that the Moscow Synod has deprived itself of all authority, since it has entered into agreement with the atheists, and without offering any resistance it has tolerated the closing and destruction of the holy churches, and the other innumerable crimes of the Soviet government… That illegally formed organization which has entered into union with God’s enemies, which Metropolitan Sergius calls an Orthodox Synod – but which the best Russian hierarchs, clergy and laymen have refused to recognize - … must not be recognized by our Orthodox Churches, nor by our Synod of Bishops with its flock here abroad. Furthermore, the organization of the Moscow Synod must be recognized to be exactly the same sort of apostates from the Faith as the ancient libellatici, that is, Christians who although they refused to blaspheme openly against Christ and offer sacrifices to the idols, nevertheless still received from the priests of the idols false documents verifying that they were in complete accord with the adherents of pagan religion…”[[892]](#footnote-892)

Unfortunately, however, this “completely definitive” statement did not prove to be *completely* definitive for the ROCOR hierarchs in years to come; their attitude to the Moscow Patriarchate wavered between strictness and condescension…

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Early in 1930, just after Sergius had given his interview denying that there had ever been persecutions against the faith in Soviet Russia, the archbishop of Canterbury invited Metropolitan Evlogy of Paris to go to London for one day of prayers for the suffering Church of Russia. “I decided to go,” he wrote. “The whole of England will pray for us, and I will remain in Paris as a witness of the unanimous sympathy of all the Churches for our suffering Church, but not take part? Impossible! My conscience ordered me to take part in these prayers; and my flock undoubtedly felt the same way.

“I spent about a week in England. It is a long time since I experienced such a radiant feeling of brotherly Christian love between the Churches as I experienced in those unforgettable days, when the whole of ecclesiastical and believing England prayed on her knees for a cessation of the terrible sufferings of our Russian Orthodox Church… I pursued no political aims in England, and nowhere gave political speeches. Everywhere that I had to give speeches I only gave thanks for their sympathy and asked them to support our suffering Mother Church by their prayers. And now these speeches have served as an excuse for a strict inquiry from Metropolitan Sergius in Moscow: on what basis could I allow myself to go round England calling people to protest against the USSR? Then it was demanded that I condemn my journey and give an undertaking not to repeat such speeches… It was bitter for me to read these unjust reproaches, which were dictated by Soviet power, and I replied sharply to Metropolitan Sergius that my prayers in England did not have a political, but only a religious character: it was a protest of the religious and in general the human conscience against the terrible persecutions against the Church in Soviet Russia…”[[893]](#footnote-893)

On June 10, 1930, Sergius retired Metropolitan Evlogy from his post administering the Russian parishes in Western Europe. On July 10 Evlogy broke communion with the Moscow Patriarchate, and in February was received by Constantinople…

On May 6, 1933 Metropolitan Anthony wrote to Sergius, who had reproached the ROCOR bishops for abandoning their sees: “… It is not from you and not for us to hear an exhortation to martyrdom, which we would not have avoided if we had stayed in the South of Russia. We are ready to listen to it and to many such reproaches, if we deserve them, from those who even now display an example of confession, and have not, like you, sold the purity of the faith for a mess of pottage of seeming freedom, which is in fact the most heavy and shameful slavery…

“What divides you from us is the fact that you, in your desire to guarantee a secure existence for your ecclesiastical centre, have tried to unite light with darkness. You have fallen into the temptation whose essence was revealed in the holy Gospel. Once the spirit of evil tried to draw even the Son of God Himself by a picture of external easy success, placing as a condition His worship of him, the son of destruction. You have not followed the example of Christ, the holy martyrs and confessors, who rejected such a compromise, but have bowed down to the age-old enemy of our salvation, when, for the sake of an illusory success, for the sake of the preservation of an external organization, you declared that the joys of the godless authorities are your joys and its enemies your enemies. You even tried to remove the crowns from the recent martyrs and confessors (including yourself, for I know that once you showed firmness and were in prison), affirming that they are suffering imprisonment, exile and torments not for the name of Christ, but as counter-revolutionaries. In this way you blasphemed against them. You denigrated their exploit, and dampened the enthusiasm of those who could have been numbered to the ranks of the martyrs for the faith. You excommunicated them from the flower and adornment of the Russian church. In this neither I nor my brothers abroad will ever follow you… We have no intercourse with the Orthodox archpastors, pastors and laymen who are imprisoned in Russia, except that we pray for them and know that they suffer only for the faith, though the persecutors charge them with State crimes which are alien to them, as the enemies of the Christians loved to do in ancient times… For you the way of the cross is now madness like it was to the Greeks contemporary with the Apostles (I Corinthians 1.23). I implore you, as a pupil and friend, free yourself from this temptation, renounce publicly every lie which Tuchkov and other enemies of the Church have put into your mouth, do not yield in the face of probably tortures. If you are counted worthy of a martyr’s crown, the earthly and heavenly Churches will combine in glorification of your courage and of the Lord Who strengthened you; but if you stay on this wide path leading you to perdition (Matthew 7.13), on which you stand now, you will be ignominiously led to the pit of hell and until the end of its earthly existence the Church will not forget your betrayal. I always think of this when I look at the panagia of the Vladimir Mother of God with the engraved inscription which you presented to me twenty years ago: ‘To a dear teacher and friend.’ Your further words in this inscription are: ‘give us some of your oil, for our lamps are fading.’ Here we offer you the salutary oil of faith and loyalty in the Holy Church. *Do not refuse it, but reunite with it* as in 1922 when you solemnly declared to Patriarch Tikhon your repentance for your former wavering loyalty. Do not refuse the friendly appeal of one who tenderly loved you and continues to love you. Metropolitan Anthony.”[[894]](#footnote-894)

On July 8, 1933 the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR issued an encyclical to the Russian Orthodox flock with regard to Sergius’ epistle of March 23: “His appeal in its essence remains the same as it was in 1927 and can be formulated in the words: he who is with Soviet power is with the Russian Church; he who is against the former cannot be with the latter. In this way the link with the Mother Church can be realized for us in no other way than by accepting the God-fighting authorities that now rule in Russia. Before stretching out the hand of communion with Metropolitan Sergius, we must stretch it out first to the Bolsheviks and receive from them attestation of our political reliability, without which the deputy of the locum tenens cannot re-establish fraternal and canonical union with us…”[[895]](#footnote-895)

At the same time, this encyclical, - penned, according to Archbishop Nikon, by Metropolitan Anastasy, - declared: “As regards relations toward the Mother Church, the Russian ecclesial organization abroad has considered itself no more than a branch of the latter, bound organically to the whole body of the Church of Russia, even though temporarily deprived only of outward unity with the latter in ecclesiastical administration.

“To the present day the entire Church organization abroad has considered and still considers itself an extraordinary and temporary institution, which must be abolished without delay after the restoration of normal social and ecclesiastical life in Russia.

“We are taking fully into account the extraordinary difficulties of the position of Metropolitan Sergius, who is now the de facto head of the Church of Russia, and are aware of the heavy burden of responsibility for the fate of the latter, which lies upon him. No one, therefore, has the audacity to accuse him for the mere attempt to enter into dialogue with the Soviet regime so as to obtain legal standing for the Church of Russia. Not without foundation does the deputy locum tenens of the Patriarchal Throne say in his aforementioned Declaration that only ‘armchair dreamers can think that such a vast community as our Orthodox Church, with all its organization, can exist peacefully in a country while walling itself off from the authorities.’ While the church exists on earth, it remains closely bound up with the fates of human society and cannot be imagined outside time and space. It is impossible for it to refrain from all contact with a powerful societal organization such as the government; otherwise it would have to leave the world.”[[896]](#footnote-896)

However, in his 1934 Paschal encyclical Metropolitan Anthony was stricter: “It is noteworthy that several hierarchs and their flocks, for the most part Russians, have already fallen away from Ecumenical unity, and to the question: ‘What do you believe?’, reply with references to self-proclaimed heads of all sorts of schisms in Moscow, America, and Western Europe. It is clear that, without admitting it, they have ceased to believe in the unity of the Church throughout the world. They try to bear calmly the refusal of the true Church to have relations with them, and imagine that one can save one’s soul even without communion with Her… Unfortunately, some Orthodox laymen, even, alas, many priests (and hierarchs) have subjected themselves to this state of gracelessness, although still retaining the outward appearance of the church services and the apparent performance of the Mysteries…”[[897]](#footnote-897)

On July 5, 1934, Metropolitan Sergius banned the ROCOR hierarchs. On August 7, Metropolitan Anthony wrote to Metropolitan Eleutherius of Lithuania explaining that he could not accept this ban because “a hierarch cannot be removed from his see except through a trial”.[[898]](#footnote-898) Now Eleutherius was a supporter of Sergius, and on the departure of Metropolitan Evlogy for Constantinople was entrusted with oversight of the patriarchal parishes in Western Europe. In 1935 he published a book defending the MP against ROCOR and Metropolitan Anthony, in which he argued that while Soviet power acted in the religious sphere “by the inspiration of Satan”, Christians were still bound to obey it, because “all power is from God”. If they obeyed Soviet power, as God commanded, then Soviet power, “would see this, and the Spirit of God would proclaim good things for the Church through it”.[[899]](#footnote-899)

Professor Ivan Ilyin subjected this argument to detailed criticism. The communists could not be simultaneously servants of God and servants of Satan. If they were acting “by the inspiration of Satan”, as was clearly the case, then they had to be opposed. In any case, Church history contained many examples of hierarchs refusing to obey the secular authorities, beginning with the apostles who told the Sanhedrin: “we must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5.29).

Ilyin quotes “the law of freedom” (James 1.25; I Peter 2.16) to illumine the meaning of the words “all power is from God”. They “signify not that power is unrestrained, but that it is bound and limited. ‘Being from God’ *means being called* to the service of God and *undertaking* this service; it binds and limits this power. It does not mean that the power is free to do any baseness or abomination, sin or iniquity, and that, whatever it does, it will always ‘come from God’, and that obedience in conscience will be demanded by it from its subjects as if it were the voice of God. But it means that the power is established by God *for the doing of good and the overcoming of evil*; that it must rule precisely in this way, and not otherwise. And if it does rule in this way, the subjects are obliged to obey it out of conscience.

“Thus the calling of the power by God becomes for it a rule and obligation, as it were a court before the face of God. While the free obedience of subjects according to conscience turns out to be strengthened, but also limited, by this law. But how far is it ‘limited’? To the extent that the law of Christian freedom calls them to loyalty or forbids them to show loyalty.

“And it is precisely to this freedom, infused with love, conscience and clear perception of its object, that we must turn for an exit when the power turns out to be in the hands of Satan, whom we can in no way serve or want to serve – neither out of fear, nor for conscience’s sake. We can and must serve only God, for we are ‘servants of God’ (I Peter 2.16); we are called to serve Him *in freedom*, speaking and acting as people who must be judged, not according to the letter of the Scripture, but according to the law of freedom. And if it turns out that according to our free and object-directed Christian conscience (not out of arbitrariness or passion!), this power is satanic, then we are called to condemn it, refuse to obey it and conduct a struggle against it in word and deed, by no means using our Christian freedom in order to cover up evil, that is, without distorting the voice of our Christian conscience, and not embellishing the words of Satan and not ascribing them in crookedness of soul to Christ…”[[900]](#footnote-900)

The issue dividing ROCOR and Metropolitan Sergius is often described by the supporters of Sergius as “political” – a question only of the political recognition of the Soviet regime. However, as the Catacomb confessor Professor Ivan Andreyev pointed out: “To dissociate oneself in principle from any politics is impossible for an Orthodox person, for religion and politics are at the present time organically blended. The question: to be with Christ or against Him, has a political meaning today, because it commits one to protesting against those political systems which have as their main goal the destruction of Christianity. Whoever at the present time denies the necessity of political discussions (reasoning) and jurisdictional explanations (interpretations) denies the necessity of distinguishing the wolves in sheep’s clothing and finding out where Christ is and where the Antichrist…”[[901]](#footnote-901)

In this connection, it is worth recalling the following decree issued by Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod on July 25, 1935 recently discovered by researchers: “The decision of the former Most Holy Governing Synod of April 20, 1813 to deprive Archbishop Barlaam (Shishatsky) of Mogilev of his rank and priesthood, is to be completely rescinded as being issued for political reasons and under pressure of political circumstances. His Eminence Archbishop Barlaam Shishatsky is to be recognized as having died in his hierarchical rank. Therefore he is to be commemorated among those who have reposed as an Archbishop.” Deacon Alexander Mazyrin comments on this: “Archbishop Barlaam was defrocked in his time because in the summer of 1812, after the French took Mogilev, he swore allegiance to the Emperor Napoleon. In rescinding the indicated decree of the Most Holy Synod, ‘as being issued for political reasons and under pressure of political circumstances’, Metropolitan Sergius clearly let us understand how we should relate to his own decrees, at the base of which there also lay political motives.’”[[902]](#footnote-902)

True; and yet there is a still more pertinent conclusion to be drawn from this. Archbishop Barlaam was undoubtedly *justly* defrocked by the Most Holy Synod in 1813, because he swore allegiance to a man, Napoleon, who had been anathematized by the Synod. That being the case, Metropolitan Sergius was no less justly defrocked for swearing allegiance to the Bolsheviks, who were also under the Russian Church’s anathema and whose enmity to Orthodoxy was still more obvious. For the fact that both acts were committed “under political pressure” is strictly irrelevant. Both acts, although clothed as concessions to political necessity, were acts of *ecclesiastical* betrayal; both men betrayed Christ and His Holy Church, and were therefore subject to anathema and expulsion from the Church.

## 71. ARCHBISHOP ANDREW AND THE OLD RITUALISTS

As we have seen, Archbishop Andrew was a thorn in the side both of Metropolitan Peter and of Metropolitan Sergius.[[903]](#footnote-903) In 1922 he had made his Ufa diocese autonomous on the basis of the Patriarch’s ukaz № 362, and by the end of his life he had consecrated as many as 40 secret bishops, whose successors, it is claimed, have survived to the present day.

Also important were his controversial relations with the Old Ritualists, which, if successful, would have ended the 250-year-old schism in the Russian Church.

Just after the February revolution, Archbishop Andrew presided over the All-Russian Congress of Yedinovertsy (that is, converts to Orthodoxy from the Old Ritualists who were allowed to retain the Old Rite) in Nizhni-Novgorod. In May, 1917, together with the future hieromartyr-bishop Joseph (Petrovykh) and the yedinoverets Protopriest (later bishop and hieromartyr) Simon (Sheev), he visited the Rogozhskoe cemetery in Moscow, the spiritual centre of the Belokrinitsky Old Ritualist hierarchy, and handed over a letter from the Congress expressing a desire for union. However, the reply of the Old Ritualist bishops was negative.

But Vladyka’s sympathy for the Old Ritualists went further than these early actions would suggest, and further than the opinion, which was generally accepted in his time, that the anathemas on the Old Rite were unjust and should be removed. Influenced by one of his teachers at the Academy, Professor N. Kapterev, he adopted a still more “liberal” attitude towards the Old Ritualists that has been a subject of controversy to this day. While continuing to recognize the pre-revolutionary Church, he considered that it had fallen into caesaropapism, or the “Nikonian heresy” as he called it, and that it was “Nikonianism” that had led to the Russian revolution and to the renovationist and sergianist submission of the Church to Soviet power. He often referred to the Orthodox as “Nikonians”, while calling the Old Ritualists “Ancient Orthodox”, whose schism was not a schism, but precisely a protest against this unlawful encroachment on the freedom of the Church. Therefore Vladyka Andrew's attempted rapprochement with the Old Ritualists must be seen in the context of the main struggle of the times - the struggle of the Church against Soviet power and renovationist and sergianist caesaropapism.

Let us turn to Archbishop Andrew’s own account of his dealings with the Old Ritualists: “In September, 1917 the so-called beglopopovtsi [i.e. those Old Ritualists who accepted runaway priests from the official Russian Church, but had no hierarchy of their own] approached me with the request that I become their bishop. At this time I was in Moscow at the 1917 Council. I agreed in principle, but on condition that my flock in Ufa should remain in my jurisdiction. It was Lev Alexeevich Molekhonov who was conducting negotiations with me on the side of the beglopopovtsi. He assembled in Moscow a small convention of representatives of other communities of theirs. At this convention, after long discussions, they agreed that my union with this group of Old Ritualists should take place in the following manner: I would come without vestments to the church of the beglopopovtsi in Moscow (on M. Andronievskaia street). They would meet me with the question: ‘Who are you?’ I would reply at first that I was a bishop of the Orthodox, One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, and them I would read the Symbol of Faith and a lengthy confession of faith, which everyone ordained to the episcopate would read. Then I, at the request of the beglopopovtsi, would anoint myself with the same chrism which they in 1917 called and considered to be patriarchal, which remained [to them] from Patriarch Joseph [(1642-1652), the last Moscow Patriarch recognized by both the Orthodox and the Old Ritualists]. With this my ‘rite of reception’ would come to an end.

“My spiritual father, Archbishop Anthony of Kharkov, knew about all these negotiations, and Patriarch Tikhon was informed about everything. They approved my intentions.

“Thus from both sides everything was measured, calculated, thought out and humanly speaking worked out in a manner completely acceptable for all. After this I went to Ufa.

“But then the events of 1918 and 1919 took place. The beglopopovtsi lost me for a long time. I was in Siberia and then in a difficult incarceration… But in 1925, when I was in exile in Ashkhabad [in 1923 Archbishop Andrew had again been arrested and sentenced to three years exile in Central Asia, first in Ashkhabad, and then in Tashkent], the beglopopovets Archimandrite Clement came to me and began to ask me again that I should become bishop for the beglopopovtsi…

“I agreed to do everything that I had promised to L.A. Molekhonov… Moreover, I agreed to become bishop for the beglopopovtsi only on condition that Archimandrite Clement should himself receive consecration to the episcopate and would become de facto an active bishop, for I myself was chained to Askhabad or some other place for a long time.

“Clement accepted all my conditions and on August 28, 1925 we for the first time prayed together with him to God in a truly Orthodox, that is, not caesaropapist church [!]; I on my side had fulfilled everything that I had been blessed to do by Patriarch Tikhon. On September 3, 1925 I (together with Bishop Rufinus) consecrated Clement to the episcopate, giving him the authority to be my deputy, as it were, as long as I did not enjoy freedom of movement…

“After this we parted on the same day of September 3.

“But soon I received news from Bishop Clement that the beglopopovtsi recognised neither me nor him as their bishops and that he, Clement, had been received in his existing rank into the number of the bishops of the Belokrinitsky hierarchy.”

The renovationist *Vestnik Sviashchennago Sinoda (Herald of the Holy Synod)* reported: "According to the report of Archimandrite Clement, Bishop Andrew did not agree to the second rite (i.e. chrismation) for a long time, and agreed only after sustained discussions with, or demands from Clement, based on the 95th canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council (which orders that heretics should be united to Orthodoxy only through chrismation).

"Archbishop Andrew said the following to Clement before the chrismation: 'It is not your hand that is being lain upon me, but the hand of that patriarch who consecrated your ancient chrism: when you read the proclamation, and when I recite the heresies and confession of faith before chrismation, then I immediately become your bishop and can commune with you. But since I am your bishop, that means that a priest cannot anoint a bishop.'

"After this, Archbishop Andrew anointed himself with the Old Ritualist chrism [more exactly: the chrism consecrated by the Orthodox Patriarch Joseph] and read out the following confession of faith: 'I, Bishop Andrew, of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, who was consecrated to the rank of bishop on October 4, 1907 in front of the holy relics of the Kazan hierarchs Gurias and Barsanuphius and on the day of their commemoration, and who am now suffering persecution from the ruling hierarchy for the freedom of the Church of Christ, confess before the Holy Church that Patriarch Nicon in his wisdom disrupted the life and love of the Catholic Church, thereby laying the beginnings of the schism in the Russian Church. On the basis of Patriarch Nicon's mistake was established that caesaropapism which has, since the time of Patriarch Nicon, undermined all the roots of Russian Church life and was finally expressed in the formation of the so-called 'Living Church', which is at present the ruling hierarchy and which has transgressed all the church canons... But I, although I am a sinful and unworthy bishop, by the mercy of God ascribe myself to no ruling hierarchy and have always remembered the command of the holy Apostle Peter: 'Pasture the flock of God without lording it over God's inheritance'."

Hearing about the events in Ashkhabad, Metropolitan Peter, the patriarchal locum tenens, banned Archbishop Andrew from serving, although a later search in the Synodal offices revealed no such decree (Spravka by the Chancellor of the Patriarchal Synod, Archbishop Pitirim of Dmitrov on October 27, 1927 (№ 1799)).

However, Archbishop Andrew was not inclined to obey such a decree, whether genuine or not; for he considered Metropolitan Peter to be “an autocrat in clerical guise” who had ascended the ecclesiastical ladder by means of an intrigue, and the whole system of the succession of power in the Church by means of secret wills to be uncanonical. Thus he continued to “ascribe myself to no ruling hierarchy”, and to rule the Ufa diocese on an autonomous basis until the convening of a Council of the whole Russian Church, consecrating no less than 40 bishops for the Catacomb Church – about 30 already by the beginning of 1927.

As regards the supposed ban on Archbishop Andrew by Metropolitan Peter, we must conclude either, if we are to believe Metropolitan Sergius, that "it may have been lost on the road", or, much more likely, that it never existed.

Unfortunately, this supposed ban by Metropolitan Peter caused him to be distrusted for a time by Archbishop Andrew. Fortunately, however, this distrust did not last, as we shall see…

Archbishop Andrew returned from exile to Ufa in 1926, and the people visited their Vladyka in unending streams. However, the Ufa clergy led by the newly appointed Bishop John met him with hostility and coldness.

One of his parishioners wrote in her diary: "The people search him out and revere him, and all the parishioners of various churches invite him to them, while the clergy does not accept him. There are many rumours, and no one knows what to believe... Bishop Andrew took up his residence in the workers' quarter on Samara street not far from the Simeonov church. He served in the Simeonov church, and in such a way, according to another eyewitness, that "we ascended to heaven and did not want to come down."

In July, 1926, Metropolitan Peter’s deputy, Metropolitan Sergius, renewed the attack on Archbishop Andrew, and banned him from serving. However, even if we assume that the charges against him were justified, this ban was invalid, since it transgressed several canons according to which a bishop must be first be summoned to trial by bishops, and if he does not obey, he must be summoned again through two bishops who are sent to bring him, and then a third time through two bishops, and only when he does not appear the third time will the Council pronounce its decisions about him. In the case of Archbishop Andrew, he was not only not invited to a trial, but the sentence against him was passed, not by a Council, but by a single bishop like himself.

For similar reasons, his bans on Catacomb bishops in later years were also invalid.

Archbishop Andrew wrote: “This Sergius, knowing that I was in Ufa, wrote to my flock a letter, filled with slander against me, as if I had fallen away from Orthodoxy, as if I by the second rite had united myself to the beglopopovtsi, etc. I had no difficulty in proving that this was a lie and that the deputy of the locum tenens was simply a liar!…

“And so Metropolitan Sergius slandered me, travelling along this well-trodden path of slander and lies. But in Ufa amidst the ‘Niconians’ there were some thinking people and they did not believe Sergius’ slander, as they did not believe Peter’s. Moreover, two things took place which served to help me personally and help the Church in general.

“At that time I had two vicar-bishops with me – Anthony [Milovidov, of Ust-Katavsky] and Pitirim [of Nizhegorod, later Schema-Bishop Peter (Ladygin)]. Both of them wanted to check out everything that related to me in the matter of the reunion with Old Ritualism. Anthony set off to check things out in Moscow, obtained the trust of people in the chancellery of the Patriarchal Synod and personally got into the Synodal archive, so as to study the documents relating to me.

“You can imagine his surprise when in the spring of 1927 he became convinced that there were absolutely no documents about me in the Synodal archives, neither about my ‘departure into schism’, nor about my ‘ban’, etc. He asked in the Synod what this meant, and received the exceptionally characteristic reply: ‘Metropolitan Peter was probably only wanting to frighten Bishop Andrew’!…

“Bishop Pitirim, a 70-year-old monk who used to be on Old Athos, a clever man, although unlettered, went not to the sergianist Synod, which he did not recognize, but to Yaroslavl to Metropolitan Agathangelus, so as to tell him everything concerning Church life in Ufa in detail and to hear his opinion. Metropolitan Agathangel heard Bishop Pitirim out very attentively for several hours (two days) and told my vicar-bishop Pitirim (whom I had consecrated to the episcopate during my first exile in Tedzhent in June, 1925), that he should not be upset, that my ecclesiastical behaviour was irreproachable and that only in the interests of ecclesiastical peace he, Metropolitan Agathangel, advised me not to carry out any hierarchical consecrations but in the interests of the enlightenment of the flock in Ufa and other faithful sons of the Church, he, Metropolitan Agathangel, advised me to present my whole ‘case’ before the judgement of the nearest – at least three – bishops.

“’But this is only my advice, and it will be clearer how to act on the spot,” said Metropolitan Agathangel to Bishop Pitirim.

“Bishop Pitirim, on returning to Ufa, told me about all this, and Bishop Habbakuk of Old Ufa decided immediately to carry out the advice of Metropolitan Agathangel and on February 3, 1927 he invited Bishop Pitirim and Anthony to a convention in Ufa, while he asked me for all the materials that would explain my ecclesiastical behaviour.

“On February 3, 1927 these three bishops issued under their signatures an ‘Act with regard to the Affair of Archbishop Andrew’, in which they laid out the circumstances of the affair and came to the conclusion that I had not ‘departed’ anywhere, and that Metropolitan Sergius’ slander was in essence a light-minded and shameful intrusion into a holy affair.”

From October 3-6, 1927 a diocesan Congress took place in Ufa at which the “Act” was approved, Archbishop Andrew vindicated “as their true Ufa archpastor" and Metropolitan Sergius accused of lying. Vladyka Andrew's own view of his episcopal authority is contained in his reply to the Address of the clergy-lay assembly of March 26, 1926: "I remain a bishop for those who recognize me as their bishop, who fed me for the six years I was in prison, and who need me. I don't impose my episcopate on anyone."

However, Archbishop Andrew’s relations with the Old Ritualists did not end there. When Vladyka was released from prison in 1931, he began to visit the Rogozhskoe cemetery again, reasoning “that I am for them not a stranger, but their own, and I am for them not a hostile and harmful ‘Niconian’, but a true bishop of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church”. It seems that he then entered into communion with Archbishop Meletius (Kartushin) of Moscow, the first-hierarch of the Belokrinitsky hierarchy, and together with him consecrated a secret bishop, Basil Guslinsky. Then he was again exiled. During this period, on April 1, 1932, priests of the Belokrinitsky hierarchy sent him the Holy Gifts and an omophorion. Archbishop Andrew now considered himself to be in full communion with Archbishop Meletius “in the holy ecclesiastical dogmas, and in prayer, and in ecclesiastical discipline (that is, in the holy rites)”. At the same time, he rejected the idea that he had “transferred” to the Belokrinitsky hierarchy, and insisted on remaining Bishop of Ufa, retaining “full freedom of Church action, arousing the suspicions of nobody”. Archbishop Meletius appears to have accepted this condition.

It is difficult to resist the conclusion that the Old Ritualists used the good intentions of the Orthodox bishop and future hieromartyr to deceive him. He considered that, as a result of his actions, “the schism, as a schism, has ideologically speaking come to an end”. But he was tricked by the beglopopovtsi, who rejected both him and the bishop he had consecrated for them, Clement. There was not then, and has not been since then, any union between the Orthodox Church and the Old Ritualists of the Belokrinitsky hierarchy. Nor can there be without the repentance of the latter, because, apart from the fact that the Belokrinitsky hierarchy has no apostolic succession, it, as the “Andrewites” themselves admit, followed the sergianists in becoming a tool of Soviet propaganda.

## 72. NOT BOWING THE KNEE TO BAAL

Although the True Orthodox laity of the Church of Greece with their few priests were essentially alone in openly opposing the calendar change, there were still some who had not “bowed the knee to Baal” in “the king’s palace” – the hierarchy headed by Chrysostom Papadopoulos. Thus Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina never accepted it, while Metropolitan Germanus of Demetrias protested against the introduction of the new calendar and held it in abeyance in his diocese until February 15, 1928.[[904]](#footnote-904) Others accepted it, but continued to agitate for its removal.

Thus “on July 2, 1929, in the presence of forty-four metropolitans, [Archbishop] Chrysostom suddenly demanded the immediate signature of the hierarchs present to a report he had prepared approving the calendar change and condemning those who stayed with the old. This satanic plan of Chrysostom’s was opposed by the metropolitans of Kassandreia, Maronia, Ioannina, Druinopolis, Florina, Demetrias, Samos and Khalkis. When the archbishop insisted, thirteen hierarchs left, while of the fifty-one who remained twenty-seven against four signed Chrysostom’s report.”[[905]](#footnote-905) Indeed, it was the hope that the State Church would eventually return to the Julian Calendar, that persuaded those bishops who later joined the True Orthodox to stay where they were for the time being. It was under their influence that in 1934 the State Church of Greece condemned Freemasonry as a pagan religion, and excommunicated Freemasons.

Bishop Ephraim writes that at a “Pre-Council” held at the monastery of Vatopedi on Mount Athos in 1930, “the representatives of the Serbian and Polish Churches (the Churches of Russia, Georgia, and Bulgaria were not represented at the council; Russia and Georgia were not present because, at the time, they were weathering the third wave of persecutions under Stalin, Bulgaria was not present because the ‘Bulgarian schism’ was still in effect) asked for a separate chapel. When the Greeks insisted that they all celebrate together the Slavs refused, excusing themselves by saying that the language was different, as well as the typicon, and that there would be confusion. The Greeks kept insisting and the Slavs kept refusing, and in fact, to the end of the council, the two did not concelebrate, and it became clear that the Slavs considered the calendar issue important enough at the time to separate themselves from the Greeks. When they said that their typicon was different, the calendar obviously weighed heavily as a part of that difference… In fact the Serbian Church even supported the Old Calendarist movement in Greece by sending them Chrism across the border secretly.”[[906]](#footnote-906)

During this council Bishop Nicholas (Velimirovich) of Ochrid vehemently defended the Orthodox Calendar, declaring that the1923 Congress which approved the new calendar had created a schism. “Does the present assembly,” he said, “have any relation to the Pan-Orthodox Congress of Constantinople, from which the anomalies known to us all proceeded? The Church of Serbia was stunned when she saw the decisions of that Congress put into practice.”[[907]](#footnote-907)

In 1929 Metropolitan Innocent of Peking wrote an open letter on the calendar question in which he said: “In the Church of Christ there is nothing of little value, nothing unimportant, for in every custom there is incarnate the Spirit of God, by Whom the Church lives and breathes. Does not everyone who dares to rise up against the customs and laws of the Church, which are based on sacred Tradition and Scripture, rise up against the Spirit of God and thereby show to all who have eyes to see of what spirit he is? Worthily and rightly does the Holy Church consign such people to anathema.”[[908]](#footnote-908)

In Greece, the number of True Orthodox parishes multiplied - 800 were founded in the years 1926-30 alone. And, helped by a parliamentary decree of 1931 granting freedom of worship to the Old Calendarists, the numbers of the faithful had swelled to over 200,000 by October, 1934.

On August 8, 1934 the True Orthodox Christians declared the official church to be schismatic. For, as Nicetas Anagnostopoulos wrote, the Greek Church had “infringed on the dogma of the spiritual unity of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, for which the Divine Founder had prayed, because it separated itself in the simultaneous celebration of the feasts and observance of the fasts from the other Orthodox Churches and the Orthodox world, 8/10ths of which follows the Old Calendar (the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Holy Mountain, Russia, Serbia and others).

“In Divine worship it has divided the pious Greek people into two worshipping camps, and has divided families and introduced the simultaneous feasts of Orthodox and heretics (Catholics, Protestants and others) as well as confusion and disorder into the divine Orthodox Worship handed down by the Fathers.

“It has transferred the immovable religious feasts and the great fasts, handed down from ages past, of Christmas, the Mother of God and the Holy Apostles, reducing the fast of the Apostles until it disappears when it coincides with the feast of All Saints; and has removed the readings from the Gospel and Apostle from the Sunday cycle.

“From this it becomes evident that the Calendar is not an astronomical question, as the innovators of the Church of Greece claim in their defence, but quite clearly a religious question, given that it is indissolubly bound up with the worshipping, and in general with the religious life of the Orthodox Christian.

“Through the calendar innovation the new calendarist Church has transgressed, not only the perennial Ecclesiastical Tradition of the Patristic and Orthodox Calendar, and not only the above-mentioned Apostolic command [II Thessalonians 2.15; Galatians 1.8-9] and the decision of the Seventh Ecumenical Council concerning the anathematisation of those who violate the Sacred Tradition [“If anyone violates any ecclesiastical tradition, written or unwritten, let him be anathema”], but also the decisions of the Pan-Orthodox Patriarchal Councils of the years 1583, 1587 and 1593 under the Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II and of 1848 under the Ecumenical Patriarch Anthimus, which condemned and anathematized the Gregorian calendar.

“It has also transgressed the Sacred Canons which order the keeping and observance of the Sacred Traditions, which are: a) the Third of the Council of Carthage, b) the Twenty-First of the Council of Gangra, and c) the Ninety-First and Ninety-Second of St. Basil the Great, as well as the Forty-Seventh canon of the Council of Laodicea, which forbids the concelebration with heretics, which is what the Latins and the Protestants are, and the First of the Seventh Ecumenical Council concerning the steadfast observance of the complete array of the divine Canons.”[[909]](#footnote-909)

Nor did the new calendarists lack direct warnings from the Heavenly Church that the path they had embarked on was false. One such warning was given to the new calendarist Bishop Arsenius of Larissa on December 12/25, 1934, the feast of St. Spyridon according to the Old Calendar, but Christmas according to the new calendar.

“In the morning the bishop went by car to celebrate the Liturgy in his holy church. When he arrived there, he saw a humble, aged, gracious Bishop with a panagia on his breast. Arsenius said to him: ‘Brother, come, let’s proclaim the joyful letters of Christmas and then I will give you hospitality.’

“The humble Bishop replied: ‘You must not proclaim those letters but mine, St. Spyridon’s!’ Then Arsenius got angry and said: ‘I’m inviting you and you’re despising me. Go away then.’

“Arsenius went into the church, venerated the icons and sat in his throne. When the time for the katavasias came, he sang the first katavasia, and then told the choir to sing the second. Arsenius began to say the third, but suddenly felt anxious and unwell. He motioned to the choir to continue and went into the altar, where they asked him: ‘What’s the matter, master?’ He replied: ‘I don’t feel well.’

“When Arsenius’ indisposition increased, they carried him to his house, where his condition worsened, and the next day he died. He had been punished by God for his impious disobedience to St. Spyridon. This miracle is known by the older Orthodox faithful of Larissa.”[[910]](#footnote-910)

During this early period of the struggle against the new calendar, many people sympathized with the True Orthodox but did not join them because they did not yet have bishops. Others continued to worship according to the Orthodox Calendar without openly breaking communion with the new calendarists.

Among the latter was Fr. Nicholas Planas of Athens. Fr. Nicholas was the priest who was called to conduct a service of Holy Water to bless the “Society of the Orthodox”, which effectively marked the beginning of the Old Calendarist struggle. At that service he said: “Whatever has been done uncanonically cannot stand – it will fall.”

Once “he wanted to serve according to the traditional Calendar on the feast of the Prophet Elisseus [Elisha]. But since he feared that obstacles might arise, he agreed with his assistant priest the night before to go and serve at Saint Spyridon’s in Mantouka. In the morning his chantress went to Saint Spyridon’s and waited for him. Time passed and it looked as though the priest was not going to come to serve. She despaired. She supposed that something serious had happened to him, and that was why he hadn’t come. She left and went to Prophet Elisseus’ (because the ‘information center’ was there), to ask what had happened to the priest, and there, she saw him in the church preparing to celebrate the Liturgy! She chided him for breaking the agreement which they had made, and asked furthermore why he was not afraid, but came there in the center, right in the midst of the seething persecution. He said to her, ‘Don’t scold me, because this morning I saw the Prophet and he told me to come here to serve and not to fear anything, because he will watch over me.’ His helper was left with her argument unfinished! ‘But, how did you see him?’ she asked him. He told her, ‘I got up this morning and got ready for Saint Spyridon’s. I was sitting in an armchair while they brought me a carriage. At that moment I saw Prophet Elisseus before me, and he told me to go to his church to celebrate the Liturgy!’…

“Another example similar to that of Papa-Nicholas is that of the priestmonk Jerome of Aegina, who followed the same path. Shortly after his ordination to the priesthood, a year or so before the calendar change, Fr. Jerome ceased from serving because of a vision that was granted him during the Liturgy. According to some accounts this occurred within forty days of his ordination. He continued to preach, however, at a hospital chapel where he lived, and which he himself had built there on the island of Aegina. Although this chapel officially was under the new calendar diocese of Aegina, Fr. Jerome always celebrated the feast days according to the traditional ecclesiastical calendar…

“Although he himself did not serve as a priest, nevertheless, because of his saintliness and his popularity among the people and because of the obvious gifts of the Holy Spirit which he possessed, he had great influence among the faithful who looked to him for direction and guidance. This came to the ears of Procopius, the Bishop of Hydra and Aegina. As a result, the bishop sent word to Fr. Jerome that he was going to come and impose on him to concelebrate with him. Up to this time, Fr. Jerome had sought to remain faithful to the Church’s tradition and to his conscience without making an issue of it publicly or in street demonstrations. He saw, however, that the bishop was determined to create an issue now and force him into communion with him. As a result, Fr. Jerome sent the bishop a short note and resigned from the diocese, saying among other things: ‘I ask you to accept my resignation from the Hospital, because from 1924 and thence, my longing, as well as my zeal, has been for the Orthodox Church and Faith. From my childhood I revered Her, and dedicated all my life to Her, in obedience to the traditions of the Godbearing Fathers. I confess and proclaim the calendar of the Fathers to be the correct one, even as You Yourself acknowledge…’”[[911]](#footnote-911)

An especially active role in the struggle was played by Hieromonk Matthew (Karpathakis), who in 1927, in response to a Divine vision, founded the women’s Monastery of the Mother of God at Keratea, Attica, which soon became the largest monastery in Greece.[[912]](#footnote-912)

In 1934 he wrote: “For every Christian there is nothing more honourable in this fleeting life than devout faith in the Master of all things, our Lord Jesus Christ. For what else can save the soul from death, that is, from the condemnation of eternal punishment, than this faultless Orthodox Christian Faith of ours, about which the Lord speaks clearly, saying: ‘He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned’ (Mark 16.16). This Faith was compared by the Lord to a valuable treasure which a man found hidden in a field and to buy which he sold all his possessions (Matthew 13.13).

“Therefore the blessed Apostle Jude exhorts everyone ‘to contend for the Faith which was once for all delivered to the saints’ (Catholic epistle, v. 3). And the divine Apostle made such an exhortation because there were appearing at that time men of deceit, the vessels of Satan, guileful workers, who sow tares in the field of the Lord, and who attempt to overturn the holy Faith in Christ. Concerning the men of impiety and perdition, the holy Apostle went on to write: ‘For admission has been secretly gained by some who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly persons who pervert the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.’ Because of these innovators and despisers of the Faith in the Holy Church of God which has been handed down to us, the Apostle of the Gentiles and Walker in heavenly places Paul hurled a terrible anathema, saying: ‘If any one preaches to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed’ (Galatians 1.9).

“Therefore our Lord in the Holy Gospel cries to all His faithful servants: ‘Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits… Take heed that no one leads you astray… And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.’ (Matthew 7.15,16, 24.4, 11)

“Against these innovating false-bishops and their followers the synodical decrees of the Church through the Most Holy Patriarchs declare that ‘whoever has wished to add or take away one iota – let him be seven times anathema’…

“Thus with what great attention should every Orthodox Christian care for the valuable treasures of the Faith, so as to keep it undefiled, as the divine Apostles and Godbearing Fathers handed it down to us, and that he should struggle to preserve the state which is fitting for Christians of penitence, the fear of God, good works; for we live in an age in which, as the Evangelist John says, so many antichrists have appeared. He writes: ‘Children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come; therefore we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.’ (I John 2.18-19)

“… Those who govern the Church of Greece today have, together with the clergy who follow them, persisted in error, kakodoxy, schism, the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, the heresy of the Papist calendar! And they have led the people into error and become ‘heresiarch’ hierarchs according to the divine Fathers!

“… What great wealth of the grace of God is brought into the soul of the Christian by a little patience in afflictions! Although the holy martyrs, confessors and righteous ones passed their lives in persecutions and afflictions, nevertheless they endured and triumphed over this world which ‘lies in evil’ and found the unfading glory of the Kingdom of the Heavens, because they hoped in the Lord. Our Fathers hoped and were not ashamed, for the unlying mouth of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ confirmed: ‘Behold, I am with you all the days of your life until the end of the age.’ (Matthew 28.20) That is why the Church of Christ, One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic, although furiously persecuted by the Jews, the idolaters, the pseudo-wise, the atheist heretics and in general by the organs of the devil, emerged always victorious and resplendent. ‘In truth nothing is stronger than the Church’; for Her Founder and Head is the God Who became man for our sakes, He Who together with the Father and the Holy Spirit is worshipped and glorified in heaven and on earth, He Who is blessed to the ages. As every Christian can see, Orthodoxy is passing through a terrible winter. Piety is persecuted, virtue is derided, Church tradition is scorned. It is frightful that Shepherds of the Church should turn into Her persecutors.

“St. Basil the Great once wrote: ‘The one crime that is severely avenged is the strict keeping of the patristic traditions… No white hair is venerable to the judges of injustice, no pious asceticism, no state according to the Gospel from youth to old age… To our grief we see our feasts upturned, our houses of prayer closed, our altars of spiritual worship unused.’ All this has now come upon us. Many and clearly to be seen by all are the great evils that the anticanonical renovationists introduced into the menologion and calendar of the Orthodox Church. Schisms, divisions, the overthrow of good order and complete confusion, violation of the most ancient laws of the Church, a great scandal for the conscience of the faithful were the consequences, though anathemas on those who violate ‘any ecclesiastical tradition, whether written or unwritten’ had been sounded by the Holy Ecumenical Councils. On the basis of the apostolic maxim, ‘Obey those who have the rule over you and submit to them’ (Hebrews. 13.7), the Shepherds of the Church who support this anticanonical innovation expect absolute obedience from the fullness of the Church. But how can the true children of the Church obey those who at the same moment disobey the holy Fathers, of whom the prophet says: ‘The Lord chose them to love them’, and do not venerate the Church’s established order that has been handed down and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, while the Lord says concerning them: ‘He who hears you hears Me, and he who despises you despises Me. And he who despises Me despises Him Who sent Me’? How can pious Christians shut their ears to the voices and work of such great Saints of God, and so be deprived of the praise and blessing of the Holy Trinity, which we hear in the mouth of the Apostle Paul himself: ‘I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I have delivered them to you’ (I Corinthians 11.2); thereby receiving diverse and strange teachings ‘according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ’ (Colossians 2.8), inventions of men in which there lurks a special danger for the soul? The faithful children of the Church, with fear of God in regard to the commandment of the Holy Spirit: ‘Stand firm and hold to the traditions’ (II Thessalonians 2.15), and in conformity with the other commandment: ‘Continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it’ (II Timothy. 3.14), have a reverent and God-pleasing answer to give to the unproved claims of today’s innovating shepherds with regard to obedience: ‘We must obey God rather than men’ (Acts 5.29).”[[913]](#footnote-913)

On August 6/19, Fr. Matthew and a group of other hieromonks and laymen gave an interesting “political” interpretation to the calendar question, laying special emphasis on the role of *the State* in imposing the innovations on the Church. The Greek “Mother Church” was accused of becoming a department of the State in a manner very similar to the accusations of Sergianism levelled by the Catacomb Christians against the official Russian Church. This again demonstrates the close kinship between the struggles of the True Orthodox Christians in Russia and Greece:

“1. Although, in accordance with the fundamental dogma of the Orthodox Church, she, as having as her source a Divine establishment [sustasis], must be a completely independent organism (‘Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s’ (Mark 12.17) and ‘My Kingdom is not of this world’ (John 18.36)), which by (Divine) right executes the spiritual power given to her by the Lord, her Founder – that is, teaching, ritual and pastoral authority (law-giving, judicial and administrative, including the administration of church property), - her part in Greece has been transformed from an independent institution of Christ into a state department, having her origin from the State and receiving her orders from it in every action.

“2. Following this reconstruction, the bishops, having cast aside the power to govern church matters given to them by their ordination as being a vexatious [okhliron] burden, have allowed themselves to be replaced in the execution of this authority by Parliament, that is, a Babylonian affair composed of laymen and, which is, worst of all, not always Orthodox (Papists, Protestants, Jews, Muslims, Masons, atheists).

“3. They have abolished the fundamental principle proceeding from the New Testament, tradition and the sacred canons, in accordance with which bishops are elected exclusively at councils in the Holy Spirit, while today in essence and form they are elected by the State as its pure servants…

“4. They have abolished the fundamental understanding of the unity of the Church in the regulation of general questions at general Councils gathered together and taking decisions in the Holy Spirit, which they have done in the case of the calendar question, introducing the Catholic calendar into the Church, by which they have torn apart the unity of the Church, which they want to offer up as a prisoner to the propaganda of heterodox churches, in spite of the fact that there is not one reason for cooperating with the change from the patristic calendar to the Frankish calendar. For if they had decided for purely scientific reasons to accept the Grigorian calendar, which, in their opinion, is scientifically correct, the results of scientific investigations clearly show that it was necessary to add, not 13, but 16 days, as the introduction of the Catholic calendar into the Church requires. Consequently, it is completely clear that the aim of those who have introduced the Catholic calendar was to serve the propaganda of heterodox churches….

“8… Insofar as these and other innovations constitute a complete change in the teaching of the Orthodox Church, and pure Protestantism, which is inadmissible for our Orthodox conscience, we have decided: to reject this Orthodox Church, which is considered official, as schismatic, and remain faithful to the true principles of our Mother Orthodox Church, in theory and practice, and to concern ourselves to find canonical hierarchs, and when they have numbered three, to hand over to them the leadership of the Church.”[[914]](#footnote-914)

Here the official Church is completely rejected in what came to be known as the “Matthewite” ecclesiology (even if, at the beginning of the document the State Church of Greece is called “part” of “the Orthodox Mother Church”).

## 73. THE RETURN OF THE THREE BISHOPS

But this posed a serious problem. Suppose some Greek new calendarist bishops repented and returned to the Old Calendar, could they be considered to be bishops? After all, according to the “Matthewite” ecclesiology, in accepting the new calendar (under political pressure), they became schismatics. But schismatics do not have the grace of sacraments, nor the grace of the priesthood. Moreover, a movement composed of priests and laity only could not confer that grace on them…

Moreover, for complete consistency, why should the cut-off point be considered to be the introduction of the new calendar in 1924? Why not the first official proclamation of the heresy of ecumenism in 1920? But in that case the Ecumenical Patriarchate must have lost grace as early as 1920…

These questions did not, it would seem, occupy the minds of the “Matthewites” at this stage. But the time was coming when the whole movement would have to address them. And the differing answers given would tear the movement apart…

Now the True Orthodox Christians both in Greece and in Romania conducted the first phase of their struggle against the innovating State Churches without bishops. This is not to say that there were not bishops who supported them, but they were outside Greece and Romania. Thus Bishop Nicholas (Velimirovich) supported the Greek Old Calendarists from Serbia. Again, Metropolitan Anastasy of Kishinev supported the Romanian Old Calendarists from Jerusalem. In 1925 he wrote to Protopriest Vladimir Polyakov saying that he still considered himself head of the Bessarabian Church and was waiting for the opportunity to return there. And in 1930 he concelebrated with Fr. Glycherie in Jerusalem.[[915]](#footnote-915)

But in Greece and Romania there were no bishops of the Old Calendar. This was a severe handicap, for while it is better to have no bishop than a heretical or schismatic one, the absence of bishops endangers the long-term survival of a Church for the simple reason that without a bishop it is impossible to ordain priests. Moreover, those in the camp of the innovators who secretly sympathize with the confessors are less likely to cross over to the latter if they have no bishops.

On October 11, 1934 Geroge Paraschos and Basil Stamatoulis, the President and Secretary General respectively of the Community of Genuine Orthodox Christians, appealed to ROCOR President Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky to consecrate bishops for them and accept them under his omophorion. But nothing came of their appeal.[[916]](#footnote-916) However, it may be doubted whether Metropolitan Anthony was favourable to their petition - as we have seen, in 1926 he was against breaking all ties with the new calendarists until they had been condemned at an Ecumenical Council.[[917]](#footnote-917)

But pressure for a return to the Julian Calendar continued to build up within the State Church; and in May, 1935 eleven bishops decided to return to the Julian calendar. However, pressure was exerted on them, and eight withdrew at the last moment. This left three: Metropolitan Germanus of Demetrias, the retired Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina (who had already distinguished himself in the early 1920s by refusing to recognize the election of Meletius Metaxakis) and Metropolitan Chrysostom of Zakynthos, who, according to one source, was accepted by the first two by the laying-on of hands, since he had been consecrated after the calendar change.[[918]](#footnote-918) The three bishops did not make a public confession of repentance, saying that they had been trying to work for the restoration of the Julian calendar from within the State Church. They were accepted through their public confession of faith.[[919]](#footnote-919)

On May 25, 1935, the Community of the Genuine Orthodox Christians invited the three metropolitans to break communion with the State Church and take up the leadership of the True Church. They agreed, and on Sunday, May 13/26, in the Community’s little church of the Dormition at Colonus, Athens, and in the presence of 25,000 faithful, they formally announced their adherence to the True Orthodox Church – that is, the Church that followed the patristic calendar. Metropolitan Germanus was elected president of the new Synod. This joyful event was the people’s reward for their steadfast confession of the Faith and the necessary condition for the further success of the sacred struggle of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece.

The three metropolitans then issued an encyclical in which they declared, among other things: “Those who now administer the Church of Greece have divided the unity of Orthodoxy through the calendar innovation, and have split the Greek Orthodox People into two opposing calendar parts. They have not only violated an Ecclesiastical Tradition which was consecrated by the Seven Ecumenical Councils and sanctioned by the age-old practice of the Eastern Orthodox Church, but have also touched the Dogma of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Therefore those who now administer the Greek Church have, by their unilateral, anticanonical and unthinking introduction of the Gregorian calendar, cut themselves off completely from the trunk of Orthodoxy, and have declared themselves to be in essence schismatics in relation to the Orthodox Churches which stand on the foundation of the Seven Ecumenical Councils and the Orthodox laws and Traditions, the Churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, Serbia, Poland, the Holy Mountain and the God-trodden Mountain of Sinai, etc.

“That this is so was confirmed by the Commission made up of the best jurists and theologian-professors of the National University which was appointed to study the calendar question, and one of whose members happened to be his Blessedness the Archbishop of Athens in his then capacity as professor of Church History in the National University.

“Let us see what was the opinion given by this Commission on the new calendar: ‘Although all the Orthodox Churches are autocephalous in their internal administration, nevertheless, in that they are united to each other through the Dogmas and the Synodical decrees and Canons, none of them can separate itself off as an individual Orthodox Church and accept the new Church calendar without being considered Schismatic in relation to the others.’

“Since his Beatitude the Archbishop of Athens has by his own signature declared himself to be a Schismatic, what need do we have of witnesses to demonstrate that he and the hierarchs who think like him have become Schismatics, in that they have split the unity of Orthodoxy through the calendar innovation and divided the Ecclesiastical and ethnic soul of the Greek Orthodox People?”[[920]](#footnote-920)

This very important document was confirmed as expressing the Faith of the Church in several subsequent Confessions (notably the “Florinite” Confessions of 1950, 1974 and 1991). It declares that the new calendarists were not only schismatics but also, by clear implication, heretics in that they “touched the Dogma of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church”. Equally importantly, it shows that the three metropolitans recognized those Local Orthodox Churches that were still using the Old Calendar but remained in communion with the new calendarists to be still Orthodox.[[921]](#footnote-921)

On May 23, 24, 25 and 26 (old calendar), 1935, the three metropolitans consecrated four new bishops in the monastery of the Mother of God in Keratea: Germanus (Varykopoulos) of the Cyclades, Christopher (Hatzi) of Megara, Polycarp (Liosi) of Diauleia, and Matthew (Karpathakis) of Bresthena. For this, on May 29, all seven bishops were arrested; later they were tried and defrocked by the State Church.

On June 1 the believing people came out *en masse* in front of the cathedral in Athens. A struggle with the police took place, and blood was shed. On June 7, the minister of security warned the Old Calendarist bishops that they would be exiled the next day.

On June 8, as they were being sent into exile, the three metropolitans issued the following encyclical: “We recommend to all those who follow the Orthodox Calendar that they have no spiritual communion with the schismatic church of the schismatic ministers, from whom the grace of the All-Holy Spirit has fled, because they have violated the decisions of the Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council and the Pan-Orthodox Councils which condemned the Gregorian calendar. That the schismatic Church does not have Grace and the Holy Spirit is affirmed by St. Basil the Great, who says the following: ‘Even if the schismatics have erred about things which are not Dogmas, since the head of the Church is Christ, according to the divine Apostle, from Whom all the members live and receive spiritual increase, they have torn themselves away from the harmony of the members of the Body and no longer are members [of that Body] or have the grace of the Holy Spirit. Therefore he who does not have it cannot transfer it to others.’”[[922]](#footnote-922)

By a “coincidence” rich in symbolical meaning, it was precisely at this time – June, 1935 – that the Turkish law banning Orthodox clergy from wearing cassocks came into effect. Although this regulation was strongly resented by Patriarch Photius, the lower clergy greeted it with delight, shouting: “Long live Ataturk!”[[923]](#footnote-923) And indeed, deprived now of the inner vestment of grace, and governed by “human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ” (Colossians 2.8), it was only fitting that the Patriarchate should lose even the outer sign of its former glory.

