

THE AGE OF LIBERALISM (1830-1865)
Volume VI of
AN ESSAY IN UNIVERSAL HISTORY
From an Orthodox Christian Point of View

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No man can serve two masters... You cannot serve God and Mammon.
Matthew 6.24.

*Having decided to worship Mammon, [the Victorians] had little enough room for the
demanding Alternative.*

A.N. Wilson, Charles Darwin, the Mythmaker (2017).

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

John Maynard Keynes, A Tract on Monetary Reform.

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

Benjamin Disraeli on Nathan Mayer Rothschild.

Money is the god of our time, and Rothschild is his prophet.
Heinrich Heine.

*Freedom is the new religion, the religion of our time. If Christ is not the god of this new
religion, he is nevertheless a high priest of it, and his name gleams beatifically into the
hearts of the apostles. But the French are the chosen people of the new religion, their
language records the first gospels and dogmas. Paris is the New Jerusalem, the Rhine is
the Jordan that separates the consecrated land of freedom from the land of the Philistines.*
Heinrich Heine.

Property is theft... Anarchy is order.
Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1840).

*Up to the moment before this palace of folly and illusion vanishes into the gulf of
universal ruin, human beings will boast about the progress of civilization and the
prospects of society. Nevertheless, reason will decay before men's eyes. The simplest
truths will appear strange and remarkable and will scarcely be tolerated.*
Abbé de Lamennais.

*"You know, all is development - the principle is perpetually going on. First, there was
nothing; then - I forget the next - I think there were shells; then fishes; then we came - let
me see - did we come next? Never mind, we came at last and the next change will be
something very superior to us, something with wings."*
Lady Constance in Benjamin Disraeli's Tancred (1847).

Man is made to adore and to obey: but if you will not command him, if you give him nothing to worship, he will fashion his own divinities.
Benjamin Disraeli.

The tsar's power over man comes from God, but do not make that power a mockery of God and man.
Vassily Zhukovsky to Tsarevich Alexander Pavlovsky.

Without religion, political science can create only despotism or anarchy.
Giuseppe Mazzini.

The protector of religion is the very body of the Church, even the people themselves, who desire their religious worship to be ever unchanged and of the same kind as that of their fathers.
Epistle of the Eastern Patriarchs (1848).

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

Liberalism in religion is the doctrine that there is no positive truth in religion, but that one creed is as good as another, and this is the teaching which is gathering substance and force daily. It is inconsistent with any recognition of any religion, as true. It teaches that all are to be tolerated, for all are matters of opinion.
Cardinal John Newman, Biglietto Speech (1879).

Some people by the word "freedom" understand the ability to do whatever one wants ... The more people have allowed themselves to be enslaved to sins, passions and defilements the more often than others they appear as zealots of external freedom, wanting to broaden the laws as much as possible. But such a man uses external freedom only the more to burden himself with inner slavery. True freedom is the active ability of a man who is not enslaved to sin, who is not pricked by a condemning conscience, to choose the better in the light of God's truth, and to bring it into actuality with the help of the gracious power of God. This is the freedom of which neither heaven nor earth are restrictors.
St. Philaret of Moscow, Sermon on the Birthday of Emperor Nicholas I, 1851.

*We have but faith: we cannot know;
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from Thee.
A beam in darkness: let it grow.
Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before.*
Alfred Lord Tennyson, In Memoriam (1850).

I am quite conscious that my speculations are quite beyond the bounds of true science.
Charles Darwin (1856).

Freedom is a very good horse to ride, but to ride somewhere.
Matthew Arnold.

In general a necessary condition of free institutions is that the boundaries of government should coincide in the main with those of nationalities.
John Stuart Mill, Representative Government.

In democracy there lies a terrible power of destruction.
Alexander Herzen.

The prevailing Civil War narrative is that the South committed treason by seceding to protect slavery and the North went to war to protect the union and free the slaves. That's simply not true, says professor Donald Livingston. Livingston, a historian and founder of the Abbeville Institute, looks closely at the events leading up to the Civil War in It Wasn't About Slavery. Among his revelations: - Slavery wasn't just a Southern institution: the North's industrial revolution was made possible through slave labor. - Many Northern states, including Lincoln's Illinois, prohibited the entrance of free blacks, making the integration of former slaves into society difficult. - If the federal government had developed a program to help compensate slave owners for their financial loss and aid integration, war likely could have been avoided (and in fact, Britain did have such a program--and managed to end slavery peacefully).
Kev Lee.

The root elements of our Russian life have been characterized long ago, and they are so powerfully and completely expressed by the familiar words: Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality. That is what we must preserve! When these principles become weaker or fail, the Russian people will cease to be Russian. It will then lose its sacred three-coloured flag.
St. Theophan the Recluse, Letters, VII, p. 289.

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INTRODUCTION

This book represents the sixth volume in my series, *An Essay in Universal History*. It continues the theme of the struggle between the Orthodox Autocracy and its enemies in the age of the nationalist, liberal and industrial revolutions, beginning with the consequences of the industrial and free-trade revolution in Britain, continuing with the pan-European liberal-nationalist revolutions of 1848 and the movement for Italian unification. Meanwhile, we see the hardening and darkening of nationalist ideology, the beginnings of socialist theorizing, both Utopian and Marxist, and the appearance of a new and very important false teaching, Darwinism, undermining not only Christianity but any belief in the Creator God.

This book is called *The Age of Liberalism* because the main idea that came to hold sway over European men's minds was liberalism, the theme of *freedom, political, economic and national*. Among the Great Powers, only Russia under the much-maligned Tsar Nicholas I, "the gendarme of Europe", kept the true faith in Christianity and Christian Monarchism alive and the mystery of iniquity at bay... The rivalry and "great game" between liberal England, the world's most advanced economy and most aggressive, self-confident polity, and Orthodox Russia, is one of the major themes of the period.

The book ends with the greatest liberalizing act of the Age of Liberalism, the emancipation of the Russian serfs early in the reign of Tsar Alexander II (1861). This bloodless act, compared with the contemporary emancipation of the American slaves in the American Civil War, which cost 600,000 lives, proved that Orthodox autocrats are not only able to carry out important liberal reforms, but are able to do them better by virtue of their autocratic authority. Indeed, it was already becoming clear that the western ideology of liberalism in action is almost always accompanied by violence or revolution on a large scale, with one kind of oppression and oppressor replacing another, which raised the question: was something morally and spiritual suspect about the whole liberational ideology?

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

I. THE WEST: THE PARADOXES OF FREEDOM

1. THE RELIGION OF LIBERALISM

After Napoleon's fall, France returned to monarchism – but not for long... While King Louis XVIII was forced to allow a certain degree of constitutionalism, his successor, Charles X, tried to turn the clock back, and his coronation ceremony in Rheims in 1825 had all the ceremonial of the *ancien regime*, including the medieval practice of touching for scrofula.¹ But Charles was not popular, and in July, 1830 he was overthrown.²

The July Days, as this revolution was called, introduced a constitutional monarchy headed by another Bourbon, Louis-Philippe, the Duke of Orléans. As Alistair Horne writes, "his acceptability to both sides in 1830 stemmed largely from the fact that his father had been the duplicitous regicide Philippe Egalité – though apostasy had not sufficed to save his neck during the Terror. Louis-Philippe had been nominated for the post of Lieutenant-General of the Kingdom by both Charles X and the Commune of Paris, and for the remainder of his eighteen-year rule between revolutions he would do his utmost to be all things to all sides. It was symbolic that the last King of France, the very antithesis of Louis XIV, accepted the crown not at Rheims but in the Palais Bourbon, as the politically elected ruler of 'the people'. Shorn of all mystical or inherited *droits*, the People's King had little more power than a British constitutional monarch..."³

Louis Philippe had suffered much in exile; he knew that absolutism was finished in France and instead sought to establish a "golden mean" between absolutism and Jacobinism. As he said in a speech from the throne in January, 1831: "We seek to hold to the *juste milieu* [golden mean] equally distant from the

¹ W.M. Spellman, *Monarchies*, London: Reaktion Books, 2001, p. 208.

² Even allies of De Maistre, such as the ultra-royalist and ultramontane priest Felicité de Lamennais, became disillusioned with Charles X. "To Lamennais, the July 1830 revolution was providential; the world was to be given a new lease of life through freedom and freedom was to be given a new lease of life through God. With his friends Lacordaire, Montalembert, de Coux and Gerbet, on 15 October 1830 Lamennais founded a journal with the title *L'Avenir* (The Future), which carried at its masthead 'God and Freedom'. The journal was of interest to those who were fighting for independence: the Poles, the Irish. It proposed a renewal of the church and society based on freedom: freedom of conscience and worship without distinction, the separation of church and state, the freedom of the press and of association, decentralization, and so on. De Coux aroused his readers to the social question. The tone of the journal was sometimes over the top. The bishops, who thought that the idea of separation of church and state was unthinkable, showed their disapproval by applying indirect sanctions against the subscribers. *L'Avenir* ceased publication on 15 November 1831. Frowned on by the French bishops, Lamennais, Lacordaire and Montalembert decided to take their case to the pope, whom they had always supported. 'Pilgrims for God and Freedom', they arrived in Rome at the end of December 1831 at a rather inopportune time. The pilgrims waited three months before having a disappointing meeting with Gregory XVI, at which neither the question of *L'Avenir* nor future preoccupations were raised. The publication of the letter from the Pope to the Polish bishops in June 1832 infuriated Lamennais, who left Rome, which he called 'this gigantic tomb where there are only bones to be found'. A few weeks later, on 15 August 1832, the encyclical *Mirari vos* appeared which, without naming Lamennais, condemned all his ideas and those of *L'Avenir*." (Jean Comby, *How to Read Church History*, London: SCM Press, 1989, vol. 1, pp. 129-130).

³ Horne, *Seven Ages of Paris*, London: Pan, 2002, pp. 254-255.

excesses of popular power and the abuses of royal authority".⁴ But arguably such a "golden mean" was not attained by any except the English in the nineteenth century for any long period of time.

The difference between the revolutions of 1789 and 1830, apart from the fact that less blood was shed in 1830, consisted in the latter's concentration on broadening electoral suffrage and in its more openly commercial flavour, in keeping with the new spirit of commercial enterprise. "The July revolution," wrote Alexis de Tocqueville, "was carried out by the people, but the middle class which had touched it off and led it, was the chief beneficiary".⁵ "Master of everything, as no aristocracy had ever been or perhaps will never be, the middle class, which one has to call the governing class, having entrenched itself in power and soon afterwards in its self-interest, seemed like a private industry. Each of its members scarcely gave a thought to public affairs except to make them function to profit his own private business, and had no difficulty in forgetting the lower orders in his little cocoon of affluence. Posterity will possibly never realize how far the government of the day had in the end taken on the appearance of an industrial company, where all operations are carried out with a view to the benefit the shareholders can draw from them."⁶

The July Days in Paris were followed by a revolution in Brussels in the same year that overthrew the rule of the Dutch King Willem and separated Belgium proper from Holland. As Sir Richard Evans writes, "the formation of a provisional national government on 26 September was followed on October 4 by a Belgian declaration of independence and then the calling of a national Congress. Demonstrating the enduring influence of the American Revolution in European political thought, the Congress issued a ringing condemnation of the Dutch government for reducing Belgium to the status of a colony, accompanied by 'the despotic imposition of a privileged language' and 'taxes, overwhelming in their amount, and still more in the manner in which they were apportioned'."⁷

The events in Paris led to similar disturbances and similar political changes in several West European countries. The issues were comparable everywhere: "middle-class reformers and artisans and small farmers all wanted a liberalization of the laws of assembly and association, freedom of the press, and above all a widening of political participation."⁸

Thus the monarchist counter-revolution mandated at the Congress of Vienna in 1815 failed within fifteen years of its convening... Of course, the major monarchist regimes outside France held on to power; the last did not disappear until 1918. But the period 1830-1918 was essentially the story of a long, slow retreat from monarchism...

⁴ Guizot, in M.J. Cohen and John Major (eds.), *History in Quotations*, London: Cassell, 2004, p. 552

⁵ Tocqueville, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 556.

⁶ Tocqueville, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 553.

⁷ Evans, *The Pursuit of Power. Europe 1815-1914*, London: Penguin, 2017, pp. 70-71.

⁸ Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

The liberal ferment created by the first phase of the French revolution of 1789 was partially suppressed by the defeat of Napoleon in 1815, but its momentum was revived by the “July Days” revolution of 1830, which may be taken to inaugurate “the Age of Liberalism”. At the same time, the memory of the second, illiberal Jacobin phase of the French revolution inspired many governments to introduce liberal reforms to avert similar catastrophes.

In Britain, for example, the Peterloo riots of 1819 in Manchester, during which troops killed and wounded many demonstrating for greater worker emancipation, wakened the rulers to the necessity of liberal reform. The result was the Reform Act of 1832, which “did enough to defuse popular outrage and, with further reforms in local government and other areas of administration, stabilized the British political system on a new, moderately liberal basis. The outcome of the great struggle over reform was in the end a constitution and political system not so very different from those of other European states that had experienced a successful transition in 1830. Unlike them, however, it was, in the short-to-medium term at least, to be more durable and to prove more resistant to further attempts at changing the status quo.”⁹

Although the Great Reform Act was by no means radical by modern standards (it gave the franchise to less than 10% of the population), according to David Cannadine, it “took on an even greater significance when seen in the broader context of the widespread disorder and revolution that convulsed much of Europe during the years from 1830 to 1832. In addition to the July revolution in France, there were uprisings in the Netherlands, parts of Italy and Germany, on the Iberian Peninsula, and in Russia, and it looked for a time as though the restored order of royal legitimacy that had been put in place in 1815 was in serious jeopardy. By comparison, Britain seemed a much more stable state, and a much more robust polity, and in the aftermath of the Reform Act it had some claims to be the freest and the most liberal nation in Europe. The franchise might still be very narrow, but by continental standards the new electorate of the United Kingdom was very large indeed. A greater proportion of men could now vote than in France or Spain, while Austria, Denmark, Russia and Greece had no elected national assemblies at all. Indeed, in the Europe of 1832, only in parts of Scandinavia were the boundaries of active citizenship set wider. But among the major powers of Europe the United Kingdom was unique in simultaneously avoiding revolution, extending the franchise, and maintaining governmental stability. The result was that the British parliament acquired a new legitimacy, and the British constitution a new respect, not only at home but also abroad.”¹⁰

*

“Liberalism,” writes Norman Davies, “developed along two parallel tracks, the political and the economic. Political liberalism focused on the essential concept of government by consent. It took its name from the *liberales* of Spain,

⁹ Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

¹⁰ Cannadine, *Victorious Century. The United Kingdom, 1800-1906*, London: Viking, 2017, p. 164.

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

“Economic liberalism focused on the concept of free trade, and on the associated doctrine of *laissez-faire*, which opposed the habit of governments to regulate economic life through protectionist tariffs. It stressed the right of men of property to engage in commercial and industrial activities without undue restraint. Its energies were directed on the one hand to dismantling the economic barriers which had proliferated both within and between countries and on the other to battling against all forms of collectivist organization, from the ancient guild to the new trade unions.”¹¹

Economic liberalism, under the banner of “free trade”, became a new dogma preached with almost religious fervour. It separated the sheep from the goats, the moderns from the ancients, the enlightened from those still in the dark. And it acquired new organs to spread its gospel. Prominent among them (and still preaching the same gospel in 2021) was *The Economist*. It was published in September, 1843, in order to take part in “a severe contest between intelligence, which presses forward, and an unworthy, timid ignorance obstructing our progress”.

Liberalism was an individualist creed in that its aim was the maximum development of individual men. It was concerned to protect individual freedoms from the encroachment of all kinds of collectives, including the State and organized religion.

However, trends towards individualism have always gone hand in hand historically with trends in the opposite, collectivist direction; and the horrors caused by unchecked liberal individualism elicited the growth both of nationalism and of socialist collectivism...

¹¹ Davies, *Europe: A History*, London: Pimlico, 1997, p. 802.