Metropolitans Germanus and Chrysostom and Bishop Germanus were exiled to distant newcalendarist monasteries, while Bishop Matthew was allowed to stay confined in his monastery in Keratea on account of his poor health. The remaining three bishops repented, and were received back into the State Church in their existing orders.[[924]](#footnote-924)

However, in October the three exiled bishops were freed before time by the government (the new prime-minister, George Kondyles, sympathized with the True Orthodox).

The four Old Calendarist bishops then formed a Sacred Synod of the Greek Old Calendarist Church with Metropolitan Germanus as president.

In December, 1935 Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina set off for Jerusalem and Damascus in order to discuss the possibility of convening a Council to resolve the calendar question. The two Patriarchs received him kindly and promised to help towards this goal.

However, as he prepared to return to Greece, the Greek consul in Jerusalem, acting under orders from Athens, refused to stamp a visa into his passport. For several months Metropolitan Chrysostom languished in Jerusalem as a virtual prisoner of the Greek consul. But Divine Providence, through the intercessions of “the liberator of captives”, St. George, found a way out for him.

This miracle was recounted by Metropolitan Chrysostom himself as follows: “I was depressed by my captivity since I had no information about how the Sacred Struggle was going and did not know what would be the outcome of my arbitrary detention in Jerusalem.

“With this serious problem weighing on me, I went, the next day, which was April 23, to the Divine Liturgy. With pain and faith I called on St. George to help me:

“’Holy Great-Martyr of Christ George, you who are the liberator of captives and defender of the poor, perform your miracle and deliver me from this captivity.’

“That evening, when I was in my house and before going to bed, I heard a knock on the door of my house:

“’Come in.’

“Immediately the door opened and there entered a good-looking young man, who said:

“’You are free to leave. No-one will give you the news.’

“’Go and look at my passport.’

“The young men promptly left and, returning soon after, said:

“’Everything is ready.’”

The bishop was about to give the young man a tip when, to his amazement, he vanished. He pondered what this could mean. However, his heart was full of peace and joy.

The next day he again went to the church. On glancing at the icon of St. George, he remembered the previous day’s incident and noticed that the face of the saint on the icon looked exactly like the young man he had seen. With great enthusiasm he chanted the troparion to the saint: “Liberator of captives and defender of the poor”, and then turned to him as if to a close friend:

“St. George, I, too, am a prisoner. But since you promised that no-one would give me the news, I’m going. Protect me.”

Immediately after church he went to the house where he was staying and said to the landlady:

“I’m going to Piraeus.”

“But, your Grace, where will you go? Your passport doesn’t have a visa.”

“St. George will help me.”

When he got to Haifa, from where the boats left for Piraeus, he began to worry again, because he did not know the language and had no-one he knew to talk to.

As he was setting foot in a boat, he saw a monk whom he did not know, who approached him, bowed and said to him in Greek:

“Your Grace, how can I be of service to you?”

“How can you be of service to me? I want to leave, but my passport has not had a visa stamped in it by the Greek consul.”

The monk took the passport, went to a travel agency, and although the passport did not have the seal of the Greek consul, obtained a ticket.[[925]](#footnote-925)

The two metropolitans continued to be harassed by the State Church. Thus in 1937 a magistrate’s court tried Chrysostom on the charge of having served in the church of the Three Hierarchs in Thessalonica. He was declared innocent. However, further trials followed in 1938 and 1940[[926]](#footnote-926), and in 1943 Metropolitan Germanus died in exile.

But the Lord also continued to give signs from heaven to His faithful. Thus the True Orthodox Christians of Crete were going to celebrate the feast of the Exaltation in a church on Mount Kophinas. “On the eve of the feast, which was a Sunday (13/9/1937), when it began to grow dark, the faithful were arriving in groups from the various villages in the area, some on foot, some riding on animals… The old men together with the priests Fr. Demetrius from Krousona and Fr. Charalampus from Kapetaniana were waiting for them at the little church of the Nativity of the Mother of God, which was on the foothills of Kophinas. That evening, above the peak of the Cross, there was a lot of mist and thick fog, and climbing was very difficult. The faithful numbered more than 500, and according to others – more than 1000.

“At ten o’clock a detachment of police arrived led by a sub-lieutenant. They justified their presence by saying that ‘they came to maintain… order!’ Of course, their motive was quite different. However, when they saw the numbers of the faithful they were forced to change their minds.

“At midnight the priests began to chant the Akathist to the Honoured Cross. In spite of the fog and the cold, strong wind, the faithful prayed on their knees, and they all together repeated the ‘Rejoice, blessed wood’ or the ‘Alleluia’.

“At the end of the Rejoices the wind suddenly stopped blowing and the mist began to disperse. The peak of Kophinas and the little church of the Honoured Cross came clearly into view.

“Before they realized what was happening, the whole area was illumined by light and sweet peace spread everywhere. Then, with fear but also with ineffable joy, they saw a cross of light shining on the peak of Kophinas and casting its rays over the whole area. The night suddenly became day! Nothing could be heard except the ‘Kyrie eleisons’ and the mute weeping of the Faithful. None of the eyewitnesses could say how long the miracle lasted.

“Finally, after quite a long time, as it had appeared, so it gradually disappeared again… And again, as at the beginning, the wind began to blow and a thick fog covered the area.

“The faithful continued with renewed zeal and compunction to pray the whole night. The priests celebrated the Divine Liturgy in the little church of the All Holy.

“At dawn the Divine Liturgy came to an end, whereupon the whole crowd of the faithful began to move, returning to their villages and houses, discussing amongst themselves and the police the wonderful miracle of the divine appearance of the Honoured Cross…”[[927]](#footnote-927)

## 74. PERSECUTION IN ROMANIA

In 1935, the leader of the Romanian Old Calendarists, Hieromonk Glycherie, heard of the return of the three bishops to the Old Calendar in Greece. And so late in the autumn he “travelled again to Mount Athos, accompanied by Monk Ghimnazie, who knew Greek… Their purpose was to bring an Old Calendarist Hierarch to Romania to perform Ordinations, or to have Father Ghimnazie or any other Romanian living on Mount Athos Consecrated to serve the Church back home.”[[928]](#footnote-928)

However, when they “asked the Old Calendar Greek bishops to consecrate Fr. Ghimnazie to the episcopate, the bishops could do nothing without their first-hierarch, Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina, who, at the insistence of the newcalendarist Metropolitan of Athens, had been detained by the English authorities in Palestine...

“St. Glycherie set off for Yugoslavia. He visited the church of the Russian Church Abroad in Belgrade, where Metropolitan Anastasy was serving. Metropolitan Anastasy advised Fr. Glycherie to turn to Bishop Seraphim (Lyade) of the Russian Church Abroad, and ask him to go to Romania to order Old Calendar priests. Bishop Seraphim at that time was in Vienna. St. Glycherie set off there, but Vladyka Seraphim did not decide to go to Romania, knowing how dangerous it was.”[[929]](#footnote-929)

After returning to Romania, on September 1, 1936 Fr. Glycherie came to the consecration of a church in the village of Bukhalniţa-Neamţ. He was accompanied by 4000 peasants on 500 waggons. When the procession was passing through the town of Piatra Neamţ, the road was blocked by soldiers with machine guns. St. Glycherie and many other monks and laypeople were arrested. Many were killed. Glycherie was savagely beaten on the head with various clubs. Deacon David Bidascu was also beaten, and suffered from his wounds for the rest of his days.[[930]](#footnote-930)

Metropolitan Cyprian writes: “Hieromonk Glycherie… was taken under guard to Bucharest and there condemned to death. He was, however, miraculously saved, in that the Theotokos appeared to the wife of the Minister of Justice and gave her an order to intercede with her husband on Father Glycherie’ behalf. Her husband did not react in the manner of Pilate, but rather commuted Father Glycherie’s death sentence and ordered him imprisoned in a distant monastery…

“[Patriarch Miron] ordered all of the churches of the True Orthodox Christians razed, and imprisoned any cleric or monastic who refused to submit to his authority. The monks and nuns were incarcerated in two monasteries, where they were treated with unheard of barbarity. Some of them, such as Hieromonk Pambo, founder of the Monastery of Dobru (which was demolished and rebuilt three times), met with a martyr’s end. During the destruction of the Monastery of Cucova, five lay people were thrown into the monastery well and drowned. By such tactics the Patriarch wished to rid himself of the Old Calendarist problem!”[[931]](#footnote-931)

Like several Balkan countries, and indeed Europe as a whole, Romania during the 1930s was torn by the rivalry between the two totalitarian powers, Nazi Germany or Soviet Russia. Romania was in a particularly vulnerable position because she shared a frontier with the Soviets, across which, in the event of a Soviet-German war, the Soviets would undoubtedly want to send their troops. The question was: should Romania allow it?

As is revealed in the Memoirs of Prince Michael Sturdza[[932]](#footnote-932), on October 22, 1934 Göring, speaking in the name of Hitler, set forth the following proposal to the Romanian Ambassador in Berlin, Petrescu-Comnen: a guarantee of all Romania’s frontiers, including those with Soviet Russia and Hungary and the complete rearmament with the most modern weapons of Romania’s military forces. Germany did not ask Romania to abandon any of her alliances. The only thing she asked in exchange was a pledge to oppose any attempt of the Soviet troops to cross Romania’s territory. Titulescu, Romania's pro-western Foreign Minister at the time, concealed Petrescu-Comnen's report, and the German proposals, though repeated several times before the outbreak of World War Two, continued to be rejected by Romanian statesman.

However, there was a strong movement in favour of a rapprochement with Germany within Romania. Because of its pro-fascist, anti-semitic and occasionally violent nature, this, the Legionnaire or Iron Guard movement has had a bad press generally in the West.[[933]](#footnote-933)

There can be no doubt about its pro-fascism: documentary films show the Legionnaires making the fascist salute, and their leader, Corneliu Codreanu, declared on November 30, 1937: "Forty-eight hours after the victory of the Legionary Movement, Rumania will be allied to Rome and Berlin, thus entering the line of its historical world-mission: the defense of the Cross, of Christian Culture and Civilization."

Nevertheless, in view of its political and religious importance, and its brave resistance to Soviet influence in Romania, for which Codreanu and several other legionnaires paid with their lives, it will be worth citing more positive estimates of its significance. For example: “The Legionary Movement,” writes Thomas Haas, “was founded on June 24, 1927, under the name of the Legion of the Archangel Michael, by one of the truly great men of our era. Corneliu Codreanu was born on September 13, 1899 in Husi, a town in northern Moldavia, where his father was a teacher at the local lycee. He attended the famous military school Manastirea Dealului and the Infantry Officer's school. The beginning of what was to be his career and mission can be dated from January 1918. After the Bolshevik takeover in Petrograd, the Russian troops which had been fighting alongside their Rumanian allies degenerated into no more than a collection of drinking, looting, raping rabble. During that fateful January, Codreanu organized a group of high school students to fight the Russian marauders, who were menacing the Moldavian city of Iasi. Shortly thereafter he organized the Guard of National Conscience from among the students and workers of Iasi.

“Codreanu reached what can be considered a point of no return in his tragic life, a life entirely dedicated to the battle for the moral purity and the welfare and the glory of his nation, in 1922 when he organized the Association of Christian Students. He and twenty-six students took a pledge of honor, in a religious ceremony, to continue for the rest of their lives the nationalist fight—a pledge to which many of them remained faithful even unto their deaths. In 1923 he founded the League of National Christian Defense (LANC, which polled 120,000 votes in the election of 1926). When Codreanu returned to Rumania in 1927 after a period of study at Grenoble University, LANC had disintegrated into a collection of feuding splinter groups. From the best of the earlier league, he organized the Legion of the Archangel Michael which came to be called the Legionary Movement. In 1930 a group of hard-core members formed an elite section within the Legion, called the Iron Guard. In time the Legion came to be known by the name of this elite group. Although the two are almost synonymous, the reader should keep in mind that they represent two different aspects of the Movement.

“The purpose of the Legionary Movement was the defense of the endangered nation and of all the spiritual and historic values which formed the texture of Rumania's national existence…

“We think it is fitting to quote the basic rules of the organization. These are contained in the Manual of Legionary Laws, written for the use of the head of each Legionary group.

“The Law of Discipline: [The] Legionary [must] be obedient; without discipline we will not win. Follow your chief for better or worse.

“The Law of Work: Do your daily work. Work with joy. Let the reward of your work be not any material profit, but the satisfaction that you have contributed something to the glory of the Legion and the greatness of your country.

“The Law of Silence: Talk little. Talk only when you must. Your eloquence is in deeds. Let others talk; you do.

“The Law of Education: You must become another man. A hero.

“The Law of Assistance: Help your brother in distress. Do not abandon him.

“The Law of Honor: Follow only the ways shown by honor. Fight. Never be a coward. Leave to others the ways of infamy. Better fall fighting the way of honor, than to conquer by infamy.”[[934]](#footnote-934)

Another positive assessment is provided by Monk Moise: “After wandering off in different directions, Codreanu and other young people, troubled by the need to do something for their country, realized that what was needed to instigate a profound change in society was not so much a new party or a new political program – as they themselves had been tempted to believe – but rather education of a Christian and national character leading to moral renewal. ‘This country [wrote Codreanu] is perishing from lack of people, not from a lack of programs. This is our opinion. It is not programs that we must create, but people, new people… Therefore the cornerstone from which the Legion sets out is humankind, not political programs. The reform of people, not the reform of political programs. Therefore, the Legion of the Archangel Michael will rather be a school and army than a political party. The Romanian people, at this point in its history, do not need a great politician, as some mistakenly believe, but a great educator and leader to vanquish the powers of evil and shatter the ranks of evildoers. In order to do this, however, he must first overcome the evil in himself and in his brethren.’

“In order to form a Legionnaire elite, the best from among the youth were selected, beginning with those of high school age. This organization of young men was named *Frąţia de Cruce* (FDC), the *Brotherhood of the Cross.* Those targeted were screened according to certain criteria: faithfulness and attendance at church, good academic achievement, respectfulness toward others, love of country, honesty, etc. Candidates were not admitted to the FDC automatically but in accordance with certain requirements. It set out be an elite organization that would admit only the best.

“Those admitted found an atmosphere of love, seriousness, and enthusiasm highly suited to their spiritual growth. They received a primarily moral and spiritual education, along Christian lines; they were encouraged to participate in the sacraments of confession, to adhere to a prayer schedule, to fast, to avoid bodily sins, to be merciful, correct, punctual, sympathetic, ready to help others, obedient, and studious. Since work played an important role in Legionnaire training, work camps were organized in which, along with Legionnaires, *brothers of the cross* participated in the construction and repair of churches, schools, roads, bridges, levees, etc. They worked in an atmosphere of youthful enthusiasm, while the camps also provided an opportunity for the formation and strengthening of spiritual ties.

“Their meetings began with a prayer commemorating those who had died for the Legionnaire cause, followed by a reading from the New Testament. At every meeting, those present took turns introducing a theme having to do with faith, morality, national history, culture, etc. Legionnaire songs were sung and memorized; participants took turns reciting from Legionnaire writings, while the final portions of meetings were reserved for decision-making regarding new goodwill projects that needed to be undertaken such as help for someone in need, collection of assistance for the family of an arrested Legionnaire, or similar work for the benefit of their brethren.

“The young men who gathered together in the FDC made up a real family; they were taught to love one another and to help one another in time of need. The friendship that existed between them sprang from an impressive degree of love and sincerity. The most original part of the meetings was the moment of friendship or sincerity, a form of public ‘confession’ of all mistakes made since the last meeting. This did not replace the sacrament of confession – each of them also confessed to his spiritual father; rather, it was an expression of the trust and sincerity that united them. After they all confessed their mistakes, each of them reported what mistakes they’d noticed among the others who were present. Then each of them received a ‘penance’…

“In addition to educational activity, the *brothers of the cross* participated in the political activity of the Legion through the distribution of leaflets and posters and through occasional involvement in electoral propaganda. They also participated in the collection of funds for imprisoned Legionnaires and their families…

“The moral-spiritual component of this education was interwoven with a national-heroic component. The accent was placed on love of country and on knowledge of history and well-known Romanians. There was pronounced consideration of historical struggles and national heroes, the Legionnaires identifying with these heroes and looking to them as models. The intention was to cultivate the heroic and soldierly qualities of these young men: courage, strength of will, steadfastness, a spirit of sacrifice, discipline, the ability to confront danger, etc.

“The Legionnaires’ organization and discipline were of military inspiration, but this freely-assumed discipline did not have an air of dryness and barrack-like rigidity for those involved. The harshness was alleviated by their spiritual relationships and states of spirit. The conduct of a *brother of the cross*, like that of a Legionnaire, had to be dignified, firm, disciplined, and orderly, like that of a soldier…

“A very important trait for … the Legionnaire … was a sense of justice. While being obligated by their code of conduct not to do anything that would stain their sense of honor or that would prevent them from supporting any just cause, this very sense of honor also required them to react when anyone offended them. This kind of conduct is debatable from a Christian point of view, which advocates humility and requires that one turn the other cheek when struck. When the Legionnaire encountered Christianity in all its profundity in the Communist prisons, this concept of honor turned out to be a source of great difficulty for them, as they realized that the passion of pride can lie behind it…

“Because measures were taken against the Legion such that they were almost constantly persecuted, the education of the *brothers of the cross* did not follow its natural course. Forced to meet in secret, sheltered from the far-reaching sight of the authorities, without experienced guides, these young men were not always able to benefit from a solid spiritual education. Borne along primarily by enthusiasm and sincerity, they nevertheless lacked a profoundly Christian vision, which most of them would acquire in prison. The seeds sown by training in the Brotherhood of the Cross, despite their shortcomings, were significant [and] important, for the young men received a spiritual foundation based on Christian principles that was much more solid than any training offered in traditional, academic milieus. The Christian conduct they later displayed in prison found its source in these principles that formed their characters, principles which cultivated the virtues of steadfastness, solidarity, and a spirit of sacrifice, while many non-Legionnaires, as Steinhardt noted, lost their balance, humanity, and self-control.”[[935]](#footnote-935)

Perhaps the finest fruit of the Legionnaire movement was a group of martyrs who suffered in Tărgu-Ocna in the 1950s. Valeriu Gafencu was imprisoned by the communists precisely because of his training in the Legionnaire spirit. He was attracted to the religious rather than the political aspects of the movement, was opposed to its occasional violence and anti-semitism, and instilled in the quasi-monastic community that formed around him in the camp-hospital an Orthodox spirit of love and self-sacrifice. His group therefore represented Legionnairism purged of all dubious political elements and striving only to fulfil the commandments of God in the spirit of Orthodox Christianity.

The Legionnaires did not separate from the official, new calendar church. Nevertheless, in their own way they represented a separation from the spiritual deadness of that church, whose head, Patriarch Miron became prime minister in the cabinet of the “royal dictatorship” of King Charles II in February, 1938. Immediately there began a severe persecution of the Legionnaires. In April Codreanu was arrested and sentenced to ten years in prison. In November he was killed…

Although the Romanian True Orthodox Church, unlike the Legionnaire movement, was a purely spiritual organization, it is not surprising that its leaders should have been put into the same category.

Thus in 1938 the authorities now decided to accuse the True Orthodox leader Fr. Glycherie of being an Iron Guard. “After Father Glicherie was arrested in 1936,” writes Constantin Bujor, “all means of intimidation were employed to shatter his nervous system. He was incarcerated for more than two years in a variety of prisons, being transferred from one jail to another; Bucharest, Iezeru, Rāmnicu Vālcea, Iezeru, Rāmnicu Vālcea, Craiova, Bucharest, Iaşi, Iezeru, and Piatra Niamţ. The accusation of being an Old Calendarist could not carry too long a sentence, and Father Glicherie was thus finally set at liberty in 1938 – much to the chagrin of those who had gone to such great lengths to have him arrested. So, once again, they fabricated false charges, this time accusing him of more serious infractions in order to have him decisively condemned. Thus, Hieromonk Glicherie was falsely accused of being active in the Legionary Movement. Although Legionnaires were highly regarded and visible in Romanian political life at this time, the Monarch had dictatorially abolished all political parties. Ironically, Father Glicherie was also falsely accused at the same time of Communist or Bolshevik activity, because the Russian Orthodox Church followed the Julian Calendar. This, too, was a serious charge: the Communists were mortal enemies of Romania, and therefore, through guilt by association, the Old Calendarists were enemies of the State. Accusations of these kinds provoked a variety of reactions and even frightened many people, who came to believe that the Old Calendarists posed a danger to society. To discourage supporters of the Old Calendar Church, appropriate punishments were levied. Plenty of ‘witnesses’, denunciations, and contrived ‘facts’ could easily be produced; the elimination of inconvenient opponents by such methods was the order of the day. Thus, in 1938, Father Glicherie was arrested and sent to Miercurea Ciuc to a death camp for political prisoners. After nine months’ imprisonment, he was scheduled for execution with a group of Legionnaires. Miraculously, at the very moment that he was to face the firing squad, he was saved by the government’s unexpected amnesty of the camp’s remaining detainees…”[[936]](#footnote-936)

K.V. Glazkov writes that while Fr. Glycherie was in this camp “there came an order to divide all the prisoners into two parts and shoot one part and then the other. When the first group had been shot, Fr. Glycherie and several legionnaires in the second group prayed a thanksgiving moleben to the Lord God and the Mother of God for counting them worthy of death in the Orthodox faith. The Lord worked a miracle – suddenly there arrived a governmental order decreeing clemency.”[[937]](#footnote-937)

“King Carol II’s attempt to crush the Legionary movement, rather than weakening it, strengthened it more. Moreover, the king’s grasp on power was slipping because of the corruption of his regime and its powerlessness to oppose the territorial losses to neighboring states in 1940 [Bessarabia, was occupied by the Red Army]. Carol was thus forced to accommodate the Legionnaires, who even gained positions in the government. The tables were finally turned on him when General (later Marshal) Ion Antonescu became President of the Council of Ministers and forged an alliance with the Iron Guard. On August 24/September 6, 1940, King Carol II was forced to abdicate in favour of the previous Monarch, his son Mihai; Antonescu dubbed himself Conducător Statului, ‘Leader of the State’ [a title used by the murdered Iron Guard leader Codreanu]; Horia Sima (1907-1993), Commander of the Iron Guard, became Vice-President of the Council of Ministers, and the National Legionary State of Romania was formally established. Antonescu’s alliance with the Iron Guard was one of political expediency, however, not one of ideological conviction; its draconian methods and goals often clashed with his own personal authoritarian agendum. The Legionnaires thus betrayed Antonescu, staging a coup d’état in January of 1941, which, lacking support from the Third Reich of Germany, proved abortive. This enabled Antonescu, with the blessing of Adolf Hitler (1889-1945), to suppress the Iron Guard, thereby consolidating his power as military dictator of Romania.”[[938]](#footnote-938)

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“With the outbreak of World War II in 1939,” writes Metropolitan Cyprian, “Father Glycherie was set free and, along with his beloved co-struggler, Deacon David Bidascu, fled into the forest. There the two lived in indescribable deprivation and hardship, especially during the winter. In the midst of heavy snows, when their few secret supporters could not get frugal provisions to them, the Fathers were obliged to eat worms! However, Divine Providence protected them from their persecutors and, directed by that same Providence, the birds of the sky would erase traces of the Fathers’ footprints in the snow by flying about and flapping their wings in the snow. And despite the harsh cold, not once did they light a fire, lest the smoke might betray their refuge. (The cold often approaches thirty degrees below zero during the winter in Romania.) Other ascetics were also hidden in the deserts, among them Father Damascene, Father Paisius, et al.”[[939]](#footnote-939)

## 75. TWO HOLY HIEROMARTYRS

In May, 1932, Stalin declared an anti-religious five-year plan: by 1936 the last church was to be closed, and by 1937 the name of God would no longer be pronounced in the Soviet Union. By the beginning of 1933 half the churches in the land had been closed or destroyed.[[940]](#footnote-940) But the census of 1937 established that two-thirds of the peasantry and one-third of the city-dwellers still maintained their faith in God. This impressive figure owed nothing to Sergius’ pact with the State, which divided the faithful and gave the atheists a powerful weapon against them.

In 1933 Metropolitan Sergius stated officially that he “as the deputy of Metropolitan Peter, had not only the temporary authority of the First Hierarch but the Patriarchal Power as well”. He also declared that Metropolitan Peter, the lawful First Hierarch, did not have the right “to interfere in the administration of the Church or even correct the mistakes of his deputy.”

As a result of this statement, Bishop Athanasius (Sakharov) of Kovrov broke communion with Sergius, as he stated in a letter to him on his return from exile in December, 1933.[[941]](#footnote-941)

In April, 1934 Sergius’ Synod gave him the title of Metropolitan of Kolomna, thereby making him in effect an “adulterer bishop”; for the true holder of the see, Metropolitan Peter, was still alive. In 1935 Metropolitan Peter returned to Moscow and met Metropolitan Sergius. The latter asked him to recognize the new construction of Church life and to agree to the convening of a Council.

On his side, Metropolitan Peter demanded that Sergius return Church power to him. Sergius refused, and Peter returned to the camps. In August, 1936, the NKVD spread the rumour that Metropolitan Peter had died. The Sergianist Synod promptly – and completely uncanonically – passed a resolution transferring the rights and duties of the patriarchal locum tenency to Metropolitan Sergius.

In view of this further departure of Metropolitan Sergius from the holy canons, it may be asked what was the reaction of the leading hierarchs of the Catacomb Church – Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa, the patriarchal locum tenens and de jure leader of the Church, Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd, her de facto leader, and Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan, the first locum tenens appointed by Patriarch Tikhon and the favoured candidate of the Russian episcopate for the role of patriarch.

Metropolitan Peter’s attitude was particularly important to ascertain in view of the fact that both the True Orthodox and the sergianists formally acknowledged him as the Church’s first hierarch. Earlier, Bishop Damascene of Glukhov had claimed to have made contact with him through his cell-attendant, who reported that Metropolitan Peter expressed disapproval of Sergius’ policies. Thus on January 22, 1928 he wrote to a certain N. “For a first-hierarch such an appeal [as Sergius’ declaration] is *inadmissible.* Moreover, I don’t understand why a Synod was formed from (as I can see from the signatures under the appeal) unreliable people. Thus, for example, Bishop Philip is a heretic… In this appeal a shadow is cast upon me and the patriarch, as if we had political relations with abroad, whereas the only relations were ecclesiastical. I do not belong to the irreconcilables, I allowed everything that could be allowed, and it was suggested to me in a more polite manner that I sign the appeal. I refused, for which I was exiled. I trusted Metropolitan Sergius, and I see that I was mistaken.”

On September 17, 1929, the priest Gregory Seletsky wrote to Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd on behalf of Archbishop Demetrius (Lyubimov): “I am fulfilling the request of his Eminence Archbishop Demetrius and set out before you in written form that information which the exiled Bishop Damascene has communicated to me. He succeeded in making contact with Metropolitan Peter, and in sending him, via a trusted person, full information about everything that has been taking place in the Russian Church. Through this emissary Metropolitan Peter said the following to him: ’1. You Bishops must yourselves remove Metropolitan Sergius. ’2. I do not bless you to commemorate Metropolitan Sergius during Divine services…”[[942]](#footnote-942)

In December, 1929 Metropolitan Peter wrote to Sergius: “Your Eminence, forgive me magnanimously if by the present letter I disturb the peace of your Eminence’s soul. People inform me about the difficult circumstances that have formed for the Church in connection with the exceeding of the limits of the ecclesiastical authority entrusted to you. I am very sorry that you have not taken the trouble to initiate me into your plans for the administration of the Church. You know that I have not renounced the locum tenancy, and consequently, I have retained for myself the Higher Church Administration and the general leadership of Church life. At the same time I make bold to declare that your remit as deputy was only for the management of everyday affairs; you are only to preserve the status quo. I am profoundly convinced that without prior contact with me you will not make any responsible decision. I have not accorded you any constituent right as long as I retain the locum tenancy and as long as Metropolitan Cyril is alive and as long as Metropolitan Agathangelus was alive. Therefore I did not consider it necessary in my decree concerning the appointment of candidates for the deputyship to mention the limitation of their duties; I had no doubt that the deputy would not alter the established rights, but would only deputize, or represent, so to speak, the central organ through which the locum tenens could communicate with his flock. But the system of administration you have introduced not only excludes this: it also excludes the very need for the existence of the locum tenens. Such major steps cannot, of course, be approved by the consciousness of the Church. I did not admit any qualifications limiting the duties of the deputy, both from a feeling of deep reverence and trust for the appointed candidates, and first of all for you, having in mind at this point your wisdom. It is burdensome for me to number all the details of negative evaluations of your administration: the resounding protests and cries from believers, from hierarchs and laypeople. The picture of ecclesiastical division that has been painted is shocking. My duty and conscience do not allow me to remain indifferent to such a sorrowful phenomenon; they urge me to address your Eminence with a most insistent demand that you correct the mistake you have made, which has placed the Church in a humiliating position, and which has caused quarrels and divisions in her and a blackening of the reputation of her leaders. In the same way I ask you to suspend the other measures that have increased your prerogatives. Such a decision of yours will, I hope, create a good atmosphere in the Church and will calm the troubled souls of her children, while with regard to you it will preserve that disposition towards you which you deservedly enjoyed both as a Church figure and as a man. Place all your hope on the Lord, and His help will always be with you. On my part, I as the first-hierarch of the Church, call on all clergy and church activists to display, in everything that touches on the civil legislation and administration, complete loyalty. They are obliged to submit unfailingly to the governmental decrees as long as they do not violate the holy faith and in general are not contrary to Christian conscience; and they must not engage in any anti-governmental activity, and they are allowed to express neither approval nor disapproval of their actions in the churches or in private conversations, and in general they must not interfere in matters having nothing to do with the Church...”

On February 13/26, 1930, after receiving news from Deacon K. about the true state of affairs in the Church, Metropolitan Peter wrote to Sergius: "Of all the distressing news I have had to receive, the most distressing was the news that many believers remain outside the walls of the churches in which your name is commemorated. I am filled with spiritual pain both about the disputes that have arisen with regard to your administration and about other sad phenomena. Perhaps this information is biassed, perhaps I am not sufficiently acquainted with the character and aims of the people writing to me. But the news of disturbances in the Church come to me from various quarters and mainly from clerics and laymen who have made a great impression on me. In my opinion, in view of the exceptional circumstances of Church life, when normal rules of administration have been subject to all kinds of distortion, it is necessary to put Church life on that path on which it stood during your first period as deputy. So be so good as to return to that course of action that was respected by everybody. I repeat that I am very sad that you have not written to me or confided your plans to me. Since letters come from other people, yours would undoubtedly have reached me..."[[943]](#footnote-943)

From August 17, 1930, after again refusing to renounce the locum tenancy, Metropolitan Peter was imprisoned in Tobolsk and Yekaterinburg prisons in solitary confinement with no right to receive parcels or visitors. On March 11, 1931, after describing the sufferings of his life in Khe (which included the enmity of three renovationist priests), he posed the following question in a letter to J.B. Polyansky: "Will not a change in locum tenens bring with it a change also in his deputy? Of course, it is possible that my successor, if he were to find himself incapable of carrying out his responsibilities directly, would leave the same person as his deputy - that is his right. But it is certain, in my opinion, that the carrying out of his duties by this deputy would have to come to an end at the same time as the departure of the person for whom he is deputizing, just as, according to the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, with his departure the synod created by him would cease to exist. All this and other questions require thorough and authoritative discussion and canonical underpinning... Be so kind as to bow to Metropolitan Sergius on my behalf, since I am unable to do this myself, and send him my fervent plea that he, together with Metropolitan Seraphim and Archbishop Philip, to whom I also bow, work together for my liberation. I beseech them to defend, an old man who can hardly walk. I was always filled with a feeling of deep veneration and gratitude to Metropolitan Sergius, and the thought of some kind of worsening of our relations would give me indescribable sorrow."

On March 27, Metropolitan Peter wrote to B.P. Menzhinsky: "I was given a five-year exile which I served in the far north in the midst of the cruellest frosts, constant storms, extreme poverty and destitution in everything. (I was constantly on the edge of the grave.) But years passed, and there remained four months to the end of my exile when the same thing began all over again - I was again arrested and imprisoned by the Urals OGPU. After some time I was visited by comrade J.V. Polyansky, who suggested that I renounce the locum tenancy. But I could not accept such a suggestion for the following reasons which have a decisive significance for me. First of all I would be transgressing the established order according to which the locum tenens must remain at his post until the convening of a council. A council convened without the sanction of the locum tenens would be considered uncanonical and its decisions invalid. But in the case of my death the prerogatives of the locum tenens will pass to another person who will complete that which was not done by his predecessor. Moreover, my removal would bring in its wake the departure also of my deputy, Metropolitan Sergius, just as, according to his declaration, with his departure from the position of deputy the Synod created by him would cease to exist. I cannot be indifferent to such a circumstance. Our simultaneous departure does not guarantee church life from various possible frictions, and, of course, the guilt would be mine. Therefore in the given case it is necessary that we discuss this matter together, just as we discussed together the questions relating to my letter to Metropolitan Sergius dated December, 1929. Finally, my decree, coming from prison, would undoubtedly be interpreted as made under pressure, with various undesirable consequences."

In spite of this strong criticism, it is not known that Metropolitan Peter declared that Metropolitan Sergius had fallen from grace; and according to one (possibly dubious) source, he, together with Metropolitan Cyril, refused to sign the sixth canon of the so-called “Nomadic Council” in 1928, which anathematised the sergianists.[[944]](#footnote-944)

Nevertheless, he continued not only to resist pressure from the OGPU to give up the locum tenancy himself, but also rejected the right of Metropolitan Sergius to take it over after his death. Thus on March 11, 1931, he posed the following question to I.B. Polyansky: “Will not a change in locum tenens bring with it a change also in his deputy? Of course, it is possible that my successor, if he were to find himself incapable of carrying out his responsibilities directly, would leave the same person as his deputy – that is his right. But it is certain, in my opinion, that the carrying out of his duties by this deputy would have to come to an end at the same time as the departure of the person for whom he is deputizing, just as, according to the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, with his departure the synod created by him would cease to exist. All this and other questions require thorough and authoritative discussion and canonical underpinning…” He repeated the same argument in a letter to Menzhinsky later that month.[[945]](#footnote-945)

We have no direct evidence for Metropolitan Peter’s views after 1931. As we have seen, we know that he did not bless his clergy to commemorate Sergus, but little more. Indirectly, however, we can infer that his attitude towards Metropolitan Sergius hardened. For, as the True Orthodox Confessor and Professor Ivan Andreyev witnesses, “Approval of the position of Metropolitan Joseph [whose views on Sergius are known to have been uncompromisingly severe] was received from the exiled Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa and from Metropolitan Cyril.”[[946]](#footnote-946)

Moreover, “from the fact that in the last years secret relations were established between Metropolitan Peter and Metropolitan Joseph, we may conjecture that Metropolitan Peter gave his blessing, in the event of his death, to Metropolitan Joseph’s heading the Russian Church in his capacity as *Extraordinary Locum Tenens*. This right was accorded to Metropolitan Joseph, as is known only to a few, by a Decision of the Local Council of 1917-18 dated January 25, 1918.”[[947]](#footnote-947)

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Metropolitan Cyril, like Metropolitan Peter, at first took a relatively “lenient” attitude towards the sergianists. Thus in 1934 he wrote: “If we reproach them for not resisting, and, therefore, of belonging to heresy, we risk depriving them of the psychological opportunity to reunite with us and losing them forever for Orthodoxy.”

This relative leniency has been exploited by those who wish to make out that the MP is a true Church even now, nearly eighty years after Sergius’ declaration. However, there are several reasons for thinking that Cyril was less “moderate” than he has been made out.

First, as his correspondent, another Catacomb hierarch said, he was being “excessively cautious” because of his insufficient knowledge of the Church situation from his position in exile. Secondly, he was in the unique position of being the only legal locum tenens that was able to correspond and reason with Sergius. He therefore naturally steered the dialogue to the theme of the canonical rights of the locum tenentes and their deputies, convicting Sergius of usurpation of the power of the First Hierarch. Concentrating on the *canonical-administrative* aspect of the matter, without entering into the *dogmatic* aspect of Sergius’ subordination to the atheists, was bound to lead to a less serious estimate of his sin. Nevertheless, in 1934 he wrote that while the Sergianist priests administered valid sacraments, Christians who partook of them knowing of Sergius’ usurpation of power and the illegality of his Synod would receive them *to their condemnation*.

Several points made by Metropolitan Cyril in his correspondence with Metropolitan Sergius are of vital importance in evaluating the significance of the various schisms that have taken place in the Orthodox Church in this century. The first is the priority of “the conciliar hierarchical conscience of the Church”. As he wrote in 1929: “Church discipline is able to retain its validity only as long as it is a true reflection of the hierarchical conscience of the Conciliar [Sobornoj] Church; discipline can never take the place of this conscience”. Sergius violated the hierarchical, conciliar conscience of the Church by his disregard of the views of bishops equal to him in rank.

The second is that a hierarch is justified in breaking communion with a fellow hierarch, not only for heresy, but also in order not to partake in his brother’s sin. Thus while Metropolitan Cyril did not consider Sergius to have sinned in matters of faith, he was forced to break communion with him because “I have no other means of rebuking my sinning brother”. If clergy have mutually opposing opinions within the Church, then their concelebration is for both “to judgement and condemnation”.[[948]](#footnote-948)

Again, in November, 1929, Metropolitan Cyril refused to condemn Metropolitan Joseph and his supporters, who had broken communion with Sergius; and he did not agree with the bishops in exile in Tashkent – Arseny (Stadnitsky), Nicodemus (Krotkov), Nicander (Fenomenov) and others – who condemned Joseph, considering their hopes of convening a canonical Council to be “naivety or cunning”.[[949]](#footnote-949)

Thirdly, while Metropolitan Cyril did not deny the sacraments of the sergianists, he did so only in respect of those clergy who had been *correctly ordained*, i.e. by non-sergianist hierarchs.

A fourth point made by the metropolitan was that even when such a break in communion occurs between two parties, both sides remain in the Church so long as dogmatic unanimity is preserved. But this immediately raised the question: had Sergius only sinned “administratively”, by transgressing against the canons, as Metropolitan Cyril claimed (until 1934, at any rate), or had he sinned also “dogmatically”, by transgressing against the dogma of the One Church, as Archbishop Demetrius of Gdov, among others, claimed?[[950]](#footnote-950)

In the middle of the 1930s Metropolitan Cyril issued an epistle in which he called on the Catacomb hierarchs to confirm his candidacy as the lawful patriarchal locum tenens in the case of the death of Metropolitan Peter. We know the reaction of one hierarch, Archbishop Theodore of Volokolamsk, to this epistle. He was not enthusiastic, because he considered that in times of persecution a centralized administration was not obligatory for the Church.[[951]](#footnote-951) In any case, at some time in the 1930s, as we have seen, both Metropolitan Peter and Metropolitan Cyril came to accept that Metropolitan *Joseph* should lead the Russian Church in the event of Metropolitan Peter’s death.

Metropolitan Cyril’s position hardened towards the end of his life. Thus in March, 1937 he wrote: “With regard to your perplexities concerning Sergianism, I can say that the very same questions in almost the same form were addressed to me from Kazan ten years ago, and then I replied affirmatively to them, because I considered everything that Metropolitan Sergius had done as a mistake which he himself was conscious of and wished to correct. Moreover, among our ordinary flock there were many people who had not investigated what had happened, and it was impossible to demand from them a decisive and active condemnation of the events. Since then much water has flowed under the bridge. The expectations that Metropolitan Sergius would correct himself have not been justified, *but there has been enough time for the formerly ignorant members of the Church, enough incentive and enough opportunity to investigate what has happened*; and very many have both investigated and understood that Metropolitan Sergius is departing from that Orthodox Church which the Holy Patriarch Tikhon entrusted to us to guard, and consequently there can be no part or lot with him for the Orthodox. The recent events have finally made clear the renovationist nature of Sergianism. We cannot know whether those believers who remain in Sergianism will be saved, because the work of eternal Salvation is a work of the mercy and grace of God. But for those who see and feel the unrighteousness of Sergianism (those are your questions) it would be unforgiveable craftiness to close one’s eyes to this unrighteousness and seek there for the satisfaction of one’s spiritual needs when one’s conscience doubts in the possibility of receiving such satisfaction. Everything which is not of faith is sin…”[[952]](#footnote-952)

This is an important document, for it shows that by 1937 Metropolitan Cyril considered that enough time had passed for the ordinary believer to come to a correct conclusion concerning the true, “renovationist” – that is, *heretical* – nature of Sergianism. So from 1937, in Metropolitan Cyril’s opinion, “the excuse of ignorance” was no longer valid. What had been involuntary ignorance in the early days of the schism was now (except in exceptional circumstances caused by, for example, extreme youth or mental deficiency) *witting* ignorance – that is, *indifference to the truth or refusal to face the truth.*

This view is confirmed by Schema-Monk Epiphany (Chernov), who writes that during their imprisonment together in Chimkent, “when they let Metropolitans Cyril and Joseph go out for a walk, they stuck together: the tall Metropolitan Joseph and the stocky, short Metropolitan Cyril. And these two figures, as it seemed, merged into one, symbolising ‘the unity of two in one’. The metropolitans walked in a circle and were continually engaged in conversation – after all, it was impossible to overhear them there. And during their walk they were constantly watched from a hill by some Catacomb nuns to whom the metropolitans, at the end of their walk, gave their blessing – it was necessary to disguise this, so that the guards should not notice their secret signalling.”[[953]](#footnote-953)

“And this signalling, as was later made known by these same Catacomb nuns, consisted further in the following sign: that when Metropolitan Cyril several times bowed beneath the elbow of Metropolitan Joseph, this meant that he completely recognized the authority and leadership of the latter for himself.”[[954]](#footnote-954)

## 76. DIVISIONS AMONG THE GREEK OLD CALENDARISTS

Returning to the Old Calendarist struggle in Greece, we come to the tragic division that took place in 1937 between Metropolitans Germanus of Demetrias and Chrysostom of Florina, on the one hand, and Bishops Germanus of the Cyclades and Matthew of Bresthena, on the other. This division between the so-called “Florinites” and “Matthewites” greatly weakened the struggle of the True Orthodox and has continued (with further splinterings) to the present day.

In 1937 the Monk Mark (Khaniotis) wrote to the bishops asking for a clarification of their ecclesiological views. In June Metropolitans Germanos and Chrysostom wrote a private reply to Fr. Mark: “When a Church falls into what St. Basil the Great calls a curable error, as is the error of the Calendar, the hierarchs as individuals can wall themselves off and break their spiritual communion with the Church, so as not to become partakers of their error. However, they do not have the right to declare the Church schismatic. That is the right of a Pan-Orthodox or Great Local Council alone. In this case those who break communion with the erring Church before Synodical clarification appeal against it to a Pan-Orthodox or Great Local Council, so as to lead it back onto the Orthodox way, or, if it remains in its error, to have it proclaimed as heretical or schismatic by the Pan-Orthodox Council after the first and second admonition – heretical, if its error affects Dogma, and schismatic if it affects the Typicon and the administrative side of the Church. This is what we have done in a rigorous manner, breaking spiritual communion with the Hierarchy of the Great Church because of the error of the calendar innovation, and appealing against it to a Pan-Orthodox or Great Local Council, which is the only competent authority having the right to judge it for its error and either persuade it to forsake its error, or if it remains in it, to declare it schismatic. Thus insofar as it is one error of one Church which does not directly affect a dogma of the faith but is related to ecclesiastical anticanonicities and irregularities that are curable, in St. Basil the Great’s words, it makes the erring Church *potentially* *schismatic, but not actually so*, until it is condemned and declared actually schismatic by a Pan-Orthodox Council…

“But let your holiness know that the Holy Chrism which is celebrated and sanctified by the Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate retains all its grace and sanctifying energy, even if this was done by the Patriarchate after the introduction of the calendar.”[[955]](#footnote-955)

This statement clearly contradicted the three bishops’ encyclical of 1935, which both declared that the State Church was fully schismatic and deprived of the grace of sacraments, and indicated that the dogma of the One Church had been affected by the introduction of the new calendar.

On June 30 Bishop Matthew wrote to the Synod requesting an official declaration by Metropolitan Germanus that the new calendarists were schismatics and deprived of the grace of sacraments, and that it was necessary to chrismate children baptised in the schism.

On July 5/18, Bishop Matthew again wrote to Metropolitan Germanus: “… Insofar in the course of our discussion on the conditions of this suggestion of mine, two members of the Sacred Synod lost their composure and attacked me, and insofar as threats and insults cannot diminish the seriousness of my suggestion, I have the honour to ask you kindly to convene a Synod as quickly as possible and give a reply to the above-mentioned suggestion.

“If, contrary to every hope, the Sacred Synod does not want to accept the conditions of my suggestion in accordance with the prescriptions of the divine and sacred canons, but will continue to be stubborn, then… I consider myself bound as an Orthodox Hierarch to break all spiritual communion with you, so as not to be found guilty at the terrible day of Judgement for having despised the divine and sacred canons… I will await your written reply to my suggestion until next Monday, the 13th.

“If the Holy and Sacred Synod will not accept the conditions of this suggestion of mine before this date, I will consider silence to be a rejection of my suggestion and in connection with this will break all relations with you and will determine my further position…”[[956]](#footnote-956)

On September 5/18 Bishop Matthew wrote to Metropolitan Germanus: “Insofar as up to this time I have received no reply, and in view of the 15th canon of the so-called First-and-Second Council, according to which: ‘He who separates from communion with his president because of some heresy condemned by the Holy Councils or Fathers, when, that is, he preaches heresy publicly and teaches it openly in church, if such people guard themselves from communion with the so-called bishop before a conciliar investigation, not only are they not subject to the epitimia decreed by the canons, but are even worthy of the honour fitting to the Orthodox. For they have condemned, not bishops, but false bishops and false teachers, and have not sundered the unity of the Church by schism, but have striven to protect the Church from schisms and divisions’, and (2) insofar as in the recent letter which you gave to the Reverend Monk Mark Khaniotes, you have completely clearly declared that the sacraments accomplished by the new calendarists are valid and have Divine Grace, and that in the future you will continue to maintain spiritual communion with the innovating schismatic church of Greece… Therefore we decide: (1) to express our deepest sorrow to you and all those who follow you at your completely unexpected sudden apostasy from your original confessions and declarations; (2) to break with you and all those who follow you all spiritual communion until the Lord God wishes to enlighten you to return to your original Confession of Faith and preserve the exactness of the Sacred Canons and Traditions of the Church, not following so-called kindness, economy and condescension, as not being able to bear the burden of one such decision of yours, and so as not to be found guilty at the terrible day of Judgement of having despised the divine and sacred canons, drawing on yourselves the curses and anathemas of our Holy and God-bearing Fathers; (3) I take back all the signatures which until today I placed under the acts and remaining documents in the sessions of the Synod with you, and also ask you to annul my participation in the newspaper *The Voice of Orthodoxy.*”[[957]](#footnote-957)

It was strange that Bishop Matthew should withdraw his signature from all previous decisions of the Synod… Another disturbing feature of this encyclical was the way in which it was addressed to “the *former* Metropolitan of Demetrias Germanus, *until now* president of the Sacred Synod”[[958]](#footnote-958) (later he would address him as a mere monk), as if the latter were already defrocked. Presumably he felt that the reference to “false bishops” in the 15th canon he quoted (both here and in his second “excommunication” of September 19 / October 2) was sufficient justification. And yet he nowhere demonstrates that the two metropolitans had uttered *heresy.* Did he mean the heresy of newcalendarism? But the metropolitans rejected it. In any case, if they were being accused of heresy, they should have been summoned to a trial. Canonical due process requires that a bishop must be tried by at least twelve bishops, that he must be summoned to present his case, and that he can be defrocked in absentia only if he has refused to appear after three summonses by two bishops. If canonical procedure could not be exactly fulfilled in such a small Synod, at any rate some reference to it was surely obligatory. And yet Matthew did not speak of a trial…

On September 9, the two metropolitans, alarmed by the confusion which their statement had created, seemed to backtrack, writing: “As regards the validity or invalidity of the sacraments performed by the new calendarists, we abide by what we proclaimed in June, 1935, that the sanctifying grace of the sacraments is found in and works through those ecclesiastical ministers who keep to the sacred traditions and canons without making any innovation, but not through those who have distanced themselves from the sacred canons and remain under the curses of the Fathers.”[[959]](#footnote-959)

On September 14/27 Bishop Germanos of the Cyclades wrote to all the True Orthodox Christians: “… We have been forced to reject two hierarchs, the former Germanos of Dmitriades and the former Chrysostom of Florina, and break all links with them, insofar as they have trampled on and cast out everything that they formerly taught in the presence of thousands of people in Colonus. They have fallen into the same category as the new calendarists themselves insofar as, on the one hand, they recognize the sacraments of the latter as valid, and on the other, they forbid us to consider the so-called ‘church’ of Chrysostomos Papadopoulos as schismatic, in spite of the fact that it has clearly violated the Canons of the Holy Apostles, the decrees of the Holy Seven Ecumenical Councils and the Sacred Tradition of the Church. They have accepted communion with the new calendarists in order to serve their own interests…”[[960]](#footnote-960)

This language was astonishingly unjust. The most that the two metropolitans could be accused of was inconsistency with regard to the status of the new calendarists: inside or outside the True Church. To say that they were in the same category as the new calendarists themselves, or that they had accepted communion with them, was demagogical nonsense – neither metropolitan communed with the new calendarists from 1935 until their deaths. And here Bishop Germanos adopts the same uncanonical tactic as Bishop Matthew in calling Metropolitan Germanos “the former metropolitan”, as if he had already been defrocked. Fortunately, Bishop Germanos, unlike Bishop Matthew, was to repent of his hastiness and return into communion with Metropolitan Chrysostom…

True: in 1937 the two metropolitans softened the strict position they had taken in 1935. And yet their wavering was understandable: Metropolitan Chrysostom was in negotiations with the Antiochian and Jerusalem patriarchates for the convening of an Ecumenical Council that would condemn the new calendarists, and he knew that these patriarchates, being still in communion with the new calendarists, would never accept that they were already condemned. Of course, from a Matthewite perspective, the attempt to win the cooperation of these patriarchates was in itself a kind of betrayal; for, in accordance with the words of St. John Chrysostom that they loved to quote, “he who communes with an excommunicate is himself excommunicated”; so the Antiochian and Jerusalem patriarchates – indeed, *all* the Local Churches – were, according to their reasoning, outside the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. And yet in May, 1935 the three hierarchs in official communications had not rejected the Old Calendarist Local Churches that were in communion with the new calendarists (Antioch, Jerusalem, Serbia, etc.), but sought to “collaborate” with them.[[961]](#footnote-961) So if these Churches still remained inside the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church in spite of being in communion with the new calendarists, how was it possible to condemn Metropolitan Chrysostom, who was *not* in communion with the new calendarists?

On October 10/23 at a Council in Athens Bishops Germanos and Matthew together with the clergy who supported them officially declared that the two metropolitans had fallen away from the true confession. And it was declared that the sacraments of the new calendarists, including their chrism sanctified after 1924, were deprived of saving grace.