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

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

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

"Of course, a sea of arguments swirled around these beliefs. Could a hereditary monarch be trusted as head of state, or was a republic the only safe form of representative government? Could women be part of the political nation, or was

their 'physical faculty' a decisive bar? Did commercial and industrial wealth confer political virtue on its possessors, or did this spring only from property in land? Was religion the enemy of freedom of thought or the vital prop of social morality? Should the laws embody the 'custom of the country' (and become the subject of historical inquiry) or (as the 'utilitarian' followers of Jeremy Bentham believed) emancipate society from the 'dead hand' of the past? Then there was the question that vexed liberalism more perhaps than any other: was the achievement of 'nationality' – a shared ethnic, linguistic and (sometimes) religious identity – the essential precondition for liberal institutions to function properly? And what if the pursuit of nationality conflicted with the central tenets of the liberal programme: freedom of thought and the strict limitation of government power? Was nationalism a forward-looking ideology or (except in a few and 'progressive' places) a creed of the backward and benighted?"¹²

The contradictions between liberalism and nationalism were not immediately clear, and only became clearer in the course of the tumultuous, revolutionary nineteenth century...

*

The essential problem for "reasonable" liberals was that liberalism began in France with a *revolution*, but revolution, being an essentially anti-authoritarian force cannot be used to make limited reforms, and then be stopped in its tracks before it becomes dangerous. The violent path that the first French revolution took after its first, liberal phase in 1792 should have made that obvious. But many conservative liberals, including two Prime Ministers under Louis Philippe, Adolphe Thiers and François Guizot, thought that they could sow the wind without reaping the whirlwind...

Guizot was "a Protestant historian whose father had been guillotined during the Reign of Terror, [and who] managed to establish a stable ministry in 1840, which lasted until 1848. He became more conservative over time. 'Not to be a Republican at the age of 20 is proof of a want of heart,' he remarked: 'to be one at 30 is proof of a want of head'. An Anglophile who translated Shakespeare [and Gibbon] and published a collection of English historical documents in thirty-one volumes, Guizot was the arch-apostle of English-style constitutional monarchy. His commitment to the established order was unquestionable. His ambition, one critic said, was 'to be incorporated into the Metternich clique of every country'. His response to those who complained of not having a vote because they did not have the 1,000 francs a year needed as a qualification, laid bare the materialism at the heart of the July Monarchy: 'Enrich yourselves!'"¹³

In 1820, when Louis XVIII's Charter conceded legal equality, religious toleration and parliamentary scrutiny over new laws, Guizot declared: "I consider the revolution of 1789 to be over. All its interests and legitimate wishes are

¹² Darwin, *After Tamerlane: The Rise & Fall of Global Empires, 1400-2000*, London: Penguin Books, 2008, pp. 229-231.

¹³ Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-186.

guaranteed by the Charter. What France needs now is to do away with the revolutionary spirit which still torments her."¹⁴ Guizot wanted to believe that this was really the last revolution, and that the "freedom" aimed at by the revolution of 1789 was quite different from the "freedom" aimed at by the revolutionaries of 1793. As he said in December, 1830: "the spirit of revolution, the spirit of insurrection, is a spirit radically opposed to liberty".¹⁵ Therefore according to Guizot the revolution could conveniently stop in 1830, when the middle classes were put back in the saddle.

But is there really such a radical opposition between the "freedom from" of the frock-coated liberal bourgeoisie and the "freedom to" of the *sans-culottes*? How can one and not the other be called "the spirit of insurrection" when both attained their ends by means of bloody insurrection against the established order?

Guizot's real goal was a repetition of the "Glorious" English revolution of 1688 on French soil, a supposedly bloodless affair that would put the men of property firmly in power. "Moderate" revolutions such as those of 1688 and 1789 would somehow avert "radical" ones such as 1793. That is why he supported the overthrow of Charles X in 1830, hoping that Louis Philippe could play the role of William of Orange to Charles X's James II: "We did not choose the king but negotiated with a prince [Orléans] we found next to the throne and who alone could by mounting it guarantee our public law and save us from revolutions... Our minds were guided by the English Revolution of 1688, by the fine and free government it founded, and the wonderful prosperity it brought to the British nation."¹⁶ And since the English Revolution had put the middle classes into power (although only after the Reform Act of 1832 did they really begin to acquire power at the ballot box), he wanted the same for France. "I want," he said, "to secure the political preponderance of the middle classes in France, the final and complete organization of the great victory that the middle classes have won over privilege and absolute power from 1789 to 1830."¹⁷

He was to be disappointed. Guizot himself was expelled by the bloody revolution of 1848, which was followed by the still bloodier Paris Commune of 1870. But for the time being, European liberals like Guizot could deceive themselves into thinking that they could be both liberal and Christian, both progressive and civilized.

What the liberals like Guizot failed, and still to this day fail, to see is that that the revolution is not a rational human desire for limited, reasonable reform that can be satisfied once those limited reforms have been granted. In its subconscious depths there is an irrational, elemental, *satanic* force whose ultimate aim is simply *total destruction*. Guizot and Louis Philippe are clear examples of the inconsistency and ultimate ineffectiveness of those who oppose revolution, not *root and branch*, but only in its more obviously unpleasant and radical manifestations.

¹⁴ Guizot, in Mark Almond, *Revolution*, London: De Agostini, 1996, p. 92.

¹⁵ Guizot, in Almond, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

¹⁶ Guizot, in Almond, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

¹⁷ Guizot, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 552.

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

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

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

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

"A government must rule by the Grace of God *or* by the will of the people, it must believe in authority *or* in the Revolution; on these issues compromise is possible only in semblance, and only for a time. The Revolution, like the disbelief which has always accompanied it, cannot be stopped halfway; it is a force that, once awakened, will not rest until it ends in a totalitarian Kingdom of this world. The history of the last two centuries has proved nothing if not this. To appease the

Revolution and offer it concessions, as Liberals have always done, thereby showing that they have no truth with which to oppose it, is perhaps to postpone, but not to prevent, the attainment of its end. And to oppose the radical Revolution with a Revolution of one's own, whether it be 'conservative', 'non-violent', or 'spiritual', is not merely to reveal ignorance of the full scope and nature of the Revolution of our time, but to concede as well the first principle of the Revolution: that the old truth is no longer true, and a new truth must take its place."¹⁸

Liberalism as a political theory is a compromise, a compromise between the barbarism of the revolutionaries, the crude and violent men known as the *sans-culottes* (literally, those "without trousers"), and the decency of the liberals themselves, the gentlemen who wore both trousers and top hats, who paid their taxes and bowed to the ideals of Christian civilization as they understood them.

The liberals took the slogan of the revolution, "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" and sought to give it a Christian gloss. In essence, however, this slogan encapsulates, not merely a political doctrine, but *a new religion, the religion of liberty*, which is expressed on an individual level by the doctrine of human rights and on a collective level by the doctrine of the supremacy of the homogeneous ethnic nation-state. In both its aspects, individual and collective, the religion of liberty prepares the way for *the religion of socialism*, when liberal "freedoms from" are supplemented and ultimately supplanted by anti-liberal "freedoms to", which subsume both individuals and nations in a new global despotism and whose real nature only became clear in the second half of the nineteenth century.

James Fitzjames Stephens (1829-1894) was, from 1873, Liberal MP for Dundee. He considered that the phrase "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" ... was "indeed something more than a motto. It is the creed of a religion, less definite than any one of the forms of Christianity, which are in part its rivals, in part its antagonists, and in part its associates, but not on that account the less powerful. It is, on the contrary, one of the most penetrating influences of the day. It shows itself now and then in definite forms, of which Positivism is the one best known to our generation, but its special manifestations give no adequate measure of its depth or width. It penetrates other creeds. It has often transformed Christianity into a system of optimism, which has in some cases retained and in others rejected Christian phraseology. It deeply influences politics and legislation. It has its solemn festivals, its sober adherents, its enthusiasts, its Anabaptists and Antinomians. The Religion of Humanity is perhaps as good a name as could be found for it, if the expression is used in a wider sense than the narrow and technical one associated with it by Comte. It is one of the commonest beliefs of the day that the human race collectively has before it splendid destinies of various kinds, and that the road to them is to be found in the removal of all restraints on human conduct, in the recognition of a substantial equality between all human creatures, and in fraternity or general love. These doctrines are in very many cases held as a religious faith. They are regarded not merely as truths, but as truths for which those who believe in them are ready to do battle, and for the establishment of which they are prepared to sacrifice all merely personal ends. Such, stated of

¹⁸ Rose, *Nihilism*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood Press, 1994, pp. 28-30.

course in the most general terms, is the religion of which I take 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity' to be the creed."