For two vicar-bishops to condemn their metropolitans in this way without a trial was completely uncanonical. But it raised the further question: if the sacraments of the new calendarists were invalid as early as 1924, then the two metropolitans who stayed in the State Church between 1924 and 1935 lost the grace of the episcopate in that period. Consequently, when they joined the Sacred Struggle in 1935, they were simple laymen. Nor could their episcopate be restored to them by an assembly of priests and laity, however numerous. So their ordinations of Matthew and Germanos were invalid! Such were some of the contradictions that the “Matthewite” position entailed…

On October 17 Metropolitan Chrysostom wrote to Metropolitan Germanus: “You should ignore the encylicals of the bishops of Bresthena [Matthew] and the Cyclades [Germanus] who have fallen away, insofar as they have condemned us for reasons of avarice, since they cannot abide our criticism of their unlawful ordinations and other crimes, and have taken the side of the old Administrative Council of Manesis and Gounaris, whom until yesterday they were calling profiteers and usurpers. As an excuse for condemning us they have found the reason that we have refused to allow a repeat chrismation of children baptised by newcalendarist priests, following the ban by the divine and sacred canons, and that we have refused to declare the newcalendarist Church heretical and schismatical, and their sacraments invalid. But the main reason for their condemnation for the holy one of Bresthena is the fact that we have hindered him from using our sacred struggle for his own enrichment, while for the holy one of the Cyclades it is the fact that we have forbidden him from carrying out unlawful ordinations of priests and deacons, not for the sake of serving our Sacred Struggle, but for the sake of creating his own party and seizing the leadership of our struggle. Both of them, casting off every restraint of conscience and fear of God, have proceeded to publish an encyclical to the True Orthodox Christians and are trying by means of lies and disgusting slanders to present us as deserters and traitors to the struggle because we did not want to despise the divine and sacred canons and proclaim the Greek Church to be schismatical and its sacraments invalid, and to condemn to spiritual death five million Greek brothers who in purity of heart follow the new calendar, and to enter into contradiction with the remaining Orthodox Churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, Russia, Serbia, etc., which not only have not broken communion with the newcalendarist churches, but even serve together with their clergy. And this because the newcalendarist Churches have not been proclaimed to be schismatic by a Pan-Orthodox Council, which alone has the right according to the sacred canons to condemn and declare them schismatical if they do not depart from the error of the new calendar. The divine and God-bearing Fathers of the Ecumenical Councils gave the right to proclaim individual people and churches schismatical neither to individual people nor to local churches, but [only] to an Ecumenical Council, which expresses the Catholic Orthodox Church and whose decisions are made through the inspiration of the All-Holy Spirit. For this reason we, honouring the canons and decisions of the Ecumenical Councils, have refused to proclaim the Greek Church schismatical, and have confined ourselves only to breaking ecclesiastical communion with the Archbishop of Athens and the hierarchs who think like him, so as not to be participants in the calendar innovation. And we have done this in accordance with the 15th canon of the First-and-Second Ecumenical Council, which gives the right only to break ecclesiastical communion with him who violates tradition until a conciliar decision, by which alone individual people and churches are declared schismatical and their sacraments invalid. The above-mentioned bishops have taken this refusal of ours based on the canons and apostolic decrees as an excuse, and unfortunately they have fallen morally to such a degree that they place the authority of the Society of the True Orthodox Christians under the presidency of Manesis and Gounaris above our authority – we who in the course of 35 years have done nothing other than declare the dogmas of Orthodoxy and rightly divide the word of divine truth. But the main motive inciting them to condemn us is a striving to be free from any control on our part, and freely and ignorantly to use our sacred struggle on the excuse of feigned piety. A proof of the fact that they are employing demagogy and fishing for glory and honours at the expense of the struggle is the fact that they have both accepted the titles of metropolitans, although we at their consecration gave them the title of bishops, which only adventurers and intellectually and morally unstable people could do without shame. It is also a shameless lie that, as they say, the protosyncellus beat up the bishop of the Cyclades at one session of the Synod, which has not assembled already for two months because of the obstruction of the bishops…”[[962]](#footnote-962)

Metropolitan Chrysostom wrote to Bishop Germanos as follows: “When your Grace, like another Pope, characterizes us as heretics, because we have not proclaimed the Church of Greece schismatic and her Mysteries invalid on account of the Archbishop’s innovation, but have restricted ourselves to breaking off ecclesiastical communion with him even before a Synodal verdict…, then you must also proclaim the other Orthodox Churches, which have not broken communion with the innovating Archbishop, heretics twice over, in which case, you will be left as the sole Orthodox Hierarch, along with your like-minded collaborator, the Bishop of Vresthena!”[[963]](#footnote-963)

On November 9/22, Metropolitan Chrysostom wrote to the two vicar-bishops that the State Church of Greece was potentially, and not actually schismatic, and that it could be said to be actually schismatic and graceless only on the basis of a decision of an Ecumenical or Pan-Orthodox Council.[[964]](#footnote-964) In fact, it seems that Metropolitan Chrysostom was hopeful that such a Pan-Orthodox Council was about to be convened. In December he and Metropolitan Germanus wrote to the ministry of religion suggesting that a “Pre-Council” be convened on Mount Athos with representatives from both the old and the new calendar to decide the calendar question. However, if for any reason this “Pre-Council” should not be convened before Pascha, then the royal decree of 1923 ordering the retention of the Julian calendar should be enforced. If these conditions are accepted, then the two metropolitans agreed not to proceed to any new ordinations or ecclesiastical actions until Pascha.[[965]](#footnote-965)

However, by 1940 the metropolitans had reverted to the stricter position. Thus on August 30, together with Chrysostom of Zacynthus, who had returned to the Old Calendar, they declared: “Concerning the validity or invalidity of the sacraments performed by the newcalendarists, we remain with everything that we declared in June, 1935, according to which ‘the sanctifying grace of the mysteries, according to the spirit of the divine and sacred canons and our opinion, exist and act through those Church servers who keep the sacred traditions and canons of the Orthodox Church, without accepting any innovation, and not through those who have separated from the sacred traditions and violated the divine and sacred canons, and who, consequently, are under the curses of the Holy Fathers. In order that a new calendarist should be received into our Old Calendar Church, he must through a petition declare his sacred intention to us, the hierarchs, to whom alone it behoves to evaluate the method of their reception, either through a written declaration, as the First Ecumenical Council (canon eight) and the early Church received heretics and schismatics by ecclesiastical economy, or by a second chrismation, in accordance with the fifth canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council. With regard to the fact that we bishops alone, as representatives of the Church, are competent to be treasure-houses of Grace, we cite the thirty-ninth Apostolic canon, which so decrees. Priests and deacons can do nothing without the will of the bishop. For the people of the Lord are entrusted to him, and he will give an account for their souls.”[[966]](#footnote-966)

## 77. THE VATICAN AND RUSSIA

Russia’s age-old enemy, the Vatican, at first appeared to condemn the revolution in Russia, and support the Orthodox. On March 12, 1919 Pope Benedict XV sent Lenin a protest against the persecutions of the Orthodox clergy, while Archbishop Ropp sent Patriarch Tikhon a letter of sympathy. The Bolshevik Commissar for Foreign Affairs Chicherin noted with dissatisfaction this “solidarity with the servers of the Orthodox Church”.[[967]](#footnote-967)

In general, however, relations between the Vatican and the Russian Orthodox Church were very bad. In 1922 Hieromartyr Benjamin of Petrograd said to Fyodorov: “You offer us unification… and all the while your Latin priests, behind our backs, are sowing ruin amongst our flock.”

Nicholas Boyeikov writes: “In his epistle of 25 June, 1925, the locum tenens of the All-Russian Patriarchal Throne, Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa, who suffered torture in Soviet exile, expressed himself on the ‘Eastern Rite’ as follows: ‘the Orthodox Christian Church has many enemies. Now they have increased their activity against Orthodoxy. The Catholics, by introducing the rites of our divine services, are seducing the believing people – especially those among the western churches which have been Orthodox since antiquity – into accepting the unia, and by this means they are distracting the forces of the Orthodox Church from the more urgent struggle against unbelief.’”[[968]](#footnote-968)

Protodeacon Herman Ivanov-Trinadtsaty writes: “Pope Pius X (who was canonized in 1954) pronounced on the very eve of World War I, ‘Russia is the greatest enemy of the [Roman] Church.’ Therefore it is not surprising that the Roman Catholic world greeted the Bolshevik Revolution with joy. ‘After the Jews the Catholics did probably more than anyone else to organize the overthrow of tsarist power. At least they did nothing to stop it.’ Shamelessly and with great candour they wrote in Rome as soon as the Bolshevik ‘victory’ became evident: ‘there has been uncontainable pleasure over the fall of the tsarist government and Rome has not wasted any time in entering into negotiations with the Soviet government.’ When a leading Vatican dignitary was asked why the Vatican was against France during World War II, he exclaimed: ‘The victory of the Entente allied with Russia would have been as great a catastrophe for the Roman Catholic Church as the Reformation was.’ Pope Pius conveyed this feeling in his typically abrupt manner: ‘If Russia is victorious, then the schism is victorious.’…

“Even though the Vatican had long prepared for it, the collapse of the Orthodox Russian Empire caught it unawares. It very quickly came to its senses. The collapse of Russia did not yet mean that Russia could turn Roman Catholic. For this, a new plan of attack was needed. Realizing that it would be as difficult for a Pole to proselytise in Russia as for an Englishman in Ireland, the Vatican understood the necessity of finding a totally different method of battle with Orthodoxy, which would painlessly and without raising the slightest suspicion, ensnare and subordinate the Russian people to the Roman Pope. This Machiavellian scheme was the appearance of the so-called ‘Eastern Rite’, which its defenders understood as ‘the bridge by which Rome will enter Russia’, to quote an apt expression of K.N. Nikolaiev.

“This treacherous plot, which can be likened to a ship sailing under a false flag, had very rapid success in the first years after the establishment of Soviet power. This too place in blood-drenched Russia and abroad, where feverish activity was begun amongst the hapless émigrés, such as finding them work, putting their immigration status in order, and opening Russian-language schools for them and their children.

“It cannot be denied that there were cases of unmercenary help, but in the overwhelming majority of cases, this charitable work had a thinly disguised confessional goal, to lure by various means the unfortunate refugees into what seemed at first glance to be true Orthodox churches, but which at the same time commemorated the pope…

“In Russia the experiment with the ‘Eastern Rite’ lasted more than ten years… The heart and soul of the papal ‘Ostpolitik’, its eastern policies, was a Jesuit, the French Bishop d’Herbigny, who was specially authorized by the pope to conduct negotiations with the Kremlin for the wide dissemination of Roman Catholicism in the Soviet Union and by the same token the supplanting of Orthodoxy in Russia and in Russian souls.

“With this in mind, d’Herbigny travelled three times to the Soviet Union on a French diplomatic passport. He consecrated several Roman Catholic hierarchs with the aim of building up a group of Russian Catholic clergymen who would be acceptable to the Soviet authorities. Let us listen to the degree of open amorality that these clerics were capable of: ‘Bolshevism is liquidating priests, desecrating churches and holy places, and destroying monasteries. Is this not where the religious mission of irreligious Bolshevism lies, in the disappearance of the carriers of schismatic thought, as it were presenting a “clean table”, a tabula rasa, which gives us the possibility of spiritual recreation.’ For those to whom it is not clear just what kind of spiritual reconstruction the Benedictine monk Chrysostom Bayer is referring to, his thoughts can be amplified by the official …Catholic journal, *Bayrischer Kurier*: ‘Bolshevism is creating the possibility of the conversion of stagnant Russia to Catholicism.’

“No one less than the exarch of the Russian Catholics, Leonid Fyodorov, when on trial in March of 1923 along with fourteen other clergymen and one layman, pathetically testified to the sincerity of his feelings in relation to the Soviet authorities, who, Fyodorov thought later, did not fully understand what could be expected from Roman Catholicism. He explained: ‘From the time that I gave myself to the Roman Catholic Church, my cherished dream has been to reconcile my homeland with this church, which for me is the only true one. But we were not understood by the government. All Latin Catholics heaved a sigh of relief when the October Revolution took place. I myself greeted with enthusiasm the decree on the separation of Church and State… Only under Soviet rule, when Church and State are separated, could we breathe freely. As a religious believer, I saw in this liberation the hand of God.

“Let us not lose sight of the fact that all these declarations by Roman Catholics, who were quite friendly with the Soviets, were pronounced during the nightmarish period when the Soviets were trying to eradicate the Orthodox Church. Keeping in mind that Vatican diplomacy adheres to the principle that the end justifies the means, which is illustrated throughout its centuries-old history, the game which the Vatican has been playing with Moscow should be clearly understood. The essence of the matter is that Russia has become a sacrifice to two principles hostile to it, Catholicism and godless communism, which are drawn together by a curious concurrence of interests. Moscow realizes that the eradication of faith from the Russian soul is a hopeless task. As long as the Russian Church remained faithful to itself, and uncompromising towards the godless power, courageously witnessing to the fundamental incompatibility between Christian and communist principles, the Soviet leaders were ready for two reasons to graciously study the variant of Roman Catholicism offered to them. By this means they hoped to manipulate the religiousness of the Russian soul.

“The first reason was Rome’s consistent, impeccable loyalty to the communist regime, both in the U.S.S.R. and outside it [until 1930]. Secondly, it was advantageous to the Kremlin, or simply entertaining, that the religious needs of the Russians should be satisfied by this centuries-old enemy of Orthodoxy. For their part, the Catholics were ready to close their eyes to all the atrocities of Bolshevism, including the shooting of the Roman Catholic Bishop Butkevich in April of 1923 and the imprisonment of Bishops Tseplyak, Malyetsky and Fyodorov. Six weeks later, the Vatican expressed its sorrow over the assassination of the Soviet agent Vorovsky in Lausanne! The People’s Commissar of Foreign Affairs told the German Ambassador, ‘Pius XI was amiable to me in Genoa, expressing the hope that we [the Bolsheviks] would break the monopoly of the Orthodox Church in Russia, thus clearing a path for him.’

“We have discovered information of the greatest importance in the archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A secret telegram № 266 of February 6, 1925 from Berlin, stated that the Soviet ambassador, Krestinsky, told Cardinal Pacelli (the future Pius XII) that Moscow would not oppose the existence of Roman Catholic bishops and a metropolitan on Russian territory. Furthermore, the Roman clergy were offered the very best conditions. Six days later, secret telegram № 284 spoke of permission being granted for the opening of a Roman Catholic seminary. Thus, while our holy New Martyrs were being annihilated with incredible cruelty, the Vatican was conducting secret negotiations with Moscow. In short, Rome attempted to gain permission to appoint the necessary bishops and even permission to open a seminary. Our evidence shows that this question was discussed once more in high circles in the autumn of 1926. In all likelihood, it had not been satisfactorily settled earlier. This might be viewed as the culmination of the unnaturally close relations between the Vatican and the Soviet government.”

In July, 1927 Metropolitan Sergius wrote his notorious declaration. Having broken Sergius, the Bolsheviks no longer needed the Catholics. And so, as an “unexpected and indirect result” of the declaration, writes Ivanov-Trinadtsaty, “Moscow put an end to the negotiations and the attention it was devoting to Vatican offers… The restitution of the traditional [in appearance] Russian Orthodox Church, neutralized as it were, seemed more useful to the Soviet authorities than the Vatican. From then on, the Soviets lost interest in the Vatican. Only at the end of 1929 and the beginning of 1930 did the Vatican finally admit that it had suffered a political defeat and began vociferously to condemn the Bolshevik crimes. It had somehow not noticed them until 1930. Only in 1937 did Pope Pius XI release the encyclical *Divino Redemptori* (Divine Redeemer), which denounced communism…”[[969]](#footnote-969)

However, for a while the Catholics were certainly in with a chance… Thus Bishop Nicholas (Yarushevich) told the Catholic Bishop Névé that “the current state of the Orthodox Church is so grievous that it can only save itself by making an alliance with the Catholic centre. Otherwise, nothing will ever be straightened out again… At least one diocese should do it first, and others would follow suit later.”[[970]](#footnote-970) This suggestion was acted upon in the 1930s by Archbishop Bartholomew (Remov), who secretly adopted Eastern Rite Catholicism.

An interesting aspect of Russian-Vatican relations was the role played by Great Prince Cyril Vladimirovich, who in 1924 proclaimed himself Tsar of Russia. Cyril, who had been very quick to welcome the February revolution, had no legitimate claim to the throne – Tsar Nicholas had blocked the “Cyrillovichi” from the succession because of his unlawful marriage, and his claim was also rejected by other leading Romanovs. [[971]](#footnote-971) Therefore he needed support from other powers – notably, the Vatican.

“Truly,” writes Michael Nazarov, “in his search for support ‘Cyril I’ and his activist wife were ready to display ‘flexibility’ both to the right (in the direction of Hitler’s party, which was then being born), and to the left (towards American billionaires, to the point of creating a ‘democratic monarchy’ with a Council, in which half the places belonged to American appointees), and in the direction of the Vatican, which in the 1920s was attempting to conclude a concordat with the Bolsheviks for the Catholicization of Russia at the expense of a prostrate Orthodoxy.

“Now the Catholics themselves recognize that in their archives there are documents about these attempts of Great Prince Cyril Vladimirovich to be confirmed in the role of heir to the Russian throne. ‘Through his personal representative he established contact with Cardinal Gaspari, the papal secretary of state, and also with the Jesuit Bishop D’Herbigny in an attempt to assure himself of the support of the Vatican… In return, he [Cyril – M.N.] promised that after his ascent on the throne of the Romanovs, he would give official recognition to Russian Catholicism in the form of a Russian exarchate, and recognize a possible Catholic-Orthodox unia… However, the Vatican, acting realistically, preferred to continue its secret negotiations with the red regime.’ In 1929 Great Prince Cyril repeated his attempt. On learning that the negotiations between the Vatican and the Bolsheviks had failed, ‘he invited a Jesuit [D’Herbigny – M.N.] to his house in Brittany and gave through him a letter to the Pope. Cyril promised to give freedom of religious propaganda in Russia to Catholicism in the case of the fall of the Soviet regime and his ascent on the throne of the Romanovs. In the form of a payback, he wanted the Pope to give his venture his support and recognize him as ‘the legitimate and Providence-sent heir to the Russian throne’. However, Cyril’s suggestion was again turned down – for the same reasons: the Vatican was hoping for an improvement in relations with the Soviet authorities.”[[972]](#footnote-972)

## 78. THE SERBS AND THE CONCORDAT

The kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes had been formed after the First World War. In accordance with the plan of the major world powers, it was a centralized State ruled by a Serbian Orthodox king and a parliament. The Catholic Croats resented the power of the Serbs, and tension between the two communities was high throughout the inter-war period.

T.V. writes: “In both public and private life King Alexander was a convinced supporter of Yugoslav unity. Once while the king was in Zagreb [the Croat capital], there was a reception and a ball. At the ball they introduced to the king a lady who, after curtseying, said:

“’I am a Serb from Zagreb.’

“’And I,’ replied the king with a gentle smile, ‘am a Croat from Belgrade…’”[[973]](#footnote-973)

But the Croats did not feel the same towards the Serbian King and the Orthodox Church. In 1932 Metropolitan Dositheus (Vasič) was appointed to the see of Zagreb in Croatia, where the Orthodox were in a minority. Alexis Gerovsky, the Carpatho-Russian political and religious activist, wrote: “Dositheus’ appointment to Zagreb elicited great discontent among the Catholics. The name of Bishop Dositheus was already blacklisted because he ‘by his propaganda has converted the Carpatho-Russians to Orthodoxy’… When some years before the Second World War Bishop Dositheus told me that he had been appointed as metropolitan in Zagreb, I besought him not to accept this appointment, since he had never been there and did not know the religious fanaticism of the Zagreb Croats… I mentioned to him [the Catholic Archbishop] Stepinac, who was already famous for his religious intolerance, and I warned him that he would suffer many unpleasantnesses from him. ‘Stepinac, who was educated for seven years in a Jesuit seminary in Rome,’ I said, ‘will feel offended that an Orthodox metropolitan should be implanted in his capital’… I advised him to convince the members of the Synod to send to Zagreb a bishop from those who had been born before the First World War and raised in Austro-Hungary, and who was already familiar with types like Stepinac. But Vladyka told me that it was his duty to obey the will of the patriarch, and he went to Zagreb. When, several months later, I again met him in Belgrade, he told me that I had been right. He was often insulted in the street. Sometime the windows of his house were broken at night. Stones even fell into his bedroom. I asked Vladyka whether he had spoken to the police. He replied that it was not fitting for a bishop to call the police. But when I told him that in such a case his enemies would think that he feared them, and would be still more brazen, Vladyka replied: ‘No, they know that I am not afraid of them. When they revile me or spit at me, I simply raise my hands and bless them with the sign of the cross.’”[[974]](#footnote-974)

In 1934 King Alexander was assassinated in Marseilles by the Croat Ustashi terrorists. According to one source[[975]](#footnote-975), the terrorists were under the direction of the SS, “Teutonic sword”. Others believe they were directed by the Grand Orient of France. Still others – by Mussolini. This last is the most likely version…

Whatever the truth about his death, there is no doubt that in King Alexander not only the Serbs, but also the Russian Church Abroad whose headquarters was in Serbia, lost a great defender.

Although the Serbs had invited the Russians to Serbia, by the beginning of the Second World War it became clear that the ROCOR Synod would have to move to another country sooner or later. Nevertheless, ROCOR always remained grateful to the Serbs for the protection they had been offered. Patriarch Barnabas defended ROCOR even in its split with the Moscow Patriarchate[[976]](#footnote-976), and King Alexander remained their constant defender.

The most important event of the inter-war years in Yugoslavia was the signing of a Concordat between the government of Prime Minister Stoyadinovič and the Vatican. This was done in order to solve the problem of the integration of the Catholic Croats into the united kingdom of Yugoslavia. However, its heavily pro-Catholic bias only served to increase tensions.

Hieroschemamonk (now Bishop) Akakije (Stankevič) writes: “Drafts of the text were prepared in 1923, in 1925 and 1931. The final text of the Concordat was signed in Rome on July 25, 1935. Stoyadinovič was brought to the helm of the king’s government by the Duke-Regent Pavle Karageorgevič. This solution Duke Pavle chose with the consent of the British ruling circles. It was believed that Stoyadinovič would be able to come to an understanding with Maček’s Croatian peasants’ party, and also that he would lead the policy of rapprochement with Germany and Italy, since British policy in Europe at that time was strictly anti-communist and anti-Soviet. As assumed by some, Stoyadinovič, as a trader and a risk-taker, immediately calculated that, by the acceptance of the Concordat, he would achieve two of his goals: to gain the Catholic Church’s support, as the leader of five million Croatian Catholics, and to improve relations with Fascist Italy in order to become closer to the Triple Pact. In addition to this, he was convinced that the contract with the Vatican would be concluded without any problems. As he writes in his memoirs, published after the war in Argentina, his self-confidence was based on a very broad preparation, in which he included the whole state apparatus. In the first place, he thought that a considerable number of newsmen and newspapers were under his control. He even thought that among those preparing the documents were a number of his own men. His informants were constantly telling him what was being said about the Concordat in the Serbian Orthodox Church. In the struggle for the Concordat nothing was to be left to chance. He seemed to have been convinced about a positive outcome, but Stoyadinovič could not have imagined what a storm the Concordat would arouse.

“In the beginning nobody rejected it, even Patriarch Barnabas was convinced that everything would be alright with the Concordat, because it was based on an idea of King Alexander, and as such it could not have been in conflict with the interests of the Serbian Orthodox Church. But analysis later revealed that a number of articles in the Concordat compromised the religious equality guaranteed by the Constitution. So the patriarch changed his position, and became an ardent opponent of the Concordat. By signing the Concordat, the Catholic Church was to receive from the State larger privileges than the Orthodox Church already had. In the evaluation of Professor Sergije Troitsky, who in a special brochure analysed the project of the Concordat, article number 7 and some others obliged the Yugoslav State to accept the Catholic Code Juris Canonici, which would, if accepted, become a parallel constitution. The sharpest argument related to the article by which the Catholic Church would have ‘full rights to freely and publicly execute its mission in the kingdom of Yugoslavia’. In formulating this article, the term ‘mission’ was used, which was unacceptable to the Orthodox Church. In the Concordats accepted in other European countries, this problem was resolved by the statement that the Catholic faith would be freely and publicly confessed… By the term ‘mission’ the kingdom of Yugoslavia was being characterised as a pagan country… The project of the Concordat gave the Catholic Church a missionary character as if Yugoslavia were an unenlightened, pagan country. The approval of the special status of the Catholic Church was discovered in many other articles of the Concordat. For example, the article about marriage in the Catholic Church said that… for all citizens being married in the Catholic Church the obligation to register as a civil marriage was removed. In the same article there was another questionable position, which obliged the civil powers that in the case of mixed marriages, at the request of an insulted Catholic side, they should take care that the other side had to fulfil the promise that all the sons and the daughters without exception should be educated in the Catholic faith. With such and similar articles the Catholic Church was given a major advantage over all other confessions in the State, as Patriarch Barnabas said: ‘Giving the Catholic Church the position of the main and dominant State Church, the Concordat puts all other confessions, and especially the Church of the majority of citizens in the State, the Orthodox Church, in the position of being tolerated’, which destroyed the rule of religious equality that was guaranteed by the State Constitution.

“All publications critical of the Concordat were prohibited or censored. The little things that were missed by the State censors were not enough to explain to the public the seriousness of the Concordat crisis and the sharpness of the conflict that began between the highest ranks in the Orthodox Church and State. The Hierarchical Council of the Serbian Orthodox Church held an extraordinary meeting on November 24, 1936, and discussed the position of the Serbian Church after the acceptance of the laws about the State-recognized confessions. The Serbian Orthodox Church could no longer peacefully watch how the Catholic Church in the kingdom of Yugoslavia was receiving rights and privileges that it had nowhere else in Europe, and which even the Serbian Church did not have as the State Church of Serbia.

“On January 19, 1937, before the Orthodox New Year, Patriarch Barnabas finally delivered his judgement on the Concordat. The censors saw it, the public did not receive the message that the leader of the Serbian Church delivered in his traditional New Year message to the faithful. The censored text published in the newspaper *Politika* could have been understood to mean that the patriarch looked forward to the Concordat without much excitement. What Patriarch Barnabas really said in his New Year message, a part of the public found out from the illegal leaflet entitled ‘What the Newspapermen were Forbidden to Publish’, in which the whole message for the new year of 1937 was printed. Whoever read at least one passage from the leaflet understood why Stoyadinovič had forbidden the publication of the patriarch’s New Year message: ‘… For completely unknown reasons, and incomprehensible causes, they have made a contract with the black leader of the Black International (the Patriarch was thinking of the Pope). By this contract they want to bring that leader to triumph in the Balkans, where he has been trying to triumph for a thousand years. The Byzantine patriarchs and emperors were the first to fight against this black leader and his Jesuit army. When their arms lost strength, our glorious Nemanja dynasty headed by St. Sava accepted the struggle. When the Serbian kingdom fell at Kosovo, even the Turks fought against the Latin attacks on the Balkans. The Turks knew the false character of that International, so they did not give it the Balkans. The Turks knew the destructive impact of this international within the State. They knew that this International uses all means, intrigues and cunning strategems, so they made no compromise with it. The Orthodox Faith was sometimes persecuted by the Ottomans, but they considered it to be a faith and respected it as a faith. But they did not look on that Black International as a faith, but as politics. And so, my brothers, to that unscrupulous political organization our rulers today have widely opened the gates, and allowed it to stand firmly in the Balkans. And who, and when? Not some strangers, but baptized sons of the Church of St. Sava… Honour to the Turks, and shame to such Orthodox and such Serbs.’ Explaining why he hadn’t raised his voice earlier against this situation, Patriarch Barnabas continued to pour out his soul’s anger: ‘… They complain that we introduce politics into the Church! We are not bringing politics into the Church, but they are introducing poison into the whole national organism. Those who have lost their wisdom, their patriotism and their sincerity… Who is going to tell people the truth if not the people’s Holy Church? From where shall the voice of God and the voice of the nation’s conscience be heard if not from the Church of St. Sava? I am not afraid to say this. I hope that I’m not too late in saying this. Maybe I should have said this earlier. I’m afraid I’m going to give an answer for this before God’s judgement. But all the time I expected, like all conscientious people in this country, that the evil would be stopped…’ After seeing that this message of the patriarch did not reach the broad public, Stoyadinovich made an effort to soften the position of the Church’s hierarchy, trying to convince them that there was absolutely nothing in the Concordat that could in any way harm the Serbian Church and the Orthodox Faith. From his discussion with the hierarchs, he soon realized, as he later wrote in his memoirs, that all his effort was in vain. No arguments helped. The Concordat had already been ‘condemned’. Since then, the struggle over the Concordat became a war between the Orthodox Church and her spiritual army, on the one hand, and the State and its powerful apparatus, on the other. Using different religious gatherings and festal meetings, the priests and bishops from the ambon pronounced, with a cross in their hands, the fiercest condemnation of those who were in favour of the Concordat. The State used very powerful censorship to ban all the literature against the Concordat. The department of state security with the ministry of internal affairs sent instructions to all local government and police authorities to stop local people signing petitions and sending representatives to Belgrade to demand the repeal of the Concordat. In the parliament, the main debate over the ratification of the Concordat was about to start. On the same day an extraordinary session of the Hierarchical Council, the highest institution in the Serbian Orthodox Church, began. The tense atmosphere became even tenser when information was received on the health of Patriarch Barnabas, signed every day by three specialists. The patriarch became ill at the beginning of June, during a regular session of the Hierarchical Council. As it was known that the patriarch was opposed to the Concordat, rumours started that the leader of the Serbian Orthodox Church had been poisoned. One group of national deputies in the parliament demanded from the minister of internal affairs that he conduct an investigation to find out whether the patriarch had been poisoned by his servant, and whether the servant had been put up to it by some people outside the patriarchate. In the patriarchate the belief was that his personal servant had poisoned him, so he was dismissed from his post for a while, and until he disappeared without trace he was under observation. The patriarchate itself made its own investigation into this. So on July 8, at almost the same time, two bodies were in session, the Council for the Concordat and the extraordinary Hierarchical Council. At the same time, in all the churches of Belgrade, prayers were organized for the patriarch’s health, and many of the faithful attended. These gatherings added to the tension, and passions were ready to explode. Police control over all religious activity was strengthened. The voting on the Concordat within the Council passed it with a very small majority. But the final battle was just ahead.

“The government used all means against the opponents of the Concordat. The conflicts between the representatives of the government and the citizens became serious. Opponents of the Concordat were said to be religious fanatics, and… it looked as if civil war would break out. In conflict with the police, some even gave their lives, as Vladyka Nikolai of Žiča confirmed in his famous message in Valyevo: ‘… Here are the names of those who we know were killed. They are: Milovan Zhivanovič from the village of Yanilo, Lyubomir Spassovič from the village of Koračitsa, George Todorovič from Bielina, Dragitsa Bostanovič from Sarajevo. And how many others were wounded, how many others reported to hospital, and how many ran into the cornfields and woods, afraid to report to the hospital, fearing to be arrested and interrogated. And how many others were dismissed from their posts, how many were forced to retire, and how many were humiliated and insulted? Thousands and thousands of sons in these sixty days suffered and are suffering for our holy national faith and holy Orthodox Church.’ As a result of all these events, and the displeasure of the people, which was growing from day to day, Stoyadinovič’s government was in a hurry to complete the job of accepting the Concordat. That was the main reason why the meeting of the national parliament was scheduled for July 19. It is interesting that the session started with a question from Deputy Dušan Ivančevič: ‘Are the security measures around the national parliament well enforced?’ This question illustrates the atmosphere in which the main debate on the Concordat began. To understand better why such excitement existed in the national parliament, it is necessary to remember that in the newspaper *Politika* dated July 18, the day before the parliament session, the patriarchate had published the information that the next day, in accordance with the will of the people, there would be a litia and prayers for the health of the patriarch. Neglecting the prohibition from the city government, at about four o’clock in the afternoon on the day of the parliament session, from the Saborna Church a multitude of people burning with almost-forgotten religious passion and holding church banners and gonfalons began a litia led by seventy priests and four bishops. At about six o’clock in the evening when they reached Knez Mikhailova Street, they met a line of policemen. This is how events unfurled…. The gendarmes stopped the litia, asking the people to disperse because the litia was forbidden. Bishop Simeon of Šabats shouted: ‘Move away, blasphemers! Do not defile the sacred cross, but let us go on our way in peace! We are not interfering with anyone, we are carrying out a normal church rite in our own country.’ And holding the cross more firmly, he began to chant: ‘Save, O Lord, Thy people’’. He wanted to go on. But there was no way through, the litia faced another line of policemen, who started to hit whomever they could. They seized and tore up church banners, they broke crosses, they pulled the priests by their beards, they tried to strangle them, and they tore their vestments. The most dramatic scene was when a policeman ran out of the line and attacked Bishop Simeon with a heavy rubber truncheon, hitting him and saying: ‘Son of a Serbian bitch, move away or I shall pull your beard out!’ The bishop continued singing, ‘Save, O Lord, Thy people’ and went on. Another policeman said: ‘I will save you by hitting you’. And two more ran up to accompany him. All three of them attacked the bishop. They hit him everywhere, his mitre fell to the ground, and blood spurted from the bishop’s face. Covered with blood and his hair akimbo, he picked up his mitre from the ground, put it on his head and continued. He went on like that, defending himself with the cross, until the policemen hit him with a rifle-butt. He fell unconscious on the ground covered with blood. The people raised him on their hands and took him to the building of the patriarchate. And then a full-scale fight broke out. The priests used gonfalons to protect themselves, and finally started hitting the policemen with them. Eyewitnesses claim that the police had never been as ruthless and merciless towards the citizens. After these incidents black flags were raised over the patriarchate and all the churches in Belgrade, and all the bells were rung. It is not clear whether all the policement who took part in this incident were Catholics, since the minister of internal affairs Korošets was a Catholic priest. The situation was at boiling point, and this simply added fuel to the fire. The leadership of the Serbian Orthodox Church imposed punishments on those who voted for the Concordat. The Holy Hierarchical Council, at its session of July 19, 1937, the same day on which the police brutally broke up the litia, decided to excommunicate all the ministers and representatives of the Orthodox Church who voted for the Concordat, explaining that none of the clergy under any pretext can enter the home of those persons. In addition, it was ordered that the decision had to be proclaimed publicly in all the churches after the first liturgy. It was advised in this document that not only the clergy, but also all other faithful, should not communicate with those who had been punished. In the days following the incidents were repeated. The police hit the citizens with rubber truncheons, even fire-arms were used. One policeman and two citizens were killed in these street riots. In the streets the police were everywhere, they stood guard in front of every church and nobody could enter. Every hour church bells were rung from the church towers.

“The struggle against the Concordat was not restricted to Belgrade. By the end it had spread to most of the country and the people. Kraguyevats, Šabats, Užitse and Malednovats are only some of the cities that supported the struggle against the Concordat. In Malednovats one of the sharpest conflicts took place, in which three people were killed and fifty were seriously wounded. In these conflicts between the spiritual and secular power, many different political parties and groups saw their chance. They joined one or the other side according to their programmes. As a result, in the litia for the health of the patriarch, members of the forbidden communist party of Yugoslavia found their place together with bishops and priests, even though they had nothing in common with the Church and the priesthood. In the meantime, at midnight between the 23rd and 24th of July, Patriarch Barnabas reposed. Censors could not prohibit writing that more than 350,000 people took part in the funeral from all the different parts of the country. Belgrade has never known such a majestic gathering. The day before the parliament had accepted the Concordat, but that didn’t mean its final acceptance. The parliament agreed on the text, but it still had to pass through the Senate. The public believed that Patriarch Barnabas, as the main opponent of the Concordat, had been poisoned, and that it was done with the knowledge of Stoyadinovič and his closest co-workers. The peak of national discontent was reached on the day when the press revealed that the patriarch had died on the same night that the parliament majority voted for the Concordat. The government of Stoyadinovič found itself in a very unpleasant situation. The national discontent was augmented by words from the church ambon, and it threatened to become an unstoppable flood. The government tried, with police help, to gather statements from the doctors who were looking after the patriarch’s health in order to prove that the stories about his poisoning were false. They hoped in this way to stop the dangerous situation. But the manoeuvre was so obvious that nobody believed it. Professor Igniatovsky, the doctor who had been with the patriarch from the beginning to his death, claimed that it was forcible poisoning. So did Professor Xenophon Šakhovich. After many years, he publicly said: ‘I’m declaring this now, because before the war I was not allowed, that Patriarch Barnabas was poisoned! I know because I with my assistants did a post-mortem on the late Patriarch Barnabas, and definitely established that Patriarch Barnabas was poisoned.’ The senior medical technician, Miroslav Božovich, witnessed on the contrary that this statement of Professor Šakhovich was not true as regards the post-mortem, because the post-mortem was not carried out, since the government would not allow it. Instead of a post-mortem, from ‘the highest place’ it was ordered that the patriarch’s body be embalmed. The embalming was done during the night, ‘in an urgent procedure and in the presence of the police’. Those who initiated it wanted to stop the real truth from being revealed in this way. The results of the judicial enquiry were never revealed, nor was the case of Barnabas’ death ever judicially completed. The investigation itself was stopped in April, 1938. One thing was certain: the city government that led the investigation succeeded in proving that the patriarch was not poisoned and that the government was not involved in the poisoning, and gave this finding great publicity. In October the Concordat was officially withdrawn.[[977]](#footnote-977) The government of Stoyadinovič decided that there should be no Concordat – no old one, no new one, no Concordat at all. In addition to this, Stoyadinovič was forced to the wall from one side by the firm position of the Serbian Orthodox Church and on the other side by the firm requests of the Duke’s authority to restore good relations with the Serbian Orthodox Church as soon as possible, and in that way he practically accepted all that the persistent hierarchs requested from his government: for example, to punish all those responsible for the terrible events in front of the Sabarna church in Belgrade and other places, without reference to their positions, whether they were ministers or state officials, and other such things. In exchange, in one of the last sessions the Hierarchical Council decided that they would remove the sanctions against the ministers and deputies that voted for the Concordat. Through these decisions both sides put an end to the dispute, which for more than a year had put more wood on the fire of political and religious passions.

“The rejection of the Concordat with the Vatican caused the displeasure and rage of Pope Pius XI, who declared in December, 1937: ‘… I am convinced that there will not be a small number of souls who will regret not accepting wholeheartedly and with an open mind such a great good as the one which the representative of Jesus Christ offered the country, and not only for the Church and the religious harmony of the nation, but also for the social and political harmony, though we strongly resent the idea that politics should be our business.’ This pope’s threat very shortly, during the Second World War, came true in the most monstrous way. The pope’s revenge for the non-acceptance of the ‘great good’ of the Concordat, carried out at the hands of the Ustasha, was really horrible.

“The thirties in the twentieth century on the historical road of the Serbian Church were marked by a firm position of non-acceptance of the new calendar. This didn’t mean that they completely broke communion with the new calendarists. [However,] that wasn’t the case with the Soviet church of Metropolitan Sergius, who was not acknowledged as the canonical ruler of the Russian Orthodox Church. The patriarch-martyr Barnabas offered hospitality to the confessing Russian Church Abroad, and has a very close relationship with her; besides, the Serbian Church in this period had a lot of sympathy and support for the Greek confessors of the Old Calendar, sending them holy chrism almost until the end of the 1950s. If we add to all this the firm and uncompromising struggle against the Concordat, we have to realize how high was the level of the clergy and the people before the war, and how high their awareness and readiness to sacrifice in order to defend the position of the Orthodox Church.”[[978]](#footnote-978)

## 79. SECRET CATACOMB COUNCILS

On November 20, 1937, Metropolitans Joseph and Cyril were shot together in Chimkent. Following on the shooting of Metropolitan Peter on October 10, this meant that all of the holy patriarch’s locum tenentes, both “ordinary” and “extraordinary”, were now dead… The martyrdom of the last de jure and de facto leaders of the Catacomb Church placed the Russian Church in an unprecedented situation.

Nun Vassa writes: “In connection with the death of the locum tenens of the patriarchal throne, Hieromartyr Peter of Krutitsa, an ‘Act on the lawful succession of the title of locum tenens of the Moscow patriarchal throne and the leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church after the death of Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa’ was drawn up at the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR in December, 1937. Recognizing the claims of Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) to be unlawful, the Hierarchical Council recognized Metropolitan Cyril as the lawful locum tenens, not knowing that Hieromartyr Cyril had been shot on November 20, 1937. However, in view of the persecutions the Council admitted that it was impossible openly to commemorate Metropolitan Cyril, and decreed: ‘To commemorate Metropolitan Cyril as locum tenens of the Moscow patriarchal throne and head of the Russian Church at the proskomedia and in private prayers, but to refrain from proclaiming his name during the Divine services, so as not to draw upon him heavy persecutions on the part of the atheist power of the Bolsheviks. The present act is to be preserved without publication, as a witness to future times concerning the lawful succession of the leadership of the Russian Church.’ Instead of openly commemorating Metropolitan Cyril’s name, the Council decreed that ‘the Orthodox Episcopate of the Russian [Rossijskaia] Church’ should be commemorated. However, there is no more detailed explanation of this formula in the protocols of 1937.

“From what has been said we may conclude that at first ‘the Orthodox Episcopate of the Russian Church’ signified a concrete person, the patriarchal locum tenens Metropolitan Cyril, since his name could not be raised openly. This formula signified at the same time also that the Hierarchical Council did not recognize Metropolitan Sergius to be the head of the Russian Church.”[[979]](#footnote-979)

And so by the end of 1937, the Church’s descent into the catacombs, which had begun in the early 20s, was complete. From now on, with the external administrative machinery of the Church destroyed, it was up to each bishop – sometimes each believer – individually to preserve the fire of faith, being linked with his fellow Christians only through the inner, mystical bonds of the life in Christ. Thus was the premonition of Hieromartyr Bishop Damascene fulfilled: “Perhaps the time has come when the Lord does not wish that the Church should stand as an intermediary between Himself and the believers, but that everyone is called to stand directly before the Lord and himself answer for himself as it was with the forefathers!”[[980]](#footnote-980)

This judgement was supported by ROCOR at its Second All-Emigration Council in 1938: “Since the epoch we have lived through was without doubt an epoch of apostasy, it goes without saying that for the true Church of Christ a period of life in the wilderness, of which the twelfth chapter of the Revelation of St. John speaks, is not, as some may believe, an episode connected exclusively with the last period in the history of mankind. History show us that the Orthodox Church has withdrawn into the wilderness repeatedly, from whence the will of God called her back to the stage of history, where she once again assumed her role under more favourable circumstances. At the end of history the Church of God will go into the wilderness for the last time to receive Him, Who comes to judge the quick and the dead. Thus the twelfth chapter of Revelation must be understood not only in an eschatological sense, but in a historical and educational sense as well: it shows up the general and typical forms of Church life. If the Church of God is destined to live in the wilderness through the Providence of the Almighty Creator, the judgement of history, and the legislation of the proletarian state, it follows clearly that she must forego all attempts to reach a legalization, for every attempt to arrive at a legalization during the epoch of apostasy inescapably turns the Church into the great Babylonian whore of blasphemous atheism. The near future will confirm our opinion and prove that the time has come in which the welfare of the Church demands giving up all legalizations, even those of the parishes. We must follow the example of the Church prior to the Council of Nicaea, when the Christian communities were united not on the basis of the administrative institutions of the State, but through the Holy Spirit alone.”[[981]](#footnote-981)

Perhaps the most striking and literal example of the Church’s fleeing into the wilderness is provided by Bishop Amphilochius of Yenisei and Krasnoyarsk, who in 1930 departed into the Siberian forests and founded a catacomb skete there in complete isolation from the world. However, the Catacomb Church was still able to issue decrees in this period, such as the following anathema attached to the Order for the Triumph of Orthodoxy in Josephite parishes: “To those who maintain the mindless renovationist heresy of sergianism; to those who teach that the earthly existence of the Church of God can be established by denying the truth of Christ; and to those who affirm that serving the God-fighting authorities and fulfilling their godless commands, which trample on the sacred canons, the patristic traditions and the Divine dogmas, and destroy the whole of Christianity, saves the Church of Christ; and to those who revere the Antichrist and his servants and forerunners, and all his minions, as a lawful power established by God; and to all those… who blaspheme against the new confessors and martyrs (Sergius of Nizhni-Novgorod, Nicholas of Kiev and Alexis of Khutyn), and to… the renovationists and the other heretics – **anathema**.”[[982]](#footnote-982)

Again, Divine Providence convened a Council of the Catacomb Church in July, 1937, in the depths of Siberia:- “In the last days of July, 1937, in the Siberian town of Ust-Kut, on the River Lena (at its juncture with the River Kut), in the re-grouping section of the house of arrest, there met by chance: two Metropolitans, four Bishops, two Priests and six laymen of the secret Catacomb Church, who were on a stage of their journey from Vitim to Irkutsk, being sent from Irkutsk to the north.

“It was difficult to anticipate a similarly full and representative gathering of same-minded members of the Church in the near future. Therefore those who had gathered decided immediately to open a ‘Sacred Council’, in order to make canonical regulations concerning vital questions of the Catacomb Church. The time of the Council was, as it seemed, limited to four hours, after which the participants in the Council were sent in different directions.

“The president was Metropolitan John (in one version: “Bishop John”), and the Council chose the layman A.Z. to be secretary. The resolutions of the Council were not signed: A.Z. gave an oath to memorize the decisions of the Council and to pass on to whom it was necessary whatever he remembered exactly, but not to speak at all about what he confused or could not remember exactly. A.Z. in his time succeeded in passing on the memorised decisions of the Church. His words were written down and became Canons of the Church. Among these Canons were some that are especially necessary for the Church:

“1. The Sacred Council forbids the faithful to receive communion from the clergy legalized by the anti-Christian State.

“2. It has been revealed to the Sacred Council by the Spirit that the anathema-curse hurled by his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon is valid, and all priests and Church-servers who have dared to consider it as an ecclesiastical mistake or political tactic are placed under its power and bound by it.

“3. To all those who discredit and separate themselves from the Sacred Council of 1917-18 – **Anathema**!

“4. All branches of the Church which are on the common trunk – the trunk is our pre-revolutionary Church – are living branches of the Church of Christ. We give our blessing to common prayer and the serving of the Divine Liturgy to all priests of these branches. The Sacred Council forbids all those who do not consider themselves to be branches, but independent from the tree of the Church, to serve the Divine Liturgy. The Sacred Council does not consider it necessary to have administrative unity of the branches of the Church, but unity of mind concerning the Church is binding on all.”[[983]](#footnote-983)

Thus Sergius was to be condemned, not only because he was a usurper of ecclesiastical authority (although he was that), nor because he violated the sacred canons (although he did that), but because he imposed on the Church an heretical attitude towards the antichristian authorities. As Hieromartyr Bishop Mark (Novoselov) said during interrogation: “I am an enemy of Soviet power – and what is more, by dint of my religious convictions, since Soviet power is an atheist power and even anti-theist. I believe that as a true Christian I cannot strengthen this power by any means… [There is] a petition which the Church has commanded to be used everyday in certain well-known conditions… The purpose of this formula is to request the overthrow of the infidel power by God… But this formula does not amount to a summons to believers to take active measures, but only calls them to pray for the overthrow of the power that has fallen away from God.”[[984]](#footnote-984)

Again, in another catacomb document dating from the 1960s we read: “Authority is given by God in order to preserve and fulfil the law… But how should one look on the Soviet authority, following the Apostolic teaching on authorities [Romans 13]? In accordance with the Apostolic teaching which we have set forth, one must acknowledge that the Soviet authority is not an authority. It is an anti-authority. It is not an authority because it is not established by God, but insolently created by an aggregation of the evil actions of men, and it is consolidated and supported by these actions. If the evil actions weaken, the Soviet authority, representing a condensation of evil, likewise weakens… This authority consolidates itself in order to destroy all religions, simply to eradicate faith in God. Its essence is warfare with God, because its root is from Satan. The Soviet authority is not authority, because by its nature it cannot fulfill the law, for the essence of its life is evil.

“It may be said that the Soviet authority, in condemning various crimes of men, can still be considered an authority. We do not say that a ruling authority is totally lacking. We only affirm that it is an anti-authority. One must know that the affirmation of real power is bound up with certain actions of men, to whom the instinct of preservation is natural. And they must take into consideration the laws of morality which have been inherent in mankind from ages past. But in essence this authority systematically commits murder physically and spiritually. In reality a hostile power acts, which is called Soviet authority. The enemy strives by cunning to compel humanity to acknowledge this power as an authority. But the Apostolic teaching on authority is inapplicable to it, just as evil is inapplicable to God and the good, because evil is outside God; but the enemies with hypocrisy can take refuge in the well-known saying that everything is from God. This Soviet anti-authority is precisely the collective Antichrist, warfare against God…”[[985]](#footnote-985)

## 80. ROCOR’S SECOND ALL-DIASPORA COUNCIL

On October 30, 1935 Fr. Sergius Bulgakov’s teaching on Sophia was condemned as heretical by ROCOR’s Hierarchical Council. This decision would seem to have precluded any reconciliation between ROCOR and Metropolitan Evlogy, who continued to shelter the heretic. Moreover, ROCOR’s condemnation of Masonry, which financially supported Eulogius, emphasised the now very wide chasm between the two parties.[[986]](#footnote-986) However, in November, 1935 Patriarch Barnabas of Serbia succeeded in bringing together the separated parts of the Russian Church in a special meeting in Belgrade.[[987]](#footnote-987) Metropolitan Evlogy took part, together with Metropolitan Theophilus of the North American diocese, which had also separated from ROCOR.[[988]](#footnote-988)

The American schism, writes Protopriest Benjamin Zhukov, “began in 1923 with the refusal of Metropolitan Plato, who was ruling the Aleut and North American diocese, to submit to the decision of the Hierarchical Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad to appoint Archbishop Alexander to his diocese as financial auditor. On January 16, 1924, by ukaz no. 28, Patriarch Tikhon removed Metropolitan Plato and summoned him to Moscow. In reply Metropolitan Plato began to seek autocephalous status. On March 20, 1924 a ‘council’ was convened in Detroit at which, contrary to the rules of the Church, a protopriest presided, and not a ruling bishop. The ‘council’ decreed: ‘… to declare the Russian Orthodox Diocese in America a self-governing church…’

“In 1933 Metropolitan Plato declared the American Church to be an autonomous ‘Russian Orthodox Greek-Catholic Church of America’, the so- called American Metropolia. In 1934 he died, being under ban from the Moscow Patriarchate and the Hierarchical Synod of ROCOR.”[[989]](#footnote-989)

Reconciliation between ROCOR, the West European Metropolia and the American Metropolia was achieved, and when Metropolitan Evlogy signed the new Temporary Statute of ROCOR, which allowed the Synod to place bishops in the autonomous regions, one of which was Western Europe, all the sanctions against him were removed. Moreover, in a special resolution the ROCOR Council of Bishops declared that all the Mysteries performed by Metropolitan Evlogy in the period of his separation had been invalid, as if the previous declarations of lack of grace had never taken place (yako ne byvshii).[[990]](#footnote-990)

However, Evlogy said that “as before, I did not feel genuine, sincere peace between us, and did not believe that the ‘Temporary Statute’, which had been hastily and with great difficulty composed by us, could unite us all…”[[991]](#footnote-991) He retracted neither his sophianist heresy nor his Masonic contacts. Nor was he asked to break his links with the Ecumenical Patriarch, whose exarch in Western Europe he now was (and who had blessed his trip to Yugoslavia[[992]](#footnote-992)). And so in June, 1936 a diocesan assembly convened by Evlogy rejected the “Temporary Statute” agreed on in Yugoslavia.[[993]](#footnote-993) As he wrote to the Ecumenical Patriarch: “Our bishops for some reason want to tear me away from the jurisdiction of Your Holiness, but I and my flock did not agree to that, for we see in your fatherly protection the only strong defence of our canonical existence.[[994]](#footnote-994)

On July 10, 1936, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) died. Metropolitan Evlogy was invited to the Hierarchical Council that took place in September, at which Archbishop Anastasy was elected metropolitan, but declined. The Council recognized that the new order for the administration of ROCOR could not be realized because of Metropolitan Evlogy’s rejection of it. But it rejected Eulogius’ reference to “the will of the people”, saying that the will of the people in Paris had undoubtedly been influenced by the report of the diocesan council and the prior speech of Evlogy himself. The Council voted to continue to seek for ways of reconciliation with Evlogy, but declared that the unity of ROCOR could be achieved only if Metropolitan Evlogy came out of the orbit of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The Temporary Statute was confirmed, and concerning Fr. Sergius Bulgakov it was resolved that the Autocephalous Churches should be informed that his Sophianist teaching had been recognized to be a heresy.[[995]](#footnote-995)

On August 14, 1938 an All-Diaspora Council of ROCOR consisting of 13 bishops, 26 priests and 58 laymen was convened. Bishop John (Maximovich) of Shanghai said, in his report “The Situation of the Orthodox Church after the War”: “We (the faithful of the Russian Church Abroad) must firmly stand on the ground of the Church canons and not be with those who depart from them. Formerly, in order to reproach canonical irregularities in a Local Church, canonical communion with her was broken. The Russian Church Abroad cannot act in this way since her position has not been completely determined. For that reason she must not break communion with other Churches if they do not take this step first. But, while maintaining communion, she must not be silent about violations of Church truth…”[[996]](#footnote-996)

This “liberal” position was followed by a still more liberal declaration. Protocol number 8 for August 16 stated: “Judgement was made concerning concelebrations with clergy belonging to the jurisdiction of Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod. Metropolitan Anastasy pointed out that clergy coming from Russia from the named jurisdiction were immediately admitted to communion in prayer, and cited the opinion of Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan in his epistle published in *Church Life* to the effect that the sin of Metropolitan Sergius did not extend to the clergy subject to him. It was decreed: to recognize that there is no obstacle to communion in prayer and concelebration with the clergy of Metropolitan Sergius.”[[997]](#footnote-997)

Nun Vassa: “In this section, Metropolitan Anastasy gives little argument for his position, referring only to the opinion of Holy Martyr Metropolitan Kirill… The very fact of Metropolitan Anastasy's unity of mind with Metropolitan Kirill in this ecclesiastical question is very interesting for us. For the foundation of his ecclesiastical position of St Cyril was not the letter of the law, but the real meaning of the Holy Canons constructive for the Church, opposing his understanding to the formalism of Metropolitan Sergius.”[[998]](#footnote-998)

However, there are several problems with Nun Vassa’s interpretation here. First, as we have seen, Metropolitan Cyril never expressed the view that “there are no obstacles to prayerful communion and concelebration with clergymen of Metropolitan Sergius”. On the contrary, in his earliest epistle, that of 1929, he wrote: “I acknowledge it as a fulfillment of our archpastoral duty for those Archpastors and all who consider the establishment of the so-called ‘Temporary Patriarchal Synod’ as wrong, to refrain from communion with Metropolitan Sergius and those Archpastors who are of one mind with him.”

Nor did he ever declare that while it was wrong to have communion with the Sergianist bishops, it was alright to have communion with their priests – which would have been canonical nonsense in any case. True, he refrained – at that time – from declaring the Sergianists to be graceless. However, he *did* say, in his epistle of 1934, that Christians who partook of the Sergianist sacraments knowing of Sergius’ usurpation of power and the illegality of his Synod would receive them *to their condemnation*…

Moreover, we now know (as Metropolitan Anastasy did not know, but Nun Vassa surely does) that by 1937 Metropolitan Cyril’s position had hardened considerably: “The expectations that Metropolitan Sergius would correct himself have not been justified, but *there has been enough time for the formerly ignorant members of the Church, enough incentive and enough opportunity to investigate what has happened*; and very many have both investigated and understood that *Metropolitan Sergius is departing from that Orthodox Church which the Holy Patriarch Tikhon entrusted to us to guard, and consequently there can be no part or lot with him for the Orthodox*. The recent events have finally made clear the *renovationist* [that is, *heretical*] nature of Sergianism…” That Metropolitan Anastasy did not know the true position of Metropolitan Cyril, not to mention the position of a whole series of other Catacomb hierarchs and martyrs, indicates a growing difference in outlook between the True Russian Church inside and outside Russia.