But was Stephens right to suppose that the liberals were as passionate about their religion of liberalism as the revolutionaries about their religion? Yes, because in essence they are *the same religion*. The French Revolution gave birth *both* to liberalism with its slogan of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity with its Declaration of Human Rights *and* to Jacobinism with its bloody guillotine and regicide. If the earlier phase seems more reasonable and civilized to contemporary westerners than the later, it nevertheless gave birth to the later and cannot be separated from it logically or historically. If "true" liberals stop short in horror at cutting off the heads of kings and aristocrats, this is not because their teaching forbids it. Christianity forbids it – but Christianity is something quite different. If the path to liberty and equality lies through a pool of blood, then so be it. In vain did Guizot and his ilk look to the English revolution as a model of moderation. It, too, culminated in regicide, and even its less violent and supposedly "glorious" reprise in 1689 involved an armed invasion and a pitched battle.

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Not all radicals accepted the idea of human rights. One critic was the leader of the "Philosophical Radicals", Jeremy Bentham, famous for his "greatest happiness" principle: the best action is the one that involves the greatest balance of pleasure over pain for the greatest number of people. In 1843 Bentham declared that the authors of the Declaration of Human Rights were sowing "the seeds of anarchy" and that the rights doctrine was "execrable trash... nonsense upon stilts". Bentham, in the words of Bertrand Russell, called the Declaration "a metaphysical work – the *ne plus ultra* of metaphysics." Its articles, he said, could be divided into three classes: (1) those that are unintelligible, (2) those that are false, (3) those that are both."¹⁹

As for the idea that all men were born free: on the contrary, said Bentham, "all men... are born in subjection, and the most absolute subjection – the subjection of a helpless child to the parents upon whom he depends every moment of his existence..." "This was the case," writes Joanna Bourke, interpreting Bentham, "when you looked at the relationship of apprentices to their masters, or of wives to their husbands. Indeed, 'without subjection and inequality' the institution of marriage could not exist, 'for of two contradictory wills, both cannot take effect at the same time'. Bentham ridiculed the idea that rights belonged to 'all human creatures'. In his words, this would mean that women would have to be included, as well as 'children – children of every age', because, his sarcastic analysis continued, 'if women and children are not part of the nation, what are they? Cattle?' For him, this was nothing more than 'smack-smooth equality, which rolls so glibly out of the lips of the rhetorician.'"²⁰

¹⁹ Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, London: George Allen and Unwin, 1946, p. 803.

²⁰ Bentham, "Anarchical Fallacies; Being an Examination of the Declaration of Rights Issued During the French Revolution"; Joanna Bourke, *What it Means to be Human*, London: Virago, 2011, p. 115.

The second principle, that of equality, is no less difficult to establish. According to C.S. Lewis, "equality is a purely social conception. It applies to man as a political and economic animal. It has no place in the world of the mind. Beauty is not democratic; she reveals herself more to the few than to the many, more to the persistent and disciplined seekers than to the careless. Virtue is not democratic; she is achieved by those who pursue her more hotly than most men. Truth is not democratic; she demands special talents and special industry in those to whom she gives her favours. Political democracy is doomed if it tries to extend its demand for equality into these higher spheres. Ethical, intellectual, or aesthetic democracy is death..."²¹

Human rightists see inequality, especially in social life, as a scandal. But the "scandal" for our ancestors was not so much in the obvious and inescapable fact of inequality in every sphere of life, as in the fact that life so often does not seem to distribute rewards in accordance with natural *inequality*: "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to the learned, nor favour to the skilful" (Ecclesiastes 9.11). So life is unjust, not so much because it contains inequalities, as because the natural order of inequality is not rewarded as it should be from a human point of view... However, the injustice of life is not a scandal to religious people because they believe in "the God of justice" (Malachi 2.17) Who will put all injustices to right at the Last Judgement and reward all men according to their deeds. And this means *unequal* rewards for *unequal* men; for apart from the fact that some men will be sent to heaven and others to hell, even among those who are saved there are different rewards. For, as the Apostle Paul says, "there is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another in glory" (I Corinthians 15.41).

As regards the third principle, that of fraternity, that was easily unmasked. The behaviour of the revolutionaries themselves showed that they had no conception of true love or fraternity. The revolution bitterly divided Frenchmen against each other, and Frenchmen against the other nations of Europe upon whom they tried to impose their "fraternity" at the edge of a sword...

The truth is that the ideals of freedom, equality and fraternity have real content and application only in the context of the Christian faith. All men are born free in the sense that they are created in the image of God, which means they are free to do the will of God or reject it. If they do His will, then they become truly free in the sense that they become like God, free from sin and passion, whereas "he who commits sin is the slave of sin" (John 8.32). Then, having becoming truly free, they are truly equal to all other men who are spiritually free in the redeemed and renewed human nature that is given to us in the Last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ. And then, having become free and equal in Jesus Christ, we all participate in the love of brothers, that true fraternity, which exists only in the Church of Christ... The revolution began by imposing freedom and equality at the point of a gun: it was never really concerned with fraternity at all. But the Christian way is the reverse: the path to true freedom and equality is through love.

²¹ Lewis, "Democratic Education", in *Compelling Reason*, London: Fount, 1987, p. 41.

For love in the great liberator and equalizer; it does not remove natural subjections and inequalities, but makes them as it were irrelevant. This was beautifully expressed in the seventh century by St. John the Almsgiver, Patriarch of Alexandria. As we read in his *Life*: "If by chance the blessed man heard of anybody being harsh and cruel to his slaves and given to striking them, he would first send for him and then admonish him very gently, saying: 'Son, it is come to my sinful ears that by the prompting of our enemy you behave somewhat too harshly towards your household slaves. Now, I beseech you, do not give place to anger, for God has not given them to us to strike, but to be our servants, and perhaps not even for that, but rather for them to be supported by us from the riches God has bestowed on us. What price, tell me, must a man pay to purchase one who has been honoured by creation in the likeness and similitude of God? Or do you, the slave's master, possess anything more in your own body than he does? Say, a hand, or foot, or hearing, or a soul? Is he not in all things like unto you? Listen to what the great light, Paul, says: 'For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus'. *If then we are equal before Christ, let us become equal in our relations with another*; for Christ took upon himself the form of a servant thereby teaching us not to treat our fellow-servants with disdain. For there is one Master of all Who dwells in heaven and yet regards the things of low degree; it does not say 'the rich things' but 'things of low degree'. We give so much gold in order to make a slave for ourselves of a man honoured and together with us bought by the blood of our God and Master. For him is the heaven, for him the earth, for him the stars, for him the sun, for him the sea and all that is in it; at times the angels serve him. For him Christ washed the feet of slaves, for him He was crucified and for him endured all His other sufferings. Yet you dishonour him who is honoured of God and you beat him mercilessly as if he were not of the same nature as yourself."²²

There is no axiom in liberal theory that will prevent it taking the road to war and barbarism. Once it is accepted that the first step towards liberty involves rebellion against the powers that be, the potential for violence and barbarism is present. For while the English might deceive themselves that their own revolution of 1688 was "glorious" and "bloodless", in truth there is no such thing as a glorious and bloodless revolution whose aims are those of liberalism. The degree of violence will vary depending on the situation, the degree of resistance and the temperament of the liberators; but violence there will undoubtedly be...

The same applies to the "liberal empire" which the British boasted in having. In India, for example, the British Raj, while more liberal in some respects than its Mughal predecessor, and having some justifications for its rule that were not trivial, was nevertheless *not* liberal. How could it be if it ruled over a vastly more numerous population who did not want to be ruled by foreigners? Only if one nation *asks* to be ruled by another – as, for example, the Russians asked to be ruled by Rurik in 862, or the Georgians asked to be ruled by the Tsar in 1801 – can we

²² *Life of St. John the Almsgiver*, 33; in Elizabeth Dawes & Norman H. Baynes, *Three Byzantine Saints*, London: Mowbrays, 1977, pp. 243-244.

entertain the *possibility*, albeit highly unlikely, of a liberal imperium. In India, the fiction of a liberal British empire was exposed during the Indian Mutiny in 1859 and again during the Amritsar massacre of 1919.

The truth which all liberals refuse to face, and which renders all their dreams vain and foolish, is *the fallenness of human nature*. Freedom beyond a certain limit is not good for fallen man; it spoils him and leads him further away from God and the truth. The Lord did not say "Ye shall be free, and that will lead you into truth", but the opposite: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8.32). The liberals did not know the truth, which is why, for all their good intentions and some undoubtedly good results (such as the abolition of slavery), they have proved incapable of truly freeing a single human being.

2. THE PROS AND CONS OF INDUSTRIALIZATION

In the second quarter of the nineteenth century, as John Plender writes, there began that process whereby “the industrial revolution that began in the late eighteenth century and embodied to the full the workings of what we now know as capitalism was ultimately to lift millions out of grinding poverty. The economist Angus Maddison calculates that in the period from 1500 to 1820, world gross domestic product per capita grew at an annual average compound rate of just 0.04 per cent – one-thirtieth of what has been achieved since 1820. Put another way, in Western Europe between 1820 and 1992, per capita growth increased thirteen-fold. Maddison’s work is an extraordinary statistical marathon. While some economists quibble about his methodology, few doubt that the broad picture is correct...”²³

And yet the gains of the industrial revolution came at a terrible price. The poet William Blake had spoken, decades earlier, of England’s “dark, satanic mills”. Paradoxically, there were some who even found beauty in the darkness and cacophony. Thus Thomas Carlyle wrote: “Hast thou heard with sound ears, the awakening of a Manchester, on Monday morning, at half-past-five by the clock, the rushing of its thousand mills, like the boom of an Atlantic tide, then ten thousand spools and spindles all set humming there, - it is perhaps if thou knew it well, sublime as a Niagara, or more so.”²⁴

But the general consensus, from Engels to Dickens to Wagner to Dostoyevsky, was very different, that a new and frighteningly misshapen creature had been born to haunt the world. Alexis de Tocqueville wrote: “A sort of black smoke covers the city. The sun seen through it is a disc without rays. Under this half daylight 300,000 human beings are ceaselessly at work. A thousand noises disturb this damp, dark labyrinth, but they are not at all the ordinary sounds one hears in great cities. The footsteps of a *busy* crowd, the crunching of wheels of machinery, the shriek of steam from boilers, the regular beat of the looms, the heavy rumble of carts, these are the noises from which you can never escape in the sombre half-light of these streets. You will never hear the clatter of hoofs as the rich man drives back home or out on expeditions of pleasure. Never the gay shouts of people amusing themselves, or music heralding a holiday.

“You will never see the smart folk strolling at leisure in the streets, or going out on innocent pleasure parties in the surrounding country. Crowds are ever hurrying this way and that in the Manchester streets, but their footsteps are brisk, harsh. Day and night the street echoes with street noises... From this foul drain the greatest stream of human industry flows out to fertilise the whole world. Here humanity attains its most complex development and its most brutish; here civilisation works its miracles, and civilised man is turned back almost into a savage...”²⁵

²³ Plender, *Capitalism. Money, Morals and Markets*, London: Bloomsbury, 2016, pp. 14-15.

²⁴ Carlyle, “Chartism” (1840), in John Pender, *Capitalism*, London: Bloomsbury, 2016, p. 87.

²⁵ Tocqueville, *Journeys to England and Ireland*, in Plender, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88.

Not only the products, but also the theory of “Manchesterism” spread worldwide.

Paul Kennedy writes of “the steady and then (after the 1840s) spectacular growth of an integrated global economy, which drew ever more regions into a transoceanic and transcontinental trading and financial network centred upon western Europe, and in particular upon Great Britain. These decades of British economic hegemony were accompanied by large-scale improvements in transport and communications, by the increasingly rapid transfer of industrial technology from one region to another, and by an immense spurt in manufacturing output, which in turn stimulated the opening of new areas of agricultural land and raw-materials sources. The erosion of tariff barriers and other mercantilist devices, together with the widespread propagation of ideas about free trade and international harmony, suggested that a new international order had arisen, quite different from the eighteenth-century world of repeated Great Power conflict. The turbulence and costs of the 1793-1815 struggle – known to the nineteenth century as ‘the Great War’ – caused conservatives and liberals alike to opt as far as possible for peace and stability, underpinned by devices as varied as the Concert of Europe or free-trade treaties. These conditions naturally encouraged long-term commercial and industrial investment, thereby stimulating the growth of a global economy.

“Secondly, the absence of prolonged Great Power wars did not mean that all interstate conflict came to an end. If anything, the European and North American wars of conquest against less developed peoples intensified, and were in many ways the military concomitant to the economic penetration of the overseas world and to the swift decline in its share of manufacturing output. In addition, there still were regional and individual conflicts among the European powers, especially over questions of nationality and territorial borders; but... open struggles such as the Franco-Austrian War of 1859 or the wars of German unification in the 1860s were limited both in duration and area, and even the Crimean War could hardly be called a major conflict. Only the American Civil War was an exception to this rule, and deserves to be examined as such.

“Thirdly, technology deriving from the Industrial Revolution began to make an impact on military and naval warfare. But the changes were much slower than has sometimes been represented, and it was only in the second half of the century that railways, telegraphs, quick-firing guns, steam propulsion, and armoured warships really became decisive indicators of military strength [as, for example, in the American Civil War]. While the new technology increased the lead in firepower and mobility which the Great Powers enjoyed in the overseas world, it was going to be many decades before military and naval commanders revised their ideas of how to fight a European war. Nevertheless, the twin forces of technical change and industrial development were steadily having an impact, on land and at sea, and also affecting the relative strengths of the powers...”²⁶

²⁶ Kennedy, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-184.

Perhaps the most important new technology was in book-production, which made books far cheaper. This, combined with a far wider, more literate and more affluent reading public, made for an explosion in book production, mainly fiction. But it also meant that revolutionaries could spread their doctrines more rapidly...

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The working classes did not take the deterioration in their quality of life caused by the industrial revolution lying down... The late 1830s in England were characterized by a huge movement of protests, strikes and threats of violence. The largest working-class movement was Chartism, combining a variety of causes. The Chartists were so-called because they handed in a charter with 1.2 signatures to parliament, but it was rejected. Tempers flared, and there was one armed uprising, in Newport.

The result of increasing poverty for the great majority in the 1840s, according to the Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm, "was social revolution in the form of spontaneous risings of the urban and industrial poor", which "made the revolution of 1848 on the continent, the vast Chartist movement in Britain. Nor was discontent confined to the labouring poor. Small and inadaptably businessmen, petty-bourgeois, special sections of the economy, were also the victims of the Industrial Revolution and of its ramifications. Simple-minded labourers reacted to the new system by smashing the machines which they thought responsible for their troubles; but a surprisingly large body of local businessmen and farmers sympathized profoundly with these Luddite activities of their labourers, because they too saw themselves as victims of a diabolical minority of selfish innovators. The exploitation of labour which kept its incomes at subsistence level, thus enabling the rich to accumulate the profits which financed industrialization (and their own ample comforts), antagonized the proletariat. However, another aspect of this diversion of national income from the poor to the rich, from consumption to investment, also antagonized the small entrepreneur. The great financiers, the tight community of home and foreign 'fund-holders' who received what all paid in taxes... - something like 8 per cent of the entire national income - were perhaps even more unpopular among small businessmen, farmers and the like than among labourers, for these knew enough about money and credit to feel a personal rage at their disadvantage. It was all very well for the rich, who could raise all the credit they needed, to clamp rigid deflation and monetary orthodoxy on the economy after the Napoleonic Wars; it was the little man who suffered, and who, in all countries and at all times in the nineteenth century demanded easy credit and financial unorthodoxy. Labour and the disgruntled petty-bourgeois on the verge of toppling over into the unpropertied abyss, therefore shared common discontents. These in turn united them in the mass movements of 'radicalism', 'democracy' or 'republicanism' of which the British Radicals, the French Republicans and the American Jacksonian Democrats were the most formidable between 1815 and 1848."²⁷

²⁷ Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*, London: Abacus, 1992, pp. 54-55.