The 1938 Council also discussed the Church’s participation in the ecumenical movement, and here for the first time doubts began to be expressed about this participation. ROCOR had sent representatives to ecumenical conferences in Lausanne, Edinburgh and Oxford, and in his report Bishop Seraphim (Lyade) defending this position, saying that the Orthodox had always expounded and defended the sacred dogmas. “Therefore the Orthodox delegates both in Lausanne and in Edinburgh considered it their duty to give and publish special declarations; in this way they clearly marked the Orthodox Church off from other confessions calling themselves ‘churches’… We must disperse all perplexities and ideas about Orthodoxy that are often simply caricatures… To be reconciled with the existing situation of alienation of the larger part of the Christian world from the Orthodox Church, and an indifferent attitude towards the ecumenical seeking of the unity of the Church, would be an unforgiveable sin, for we must bear responsibility for the destiny of thoese who still remain beyond the boundaries of the Church and for the future destiny of the whole of the Christian world… But while participating in the ecumenical movement, we must beware of concessions and condescension, for this is extremely harmful and dangerous, and confirms the heterodox in the conviction that they are membes of the true Church. In the sphere of dogmatics and other essential and basic questions we cannot diminish our demands…”

Bishop Seraphim’s position was supported by Metropolitan Anastasy and Count George Grabbe. However, others took a more “rightist” position. Thus N.F. Stefanov read a report on the influence of Masonry on the Oxford conference. And Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev) said: “Extra-ecclesiastical unity brings nothing but harm. Orthodox Truth is expressed in the grace of the Holy Spirit, which is precisely what the ecumenical movement does not want to know… Unity can take place only on the ground of grace-filled life. The aims of the ecumenical movement are unattainable. ‘Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the council of the ungodly.’”

Metropolitan Anastasy said: “We have to choose between two dangers – a temptation or a refusal to engage in missionary work in the confession of Orthodoxy. Which danger is greater? We shall proceed from our premises. The grace-filled Church must carry out missionary work, for in this way it is possible to save some of those who waver. Beside the leaders who want to disfigure Orthodoxy, there are others, for example the young, who come to conferences with true seeking. Comparing that which they see and hear from their own pastors and from the Orthodox pastor, they will understand the truth. Otherwise they will remain alone. I have heard positive reviews from heterodox of Bishop Seraphim’s speeches at conferences. We must also take into account that the Anglo-Saxon world is in crisis, and is seeking the truth. Protestantism is also seeking support for itself. Moreover, we have a tradition of participating in such conferences that was established by the reposed Metropolitan Anthony. To avoid temptation we must clarify the essence of the matter.”

As we have seen, a resolution was passed that ROCOR members should not take part in the ecumenical movement. However, for the sake of missionary aims, bishops could instruct their representatives to attend conferences and explain without compromise the teaching of the Orthodox Church, without allowing the slightest deviation from the Orthodox point of view.[[999]](#footnote-999)  In 1938 Archbishop Nestor of Kamchatka, who was at the ROCOR mission in Ceylon, asked Metropolitan Anastasy whether he could receive Anglican clergy and laity through confession (13 clergy expressed the desire to join Orthodoxy), which would make their joining much easier. An ukaz of the Synod dated January 4, 1939 was sent to the archbishop, which said that in view of the fact “that there is no definite resolution of the whole Orthodox Church with regard to the question of receiving Anglican clergy in their existing orders, it should be recognized that allowing this in a positive sense would exceed the competency of the Hierarchical Synod”. So Anglican clergy were to continue to be received as before, through ordination.[[1000]](#footnote-1000)

## 81. ARCHBISHOP THEOPHAN OF POLTAVA

In 1931, Archbishop Theophan of Poltava, perhaps the greatest theologian of the Russian Church in the twentieth century, departed from active service in ROCOR to live as a hermit in France. His departure was probably caused by his disagreements with Metropolitan Anthony on a number of issues. Thus in his handwritten note dated February 16/29, 1932 he listed the following “uncanonical actions of Metropolitan Anthony”:

“1. Patriarch Tikhon and the Councils abroad [zagranichnie sobory] did not recognize and do not recognize the autocephaly of the Polish Orthodox Church. Metropolitan Anthony recognizes it.[[1001]](#footnote-1001)

“2. The Councils abroad condemned the introduction of the new style in the Finnish Orthodox Church. Metropolitan Anthony at first blessed the introduction of the new style there, but then condemned it. By this behaviour he greatly contributed to the arising of the disturbances in the Finnish Orthodox Church.

“3. Both the previous Russian ecclesiastical authority and the Councils abroad did not recognize the ‘schism’ of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church in relation to the Greek. Metropolitan Anthony stubbornly recognizes it.

“4. The Councils abroad decreed that no intervention should be made in the affairs of the Orthodox Carpatho-Russian and Czech Churches in Czechoslovakia, but that the ordering of the affairs of those Churches should be given over to the Serbian ecclesiastical authorities until the restoration of normal life in Russia. Metropolitan Anthony has often interfered in these affairs, crudely violating the decisions of the councils, thereby inciting the Czech government against him and in part also the Serbian ecclesiastical authorities.

“5. The Councils condemned the so-called ‘Young Men’s Christian Association’ (YMCA) as being harmful for Russian youth. Metropolitan Anthony often blessed this movement as being in the highest degree useful.

“6. The Councils also condemned the ‘theological institute’ in Paris, which was founded by Metropolitan Eulogius on his own initiative. Metropolitan Anthony blessed the founding of this institute and even read lectures there.

“7. The Councils decreed that there should be an administrative separation from Metropolitan Sergius for his agreement with Soviet power and that all communion with him should be cut off. Metropolitan Anthony, paying no attention to this decree, is in communion with Metropolitan Sergius.

“8. Under the influence of objections made, Metropolitan Anthony was about to take back his *Catechism*, which had been introduced by him into school use instead of the *Catechism* of Metropolitan Philaret. But, as was revealed shortly, he did this insincerely and insistently continues to distribute his incorrect teaching *On Redemption* and many other incorrect teachings included in his *Catechism*.

“9. At one of the Councils he tried to prove the complete admissibility for a Christian and for a hierarch of becoming a member of a masonic organization as far as the 18th degree of Masonry!”[[1002]](#footnote-1002)

However, these disagreements of Archbishop Theophan with Metropolitan Anthony did not lead to his formally breaking relations with the Church Abroad, for the newspapers reported that he concelebrated with Archbishop Seraphim (Lukianov) of Paris, and gave sermons.

Certainly he was unhappy about the state of the Churches, and perhaps felt that he with his uncompromising views could make no further contribution to public Church life. Thus on September 12, 1931 he wrote from Clamart: “You complain about developments in ecclesiastical affairs in your country. I do not know the details of your situation, but I think that the religious and moral state of other Orthodox countries is no better, perhaps even worse. I can at least state with assurance that this is true both of Russia under the yoke and of Russia in the Diaspora. Regarding ecclesiastical matters there, I have an enormous amount of material at my disposal: approximately 700 pages in all. I have at my disposal materials about ecclesiastical affairs here as well which are no less important or voluminous. The overall conclusion that can be drawn from these materials is horrifying. Yet there is, of course, amid this general darkness a ‘grace-filled remnant’ that still perpetuates the Orthodox faith both here and there. ‘Our times seem to be apocalyptic. *The salt is losing its savour.* Among the Church’s highest pastors there remains a weak, dim, contradictory and incorrect understanding of the written word. This is subverting spiritual life in Christian society and destroying Christianity, which consists of *actions, not words. It grieves me to see to whom Christ’s sheep have been entrusted, to see who it is that oversees their guidance and salvation.* But this is tolerated by God. Let those in Judaea flee to the mountains!’ With these words the great Russian hierarchs Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow and Bishop Ignatius Brianchaninov characterized the state of ecclesiastical affairs in their own times, sixty years ago. Do we not have even greater reason to repeat these threatening words at the present time?”

The great archbishop’s letters were becoming increasingly apocalyptic in tone. Already in 1931 he predicted a new war in Europe. And “Czechoslovakia will be the first to succumb to this threat!”, he added prophetically. Again, on April 31, 1936 he wrote: “Have you noticed what is happening in the world today? The leaders of the world’s governments are all doing the same thing: they all speak about world *peace*. The leaders of France and of states friendly to her are also very insistent in speaking about ways to guarantee *security*, as if this were the essential precondition of this ‘peace’. One cannot help but recall the words of the Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Thessalonians: ‘The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say peace and security, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape’ (I Thessalonians 5.3). Everybody who loves the Truth must not only take note of the signs of the times, but also follow these observations to their logical conclusion.

“Regarding the affairs of the Church, in the words of the Saviour, one of the most awesome phenomena of the last days is that at that time ‘the *stars* shall fall from heaven’ (Matthew 24.29). According to the Saviour’s own explanation, these ‘stars’ are *the Angels of the Churches*, in other words, *the Bishops* (Revelation 1.20). The religious and moral fall of the Bishops is, therefore, one of the most characteristic signs of the last days. The fall of the Bishops is particularly horrifying when they deviate from the doctrines of the faith, or, as the Apostle put it, when they ‘would pervert the Gospel of Christ’ (Galatians 1.7). The Apostle orders that such people be pronounced ‘*anathema*’. He said, ‘*If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that which ye have received, let him be accursed (anathema)*’ (Galatians 1.9). And one must not be slow about this, for he continues, ‘*A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject, knowing that he that is such is subverted, being condemned of himself*’ (Titus 3.10-11). Moreover, you may be subject to God’s judgement if you are indifferent to deviation from the truth: ‘So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold not hot, I will spew thee out of My mouth’ (Revelation 3.6).

“Clouds are gathering on the world’s horizon. God’s judgement of its peoples and of hypocritical Christians, beginning with heretics and lukewarm hierarchs, is approaching.”

Archbishop Theophan reposed peacefully on February 19, 1940, in a cave where he spent the last years of his life. There were no more than four people present at the funeral of the hierarch, who was vested in his hierarchical vestments with the mitre and panagia that the Tsar had presented him with at his consecration. His effects, including a priceless interpretation of the Apocalypse, were stolen and taken to Moscow. Miracles were recorded after his repose. To this day, this great confessor against almost all the major heresies of the twentieth century remains largely unrecognized, and it must be one of the tasks of the Russian Church of the future to give him the recognition and veneration that he so clearly deserves…

## 82. ROCOR IN GERMANY

The 1935 ROCOR’s Hierarchical Council approved a “Statute on the Orthodox Diocese of Berlin and Germany” which had been worked out in the ministry of ecclesiastical affairs of the Third Reich. This Statute envisaged the following demands: the agreement of the government on appointing the head of the diocese of Berlin and Germany; the agreement of the local State organs in the appointment to a parish of a priest “who is a foreigner or without citizenship”, which affected almost all the clergy of ROCOR in Germany; and in the appointment by a bishop of members of the diocesan council and when forming new parishes or accepting old ones into the diocese.[[1003]](#footnote-1003)

On February 14, 1936 the German government began to help ROCOR, seeing it was now a State-recognized institution: the German clergy of ROCOR began to receive regular salaries; subsidies were granted for various needs of the German diocese and its parishes; and the clergy and the diocese received various privileges.[[1004]](#footnote-1004) On February 25, 1938 Hitler signed a law “On the land-ownership of the Russian Orthodox Church in Germany”, according to which “the State in the person of the minister of ecclesiastical affairs received the right to dispose of the Russian ecclesiastical property in the country and in the territories joined to it.” On the basis of this law the German State handed over all the pre-revolutionary property of the Russian Church in Germany into the possession of ROCOR, besides the church in Dresden.[[1005]](#footnote-1005)

However, it did not do this immediately. As Metropolitan Evlogy of Paris writes in his *Memoirs* (p. 648), for some time the government still retained parishes in Berlin, in Eastern Prussia and in Dresden. But on May 5, 1939 the law was extended to Dresden and the Sudetenland.

Why was the German government so favourably disposed to ROCOR? Part of the answer may lie in the fact that the authorities had a negative opinion of the Paris jurisdiction of Metropolitan Evlogy because of its links with the YMCA and other internationalist and Masonic organizations, and were therefore more favourably disposed to ROCOR, which had broken links with the Evlogians. Also, some of the churches in their possession had been built with the participation of German royalty who had family links with the House of the Romanovs, and ROCOR was, of course, the Orthodox jurisdiction with the closest links with the Romanovs. Perhaps also they were hoping in this way to elicit the sympathy of the Balkan Slavic peoples towards Germany.[[1006]](#footnote-1006)

In 1938 Hitler gave ROCOR a plot of land in Berlin to build a church, for which Metropolitan Anastasy thanked him. This formed the basis for “Patriarch” Alexis of Moscow to accuse him of sympathy for fascism, an accusation which has been repeated many times since then. The truth of the matter was explained by Metropolitan Anastasy himself in October, 1945 as follows: “Soon after his coming to power Hitler learned that the Russian Orthdoox people in Berlin did not have a church of their own after the church built by them had been removed from the parish because they could not pay the debts they had incurred for it. This led immediately to order the release of considerable sums of money for the building of a new Orthodox church on a beautiful plot of land set aside for this in the German capital. We should note that Hitler took this step without any deliberate request on the part of the Russian Orthodox community and did not attach any conditions to his offering that might have been compensation for it. The Hierarchical Synod as well as the whole of Russia Abroad could not fail to value this magnanimous act, which came at a time when Orthodox churches and monasteries were being mercilessly closed, destroyed or used for completely unsuitable purposes (they were being turned into clubs, cinemas, atheist museums, food warehouses, etc.), and other holy things in Russia were being mocked or defiled. This fact was noted in the address [given by the metropolitan], but the Synod of course gave no ‘blessing to destroy and conquer Russia’.”[[1007]](#footnote-1007)

In fact, according to Bishop Gregory Grabbe, the address sent to Hitler was not composed by Metropolitan Anastasy, but by the president of the Russian colony in Berlin, General Biskupsky. When it was shown to the metropolitan, he found it too “flowery”. But it had already been sent to the ministry of the interior, and it was too late to compose a new, more moderate variant.[[1008]](#footnote-1008)

After the German annexation of Czechia and Moravia in March, 1939, the Germans tried to put all the Orthodox there in the jurisdiction of Archbishop Seraphim (Lyade). On November 3, Seraphim concluded an agreement with the Eulogian Bishop Sergius of Prague whereby his parishes were transferred, from a purely juridical point of view, into the jurisdiction of Archbishop Seraphim, but retained their real independence and submission to Metropolitan Evlogy.[[1009]](#footnote-1009)

The influence of Archbishop (later Metropolitan) Seraphim in the German government was to prove useful again. On November 4, 1940 the Eulogian Archbishop Alexander (Nemolovsky) of Brussels was arrested after the liturgy and imprisoned as “enemy № 2” in Aachen. From there he was transferred to a prison in Berlin. It was Archbishop Seraphim who rescued Archbishop Alexander from prison and settled him at the Russian church in Tegel, where he remained until the end of the war.[[1010]](#footnote-1010)

## 83. THE RUSSIAN BORDERLANDS

The Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939 brought still more Orthodox into the Soviet maw. ”Hitler’s deal with Stalin,” writes Nathanael Davis, “allowed the Soviet to occupy eastern Poland, and 1,200 Orthodox parishes [with a theological seminary in Kremenets] were incorporated into the Soviet Union as a result. Then, in June of 1940, the Soviets occupied Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, among whose 6 million people were almost half a million traditionally Orthodox persons who worshiped in about 300 Orthodox churches. Later in the same month the Soviets compelled the Romanians to cede Bessarabia and northern Bukovina with their 4 million people, 3 million of them traditionally Orthodox. There were between 2,000 and 2,500 parishes in these formerly Romanian lands. These annexations brought the Russian Orthodox Church more than 6 million traditionally Orthodox people and 3,500-4,000 churches with active priests, as well as many monasteries and nunneries, some bishops and seminaries, and other resources. The institutional strength of the church must have increased fifteenfold.”[[1011]](#footnote-1011)

A year later, however, these annexations brought Romania voluntarily into the Axis camp. The official church even declared a kind of crusade against Bolshevik Russia. Thus the Orthodox metropolitan of Moldavia declared that God had “had mercy on them [the inhabitants of the Soviet-occupied provinces] and sent his archangels on earth: Hitler, Antonescu and [Finland’s] Mannerheim, and they headed their armies with the sign of the cross on their chests and in their hearts a war against the Great Dragon, red as fire, and they defeated him, chased him in chains , and the synagogue of Satan was ruined and scattered in the four directions of the earth and in their place they erected a sacred altar to the God of peace.”[[1012]](#footnote-1012)

Patriarch Nicodemus of Romania showed that the anti-semitic religiosity of the Iron Guard had penetrated deep into his church’s consciousness: “God has shown to the leader of our country the path toward a sacred and redeeming alliance with the German nation and sent the united armies to the Divine Crusade against destructive Bolshevism… the Bolshevist Dragon… has found here also villainous souls ready to serve him. Let us bless God that these companions of Satan have been found mostly among the sons of the aliens [the Jews], among the nation that had brought damnation upon itself and its sons, since it had crucified the Son of God. If by their side there had also been some Romanian outcasts, then their blood was certainly not pure Romanian blood, yet mixed with damned blood. These servants of the Devil and Bolshevism, seeing that their master, the monster called Bolshevist Russia, will soon be destroyed, are now trying to help him… they disseminate among our people all sorts of bade new words.”[[1013]](#footnote-1013)

Another Orthodox territory occupied by the Soviets in 1939 was Eastern Poland. V.I. Alexeyev and F. Stavrou write: “Usually Soviet border zones were very thoroughly communised. The churches there were closed. When a part of Poland became Soviet territory and a border zone, Soviet power was forced to review its usual policy. It was too risky to start large-scale religious persecutions and arouse the displeasure of the populace in the presence of the German army on the other side of the border. It was necessary to take into account the fact – which was beneficial in the given circumstances for Soviet power – of the Polish authorities’ discrimination against the Orthodox Church. Before the beginning of the Second World War the Poles had closed hundreds of Orthodox churches on their territory on the grounds that the Tsarist government had in 1875 returned theses churches from the unia to Orthodoxy. The Polish government considered the return of the uniates to Orthodoxy an act of violence, and they in their own way restored justice by means of violence, which, needless to say, elicited protests even from the Catholic and Uniate churches.

“The results of these measures of the Polish government were such that, for example, in the region of Kholm out of 393 Orthodox churches existing in 1914, by 1938 there remained 227, by 1939 – 176, and by the beginning of the war – 53 in all.[[1014]](#footnote-1014) Particularly disturbing was the fact that, of the cult buildings taken away from the Orthodox, 130 churches, 10 houses of prayer and 2 monasteries were simply destroyed.

“Naturally, such measures elicited the displeasure of the Orthodox population of Poland and created good soil for Communist propaganda and the growth of sympathy towards the USSR. In these conditions it was particularly difficult for the Soviet government in 1939 to begin large-scale persecutions and close the churches which had not yet been closed by the Poles. It preferred a more cautious policy: the submission of the Orthodox hierarchy and the Orthodox parishes of what used to be Poland to the Moscow Patriarchate, which was well controlled by the government. In other words, this was the first occasion on which the Soviet government used the Moscow Patriarchate for the spread of its influence over newly acquired territory. Thus it did not suit Stalin to snuff out the Moscow Patriarchate at this time!”[[1015]](#footnote-1015)

However, it was difficult for the wolf to look like a sheep for long; so while it suited Stalin temporarily to play the part of defender of Orthodoxy against Catholicism, it was not long before the familiar pattern re-emerged. Thus all church property in the newly-occupied territories was nationalized in October, 1939; heavy taxes were laid on the clergy, the seminary in Kremenets was closed, and Archbishop Alexis (Gromadsky) of Kremenets was arrested. By June, 1941, 53 priests had been arrested, of whom 37 disappeared and 6 were shot; and the monks at the famous Pochaev Lavra had been reduced from 300 to 80. Two Soviet monks were imported into the monastery to see that the remainder stayed loyal to Soviet power.

The acceptance of the bishops in these areas took place in Moscow “through reading the corresponding prayer for unification, confession and joint participation in the Divine Liturgy”[[1016]](#footnote-1016) Archbishop Theodosius (Theodosiev) of Lithuania for the Polish Autocephaly repented before the MP, and was accepted in his existing orders but in retirement. His Lithuanian see was transferred to Metropolitan Eleutherius (Bogoyavlensky).[[1017]](#footnote-1017) Archbishop Alexis was received in June, 1940, but was given only a few parishes in the Kremenets area. Bishops Anthony (Martsenko) of Kamen-Kashira and Simon of Ostrog were received on August 21, 1940.

Archbishop Panteleimon (Rozhnevsky), formerly of Pinsk, was living in exile in the Zhirovitsky monastery for refusing to accept the Polish autocephaly. After the Soviet takeover, he petitioned the MP for him and his clergy to be received into the MP and for him to be appointed ruling bishop of Pinsk and Novgorod. At the same time he petitioned for the Grodno diocese to be given into his care since Bishop Sabbas (Sovetov) of Grodno had fled to the west. On October 17, 1939 the MP granted his petition and appointed him exarch of Belorussia.[[1018]](#footnote-1018) However, in June, 1940 Archbishop Nicholas (Yarushevich) was sent from Moscow as exarch, while Panteleimon, after being officially received into the MP on July 10, was appointed head of the new Grodno-Vilnius diocese with more than 300 parishes.[[1019]](#footnote-1019)

As for the Orthodox in German-occupied Poland, on September 1, 1939 the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR ordered Archbishop Seraphim (Lyade): (a) if necessary, to help the Orthodox hierarchy in Poland (since, as being loyal to the former Polish government, it might be subjected to repressions), (b) but if there will turn out to be no hierarchy in Poland (that is, if it will be repressed), to take upon himself the care of the flock deprived of archpastoral care.[[1020]](#footnote-1020) As it turned out, there was a considerable movement of the parishes of the Polish autocephaly in German-occupied Poland to ROCOR, and Archbishop Seraphim was invited to Warsaw to take control of the Warsaw diocese. He arrived on November 10, but Metropolitan Dionysius was not yet ready to concede defeat, so Seraphim returned to Berlin.

However, on December 23 Dionysius wrote to Seraphim: “The collapse of the independent Polish State on whose existence the independence and autocephaly of the Orthodox Church in Poland was dependent, deprives the Church of the possibility of an autocephalous existence in the future. The new State order established on the former Polish territory, which now belongs to the sphere of German imperial interests, makes it necessary for the former Autocephalous Orthodox Church in Poland to be united with the ecclesiastical organizations which you, Your Eminence, represent. In consequence of this I ask Your Eminence to come soon to Warsaw and take upon yourself the administration of this part of the former Autocephalous Church in Poland, which has entered into the sphere of German imperial interests. In connection with the considerations expounded above, I inform you that from the day of your taking upon yourself the administration of the Church I will renounce the further care of the above-mentioned Church.”

Dionysius left Warsaw and went again to his dacha in Otvotsk. Seraphim then again went to Warsaw and entered on the administration of the Warsaw-Kholm diocese. However, this was rather a temporary administration, since the official annulment of the autocephaly did not take place and the name of Metropolitan Dionysius continued as before to be commemorated in all services as the head of the Church. Nevertheless, Archbishop Seraphim, as locum tenensof the Polish Autocephalous Church in the German province, did manage to remove the new style and forbid other innovations, such as the shaving of priests. Moreover, he was able to restore over 75 churches taken from the Orthodox as well as the Turkovitsky monastery.

However, Bishop Savva (Sovetov) of Grodno, filed a complaint against Seraphim’s activities to the Ecumenical Patriarch, who declared them uncanonical.[[1021]](#footnote-1021) And on September 23, 1940 in Krakow the General-Governor Frank told Dionysius that he was being restored to the administration of the Orthodox Church in the province. This was followed by a wave of Ukrainianization in the so-called “Autocephalous Orthodox Church in the General-Governorship”.[[1022]](#footnote-1022)

Further north, the communists were extending their tentacles. Although they were repulsed from Finland with the loss of 250,000 lives, they took control of the Baltic States without any trouble. In 1939 the MP sent Archbishop Sergius (Voskresensky) of Dmitrov to Riga as the patriarchal exarch in the occupied Baltic States. In December, 1940 he received the Churches of Latvia and Estonia, which had been granted autocephaly by Constantinople, into the MP. Metropolitan Augustine (Peterson) of Riga went into retirement.[[1023]](#footnote-1023) Then, in March, 1941, after the death of Metropolitan Eleutherius on December 31, he took control of the see of Vilnius and Lithuania.[[1024]](#footnote-1024)

In December, 1941 Metropolitans Alexander of Tallin and Augustine of Riga travelled to Moscow, repented publicly of the sin of schism and were received into communion.[[1025]](#footnote-1025)

“Rule over the new diocesan provinces,” writes Volkogonov, “was established, naturally, by means of the secret services. As an illustration of the process, the following report was received by Stalin in March, 1941 from B. Merkulov, People’s Commissar for State Security of the USSR:

“’There are at present in the territories of the Latvian, Estonian and Lithuanian republics autocephalous [autonomous] Orthodox churches, headed by local metropolitans who are placemen of the bourgeois governments.

“’In the Latvian SSR there are 175,000 Orthodox parishioners. Anti-Soviet elements, former members of the Fascist organization ‘Perkanirust’, are grouped around the head of the Synod, Augustin.

“’In the Estonian SSR there are 40,000 Orthodox. The head of the eparchy has died. Archbishop Fedosi Fedoseev, who heads an anti-Soviet group of churchmen, is trying to grab the job.

“’The NKVD has prepared the following measures:

“’1) Through an NKVD agency we will get the Moscow patriarchate to issue a resolution on the subordination of the Orthodox churches of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania to itself, using a declaration from local rank and file clergy and believers for the purpose.

“’2) By a decision of the Moscow patriarchate we shall appoint as eparch Archbishop Dmitri Nikolayevich Voskresensky[[1026]](#footnote-1026) (an agent of the NKGB of the USSR), using for the purpose appropriate requests from the local clergy, which are to be found in the Moscow patriarchate.”[[1027]](#footnote-1027)

It is striking how openly Merkulov talks about using the patriarchate for political purposes here… The fact that Sergius (Voskresensky) was an agent of the NKGB makes it highly probable that his three fellow metropolitans who were still in freedom – Sergius (Stragorodsky), Nicholas and Alexis – were also agents. Indeed, according to the apostate professor-priest A. Osipov, Patriarch Alexis feared that Nicholas was an agent of the Bolsheviks.[[1028]](#footnote-1028)

He was right to be afraid: Nicholas *was* an agent. This was confirmed by a secret letter from Beria to Stalin, in which it was proposed “under the cover of NKVD agent B.D. Yarushevich, Archbishop of the Leningrad diocese, to create an illegal residency for the NKVD of the USSR so as to organize the work of agents amidst churchmen”.[[1029]](#footnote-1029) Nicholas denied that he “had ever collaborated with the communists”.[[1030]](#footnote-1030) However, KGB defector Major Deriabin testified before the U.S. Senate Internal Security Subcommittee on May 5, 1959 that under instructions from the KGB, he himself had collaborated with Agent Nicholas, and that when a Soviet delegation to the Vienna Conference for Peace was to arrive in Vienna, Colonel Kovalev referred to him a telegram with the order “to take care of the delegation”, and that “Metropolitan Nicholas is an agent of State Security”.

This demonstrates, continues Volkogonov, “the reasons behind Lenin’s confident assertion that ‘our victory over the clergy is fully assured’. So complete indeed was that victory that even Stalin and his associates were at times at a loss to know whether someone was a priest or an NKGB agent in a cassock. While boasting loudly of freedom of conscience and quoting copiously from Lenin’s hypocritical statements on how humanely socialism treated religion, the Bolshevik regime, through the widespread use of violence, had turned the dwelling-place of the spirit and faith into a den of the thought-police…”[[1031]](#footnote-1031)

## 84. THE COST OF SERGIANISM

Even patriarchal sources have spoken about the falsity of Sergius’ declaration, the true confession of those who opposed him, and the invalidity of the measures he took to punish them. Thus: “Amidst the opponents of Metropolitan Sergius were a multitude of remarkable martyrs and confessors, bishops, monks, priests… The ‘canonical’ bans of Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) and his Synod were taken seriously by no one, neither at that time [the 1930s] nor later by dint of the uncanonicity of the situation of Metropolitan Sergius himself…”[[1032]](#footnote-1032) And again: “The particular tragedy of the Declaration of Metropolitan Sergius consists in its principled rejection of the podvig of martyrdom and confession, without which witnessing to the truth is inconceivable. In this way Metropolitan Sergius took as his foundation not hope on the Providence of God, but a purely human approach to the resolution of church problems… The courage of the ‘catacombniks’ and their firmness of faith cannot be doubted, and it is our duty to preserve the memory of those whose names we shall probably learn only in eternity…”[[1033]](#footnote-1033)

If Metropolitan Sergius thought that his betrayal of the True Orthodox Christians would “save the Church”, the next few years would prove him terribly wrong. From 1935 the Bolsheviks began to repress all the clergy, sergianist as well as True Orthodox. According to Russian government figures, in 1937 alone 136,900 clergy were arrested, of whom 106,800 were killed; while between 1917 and 1980, 200,000 clergy were executed and 500,000 others were imprisoned or sent to the camps. The rate of killing slowed down considerably in the following years. In 1939 900 clergy were killed, in 1940 – 1100, in 1941 – 1900, in 1943 – 500. In the period 1917 to 1940 205 Russian hierarchs “disappeared without trace”; 59 disappeared in 1937 alone.[[1034]](#footnote-1034) By 1939 there were only four bishops of the sergianist church at liberty, and only a tiny handful of churches open in the whole country…

The situation was no better with regard to churches. There were no churches at all in Belorussia (Kolarz), “less than a dozen” in Ukraine (Bociurkiw), and a total of 150-200 in the whole of Russia.[[1035]](#footnote-1035) In all, the numbers of functioning Orthodox churches declined from 54,692 in 1914 to 39,000 at the beginning of 1929 to 15, 835 on April 1, 1936.[[1036]](#footnote-1036)

And yet the census of 1937 established that one-third of city-dwellers and two-thirds of country-dwellers still confessed that they believed in God. Stalin’s plan that the Name of God should not be named in the country by the year 1937 had failed…

But what of the future? What hopes did the Christians of the Catacomb Church nurture with regard to a deliverance from their terrible sufferings? If some, like Bishop Maximus of Serpukhov, were pessimistic about the future, thinking that the very last days of the world had been reached, others prophesied the resurrection of Holy Russia before the end, such as Bishop Victor of Glazov. Eldress Agatha of Belorussia, who was starved to death by the authorities in 1939 at the age of 119, told her spiritual children concerning the Soviet Church: “This is not a true church. It has signed a contract to serve the Antichrist. Do not go to it. Do not receive any Mysteries from its servants. Do not participate in prayer with them.” And then she said: “There will come a time when churches will be opened in Russia, and the true Orthodox Faith will triumph. Then people will become baptized, as at one time they were baptized under St. Vladimir. When the churches are opened for the first time, do not go to them because these will not be true churches; but when they are opened the second time, then go – these will be the true churches. I will not live to see this time, but many of you will live to this time. The atheist Soviet authority will vanish, and all its servants will perish…”[[1037]](#footnote-1037)

However, the immediate outlook at the end of the thirties was bleak indeed. E.L., writing about Hieromartyr Bishop Damascene, comments: “He warmed the hearts of many, but the masses remained… passive and inert, moving in any direction in accordance with an external push, and not their inner convictions… The long isolation of Bishop Damascene from Soviet life, his remoteness from the gradual process of sovietization led him to an unrealistic assessment of the real relations of forces in the reality that surrounded him. Although he remained unshaken himself, he did not see… the desolation of the human soul in the masses. This soul had been diverted onto another path – a slippery, opportunistic path which led people where the leaders of Soviet power – bold men who stopped at nothing in their attacks on all moral and material values – wanted them to go… Between the hierarchs and priests who had languished in the concentration camps and prisons, and the mass of the believers, however firmly they tried to stand in the faith, there grew an abyss of mutual incomprehension. The confessors strove to raise the believers onto a higher plane and bring their spiritual level closer to their own. The mass of believers, weighed down by the cares of life and family, blinded by propaganda, involuntarily went in the opposite direction, downwards. Visions of a future golden age of satiety, of complete liberty from all external and internal restrictions, of the submission of the forces of nature to man, deceitful perspectives in which fantasy passed for science… were used by the Bolsheviks to draw the overwhelming majority of the people into their nets. Only a few individuals were able to preserve a loftiness of spirit. This situation was exploited very well by Metropolitan Sergius…”[[1038]](#footnote-1038)

Sergius has had many apologists. Some have claimed that he “saved the Church” for a future generation, when the whirlwind of the persecution had passed. This claim cannot be justified, as we have seen. It was rather the Catacomb Church, which, as Alexeyev writes, “in a sense saved the official Church from complete destruction because the Soviet authorities were afraid to force the entire Russian Church underground through ruthless suppression and so to lose control over it.”[[1039]](#footnote-1039) As St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco wrote: “The Declaration of Metropolitan Sergius brought no benefit to the Church. The persecutions not only did not cease, but sharply increased. To the number of other accusations brought by the Soviet regime against clergy and laymen, one more was added – non-recognition of the Declaration. At the same time, a wave of church closings rolled over all Russia… Concentration camps and places of forced labor held thousands of clergymen, a significant part of whom never saw freedom again, being executed there or dying from excessive labors and deprivations.”[[1040]](#footnote-1040)

Others have tried to justify Sergius by claiming that there are two paths to salvation, one through open confession or the descent into the catacombs, and the other through compromise. Sergius, according to this view, was no less a martyr than the Catacomb martyrs, only he suffered the martyrdom of losing his good name.[[1041]](#footnote-1041)  However, this view comes close to the “Rasputinite” heresy that there can be salvation through sin – in this case, the most brazen lying, the sacrifice of the freedom and dignity of the Church and Orthodoxy, and the betrayal to torments and death of one’s fellow Christians! Thus Hieromartyr Sergius Mechev was betrayed by "Bishop" Manuel Lemeshevsky.[[1042]](#footnote-1042)  And more generally, Metropolitan Sergius' charge that all the catacomb bishops were "counter-revolutionaries" was sufficient to send them to their deaths.[[1043]](#footnote-1043)

Sergianists are constantly trying to prove that the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, though disastrous for the Church, was nevertheless motivated by the purest of feelings. Apart from the inherent improbability that an action motivated by the purest of feelings - and therefore inspired by the Grace of God - would bring disaster, both physical and spiritual, to thousands, if not millions of people, we have seen that Sergius was an opportunist from the beginning, from well before the revolution.

Further proof of this is provided in the *Memoirs* of Princess Natalya Vladimirovna Urusova: "The personality of Metropolitan Sergius was of the basest, crawling before the authorities. Many people asked each other: 'Does Metropolitan Sergius really take part in the persecutions and the destruction of churches?' Some did not admit that he took an active part in this, but, unfortunately, they were wrong. He completely sold himself to satan. I can cite a case personally known to me which confirms the fact of his participation in these works.

     "In the church of St. Nicholas the Big Cross there chanted in the choir a young girl, very humble and nice. The whole of her family was religious, and consequently did not recognize the sergianist church. We got to know each other, and I and Andryusha would often go to their dacha near Moscow. Verochka worked in the main post office in Moscow, she was welcoming and good-looking. Once there came to her department on service matters a GPU boss. He was attracted to her and began to talk with her. To her horror and that of her family, he asked for their address. Unexpectedly he came to the dacha, thoroughly frightening everyone, of course. After all, it was impossible ever to know the intentions of these terrible people. Having said hello, he brought out a box of pastries, which no simple mortal could get at that time, and gave it to Verochka, asking her to accept him as a guest. He began to come often and to court her. Probably everyone was quietly and secretly crossing themselves, praying to be delivered from this guest. But there was nothing to be done. He looked about 30, with quite an interesting appearance. Almost immediately they set off on a walk without Verochka's father and mother, while Andryusha and I hurried to leave. Verochka said that she could have liked him, but the single thought that he was not only the boss of a GPU department, but, as he himself said, in charge of Church affairs, repulsed and horrified her. He proposed to her. She refused. 'How can I be your wife, when you are not only not a believer, but a persecutor of the Church, and I can never under any circumstances agree with that.' During their conversations he tried by every means to draw her away from faith in God, but she was unbending, the more so in that she was one of the beloved spiritual children of the murdered Fr. Alexander. He did not give up, but threatened to shoot her and himself. Moreover, he once even got out his revolver and pointed it at her. He continued to visit her. The family's situation was terrible. They couldn't think of sleeping or eating. They spoke only about one thing: how it would all end, with his taking revenge or his leaving them in peace? Verochka rushed around like a trapped bird trying to extricate herself from the claws of a hawk. Once when she was working (at the post office) she was summoned and given a note to go immediately to the GPU at the Lubyanka... It turned out to be his office. He ordered her to take up the telephone receiver. Then he took up another and summoned Metropolitan Sergius. "Listen to the conversation," he told her. The conversation was about the destruction of one of the churches in Moscow. Sergius not only did not register any protest, but took part in this terrible affair and gave his agreement. "Did you hear?" said the boss. "That's the kind of clergy you bow down to." She replied that this conversation could not shake her faith in God, and that even before she had not recognized Metropolitan Sergius, while now she was convinced that she had not been mistaken about him… “[[1044]](#footnote-1044)

Sergius made the basic mistake of forgetting that it is God, not man, Who saves the Church. This mistake almost amounts to a loss of faith in the Providence and Omnipotence of God Himself. The faith that saves is the faith that “with God all things are possible” (Matthew 19.26). It is the faith that cries: “Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will call upon the name of the Lord our God” (Psalm 19.7). This was and is the faith of the Catacomb Church, which, being founded on “the Rock, which is Christ” (I Corinthians 10.7), has prevailed against the gates of hell.

But Sergius’ “faith” was of a different, more “supple” kind, the kind of which the Prophet spoke: “Because you have said, ‘We have made a covenant with death, and with hell we have an agreement; when the overwhelming scourge passes through it will not come to us; for we have made lies our refuge, and in falsehood we have taken shelter’; therefore thus says the Lord God,… hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and waters will overwhelm the shelter. Then your covenant with death will be annulled, and your agreement with hell will not stand; when the overwhelming scourge passes through you will be beaten down by it…” (Isaiah 28.15, 17-19)

A Catacomb Appeal of the period wrote: “May this article drop a word that will be as a burning spark in the heart of every person who has Divinity in himself and faith in our One Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ. Beloved brethren! Orthodox Christians, peace-makers! Do not forget your brothers who are suffering in cells and prisons for the word of God and for the faith, the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, for they are in terrible dark bonds which have been built as tombs for all innocent people. Thousands and thousands of peace-loving brothers are languishing, buried alive in these tombs, these cemeteries; their bodies are wasting away and their souls are in pain every day and every hour, nor is there one minute of consolation, they are doomed to death and a hopeless life. These are the little brothers of Christ, they bear that cross which the Lord bore. Jesus Christ received suffering and death and was buried in the tomb, sealed by a stone and guarded by a watch. The hour came when death could not hold in its bonds the body of Christ that had suffered, for an Angel of the Lord coming down from the heavens rolled away the stone from the tomb and the soldiers who had been on guard fled in great fear. The Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead. But the thunder will also strike these castles where the brothers languish for the word of God, and will smash the bolts where death threatens men..."[[1045]](#footnote-1045)

1. The present work is a greatly expanded and revised version of *The Orthodox Church at the Crossroads, 1917-1999* (*Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ na pereputie, 1917-1999 gg.*), which was published in Russian in St. Petersburg in 2001 and in Serbian in Belgrade in 2006 (under the title, *Letopis’ Velikoj Bitke (Chronicle of a Great Battle))*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. St. Hilary, *Ad Const.* ii, 4, 5; quoted by Metropolitan Ephraim of Boston in his “Statement on Grace, March, 2003”. St. Hilary’s younger contemporary, St. Basil the Great, spoke still more eloquently of the confusion and internecine strife of the Churches in his time (*On the Holy Spirit,* 30). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. St. John Maximovich, “Homily before a Memorial Service for the Tsar-Martyr”, in *Man of God: Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco,* Redding, Ca., 1994, p. 133. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Lebedev, *Velikorossia (Great Russia)*, St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 377-379. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Polsky, *The New Martyrs of Russia*, Wildwood, Alberta: Monastery Press, 2000, p. 117. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Mikhail V. Shkarovskii, “The Russian Orthodox Church”, in Edward Action, Vladimir Cherniaev, William Rosenberg (eds.), *A Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution, 1914-1921*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997, p. 416. On December 1, 1901 the Tsar decreed that every military unit having its own clergy should have its own church in the form of a separate building (A.S. Fedotov, “Khramy vo imia svyatogo blagovernago velikago kniazia Aleksandra Nevskago v XIX-XX vv.”, *Pravoslavnaia Rus’*, N 5 (1818), March 1/14, 2007, p. 13). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. “The First Chinese Orthodox Martyrs”, *Chinese Herald*, June, 1935; *Orthodox Life*, vol. 29, N 1, January-February, 1979, pp. 14-18; *The True Vine*, N 8, Winter, 1991, pp. 42-51. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Nicholas Werth, “A State against its People”, in Stéphane Courtois, Nicolas Werth, Jean-Louis Panné, Andrzej Packowski, Karel Bartošek, Jean-Louis Margolin, *The Black Book of Communism*, London: Harvard University Press, 1999, p. 102. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Lebedev, op. cit., p. 429. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Faulkner, “The great Jewish revolt against Rome, 66-73 CE”, *History Today,* vol. 52 (10), October, 2002, pp. 50, 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. *Illustrated Sunday Herald*, February 8, 1920; quoted in Douglas Reed, *The Controversy of Zion*, Durban, S.A.: Dolphin Press, 1978, pp. 272-273. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. However, Lenin was partly Jewish. His grandfather was called Israel before his baptism by an Orthodox priest, and his father's name was Moishe Blank. See Lina Averina, "Evrejskij koren'" (The Jewish Root*), Nasha Strana* (Our Country), January 22, 1997. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Reed, op. cit., p. 274. Donald Rayfield (*Stalin and his Hangmen*, London: Viking, 2004, p. 74) writes that in 1922, the Jews “reached their maximum representation in the party (not that they formed a coherent group) when, at 15 per cent, they were second only to ethnic Russians with 65 per cent.” [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime, 1919-1924*, London: Fontana Press, 1995, pp. 112-13. Jews - even religious Jews - continued to play a major role in the Communist parties of Eastern Europe until well after the Second World War. For example, Anna Pauker was a prominent Jewish communist in Romania after the war. Again, Moses Rozen became a member of the Romanian Communist Party after the war, and continued to serve the Romanian Communists even after becoming Chief Rabbi of Romania in 1948, and continued to have a strong influence after the fall of Ceausescu in 1989. See *Pyatnitsa* (Friday), N 69, January 22, 1997, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Reed, op. cit., p. 276. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Vladimir Kozyreff, “[paradosis] Re: A New One”, [orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com](mailto:orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com), June 11, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. However, they did sympathize with it more than with any other religion. Thus on October 18, 1905 the Jewish revolutionaries in Kiev boasted that they would turn St. Sophia cathedral into a synagogue. (Lebedev, op. cit., p. 428). Again, in 1919 they erected a monument to Judas Iscariot in Tambov! See *Leningradskaia Panorama* (Leningrad Panorama), N 10, 1990, p. 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Pipes, op.cit., p. 113. Edward Roslof writes: “80% of the Russian population voted for socialist deputies to the Constituent Assembly” (*Red Priests: Renovationism, Russian Orthodoxy, and Revolution, 1905-1946*, Indiana University Press, 2002, p. 15). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Weitzmann, *Trial and Error: The Autobiography of Chaim Weitzmann*, New York: Harper, 1949. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, London: Allen Unwin, 1947, p. 383 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Shafarevich, "Sotsializm", in Solzhenitsyn, A. (ed.) *Iz-pod Glyb* (From Under the Rubble), Paris: YMCA Press, 1974; *Sotsializm kak yavlenie mirovoj istorii* (Socialism as a Phenomenon of World History), Paris: YMCA Press, 1977. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. However, Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia writes (personal communication, 21 January, 1997): "It seems more probable that it was directed against the theories of Marcellus of Ancyra (who was not a millenarian); Marcellus and his followers are mentioned in Canon One of the 381 Council. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, takes the view that the clause in question is aimed against Marcellus. Brian E. Daley, *The Hope of the Early Church: A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology*, says nothing about any condemnation of millenarianism in 381." [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Tikhomirov, “Bor’ba veka” (The Struggle of the Century), in *Kritika Demokratii* (A Critique of Democracy), Moscow, 1997, pp. 189-190, 191, 192, 195-196. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Frank, "Religioznoe-Istoricheskoe Znachenie Russkoj Revoliutsii" (The religio-historical significance of the Russian revolution), *Po Tu Storonu i Po Pravu (On That Side and on the Right)*, Paris: YMCA Press, 1972. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Courtois, in *The Black Book of Communism,* op. cit., p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Florovsky, "Metafizicheskie predposylki utopizma" (The Metaphysical Presuppositions of Utopianism), *Put'* (The Way), June-July, 1926, p. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Dostoyevsky*, The Diary of a Writer*, 1877; Haslemere: Ianmead, 1984, p. 738. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. I. Shafarevich, "Obosoblenie ili sblizhenie" (Isolation or Rapprochement), in Solzhenitsyn, op. cit.. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Bishop Dionysius (Alferov) of Novgorod (under the pseudonym Tuskarev), *Tserkov' o Gosudarstve* (The Church on the State), Staritsa, 1992, pp. 9-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Quoted in Elizabeth Dilling, *The Jewish Religion: Its Influence Today*, The Noontide Press, 1983. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. The *Protocols* purport to be the minutes of a meeting of Jewish elders somewhere in the West, but are in fact largely plagiarized from Maurice Joly’s *Dialogue aux Enfers entre Montesquieu et Machiavel*, published in 1864. When the forgery was demonstrated to Tsar Nicholas II by Stolypin, he said: “Drop the *Protocols.* One cannot defend a pure cause by dirty methods.” See Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide*, London: Serif, 1996, pp. 126, 285-289. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Lebedev, op. cit., p. 428. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Quoted in Sergius Fomin, *Rossia pered vtorym prishestviem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Sergiev Posad: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1993, p. 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. V. Moss, “The Truth is One”, in *The Imperishable Word*, Old Woking: Gresham Books, 1980. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Monk Augustine, “To atheon dogma tou Oikoumenismou Prodromou tou Antikhristou” (The atheist dogma of Ecumenism, Forerunner of the Antichrist), *Agios Agathangelos Esphigmenites* (St. Agathangelos of Esphigmenou), NN 120, July-August, 1990, pp. 20-21, 121, September-October, 1990, pp. 33-34. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Jasper Ridley, *The Freemasons*, London: Constable, 1999, p. 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Palmer, *A Compendious Ecclesiastical History*, New York: Stanford & Swords, 1850, p. 165. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Archbishop Vitaly, report read to the Hierarchical Council of the Russian Church Abroad at Machopac in 1967, reprinted in *Moskva* (Moscow), 1991, N 9, p. 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, London: Penguin Books, p. 286. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Jacques Barzun, *From Dawn to Decadence*, New York: Perennial, 2000, p. 387. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Fr. Michael Azkoul, *Anti-Christianity: The New Atheism*, Montreal: Monastery Press, 1984, p. 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Azkoul, op cit., pp. 77-78. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Rose, *Orthodoxy and the Religion of the Future,* Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Monastery, 1983, pp. 148-149. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. V. Moss, "Ecucommunism", *Living Orthodoxy*, September-October, 1989, N 5, pp. 13-18. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Marek Kohn, "Joyfully back to Church?”, *New Statesman and Society*, May 1, 1992, p. 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Judah, *The Serbs,* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009, third edition, pp. 93-94. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Zhukov, *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ na Rodine i za Rubezhom* (The Russian Orthodox Church in the Homeland and Abroad), Paris, 2005, pp. 18-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. I.L. Solonevich, *Narodnaia Monarkhia (The People’s Monarchy),* Minsk, 1998, pp. 403-404. The slaves included some who have been numbered among the saints, such as St. John the Russian (imprisoned in Turkey itself) and St. Paul of Cairo. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Glenny, *The Balkans, 1804-1999,* London: Granta Books, 2000, p. 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Jelavich, *History of the Balkans,* Cambridge University Press, 1983, vol. 2, p. 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Malcolm, op. cit., p. 194. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Malcolm, op. cit., pp. 219-228. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History,* London: Papermac, 1998, pp. 228-229. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Malcolm, op. cit., p. xlvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Malcolm, op. cit., p. 230. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans,* Cambridge University Press, 1983, vol. 2, p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Pavlowitch, "The Church of Macedonia: 'limited autocephaly' or schism?", *Sobornost,* 9:1, 1987, p. 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Glenny, op. cit., p. 158. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Jelavich, op. cit., p. 91. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Jelavich, op. cit., pp. 92-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Pavlowitch, op. cit., pp. 43-44. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Glenny, op. cit., p. 193. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Glenny, op. cit., pp. 194-195, 199. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Glenny, op. cit., pp. 201-202. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Glenny, op. cit., pp. 205-207. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Judah, *The Serbs,* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009, third edition, pp. 93-94. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Zhukov, *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ na Rodine i za Rubezhom* (The Russian Orthodox Church in the Homeland and Abroad), Paris, 2005, pp. 18-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. West, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon,* Edinburgh: Canongate, 2006, p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Chondropoulos. *Saint Nektarios: The Saint of Our Century.* Translated by Peter and Aliki Los. Athens, 1997. p. 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Keselopoulos, *Greece’s Dostoyevsky*, Protecting Veil, [www.ProtectingVeil.com](http://www.ProtectingVeil.com), 2011, p. 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Keselopoulos, op. cit., p. 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Keselopoulos, op. cit., p. 91. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Monk Benjamin (Gomarteli), *Letopis’ Tserkovnoj Istorii (1961-1971)* (A Chronicle of Church History (1961-1971), <http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis5.htm>, p. 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Adrian Fortescue, *The Orthodox Eastern Church*, London: Catholic Truth Society, 1920, pp. 342-345. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. *Ekklesiastiki Alitheia* (Ecclesiastical Truth), 1920; in Monk Pavlos, *Neoimerologitismos Oikoumenismos* (Newcalendarism Ecumenism), Athens, 1982, pp. 17-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Fortescue, op. cit., pp. 345-347. See also Eleutherios Goutzides, *Ekklesiologika Themata* (Ecclesiological Themes), Athens, 1980, vol. I, pp. 64-67. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. *Agios Agathangelos Esphigmenites* (St. Agathangelos of Esphigmenou), № 124, March-April, 1990, pp. 17-19.

    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, &c. 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.” (op. cit., pp. 347-348) [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Monk Pavlos, op. cit., pp. 19-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. See Muriel Heppell, *George Bell and Nikolai Velimirovich,* Birmingham: Lazarica Press, 2001. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. See “Tserkovnie korni Febral'skogo Grekha. Chast' I», *Sila i Slava,* July 14, 2018. http://www.virtus-et-gloria.com/Menu.aspx?book=texts/150119doc.html#\_ftnref10 [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. S.V. Bulgakov, *Nastol’naia Kniga sviaschenno-tserkovno-sluzhitelej* (Handbook for Church Servers), Kharkov, 1900, p. 928. In a footnote Bulgakov writes: “Accepting confirmed Anglicans [and Catholics] by the ‘Third Rite’ could be permitted only under the condition of recognition that the Anglican Church has a completely legitimate hierarchy, truly having preserved the grace of the priesthood in unbroken succession from the Apostles.” In line with this acceptance of Anglican order, Bishop Tikhon of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands, the future Martyr-Patriarch, attended the consecration of Reginald Weller as Episcopalian Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin in 1900” (*The Living Church*, November 17, 1900). In his diary under December 16/29, 1900, Archbishop Nicholas (Kasatkin) of Japan mentions this fact with some annoyance: “Why did Tikhon worm himself in there in a hierarchical mantia?”

    With regard to the Syro-Chaldean Nestorians, the position of the Church of Russia was expressed in a Synodal ukaz dated March 17-21, 1898, N 1017, which stated that in accordance with the 95th Canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council they were to be received according to the Third Rite, and that their clergy had be received in full ecclesiastical rank, with no re-ordination. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. A translation of the whole Epistle is to be found in Athelstan Riley, *Birkbeck and the Russian Church*, London: Macmillan, 1917, pp. 247-257. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Veretennikov, “K Voprosu Periodizatsii Istorii Russkoj Tserkvi” (Towards the Question of the Periodicisation of the History of the Russian Church), <http://ao.orthodoxy.ru/arch/017/017-smol.htm>, pp. 6, 11 (footnote 17). [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. “Bishop Raphael Hawaweeny on the Anglicans and Orthodox Baptism”, *Orthodox Christian Information Center,* http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/hawaweeny.aspx. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Babkin, “Sviaschenstvo i tsarstvo: dukhovenstvo Pravoslavnoj Rossijskoj Tserkvi i sverzhenie monarkhii (nachalo XXv. – 1918g.) (The priesthood and the kingdom: the clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Overthrow of the monarchy (the beginning of the 20th century to 1918), May, 2010, <http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/print.php?act=news&id=77984>, pp. 1-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Babkin, op. cit., pp. 2, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Soldatov, “Tolstoj i Sergij: Iude Podobnie” (Tolstoy and Sergius: Images of Judas), *Nasha Strana (Our Country),* N 2786; *Vernost’ (Fidelity),* N 32, January 1/14, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Sergius Firsov, *Russkaia Tserkov’ nakanune peremen (The Russian Church on the Eve of the Changes)*, Moscow, 2000, p. 117. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Tikhomirov, “Gosudarstvennost’ i religia” (Statehood and religion), *Moskovskie Vedomosti (Moscow Gazette),* March, 1903, p. 3; in Firsov, op. cit., p. 137. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. The Church had anathematized Tolstoy on February 20-23, 1901 in the following words: “In his writings Count Lev Tolstoy has blasphemed against the holy sacraments, denying their grace-filled character, has not venerated the Orthodox Church as his Church, has spoken evil of the clergy, has said that he considers that to venerate Christ and worship Him as God is blasphemy, while saying of himself, by contrast: ‘I am in God, and God in me’. It is not the Church that has rejected him, casting him off from herself, but he himself has rejected the Church: Lev himself has of his own will fallen away from the Church and is no longer a son of the Church, but is hostile to her. All attempts of the clergy to admonish the prodigal have failed to produce the desired fruits: in his pride he has considered himself cleverer than all, less fallible than all and the judge of all, and the Church has made a declaration about the falling away of Count Lev Tolstoy from the Russian Orthodox Church.” (Gubanov, op. cit., p. 701). [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. St. John, in Nadieszda Kizenko, *A Prodigal Saint: Father John of Kronstadt and the Russian People*, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000, p. 249. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Soldatov, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Robert Bird, “Metropolitan Philaret and the Secular Culture of His Age”, in Vladimir Tsurikov (ed.), *Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow 1782-1867,* The Variable Press, USA, 2003, p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. St. Joseph of Petrograd, *In the Father’s Bosom: A Monk’s Diary,* 3864; in M.S. Sakharov and L.E. Sikorskaya, *Sviaschennomuchenik Iosif Mitropolit Petrogradskij* *(Hieromartyr Joseph, Metropolitan of Petrograd)*, St. Petersburg, 2006, p. 254. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Archbishop Nicon (Rklitsky), *Zhizneopisanie Blazhennejshago Antonia, Mitropolita Kievsago i Galitskago (Biography of his Beatitude Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich),* volume 1, New York: publication of the Washington-Florida diocese, 1971, pp. 144-151. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Sakharov and Sikorskaya, op. cit., pp. 45-46. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. St. Theodore, *The Meaning of Christian Asceticism*. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Glubokovsky, *Russkaia bogoslovskaia nauka v ee istoricheskom razvitii i novejshem sostoianii (Russian theological science in its historical development and contemporary condition),* Moscow: St. Vladimir Brotherhood, 2002; http:proroza.narod.ru/Glubokovsky.htm, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Novoselov, “Zabytij put’ opytnogo Bogopoznania” (The Forgotten Path of the Experiential Knowledge of God), 1902, Vyshnij Volochek; <http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page&pid=653>. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Asmus, “Arkhiepiskop Ilarion Troitskij i Pravoslavnoe Bogoslovie” (Archbishop Hilarion Troitsky and Orthodox Theology)”, *Bogoslovskij Sbornik (Theological Anthology),* issue 7, Moscow, 2001; <http://proroza.narod.ru/Asmus-1.htm>, p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Firsov, op. cit., p. 91. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Hieromartyr Victor, “Novie Bogoslovy” (The New Theologians), *Tserkov’* (The Church), 1912; reprinted by Orthodox Action, Moscow, N 1 (11), 2000; Protopriest Michael Polsky, *Novie Mucheniki Rossijskie* (The New Martyrs of Russia)), 1949-57, Jordanville, vol. 1, p. 601. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Protopriest Basil Boschansky, “Sarovskie Torzhestva” (Sarov Festivities), *Pravoslavnij Put’* (The Orthodoxy Way), 2003, Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, pp. 1-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. The original initiative for the canonization came from Blessed Pasha of Sarov, who said to Archimandrite Seraphim: “Send a request to the Tsar that they open the relics for us. “Chichagov began to collect materials”, wrote the *Diveyevo Chronicle*, “and brought it to the Tsar. When the Tsar read it, he became inflamed with the desire to uncover the relics… The Emperor insisted on the glorification, but almost the entire Synod was against it. It was supported only by the future Metropolitan Cyril and the Ober-Procurator Vladimir Carlovich Sabler. The others protested, ‘Why should we go off to the woods? They only found bones.’” (Nun Seraphima (Bulgakova), “The Diveyevo Tradition”, in Helen Kontzevitch, *Saint Seraphim, Wonderworker of Sarov,* Wildwood, Ca.: St. Xenia Skete, 2004, p. 237). [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Lebedev, op. cit., pp. 388-389. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Already early in the nineteenth century the Prophet Abel had prophesied to Tsar Paul I: ‘Nicholas II will be a holy tsar, like Job the much-suffering. He will have the mind of Christ, patience and dove-like purity. The Scriptures speak about him: Psalms 90, 10 and 20 have revealed to me the whole of his destiny. He will exchange a royal crown for a crown of thorns, will be betrayed by his people as was once the Son of God. He will be a redeemer, he will redeem his people, like the bloodless sacrifice. There will be a war, a great war, a world war. People will fly through the air like birds, and swim under the water like fish, they will begin to exterminate each other with evil-smelling sulphur. On the eve of victory the Russian throne will collapse. But the betrayal will grow and multiply. And your great-grandson will be betrayed, many of your descendants will also whiten their garments in the blood of the Lamb, the peasant will seize power with his axe in madness, but he himself will later weep. A truly Egyptian punishment will begin… Blood and tears will soak the wet earth. Rivers of blood will flow. Brother will rise up against brother. And again: fire, the sword, invasions of aliens and the inner enemy of the godless authority. The Jew will beat the Russian land with a scorpion, he will take hold of her holy things, close the churches of God and execute the best Russian people. This will be allowed by God, it will be the wrath of the Lord against Russia for her rejection of the Anointed of God…” (Monk Abel, in Gubanov, op. cit., p. 30). [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Lebedev, op. cit., p. 390. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Nilus, *Na beregu Bozh’ej reki. Zapiski pravoslavnago (On God’s River. Notes of an Orthodox),* Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1969, vol. II, pp. 181-183). For somewhat different accounts of the meeting of the Tsar and the Synod, see Bishop Dionysius (Alferov) of Novgorod, “Ob uderzhanii i symphonii”, <http://www.monarhist-spb.narod.ru/D-ST/dionisy-1.htm>, p. 15; E.E. Alferev, op. cit., pp. 88-93; M.V. Danilushkin (ed.), *Istoria Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi (*A History of the Russian Church*), 1917-1970,* Saint Petersburg, 1997, pp. 67-69. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Frank Furedi, “The Rise of the Rising Sun”, *BBC History Magazine,* vol. 6, N 9, September, 2005, p. 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Perhaps not realizing how advantageous the terms were for the Russians, or perhaps realizing that such concessions had to be made because the Russians would have won if war had continued, the Grand Orient of France congratulated the mediator in the peace negotiations, American President Theodore Roosevelt (a Freemason since 1901) in the following telegram: “The Grand Orient of France has the honour to address to you its warmest congratulations for the outstanding service you have just offered to mankind. Masonry is happy to see the triumph, thanks to one of its eminent sons, of the principles of peace and brotherhood.” On September 4, Secretary of State Loomis, wrote back on behalf of the president, thanking the French Masons. As O.F. Soloviev points out, this direct exchange between the Grand Orient and the American president was unprecedented, and showed the increasing influence of Continental Masonry in world affairs (*Masonstvo v Mirovoj Politike XX Veka* (Masonry in the World Politics of the 20th Century), Moscow, 1998, p. 45). [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. In all he loaned $200 million to Japan during the war, while preventing other firms from lending to Russia (A.I. Solzhenitsyn, *Dvesti Let Vmeste (Two Hundred Years Together)*, Moscow, 2001, volume 1, p. 347). (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Lebedev, op. cit., pp. 417-418. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Review of A.M. Khitrov, O.L. Solomina, *Khram-pamiatnik v Briussele* (The Memorial Church in Brussels), Moscow, 2005, *Pravoslavnaia Rus’*, N 24, December 15/28, 2005, p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. Archbishop Nicon (Rklitsky), *Zhizneopisanie Blazhennejshago Antonia, Mitropolita Kievskago i Galitskago,* volume 2, New York, 1957, pp. 140-141. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. <http://www.orthodox.cn/history/martyrs/188207jpcouncil_en.htm>.; “The First Chinese Orthodox Martyrs”, *Living Orthodoxy,* march-April, 1997, pp. 13-16. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’* (Orthodox Life), 1982; in Sergius and Tamara Fomin, *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestivem* (Russia before the Second Coming), volume I, Moscow, 1998, p. 372. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Von Remartel, op. cit., pp. 19, 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Von Remartel, op. cit., p. 192. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Nicholas Kazantsev, “Provokator Gapon kak Znamia Perekrestyshej” (The Provocateur Gapon as a Banner for Turn-Coats), *Nasha Strana (Our Country),* July 14, 2006, N 2799. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. Khitrov and Solomina, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. Firsov, op. cit., pp. 149-153. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Firsov, op. cit., p. 163. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Skvortsov, in Firsov, op. cit., p. 172. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. St. John of Kronstadt, in Kizenko, op. cit., pp. 247-248. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. An event apparently foretold by Rasputin, whose influence consequently began to grow… [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. Pipes, op. cit., pp. 36-37. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Pipes, op. cit., p. 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. *Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossijskoi Imperii* (A Complete Collection of the Laws of the Russian Empire), 3rd series, vol. XXV/I, N 26803. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Lebedev, op. cit., pp. 424-425. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Pipes, op. cit., p. 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. Rodzevich, in Abraham Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905,* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992, p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Pipes, op. cit., pp. 48-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. In Valentina Sologub, *Kto Gospoden – Ko Mne!* (He who is the Lord’s – Come to me!), Moscow, 2007, p. 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. Riasophor-Monk Anempodist, “Sviaschennomuchenik mitropolit Vladimir (Bogoiavlenskij) i bor’ba s revoliutsii” (Hieromartyr Metropolitan Vladimir (Bogoiavlensky) and the struggle against the revolution), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’ (Orthodox Life)*, 53, N 1 (636), January, 2003, pp. 2-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. “Preemstvennost’ Grekha” (The Heritage of Sin), publication of the parish of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia, Tsaritsyn, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. In 1915 the Empress wrote to the Emperor that Sergius “must leave the Synod” (A. Paryaev, “Mitropolit Sergij Stragorodskij: Neizvestnaia Biographia” (Metropolitan Sergius Stragorodsky: The Unknown Biography), *Suzdal’skie Eparkhial’nie Vedomosti* (Suzdal Diocesan News), N 1, September, 1997, pp. 12-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *Dvesti let vmeste* (Two Hundred Years Together) (1795-1995), part 1, Moscow: “Russkij Put’”, 2001, p. 375. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 401. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. Niall Ferguson, *The War of the World,* London: Penguin Books, 2006, p. 68. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 398-399. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. Lebedev, op. cit., p. 421. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. "New Martyr Archpriest Michael Edlinsky", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 39, N 2, March-April, 1989. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. Johnston, “Archbishop Platon Discourses”, *Harper’s Weekly,* July 27, 1912, p. 10; quoted by Andrew Komendarov, in “[paradosis] Re: More Anti-semitism couched as ‘True Orthodoxy’”, [orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com](mailto:orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com), February 8, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. See Danilushkin, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 78-80, 771-783; Kizenko, op. cit., chapter 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. *Pis’ma Blazhenneishago Mitropolita Antonia (Khrapovitskago)* (The Letters of his Beatitude Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky)), Jordanville, 1988, pp. 37, 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. Quoted in N. Talberg, *Istoria Russkoj Tserkvi (History of the Russian Church)*, Jordanville, 1959, p. 831. Nor was he silent about other instigators of violence behind the scenes, such as the Old Ritualists. As he wrote in his 1912 encyclical to the Old Ritualists: “The spirit of this world… winks at real revolutionaries and sent the money of your rich men to create the Moscow rebellion of 1905.” (in “Otnoshenia s Staroobriadchestvom (Relations with Old Ritualism)”, *Vozdvizhenie*, *(Exaltation*),Winter, 2000, p. 76). [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. Soloviev, *La Russie et l’Eglise universelle* (Russia and the Universal Church*),* Paris, 1937, p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. Alferev, *Imperator Nikolaj II kak Chelovek Sil’noj Voli* (Emperor Nicholas II as a Man of Strong Will)*,* Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1983, pp. 92-92. [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. *Suggestions of the Diocesan Hierarchs on the Reform of the Church*, St. Petersburg, 1906, vol. 3, p. 443. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. Firsov, op. cit., pp. 222-223. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. Archbishop Anthony, in Rklitsky, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 277, 278-281. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. Rklitsky, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 173, 175-177. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. *Holy New Hieromartyr Maximus Sandovich*, Liberty, Tenn.: St. John of Kronstadt Press, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. *Holy New Hieromartyr Maximus Sandovich*, op. cit., pp. 48-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. P. Ioseliani, *A Short History of the Georgian Church*, Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1983, pp. 146-148. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. Dobroklonsky, *Rukovodstvo po istorii russkoj tserkvi* (Guide to the History of the Russian Church), Moscow, 2001, pp. 278-279. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. Archpriest Zakaria Michitadze, *Lives of the Georgian Saints,* Platina: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 2006, pp. 25-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. *Journals and Protocols of the sessions of the Preconciliar Convention Established by His Majesty*, volume 3. On the second section on Georgia. St. Petersburg, 1907, pp. 55-58. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. Professor M.G. Kovalnitsky. *On the Significance of the National Element in the Historical Development of Christianity*, Kiev, 1880, pp. 3-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. *Journals and Protocols*, p. 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. Eugene Pavlenko, “The Heresy of Phyletism: History and the Present”, *Vertograd-Inform*, September, 1999. [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. See Danilushkin, op. cit., pp. 784-793; Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 444-451. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. “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). [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. Kyril Fitzlyon and Tatiana Browning, *Russia Before the Revolution*, Harmondsworth: Penguin books, 1977, p. 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. *Trial and Error: The Autobiography of Chaim Weitzmann*, New York: Harper, 1949. [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. Massie, *Nicolas and Alexandra*, London: Book Club Associates, 1967, p. 229. [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. Vostorgov, in Fomin and Fomina, op. cit., vol. II, p. 624. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
169. http://www.revisionisthistory.org/page10.page10.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
170. S.V. Bulgakov, *Nastol’naia Kniga dlya Svyashchenno-Tserkovno-Sluzhitelia* (Handbook for Church Servers), Kharkov, 1900, p. 143. For ritual murders demonstrated in court, see Dal’, V. *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. *Oboniatel’noe i osyazatel’noe otnoshenie evreev k krovi* (The Senses of Smell and Touch of the Jews towards Blood), St. Petersburg, 1913; O. Platonov, *Ternovij venets Rossii* (Russia’s Crown of Thorns), Moscow, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
171. Vladimir Rusak, *Pir Satany* (Satan’s Feast), London, Ontario: Zarya, 1991, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
172. Uspensky, in Fomin and Fomina, op. cit., vol. II, p. 632. [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
173. Platonov, op. cit., pp. 748-754. [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
174. Archbishop Anthony, in *Zhizn’ Volynii* (The Life of Volhynia), № 221, 2 September, 1913. [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
175. Bakhmatov, *Pravda o Grigorii Rasputine* (The Truth about Gregory Rasputin), Moscow, 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
176. Radzinsky, *Rasputin: The Last Word*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2000. [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
177. Khitrov, “Rasputin-Novykh Grigory Efimovich i kratkaia istoria spornogo voprosa o priznanii v RPTsZ ego oschetserkovnogo pochitania, kak pravoslavnogo startsa” (Gregory Efimovich Rasputin-Novykh and a short history of the controversial question of his recognition in ROCOR of his veneration throughout the Church as an Orthodox elder). [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
178. Maria Carlson, *“No Religion Higher than Truth”: A History of the Theosophical Movement in Russia, 1875-1922,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993. [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
179. Alexander Bokhanov, Manfred Knodt, Vladimir Oustimenko, Zinaida Peregudova, Lyubov Tyutyunnik, *The Romanovs*, London: Leppi, 1993, p. 233. [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
180. *Velikaia Kniaginia Elizaveta Fyodorovna i Imperator Nikolai I* (Great Princess Elizabeth Fyodorovna and Emperor Nicholas I), St. Petersburg: Aleteia, 2009, p. 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
181. Voeikov, op. cit., pp. 58-59. [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
182. On this important, but unsung hero of the faith, see Monk Anthony (Chernov), *Vie de Monseigneur Théophane, Archevêque de Poltava et de Pereiaslavl (The Life of his Eminence Theophan, Archbishop of Poltava and Pereyaslavl)*, Lavardac: Monastère Orthodoxe St. Michel, 1988; Richard Bettes, Vyacheslav Marchenko, *Dukhovnik Tsarskoj Sem’i (Spiritual Father of the Royal Family)*, Moscow: Valaam Society of America, 1994, pp. 60-61; Archbishop Averky (Taushev), *Vysokopreosviaschennij Feofan, Arkhiepiskop Poltavskij i Pereiaslavskij (His Eminence Theophan, Archbishop of Poltava and Pereyaslavl)*, Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1974 ; Radzinsky, *Rasputin*, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
183. Voeikov, op. cit., pp. 50, 143. [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
184. Khrapovitsky, “Moi Vospominania” (My Reminiscences), *Tserkovnie Vedomosti,* N 450, in Bishop Nikon (Rklitsky), *Zhizneopisanie Blazhennejshago Antonia* (Biography of his Beatitude Anthony), vol. 3, New York, 1957, pp. 8-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
185. A joint investigation by British and Russian police has now come to the conclusion that the third and fatal shot that killed Rasputin was actually fired by a British secret service agent. See Michael Smith, *A History of Britain’s Secret Intelligence Service,* London: Dialogue; Annabel Venning, “How Britain’s First Spy Chief Ordered Rasputin’s Murder”, *Daily Mail,* July 22, 2010, pp. 32-33. [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
186. Yusupov, *Memuary* (Memoirs), Moscow, 1998, p. 230. [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
187. Radzinsky, *Rasputin,* p. 501. [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
188. Lieven, op. cit., p. 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
189. Glenny, op. cit., p. 212. The aim of Ataturk’s *Fatherland* Society, which was later merged with the CUP, was, as he told his friends, nothing less than to liberate the Homeland from tyranny and enable the Turks to rule themselves: “Today, they wish to separate the Rumelia region in Macedonia from the homeland. Foreigners are now exercising their partial and actual influence and control over parts of the country, The Padishah [Sultan] is capable of committing all evils, who thinks of nothing but his pleasures and the sultanate. The people are being crushed under tyranny and oppression. There is death and collapse in a country in which there is no freedom. The reason for all advancement and formation is liberty. Today history is burdening us, her sons, with some major tasks. I have established a society in Syria. We have started the struggle against tyranny and oppression. I came to set up the foundations of this society here as well. It is imperative to work in secrecy and awaken the organization. I expect self-sacrifice from all of you. I invite you to the task of rebelling against this damned oppression, tearing down this rotten, worn-out administration, so that the people can rule themselves – in short, to save the motherland.” (Ilhan Akit, *Mustafa Kemal Ataturk,* Istanbul, 1998, pp. 22-23) [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
190. Glenny, op, cit., p. 215. [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
191. Glenny, op. cit., p. 216. [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
192. Glenny, op. cit., p. 218. [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
193. Glenny, op. cit., pp. 218-219. [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
194. Lieven, “Russia, Europe and World War I”, in Edward Acton, Vladimir Cherniaev, William Rosenberg (eds.), *A Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution, 1914-1921*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997, pp. 41-42. [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
195. Lieven, *Nicholas II*, London: Pimlico, 1993, pp. 191-192 [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
196. Glenny, op. cit., pp. 225-226. [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
197. Radzinsky, *The Last Tsar*, pp. 188-189. [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
198. Meanwhile, on May 4, 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.

     “Unfortunately, to this day the protocol of Corfu has not been fulfilled and is not being fulfilled by the Albanian side, neither in the part relating to the religious, nor in the part relating to the civil and educational rights of the Greek Epirots. In this sense the unchanging character of Albanian hostility is indicative. In 1914 the Albanian prime-minister Turkhan Pasha declared to the Rome correspondent of *Berliner Tageblatt* that ‘there can be no discussion’ of the autonomy of Epirus, and ‘for us there are no longer any “Epirots”, but there are only the inhabitants of provinces united to us by the London conference.’ Decades later, in 1967, another Albanian tyrant, Enver Khodja, proclaimed Albania to be the first officially atheist country in the world, where the Orthodox Church was banned and destroyed. The Serbs talk about the destruction of 2000 Orthodox churches.” (“Chto neset Pravoslaviu proekt ‘Velikoj Albanii’?”, *Pravoslavnaia Rus’*, N 2 (1787), January 15/28, 2005, p. 11). [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
199. Glenny, op. cit., pp. 233-234. [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
200. Judah, op. cit., pp. 85-86. [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
201. Judah, op. cit., pp. 84-85. [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
202. Ferguson, *The War of the World,* London: Penguin, 2007, pp. 76-77. [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
203. Fr. Simeon Kholmogorov, *One of the Ancients*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1988, p. 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
204. St. Barsanuphius, in Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., p. 409. [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
205. For, as Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich wrote, “it is God’s desire that men be unequal in externals: riches, power, status, learning, position and so forth. But he does not recommend any sort of competitiveness in this. God desires that men compete in the multiplying of the inner virtues.” (*Homilies*, volume 2). [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
206. Edward Roslof, *Red Priests: Renovationism, Russian Orthodoxy, and Revolution, 1905-1946*, Indiana University Press, 2002, p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
207. Pipes, op.cit., p. 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
208. Vinberg, op. cit., p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
209. I.L. Solonevich, *Narodnaia Monarkhia (The People’s Monarchy),* Minsk, 1998, pp. 384, 385. [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
210. De Maistre, *On God and Society*; in Fr. Seraphim Rose, *Nihilism*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood Press, 1994, p. 69. [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
211. E.L., *Episkopy-Ispovednik (Bishop Confessors),* San Francisco, 1971. [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
212. St. John, ”Homily before a Memorial Service for the Tsar-Martyr”, in *Man of God: Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco,* Richfield Springs, N.Y, 1994, p. 133. [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
213. Taushev, “Religiozno-misticheskij smysl ubienia Tsarkoj Sem’i” (The Religious-Mystical Meaning of the Killing of the Royal Family), http://www.ispovednik.org/fullest.php?nid=59&binn\_rubrik\_pl\_news=132. [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
214. Sokolov, “Afonskoe monashestvo v ego proshlom i sovremennom sostoianii”, in *Svt. Grigorij Palama* (Hierarch Gregory Palamas), St. Petersburg, 2004, pp. 237-239. [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
215. See *Ekklesiastiki Alitheeia*, N 16, April 20, 1913, pp. 123-125, N 19, May 11, 1913, pp. 145-146, N 11, N 24, June 15, 1913, pp. 187-191, March 15, 1914, p. 119; “O lzhe-uchenii imiabozhnikov”, *Tserkovnie Vedomosti*, N 20, 1913. [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
216. Gubanov, op. cit., p. 770. [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
217. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
218. See Constantine Papoulides, *Oi Rossoi onomolatroi tou Agiou Orous (The Russian Name-Worshippers of the Holy Mountain)*, Thessaloniki, 1977. [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
219. See V. Moss, “The Name of God and the Name-Worshipping Heresy”, http:www.orthodoxchristianbooks.com (also in Russian at the same site); E.S. Polischuk (ed.), *Imiaslavia. Antologia (Name-Worshipping. An Anthology)*, Moscow, 2002. [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
220. For a particularly clear and convincing exposition of this thesis, see David Fromkin, *Europe’s Last Summer,* London: Vintage Books, 2004. [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
221. Stevenson, *1914-1918: The History of the First World War,* London: Penguin, 2005, pp. 14-16. [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
222. Fromkin, op. cit., p. 302. [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
223. Stevenson, op. cit., pp. 10-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
224. West, op. cit., pp. 366-368. [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
225. Stevenson, op. cit., p. 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
226. West, op. cit., p. 376. [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
227. Stephenson, op. cit., p. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
228. West, op. cit., p. 358. [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
229. West, op. cit., p. 369. [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
230. Stevenson, op. cit., p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
231. Lieven, “Russia, Europe and World War I”, in Edward Acton, Vladimir Cherniaev, William Rosenberg, op. cit., pp. 41-46. [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
232. 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](http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page*pid=966). [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
233. Unfortunately, but not, perhaps, surprisingly, the spiritual threat of the German and Austrian heretics was perceived, but not that of the English and French. Thus “in Serbia at every religious service, prayers are offered for victory over the Enemy; and if a Bishop celebrates a Liturgy, he, with Holy Host in hand, mentions the Serbian King, the English King, the Russian Tsar, the Belgian King and the French Government” (Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich, “Christianity and the War”, in *Sabrana Dela (Collected Works),* Khimelstir, 1986, vol. 3, p. 156. [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
234. Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich, *Homilies*, volume 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
235. Lebedev, op. cit., p. 405. [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
236. Baring, in Eugene Lyons*, Our Secret Allies*, 1953. [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
237. Maria Carlson, *“No Religion Higher than Truth”: A History of the Theosophical Movement in Russia, 1875-1922*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993; Nina Berberova, *Liudi i Lozhi: russkie masony XX stoletia* (People and Lodges: Russian Masons of the 19th Century), New York: Rossica, 1986. [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
238. Richard Rhoda, “Russian Freemasonry: A New Dawn”, a paper read at the Orient Lodge no. 15 on June 29, 1996, [http://members.aol.co](http://members.aol.co/)m/houltonme/rus/htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
239. Richard Rhoda, “Russian Freemasonry: A New Dawn”, a paper read at the Orient Lodge no. 15 on June 29, 1996, [http://members.aol.co](http://members.aol.co/)m/houltonme/rus/htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
240. Dennis Stock, Russian Freemasonry, http://www.casebook.org/dissertations/freemasonry/russianfm.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
241. Hasegawa, “The February Revolution”, in Edward Acton, Vladimir Cherniaev, William Rosenberg (eds.), *Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution 1914-1921*, Bloomington and Indianopolis: Indiana University Press, 1997, p.59. [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
242. George Sprukts, “Re: [paradosis] Re: White army, [orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com](mailto:orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com), June 9, 2004. [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
243. Archbishop Nicon, “Beregite osnovnia nachala tserkovnoj zhizni”, N 366, 1917. [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
244. Archimandrite Galaction, in Constantin Bujor, *Resisting unto Blood: Sixty-Five Years of Persecution of the True (Old Calendar) Orthodox Church of Romania (October 1924 – December 1989),* Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 2003, pp. 28-29. [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
245. Bujor, op. cit., pp. 30-32. [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
246. Bujor, op. cit., p. 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-246)
247. N. Yakovlev, *1 Avgusta, 1914,* Moscow, 1974, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-247)
248. Sedova, “’Razgovory po dusham’ Fevral’skikh Impotentov” (‘Heart-to-heart Conversation of the February Impotents’), *Nasha Strana* (Our Country), N 2834, December 29, 2007, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-248)
249. *Voprosy Istorii* (Questions of History), 1990, N 10, p. 144. [↑](#footnote-ref-249)
250. *Pravoslavnij Tsar-Muchenik (The Orthodox Tsar-Martyr),* Moscow: Orthodox Pilgrim, 1997, p. 771. [↑](#footnote-ref-250)
251. Metropolitan Anastasius, *Besedy so svoim sobstvennym serdtsem* (Conversations with my own Heart), Jordanville, 1948, p. 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-251)
252. Letter of Sergius Nilus to Hierodeacon Zosimas, 6 August, 1917; in Gubanov, op. cit., p. 121. [↑](#footnote-ref-252)
253. “My abdication is necessary. Ruzsky transmitted this conversation [with Rodzianko] to the Staff HQ, and Alexeev to all the com­manders-in-chief of the fronts. The replies from all arrived at 2:05. The essence is that that for the sake of the salvation of Russia and keeping the army at the front quiet, I must resolve on this step. I agreed. From the Staff HQ they sent the draft of a manifesto. In the evening from Petrograd Guchkov and Shulgin ar­rived, with whom I discussed and transmitted to them the signed and edited manifesto. At one in the morning I left Pskov greatly affected by all that had come to pass. All around me I see treason, cow­ardice, and deceit.” (*Dnevniki Imperatora Nikolaia II* (The Diaries of Emperor Nicholas II), Moscow, 1992, p. 625) [↑](#footnote-ref-253)
254. E.E. Alferev writes: “Factually speaking, in view of the position taken by [Generals] Ruzsky and Alexeev, the possibility of resistance was excluded. Being cut off from the external world, the Sovereign was as it were in captivity. His orders were not carried out, the telegrams of those who remained faithful to their oath of allegiance were not communicated to him. The Empress, who had never trusted Ruzsky, on learning that the Tsar’s train had been help up at Pskov, immediately understood the danger. On March 2 she wrote to his Majesty: ‘But you are alone, you don’t have the army with you, you are caught like a mouse in a trap. What can you do?’ (*Imperator Nikolaj II kak chelovek sil’noj voli* (Emperor Nicholas II as a Man of Strong Will), Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1983, 2004, p. 121). [↑](#footnote-ref-254)
255. All dates are given according to the Old, Julian calendar then in use in Russia. Dates will be given in the new, Gregorian calendar after the introduction of that calendar by the Bolsheviks in January, 1918. [↑](#footnote-ref-255)
256. Nazarov, *Kto naslednik rossijskogo prestola?* (Who is the Heir of the Russian Throne?), Moscow: “Russkaia Idea”, 1996, p. 68). In defence of Great Prince Michael, it should be pointed out that he, too, acted under duress. As Nazarov points out, “Great Prince Mikhail Alexandrovich also acted under duress, under the pressure of the plotters who came to his house. Kerensky admitted that this had been their aim: ‘We decided to surround the act of abdication of Mikhail Alexandrovich with every guarantee, but in such a way as to give the abdication a voluntary character’” (p. 69). [↑](#footnote-ref-256)
257. Quoted in Tamara Groyan, Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow, *Tsariu Nebesnomu i Zemnomu Vernij* (Faithful to the Heavenly and Earthly Tsar), Moscow: Palomnik, 1996, p. 128. [↑](#footnote-ref-257)
258. In Groyan, op. cit., pp. 122, 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-258)
259. Babkin, “Sviatejshij Sinod Pravoslavnoj Rossijskoj Tserkvi i Revoliutsionnie Sobytia Fevralia-Marta 1917 g.” (“The Most Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Revolutionary Events of February-March, 1917”), <http://www.monarhist-spb.narod.ru/D-ST/Babkin-1>, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-259)
260. Gubanov, op. cit., p. 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-260)
261. <http://www.geocities.com/kitezhgrad/prophets/duniushka.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-261)
262. In Gubanov, op. cit., p. 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-262)
263. A.D. Stepanov, “Mezhdu mirom i monastyrem” (“Between the World and the Monastery”), in *Tajna Bezzakonia* (The Mystery of Iniquity), St. Petersburg, 2002, p. 491. [↑](#footnote-ref-263)
264. Babkin, “Sviatejshij Sinod Pravoslavnoj Rossijskoj Tserkvi i Revoliutsionnie Sobytia Fevralia-Marta 1917 g.” (“The Most Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Revolutionary Events of February-March, 1917”), <http://www.monarhist-spb.narod.ru/D-ST/Babkin-1>, pp. 2, 3. Archbishop Nathanael of Vienna (+1985), the son of over-procurator Vladimir Lvov, said that his family used to laugh at the incongruity of wishing “Many Years” to a merely “Provisional” Government (“Neobychnij Ierarkh” (An Unusual Hierarch), *Nasha Strana*, N 2909, February 5, 2011, p. 3). [↑](#footnote-ref-264)
265. This is also now generally accepted even by western historians. Thus Tsuyoshi Hasegawa writes: “Five members, Kerensky, N.V. Nekrasov, A.I. Konovalov, M.I. Tereshchenko and I.N. Efremov are known to have belonged to the secret political Masonic organization” (“The February Revolution”, in Edward Acton, Vladimir Cherniaev, William Rosenberg (eds.), *Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution 1914-1921*, Bloomington and Indianopolis: Indiana University Press, 1997, p. 59). [↑](#footnote-ref-265)
266. Lvov was, in the words of Bishop Gregory (Grabbe), “a not completely normal fantasist” ((*Russkaia Tserkov’ pered litsom gospodstvuiushchego zla* (The Russian Church in the Face of Dominant Evil), Jordanville, 1991, p. 4). Grabbe’s estimate of Lvov is supported by Oliver Figes, who writes: “a nobleman of no particular talent or profession, he was convinced of his calling to greatness, yet ended up in the 1920s as a pauper and a madman living on the streets of Paris” (*A People’s Tragedy,* London: Pimlico, 1997, p. 449). [↑](#footnote-ref-266)
267. As Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) testified, “already in 1917 he [Sergius] was dreaming of combining Orthodox Church life with the subjection of the Russian land to Soviet power…” (“Preemstvennost’ Grekha” (The Heritage of Sin), Tsaritsyn, p. 7). [↑](#footnote-ref-267)
268. See Mikhail V. Shkarovskii, “The Russian Orthodox Church”, in Acton, Cherniaev and Rosenberg, op. cit., p. 417; “K 80-letiu Izbrania Sv. Patriarkha Tikhona na Sviashchennom Sobore Rossijskoj Tserkvi 1917-18gg.” (Towards the Election of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon at the Sacred Council of the Russian Church, 1917-18), *Suzdal’skie Eparkhial’nie Vedomosti* (Suzdal Diocesan News), N 2, November, 1997, p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-268)
269. Babkin, op. cit., pp. 3-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-269)
270. Babkin, *Dukhovenstvo*, pp. 195-198. [↑](#footnote-ref-270)
271. Metropolitan Macarius, in Groyan, op. cit., pp. 183-184. [↑](#footnote-ref-271)
272. Groyan, op. cit., p. 142. Italics mine (V.M.). [↑](#footnote-ref-272)
273. St. John Maximovich, “Homily before a Memorial Service for the Tsar-Martyr”, in *Man of God*, p. 133. Cf. Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev): "There is no need to say how terrible a 'touching' of the Anointed of God is the overthrow of the tsar by his subjects. Here the transgression of the given command of God reaches the highest degree of criminality, which is why it drags after it the destruction of the state itself" (*Russkaia Ideologia* (The Russian Ideology), St. Petersburg, 1992, pp. 50-51). And so, insofar as it was the disobedience of the people that compelled the Tsar to abdicate, leading inexorably to his death, "we all," in the words of Archbishop Averky, "Orthodox Russian people, in one way or another, to a greater or lesser degree, are guilty of allowing this terrible evil to be committed on our Russian land" (*Istinnoe Pravoslavie i Sovremennij Mir* (True Orthodoxy and the Contemporary World), Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1971, p. 166). [↑](#footnote-ref-273)
274. St. John Maximovich, “The Nineteenth Anniversary of the Repose of His Beatitude Metropolitan Anthony”, *Pravoslavnaia Rus’*, N 19, 1955, pp. 3-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-274)
275. Ilyin, *Sobranie Sochinenij* (Collected Works), Moscow, 1994, volume 4, p. 7; in Valentina D. Sologub, *Kto Gospoden’ – Ko Mne!* (He who is the Lord’s – to me!), Moscow, 2007, p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-275)
276. According to I.M. Andreyev, “the whole of the Synod had decided to go into retirement. Archbishop Sergius had taken part in this resolution. But when all the members of the Synod, together with Archbishop Sergius, actually came to give in their retirement, the Over-Procurator, who had set about organizing a new Synod, drew Archbishop Sergius to this. And he took an active part in the new Synod” (*Kratkij Obzor Istorii Russkoj Tserkvi ot revoliutsii do nashikh dnej* (A Short Review of the History of the Russian Church from the Revolution to our Days), Jordanville, 1952, p. 74. Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) wrote: “I can remember the opinions of those who knew him and who considered him to be a careerist and the complaints of hierarchs that he promised to retire with other members of the Synod in protest against Lvov, then he changed his mind and became head of the Synod” (Letter of April 23 / May 6, 1992 to Nicholas Churilov, *Church News*, April, 2003, p. 9). [↑](#footnote-ref-276)
277. V. Egorov, *K istorii provozglashenia gruzinami avtokefalii svoej Tserkvi v 1917 godu* (Towards a History of the Proclamation by the Georgians of the Autocephaly of their Church in 1917), Moscow, 1917, p. 9; in Monk Benjamin (Gomareteli), *Letopis’ tserkovnykh sobytij Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi nachinaia s 1917 goda* (Chronicle of Church Events, beginning from 1917), [www.zlatoust.ws/letopis.htm](http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis.htm), p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-277)
278. Monk Benjamin, op cit., pp. 8-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-278)
279. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-279)
280. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-280)
281. Figes, op. cit., p. 350. [↑](#footnote-ref-281)
282. Igumen Innokenty (Pavlov), “Proval Rossijskoj Tserkovnoj Reformy v 1917-18 godakh. Vybornost episkopov prikhodskogo klira v Rossijskoj Tserkvi prosushchestvovala men’she god” (The Fall of Russian Church Reform in 1917-18. The elections of bishops and parish clergy in the Russian Church lasted for less than a year), *P{ortal-Credo.Ru,* March 30, 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-282)
283. Shkarovskii, op. cit., p. 418. [↑](#footnote-ref-283)
284. Groyan, op. cit., pp. CXXII-CXXIII. [↑](#footnote-ref-284)
285. Bishop Diomedes, Address of November 21 / December 4, 2008, <http://www.russia-talk.com/otkliki/ot-601.htm>. [↑](#footnote-ref-285)
286. Babkin, *Dukhoventstvo,* p. 210. [↑](#footnote-ref-286)
287. Sokolov, L.A. *Episkop Ignatij Brianchaninov* (Bishop Ignaty Brianchaninov)*,* Kiev, 1915, vol. 2, p. 250. [↑](#footnote-ref-287)
288. Solonevich, in “Ot Ipatyevskogo Monastyria do Doma Ipatyevskogo” (From the Ipatiev Monastery to the Ipatiev House), *Pravoslavnie Monastyri* (Orthodox Monasteries), 29, 2009, p. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-288)
289. Grabbe, op. cit., p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-289)
290. It is said that during the siege of the Moscow Kremlin in October, 1917, the Mother of God ordered the “Reigning” icon to be taken in procession seven times round the Kremlin, and then it would be saved. However, it was taken round only once… (Monk Epiphany (Chernov), *Tserkov’ Katakombnaia na Zemle Rossijskoj* (The Catacomb Church in the Russian Land), MS, Old Woking, 1980. [↑](#footnote-ref-290)
291. S. Fomin (ed.), *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem* (Russian before the Second Coming), Moscow, 2003, p. 235. [↑](#footnote-ref-291)
292. Yakovitsky, “Sergianstvo: mif ili real’nost’”, *Vernost’* (Fidelity), N 100, January, 2008. [↑](#footnote-ref-292)
293. Archbishop Theophan, in Richard Bettes, Vyacheslav Marchenko, *Dukhovnik Tsarskoj Sem’i (Spiritual Father of the Royal Family)*, Moscow: Valaam Society of America, 1994. [↑](#footnote-ref-293)
294. Grabbe, *Russkaia Tserkov’ pered litsom gospodstvuiushchego zla* (The Russian Church in the Face of Dominant Evil), Jordanville, 1991, p. 4. Grabbe’s estimate of Lvov is supported by Oliver Figes, who writes: “a nobleman of no particular talent or profession, he was convinced of his calling to greatness, yet ended up in the 1920s as a pauper and a madman living on the streets of Paris” (*A People’s Tragedy,* London: Pimlico, 1997, p. 449). [↑](#footnote-ref-294)
295. M.A. Babkin, “Sviatejshij Sinod Pravoslavnoj Rossijskoj Tserkvi i Revoliutsionnie Sobytia Fevralia- Marta 1917 g.” (“The Most Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Revolutionary Events of February-March, 1917”), http://www.monarhist-spb.narod.ru/D-ST/Babkin-1, p. 3; Monk Benjamin (Gomareteli), Letopis’ tserkovnykh sobytij Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi nachinaia s 1917 goda (Chronicle of Church Events, beginning from 1917), www.zlatoust.ws/letopis.htm, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-295)
296. *Tserkovnie Vedomosti* (Church Gazette), 1917, № 9-15, pp. 69-70; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-296)
297. Tatiana Groyan, Tsaryu Nebesnomu i Zemnomu Vernij (Faithful to the Heavenly and Earthly King), Moscow: “Palomnik”, 1996, pp. CXCV-CXCVI; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-297)
298. Groyan, op. cit., pp. 183-184. Basil Lurye writes: “Metropolitan Macarius together with the hierarchs who were members with him of the last Tsarist composition of the Synod shared the sin of justifying the February coup. His signature is under the appeal to the flock released by the Synod on March 9, 1917 which began with the blasphemous words: ‘The will of God has been accomplished’. Instead of anathematizing the ‘Provisional Government’ - in accordance with what the Order of Orthodoxy said about all those who plot against Tsarist power, and with what the former over-procurator, N.P. Rayev, suggested, - the bishops displayed their own lack of belief in what they themselves declared every year on the Sunday of Orthodoxy. They began to ‘work’ with the ‘Provisional Government’ as if it were a lawful power, and not a group of plotters who were under the anathema of the Church and who drew under this same anathema all those who followed them. The Synod did not give in to the pressure of the new authorities, who tried to force it to issue a special act concerning the loss by the Tsar of his anointing, but, in sanctioning the sin against the Anointed one, it blessed the people to go on the path of the king-killers. To the great honour of Metropolitan Macarius it is necessary to say that it was precisely he among the older hierarchs who was the first to come to his senses. It was for that reason that he took up the strictly canonical position, not agreeing with his retirement from the Moscow Metropolia. Having uncanonically replaced Vladyka Macarius on the Moscow kathedra, the future Patriarch Tikhon understood this, but only much later (at the end of his life he asked forgiveness from Metropolitan Macarius). In 1957 the relics of the hierarch Macarius were found to be incorrupt.” (review of *Molis’, boris’, spasajsya*!, a collection of the letters of Metropolitan Macarius, in *Vertograd-Inform*, N 7 (40), July, 1998, p. 37). [↑](#footnote-ref-298)
299. As Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) testified, “already in 1917 he [Sergius] was dreaming of combining Orthodox Church life with the subjection of the Russian land to Soviet power…” (“Preemstvennost’ Grekha” (The Heritage of Sin), Tsaritsyn, p. 7). [↑](#footnote-ref-299)
300. See Mikhail V. Shkarovskii, “The Russian Orthodox Church”, in Edward Acton, Vladimir Cherniaev, William Rosenberg (eds.), *Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution 1914-1921*, Bloomington and Indianopolis: Indiana University Press, 1997, p. 417; “K 80-letiu Izbrania Sv. Patriarkha Tikhona na Sviashchennom sobore Rossijskoj Tserkvi 1917-18gg.” (Towards the Election of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon at the Sacred Council of the Russian Church, 1917-18), *Suzdal’skie Eparkhial’nie Vedomosti* (Suzdal Diocesan News), № 2, November, 1997, p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-300)
301. According to I.M. Andreyev, “the whole of the Synod had decided to go into retirement. Archbishop

     Sergius had taken part in this resolution. But when all the members of the Synod, together with Archbishop Sergius, actually came to give in their retirement, the Over-Procurator, who had set about

     organizing a new Synod, drew Archbishop Sergius to this. And he took an active part in the new Synod” (*Kratkij Obzor Istorii Russkoj Tserkvi ot revoliutsii do nashikh dnej* (A Short Review of the History of the Russian Church from the Revolution to our Days), Jordanville, 1952, p. 74. Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) wrote: “I can remember the opinions of those who knew him and who considered him to be a careerist and the complaints of hierarchs that he promised to retire with other members of the Synod in protest against Lvov, then he changed his mind and became head of the Synod” (Letter of April 23 / May 6, 1992 to Nicholas Churilov, Church News, April, 2003, p. 9). [↑](#footnote-ref-301)
302. Monk Benjamin (Gomareteli), Letopis’ tserkovnykh sobytij Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi nachinaia s 1917 goda (Chronicle of Church Events, beginning from 1917), www.zlatoust.ws/letopis.htm, pp. 7-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-302)
303. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-303)
304. Cited by Protopriest Nicholas Artemov, “Pomestnij Sobor 1917-1918gg. kak osnova i istochnik Postanovlenia N 362 ot 7/20 noibria 1920 g.” (The Local Council of 1917-1918 as the basis and source of Decree N 362 of November 7/20, 1920”, in *Materialy Mezhdunarodnoj nauchnoj konferentsii ‘1917-j: Tserkov’ i sud’by Rossii. K 90 letiu Pomestnogo Sobora i izbrania Patriarkha Tikhona* (Materials from the international scientific conference: ‘1917: The Church and the Destinies of Russia. Towards the 90th Anniversary of the Local Council and the Election of Patriarch Tikhon’), Moscow, 2008, p. 124. [↑](#footnote-ref-304)
305. The electors in Vladimir rejected beforehand all candidates who had displayed monarchist or “reactionary” tendencies before the revolution. The liberal Sergius was therefore a natural choice. See

     Paryaev, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-305)
306. V. Egorov, *K istorii provozglashenia gruzinami avtokefalii svoej Tserkvi v 1917 godu* (Towards a History of the Proclamation by the Georgians of the Autocephaly of their Church in 1917), Moscow, 1917, p. 9; in Monk Benjamin, op cit., p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-306)
307. Monk Benjamin, op cit., pp. 8-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-307)
308. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 7. In May, Archbishop Eudocimus, Bishop Alexander and Bishop Alexander (Dzyubai) consecrated Archimandrite Aftimius (Ofiesha) as Bishop of Brooklyn in the place of the reposed head of the Syro-Arabian mission, Bishop Raphael (p. 8). [↑](#footnote-ref-308)
309. Shkarovskii, op. cit., p. 418. [↑](#footnote-ref-309)
310. In January, 1915 the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, secretly offered Venizelos “most important territorial compensation for Greece on the coast of Asia Minor” if Greece joined the war on the side of the Allies. See Giles Milton, *Paradise Lost: Smyrna 1922*, London: Sceptre, 2008, p. 77. [↑](#footnote-ref-310)
311. Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, London: John Murray, 2003, pp. 358-362. [↑](#footnote-ref-311)
312. “Oecumenical Patriarch Meletios (Metaxakis) (1871-1935)”,  
     http://www.hsir.org/Theology\_en/E3a4013MeletiosMetaxakis.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-312)
313. Bishop Photius of Triaditsa, “The 70th Anniversary of the Pan-Orthodox Congress in Constantinople”, *Orthodox Life*, № 1, 1994, p. 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-313)
314. In 1967 a eulogy of the Mason Meletius was published in the official bulletin of the Great Masonic Lodge of Greece by Alexander Zervudakis. It read: “The first time that he passed through Istanbul (in 1906), he made the acquaintance of Freemasons... These people... proposed to him, during his second stay in Istanbul, that he become a Freemason (1908)... He asked his colleagues, whom he esteemed, to give him some information on Freemasonry, so that he might decide… to follow the example of so many English and other foreign bishops, to get to know and to initiate himself into the mysteries hidden within Freemasonry. He was put into contact with the Harmony Lodge, Number 44, of Istanbul... and so Meletius received Masonic illumination, at the beginning of 1909... There are very few who, like Brother Meletius, have made Freemasonry the object of their life all their days.” (“Meletius Metaxakis”, *Tektonikon Deltion: Organon tes Megales Stoas tes Hellados*, № 71, January- February, 1967; translated in Dimitri Kitsikis, *The Old Calendarists and the Rise of Religious Conservatism in Greece,* Etna, Ca.: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 1995, p. 17. See also “Oecumenical Patriarch Meletios (Metaxakis)”, Orthodox Tradition, vol. XVII, №№. 2 & 3, 2000, pp. 2- 8.) However, according to the Masonic journal *Pythagoras-Gnomon*, Meletius joined the Harmony lodge in Constantinople on March 15, 1910, later reaching the highest (thirty-third) degree (Monk Paul, op. cit., pp. 49-59). [↑](#footnote-ref-314)
315. Also after the war, on October 26, 1918, an unofficial conference between Meletius, Archimandrite Chrysostom Papadopoulos and Khamilka Alizivatos took place with Anglican bishops and theologians. Chrysostom, who later introduced the new calendar into the Church of Greece, accepted the validity of Anglican Orders (*Report of an Unofficial Conference on Unity Between Members of the Episcopal Church in America and His Grace, Meletios Metaxakis, Metropolitan of Athens, and his Advisers,* New York: Department of Missions, 1920; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp 26-28). (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-315)
316. Bishop Photius, op. cit., p. 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-316)
317. D. Gatopoulos, *Andreas Michalakopoulos, 1875-1938*, Athens, Elevtheroudakis, 1947, pp. 90-93; translated in Kitsikis, op. cit., pp. 9-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-317)
318. Professor Alexei Svetozarsky, “The 1917-18 Council of the Russian Orthodox Church”, Oxford: St. Stephen’s Press, 2003, p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-318)
319. Metropolitan Tikhon said: “Look! Her unfortunate, maddened children are tormenting our dear mother, your native Rus’, they are trying to tear her to pieces, they wish to take away her hallowed treasure – the Orthodox Faith. They defame your Father-Tsar, they destroy His portraits, they disparage his Imperial decrees, and mock him. Can your heart be calm before this, O Russian man? Again ask of your conscience. It will remind you of your truly loyal oath. It will say to you – be a loving son of your native land” (in Archimandrite Luke, “Nationalism, Russia, and the Restoration of