Violent collectivist reaction to the excesses of liberal individualism seemed inevitable. This was certainly the belief of a German factory-owner in Manchester, Friedrich Engels, who wrote in his *Condition of the English Working Classes*, written in 1844, but published in English only in 1892: "The revolution must come; it is already too late to bring about a peaceful solution... The classes are divided more and more sharply, the spirit of resistance penetrates the workers, the guerrilla skirmishes become concentrated in more important battles, and soon a slight impulse will suffice to set the avalanche in motion." Engels' work made "Manchesterism" a term of abuse throughout Europe. Marx built on it to argue that the workers would not better their lot through helping themselves, and still less through receiving help from governments, churches or employers, but *through revolution*.

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Although there was some welfare legislation in this period of "unrestrained capitalism", it often only exacerbated the plight of the poor. This was especially true of the Poor Law Act of 1834, which prescribed the building of workhouses designed to be as unattractive as possible. Thus the Reverend H.H. Milman wrote: "The workhouses should be a place of hardship, of coarse fare, of degradation and humility; it should be administered with strictness – with severity; it should be as repulsive as is consistent with humanity."²⁸

As Tombs writes, "The New Poor Act (1834) – which fired Dickens's indignation in *Oliver Twist* (1837) – is the most notorious of the Utilitarian reforms, and that which most colours popular perceptions of the period. The Old Poor Law, dating from Elizabeth I, had developed into a unique welfare system... It had – or was believed to have – become increasingly unsustainable during the war years: total spending had increased from about £2m in 1784 to £6m in 1815, when around 15 percent of the population were receiving aid. In fact, the cost was pretty stable as a share of growing GDP (which contemporaries could not know) – around 2 percent. However, the rise in population, wartime inflation and postwar economic fluctuations made the old system of local financing unviable, imposing an open-ended commitment on ratepayers: in one small Yorkshire town, Newburgh, the annual bill to thirteen ratepayers rose from £34 in 1817-18 to £130 in 1836-37. Foreign observers thought it dangerous to give the poor a legal entitlement to assistance and commonly made the elementary error of assuming that because there were more 'paupers' (i.e. benefit claimants) in England than in other countries, this meant that there were more poor people, and that the gulf between rich and poor was growing. Rather, it was because the Poor Law recognized relative deprivation: the richer society grew, the more the poor needed. So 'the English poor are almost rich to the French poor,' observed the French liberal Alexis de Tocqueville. Paupers were quick to stand up for their rights by applying to Overseers of the Poor and, if dissatisfied, appealing to the magistrates: Tocqueville was scandalized to see old men, pregnant girls and unemployed labourers doing so unblushingly before the Justices of the Peace. This, he and many others thought, created a dependency culture that meant that 'the number

²⁸ Millman, in Wilson, *The Victorians*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

of illegitimate children and criminals grows rapidly and continuously, the indigent population is limitless, the spirit of foresight and saving becomes more and more alien to the poor,' as truculent young men squandered their poor relief in the pub...

"Grey's government appointed a Royal Commission, which proposed a uniform, transparent and impersonal system, aiming to eliminate fraudulent claims and what it considered excessive generosity without removing the legal right to assistance. The New Poor Law (1834) had many Benthamite features. It prescribed ratepayer-elected Boards of Guardians, professional administrators, a central supervisory commission and national dietary regulations. The key idea was a self-acting 'test' of genuine need: the traditional payments in cash or kind were forbidden (except in emergencies and for the sick); assistance was to be given only within workhouses offering a 'less eligible' existence than the lowest wages could provide. So these 'Whig Bastilles' were a deliberate deterrent, by monotonous (if usually ample) diet, unpleasant work and regimentation. The 'respectable' poor were humiliated by wearing uniforms, being mixed with the unrespectable, and having their families split up between different day-rooms and dormitories. The press quoted one old man as vowing that 'as long as I can arne a sixpence anyhow, they shan't part me from my wife.' Entry into 'the House' was made a last desperate resort: thus, reported the Royal Commission on the Poor Law with evident satisfaction, 'the line between those who do, and those who do not need relief is drawn, an drawn perfectly.' Spending on poor relief dropped from £6.3m to £4m, and the percentage of the population aided from 10.2 to 5.4 percent. Only some Tories and Radicals objected. Disraeli said that the Act 'disgraced the country'...

"Poor relief – previously a source of social cohesion – had been envenomed and many lives blighted by Utilitarian reforms that were harsh, unworkable and counter-productive, for in trying to prevent the pauperization and demoralization of the poor, the reformers had in truth pauperized and demoralized them far more. A shoemaker, Samuel Kydd, recalled that 'reforms 'did more to sour the hearts of the laboring population' than material hardship, and to 'sap the loyalty of the working men, to make them dislike the country of their birth.'..."²⁹

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

"Eric Hobsbawm captures the background, character and effects of the welfare reforms of the 1830s when he writes: 'The traditional view, which still survived in a distorted way in all classes of rural society and in the internal relations of working-class groups, was that a man had a right to earn a living, and, if unable to do so, a right to be kept alive by the community. The view of middle-class

²⁹ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 445-448.

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

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

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

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

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

“The removal of agricultural protection and the establishment of free trade, the reform of the poor laws with the aim of constraining the poor to take work, and the removal of any remaining controls on wages were the three decisive steps in the construction of the free market in mid-nineteenth century Britain. These key measures created out of the market economy of the 1830s the unregulated free market of mid-Victorian times that is the model for all subsequent neo-liberal policies.”³⁰

³⁰ Gray, *False Dawn: The Delusions of Global Capitalism*, London: Granta Books, 1998, pp. 9-11.

The most famous champion of the poor in this period was the novelist Charles Dickens, whose early novel *Oliver Twist* did much to publicize the horrors of child labour and the inhumanity of the factory-owners.

His *A Christmas Carol* (1843) was a moving exhortation to charity, a nineteenth-century version of the Parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man. As John Broich writes, it “was an instant bestseller, followed by countless print, stage and screen productions. Victorians called it ‘a new gospel,’ and reading or watching it became a sacred ritual for many, without which the Christmas season cannot materialize.

“But *A Christmas Carol*’s seemingly timeless transcendence hides the fact that it was very much the product of a particular moment in history, its author meaning to weigh in on specific issues of the day. Dickens first conceived of his project as a pamphlet, which he planned on calling, ‘An Appeal to the People of England on behalf of the Poor Man’s Child.’ But in less than a week of thinking about it, he decided instead to embody his arguments in a story, with a main character of pitiable depth. So what might have been a polemic to harangue, instead became a story for which audiences hungered.”³¹

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

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

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

³¹ Broich, “The Real Reason Charles Dickens Wrote ‘A Christmas Carol’”, *Time*, December 13, 2016.

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

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

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

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

“The British manufacturing bourgeoisie was the most extreme example of its class, but all over the continent there were smaller groups of the same kind: Catholic in the textile districts of the French North or Catalonia, Calvinist in

Alsace, Lutheran pietist in the Rhineland, Jewish all over central and eastern Europe. They were rarely quite as hard as in Britain, for they were rarely quite as divorced from the older traditions of urban life and paternalism. Leon Faucher was painfully struck, in spite of his doctrinaire liberalism, by the sight of Manchester in the 1840s, as which continental observer was not? But they shared with the English the confidence which came from steady enrichment..."³²

Even the Anglican Church, which hardly penetrated into the new industrial slums, seemed to be on the side of the exploiters. "A typical representative of this kind of Christianity was the High Church priest J. Townsend, author of *A Dissertation on the Poor Laws, by a Wellwisher of Mankind*, an extremely crude apologist for exploitation whom Marx exposed. 'Hunger,' Townsend begins his eulogy, 'is not only a peaceable, silent, unremitted pressure but, as the most natural motive of industry and labour, it calls forth the most powerful exertions.' In Townsend's 'Christian' world order, everything depends (as Marx observes) upon making hunger permanent among the working class; and Townsend believes that this is indeed the divine purpose of the principle of the growth of population; for he goes on: 'It seems to be a law of nature that the poor should be to a certain degree improvident, so that there may always be some to fulfil the most servile, the most sordid, the most ignoble offices in the community. The stock of human happiness is thereby much increased, whilst the more delicate... are left at liberty without interruption to pursue those callings which are suited to their various dispositions.' And the 'delicate priestly sycophant', as Marx called him for this remark, adds that the Poor Law, by helping the hungry, 'tends to destroy the harmony and beauty, the symmetry and order, of that system which God and nature have established in the world.'"³³

With the official Church effectively on the side of the exploiters, it was left to "Christian socialists", individual preachers and philanthropists and writers such as John Ruskin, and, above all, *novelists* to elicit the milk of human kindness from the hard breasts of the rich. The realistic novel in the hands of great writers such as Dickens and Balzac acquired an importance it had not had in earlier ages, teaching morality without moralizing.