     the Patriarchate”, *Orthodox Life*, vol. 51, № 6, November-December, 2001, pp. 30-31). [↑](#footnote-ref-319)
320. N.V. Urusova, *Materinskij Plach Sviatoj Rusi* (The Maternal Lament of Holy Russia), Moscow, 2006, p. 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-320)
321. Kusakov, in *Pravoslavnij Tsar-Muchenik* (The Orthodox Tsar-Martyr), Moscow: The Orthodox Pilgrim, 1997, pp. 727-728. [↑](#footnote-ref-321)
322. Translated in Nicholas Zernov, "The 1917 Council of the Russian Orthodox Church", *Religion in Communist Lands,* vol. 6, № 1, 1978, p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-322)
323. L. Regelson, *Tragedia Russkoj Tserkvi, 1917-1945* (The Tragedy of the Russian Church, 1917 1945), Moscow: Krutitskoe Patriarshee Podvorie, 1996, p. 217. [↑](#footnote-ref-323)
324. Hilarion, quoted in John Shelton, *Church and State in Russia: The Last Years of the Empire 1900-1917,* New York: Octagon Books, 1965, p. 260. Archimandrite Luke writes: “The idea that a Patriarch wouldreplace the Tsar (especially after his execution) was not absent from the delegates’ understanding.‘The proponents for the scheme to re-establish the Patriarchate emphasized the fact that “the statedesired to be non-confessional, openly severing its alliance with the church”, and consequently theChurch “must become militant and have its own spiritual leader”’. ‘Somehow the thought ofPatriarch became associated with that of Tsar, while those opposed to the reestablishment of thePatriarchate brought forward democratic and republican principles.’” (“Nationalism, Russia and theRestoration of the Patriarchate”, *Orthodox Life*, November-December, 2001, p. 32) [↑](#footnote-ref-324)
325. Firsov, *Russkaia Tserkov’ nakanune Peremen (konets 1890-x – 1918 gg.)* (The Russian Church on the eve of the Changes (end of the 1890s to 1918), Moscow, 2002, p. 542. [↑](#footnote-ref-325)
326. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-326)
327. Regelson, op. cit., p. 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-327)
328. Nicholas Zernov, "The 1917 Council of the Russian Orthodox Church", *Religion in Communist Lands*, vol. 6, N 1, 1978. [↑](#footnote-ref-328)
329. GARF.F.3431.Op.1.D.318.L.36-3706; http://www.ispovednik.org/fullst.php?nid=31&binn\_rubrik\_pl\_news=136. [↑](#footnote-ref-329)
330. M. Babkin, “Pomestnij Sobor 1917-1918 gg.: ‘O Prisyage pravitel’stvu voobsche i byvshemu imperatoru Nikolaiu II v chastnosti” (The Local Council of 1917-1918: ‘On the Oath to the Government in general and to the former Emperor Nicholas II in particular), http://www.portalcredo.ru/site/print.php?act=lib&id=2704. [↑](#footnote-ref-330)
331. Sergius Shumilo, *V Katakombakh* (In the Catacombs), Lutsk, 2011, p. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-331)
332. Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime, 1919-1924*, London: Fontana, 1995, p. 343. According to Regelson (op. cit., p. 226), this took place on January 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-332)
333. Figes, *A People’s Tragedy*, London: Pimlico, 1997, p. 528; Archpriest Michael Polsky, *The New Martyrs of Russia*, new edition, Wildwood, Alberta: Monastery Press, 2000, pp. 91-92. [↑](#footnote-ref-333)
334. Professor Ivan Andreyev, "The Catacomb Church in the Soviet Union", *Orthodox Life*, March-April, 1951. For details of the destruction wrought against the Church in these years, see Vladimir Rusak, *Pir Satany* (Satan’s Feast), London, Canada: Zarya, 1991. [↑](#footnote-ref-334)
335. Mazyrin, “Legalizing the Moscow Patriarchate in 1927: The Secret Aims of the Authorities”, *Social Sciences: A Quarterly Journal of the Russian Academy of Sciences,* No 1, 2009, p. 28. This article was first published in Russian in *Otechestvennaia Istoria*, no. 4, 2008. [↑](#footnote-ref-335)
336. “When they asked the holy Patriarch why he had issued his epistle on the eve of the Council’s Sitting, Vladyka replied that he did not want to put the Council under the hammer and preferred to take it on himself alone” (Andreyev, op. cit., p. 9). [↑](#footnote-ref-336)
337. Russian text in M.E. Gubonin, *Akty Sviateishego Patriarkha Tikhona* (The Acts of His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon), Moscow: St. Tikhon's Theological Institute, 1994, pp. 82-85; *Deiania Sviaschennogo* *Sobora Pravoslavnoj Rossijskoj Tserkvi, 1917-1918 gg.* (The Acts of the Sacred Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, 1917-1918), Moscow, 1918, 1996, vol. 6, pp. 4-5 (Act 66.6). [↑](#footnote-ref-337)
338. In a letter to Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) that was captured by the Bolsheviks, the Patriarch called the Bolsheviks “oprichniki” – that is, he compared them to the murderous henchmen of Ivan the Terrible (*Za Khrista Postradavshie*, Moscow, 1997, vol. 1, p. 426). [↑](#footnote-ref-338)
339. On January 1, 1970 the Russian Church Abroad under Metropolitan Philaret of New York confirmed this anathema and added one of its own against “Vladimir Lenin and the other persecutors of the Church of Christ, dishonourable apostates who have raised their hands against the Anointed of God, killing clergymen, trampling on holy things, destroying the churches of God, tormenting our brothers and defiling our Fatherland” (http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print\_page&pid=1775) [↑](#footnote-ref-339)
340. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 280, 296. [↑](#footnote-ref-340)
341. Gubonin, op. cit., p. 151. [↑](#footnote-ref-341)
342. *Deiania*, vol. 6, p. 7; quoted in A.G. Yakovitsky, “Sergianstvo: mif ili real’nost? (Sergianism: myth or reality?), *Vernost’*, 100, January, 2008. [↑](#footnote-ref-342)
343. *Deiania*, op. cit., vol. 6, p. 36. Another source quotes the following response of the Council to the patriarch’s anathema: “The Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia in his epistle to the beloved in the Lord archpastors, pastors and all faithful children of the Orthodox Church of Christ has drawn the spiritual sword against the outcasts of the human race – the Bolsheviks, and anathematized them. The head of the Russian Orthodox Church adjures all her faithful children not to enter into any communion with these outcasts. For their satanic deeds they are cursed in this life and in the life to come. Orthodox! His Holiness the Patriarch has been given the right to bind and to loose according to the word of the Saviour… Do not destroy your souls, cease communion with the servants of Satan – the Bolsheviks. Parents, if your children are Bolsheviks, demand authoritatively that they renounce their errors, that they bring forth repentance for their eternal sin, and if they do not obey you, renounce them. Wives, if your husbands are Bolsheviks and stubbornly continue to serve Satan, leave your husbands, save yourselves and your children from the soul-destroying infection. An Orthodox Christian cannot have communion with the servants of the devil… Repent, and with burning prayer call for help from the Lord of Hosts and thrust away from yourselves ‘the hand of strangers’ – the age-old enemies of the Christian faith, who have declared themselves in self-appointed fashion ‘the people’s power’… If you do not obey the Church, you will not be her sons, but participants in the cruel and satanic deeds wrought by the open and secret enemies of Christian truth… Dare! Do not delay! Do not destroy your soul and hand it over to the devil and his stooges.” ("Iz sobrania Tsentral'nogo gosudarstvennogo arkhiva OktIabr'skoj revoliutsii: listovka bez vykhodnykh dannykh, pod N 1011" (From the collection of the Central State Archive of the October Revolution: pamphlet without dates, under N 1011), *Nauka i Religia* (Science and Religion), 1989, N 4; partly translated in Arfed Gustavson, *The Catacomb Church*, Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1960, p. 9). One member of the Council said: “If the father, mother, brothers and sisters did not receive the returning evil-doer, but expelled him, saying: ‘You are a scoundrel, your hands are covered in blood, you are not our son, nor our brother,’ the disorders would cease.” (*Deiania*, op. cit., vol. 6, p. 40). [↑](#footnote-ref-343)
344. *Deiania,* op. cit., vol. 6, p. 40; Yakovitsky, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-344)
345. *Deiania*, op. cit., vol. 6, pp. 41-43. [↑](#footnote-ref-345)
346. *Deiania,* op. cit., p. 159. [↑](#footnote-ref-346)
347. Gustavson, op. cit.; John Sheldon Curtiss, *The Russian Church and the Soviet State, 1917-1950,* Boston, 1953, pp. 125-127. Curtiss refers to pages 177 to 179 of the *Acts* of the Local Council. [↑](#footnote-ref-347)
348. *Bogoslovskij Vestnik* (The Theological Herald), N 1, 1993, p. 217. [↑](#footnote-ref-348)
349. V.A. Konovalov, *Otnoshenie khristianstva k sovietskoj vlasti* (The Relationship of Christianity to Soviet Power), Montreal, 1936, p. 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-349)
350. Protopriest Benjamin Zhukov, *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ na Rodine i za Rubezhom* (The Russian Orthodox Church in the Homeland and Abroad), Paris, 2005, p. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-350)
351. Konovalov, op. cit., p. 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-351)
352. Grabbe, *Pis’ma* (Letters), Moscow, 1998, p. 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-352)
353. Alexis Rufimsky, “Biografia sviaschennomuchenika Nikolaia (Parfenova), episkopa Atkarskago, radi Khrista yurodivago ‘malenkago batiushki’” (A Biography of Hieromartyr Nicholas (Parthenov), Bishop of Aktar, fool for Christ, ‘the little batyushka’), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’*, N 17 (1782), September 1/14, 2005, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-353)
354. Shkarvoskii, “The Russian Orthodox Church”, op. cit., pp. 420-421. [↑](#footnote-ref-354)
355. Barmenkov, in Alexander Mikhalchenkov, “Tserkov’ v ogne” (The Church in the Fire), *Pravoslavnij Vestnik* (The Orthodox Herald) (Canada), June-July, 1989, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-355)
356. Sokolov, “Put’ Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi v Rossii-SSSR (1916-1961)” (The Path of the Russian Orthodox Church in Russia and the USSR (1916-1961), in *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ v SSSR: Sbornik* (The Russian Orthodox Church in the USSR: a Collection), Munich, 1962, p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-356)
357. Alferov, op. cit., pp. 16-17. For more on the Vladivostok Congress of the Land, see Demetrius Anakshin, “Poslednij zemskij sobor” (The Last Land Council), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’*, № 21 (1594), November 1/14, 1997, pp. 10-11, 15, and M.B. Danilushkin, *Istoria Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi (A* *History of the Russian Orthodox Church),* vol. I, St. Petersburg, 1997, chapter 6). The first decree of this Congress stated: “The Congress recognizes that the only path to the regeneration of a great, powerful and free Russia is the restoration in it of the monarchy, headed by a lawful Autocrat from the House of the Romanovs, in accordance with the Basic laws of the Russian Empire”. [↑](#footnote-ref-357)
358. Regelson, op. cit., pp. 236-237. [↑](#footnote-ref-358)
359. Lebedev, “St. Patriarch Tikhon and the Calendar Question Part 1”, orthodox@LISTSERV.INDIANA.EDU, 10 July, 2002. [↑](#footnote-ref-359)
360. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 21 [↑](#footnote-ref-360)
361. *Sviataia Rus’* (Holy Rus’), 2003; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 23-24. [↑](#footnote-ref-361)
362. See Archimandrite Kallistos Ware and Rev. Colin Davey (eds.), *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue: The Moscow Agreed Statement, 1977*, chapter 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-362)
363. Alan Bullock writes: “One of the most celebrated Okhrana agents, Roman Malinovski, became Lenin’s trusted chief agent in Russia and led the Bolshevik deputies in the Fourth Duma. In 1908-10, four out of five members of the Bolsheviks’ St. Petersburg Committee were Okhrana agents. Persistent rumours that Stalin was one as well have never been confirmed…” (*Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives,* London: HarperCollins, 1991, p. 435, note) [↑](#footnote-ref-363)
364. Even after smuggling Lenin and his men into Russia in the sealed train, the Germans continued to pay him vast sums of money. Thus a “top secret” document of the Reichsbank in Berlin dated January 8, 1918 informed the Foreign Affairs Commissar that 50 million rubles were to be sent to the Sovnarkom. [↑](#footnote-ref-364)
365. Trotsky, in Edvard Radzinsky, *The Last Tsar*, London: Arrow Books, 1993, p. 297. [↑](#footnote-ref-365)
366. See Nikolai Kozlov, *Krestnij Put'* (The Way of the Cross), Moscow, 1993; Enel, "Zhertva" (Sacrifice), *Kolokol'* (Bell), Moscow, 1990, N 5, pp. 17-37, and Michael Orlov, "Ekaterinburgskaia Golgofa" (The Golgotha of Yekaterinburg), *Kolokol'* (Bell), 1990, N 5, pp. 37-55; Lebedev, op. cit., p. 519; Prince Felix Yusupov, *Memuary* (Memoirs), Moscow, 1998, p. 249. However, some doubt is cast on the ritual murder hypothesis by the fact that when Sokolov’s archive was sold at Sotheby’s in 1990, the critical piece of evidence – the symbols on the wall-paper – were missing (Bishop Ambrose of Methone, personal communication, June 4, 2010). See also [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TwanvYnzCKE&feature=related](http://www.facebook.com/l/xAQG5FDSc/www.youtube.com/watch?v=TwanvYnzCKE&feature=related). [↑](#footnote-ref-366)
367. Gubonin, op. cit., p. 143. [↑](#footnote-ref-367)
368. St. John, ”Homily before a Memorial Service for the Tsar-Martyr”, in *Man of God: Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco,* Richfield Springs, N.Y, 1994, p. 133. Archbishop Averky of Syracuse continues the theme: “It is small consolation for us that the Royal Family was killed directly by non-Russian hands, non-Orthodox hands and non-Russian people. Although that is so, *the whole Russian people* is guilty of this terrible, unprecedented evil deed, insofar as it did not resist or stand against it, but behaved itself in such a way that the evil deed appeared as the natural expression of that mood which by that time had matured in the minds and hearts of the undoubted majority of the unfortunate misguided Russian people, beginning with the ‘lowers’ and ending with the very ‘tops’, the upper aristocracy” (Religiozno-misticheskij smysl ubienia Tsarkoj Sem’i” (The Religious-Mystical Meaning of the Killing of the Royal Family), http://www.ispovednik.org/fullest.php?nid=59&binn\_rubrik\_pl\_news=132. [↑](#footnote-ref-368)
369. Regelson, op. cit., p. 52; Gubonin, op. cit., p. 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-369)
370. Lenin, Letter to Gorky (1913), *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenij* (Collected Works) (second edition, 1926-1932), vol. 17, pp. 81-86. Cf. S.G. Pushkarev, *Lenin i Rossia* (Lenin and Russia), Frankfurt: Possev-Verlag, 1986, introduction; R. Wurmbrand, *Was Karl Marx a Satanist?,* Diane books, 1978. [↑](#footnote-ref-370)
371. Liberman, S.I. “Narodnij komisar Krasin” (The People’s Commissar Krasin), *Novij zhurnal* (The New Journal), № 7, 1944, p. 309; quoted in Volkogonov, D. Lenin, London: Harper Collins, 1994, p. 372. According to another version of this anecdote, Lenin said: “The peasants should pray to it; in any case they will feel its effects long before they feel any effect from on high” (S. Courtois et al., *The Black* *Book of Communism,* Cambridge, Mass., London, England: Harvard University Press, 1999, p. 124). [↑](#footnote-ref-371)
372. V. Karpov, *Genralissimus,* Kaliningrad, 2004, p. 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-372)
373. Lenin, op. cit., vol. 41, p. 309. [↑](#footnote-ref-373)
374. Solzhenitsyn, Acceptance Speech, Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion, 1983; *Russkaia Mysl'* (Russian Thought), № 3465, 19 May, 1983, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-374)
375. Trotsky, in Edvard Radzinsky, *The Last Tsar*, London: Arrow Books, 1993, p. 297. [↑](#footnote-ref-375)
376. Metropolitan Anthony, "Tserkovnost' ili politika?" (Churchness or Politics?), *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 9 (1558), May 1/14, 1996, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-376)
377. Catholicos Leonid to Patriarch Tikhon, August 5, 1919; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-377)
378. K.D. Kafafov, “Vospominania o vnutrennykh delakh Rossijskoj imperii” (Reminiscences of the Internal Affairs of the Russian Empire), *Voprosy Istorii* (Historical Questions), № 7, 2005, p. 93. [↑](#footnote-ref-378)
379. Archpriest Zakaria Machitadze, “Holy Hieromartyr Kirion, Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia (†1918)”, *Православие.Ru*, [26 July, 2007 г.](http://www.pravoslavie.ru/archive/070726), <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/7290.htm>.

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     [↑](#footnote-ref-379)
380. <http://www.pstbi.ru/bin/code.exe/frames/m/ind_oem.html?/ans/>; Archimandrite Seraphim, “Russkie sviaschennomucheniki i mucheniki v Gruzii”, Pravoslavnij Put’, 1965, pp. 23-32. [↑](#footnote-ref-380)
381. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 71-75; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-381)
382. K.E. Skurat, *Istoria Pomestnykh Pravoslavnykh Tserkvej* (A History of the Local Orthodox Churches), chapter 1; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 37-38. [↑](#footnote-ref-382)
383. Melia, "The Orthodox Church of Georgia", *A Sign of God: Orthodoxy 1964*, Athens: Zoe, 1964, pp. 112-113. According to Slava Katamidze, the number of victims was “enormous”, but “the real figure has never been published” (*Loyal Comrades, Ruthless Killers*, Staplehurst: Spellmount, 2003, p. 39). [↑](#footnote-ref-383)
384. Jelavich, *History of the Balkans*, Cambridge University Press, 1983, volume 2, pp. 158-159. [↑](#footnote-ref-384)
385. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 17, 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-385)
386. Gubonin, op. cit., p. 155; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 24-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-386)
387. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-387)
388. Glazkov, “Istoricheskie prichiny niekotorykh sobitij v istorii Rumynskoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi do II Mirovoj vojny” (The Historical Reasons for some Events in the History of the Romanian Orthodox Church before the Second World War), *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’* (Church Life), №№ 3-4, May-August, 2000, pp. 46-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-388)
389. According to the brochure *A True Account of the Church Advisory Council to the Metropolitan of Kiev* (Kiev, 1917), he is described as "at all times of the day and even sometimes at night, always with his briefcase in his hand or under his arm, racing about in an automobile with representatives of the executive committee, either to oversee the searching of monasteries in order to discover counter-revolutionary or pogromist literature, or seizing confidential documents at the Church Consistory..." (p. 30). [↑](#footnote-ref-389)
390. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 58. According to another version, Lipkovsky was “consecrated” by placing his hand on the head of St. Clement, Pope of Rome. See M.V. Shkarovsky, *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ pri Staline i Khruscheve* (The Russian Orthodox Church under Stalin and Khruschev), Moscow, 2005, p. 175, footnote 2; Archbishop Leontius (Filippovich), “Tserkovnij shovinizm i samosviatstvo na Ukraine. K Istorii vozniknovenia UAPTs v 20-e gody XX st.” (Church Chauvinism and self-consecration in Ukraine. Towards a history of the appearance of the UAOC in the 20s of the 20th century”, <http://catacomb.org.ua/php?name=Pages&go=print_page&pid=821>. [↑](#footnote-ref-390)
391. Protopresbyter Michael Polsky, *Novie Mucheniki Rossijskie* (The New Martyrs of Russia), Jordanville, 1957, part 2, chapter IV; “Hieromartyr Basil, Bishop of Priluky”, *Orthodox Life*, vol. 48, № 6, November-December, 1998, pp. 39-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-391)
392. "Spravka o Priniatii v Obschenie Episkopa Seraphima (Lyade)" (Document on the Reception of Bishop Seraphim (Lyade) into Communion), *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'* (Church Life), N 12, 1937. [↑](#footnote-ref-392)
393. See Archbishop Leontius (Philippovich), "Ukrainskie shovinsity i samosvyaty" (Ukrainian Chauvinists and Self-Consecrators), *Russkij Pastyr* (Russian Pastor), II-III, 1995, pp. 154-187; J.-F. Meyer, *Réligions et sécurité internationale* (Religions and International Security), Berne: Office Centrale de la Defense, 1995, p. 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-393)
394. *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia* (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), 1968, №№ 89-90, pp. 19-23; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 25-26. [↑](#footnote-ref-394)
395. Pipes, op. cit., p. 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-395)
396. For example, by Protodeacon German Ivanov-Trinadtsaty, who writes: “Even if the White Army officially supported the principle of ‘non-pre-determination’ in relation to the future political order of Russia, according to the witness of General P.N. Wrangel, 90% of his Russian Army was composed of monarchists, and set itself only one task – the overthrow of the Bolshevik yoke” (“90 let Velikogo Rossijskogo Iskhoda” (90 Years of the Great Russian Exodus), *Nasha Strana*, N 2905, December 4, 2010, p. 2) . [↑](#footnote-ref-396)
397. Yusupov, *Memuary* (Memoirs), Moscow, 1998, p. 250. [↑](#footnote-ref-397)
398. Nazarov, *Tajna Rossii* (The Mystery of Russia), Moscow: “Russkaia Idea”, 1999, pp. 85-86. [↑](#footnote-ref-398)
399. Denikin, *Kto spas Sovetskuiu vlast’ ot gibeli?* (Who Saved Soviet Power from Destruction?), Paris, 1937, in A.I. Denikin and A.A. von Lampe, *Tragedia Beloj Armii* (The Tragedy of the White Army), Moscow, 1991, p. 8. Denikin said during the war: “You think that I’m going to Moscow to restore the throne of the Romanovs? Never!” [↑](#footnote-ref-399)
400. Khrapovitsky, op. cit., p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-400)
401. Shambarov, *Belogvardeischina* (Whiteguardism), Moscow, 2002. [↑](#footnote-ref-401)
402. Anthony Lockley, “Propaganda and the First Cold War in North Russia, 1918-1919”, *History Today*, vol. 53 (9), September, 2003, pp. 46-53. [↑](#footnote-ref-402)
403. St. John Maximovich, in Fomin, op. cit., p. 286. [↑](#footnote-ref-403)
404. Pipes, op. cit., pp. 109-110. [↑](#footnote-ref-404)
405. Pipes, op. cit., pp. 110, 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-405)
406. Von Lampe, “Prichiny neudachi vooruzhennogo vystuplenia belykh” (The Reasons for the Failure of the Whites’ Armed Intervention), Berlin, 1929, in Denikin and von Lampe, op. cit., pp. 28-30. [↑](#footnote-ref-406)
407. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 35-36. [↑](#footnote-ref-407)
408. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 30-31. [↑](#footnote-ref-408)
409. Kniazev, V.V. *Zhizn’ za vsekh i smert’ za vsekh* (Life for all and death for all), Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1971, pp. 20-23; S. Volkov, *Admiral Aleksandr Vasilievich Kolchak*, Moscow, 1991, pp. 70-81; Fr. Stefan Krasovitsky, "Otvet apologetu kommunisticheskoj ideologii" (Reply to an Apologist of the Communist Ideology), *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), N 1553, February 15/28, 1996, p. 15. According to another source, the Patriarch sent Bishop Nestor with the icon of St. Nicholas to Kolchak in Omsk with the instruction: “Tell the people that if they do not unite and take Moscow again by armed force, then we will perish and Holy Rus’ will perish with us” (Gubanov, op. cit., p. 131). [↑](#footnote-ref-409)
410. Regelson, op. cit., p. 237; Sokolov, op. cit., p. 16; Shkarovskii, “The Russian Orthodox Church”, op. cit., p. 423; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 38-39; Zhukov, op. cit, p. 92. [↑](#footnote-ref-410)
411. *Izvestia*, October 22, 1919; in Zhukov, op. cit., pp. 92-93, footnote 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-411)
412. The campaign was counter-productive from the Bolsheviks’ point of view because the relics of the saints were often found to be incorrupt. Thus “St. Sergius of Radonezh was said to have been found perfectly preserved, to the rapturous joy of the onlookers and the consternation of the monastery’s communist custodian, who was subsequently beaten up by the crowd.” (Richard Overy, *The Dictators,* London: Penguin, 2005, p. 274). The relics of St. Theodosius of Chernigov were also found to be incorrupt (see photograph opposite page 182 in I.M. Andreyev, *Russia’s Catacomb Saints,* Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 1982. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-412)
413. Shkarovskii, “The Russian Orthodox Church”, op. cit., pp. 422, 423. [↑](#footnote-ref-413)
414. *Russkaia pravoslavnaia tserkov’ i kommunisticheskoe gosudarstvo, 1917-1941* (The Russian Orthodox Church and the Communist State, 1917-1941), Moscow: Terra, 1996, p. 69. [↑](#footnote-ref-414)
415. Roslof, *Red Priests*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002, p. 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-415)
416. Gustavson, op. cit., p. 34. In Petrograd alone 550 clergy and monks of all ranks were shot in the period 1917-1922 (Anatoly Latyshev, "Provesti besposhadnij Massovij Terror Protiv Popov" (The Conducting of Ruthless Mass Terror against the Priests), *Argumenty i Fakty* (Arguments and Facts), № 26, 1996). [↑](#footnote-ref-416)
417. Rusak, *Pir Satany*, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-417)
418. Shkarovskii, op. cit., pp. 423-424. [↑](#footnote-ref-418)
419. It should be remembered that this was exclusively an anti-Orthodox rather than an anti-religious struggle; for Lenin viewed Islam as an ally in spreading world revolution to the countries of the East, and he did not persecute the Catholics or Protestants. [↑](#footnote-ref-419)
420. "To imerologiakon skhisma apo istorikes kai kanonikes apopseos exetazomenon" (The Calendar Schism from an Historical and Canonical Point of View), *Agios Agathangelos Esphigmenites* (St. Agathangelos of Esphigmenou), 130, March-April, 1992, p. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-420)
421. Miletich, “Behind the Sourozh Phenomenon: Spiritual Freedom or Cultural Captivity? Meletios Metaksakis, Metropolitan, Archbishop, Pope and Patriarch”, hocna@yahoogroups.com, July 5, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-421)
422. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-422)
423. Goutzidis, *Ekklesiologika Themata* (Ecclesiological Themes), Athens, 1980, pp. 67-68. [↑](#footnote-ref-423)
424. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-424)
425. Sakkas, *The Calendar Question*, Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1983, p. 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-425)
426. Goutzidis, op. cit., p. 68. [↑](#footnote-ref-426)
427. Metropolitan Ephraim, *Letter on the Calendar Issue*, Brookline, Mass.: Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 1968, second edition 1979, St. Nectarios Educational Series, № 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-427)
428. Alexis Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations, 1918-1974*, Athens: Centre for Asia Minor Studies, 1983, pp. 54-57. [↑](#footnote-ref-428)
429. Alexandris, op. cit., p. 58. [↑](#footnote-ref-429)
430. Averky, "O polozhenii pravoslavnago khristianina v sovremennom mire" (On the Position of the Orthodox Christian in the Contemporary World), in *Istinnoe Pravoslavie i Sovremennij Mir* (True Orthodoxy and the Contemporary World), Jordanville, 1972. [↑](#footnote-ref-430)
431. Troitsky, *The Unity of the Church and the World Conference of Christian Communities*, Montreal: The Monastery Press, 1975, pp. 13-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-431)
432. Vasilios Stavrides, *Istoria tou Oikoumenikou Patriarkheiou (1453 – simeron)* (A History of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (1453 to the present day)), Thessalonica, 1987, pp. 248-249. [↑](#footnote-ref-432)
433. Stavrides, op. cit., pp. 260, 247. [↑](#footnote-ref-433)
434. Fr. George Macris, *The Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Movement*, Seattle: St. Nectarios Press, 1986, pp. 4-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-434)
435. Alexandris, op. cit., p. 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-435)
436. http://www.slideshare.net/SpyridonVoykalis/ep-anglican-orders1922 [↑](#footnote-ref-436)
437. http://www.slideshare.net/SpyridonVoykalis/cyprus-39568219  [↑](#footnote-ref-437)
438. http://www.slideshare.net/SpyridonVoykalis/jerusalem-39568862  [↑](#footnote-ref-438)
439. Paul Gerrard, in Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-439)
440. Smith, *Former People: The Last Days of the Russian Aristocracy,* London: Macmillan, 2012, pp. 207-208. [↑](#footnote-ref-440)
441. For more details on this Council, see Andrej Alexandrovich Kostriukov, “Stavropol’skij Sobor 1919 g. i nachalo nezavisimoj tserkovnoj organizatsii na iuge Rossii” (The Stavropol Council of 1919 and the beginning of independent church organization in the south of Russia), *Ural’skij istoricheskij vestnik,* 2008, N 4 (21), pp. 71-75; *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’*, N 5 (685), May, 2009, pp. 1-11. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-441)
442. Before being evacuated, while still in Yekaterinodar, Metropolitan Anthony came out of the cathedral, accompanied by all the clergy, and addressed the thousands of faithful, asking them – for one knows, he said, that “the voice of the people is the voice of God” - whether they should leave with the White Army or stay in Russia and suffer for the faith. The crowd replied that they should leave (Monk Anthony (Chernov), *Archvêque Theophane de Poltava* (Archbishop Theophan of Poltava), Lavardac: Monastère de St. Michael, 1988, p. 73) (V.M.). [↑](#footnote-ref-442)
443. About 200,000 military and civilian personnel in a fleet of 126 vessels were evacuated from Sevastopol to Constaninople (Schemanun Seraphima, *Saint Seraphim of Sophia*, Etna, Ca., 2008, p. 53, note). According to Zhukiov (op. cit., p. 67) there were 125 ships with about 150,000 people on board. At the beginning of the 1920s about 85,000 Russian emigres had settled in Serbia. They built four churches and chapels and formed more than ten Russian parishes and spiritual brotherhoods (M. Skarovsky, *Istoria Russkoj Tserkovnoj Emigratsii* (A History of the Russian Church Emigration). St. Petersburg, 2009, p. 26). [↑](#footnote-ref-443)
444. The session of the HCA took place on board the steamer *Great Prince Alexander Mikhailovich.* In it took part Metropolitan Anthony of Kiev, Metropolitan Plato of Odessa, Archbishop Theophan of Poltava and Bishop Benjamin of Sebastopol. It was decided to continue the prerogatives of the members of the HCA, and discussed all aspects of the Church life of the refugees and soldiers in all states having relations with the Ecumenical Patriarch (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 47-48). (V.M.)

     At the second session, on November 22, it was decided to include Archbishop Anastasy of Kishinev, who was already living in Constantinople, in the HCA (Zhukov, op. cit., p. 69) [↑](#footnote-ref-444)
445. Traskovsky, "Istoria Russkoj Zarubezhnoj Tserkvi, 1921-1939 gg." (A History of the Russian Church Abroad, 1921-1939), *Pravoslavnij Put'* (The Orthodox Way), Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1995, pp. 20-24. Sremskie Karlovtsy was a significant centre for the Russian Church in Exile because in 1691 37,000 Serbian families had fled there from Turkish-ruled Serbia with the blessing of Patriarch Arsenius III, forming an autonomous metropolitanate in 1712. Just as the Serbs fled west from the Turks, so the Russians now fled west from the Bolsheviks. [↑](#footnote-ref-445)
446. Psarev, op. cit., p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-446)
447. Nicholas Ross, *Saint Alexandre Nevski. Centre Spiritual de l’emigration russe, 1918-1939,* Paris: Editions Syrtes, 2011, p. 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-447)
448. Salni and 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](http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page*pid=966) . [↑](#footnote-ref-448)
449. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-449)
450. However, A.A. Kotstriukov writes that this resolution did not reach ROCOR (“Russkaia Zarubezhnaia Tserkov’: sozdanie, vzaimootnoshenia s moskovskoj tserkovnoj vlastiu i vnutrennie razdelenia v 1920-1938 gg.” (The Russian Orthodox Church Abroad: creation, relations with the Moscow ecclesiastical authorities and internal divisions from 1920 to 1938)), Dissertation, 2012, <http://www.dissercat.com/content/russkaya-zarubezhnaya-tserkov-sozdanie-vzaimootnosheniya-s-moskovskoi-tserkovnoi-vlastyu-i-v#ixzz3HwE4FtaB> [↑](#footnote-ref-450)
451. According to Ross (op. cit., pp. 50-51), all Russian bishops in exile, and all former members of the Moscow Council of 1917-18 were automatically members of the Council. There were about 150 delegates, of whom only 109 had full voting powers. [↑](#footnote-ref-451)
452. Ivan Snegarov, *Otnosheniata mezhdu B’lgarskata ts’rkva i drugite pravoslavni ts’rkvi sled prov’zglasiavaneto na skhizmata* (Relations between the Bulgarian Church and other Orthodox Churches following the declaration of the schism); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-452)
453. Ross, op. cit., p. 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-453)
454. Protodeacon German Ivanov-Trinadtsaty, “Aktual’nost’ Pervogo Vsezarubezhnogo Sobora” (The Contemporary Relevance of the First All-Abroad Council), *Nasha Strana* (Our Country), N 2929, December 3, 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-454)
455. Kostriukov, op. cit., pp. 9-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-455)
456. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 60-61. [↑](#footnote-ref-456)
457. Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, *A History of the Russian Church Abroad*, Seattle: St. Nectarios Press, 1961, p. 24; Archbishop Nikon (Rklitsky), *Zhizneopisanie Blazhennejshago Antonia,* *Mitropolita Kievskago i Galitskago* (A Life of his Beatitude Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich), New York, 1960, vol. VI, p. 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-457)
458. Anton Ter-Grigorian, “Priamurskij zemskij sobor (kontsa 1922-ogo goda)”, [http://anton-tg.livejournal.com/307585.html](http://antoon-tg.livejournal.com/307585.html), July 24, 2006. See also Demetrius Anakshin, “Poslednij zemskij sobor”, *Pravoslavnaia Rus’*, N 21 (1594), November 1/14, 1997, pp. 10-11, 15, and Danilushkin, op. cit., chapter 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-458)
459. Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, London: John Murray, 2003, pp. 440-441. [↑](#footnote-ref-459)
460. Giles Milton, *Paradise Lost: Smyrna 1922*, London: Sceptre, 2008, p. 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-460)
461. Macmillan, op. cit., p. 443. [↑](#footnote-ref-461)
462. Curzon, in Matthew Stewart, “Catastrophe at Smyrna”, *History Today*, vol. 54, July, 2004, pp. 28-29. [↑](#footnote-ref-462)
463. Macmillan, op. cit., p. 451. [↑](#footnote-ref-463)
464. Macmillan, op. cit., p. 459. [↑](#footnote-ref-464)
465. Nicolson, *History, 1919-1925*, 1934, p. 250; quoted in Jean de Murat, *The Great Extirpation of Hellenism & Christianity in Asia Minor*, Miami, 1999, p. 95. [↑](#footnote-ref-465)
466. Churchill, *Memoirs*; in Murat, op. cit., p. 108. [↑](#footnote-ref-466)
467. Murat writes, basing himself on the account by Edward Hale Bierstadt in *The Great Betrayal*: “Just after midday on Monday, 11 September 1922, the Turkish High Commander Noureddin sent men to arrest the Greek Archbishop Chrysostom and to bring him to his Residency Konak. The reverend priest arrived there separately from the Turkish escort, accompanied by a French naval attachment of 12 men. The old Archbishop ascended the stairs of the Residency with difficulty and, entering the General’s office, held out his hand to greet him. Noureddin, instead of taking it, spat at him in uncontrolled anger and, showing the venerable and eminent priest a file which was open on the table, said to him savagely: ‘Based on these sworn statements, the court in Ankara has already sentenced you to death. It is only remains for the people to carry out this judicial decision’. And shouting out with unsuppressed violence ‘Take yourself out of my sight!’, he made a sign at the same time to the guards, who pushed the Archbishop out.

     “The reverend priest descended the stairs of the mansion slowly and at the same time Noureddin went out onto the balcony, shouting to the crowd of fanatical Turks who were gathered there: ‘Give him what he deserves’. The savage brutality which followed is absolutely horrific. They fell upon him like hungry wolves. They put out his eyes, they cut out his tongue, his ears and his nose, they pulled out his hair and his beard in their frantic mania, they cut off his hands and did other unspeakable horrors. Then they put a chain around his butchered body, hung him on the back of a car and dragged him around the square and towards the Turkish quarters. The French marines who had escorted Chrysostom to the Residency and who were waiting for his return, went crazy when they saw this brutal savagery. Some of them hurled themselves instinctively forward to give human protection to the victim, but the leader of the detachment forbade them to proceed. They were an insignificant minority under the circumstances and they would doubtless have met the same fate as the unfortunate Archbishop from the maniacal crowd had they thoughtlessly proceeded to take action. The French leader of the detachment himself had his pistol ready in his hand, but he was trembling from head to foot from the outrageous spectacle.” (op. cit., pp. 137-138) [↑](#footnote-ref-467)
468. Murat, op. cit., p. 128. [↑](#footnote-ref-468)
469. Jelavich, op. cit., pp. 131-132, 173-174; *"1922-1982", Orthodox Christian Witness*, October 4/17, 1982. [↑](#footnote-ref-469)
470. Milton, op. cit., p. 372. Fr. Raphael Moore (ORTHODOX@LISTSERV.INDIANA.EDU , January 17, 1999) calculates that the following numbers of Greeks were killed in Asia Minor: in 1914 – 400,000 in forced labour brigades; 1922 - 100,000 in Smyrna; 1916-22 – 350,000 Pontians during forced deportations; 1914-22 – 900,000 from maltreatment, starvation in all other areas. [↑](#footnote-ref-470)
471. This was reported in June, 1921 to the Serbian Orthodox Church by Bishop Nicholas (Velimirovich), who had been sent to America to investigate the needs of the Serbs there. Canon 28 talks about the “barbarian” lands in Thrace and other places being placed under Constantinople. Nobody before Metaxakis had interpreted it to mean jurisdiction over the whole world outside the traditional patriarchates… [↑](#footnote-ref-471)
472. Archimandrite Theokletos A. Strangas, *Ekklesias Ellados Istoria* (A History of the Church of Greece), Athens, 1970, vol. II, p. 1118; quoted in “Oecumenical Patriarch Meletios (Metaxakis)”, *Orthodox Tradition,* vol. XVII, №№. 2 & 3, 2000, p. 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-472)
473. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-473)
474. Monk Paul, *Neoimerologitismos-Oikoumenismos* (Newcalendarism-Ecumenism), Athens, 1982, p. 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-474)
475. Bishop Photius, op. cit., p. 41-42. [↑](#footnote-ref-475)
476. Alexandris, op. cit., pp. 75-76. [↑](#footnote-ref-476)
477. “To imerologiakon skhisma apo istorikis kai kanonikis apopseos exetazomenon" (The Calendar Schism from an historical and canonical point of view), *Agios Agathangelos Esphigmenites* (St. Agathangelos of Esphigmenou), № 131, May-June, 1992, p. 17; Bishop Photius, op. cit., p. 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-477)
478. Quoted by Fr. Alexander Papertov, “Starostil’niki: bor’ba za kalendar’ ili predchuvstvie dukhovnoj vojny?” (The Old Calendarists: a struggle for the calendar or an intimation of a spiritual war?”), November, 2014, Portal-Credo.ru. [↑](#footnote-ref-478)
479. Papertov, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-479)
480. Stavrides, op. cit., p. 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-480)
481. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 93. [↑](#footnote-ref-481)
482. *A History of the Russian Church Abroad*, Seattle: St. Nectarios Press, 1972, p. 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-482)
483. Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), in Monk Gorazd, "Quo Vadis, Konstantinopol'skaia Patriarkhia?" (Where are you going, Constantinopolitan Patriarchate?), *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox

     Russia), № 2 (1455), January 15/28, 1992, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-483)
484. Gubonin, op. cit., p. 304. [↑](#footnote-ref-484)
485. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-485)
486. Monk Benjamin, http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis2.htm , p. 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-486)
487. Danilushkin, op. cit., p. 197. [↑](#footnote-ref-487)
488. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-488)
489. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 63-64. [↑](#footnote-ref-489)
490. Already on October 22, 1919 the Poles had ordered 497 Orthodox churches and chapels, which had supposedly been seized from the Catholics in the past, to be returned to the Catholic Church. See Danilushkin, op. cit., p. 586. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-490)
491. Koeller, "Kommentarii k pis'mu Arkhiepiskopa Rizhskago i Latvijskago Ioanna Arkhiepiskopu Vilyenskomu i Litovskomu Elevferiu ot 2 noiabria 1927 g." (Commentary on the Letter of Archbishop

     John of Riga and Latvia to Archbishop Eleutherios of Vilnius and Lithuania), *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’* (Church Life), №№. 3-4, May-June-July-August, 1992, pp. 56-57; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-491)
492. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 320-321. [↑](#footnote-ref-492)
493. K. Svitich, *Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ v Pol’she i ee autokefalia* (The Orthodox Church in Poland and its autocephaly); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 133. For a more detailed account of the Polish autocephaly, see M. Zyzykin, “Avtokefalia i printsipy eia primenenia” (Autocephaly and the principles of its application), *Pravoslavnij Put’* (The Orthodox Way), 2004, pp. 101-133. For a translation of the whole *Tomos* see http://www.ukrainianorthodoxchurchinexile.org/1924\_tomos\_of\_autocephaly.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-493)
494. Woerl, Facebook communication, August 9, 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-494)
495. Meanwhile, on August 9, Archimandrite Alexis (Kabaliuk) convened a Council of the Carpatho- Russian Church to which 400 delegates came. Because of the persecution of the faith in Russia, the Council decided to remain within the jurisdiction of the Serbian Church (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 57). [↑](#footnote-ref-495)
496. Monk Gorazd, op. cit. At the beginning of the Second World War, Metropolitan Dositheus was imprisoned and tortured in Zagreb, and died on January 13, 1945 without returning to consciousness. See “Novij sviashchenno-ispovednik Dosifej mitropolit Zagrebskij” (New Hiero-Confessor Dositheus, Metropolitan of Zagreb), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 7 (1628), April 1/14, 1999, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-496)
497. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 84. At that time there lived about 50,000 Turkish-speaking Orthodox in Anatolia. This movement lost all support after the great exodus of the Orthodox from Turkey in 1922- 1923. [↑](#footnote-ref-497)
498. Archbishop John, "The Decline of the Patriarchate of Constantinople", translated in *The Orthodox Word,* vol. 8, № 4 (45), July-August, 1972, p. 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-498)
499. Roslof, *Red Priests: Renovationism, Russian Orthodoxy, and Revolution, 1905-1946*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002, p. 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-499)
500. S. Savelev, "Bog i komissary" (God and the Commissars), in Bessmertny A.R. and Filatov, S.B., *Religia i Demokratia* (Religion and Democracy), Moscow: Progress, 1993, pp. 164-216. [↑](#footnote-ref-500)
501. Samsonov, in Edward Radzinsky, *Stalin*, New York: Doubleday, 1996. p. 244. [↑](#footnote-ref-501)
502. Potapov, “’…Molchaniem predaetsa Bog’” (God is Betrayed by Silence), *Posev* (Sowing), № 166, 1992, pp. 209-210. [↑](#footnote-ref-502)
503. Rayfield translates this sentence differently: “that is very, very dangerous. We’ve had enough trouble with just the ‘specialists’” (op. cit., p. 121). (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-503)
504. Roslof, op. cit., pp. 33-34. [↑](#footnote-ref-504)
505. N.A., "One bo vragom Tvoim tajnu poviem..." (I will not give Thy Mystery to Thine enemies), *Vestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi za Granitsej* (Herald of the German Diocese of

     the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad), 1992, № 1, p. 17; Grabbe, op. cit., p. 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-505)
506. N.N. Pokrovsky, S.G. Petrov, *Arkhivy Kremlia: Politburo i Tserkov’ 1922-1925gg.* (The Kremlin Archives: the Politburo and the Church, 1922-1925), Moscow-Novosibirsk, 1997, vol. 1, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-506)
507. Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*, London: Fontana, vol. 1, pp. 342-344. [↑](#footnote-ref-507)
508. Gubonin, op. cit., p. 190. [↑](#footnote-ref-508)
509. Matushka Evgenia Grigorievna Rymarenko, "Remembrances of Optina Staretz Hieroschemamonk Nektary", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 36, № 3, May-June, 1986, p. 39. One concession to the Antichrist invariably leads to others. Thus on February 24, 1923 the GPU agent Jacob Savlovich Agranov forced the Patriarch to make further concessions on this issue. “From the point of view of the Bolsheviks,” writes N. Krivova, “Tikhon’s epistle of February 28, 1922 was incorrect juridically speaking, for according to the decree of 1918 on the separation of the Church from the State Church property passed to the State and was declared the heritage of the State. Tikhon testified that in the Church canons there are no indications to the effect that State power in the event of the confiscation of Church valuables during popular disturbances should turn to the Church authorities for agreement. Although of course the Patriarch very well understood that the valuables taken from the Church would not be used for aid to the starving. And nevertheless he declared that the Soviet government need not turn to the Patriarch for agreement to the requisitioning. They managed to get an analogous testimony from the Patriarch’s closest colleague, Archbishop Nicander (Fenomenov). “Thus the GPU obtained a most important testimony from the Patriarch to the effect that he was guilty in issuing an appeal with regard to the requisitioning of Church valuables, that the use of the Church valuables for the needs of the starving was not sacrilege and did not contradict the Church canons” (*Vlast’ i Tserkov’ v 1922-1925gg.* (The Authorities and the Church in 1922-1925), Moscow, 1997; S. Golubtsov, op. cit., pp. 151-152). [↑](#footnote-ref-509)
510. Krivova, op cit., pp. 184-85. See also Roslof, op. cit., pp. 43-44. [↑](#footnote-ref-510)
511. Ravich, "Ograblennij Khristos, ili brillianty dlya diktatury proletariata" (Christ Robbed, or Diamonds for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat), *Chas-Pik* (Rush Hour), № 18, pp. 24-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-511)
512. Ravich, op. cit., p. 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-512)
513. Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime, 1919-1924*, p. 355. [↑](#footnote-ref-513)
514. V. Petrenko, “Sv. Patriarkh Vserossijskij Tikhon” (His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon of All Russia), *Vestnik I.P.Ts.* (Herald of the True Orthodox Church), Odessa, № 1 (11), 1998, p. 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-514)
515. Donald Rayfield, *Stalin and his Hangmen*, London: Viking, 2004, p. 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-515)
516. Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenij* (Complete Works), vol. 45, p. 666, cited in *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia* (The Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), № 94, pp. 54-60, Regelson,op. cit., p. 314, and Richard Pipes, *The Unknown Lenin*, New Haven and London: Yale UniversityPress, 1996, p. 134). Volkogonov said that he had seen a document in which Lenin requested that hebe informed on a daily basis how many priests had been executed (*Literator*, August 31, 1990, p. 4, inPipes, *The Unknown Lenin*, p. 11, note). [↑](#footnote-ref-516)
517. Pipes, *The Unknown Lenin*, p. 155. Volkogonov (op. cit., p. 380) agrees with this opinion. As does Rayfield (op. cit., pp. 121-122). [↑](#footnote-ref-517)
518. D. Anashkin, “Khod iziatia tserkovnykh tsennostej” (The Process of the Requisitioning of Church Valuables”, *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’* (Church Life), N 9 (677), September, 2008, p. 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-518)
519. "Mucheniki Shuiskiye", *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia* (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), № 170, III-1994, p. 190. [↑](#footnote-ref-519)
520. Pipes, op. cit., p. 355. According to Rayfield, “barely four million gold roubles was realized of which one million was spent on famine relief” (op. cit., pp. 120-121). For another estimate, see Volkogonov, op. cit., p. 381. *Rukh* (№ 34, November 4, 1996) reports that the Bolsheviks received a “profit” of 2.5 million gold roubles. [↑](#footnote-ref-520)
521. Richard Joseph Cooke, *Religion in Russia and the Soviets*, p. 149. But the Bolsheviks already had the Russian crown jewels, worth one billion gold roubles, and jewels from the Kremlin museum, worth 300 million gold roubles – far more than the market price of the church valuables (Pipes, op. cit., p. 355). [↑](#footnote-ref-521)
522. Michael Burleigh, *Sacred Causes*, London: Harper Perennial, 2007, p. 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-522)
523. Walters, “The Living Church 1922-1946”, *Religion in Communion Lands*, vol. 6, Winter, 1978, pp. 235-236. [↑](#footnote-ref-523)
524. Pipes, op. cit., p. 338. [↑](#footnote-ref-524)
525. Zhukov, op. cit., p. 33, footnote 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-525)
526. N.A., op. cit., p. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-526)
527. Grabbe, op. cit., p. 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-527)
528. Jane Swan, *A Biography of Patriarch Tikhon*, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, N.Y., 1964, p. 62; Levitin-Shavrov, in Pospielovsky, *The Russian Church under the Soviet Regime, 1917-1982*, Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1982, vol. I, pp. 55, 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-528)
529. Florovsky, in Pospielovsky, *The Russian Church*, op. cit. p. 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-529)
530. Titlinov, in Grabbe, op. cit., p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-530)
531. E.L., *Episkopy-Ispovedniki* (Bishop-Confessors), San Francisco, 1971, p. 68. On October 8, 1922 Tuchkov reported to the Politburo: “On the Tikhon question. A group has been formed of the so-called ‘living church’, consisting chiefly of ‘white clergy’, and this has given us the chance to cause a quarrel between the priests and the bishops, like soldiers against generals, for there was hostility between the white and black clergy. We are working to push the Tikhonites out of the patriarchate and the parishes.” (Quoted in Volkogonov, op. cit., p. 382). [↑](#footnote-ref-531)
532. According to Danilushkin (op. cit., p. 180), Vvedensky admitted that both Zinoviev and Tuchkov were directly involved in the schism. [↑](#footnote-ref-532)
533. Grabbe, op. cit., pp. 31, 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-533)
534. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-534)
535. *Russkaia Mysl'* (Russian Thought), № 3143, March 17, 1977. [↑](#footnote-ref-535)
536. I*stochnik* (The Source), № 3, 1995, p. 116. [↑](#footnote-ref-536)
537. Rayfield, op. cit., p. 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-537)
538. Protopriest Lev Lebedev, *Velikorossia* (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, p. 573. [↑](#footnote-ref-538)
539. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 69. [↑](#footnote-ref-539)
540. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 71. [↑](#footnote-ref-540)
541. *Acts of the Russian Pan-Diaspora Church Council in Sremsky-Karlovtsy*, Sremsky-Karlovtsy, 1922, p. 126; quoted by Fr. Victor Potapov, "What is False is also Corrupt", *Living Orthodoxy*, vol. XIV, № 1, January-February, 1992, p. 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-541)
542. Protopriest Alexander Lebedev, “’Ia napisal eto dlia vlastej, a ty sidi i rabotaj’” (I wrote this for the authorities, you sit and work), *Vozvrashchenie* (Return), № 2 (6), 1994, p. 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-542)
543. Igumen Luke, "An Answer to the Orthodox Church in America's Document, 'Why Deepen the Schism?'", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 40, № 6, November-December, 1990, pp. 13-14. During his interrogation by the GPU on May 9, the Patriarch, according to Sergius Golubtsov (op. cit., p. 115), “was forced to recognise Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky as ‘an accursed enemy of the workers’ and peasants’ toiling masses of Russia’. But the patriarch made the substantial qualification that he had not up to that moment considered Metropolitan Anthony an enemy of Soviet power, while his ‘antisoviet and interventionist speeches’ became known to him only from February- March, 1922, having in mind, evidently, his address in the name of the Karlovtsy Council to the Genoa conference. By this recognition, in our view, the Patriarch underlined his walling off from the Church Abroad only with regard to the latter’s political declarations, which he did not support. At the same time he strove by all means to avoid evaluations of Metropolitan Anthony both as a whole and during his time in the camp of Denikin, Wrangel and Skoropadsky.” [↑](#footnote-ref-543)
544. For more detail on the evolution of Evlogy’s views, see Ross, op. cit., pp. 57-61. [↑](#footnote-ref-544)
545. Grabbe, op. cit., p. 32. For example, he accepted the authority of the Synod Abroad to appoint Metropolitan Platon to head the American dioceses in 1922. See Igumen Luke, op. cit., p. 14; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 69-70. [↑](#footnote-ref-545)
546. Polsky, *Polozhenie Tserkvi v Sovietskoj Rossii* (The Situation of the Church in Soviet Russia), Jerusalem, 1931. [↑](#footnote-ref-546)
547. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 73. Metropolitan Michael (Ermakov) of Kiev witnessed in 1925: “In 1922

     there was a meeting of churchmen in Ukraine. Among them were 7 bishops, including myself – 70 people in all. At this convention the desire was expressed that Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky, the metropolitan of Kiev, should be considered removed from the administration and calling of the metropolitan of Kiev. However, Patriarch Tikhon in the same year, or perhaps in 1923 or 1924, annulled this resolution, and sent a corresponding act to Bishop Gregory of Poltava in reply. That the Kiev metropolia should remain with Anthony was evident from the fact that in the document the Patriarch declared his non-acceptance of all the desires expressed at this convention. Thus I could not be the metropolitan of Kiev, or, more exactly, bear the title ‘metropolitan of Kiev and Galicia’, a title which, consequently remains with Anthony Khrapovitsky” (Archimandrite Damascene (Orlov), “Patriarshij mestobliustitel’ sviaschennomuchenik Petr (Patriarchal locum tenens Hieromartyr Peter), *Mucheniki, ispovedniki i podvizhniki blagochestia Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi XX stoletia* (Martyrs, Confessors and Ascetics of Piety of the Russian Orthodox Church in the 20th Century), book 2; in Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 89). [↑](#footnote-ref-547)
548. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-548)
549. Krivova, op. cit.; Golubtsov, op. cit., p. 116. [↑](#footnote-ref-549)
550. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-550)
551. J.S. Curtiss, *The Russian Church and the Soviet State*, Boston: Little, Brown, 1953, pp. 159-160; Gubonin, op. cit., p. 290; Grabbe, op. cit., pp. 33-34. [↑](#footnote-ref-551)
552. N.A. "Nye bo vragom Tvoim ajnu povyem...", op. cit., p. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-552)
553. Levitin, A. and Shavrov, V. in Gubonin, op. cit., p. 813. [↑](#footnote-ref-553)
554. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 219-221. [↑](#footnote-ref-554)
555. *Zhivaia Tserkov’*, 10, October 1, 1922; Zhukov, op. cit., p. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-555)
556. *Zhivaia Tserkov’*, 10, October 1, 1922; Zhukov, op. cit., p. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-556)
557. Redechkin, “Pojmi vremia: Iskazhenie Pravoslavnogo Uchenia Moskovskoj Patriarkhii” (Understand the Time: The Distortion of Orthodox Teaching by the Moscow Patriarchate), Moscow, 1992, samizdat, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-557)
558. Protopriest Vladislav Tsypin, *Istoria Russkoj Tserkvi, 1917-1918*, chapter 2; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-558)
559. Levitin and Shavrov, op. cit.; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 77. [↑](#footnote-ref-559)
560. Bishop Ambrose (Epiphanov), “Pervij preemnik Sergia. K 40-letiu so dnia konchiny Patriarkha Aleksia I (Simanskogo). Chast’ pervaia” (First successor of Sergius. On the 40th anniversary of the death of Patriarch Alexis I (Simansky), Part One), http://www.portalcredo. ru/site/print.php?act=fresh&id=1206, pp. 2, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-560)
561. Shkarovsky, *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ v XX veke* (The Russian Orthodox Church in the 20th century), Moscow, 2010, p. 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-561)
562. Lebedev, http://p-alexey.livejournal.com/273210.html , May 21, 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-562)
563. Epiphanov, op. cit., p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-563)
564. Regelson, op. cit., p. 302. [↑](#footnote-ref-564)
565. Polsky, op. cit., part 2, p. 294. [↑](#footnote-ref-565)
566. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 218-219. [↑](#footnote-ref-566)
567. Snychev, “Mitropolit Sergij i Obnovlencheskij Raskol” (Metropolitan Sergius and the Renovationist Schism), in Danilushkin, op. cit., p. 182. [↑](#footnote-ref-567)
568. D. V. Pospielovsky, *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ v XX veke* (The Russian Orthodox Church in the 20th Century), Moscow, 1995, p. 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-568)
569. Volkogonov, op. cit., p. 383. [↑](#footnote-ref-569)
570. “G. Chicherin and L. Trotsky told the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets: ‘Do nothing and say nothing that could close the path to a peaceful resolution of the conflict with England’” (S. Bychkov, *Moskovskij Komsomolets* (Muscovite Komsomolian), May 16, 1990). [↑](#footnote-ref-570)
571. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 96. [↑](#footnote-ref-571)
572. Zhukov, op. cit., p. 34; Shumilo, op. cit., p. 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-572)
573. Arfed Gustavson, *The Catacomb Church,* Jordanville, 1960. [↑](#footnote-ref-573)
574. Shumilo, op. cit., pp. 23-24. [↑](#footnote-ref-574)
575. Gubonin, op. cit., p. 224. [↑](#footnote-ref-575)
576. Cited in Archbishop Nikon (Rklitsky), *Zhizneopisanie*, op. cit., vol. VI, p. 114. The council also consecrated the married Protopriest John (Kedrovsky) as Metropolitan of the Aleutian Islands and North America. On returning to America, he conducted a stubborn struggle against Metropolitan Plato, drawing 115 churches to his side (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 96). [↑](#footnote-ref-576)
577. Savelev, op. cit., p. 195. [↑](#footnote-ref-577)
578. TsGAOOU.F.263.Op.1.D.45504.L.54-55, in Alexander Nikolayevich Sukhorukov, “Maloizvestnie stranitsy tserkovnogo sluzhenia ekzarkha Ukrainy mitropolita Mikhaila (Yermakova) v 1922-23 godakh (po materialam sledstvennogo dela)” (Little-known pages in the church service of the exarch of the Ukraine Metropolitan Michael Yermakov in 1922-23 (from materials of his case), *Vestnik PSTGU II: Istoria Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi*, 2009, II:1 (3), pp. 79-122. [↑](#footnote-ref-578)
579. Karamitsos, *O Synkhronos Omologitis tis Orthodoxias* (The Contemporary Confessor of Orthodoxy), Athens, 1990, p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-579)
580. Peter Botsis, *Gerontas Ieronymos o Isykhastes tis Aiginas* (Elder Jerome the Hesychast of Aegina), Athens, 1991, p. 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-580)
581. Goutzidis, op. cit., pp. 68-70. [↑](#footnote-ref-581)
582. Goutzidis, op. cit., p. 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-582)
583. Bishop Photius of Triaditsa, "The 70th Anniversary of the Pan-Orthodox Congress in Constantinople", *Orthodox Life*, № 1, 1994, p. 40. At about this time the Churches of Cyprus, Jerusalem and Sinai all issued declarations recognising Anglican orders (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 91, 92). [↑](#footnote-ref-583)
584. Goutzidis, op. cit., pp. 74-78. [↑](#footnote-ref-584)
585. However, an Anglican hierarch, Charles Gore of Oxford, was allowed to attend one of the sessions, sitting at the right hand of Meletius and taking part in the work of the Congress. [↑](#footnote-ref-585)
586. “Oecumenical Patriarch Meletios (Metaxakis)”, *Orthodox Tradition*, vol. XVII, №№ 2 & 3, 2000, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-586)
587. Sakkas, op. cit., p. 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-587)
588. Monk Paul, op. cit., pp. 72-73. [↑](#footnote-ref-588)
589. Dionysius Battistatos, *Praktika-Apophaseis tou en Kon/polei Panorthodoxou Synedriou 1923* (The Acts and Decisions of the Pan-Orthodox Conference in Constantinople in 1923), 1982, p. 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-589)
590. See Monk Gorazd, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-590)
591. Archbishop Nicon (Rklitsky), op. cit., vol. 10, p. 38. See also *A History*, op. cit., pp. 53-55. Archbishop Anastasy suffered for his outspokenness. [↑](#footnote-ref-591)
592. Alexandris, op. cit., pp. 90, 91. [↑](#footnote-ref-592)
593. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 90. [↑](#footnote-ref-593)
594. *Oriente Moderno* (The Contemporary East), January 15, 1924, p. 30; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-594)
595. Platonov, *Ternovij Venets Rossii* (Russia’s Crown of Thorns), Moscow: Rodnik, 1998, p. 478.

     Moreover, he again tried to push many of the Greek Orthodox in America into schism. See Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, *A Reply to Archbishop Athenagoras*, Montreal, 1979, p. 19; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 150. [↑](#footnote-ref-595)
596. E. Kholmogorov, letter to *Vertograd*, 1999. [↑](#footnote-ref-596)
597. Psarev, op. cit., pp. 1-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-597)
598. Archimandrite Theocletus A. Strangas, *Ekklesias Hellados Historia, ek pegon apseudon, 1817-1967 (A*

     *History of the Church of Greece from Unlying Sources, 1817-1967*), vol. 2, Athens, 1970, p. 1181; translated by Kitskikis, op. cit., p. 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-598)
599. Abraham Tsimirikas, *Eis Ipakoin Pisteos* (To the Obedience of the Faith), 1977, pp. 28-30. [↑](#footnote-ref-599)
600. Tsimirakis, op. cit., pp. 85-98. [↑](#footnote-ref-600)
601. Demetrius Mavropoulos, *Patriarkhikai selides: To Oikoumenikon Patriarkheion apo 1878-1949* (Patriarchal Pages: The Ecumenical Patriarchate from 1878 to 1949), Athens, 1960; translated by Kitsikis, op. cit., p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-601)
602. Metropolitan Calliopius of Pentapolis, *Deinopathimata G.O.X.* (The Sufferings of the True Orthodox Christians), vol. 1, Piraeus, 1990, p. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-602)
603. Metropolitan Calliopius, op. cit., p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-603)
604. From *The New York Times*, June 7, 1917, p. 22: “A miniature civil war between Venizelists and the supporters of King Constantine of Greece was fought in the basement of the St. Constantine’s Greek Orthodox Church at 64 Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn, last night when the Constantine faction sought to expel the pastor of the church for omitting the usual custom of saying ‘long live the King’ in every Sunday prayer.

     “Police were called in to untangle the difficulties, and while the king’s men were at the Adams Street police station making complaints about the religious, political and military zeal of the Venizelists, the supporters of the pro-Allies ex-Premier elected a Board of Trustees and informed the pastor of the church, the Rev. Stephano Papamacaronis, that he could omit to pray for the King.” [↑](#footnote-ref-604)
605. Bishop Photius, op. cit., p. 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-605)
606. Metropolitan Calliopius, op. cit., pp. 17-18, 22, 45-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-606)
607. *Apostolic Constitutions*, 10:19, *P.G. 1*, 633. [↑](#footnote-ref-607)
608. In Poland, the Russian, Ukrainian and Belorussian press was full of protests against the innovation. However, the government strongly supported it, and there were some bloody confrontations with the police (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 121). The Church of Alexandria did not immediately accept the new calendar, but only in 1928 when Meletius Metaxakis became patriarch. Antioch followed after the war, and in 1968 – Bulgaria. The other Slavic Churches and Jerusalem continue to follow the Julian calendar to this day. [↑](#footnote-ref-608)
609. St. Chrysostom, in Liudmila Perepelkina, "Iulianskij kalendar' - 1000-letnaia ikona vremeni na Rusi" (The Julian Calendar – a thousand-year icon of time in Russia), *Pravoslavnij Put’* (The Orthodox Way), 1988, p. 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-609)
610. St. Chrysostom, *Homilies on Ephesians*. [↑](#footnote-ref-610)
611. St. Chrysostom, *Homilies on Ephesians* , 4.4. [↑](#footnote-ref-611)
612. St. Augustine, *Discourse on Psalm 37*, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-612)
613. Popovich, *Orthodoxos Ekklesia kai Oikoumenismos (The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism)*, Thessaloniki, 1974, pp. 80-82. [↑](#footnote-ref-613)
614. *Phoni ex Agiou Orous* (A Voice from the Holy Mountain), op. cit., pp. 57-58. St. Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain writes, in his commentary on the 31st Apostolic Canon: "Even as the ecclesiastical traditions have need of the Faith, so also is the Faith in need of the ecclesiastical traditions; and these two cannot be separated one from another." [↑](#footnote-ref-614)
615. At the end of 1925 Patriarch Basil III of Constantinople had proposed the convening of an Ecumenical Council for the purpose of overhauling Orthodoxy and uniting with the Western heretics. At that time Elder Philotheus, together with Elder Daniel of Katounakia, had been among the leading critics of this idea. [↑](#footnote-ref-615)
616. Hieromonk Theodoritus (Mavros), *Palaion kai Neon: i Orthodoxia kai Airesis? (Old and New: Orthodoxy and Heresy?),* Athens, 1991, pp. 24-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-616)
617. Hieromonk Theodoritus, op. cit., p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-617)
618. *The Christian East*, Autumn, 1930. In 1934 two Ugandan Anglicans applied to Metaxakis to receive them into Orthodoxy. He replied that the union of the Churches was not far off, so it would be better for them to stay where they were! (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 45) [↑](#footnote-ref-618)
619. Monk Paul, op. cit. p. 82. In 1998 the True Orthodox Church of Greece under Archbishop Chrysostom II of Athens resolved to include anathemas against Meletius Metaxakis and Chrysostom Papadopoulos in the anathema against ecumenism proclaimed on the Sunday of Orthodoxy… [↑](#footnote-ref-619)
620. Pokrovsky and Petrov, op. cit., pp. 282-284. [↑](#footnote-ref-620)
621. Polsky, *Polozhenie*, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-621)
622. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 280, 286. There is some evidence that Patriarch Tikhon's release from prison was linked with the fact that in June, 1923 the Bolsheviks finally accepted that Lenin was too ill to return to politics. A. Rykov took over from Lenin as president of the Sovnarkom, and on entering office immediately received the Patriarch and promised to reduce the pressure on religious organizations, reduce the taxes on the clergy and churches and release some hierarchs from prison – a promise that he kept. See Latyshev, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-622)
623. Shumilo, op, cit., p. 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-623)
624. Pospielovsky writes: "If by the end of 1922 the patriarchal Church in Moscow had only 4 churches against the 400 or so of the renovationists, in Petrograd after the exile of Bishop Nicholas almost all the churches had been seized by the renovationists, and throughout the country about 66% of the functioning churches were in the hands of the renovationists, then by November, 1924 the renovationists had about 14,000 churches, not more than 30%" ("Obnovlenchestvo: Pereosmyslenie techenia v svete arkhivnykh dokumentov" (Renovationism: A Rethinking of the Tendency in the Light of Archival Documents), *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia* (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), № 168, II-III, 1993, p. 217). [↑](#footnote-ref-624)
625. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 103-104. [↑](#footnote-ref-625)
626. For example, Fr. Gleb Yakunin wrote: “All the hitherto righteous and courageous words of the patriarch censuring the moral and spiritual fall of the people, the terrible bloody excesses and murders of innocent people, the wild outbursts of satanic spite and hatred, the profanation of religious and national holy things – all these words of the patriarch calling men to heed their consciences and full of righteous indignation against the evils committed were declared ‘antisoviet politics’ by the patriarch himself. In spite of the greatness of the personality and exploit of Patriarch Tikhon, we must with great sorrow admit that the principle of the use of lies and false witness for the sake of ‘the salvation of the Church’ was applied in the Moscow Patriarchate for the first time by him.

     “In its time Patriarch Tikhon’s ‘repentance’ did not elicit wide protests: believers understood the extraordinary difficulty of the situation and hoped that the grievous compromise would nevertheless work for the benefit of the Church. Besides, joy at the liberation of Patriarch Tikhon drowned all feelings of alarm. The absence of protests was also elicited by the huge authority the patriarch enjoyed and the unquestioning trust people had in all his actions.” ("V sluzhenii kul'tu (Moskovskaia Patriarkhia i kul't lichnosti Stalina)" (In the Service of the Cult (the Moscow Patriarchate and the Stalinist Cult of Personality), *Na puti k svobode sovesti* (On the Path to Freedom of Conscience), Moscow: Progress, 1989, p. 178). [↑](#footnote-ref-626)
627. Archbishop Nikon, op. cit., pp. 151-152. [↑](#footnote-ref-627)
628. Shumilo, op. cit., p. 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-628)
629. *Izvestia*, June 12, 1924; Lebedev, *Velikorossia*, op. cit., p. 577. [↑](#footnote-ref-629)
630. Regelson, op. cit., p. 347; Gubonin, op. cit., p. 291. [↑](#footnote-ref-630)
631. 83 out of 115 renovationist parishes had returned to the patriarch by December, 1923 (Regelson, op.

     cit., p. 343). Bishop Manuel (Lemeshevsky) was mainly instrumental in this. See Metropolitan John (Snychev) of Saint Petersburg, *Mitropolit Manuil (Lemeshevsky)* (Metropolitan Manuel (Lemeshevsky), Saint Petersburg, 1993. [↑](#footnote-ref-631)
632. Through Archbishop Peter (Zverev). See "Petr, arkhiepiskop Voronezhskij" (Peter, Archbishop of Voronezh), *Vestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi za Granitsei* (Herald of the German Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad), № 6, 1991, pp. 18-21; "Episkop Varnava (Belyaev)" (Bishop Barnabas (Belyaev), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn'* (Orthodox Life), № 3 (518), March, 1993, p. 19; Andreyev, *Russia's Catacomb Saints*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, p. 177; "Vospominania monakhini Seraphimy ob Arkhiepiskope Petre (Zvereve)" (Reminiscences of Nun Seraphima about Archbishop Peter (Zverev), *Troitskoe Slovo* (Trinity Sermon), № 6, pp. 12-27). [↑](#footnote-ref-632)
633. E.L., *Episkopy-Ispovedniki*, op. cit., p. 68, note. [↑](#footnote-ref-633)
634. Parayev, “Istinnoe Pravoslavie i Sergianstvo”, *Suzdal’skie Eparkhialnie Vedomosti*, September, 1997 http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=page&pid=544 ) [↑](#footnote-ref-634)
635. Pospielovsky, "Mitropolit Sergij i raskoly sprava" (Metropolitan Sergius and the Schisms on the

     Right), *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia* (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), № 158, I-1990. [↑](#footnote-ref-635)
636. I.M. Kontsevich, *Optina pustyn' i ee vremia* (Optina Desert and its Time), Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery Press, 1971, p. 546. The elder also said of the renovationist “church”: “There is no Grace there. By rebelling against the lawful Patriarch, Tikhon, the bishops and priests of the Living Church have deprived themselves of Grace and have lost, according to canonical ruling, their hierarchical office. Because of this, the liturgy performed by them is a blasphemy…” (Kontsevich, *Elder Nektary of Optina*, 1998, p. 209) [↑](#footnote-ref-636)
637. Metropolitan Anthony, in *Orthodox Life*, vol. 25, March-April, 1975. [↑](#footnote-ref-637)
638. Swan, op. cit., p. 83. [↑](#footnote-ref-638)
639. Quoted in Protopriest Lev Lebedev, “Dialogue between the ROCA and the MP: Why and How?”, report to be given to the Sobor of Bishops of the Russian Church Outside Russia, Great Lent, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-639)
640. Archpriest Alexander Lebedev, “[paradosis] Who is Really Behind the Schisms?”, orthodoxtradition@yahoogroups.com , March 2, 2006. The second achievement Tuchkov claimed for himself as director of the 6th Section of the Secret Department of the OGPU was the splitting up of the Church and a decline in faith among the young. Here he exaggerates, failing to take into account the strengthening of the patriarchate’s position vis-á-vis the other groups since July: “The goal which had been placed before the Section at the end of 1922 to move the Orthodox Church from its moribund and anti-Soviet position and to deprive it of that strength which it had held prior to that time, has been completely accomplished by the Section. The Orthodox Church as a single apparatus does not exist any more at the present time; it has been broken into several separate groups which have their separate hierarchies, and which are found in constant enmity to one another and which are disposed to be completely irreconcilable to one another.

     “At the present time there are four such groups that are fully formed and which have their own ecclesiastical apparatus, namely the Tikhonites, the Renovationists, the Renascenists, and the Working Church. All of these groups have been placed in such a state, that willingly or unwillingly they are bound to constantly be at war with one another and to curry favour from the organs of civil authority. The enmity between these groups deepens from time to time and more and more, and concurrently the authority of the servers of the cult is being lost, and from this, among the faithful, and especially among the youth, is created an extremely passive, and at time inimical attitude even to the Church itself, on the grounds of which there begins to develop the growth of atheism.

     “The splitting up of the Orthodox Church into the above-indicated groups is the fulfilment of only one part of the work which was completed regarding the Orthodox churchmen in 1923.” [↑](#footnote-ref-640)
641. Lebedev, *Velikorossia*, p. 577; Danilushkin, op. cit., p. 192; Shumilo, op. cit., p. 28. The commemoration was banned on the grounds that such an act would be seen “as having the character of a clearly political demonstration against the Worker-Peasants’ authorities.” [↑](#footnote-ref-641)
642. Pokrovsky and Petrov, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 531; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-642)
643. Pokrovsky and Petrov, op. cit., pp. 282-284. [↑](#footnote-ref-643)
644. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 332-338. [↑](#footnote-ref-644)
645. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 299-300, 335. [↑](#footnote-ref-645)
646. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-646)
647. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 300, 335; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-647)
648. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 332-338; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 115-117, 130-131. [↑](#footnote-ref-648)
649. Papertov, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-649)
650. Gubonin, op. cit.; Monk Nicholas, “RE: [paradosis] Communion to RCs / St. Tikhon and New Calendar”, orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com , May 22, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-650)
651. *Tserkovnie Vedomosti*, №11-12 (1925), pр. 1-4; Archbishop Nikon (Rklitsky), *Zhizneopisanie Blazhenneishago Mitropolita Antonia*, 1960, vol. VI, p. 164; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 134-135. [↑](#footnote-ref-651)
652. He wrote: “Now there have suddenly crept up to me Russians from Romania petitioning for Church autonomy and Slavonic services. I promised them nothing because their strivings were nationalist-chauvinist, and not ecclesiastical.” [↑](#footnote-ref-652)
653. *Pis’ma Blazhennejshago Mitropolita Antonia (Khrapovitskago)* (The Letters of his Beatitude Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), Jordanville, 1988, p. 195. [↑](#footnote-ref-653)
654. *Pis’ma Blazhennejshago Mitropolita Antonia,* op. cit., p. 197. But Fr. Theodosius remained in communion with the Athonite zealots and not with the new calendarist innovators… [↑](#footnote-ref-654)
655. Archbishop Theophan, “Kratkie kanonicheskie suzhdenia o letoschislenii” (Short canonical judgements on the calendar), in V.K., *Russkaia Zarubezhnaia Tserkov’ na Steziakh Otstupnichestva* (The Russian Church Abroad on the way to Apostasy), St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 29-30. [↑](#footnote-ref-655)
656. Metropolitan Vlasie, preface to Constantin Bujor, *Resisting unto Blood: Sixty-Five Years of Persecution of the True (Old Calendar) Orthodox Church of Romania (October 1924 – December 1989),* Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 2003, p. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-656)
657. Monk Benjamin, *op. cit*., p. 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-657)
658. Iorga, *The History of the Romanian Church*; cited in Bujor, op. cit., p. 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-658)
659. Bujor, op. cit., pp. 26-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-659)
660. Bujor, op. cit., p. 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-660)
661. K.V. Glazkov, “Istoricheskie prichiny nekotorykh sobytij v istorii Rumynskoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi

     do II mirovoj vojny” (Historical Reasons for Certain Events in the History of the Romanian Orthodox Church up to the Second World War), *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’* (Church Life), №№ 3-4, May August, 2000, pp. 48-49. [↑](#footnote-ref-661)
662. Fr. Glycerie (Tanas) was superior of the Protection skete. When Abbot Nicodemus (Muntianu) of Neamţ monastery offered to put him in charge of another skete if he changed calendar, Fr. Glycerie refused, and with Deacon David (Bidascu) left the skete (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 132). (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-662)
663. Metropolitan Blaise, *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 2 (1479), 15/28 January, 1993, pp. 6-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-663)
664. Metropolitan Blaise, *The Life of the Holy Hierarch and Confessor Glicherie of Romania*, Etna, Ca.: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 1999, pp. 24-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-664)
665. Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos, "The True Orthodox Christians of Romania", *The Orthodox Word*, January-February, 1982, vol. 18, № 1 (102), pp. 6-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-665)
666. Letter to Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), in Glazkov, op. cit., p. 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-666)
667. “The Convent of the Ascension on the Holy Mount of Olives, 1906-2006”, *Orthodox Life*, September-October, 2006, p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-667)
668. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 131; Gubonin, op. cit., p. 348. [↑](#footnote-ref-668)
669. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-669)
670. Pospielovsky, D. "Mitropolit Sergij i raskoly sprava" (Metropolitan Sergius and the Schisms on the Right), op. cit., p. 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-670)
671. Archbishop Nikon (Rklitsky), op. cit., pp. 181-183. [↑](#footnote-ref-671)
672. Rusak, op. cit., p. 173. [↑](#footnote-ref-672)
673. Archbishop Leontius, *Vospominania* (Reminiscences) (MS), quoted in Matushka Joanna (Pomazanskaia) "Ispovednicheskij Put' Vladyki Fiodora" (The Confessing Path of Vladyka Theodore), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn'* (Orthodox Life), vol. 47, № 549 (9), September, 1995, p. 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-673)
674. Gubonin, op. cit., p. 737. [↑](#footnote-ref-674)
675. Tsypkin, *Istoria Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi* (A History of the Russian Orthodox Church), Moscow, 1994, quoted by Pomazanskaia, op. cit., p. 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-675)
676. Pomazanskaia, op. cit., pp. 19-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-676)
677. Rusak, *Svidetel’stvo Obvinenia* (Witness for the Prosecution), Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1988, Part III, pp. 9-10. As well as showing firmness, the Patriarch showed that he had not lost his ability to evaluate events accurately. Fr. Michael Ardov writes: “While the holy hierarch was still alive, the first mausoleum, at that time still wooden, was built on Red square. Evidently they built it hastily, and soon after the work was finished an annoying event took place in the new building – the water-closet broke down and a pipe began to gush water. Rumours about this event began to spread through Moscow. They told Patriarch Tikhon also, and he responded to the information shortly and expressively: ‘From relics myrrh flows.’” (*Posev* (Sowing), 167, 1992, p. 251). [↑](#footnote-ref-677)
678. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 118-119. [↑](#footnote-ref-678)
679. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 121. [↑](#footnote-ref-679)
680. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 317, 319, 745-746; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 125. [↑](#footnote-ref-680)
681. Even the Bolsheviks had felt obliged to check Krasnitsky's overweening ambitions. See Savelev, op. cit., pp. 190, 195. [↑](#footnote-ref-681)
682. See the patriarch's resolution, addressed to the Yelisavettgrad clergy of 26 June / 9 July; Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 325, 124). [↑](#footnote-ref-682)
683. Monk Gorazd, op. cit.; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-683)
684. Gubonin, op. cit., p. 747. [↑](#footnote-ref-684)
685. Quoted in Archbishop Nikon (Rklitsky), op. cit., vol. VI, pp. 161-163. [↑](#footnote-ref-685)
686. Sokurova, O.B. *Nekolebimij Kamen’ Tserkvi* (Unshakeable Rock of the Church), St. Petersburg: “Nauka”, 1998, p. 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-686)
687. Fr. Andrew Phillips, *Orthodox England*, vol. 11, no. 2, December, 2007, p. 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-687)
688. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 120. [↑](#footnote-ref-688)
689. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 155. [↑](#footnote-ref-689)
690. P.K. Phalbos, *Vasileios III. Oikoumenikos Patriarkhis, o apo Nikaias diaprepis Ellin Eleutherotekton* (Basil III: Œcumenical Patriarch and distinguished Greek Freemason from Nicæa) (Athens: 1964), pp. 3-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-690)
691. Cited in Gustavson, *The Catacomb Church*, Jordanville, 1960*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-691)
692. Nichols, *Theology in the Russian Diaspora*, Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-692)
693. Regelson, op. cit., p. 313. [↑](#footnote-ref-693)
694. N. Golubykh, *Ocherki Glukhoj Derevni* [Sketches of the Deep Countryside], Moscow and Leningrad, 1925. [↑](#footnote-ref-694)
695. Redechkin, op. cit., p. 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-695)
696. Monk Benjamin, “Letopis’ Tserkovnykh Sobytij Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi nachinaia s 1917 goda” (A Chronicle of Church Events of the Orthodox Church beginning from 1917), http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis.htm, pp. 135-136. [↑](#footnote-ref-696)
697. I.M. Andreyev, *Russia's Catacomb Saints*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman Brotherhood Press, 1982, p. 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-697)
698. Archimandrite Joseph, *Kormchij,* 23 May, 1909; quoted in Sergius and Tamara Fomin, *Rossia pered vtorym prishestviem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Moscow: Rodnik, 1994, vol. I, p. 413. [↑](#footnote-ref-698)
699. Schemamonk Epiphany (Chernov), *Tserkov’ Katakombnaia na Zemlie Rossijskoj* (The Catacomb Church in the Russian Land) (MS), Woking, 1980. [↑](#footnote-ref-699)
700. N. Shemetov, "Khristos sredi nas" (Christ is in our midst), *Moskovskij tserkovnij vestnik* (Moscow Ecclesiastical Herald), № 11 (29), May, 1990, p. 3 [↑](#footnote-ref-700)
701. “Vladyka Lazar otvechaiet na voprosy redaktsii" (Vladyka Lazar replies to the questions of the editorial board), *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 22, 15/28 November, 1991, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-701)
702. S. Shumilo, *V Katakombakh* (In the Catacombs), Lutsk, 2011, pp. 16-17, 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-702)
703. For evidence that he was in fact poisoned, see Chernov, op. cit., Lebedev, *Velikorossia* (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1997, p. 582; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 13; Shumilo, op. cit., pp. 29-30. D. Volkogonov (*Lenin*, London: Harper Collins, 1994, p. 384) hints at the same outcome, writing: “Lenin’s instructions had been clear: ‘the more reactionary clergy and reactionary bourgeoisie are shot… the better’, and ‘the priests must be sentenced to death’. Since it had proved impractical to execute Tikhon, the Cheka had had to find other ways of ensuring that the sixty-year-old Patriarch should not long survive his sojourn in their company.” A. Levitin and V. Shavrov write: “The rector of Prophet Elias Church on Obydenny Street in Moscow, Fr. Alexander Tolgsky, who died in 1962, told one of the authors: ‘After the acknowledgement, made to me during confession by one of the doctors of the Bakunin Hospital, I do not have the least doubt that Patriarch Tikhon was poisoned.’” (*Ocherki po istorii Russkoj Tserkvi* (Sketches on the History of the Russian Church), Kusnacht, 1997, p. 31; A. Paraev, “Istinnoe Pravoslavie i Sergianstvo”, (True Orthodoxy and Sergianism), *Suzdal’skie Eparkhial’nie Vedomosti* (Suzdal Diocesan Gazette), September, 1997 http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=page&pid=544). [↑](#footnote-ref-703)
704. Quoted in M.B. Danilushkin (ed.), *Istoria Russkoj Tserkvi ot Vosstanovlenia Patriarshestva do nashikh dnej* (A History of the Russian Church from the Reestablishment of the Patriarchate to our Days), vol.I, St. Petersburg, 1997, p. 201. [↑](#footnote-ref-704)
705. M.E. Gubonin, *Akty Svyateishego Patriarkha Tikhona* (The Acts of His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon), Moscow: St. Tikhon's Theological Institute, 1994, p. 413. [↑](#footnote-ref-705)
706. And some important groups delayed their recognition. Thus it was not until November 12 that the Synod of ROCOR decreed that Metropolitan Peter should be recognised as the lawful locum tenens and the head of the Russian Church, with the introduction of his commemoration in all churches abroad (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 145). [↑](#footnote-ref-706)
707. Archbishop Andrew, in Bishop Ambrose (von Sievers), "Ekkleziologia Andrea Ufimskogo (kn. Ukhtomskogo)" (The Ecclesiology of Andrew of Ufa (Prince Ukhtomsky), *Vestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii* (Herald of the German Diocese), № 1, 1993, p. 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-707)
708. This was confirmed by Metropolitan Peter himself, who wrote to Tuchkov on January 14, 1926: “Forgive me for my frankness - the people do not trust a person who often has dealings with the GPU. For example, the frequent visits that I and Metropolitan Seraphim of Tver made to the GPU in Patriarch Tikhon’s time were far from being interpreted in our favour, while Metropolitan Seraphim was even nicknamed ‘the Lubyanka metropolitan’ by the people. And I noticed that at the beginning of my administration of the Church many people kept away from me” (quoted in Hieromonk Damascene (Orlovsky), *Mucheniki, Ispovedniki i Podvizhniki Blagochestia Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi XX Stoletia* (Martyrs, Confessors and Ascetics of Piety of the Russian Orthodox Church in the 20th Century), volume II, Tver: Bulat, 1995, p. 489). [↑](#footnote-ref-708)
709. A. Smirnov, “Ugasshie nepominaiushchie v bege vremeni” (Died out non-commemorators in the course of time), *Simvol* (Symbol), № 40, 1998, p. 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-709)
710. D. Pospielovsky, *The Russian Church under the Soviet Regime, 1917-1982*, Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1982, p. 91, note. [↑](#footnote-ref-710)
711. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 418-421. [↑](#footnote-ref-711)
712. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 744-745. [↑](#footnote-ref-712)
713. Savelev, "Bog i komissary" (God and the Commissars), in Bessmertny A.R. and Filatov, S.B., *Religia i Demokratia* (Religion and Democracy), Moscow: Progress, 1993, pp. 199-200. [↑](#footnote-ref-713)
714. Gubonin, op. cit., p. 402. [↑](#footnote-ref-714)
715. According to the anonymous author of *V Ob'iatiakh Semiglavago Zmia* (In the Embrace of the Seven Headed Serpent) (Montreal, 1984, p. 47), Metropolitan Peter made two wills regarding his deputies. In the first were three names, as indicated here. In the second were four: Metropolitans Cyril, Agathangelus, Arsenius and Sergius. Since Sergius was only fourth in order in the second will, he kept quiet about it. [↑](#footnote-ref-715)
716. Savelev, op. cit., p. 200. [↑](#footnote-ref-716)
717. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 145. [↑](#footnote-ref-717)
718. Arianism – the reference is to the appearance of the sign of the Cross over Jerusalem in 351. [↑](#footnote-ref-718)
719. *Orthodox Life*, vol. 22, №. 2, March-April, 1972; reprinted in Fr. Basile Sakkas, *The Calendar Question*, Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1973. For further witnesses and photographs, see Metropolitan Calliopius, *Deinopathimata G.O.Kh*. (The Sufferings of the True Orthodox Christians), Piraeus, 1990, vol. I, pp. 81-92, and Holy Transfiguration Monastery, *Papa-Nicholas Planas*, Boston, 1961, pp. 117-119. [↑](#footnote-ref-719)
720. “Miraculous Appearance of Cross over Athens, Greece”, Smyrna1922@aol.com, May 20, 2004. [↑](#footnote-ref-720)
721. Quoted in “Re[2]: [paradosis] (unknown)”, 1 January, 2003, orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com. [↑](#footnote-ref-721)
722. The Zealot Monks of Mount Athos, *Syntomos Istoriki Perigraphi tis Ekklesias ton Gnision Orthodoxon Khristianon Ellados* (Brief Historical Description of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece), MountAthos, 1973, pp. 8-11; Metropolitan Calliopius, op. cit., pp. 101-111. [↑](#footnote-ref-722)
723. “A Rejoinder to a Challenge of the Legitimacy of the Orthodox Monastic Brotherhood of the Holy Monastery of Esphigmenou”, orthodox-synod@yahoogroups.com, January 29, 2003. [↑](#footnote-ref-723)
724. Hieromonk Theodoritus (Mavros), *Avvakoum, Le Zélote aux Pieds Nus* (Habbakuk, the Bare-Footed Zealot), a translation from the Greek by the Fraternité Orthodoxe de St. Grégoire Palamas, Paris, 1986, pp. 37-42. There is now an English translation of this book. [↑](#footnote-ref-724)
725. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 106. [↑](#footnote-ref-725)
726. Nun Angelina, “Starets Mikhail Starshij, ispovednik strazhduschego pravoslavia”, *Russkij Palomnik*, № 17, 1998, p. 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-726)
727. Schema-Monk Nicholas, *The Orthodox Word*, №№. 160-161, September-December, 1991, pp. 268-270. [↑](#footnote-ref-727)
728. Nun Angelina, op. cit., pp. 64-66. There was a nationalist, Russophobic element to the introduction of the new calendar in Finland. Bishop Germanus (Aav) forbade his priests to wear pectoral crosses of Russian make, and would even paint over Slavonic inscriptions on old icons. His successor, Paul (Gusev), was a Russian who pretended to be a Finn. He, according to one source, “showed an indefatigable concern for one thing alone: how to make services in his Church completely unlike those in the Russian Church (“Demons in cassocks”, [orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com](mailto:orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com), December 22, 2003). [↑](#footnote-ref-728)
729. In New Valaamo in Finland, according to the witness of a True Orthodox Christian who spent a year there before his conversion, there continued to be Russian monks who confessed the Old Calendar – an abbot named Symphorian and another monk over one hundred years old. They lived in separate quarters and refused all communion with the new calendarists and visiting Soviet hierarchs. Abbot Symphorian died in the 1980s; nothing is known about the other monk. [↑](#footnote-ref-729)
730. Bito, “The Church Issue of Shkodra between Albania and Yugoslavia in its Initial Phase (1912-1923)”, *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science,* Vol. 4, No. 12; October 2014, p. 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-730)
731. In 1923, a congress in Tirana “declared that Albanian Islam should be independent of the caliphate. Asked if his regime was Muslim and willing to work in close accord with Turkey, Zogu replied that secular Albania intended to progress on occidental lines.” (Jason Tomes, *King Zog, Self-Made Monarch of Albania*, Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2007, p. 57) [↑](#footnote-ref-731)
732. Fr. Srboliub Meletich, “Behind the Sourozh Phenomenon: Spiritual Freedom or Cultural Captivity? Meletios Metaksakis, Metropolitan, Archbishop, Pope and Patriarch”, hocna@yahoogroups.com, July 5, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-732)
733. Bido, op. cit., p. 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-733)
734. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 118, 119. [↑](#footnote-ref-734)
735. Tomes, op. cit., p. 66. [↑](#footnote-ref-735)
736. Tomes, op. cit., p. 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-736)
737. Tomes, op. cit., p. 266. [↑](#footnote-ref-737)
738. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-738)
739. Tomes, op. cit., p. 102. [↑](#footnote-ref-739)
740. Tomes, op. cit., p. 145. [↑](#footnote-ref-740)
741. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 140. [↑](#footnote-ref-741)
742. Monk Benjamin, *Letopis’ Tserkovnykh Sobytij (1928-1938), (Chronicle of Church Events, 1928-1938),* part 2, http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis2.htm, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-742)
743. Tomes, op. cit., p. 151. [↑](#footnote-ref-743)
744. Tomes, op. cit., p. 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-744)
745. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-745)
746. Protopriest Vladislav Tsypin, *Istoria Russkoj Tserkvi 1925-1938* (A History of the Russian Church, 1925-1938) Moscow: Monastery of the Meeting of the Lord, 1999, p. 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-746)
747. Gubonin, op. cit., p. 429. [↑](#footnote-ref-747)
748. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 147. [↑](#footnote-ref-748)
749. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 148. [↑](#footnote-ref-749)
750. Bishop Gregory Grabbe, *Russkaia Tserkov’ pered litsom gospodstvuiushchego zla* (The Russian Church before the face of Dominant Evil), Jordanville, 1991, pp. 57-58. The Grigorian Bishop Boris of Mozhaisk also said that his Synod "received the rights to assemble, and to have publications and educational institutions." (Grabbe, op. cit., p. 61) [↑](#footnote-ref-750)
751. Regelson, *Tragedia Russkoj Tserkvi, 1917-1945* (The Tragedy of the Russian Church, 1917-1945), Paris: YMCA Press, 1977. [↑](#footnote-ref-751)
752. Gubonin, op. cit., p. 677. [↑](#footnote-ref-752)
753. Gubonin, op. cit., p. 422. [↑](#footnote-ref-753)
754. Grabbe, op. cit., p. 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-754)
755. Savelev, op. cit., p. 200. [↑](#footnote-ref-755)
756. Hieromonk Damascene (Orlovsky), "Zhizneopisanie patriarshego mestobliustitelia mitropolita Petra Krutitskago (Polianskogo)" (Biography of the patriarchal locum tenens, Metropolitan Peter (Poliansky) of Krutitsa), *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia* (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), № 166, III-1992, pp. 213-242. [↑](#footnote-ref-756)
757. Gubonin, op. cit., p. 454. [↑](#footnote-ref-757)
758. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 454-57. [↑](#footnote-ref-758)
759. Gubonin, op. cit., p. 461 (italics mine). [↑](#footnote-ref-759)
760. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 462-64. [↑](#footnote-ref-760)
761. Regelson, op. cit., pp. 404, 469. [↑](#footnote-ref-761)
762. Ladygin, "Kratkoe opisanie biografii menia nedostojnago skhiepiskopa Petra Ladygina" (Short Description of the Biography of me, the unworthy Schema-Bishop Peter Ladygin). *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'* (Church Life), №№ 7-8, July-August, 1985, p. 200. [↑](#footnote-ref-762)
763. Tsypin, op. cit., p. 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-763)
764. *Za Khrista Postradavshie* (Those Who Suffered for Christ), Moscow: St. Tikhon’s Theological Institute, 1997, p. 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-764)
765. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 477-478. [↑](#footnote-ref-765)
766. Schema-Bishop Peter (Ladygin), who later became one of the leaders of the Catacomb Church, had

     a different account of these events, which still more clearly incriminated Sergius (op. cit., pp. 152-53). [↑](#footnote-ref-766)
767. Another Russian hierarch who disagreed with Metropolitan Anthony’s views in this period was Archbishop, later Metropolitan Eleutherius of Lithuania. His eight letters were published together in his book, *Ob Iskuplenii* (On the Redemption), Paris, 1937. [↑](#footnote-ref-767)
768. *Herald of the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchate*, 1926, № II (1/14 June), pp. 168-174 (10-34). [↑](#footnote-ref-768)
769. For example, Abbot Herman of Platina wrote that Archbishop John (Maximovich) “differed theologically [from Metropolitan Anthony] although he personally loved and was devoted to him. In the early part of this century, Metropolitan Anthony had formulated a false ‘Dogma of Redemption’ based on the notion that our redemption was possible without the Cross. This teaching was promulgated by Metropolitan Anthony's followers more strongly than by the Metropolitan himself, but Archbishop John, in spite of all his love for his Abba and his Abba's love for him, did not share it. For this, the followers of Metropolitan Anthony among the hierarchs could not forgive Archbishop John… I remember once, when Archbishop John came to our store, we asked him what this teaching of the Dogma of Redemption was all about and whether it was an outright heresy. To this Archbishop John shrugged his shoulders and said, ‘No, not really,’ and began all of a sudden to talk about Blessed Augustine of Hippo, whose writings, like those of Metropolitan Anthony, contained theological imprecisions. After this discussion which Fr. Seraphim and I had with Archbishop John, Fr. Seraphim concluded that if you can forgive the theological imprecisions of Blessed Augustine, then you can forgive Metropolitan Anthony. But if you do not forgive Blessed Augustine and dismiss him as a heretic, you must do the same with Metropolitan Anthony.” (http://saintjohnwonderworker.org/sanc05.htm). [↑](#footnote-ref-769)
770. “Bishop Andrew [Rymarenko] of Rockland was a firm, but tactful opponent of the false teaching of Metr. Anthony (Khrapovitsky) on the ‘Dogma of Redemption’… When this teaching surfaced again in the Church Abroad, under Metropolitan Philaret, a whole group of the best hierarchs, not wishing to offend the first-hierarch, asked Archbishop Andrew, as the spiritual father of the metropolitan himself, to remove this subject from the agenda of the 1972 Council, so as to prevent a schism. When the danger had passed through the efforts of Bishops Nectarius, Athanasius and Averky, Bishop Andrew crossed himself, thanking God that Orthodoxy had been preserved for the Americans.” (“Batiushka O. Adrian” (Batiushka Fr. Adrian), *Russkij Palomnik* (The Russian Pilgrim), № 18, 1998, p. 105) [↑](#footnote-ref-770)
771. Donald E. Davies, “The American YMCA and the Russian emigration”, *Sobornost*, 9:1, 1987, pp. 24-41. [↑](#footnote-ref-771)
772. Protopriest Benjamin Zhukov, *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ na Rodine i za Rubezhom* (The Russian Orthodox Church in the Homeland and Abroad), Paris, 2005, p. 110. [↑](#footnote-ref-772)
773. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 154; Zhukov, op. cit., p. 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-773)
774. Archbishop Averky (Taushev), *Vysokopreosviaschennij Feofan, Arkhiepiskop Poltavskij i Pereiaslavskij* (His Eminence Theophan, Archbishop of Poltava and Pereiaslavl), Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1974. [↑](#footnote-ref-774)
775. Helen Kontzevich wrote: “in Paris, Archpriest Sergius Chetverikov asked to come and see Archbishop Theophan, to converse with him on the theme of the Jesus Prayer. But he was presented with the condition that he cease all contact with the YMCA. The Archpriest did not agree to it.” [↑](#footnote-ref-775)
776. “… A regional Orthodox Council, uniting personally and through letters 32 hierarchs in three parts of the world, cannot officially give its blessing to any institution other than those which call themselves Orthodox; but it has not forbidden its flock to be members of the YMCA society, and has not approved only of their remaining under its spiritual leadership as being an institution which, although Christian, is inter-confessional; but the Council has not forbidden serving in this society in the capacity of its officials, nor has it forbidden participation in its publishing houses, in which I have taken part, since in the last four or five years I have not found any anti-Orthodox propaganda either in the publications of the Society or in the Paris Theological institute that is subsidised by it, or in its relationship to Russian young people… As regards the attitude of the Council to the YMCA itself, that was, naturally, a repetition of the attitude of the Council of 1921; since then a significant evolution has taken place in the Society, but this was so little known to the Council that I, while knowing about it, could not impose my convictions on my brother hierarchs, to whose Council you wrote requesting its blessing; I hope that your activity, growing and entering into the life of the Orthodox Church will, by the time of later Councils, dispose them to complete trust and sympathy towards your movement.” (*Vozrozhdenie* (Regeneration), September 10, 1926, p. 2; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 156) [↑](#footnote-ref-776)
777. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 162. [↑](#footnote-ref-777)
778. Archbishop Averky, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-778)
779. *Tserkovnie Vedomosti*, 1927, №№ 5-6, pp. 5, 6, 10; in G.M. Soldatov, *Arkhierejskie Sobory Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi Zagranitsej 1938-1939 g.* (Hierarchical Councils of the Russian Orthodox ChurchAbroad, 1938-1939), Minneapolis: AARDM Press, 2003, pp. 10-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-779)
780. See Protodeacon Christopher Birchall, *Embassy, Emigrants, and Englishmen; The Three Hundred Year History of a Russian Orthodox Church in London,* Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Publications, 2014, chapter 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-780)
781. Archpriest Alexander Lebedev, “Re: the debate on grace”, orthodox\_synod@indiana.edu, May 5, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-781)
782. Blane, *Georges Florovsky*, Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1993, pp. 66-67. [↑](#footnote-ref-782)
783. Regelson, op. cit., pp. 417-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-783)
784. Tsypin, op. cit., p. 59; Gubonin, op. cit., p. 474. Cf. Fr. Alexander Mazyrin, “Legalizing the Moscow Patriarchate in 1927: The Secret Aims of the Authorities”, *Social Science: A Quarterly Journal of the Russian Academy of Sciences,* no. 1, 2009, p. 3. The article was first published in Russian in *Otechestvennaia Istoria*, no. 4, 2008. [↑](#footnote-ref-784)
785. Grabbe, op. cit., p. 154; Holy Transfiguration Monastery, *A History of the Russian Church Abroad*, pp. 61-62; Pospielovksy, "Mitropolit Sergij i raskoly sprava" (Metropolitan Sergius and the schisms from the right), *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia* (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), № 158, I-1990, p. 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-785)
786. Bishop Gregory Grabbe, “Toward a History of the Ecclesiastical Divisions within the Russian Diaspora”, chapter IV, *Living Orthodoxy*, #83, vol. XIV, № 5, September-October, 1992, p. 27; quoting from S.V. Troitsky, *Pravda o Russkoj Tserkvi Na Rodine i Za Rubezhom* (The Truth about the Russian Church in the Homeland and in the Diaspora). [↑](#footnote-ref-786)
787. Shumilo, *V Katakombakh* (In the Catacombs), Lutsk, 2011, pp. 36-38. According to the author of an anonymous work, the initiative for the election of Metropolitan Cyril came from Archbishop Hilarion (Troitsky), who was at that time in prison on Solovki. And, according to this version, it was Metropolitan Sergius who informed the authorities (“The way of the cross of his Eminence Athanasius Sakharov”, in Regelson, op. cit., p. 406). [↑](#footnote-ref-787)
788. Gubonin, op. cit., p. 422. Peter’s choice of deputies was: Sergius of Nizhni-Novgorod, Michael of the Ukraine, and Joseph of Rostov, in that order. [↑](#footnote-ref-788)
789. If Archbishop Seraphim had not been in freedom, then, according to Metropolitan Joseph’s epistle, the bishops were to govern their dioceses independently (Tsypin, op. cit., p. 86). [↑](#footnote-ref-789)
790. Regelson, op. cit., p. 408. [↑](#footnote-ref-790)
791. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 492-493. [↑](#footnote-ref-791)
792. Gustavson, *The Catacomb Church*, Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1960; see N.A., op. cit., p. 18.

     Another account of this dialogue was given by Archbishop Seraphim’s senior subdeacon, Michael Nikolaevich Yaroslavsky: “For 100 days Vladyka Seraphim happened to rule the whole of the Russian Orthodox Church. This was in 1926. Metropolitan Sergius was in prison, everybody was in prison… And so, as he had been put in charge, Vladyka told me that at that time the authorities offered him, as the Primate of the Church, a Synod of bishops. He did not agree and immediately received three years in Solovki camp. He did not betray the Church, but… declared the autocephaly of each diocese, since each Church Primate was another candidate for prison…” (Tape recorded conversation with Protopriest Michael Ardov in 1983, *Church News*, vol. 13, № 11 (112), p. 6). According to the same source, Vladyka Seraphim mentioned Metropolitan Cyril. “But he is behind bars,” Tuchkov said. “He is behind your bars, and you must release him,” said Seraphim.