Thus Mrs. Elisabeth Gaskell's *North and South* not only brought home to readers in the rural south the sufferings of the industrial north: it also showed how the philosophy of Free Trade tended to drive out even the Christian practice of almsgiving. For the novel describes how the industrialist Thornton, though not a cruel man at heart, is against helping the starving families of his striking workers on the grounds that helping them would help prolong the strike, which, if successful, would force him out of business, which would mean unemployment and starvation for those same workers. But in the end he is led by the woman he loves to see how a thriving business and kindness to the workers can be combined...

³² Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*, pp. 230-232.

³³ Karl Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966, vol. II, p. 200.

Later, of course, largely under the pressure of humanitarian ideas and the labour movement, capitalism did begin to restrain itself, thereby disproving Marx's prophecy of its imminent collapse. But collectivism was not checked by these concessions, but was rather strengthened, as we see throughout Europe as the nineteenth century progressed.

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This grim picture of the tragic consequences of the Industrial Revolution is generally accepted. But to what degree is it accurate? Almost always there are two sides to every horror story. Take the issue of child labour: as Sir Roger Scruton writes, "The factories liberated children from the farms, where they were worked just as hard and with less hope of rescue. Children working in factories came under the eye of educated people who could afford the luxury of compassion, and within a few decades the Factory Acts had rescued them from slavery."³⁴

Let us examine another "revisionist" point of view, that of Robert Tombs, for whom "the fundamental economic and social fact" of the period was "England's population growth, faster than anywhere in Europe. It rose from 8.6 million in 1801 to 17 million in 1852 – an increase of 98 percent, with the highest ever recorded growth in 1811-21 (16 percent in a decade). Around 40 percent of this population was under fifteen, comparable with much of Africa today. The total urban population, already the highest in Europe, tripled during the first half of the century. London's more than doubled, making it by far Europe's biggest conurbation. In the 1820s alone, Manchester grew by 47 percent, West Bromwich by 60 percent, and Bradford by 78 percent. Average life expectancy at birth was 41.7 years in 1841 – also comparable with much of Africa in the 2000s. In the multiplying towns and among the poorest groups it was some ten years less than the national average... This corresponds to the darkest 'Dickensian' images – of 'Coketown' (1854), or the lawless and savage 'Wodgate' in Benjamin Disraeli's novel *Sybil* (1845), where 'swarming thousands lodged in the most miserable tenements in the most hideous burg in the ugliest country in the world.' A French visitor thought that 'if the people [of Birmingham] go to hell, they won't find anything new.'

"Yet this revulsion missed as much as it saw. Critics seized on the worst conditions, not the typical: there were horrible slums, but the vast majority of the people did not live in slums, the most notorious of which, investigated and later photographed, were often very small – a few streets or houses. Working conditions in the new industries were horrifying by modern Western standards, but the deadliest trades were thoroughly traditional – file-making, chimney-sweeping and, worst of all, keeping a pub. Moreover, England was in a considerably better state than elsewhere. In 1820 GDP per head was some 50 percent higher than in western Europe as a whole. Infant mortality in 1839 was 151 per 1,000 in England (comparable with that of Afghanistan in 2010); but in France it was 160, in Belgium 185 and in southern Germany 285. An unprecedented Europe-wide cholera pandemic in 1831, spread by infected

³⁴ Scruton, *How to be a Conservative*, London: Bloomsbury, 2014, p. 102.

drinking water, killed up to 7,000 in London – often taken as a symptom of the capital's archaic and decentralized governance (it had thirty-eight local authorities); but the same disease killed over 18,000 in centrally administered Paris. Cholera came to seem the nemesis of the growing city. The worst pandemic of the century, in the mid-1850s, killed another 11,000 in London and 23,000 across Britain – but 130,000 died in France. London led the way during the 1850s in gradually improving public health, sewerage and drinking water in a joint effort by philanthropic campaigners, local government bodies such as the Metropolitan Board of Works (1855), and parliamentary legislation...

"Paternalistic Toryism campaigned in the 1830s for legislation to limit hours, improve factory conditions, and protect child and women workers. It was led by a strange but determined group including Richard Oastler (a Leeds linen merchant turned squire), his friend Michael Sadler (another Leeds linen merchant) and the philanthropic aristocrat Lord Ashley later 7th Earl of Shaftesbury. They had in common fervent Evangelical Anglicanism (opposing both slavery and Catholic emancipation) and were horrified by the moral and social effects of uncontrolled factory labour: 'I heard their groans,' wrote Oastler, 'I watched their tears; I knew they relied on me.' Parliament enacted down a watered-down Factory Act in 1833 and the principle of compulsory labour regulation was established. Utilitarians and liberals deplored what they considered ignorant and damaging attempts to shackle the labour market and pile costs on employers.

"Industrialists accused Tory paternalists – sometimes no doubt correctly – of being less solicitous about the farm labourers on great estates. It was also the case that Evangelical Tories were ultimately more concerned with souls than bodies, particularly those of women and children tempted by the drink, godlessness and sex supposedly inseparable from factories and mines...

"... Poor people themselves did not necessarily share the pessimism either of contemporary upper-class commentators or of later historians. The rural poor, especially young people underemployed in over-populated villages, found in towns and factories an escape from dependency, chronic poverty, and exclusion from adult life and marriage. However risky and accident prone, a move to town meant more regular work, money in their pockets, freedom, the chance of family life and/or amorous adventure, and exciting new social and cultural opportunities. Judging from their own writings, many working people felt not only that they were living in a rapidly changing world, but that it was changing for the better..."³⁵

In any case, Engels' analysis of the condition of the working class, according to Tombs, was not accurate. "He seized on slums in Manchester as 'the classic type of a modern manufacturing town' – although they were neither modern nor linked to manufacturing. He denounced as the 'degradation' of the new industrial 'proletariat' what was in fact the plight of a non-industrial, unskilled underclass, many of them newly arrived Irish immigrants, who had no connection with factory work. Such slums in London, Liverpool and Manchester illustrated not

³⁵ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 436-437, 438-440.

industrialization but the problems of rapid urbanization without manufacturing industry – what England’s booming population might have suffered had it *not* been for the Industrial Revolution, and which was being suffered in the ancient teeming cities of eastern and southern Europe, from Palermo to Moscow. In contrast to Engels’s pessimism, an 1860s survey found 95 percent of houses in Hull and 72 percent in Manchester to be ‘comfortable’.”³⁶

“Though long-term the global consequences, good and bad, of the Industrial Revolution are obvious the immediate effects on England and its people are less so. This has long been a vexed question. From the beginning there were enemies of the new economy, who attacked it on moral, social, aesthetic and eventually ideological grounds. It was corrupting, encouraging luxury and vice; it was disruptive and ugly. Others had praised ‘commercial society’, most famously the Scottish philosophers David Hume and Adam Smith, who asserted that the new economy remedied poverty and unemployment, and its ‘obvious and simple system of natural liberty’ provided the basis for a peaceful, civilized, cooperative and stable society. Individual self-betterment would serve the general good as if by ‘an invisible hand’: ‘It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest.’ So economic freedom was not only right, it was also productive. Oppression and slavery were not only wrong, but also inefficient. Pessimistic and optimistic interpretations have continued ever since, and have shaped English social and political ideas.