     “According to a letter written by Archbishop Seraphim a few days after his Lubyanks interview, Tuchkov said to him ‘at parting’: ‘We don’t harbour evil thoughts; we are releasing you and assign to you Uglich as your place of residence; you can officiate wherever you want, but under no circumstances can you govern. You should neither appoint, nor transfer, nor dismiss, nor reward.’ ‘But what about enquiries from the dioceses, current affairs,’ asked Archbishop Seraphim. ‘You cannot stop life, it will claim its own.’ ‘Well, you can make purely formal replies. After all, you have declared autonomy. So what do you want? You have left no deputies. So you should act accordingly: you must not send around any papers on the new government system. You can write to the dioceses that “since I have refused to govern, you should manage on your own in your localities.” But if it comes into your head to write something, send it to me with a trusted man, I’ll look through it and give you my opinion…As for now, goodbye. We’ll buy you a ticket and see you to the railway station. Go back to Uglich and sit there quietly.’” (in Mazyrin, op. cit., p. 4) [↑](#footnote-ref-792)
793. Regelson, op. cit., p. 413. [↑](#footnote-ref-793)
794. Mazyrin, op. cit., p. 5. In later years, after Sergius’ betrayal of the Church, Archbishop Seraphim is reported to have reasserted his rights as patriarchal locum tenens. See Michael Khlebnikov, “O tserkovnoj situatsii v Kostrome v 20-30-e gody” (On the Church Situation in Kostroma in the 20s and 30s), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’* (Orthodox Life), 49, № 5 (569), May, 1997, p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-794)
795. Gubonin, op. cit., p. 844. [↑](#footnote-ref-795)
796. http://www.pstbi.ru/cgi-htm/db.exe/no\_dbpath/docum/cnt/ans, “Kirill (Smirnov Konstantin Ilarionovich)”. [↑](#footnote-ref-796)
797. Mazyrin, op. cit., p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-797)
798. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 163-164. [↑](#footnote-ref-798)
799. *The Living Church*, №№ 4-5, 14 July, 1922; Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 218-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-799)
800. Regelson, op. cit., p. 415; Gubonin, op. cit., p. 407. [↑](#footnote-ref-800)
801. Mazyrin, op. cit., p. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-801)
802. Mazyrin, op. cit., p. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-802)
803. Tsypin, op. cit., p. 383. [↑](#footnote-ref-803)
804. Protopriest Alexander Lebedeff, “Is the Moscow Patriarchate the ‘Mother Church’ of the ROCOR”, Orthodox@ListServ. Indiana.Edu, 24 December, 1997. [↑](#footnote-ref-804)
805. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-805)
806. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 172. [↑](#footnote-ref-806)
807. “Pis’mo Sviaschennomuchenika Ioanna, arkhiepiskopa Rizhskago (1934 g.), arkhiepiskopu Litovskomu i Vilenskomu Elevferiu” (A Letter of Hieromartyr John, Archbishop of Riga (1934) to Archbishop Eleutherius of Lithuania and Vilnius), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’*, 676, August, 2008, pp. 30-31. [↑](#footnote-ref-807)
808. Tsypin, op. cit., p. 384. [↑](#footnote-ref-808)
809. Regelson, op. cit., p. 436; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 173. [↑](#footnote-ref-809)
810. Melia, "The Orthodox Church of Georgia", *A Sign of God: Orthodoxy 1964*, Athens: Zoe, 1964, p. 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-810)
811. Monk Benjamin op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 5-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-811)
812. Zateishvili, "Gruzinskaia Tserkov' i polnota pravoslavia" (The Georgian Church and the Fullness of Orthodoxy), in Bessmertny. and Filatov, op. cit., p. 422. [↑](#footnote-ref-812)
813. A.B. Psarev, "Zhizneopisanie Arkhiepiskopa Leontia Chilijskogo (1904-1971 gg.)" (A Life of Archbishop Leontius of Chile (1904-1971), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn'* (Orthodox Life), № 3 (555), March, 1996, p. 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-813)
814. Lebedev, “Dialogue between the ROCA and the MP: How and Why?”, Great Lent, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-814)
815. Regelson, op. cit., pp. 431-32. [↑](#footnote-ref-815)
816. *Izvestia*, in Zhukov, op. cit., p. 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-816)
817. At its Council in Odessa under the presidency of Archbishop Tikhon of Omsk and Siberia. [↑](#footnote-ref-817)
818. St. John Cassian writes: “You should know that in the world to come also you will be judged in the lot of those with whom in this life you have been affected by sharing in their gains or losses, their joys or their sorrows…” [↑](#footnote-ref-818)
819. Danilushkin, op. cit., p. 291. [↑](#footnote-ref-819)
820. Fletcher, *The Russian Orthodox Church Underground, 1917-1971*, Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-820)
821. Titov, in Fletcher, op. cit., p. 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-821)
822. Regelson, op. cit., p. 434. [↑](#footnote-ref-822)
823. Rayfield, *Stalin and his Hangmen*, London: Viking, 2004, p. 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-823)
824. Sergius Chechuga *(“Deklaratsia”, ili Novij Velikij Raskol* (The “Declaration”, or a New Great Schism), St. Petersburg, 2006) compares it to the schism of the Old Ritualists in the seventeenth century. There is indeed a resemblance, but the schismatics in the seventeenth century rejected the Orthodox State, whereas the schismatics after 1927 identified their interests with the interests of the God-fighting State. [↑](#footnote-ref-824)
825. Regelson, op. cit., p. 440. [↑](#footnote-ref-825)
826. Nicholas Balashov, “Esche raz o ‘deklaratsii’ i o ‘solidarnosti’ solovchan” (Again on the ‘declaration’ and on ‘the solidarity of the Solovkans’), *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia* (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), 157, III-1989, pp. 197-198. [↑](#footnote-ref-826)
827. Likhachev, “Iz noveishej istorii Russkoj Tserkvi” (From the most recent history of the Russian Church), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’*, N 14, 1995. [↑](#footnote-ref-827)
828. However, as we have seen, the people got round the order to commemorate the authorities in ingenious ways. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-828)
829. Mazyrin, “Prichiny nepriatia politiki mitropolita Sergia (Stragorodskogo) v tserkovnykh krugakh”(The causes of the rejection of the politics of Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) in church circles), http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/print.php?act=libe&id=2935, April 14, 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-829)
830. Metropolitan Calliopius, op. cit., pp. 64-80. [↑](#footnote-ref-830)
831. Metropolitan Calliopius, op. cit., pp. 93-100. [↑](#footnote-ref-831)
832. Metropolitan Calliopius, op. cit., pp. 112-115. [↑](#footnote-ref-832)
833. Metropolitan Calliopius, op. cit., pp. 116-119. [↑](#footnote-ref-833)
834. Metropolitan Calliopius, op. cit., pp. 120-137. She was canonized by the True Orthodox Church of Greece under Archbishop Kallinikos in 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-834)
835. Metropolitan Calliopius, op. cit., pp. 143-149. [↑](#footnote-ref-835)
836. Metropolitan Calliopius, op. cit., pp. 150-157. [↑](#footnote-ref-836)
837. Metropolitan Calliopius, op. cit., pp. 166-172. [↑](#footnote-ref-837)
838. Metropolitan Calliopius, op. cit., pp. 173-186. [↑](#footnote-ref-838)
839. Tsypin, op. cit., p. 109. Basil was a Freemason. See www.grandlodge.gr/Famous\_gr\_home.html. It should be remembered that in 1927 the Greek government classed Freemasonry as a philanthropic organization. See Ioannis Michaletos, “Freemasonry in Greece: Secret History Exposed”, http://www.balkanalysis.com/2006/09/28/freemasonry-in-greece-secret-history-revealed/. [↑](#footnote-ref-839)
840. Since King George of Greece, Helen’s brother, wished to marry Carol’s sister Elizabeth, and this is forbidden by the canons, it was arranged that the two marriages took place exactly simultaneously in Bucharest and Athens, so that the one should not be an impediment to the other! [↑](#footnote-ref-840)
841. According to Stavros Markou (“The Legacy of ROCOR and Her Successors”), Patriarch Miron celebrated Pascha according to the papist paschalion “for the first three years (1924 to 1927)”. [↑](#footnote-ref-841)
842. Bujor, *Resisting unto Blood: Sixty-Five Years of Persecution of the True (Old Calendar) Orthodox Church of Romania (October 1924 – December 1989),* Etna, Ca.: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 2003, pp. 55-60. Also, writes Glazkov, “the priests Fathers Boris Binetsky, Demetrius Stitskevich and Vladimir Polyakov were put on trial for serving according to the old style.” (op. cit., p. 57) [↑](#footnote-ref-842)
843. In this section I am particularly indebted to the work of Lydia Sikorskaya, *Svyaschennomucheniki Sergij, episkop Narvskij, Vasilij, episkop Kargopolskij, Ilarion, episkop Porechskij. Tainoye sluzhenie Iosiflyan* (Holy Hieromartyrs Sergius, Bishop of Narva, Basil, Bishop of Kargopol, Hilarion, Bishop of Porech), Moscow: Bratonezh, 2009, pages 78 et seq. [↑](#footnote-ref-843)
844. Bishop Ambrose (Epiphanov), “Pervij preemnik Sergia. K 40-letiu so dnia konchiny Patriarkha Aleksia I (Simanskogo). Chast’ pervaia” (First successor of Sergius. On the 40th anniversary of the death of Patriarch Alexis I (Simansky), Part One), htto://www.portalcredo.ru/site/print.php?act=fresh&id=1206, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-844)
845. Cheltsov, “V chem prichina tserkovnoj razrukhi v 1920-1930 gg.” (The Reason for the Church Collapse in 1920-1930), *Minuvshee* (The Past), Moscow and St. Petersburg, 1994, issue 17, p. 447. [↑](#footnote-ref-845)
846. Bishop Ambrose, op. cit., p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-846)
847. Cheltsov, op. cit., p. 457. [↑](#footnote-ref-847)
848. M.S. Sakharov, L.E. Sikorskaia, *Sviaschennomuchenik Iosif, Mitropolit Petrogradskij. Zhizneopisanie i Trudy* (Hieromartyr Joseph, Metropolitan of Petrograd. Life and Works), St. Petersburg, 2006, p. 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-848)
849. Novoselov, “Oblichenie netserkovnosti sergianskikh printsipov ‘poslushania’ i ‘edinstva Tserkvi’” (A Rebuke to the non-ecclesiastical nature of the sergianist principles of ‘obedience’ and ‘the unity of the Church’), www.romanitas.ru. [↑](#footnote-ref-849)
850. V.V.Antonov, “Otvet na Deklaratsiu” (Reply to the Declaration), *Russkij Pastyr’* (Russian Pastor), № 24, 1996, p. 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-850)
851. Andreyev, op. cit., p. 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-851)
852. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-852)
853. Andreyev, op. cit., p. 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-853)
854. http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=page&pid=777. [↑](#footnote-ref-854)
855. Bishop Victor, in Andreyev, *Russia's Catacomb Saints*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 1982, pp. 141-43. [↑](#footnote-ref-855)
856. Lidia Sikorskaya, *Viatskij Ispovednik: Sviatitel’ Viktor (Ostrovidov)* (The Vyatka Confessor: Holy Hierarch Victor (Ostrovidov), Moscow: Bratonezh, 2010, p. 191. [↑](#footnote-ref-856)
857. Regelson, op. cit., p. 435. [↑](#footnote-ref-857)
858. Archbishop Ambrose (von Sievers), “Katakombnaia Tserkov’: ‘Kochuiuschij’ Sobor 1928 g.” (The Catacomb Church: The ‘Nomadic’ Council of 1928), *Russkoe Pravoslavie* (Russian Orthodoxy), № 3 (7), 1997, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-858)
859. Urusova, “Memoirs of Prot. Valentine Sventitsky”. [↑](#footnote-ref-859)
860. Shumilo, op. cit., p. 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-860)
861. *Pravoslavnoe obozrenie* (Orthodox Review), St. Petersburg, №10 (23), 1999, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-861)
862. *Russkaia Mysl’* (Orthodox Thought), № 3143, March 17, 1977. [↑](#footnote-ref-862)
863. Polsky, *O Tserkvi v SSSR* (On the Church in the USSR), New York – Montreal, 1993, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-863)
864. Mazyrin, “Prichiny”, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-864)
865. The area occupied by the “Bujevtsy” in Tambov, Voronezh and Lipetsk provinces had been the focus of a major peasant rebellion against Soviet power in 1921. It continued to be a major stronghold of True Orthodoxy for many decades to come. See A.I. Demianov, *Istinno Pravoslavnoe Khristianstvo*, 1977, Voronezh University Press; "New Information on the True Orthodox Christians", *Radio Liberty Research*, March 15, 1978, pp. 1-4; Christel Lane, *Christian Religion in the Soviet Union*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978. ch. 4; "Registered and unregistered churches in Voronezh region", *Keston News Service*, 3 March, 1988, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-865)
866. Michael Shkarovsky, “Iosiflianskoe Dvizhenie i Oppozitsia v SSSR (1927-1943)” (The Josephite Movement and Opposition in the USSR (1927-1943)), *Minuvshee* (The Past), № 15, 1994, p. 450. [↑](#footnote-ref-866)
867. Shumilo, op. cit., p. 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-867)
868. *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 14 (1587), July 15/28, 1997, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-868)
869. Pospielovsky, "Mitropolit Sergij i raskoly sprava", op. cit., p. 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-869)
870. D’Herbigny and Alexandre Deubner, *Evêques Russes en Exil – Douze ans d’Epreuves 1918-1930* (Russian Bishops in Exile – Twelve Years of Trials, 1918-1930), Orientalia Christiana, vol. XXI, № 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-870)
871. I.I. Osipova, “Istoria Istinno Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi po Materialam Sledstvennago Dela” (The History of the True Orthodox Church according to Materials from the Interrogation Process), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 14 (1587), July 15/28, 1997, p. 2. According to *Slovar’ Ateista* (The Atheist’s Dictionary) (Moscow, 1964), “613 priests and monks” entered the True Orthodox Church – a gross underestimate. [↑](#footnote-ref-871)
872. Osipova, *O Premiloserdij… Budi s nami neotstupno…Vospominania veruiuschikh Istinno-Pravoslavnoj (Katakombnoj) Tserkvi. Konets 1920-kh – nachalo 1970-kh godov*. (O Most Merciful One… Remain with us without fail. Reminiscences of believers of the True-Orthodox (Catacomb) Church. End of the 1920s – beginning of the 1970s), Moscow, 2008. [↑](#footnote-ref-872)
873. Although the Protestants had welcomed the revolution and thus escaped the earlier persecutions, they were now subjected to the same torments as the Orthodox (Pospielovsky, "Podvig very", op. cit., pp. 233-34). [↑](#footnote-ref-873)
874. Rusak, *Svidetel’stvo Obvinenia* (Witness for the Prosecution), Jordanville, 1987, part I, p. 176. [↑](#footnote-ref-874)
875. M.I. Odintsev, “Put’ dlinoiu v sem’ desiatiletij; ot konfrontatsii k sotrudnichestvu” (A Path Seven Decades Long: from Confrontation to Cooperation), in *Na puti k svobode sovesti* (n the Path to Freedom of Conscience), op. cit., p. 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-875)
876. Rusak, op. cit. p. 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-876)
877. Husband, *“Godless Communists”*, Northern University of Illinois Press, 2000, p. 66. [↑](#footnote-ref-877)
878. Werth, “A State against its People”, in Stéphane Courtois, Nicolas Werth, Jean-Louis Panné, Andrzej Packowski, Karel Bartošek, Jean-Louis Margolin, *The Black Book of Communism*, London: Harvard University Press, 1999, pp. 172-173. [↑](#footnote-ref-878)
879. http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print\_page&pid=1221. [↑](#footnote-ref-879)
880. Igor Kurlyandsky, “Nash Otvet Rimskomu Pape: kak tt. Stalin, Yaroslavsky i Molotov v 1930 godu pisali ‘interview’ Mitropolita Sergia i ego Sinoda” (Our Reply to the Pope of Rome: How Comrades Stalin, Yaroslavsky and Molotov wrote the ‘interview’ of Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod in 193), *Politicheskij Zhurnal* (The Political Journal), 183-184, 21, April, 2008; http://www.politjournal.ru/index.php?action=Articles&dirid=50&tek=8111&issue=218. [↑](#footnote-ref-880)
881. Grabbe, op. cit., p. 78; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 10-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-881)
882. Krasovitsky, Sergianskij raskol v perspective preodolenia (The Sergianist Schism with a view to Its Overcoming), Moscow, samizdat, p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-882)
883. Zelenogorsky, M. *Zhizn’ i deiatel’nost’ Arkhiepiskopa Andrea (Kniazia Ukhtomskogo)* (The Life and Activity of Archbishop Andrew (Prince Ukhtomsky), Moscow, 1991, p. 216. [↑](#footnote-ref-883)
884. *Za Khrista Postradavshie* (Suffered for Christ), Moscow: St. Tikhon’s Theological Institute, 1997, p. 220). Bartholomew became a Catholic, which may undermine the strength of his evidence in the eyes of some. [↑](#footnote-ref-884)
885. Grabbe, op. cit., p. 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-885)
886. His words, as reported by Protopresbyter Michael Polsky (*Novie Mucheniki Rossijskie*, vol. II, p. 30), were: “The secret, desert, Catacomb Church has anathematized the ‘Sergianists’ and all those with them.” [↑](#footnote-ref-886)
887. Our information about this Council is based exclusively on Archbishop Ambrose (von Sievers), “Katakombnaia Tserkov’: Kochuiushchij Sobor 1928 g.” (“The Catacomb Church: The ‘Nomadic’ Council of 1928”), *Russkoe Pravoslavie* (Russian Orthodoxy), № 3 (7), 1997, whose main source is claimed to be the archives of the president of the Council, Bishop Mark (Novoselov), as researched by the Andrewite Bishop Evagrius. Some historians, such as Pavel Protsenko (“Skvoz’ mif ob ‘Istinnoj Tserkvi’”, *Russkij Pastyr’*, 35, III-1999, pp. 84-97), dismiss the authenticity of the Council completely. Others, such as Osipova (“V otvet na statiu ‘Mif ob “Istinnoj Tserkvi”’” (In Reply to the Article, “The Myth of ‘the True Church’”), *Russkoe Pravoslavie* (Russian Orthodoxy), № 3 (7), 1997, pp. 18-19) and Danilushkin (op. cit., p. 534) appear to accept the existence of this Council. But it is difficult to find anything other than oblique supporting evidence for it, and von Sievers has refused to allow the present writer to see the archives. A Smirnov (perhaps von Sivers himself) writes that the “noncommemorating” branch of the Catacomb Church, whose leading priest was Fr. Sergius Mechev, had bishops who “united in a constantly active Preconciliar Convention” and who were linked with each other by special people called ‘svyazniki’” (“Ugasshie nepominaiushchie v bege vremeni” (The Extinguished Non-Commemorators in the Passing of Time), *Simvol* (Symbol), № 40, 1998, p. 174). [↑](#footnote-ref-887)
888. “We cannot believe that in the Act of that Council, which was allegedly undersigned by 70 hierarchs of the Greco-Russian Church, the Savior’s name was written as Isus, the way Old Rite Believers wrote it, and the way Ambrose himself does. Furthermore, the hierarchs could not have unanimously excommunicated the Council of 166-1667 as ‘an assembly of rogues’. The Council could not have agreed to recognize all the name-worshipping believers as ‘true believers’, thus easily ending the stalemate unresolved by the Council of 1917-1918. The procedure of assignment by hierarchs of casting vote powers to their proxies, which violated the provisions of the 1917-1918 Local Council, could not have been adopted without any deliberation or objections at all. The seventy attending hierarchs could not have been unaware of the fact that only the First Hierarch, Metropolitan Peter, had the power to convene a Local Council…” (*Vertograd* (English edition), December, 1998, p. 31).

     However, Sergius Firsov is of a different opinion: “The style of the documents, the words used in them and the form of the cited proofs force [us] to admit that the published documents were created in the 1920s and are not a later forgery” (“Mitropolit Sergij (Stragorodsky) v Otsenkakh i Mneniakh Sovremennikov (k Postanovke Voprosa)” (Evaluation of, and Opinions about, Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) by his Contemporaries (Towards Setting the Question)”, http://krotov.info/history/20/1900/firsov\_strag.html, p. 8). [↑](#footnote-ref-888)
889. M.V. Shkarovsky, *Sud’by iosiflyanskikh pastyrej. Iosiflyanskoye dvizhenie RPTs v sud’bakh ego uchastnikov. Arkhivniye dokumenty* (The Destinies of the Josephite Pastors. The Josephite Movement of the ROC in the Destinies of its Participants. Archive Documents), St. Petersburg, 2006, p. 542; “Novie dannia k zhizneopisaniu sviashchennomuchenika Fyodora, arkhiepiskopa Volokolamskogo, osnovannia na protokolakh doprosov 1937 g.” (New Data towards a Biography of Hieromartyr Theodore, Archbishop of Volokolamsk), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’* (Orthodox Life), 48, № 8 (584), August, 1998, pp. 6-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-889)
890. Archbishop Theophan, *Pis’ma* (Letters), Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1976; translated in *Selected Letters,* Liberty, TN: St. John of Kronstadt Press, 1989. [↑](#footnote-ref-890)
891. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-891)
892. *Pis’ma Blazhenneishago Mitropolita Antonia (Khrapovitskogo)* (The Letters of his Beatitude Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), op. cit., pp. 105-106, quoted in the *Archpastoral Epistle of the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, 1969* and translated in *Orthodox Christian Witness*, March 8/21, 1982. Metropolitan Anthony secretly distributed this encyclical with an appeal to the archpastors to join ROCOR; it was widely read among the Josephites (Shkarovsky, M.B. “Iosiflianskoe dvizhenie i ‘Sviataia Rus’” (The Josephite Movement and ‘Holy Russia’), *Mera* (Measure), 1995, # 3, p. 101). [↑](#footnote-ref-892)
893. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 13. If Metropolitan Sergius had been thinking ecclesiastically rather than politically, he would have protested, not at the supposedly political character of Metropolitan Evlogy’s visits to England, but at his violation of the canons by his recognizing the Anglican clergy. Thus on May 16, 1935, on the initiative of the Russian Clergy and Church Aid Fund, a prayer service was arranged in London for the cessation of the persecutions against the faith in Soviet Russia. Metropolitan Evlogy came again, together with ROCOR’s Archbishops Anastasy and Seraphim. During the service in the Anglican church the Orthodox hierarchs stood with their mantias on. Then, at a liturgy and moleben in the Russian church many Anglican clergy stood and prayed in their vestments. (*Tserkovnaia Zhizn’* (Church Life), 6, 1935, pp. 100-101; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 47) [↑](#footnote-ref-893)
894. *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’* (Church Life), № 8, 1933; in *Orthodox Life*, vol. 27 (2), March-April, 1977; Archbishop Nikon, *Zhizneopisanie Blazhenneishago Antonia, Mitropolita Kievsago i Galitskago* (Biography of His Beatitude Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich), New York, 1960, vol. 6, pp. 263-269; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, pp. 24-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-894)
895. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-895)
896. <http://www.russianorthodoxchurch.ws/english/pages/history/1933epistle.html>; http://www.russianorthodoxchurch.ws/Poslania/poslanie.sobor.1933.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-896)
897. On November 26 / December 9, 1979, Metropolitan Philaret of New York wrote to Abbess Magdalina of Lesna convent: “Ponder these last words of the great Abba: the apparent performance of the Mysteries… What horror! But these words of his concur totally with my own conviction regarding the gracelessness and inefficacy of schismatic Mysteries” – and he went on to make clear that he regarded the sacraments of the Moscow Patriarchate, and of the American and Parisian jurisdictions, to be graceless. [↑](#footnote-ref-897)
898. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 40. It is interesting to note that Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina said the same thing when clarifying a pastoral epistle of his: “no clergyman, and certainly no hierarch, is to be deposed for wrong belief and excised from the universal body of the Eastern Orthodox Church without a prior trial and defense... For the age-old history of the Orthodox Church teaches us that no wrong-believing person who is liable to deposition and excision has ever been declared heretical or schismatic by Hierarchs acting in isolation, without any trial or defense, but by a valid and canonical Synod, coming together and taking counsel with the aid of the Holy Spirit and putting forth its vote of condemnation only after the defendant has stood trial and defended himself, and after all means of enlightenment and admonition have been exhausted...” (Letter of January 18, 1945; http://www.trueorthodoxy.org/schismatics\_matthewites\_postings.shtml) [↑](#footnote-ref-898)
899. Metropolitan Eleutherius, *Moj Otvet Mitropolitu Antoniu* (My Reply to Metropolitan Anthony), Kovno, 1935, pp. 18, 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-899)
900. Ilyin, “O ‘Bogoustanovlennosti’ sovietskoj vlasti” (On the ‘God-establishedness’ of Soviet Power), http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/print.php?act=lib&id=2711 [↑](#footnote-ref-900)
901. Andreev, *Is the Grace of God Present in the Soviet Church?,* Wildwood, Alberta: Monastery Press, 2000, p. 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-901)
902. Mazyrin, “K istorii vysshevo upravlenia Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi v 1935-1937 gg.”, 16th Annual Theological Conference of PSTGU, Moscow, 2006, vol. 1, p. 166, [http://pstgu.ru/download/1269284749.mazyrin.pdf](http://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fpstgu.ru%2Fdownload%2F1269284749.mazyrin.pdf&h=FAQEX3rTcAQHblAVXfevvML9ccDyuZDih_a_CIBNQct1Tug&enc=AZOGsM3HKuKNjS_5OM01Tye55y6B05vt4_Vu0BpWLtHDulwClG03iiV2zmEvgtxvecuo2Mz0fftRdcPJ2AJUpXo580o_iuc0oorcZp12rRiH2fw5IkX7KoPYShcES8nD2G_xwUErMSVSX8-CkoDjX2cLZpUedP3aJVIZ-n2MrSEEkwq4vGVpzqjiD24Tmh6h4MGTgBOyFljxQelsn8fekAv2&s=1" \t "_blank) [↑](#footnote-ref-902)
903. On Archbishop Andrew’s highly controversial life, see Paul Boiarschinov, “Sviashchennomuchenik Arkhiepiskop Andrei Ufimsky (v miru Kniaz' Ukhtomsky) - Izsledovanie Zhiznedeiatel'nosti” (Hieromartyr Archbishop Andrew of Ufa (in the world Prince Ukhtomsky), Diploma thesis, Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1995; Chernov, op. cit; I.M. Andreyev, *Russia's Catacomb Saints*, Platina, 1982, chapter 19; Archbishop Ambrose (von Sievers), "Ekkleziologia arkhiepiskopa Andrea, Ufimskogo (kn. Ukhtomskogo)" (The Ecclesiology of Archbishop Andrew of Ufa (Prince Ukhtomsky), *Vestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi za Granitsei* (Herald of the German Diocese of the Russian Church Abroad), № 2, 1993, pp. 20-24; "Gosudarstvo i 'katakomby'", in Filatov, S.B., op. cit., pp. 108-109, 111; “Katakombnaia Tserkov’: Kochuiushchij Sobor 1928 g.” (The Catacomb Church: the ‘Nomadic Council’ of 1928), *Russkoe Pravoslavie* (Russian Orthodoxy), № 3 (7), 1997; “Sviaschennomuchenik Andrej, Arkhiepiskop Ufimskij” (Hieromartyr Andrew, Archbishop of Ufa), *Russkoe Pravoslavie* (Russian Orthodoxy), № 5 (14), 1998, 1-30; Michael Podgornov, “Otpal li Arkhiepiskop Andrej (Ukhtomsky) v Staroobriadcheskij Raskol?” (Did Archbishop Andrew (Ukhtomsky) Fall Away into the Old Ritualist Schism?), *Russkoe Pravoslavie* (Russian Orthodoxy) № 2 (11), 1998, 1-22; *Staroobriadchestvo* (Old Ritualism), Moscow: "Tserkov", 1996, pp. 25-26, 141-142; *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 14 (1587), July 15/28, 1997, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-903)
904. George Lardas, “The Old Calendar Movement in the Greek Church: An Historical Survey”, B.Th. Thesis, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1983, p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-904)
905. Monk Anthony Georgantas, *Atheologites "Theologies" Atheologitou "Theologou"* (Atheist ‘Theologies’ of an Atheist ‘Theologian’), Gortynia: Monastery of St. Nikodemos, 1992, pp. 7-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-905)
906. Monk (now Metropolitan) Ephraim, *Letter on the Calendar issue*, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-906)
907. Velimirovich, in Monk Paul, *Neoimerologitismos Oikoumenismos* (Newcalendarism Ecumenism), Athens, 1982, p. 78. [↑](#footnote-ref-907)
908. St. Elijah skete, Mount Athos, *Uchenie Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi o Sviashchennom Predanii i otnoshenie ee k novomu stiliu* (The Teaching of the Orthodox Church on Holy Tradition and its Relation to the New Calendar), Jordanville, NY: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1989, p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-908)
909. *I Phoni tis Orthodoxias* (The Voice of Orthodoxy), № 844, November-December, 1991, pp. 26-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-909)
910. *I Agia Skepe* (The Holy Protection), № 122, October-December, 1991, p. 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-910)
911. Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, *Papa-Nicholas Planas*, pp. 54-55, 108-110. [↑](#footnote-ref-911)
912. Bishop Andrew of Patras, *Matthaios* (Matthew), Athens, 1963, pp. 50-66. [↑](#footnote-ref-912)
913. Hieromonk Matthew (Karpathakes) (later Bishop of Bresthena), preface to the third edition of *Theion Prosevkhytarion* (Divine Prayer Book), Athens, 1934. [↑](#footnote-ref-913)
914. Quoted by Fr. Roman Pavlov. [↑](#footnote-ref-914)
915. Glazkov, op. cit., p. 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-915)
916. Stavros Karamitsos*, I Agonia en to kipo Gethsimani* (The Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane), Athens, 1999, pp. 162-164; Lardas, op. cit., p. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-916)
917. Psarev, op. cit., p 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-917)
918. Holy Transfiguration Monastery, *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, Boston, 1998, p. 46. However, it should be emphasised that this cheirothesia is not mentioned in any of the early sources, and is not confirmed by contemporary True Orthodox sources. [↑](#footnote-ref-918)
919. Bishop Photius of Marathon, private communication, March 5, 2008. [↑](#footnote-ref-919)
920. Metropolitan Calliopius (Giannakoulopoulos) of Pentapolis, *Ta Patria* (Fatherland Matters), volume 7, Piraeus, 1987, p. 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-920)
921. See http://www.genuineorthodoxchurch.net/images/GOC1935DiangelmaBgrk.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-921)
922. Metropolitan Calliopius, op. cit., pp. 277-278. [↑](#footnote-ref-922)
923. A. Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations, 1918-1974*, Athens: Centre for Asia Minor Studies, 1983, p. 200. [↑](#footnote-ref-923)
924. Hieromonk (now Bisho) Nectarius (Yashunsky), *Kratkaia istoria sviaschennoj bor’by starostil’nikov Gretsii protiv vseeresi ekumenizma* (A Short History of the Sacred Struggle of the Old Calendarists of Greece againstthe Pan-Heresy of Ecumenism). [↑](#footnote-ref-924)
925. Elijah Angelopoulos, Dionysius Batistates, *Chrysostomos Kavourides*, Athens, 1981, pp. 21-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-925)
926. The Zealots of the Holy Mountain, *Syntomos Istorike Perigraphe*, op. cit., pp. 23-24. [↑](#footnote-ref-926)
927. Metropolitan Calliopius, *Ta Patria* (Fatherland Matters), vol. 6, Piraeus, 1984, pp. 67-74. [↑](#footnote-ref-927)
928. Bujor, op. cit., p. 98. [↑](#footnote-ref-928)
929. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-929)
930. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-930)
931. Metropolitan Cyprian, "The True Orthodox Christians of Romania", *The Orthodox Word*, January-February, 1982, vol. 18, № 1 (102). Over ten priests were killed or died in prison, including Fathers Pambo, Gideon and Theophanes. See Victor Boldewskul, "The Old Calendar Church of Romania", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 42, № 5, October-November, 1992, pp. 11-17. Metropolitan Blaise writes: “Take, for example, Fr. Euthymius – he was in a concentration camp for 3 years with Fr. Pambo, and he told us how they tortured him: they threw him into a stream and forced other prisoners to walk over him as over a bridge: he was at that time about 27 years old.” (*Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 2(1479), 15/28 January, 1993) [↑](#footnote-ref-931)
932. Sturdza, *The Suicide of Europe: Memoirs of Prince Michel Sturdza, Former Foreign Minister of Rumania,* Belmont, Mass.: Western Islands, 1968. [↑](#footnote-ref-932)
933. See, for example, Michael Burleigh’s assessment: “Few European Fascist movements went so far as to proclaim that ‘God is a Fascist!’ or that ‘the ultimate goal of the Nation must be resurrection in Christ!’ Romania was the exception. Romanian Fascists wanted ‘a Romania in delirium’ and they largely got one. The Legion of the Archangel Michael was founded in 1927 in honour of the archangel, who had allegedly visited Corneliu Codreanu, its chief ideologist, while he was in prison. It was the only European Fascist movement with religion (in this case Romanian Orthodoxy) at its core. In 1930 the Legion was renamed the Iron Guard. While rivalling only the Nazis in the ferocity of their hatred of Jews, these Romanian Fascists were sui generis in their fusion of political militancy with Orthodox mysticism into a truly lethal whole. One of the Legion’s intellectual luminaries, the world-renowned anthropologist Mircea Eliade, described the legionary ideal as ‘a harsh Christian spirituality’. Its four commandments were ‘belief in God; faith in our mission; love for one another; son’. The goal of a ‘new moral man’ may have been a totalitarian commonplace, but the ‘resurrection of the [Romanian] people in front of God’s throne’ was not routine in such circles. But then few European Fascists were induced into an elite called the Brotherhood of Christ by sipping from a communal cup of blood filled from slashes in their own arms, or went around with little bags of soil tied around their necks. Nor did they do frenzied dances after chopping opponents into hundreds of pieces. Not for nothing was the prison massacre of Iron Guard leaders – including the captain Codreanu himself – by supporters of King Carol II known to local wits as ‘the Night of the Vampires’. Although the Romanian elites emasculated the Guard’s leadership, much of their furious potential was at that elite’s disposal…” (*Sacred Causes*, London: Harper Perennial, 2007, p. 270) [↑](#footnote-ref-933)
934. Haas, introduction to Sturdza, op. cit., pp. xvii-xix. [↑](#footnote-ref-934)
935. Monk Moise, *The Saint of the Prisons*, Sibiu: Agnos, 2009, pp. 28-32, 32-34, 34-35, 36-37. For another positive assessment of the Legionnaire movement, see Alexander Ronnett and Faust Bradescu, “The Legionary Movement in Romania”, http://www.ihr.org/jhr/v07/v07p193\_Ronnett.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-935)
936. Bujor, op. cit., pp. 99-101. [↑](#footnote-ref-936)
937. Glazkov, “Istoricheskie prichiny nekotorykh sobitij v istorii Rumynskoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi do II Mirovoj vojny” (The Historical Reasons for some Events in the History of the Romanian Orthodox Church before the Second World War), *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’* (Church Life), №№ 3-4, May-August, 2000, pp. 57-58. [↑](#footnote-ref-937)
938. Bujor, op. cit., p. 101, translator’s note. [↑](#footnote-ref-938)
939. Metropolitan Cyprian, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-939)
940. Radzinsky, however, claims that by the end of 1930 “80 per cent of village churches were closed” (*Stalin*, New York: Doubleday, 1996, p. 249). [↑](#footnote-ref-940)
941. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1933, № 1, p. 3; Letter of Bishop Athanasius, May 9/22, 1955. [↑](#footnote-ref-941)
942. V.V. Antonov, "Lozh' i Pravda" (Lies and Truth), *Russkij Pastyr'* (Russian Pastor), II, 1994, pp. 79-80. [↑](#footnote-ref-942)
943. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 681-682, 691-692. Protopresbyter Michael Polsky (*Novie Mucheniki Rossijskie* (The New Martyrs of Russia), op. cit., p. 133) reported that Metropolitan Peter had written to Sergius: “If you yourself do not have the strength to protect the Church, you should step down and hand over your office to a stronger person.” [↑](#footnote-ref-943)
944. Metropolitan Peter’s representative, “the layman Popov” noted on canon 6: “Categorically not. He does not agree. Metr. Peter does not consider the sergianist Synod to be heretical.” And Metropolitan Cyril’s representative, the monk Paul (Burtsev) said: “I protest. Vladyka metropolitan does not bless the signing of this.” (Archbishop Ambrose (von Sievers), “Katakombnaia Tserkov’: ‘Kochuiuschij’ Sobor 1928 g.” (The Catacomb Church: the ‘Nomadic Council’ of 1928), *Russkoe Pravoslavie* (Russian Orthodoxy), № 3 (7), 1997, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-944)
945. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 880-881, 883. [↑](#footnote-ref-945)
946. Andreyev, “Vospominania o Katakombnoj Tserkvi v SSSR” (Reminiscences of the Catacomb Church in the USSR), in Archimandrite Panteleimon, *Luch Sveta v Zaschitu Pravoslavnoj Very, v* *oblichenie ateizma i v oproverzhenie doktrin neveria* (A Ray of Light in Defence of the Orthodox Faith, to the Rebuking of Atheism and the Rebuttal of the Doctrines of Unbelief), Jordanville, 1970, part 2, p. 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-946)
947. *Uchenie o Tserkvi Sviatykh Novomuchenikov i Ispovednikov Rossijskikh* (The Teaching on the Church of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia), attachment to *Russkoe Pravoslavie* (Russian Orthodoxy), № 3 (7), 1997, p. 7; Regelson, op. cit., p. 590. [↑](#footnote-ref-947)
948. “Ekkleziologia sv. Kirilla (Smirnova), mitropolita Kazanskogo" (The Ecclesiology of St. Cyril (Smirnov), Metropolitan of Kazan), *Vestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi za Granitsei* (Herald of the German Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad), № 1, 1991, pp. 12-14. [↑](#footnote-ref-948)
949. V.V. Antonov, "Vazhnoe Pis'mo Mitropolita Kirilla" (An Important Letter of Metropolitan Cyril), *Russkij Pastyr'* (Russian Pastor), II, 1994, p. 76. Arseny may have changed his position before his death in 1936. [↑](#footnote-ref-949)
950. Andreyev, op. cit, pp. 102-103. [↑](#footnote-ref-950)
951. “Novie dannia k zhizneopisaniu sviashchennomuchenika Fyodora, arkhiepiskopa Volokolamskogo, osnovannia na protokolakh doprosov 1937 g.” (New Date towards a Biography of Hieromartyr Theodore, Archbishop of Volokolamsk, Based on the Protocols of Interrogations in 1937), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’* (Orthodox Life), 48, # 8 (584), August, 1998, pp. 4-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-951)
952. Letter of Metropolitan Cyril to Hieromonk Leonid, February 23 / March 8, 1937, *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 16, August 15/28, 1997, p. 7. Italics mine (V.M.). [↑](#footnote-ref-952)
953. Chernov, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-953)
954. *Uchenie o Tserkvi Sviatykh Novomuchenikov i Ispovednikov Rossijskikh* (The Teaching on the Church of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia), op. cit., p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-954)
955. Hieromonk Amphilochius, *Gnosesthe tin Alitheian* (Know the Truth), Athens, 1984, pp. 17-18. [↑](#footnote-ref-955)
956. Fr. Andrew Sidniev, *Florinskij raskol v Tserkvi IPKh Gretsii* (The Florinite Schism in the Chuch of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, pp. 62-63. [↑](#footnote-ref-956)
957. Sidniev, op. cit; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 64-65. [↑](#footnote-ref-957)
958. Bishop Andrew, op. cit., pp. 68-74. [↑](#footnote-ref-958)
959. Metropolitan Calliopius, *Ta Patria*, op. cit., p. 282. Stavros Markou dates these words to July 9, 1937. [↑](#footnote-ref-959)
960. Quoted by Fr. Roman Pavlov. [↑](#footnote-ref-960)
961. http://www.genuineorthodoxchurch.net/images/GOCDemetrias1935eng.pdf;

     http://www.genuineorthodoxchurch.net/images/GOC1935DiangelmaBeng.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-961)
962. Sidniev, op. cit.; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 65-67. [↑](#footnote-ref-962)
963. Quoted by Stavros Markou, “The Matthewites: The First Schismatics of the Greek Old Calendar Movement”. [↑](#footnote-ref-963)
964. Sidniev, op. cit.; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 68-70. [↑](#footnote-ref-964)
965. Sidniev, op. cit.; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 68-70. [↑](#footnote-ref-965)
966. Encyclical № 1844; Bishop Matthew of Bresthena, epistle of September 21, 1944; in Monk Benjamin, *Letopis’ Tserkovnykh Sobytij (1939-1949)* (Chronicle of Church Events (1939-1949)), part 3, http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis3.htm, pp. 10-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-966)
967. Peter Sokolov, “Put’ Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi v Rossii-SSSR (1917-1961)” (The Path of the Russian Orthodox Church in Russia-USSR (1917-1961)), in *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ v SSSR: Sbornik* (The Russian Orthodox Church in the USSR: A Collection), Munich, 1962, p. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-967)
968. *Tserkovnie Vedomosti* (Church Gazette), 1925, №№ 21-22); Boyeikov, *Tserkov’, Rus’ i Rim* (The Church, Russia and Rome), Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1983, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-968)
969. Ivanov-Trinadtsaty, “The Vatican and Russia”, http://www.orthodoxinfo.com/new.htm. See also Oleg Platonov, *Ternovij Venets Rossii* (Russia’s Crown of Thorns), Moscow: Rodnik, 1998, pp. 464-465. [↑](#footnote-ref-969)
970. Osipova, op. cit., p. 133. [↑](#footnote-ref-970)
971. But he had the support of Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky). [↑](#footnote-ref-971)
972. Nazarov, *Kto Naslednik Rossijskogog Prestola?* (Who is the Heir to the Russian Throne?), Moscow, 1996, pp. 35-36. [↑](#footnote-ref-972)
973. T.V., “Svetloj pamiati nezabvennago ego velichestva korolia vitiazia Aleksandra I Yugoslavianskago” (To the Radiant Memory of his Majesty, the Unforgettable Knight, Alexander I of Yugoslavia), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 24 (1765), December 15/28, 2004, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-973)
974. Andrew Shestakov, Kogda terror stanovitsa zakonom, iz istorii gonenij na Pravoslavnuiu Tserkov’ v Khorvatii v seredine XX v. (When terror becomes the law: from the history of the persecutions on the Orthodox Church in Croatia in the middle of the 20th century); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, pp. 22-23. [↑](#footnote-ref-974)
975. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-975)
976. A.A. Kostriukov, “K istorii vzaimootnoshenij mezhdu Serbskoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkoviu i Arkhierejskim Sinodom v Sremskikh Karlovtsakh” (Towards a History of the Mutual Relations between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Hierarchical Synod in Sremsky Karlovtsy), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’*, N 2 (682), February, 2009, pp. 1-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-976)
977. Although the Prime Minister did not send the project of the Concordat to the Senate from ratification, he did, in 1939, establish the autonomous province of Croatia with its capital in Zagreb. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-977)
978. Hieroschemamonk Akakije, in V. Moss, *Letopis Velike Bitke* (Chronicle of a Great Battle), Belgrade, 2008, pp. 323-33. However, one problem about the Serbian Church before the war was its failure to administer the sacrament of baptism in the canonical manner, through threefold immersion. [↑](#footnote-ref-978)
979. Nun Vassa, “Ot Vserossijskago Tserkovnago Sobora k Vserossijskomu Tserkovnomu Soboru, ili: Chto takoe ‘Pravoslavnoe Episkopstvo Tserkve Rossijskia’?” (From the All-Russian Church Council to the All-Russian Church Council, or : What is ‘The Orthodox Episcopate of the Church of Russia’ ?), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 13 (1754), July 1/14, 2004, p. 13. She continues: “A somewhat less concrete interpretation of ‘the Orthodox Episcopate’ can be heard a year later, at the Hierarchical Council in August, 1938. At this Council the question ‘of the commemoration of the bishops of the Russian [Rossijskoj] Church’ was again raised. In the protocols there is no new decision on the given question, but there is only a remark of Metropolitan Anastasy: ‘[Concerning] how the bishops of the Russian Church are to be commemorated, [Metropolitan Anastasy] pointed out that in the Eastern Churches during the widowhood of the patriarchal see the ‘episcopate’ of this Church was commemorated.’ It should be pointed out that the Hierarchical Council at this time still did not know about the death of Hieromartyr Cyril. From one letter of Metropolitan Anastasy from October, 1941 it is evident that even by the end of 1941 he did not have reliable information about the fate of Metropolitan Cyril.” [↑](#footnote-ref-979)
980. E.L., *Episkopy-Ispovedniki,* San Francisco, 1971, p. 92. [↑](#footnote-ref-980)
981. Cited by Arfed Gustavson, *The Catacomb Church*, Jordanville, 1960, p. 102. [↑](#footnote-ref-981)
982. S. Verin, "Svidetel'stvo russkikh katakomb" (A Witness of the Russian Catacombs), *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 14 (1563), July 1/14, 1996, pp. 11-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-982)
983. Schema-Monk Epiphany (Chernov), personal communication; B. Zakharov (the pseudonym of a Catacomb priest), *Russkaia Mysl’* (Russian Thought), September 7, 1949; "Vazhnoe postanovlenie katakombnoj tserkvi" (An Important Decree of the Catacomb Church), *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 18, 1949. According to one version, there is a fifth canon: “To all those who support the renovationist and sergianist heresy – Anathema”. See Bishop Ambrose (von Sievers), “Katakombnaia Tserkov’: Ust’-Kutskij Sobor 1937g.” (The Catacomb Church: the Ust-Kut Council of 1937), *Russkoe Pravoslavie* (Russian Orthodoxy), № 4 (8), 1997, pp. 20-24.

     If we believe in the “Nomadic Council” of 1928, then the Ust-Kut Council may be seen as confirming its sixth cano, which defined the essence of Sergianism as its recognition of Soviet power as a true, God-established power. It also harks back to the seventh canon of that Council, which declared: “The anathema of January 19, 1918 laid by Patriarch Tikhon and the Holy Council on the former Christians who became blasphemers, is confirmed. Since Soviet power is a blaspheming and Christ-persecuting power, the action of the anathema very much applies to the God-fighting power, and one must pray not for it, but for the deliverance of people from the bitter torment of the godless authorities and for the suffering land of Russia. We establish the reading of a special prayer for the persecuted and much-suffering Church after the service.”(Bishop Ambrose (von Sievers), “Katakombnaia Tserkov’: Kochuiushchij Sobor”, op. cit., pp. 7-8)

     Who could this “Metropolitan John” that presided over this Council be? We don’t know the answer to this question. The only Metropolitan John of this period known to the present writer was mentioned by I.M. Andreyev: “In August, 1952 the Catacomb Russian Orthodox Church lost one of her most remarkable archpastors. In view of his death, we are allowed to name him and say a few words about the character of his activity. Metropolitan John (Altajkij) was secretly consecrated by Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan. The reposed metropolitan was abroad after the Second World War and from 1946 to 1951 went several times to Soviet Russia and returned. His rare epistles and reports, communicated to certain catacombniks from Soviet Russia living abroad were, until 1952, the main source abroad on the life [of the Church] in Soviet Russia” (“O Tajnoj (Katakombnoj) tserkvi v Sovietskoj Rossii” (On the Secret (Catacomb) Church in Soviet Russia”, *Russkij Sigor*, N 4-6, 2009, p. 21). [↑](#footnote-ref-983)
984. Novoselov, quoted in Osipov, op. cit., p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-984)
985. Andreyev, *Russia's Catacomb Saints*, pp. 541-42. Cf. Archbishop Averky, "Mir nevidimij – sily bezplotnie" (The Invisible World – the Bodiless Powers), *Slova i rechi* (Sermons and Speeches), Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1975, vol. 2, pp. 593-95; Metropolitan Innocent, "O Sovietskoj Vlasti" (On Soviet Power), in Archbishop Nikon (Rklitsky), *Zhizneopisanie mitropolita Antonia*, op. cit., pp. 168-172. [↑](#footnote-ref-985)
986. The Mason K.V. Gvozdanovich recalls that while “the Carlovtsy group thundered against Masonry from the ambon, the clergy… headed by the all-embracing Metropolitan Evlogy were tolerant of it, allowing us to go to confession and communion” (Zhukov, op. cit., p. 123). [↑](#footnote-ref-986)
987. Andrei Psarev writes: “In 1934 in Belgrade, after Metropolitans Anthony and Evlogii settled their differences, zealous enforcers of ROCOR church policies refused to allow Metropolitan Evlogii, who had been defrocked by ROCOR, to serve at the Russian Trinity Church in Belgrade. As a result, Patriarch Varnava appeared at a meeting of the ROCOR council of bishops being held at the time and stated that if all suspensions imposed by ROCOR were not lifted immediately, King Alexander would no longer extend his hospitality to Russian bishops.” (“The Development of Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia’s Attitude Toward Other Local Orthodox Churches”), http://www.sobor2006.com/printerfriendly2.php?id=119\_0\_3\_0, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-987)
988. See G.M. Soldatov, “Soveschanie Glav RPTsZ pod predsed. Sviat. Patriarkha Varvary, 1935 g. Arkhiv Dokumentov” (The Conference of the Heads of the ROCOR under the presidency of Patriarch Barnabas, 1935. Archive of Documents), http://www.catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print\_page&pid=737. [↑](#footnote-ref-988)
989. Zhukov, op. cit., p. 107, footnote 57. For a more detailed account, see *A History of the Russian Church Abroad and the Events leading to the American Metropolia’s Autocephaly*, Seattle, WA: St. Nectarios Press, 1972, chapters 2 and 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-989)
990. Archpriest Alexander Lebedev, “Re: the debate on grace – a bit more historical perspective”,

     orthodox\_synod@indiana.edu, May 5, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-990)
991. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-991)
992. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, pp. 49-51. [↑](#footnote-ref-992)
993. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, pp. 56-57. [↑](#footnote-ref-993)
994. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-994)
995. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, pp. 57-58. [↑](#footnote-ref-995)
996. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-996)
997. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-997)
998. Nun Vassa, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-998)
999. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, pp. 75-77. [↑](#footnote-ref-999)
1000. Andrew Psarev, “RPTsZ i ekumenicheskoe dvizhenie 1920-1948 gg. (ROCOR and the ecumenical movement, 1920-1948)”; in Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, pp. 77-78. [↑](#footnote-ref-1000)
1001. On November 3, 1925 Metropolitan Anthony concelebrated with Metropolitan Dionysius of Warsaw in the Russian embassy church in Bucharest. The new calendarist Romanian Patriarch Miron also came to the service (Zhukov, op. cit., p. 88). (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-1001)
1002. In 1933, perhaps in reaction to these criticisms, the ROCOR Synod under the presidency of Metropolitan Anthony formally condemned Masonry. [↑](#footnote-ref-1002)
1003. A.K. Nikitin, *Polozhenie russkoj pravoslavnoj obschiny v Germanii v period natsistskogo rezhima (1933- 1945)* (The Position of the Russian Orthodox Community in Germany in the Nazi Period (1933-1945)), annual theological conference PSTBI, Moscow, 1998, pp. 321-322; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, pp. 52-53. [↑](#footnote-ref-1003)
1004. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-1004)
1005. A.K. Nikitin, op. cit.; Monk Benjamin, http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis2.htm, part 2, p.71. [↑](#footnote-ref-1005)
1006. G.M. Soldatov, personal communication, March 19, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-1006)
1007. Poslanie k russkim pravoslavnym liudiam po povodu ‘Obraschenia patriarkha Aleksia k arkipastyriam i kliru tak nazyvaemoj Karlovatskoj orientatsii’ (Epistle to the Russian Orthodox people on the ‘Address of Patriarch Alexis to the archpastors and clergy of the so-called Karlovtsy orientation), in G.M. Soldatov, *Arkhierejskij Sobor Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi Zagranitsej, Miunkhen (Germania) 1946 g.* (The Hierarchical Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad at Munich in 1946), Minneapolis, 2003, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-1007)
1008. Soldatov, op. cit., pp. 12-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-1008)
1009. M. Nazarov, *Missia russkoj emigratsii* (The Mission of the Russian Emigration), Moscow, 1994, vol. 1, p. 266; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 5; M.V. Shkarovsky, *Istoria Russkoj Tserkovnoj Emigratsii* (A History of the Russian Church Emigration), St. Petersburg, 2009.

      The parishes of the Serbian Bishop Vladimir (Raich) in Transcarpathia and Slovakia also passed into Seraphim’s jurisdiction after Vladimir was detained by the Hungarian authorities (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 1). [↑](#footnote-ref-1009)
1010. M.V. Shkarovsky, in Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 14-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-1010)
1011. Davis, *A Long Walk to Church: A Contemporary History of Russian Orthodoxy*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003, p. 15. Ernest Latham writes that on June 26, 1940, Molotov, “acting on the secret annex to the Nazi-Soviet Pact, handed the Romanian minister in Moscow, Gh. Davidescu, a note with a map demanding the return forthwith of Bessarabia and the cession of the northern half of Bucovina, which Russia had never before ruled. On the advice of Germany and Italy, with Hungary and Bulgaria clamoring for their own irredentae, Romania submitted to the Soviet demands and endured the loss of 50, 762 sq. km. and 3,776,000 people, more than half of whom, some 2,020,000, were ethnic Romanians. The following August 19 negotiations with Bulgaria began to determine the fate of the Quadrilateral, which was returned to Bulgaria on September 7 with the Treaty of Craiova at a cost to Romania of 7412 sq. km. An exchange of populations ensued with 103,711 Romanians transferred north and 62,272 Bulgarians moved south. The most painful and humiliating loss, however, had occurred a week before in Vienna when Hitler determined that northern Transylvania should be ceded to Hungary. The Vienna Diktat cost Romania 42,243 sq. km and 2,600,000 people about half of whom were ethnic Romanians. 110,000 Romanian refugees fled from Transylvania to the kingdom adding their care to the other responsibilities of the Romanian social services already buckling under the weight of the 45,000 Polish refugees who had fled from war-torn Poland the previous year. The total Romanian losses in the summer of 1940 were awesome: one-third of her territory, 6.600,000 of her population including 3,000,000 ethnic Romanians, 37% of the arable land, 44% of the forests, 27% of the orchards, 37% of the vineyards, 37% of wheat acreage, 30% of corn acreage, 75% of sunflower acreage, 43% of hemp acreage and 86% of soya acreage.

      “September 1940 was arguable the nadir of Romania’s history… Onto the anti-cusp of this nadir on September 5, 1940, there stepped General Ion Antonescu, called by Carol II from house arrest in the face of widespread rioting and a pending total breakdown of law and orderly governance. The following day he demanded and got the abdication of Carol in all but name, and Mihai for the second time became king of Romania…” (*Romanian Nationalism during the Reign of King Mihai I*, Etna, Ca.: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 2010, pp. 10-11). [↑](#footnote-ref-1011)
1012. Burleigh, op. cit., pp. 271-272. [↑](#footnote-ref-1012)
1013. Burleigh, op. cit., pp. 272-273. [↑](#footnote-ref-1013)
1014. According to Monk Benjamin (op. cit., part 2, p. 73), in June and July of 1938 150 village churches visited by Ukrainian Orthodox were demolished. On July 16 the Polish Church issued a memorandum on the event, as did the MP on the same day. For further details of the persecution, see Danilushkin, M.B (ed.) *Istoria Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi* (A History of the Russian Orthodox Church), St. Petersburg: “Voskresenie”, 1997, vol. I, p. 588; K.N. Nikolaiev, ”’Unia’ i vostochnij obriad” (The ‘Unia’ and the Eastern Rite), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 6 (1411), March 15/28, 1990. Among the buildings destroyed was the cathedral of St. Alexander Nevsky (in 1927), and the Orthodox cathedrals in Liublin, Kalisha, Vlotslavka, Plotsk and Koltsy (Monk Benjamin, part 1, op. cit., p. 175). (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-1014)
1015. Alexeyev and Stavrou, "Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov' na Okkupirovannoj Nemtsami Territorii" (The Russian Orthodox Church on German-Occupied Territory), *Russkoe Vozrozhdenie* (Russian Regeneration), 1980 (IV), № 12, pp. 122-124.

      The persecution of Orthodoxy by the Poles continued well into the war. Thus in Turkovichi in Kholm region there had been for centuries the miraculous Turkovitskaya Icon of the Mother of God cared for by a convent of nuns. In 1915 the nuns were forced to flee to Moscow, and the icon perished during the revolution. Meanwhile, in 1918, writes Archbishop Athanasius, “the Poles occupied the monastery and turned it into an orphanage under the direction of Polish nuns. The Orthodox were strictly forbidden to enter the monastery. Upon return from exile, the Orthodox inhabitants of Turkovichi built with their own means a small chapel in the cemetery not far from the monastery and ordered from the local artist and iconographer, Zinya, a copy of the miraculous icon, adorning it with a large kiot (shrine) and placing it in the church. The people heard of this and began to make massive pilgrimages to Turkovichi in order to venerate the sacred ‘Turkovitskaya’ Icon as one equal to the original. Thus the feast day of Turkovichi was restored and drew numerous pilgrims on the July 2/15 date.

      “But the wheel of fate turned mercilessly for Turkovichi and Kholm. During the terrible years of 1943-1945 during the Second World War Polish bandits attacked the peaceful Orthodox inhabitants at night, slaughtered them, burned their homes, and brought a reign of terror and fear to these Orthodox people. In this tragedy hundreds of thousands of Orthodox people who inhabited the four districts of Grubeshovsky, Tomashevsky, Zamoisky, and Bielgoraisky perished at the hands of the Poles.” ("The Tragedy of Orthodoxy in Kholm: Eternal be its memory!", *Orthodox Life,* vol. 34, № 1 (January-February, 1984), pp. 34-35. Translated by Timothy Fisher from *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 14, 1983, p. 9) [↑](#footnote-ref-1015)
1016. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, №, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-1016)
1017. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, №, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-1017)
1018. Archbishop Athanasius (Martos), “Belarus’ v istoricheskoj, gosudarstvennoj i tserkovnoj zhizni” (Belarus in its historical, state and ecclesiastical life); in Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-1018)
1019. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, №, pp. 9-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-1019)
1020. Bishop Gregory (Grabbe), *Arkhierejskij Sinod vo II Mirovuiu vojnu* (The Hierarchical Synod during the Second World War), p. 322; in Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-1020)
1021. Heyer, *Die Orthodoxe Kirche*, p. 162; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 5-6, 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-1021)
1022. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 11-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-1022)
1023. The letter he sent to Metropolitan Alexander of Tallin is cited by Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 15-18. [↑](#footnote-ref-1023)
1024. As we have seen, Metropolitan Eleutherius was notable for the eight long letters he wrote to Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) in 1925 criticizing his *Dogma of Redemption* (*Ob Iskuplenii* (On Redemption), Paris, 1937). He rejected Polish autocephaly, and in 1931, after Metropolitan Eulogius’ departure to Constantinople, he ruled the patriarchal parishes in Western Europe. In 1939 he again became

      Metropolitan of Vilnius and Lithuania. [↑](#footnote-ref-1024)
1025. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-1025)
1026. This is probably a mistake for “Archbishop Sergius Voskresensky of Dmitrov”. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-1026)
1027. Volkogonov, op. cit., pp. 385-386. [↑](#footnote-ref-1027)
1028. Danilushkin, op. cit., p. 922. [↑](#footnote-ref-1028)
1029. *Moskovskaia Pravda* (Moscow Truth) (12 March, 1996. See also Protopriest Michael Ardov, “Russkij Intelligent v Arkhierejskom Sane” (A Russian Intellectual in the Rank of a Bishop), *Tserkovnie Novosti* (Church News), № 1 (77), January-February, 1999, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-1029)
1030. *Associated Press* report of June 6, 1956. [↑](#footnote-ref-1030)
1031. Volkogonov, op. cit., p. 386. [↑](#footnote-ref-1031)
1032. Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 809, 810. [↑](#footnote-ref-1032)
1033. Danilushkin, op. cit., pp. 297, 520. [↑](#footnote-ref-1033)
1034. Davis, op. cit., p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-1034)
1035. Werth, op. cit., pp. 172, 173. [↑](#footnote-ref-1035)
1036. Polsky, op. cit., vol. II, p. 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-1036)
1037. Andreyev, *Russia's Catacomb Saints*, op. cit., pp. 422-23. [↑](#footnote-ref-1037)
1038. E.L., op. cit., pp. 65-66. [↑](#footnote-ref-1038)
1039. W. Alexeyev, "The Russian Orthodox Church 1927-1945: Repression and Revival", *Religion in Communist Lands,* vol. 7, № 1, Spring, 1979, p. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-1039)
1040. St. John Maximovich, *The Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. A Short History*, Jordanville, NY: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1997, pp. 28-29. Even a recent biography of Sergius by an MP author accepts this fact: “If Metropolitan Sergius, in agreeing in his name to publish the Declaration of 1927 composed by the authorities, hoping to buy some relief for the Church and the clergy, then his hopes not only were not fulfilled, but the persecutions after 1927 became still fiercer, reaching truly hurricane-force in 1937-38.” (Sergius Fomin, *Strazh Doma Gospodnia* (Guardian of the House of the Lord), Moscow, 2003, p. 262) [↑](#footnote-ref-1040)
1041. E.S. Polishchuk, "Patriarkh Sergei i ego deklaratsia: kapitulatsia ili kompromiss?" (Patriarch Sergius and his Declaration: Capitulation or Compromise?), *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia* (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), № 161, 1991-I, pp. 233-250. [↑](#footnote-ref-1041)
1042. Alla D. "Svidetel'stvo" (Witness), *Nadezhda* (Hope), vol. 16, Basel-Moscow, 1993, 228-230. [↑](#footnote-ref-1042)
1043. I.M. Andreyev, *Is the Grace of God Present in the Soviet Church?,* op. cit., p. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-1043)
1044. N.V. Urusova, *Materinskij Plach Sviatoj Rusi* (The Maternal Lament of Holy Rus’), Moscow: "Russkij Palomnik", 2006, pp. 285-287. [↑](#footnote-ref-1044)
1045. M.V. Shkvarovsky, *Iosiflianstvo*, op. cit., p. 236. [↑](#footnote-ref-1045)