“The fundamental question is whether the Industrial Revolution improved or damaged the lives of the English people as a whole. ‘Optimists’ could point to the undeniable increase in living standards that took place – eventually. They inferred that technology and increased economic activity *must* have increased wealth. ‘Pessimists’ argued that industrialization for many decades brought workers little but cost them much – loss of independence and self-respect, devaluation of skills, deteriorating health, high mortality, bad food, crushing labour (for men, women and children) and destruction of cherished rights and community traditions. In short, the Industrial Revolution created an impoverished, downtrodden and embittered proletariat, ground down by the power of money and the oppression of the ruling classes, and forced by long and bitter struggle to assert their meager rights to a share in national wealth.

“What is the evidence? Much painstaking investigation has focused on workers’ wages and living standards. Perhaps surprisingly, real wages barely rose over the crucial period of the Industrial Revolution – by only 4 percent between 1760 and 1820. Over this period working hours greatly increased. Women and children worked more intensively, contributing about 25 percent of family incomes. Food prices rose and diet deteriorated. Health and hygiene in industrial cities worsened. Infant mortality was high and life expectancy low by present-day standards, and both actually deteriorated. People’s physical condition as measured by their height fell to one of its lowest ever levels and showed marked difference between classes – over five inches’ difference between rich and poor

³⁶ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 459-460.

boys in 1790. It would seem that the pessimistic case is amply proved, and that industrialization amounted to stunted and damaged lives for generations of ordinary people.

“Looked at closely, the picture is less stark. More optimistic views see economic changes, for good and bad, as linked to the aspirations and choices, however limited, of ordinary working people, who were not hostile to the market economy or indifferent to the goods it brought. English wages did not rise partly because they were already very high by world standards, and they remained among the highest in the world over the period of industrialization. A sharp and continuous rise took place from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, when new industries and technologies had grown sufficiently to transform the whole economy. The average fall in height may have been due not to new factory conditions, but to increasing work in agriculture at a young age (the same fall can be seen in the nineteenth-century United States), and is therefore probably a consequence of the ‘industrious revolution’ rather than of ‘proletarianized’ labour in factories. Moreover, French, Italian and Austrian men were smaller still than Englishmen. English workers’ attainment of a relative degree of prosperity brought what we now know to be unhealthy choices (more alcohol, tobacco, sugar and meat), health risks and family stress. Similar things can be seen in the slums of Mumbai or Rio today: appalling and life-threatening conditions, but which also mean a chance to escape from age-old poverty and cultural and social immobility. Indeed, England’s political stability must in part be due to many people being able to aspire to improvement, and even to attain it.

“There is, finally, a factor which most specialists now agree resolves the ‘optimist’/‘pessimist’ debate: England was experiencing a sudden demographic boom unique in its history. The population more than tripled in 150 years, from 5.2 million in 1701 to 17.9 million in 1851. The reason is simple: increasing wages and job opportunities after the Restoration – the ‘industrious revolution’ again – which enabled people to marry several years’ younger on average than before, and which meant more children. The inevitable result of this process in other times and places was a sharp fall in living standards as numbers outran resources, reducing life expectancy, restricting births, or bringing even more severe consequences such as famines, epidemics or wars. These are the famous ‘Malthus checks’ first theorized by the Rev. Thomas Malthus in his *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798). The consequences were visible in southern and central Europe, where living standards deteriorated sharply between 1500 and 1800, and real wages had dropped to a half or a third of those in England. Given its exceptional population explosion, eighteenth-century England was logically heading for a similar collapse in living standards and widespread misery.

“But it did not happen... There was certainly hardship, especially during and immediately after the Napoleonic Wars, in 1811-12 and 1816-21, when the whole country and its economic system were under strain. On top of that came a Continent-wide run of bad harvests, the worst of them due to a catastrophic volcanic eruption in the East Indies in April 1815, which disrupted global climate and caused widespread famine. In England, there was hunger and economic instability. But there was no economic disaster – as there might well have been

had Napoleon won and wrecked British trade. And there was no political catastrophe. What was once seen as the 'stagnation' or 'decline' of English workers' living standards should properly be seen as their maintenance of a relatively high level. This stands out in comparison with disastrous increases in poverty in many parts of Europe since the seventeenth century.

"How, in adverse circumstances, were English living standards maintained? By growing the towns, especially manufacturing and commercial centres, such as London, Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham. By creating new jobs in textiles, metalworking and commerce. By supporting incomes through the Poor Law. And by defending access to export markets by defeating Napoleon.

"During several decades, things might still have gone badly wrong. But by the 1850s a 'second stage' of industrialization was beginning. By 1850 Britain's GDP had overtaken that of the world's most populous country, China - a lead it maintained for more than 150 years. Productivity was transformed by the cheap energy of the 'mineral economy', permitting what economists have called a breakout to permanent economic growth. This finally brought it in the second half of the nineteenth century an unambiguous increase in workers' living standards. Thus was established, in difficult and dangerous circumstances, the prototype of a new society..."³⁷

Another important factor in the rise in Britain's GDP was the wide-scale application of "the idea of limited liability joint-stock companies", which, according to Andrew Roberts, "originated with the Dutch in the late sixteenth century, [but] were brought to their peak by the English-speaking peoples. The model for all subsequent chartered firms was the Vereenigde Compagnie (Dutch East India Company), incorporated in 1602, which had limited liability and publicly traded shares in a proper stock exchange. It was between 1844 and 1862, however, that successive Company Acts passed by the British parliament enshrined the basic principles which led to the exponential growth of market capitalism... By 2001 there were no fewer than five-and-a-half million companies registered in the United States.

"Under those Victorian laws, companies no longer had to have strict specific purposes, and limited liability ensured that investors could only lose the amount that they had originally put into them..."³⁸

Whether or not we accept that the "genius" of capitalism, in Roberts' phrase, and in particular, of the joint-stock company, was for the long-term benefit of the workers as well as the factory-owners, this is a materialist case for the industrial revolution in Britain: the spiritual case against capitalism remains overwhelming. As its trade flowed more freely and abundantly along the oceanic arteries police by her navy, Britain's spiritual arteries became unquestionably harder. Its philosophical creativity reached an all-time low in the fatuous doctrine of

³⁷ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 37- 382.

³⁸ Roberts, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples since 1900*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2019, pp. 38-39.

Utilitarianism. And its religion came to the verge of atheism. For, as we shall see, even church leaders began to accept the most destructive and blasphemous of all British inventions, the Darwinist theory of evolution, which, as we shall see later, was the reflection, in biology and philosophy, of the tooth-and-claw practice of capitalism in economic life...

The Industrial Revolution had another important spiritual effect, not only in England but throughout the world and to the present day: by increasing the number of urban dwellers and reducing the number of country dwellers, it increased the power of the state over the citizen. For the country dweller generally has a degree of independence: he grows his own food and lives in his own house. But when he moves to the town he loses this independence, and with it his independence of *mind*, making him more amenable to the influence of demagogues and mass movements, of which the most important was *socialism*...

3. THE PAX BRITANNICA

“The end of the titanic struggle with France in 1815,” writes Tombs, “left Britain the first global hegemon in history, a position only otherwise occupied by the United States from 1989. Its naval power maximized its strength, enabling some 45 percent of its forces to be deployed overseas at the end of the war. Yet there were limits to its power, some self-imposed. Policy after Waterloo was defensive: ‘It is not our business to collect trophies,’ wrote the Foreign Secretary, Lord Castlereagh, to the Prime Minister, ‘but to try [to] bring the world back to peaceful habits.’ An unwitting tribute was paid by Napoleon: ‘Castlereagh had the Continent at his mercy... And he made peace as if he had been defeated. The imbecile!’... There was irresistible pressure to reduce taxation and debt. The navy was rapidly cut back to a peacetime footing, with nearly 90 percent of its officers unemployed, and the number of ships in commission falling from 713 in 1814 to 121 in 1818. All governments throughout the century were as parsimonious as they could be, pressed by lobbies that combined equal devotion to peace and cheap government. Gladstone’s Liberal government in the 1860s, for example, was so keen to reduce the costs of empire that it was happy to contemplate ‘friendly relaxation’ of links with the colonies, or even ‘separation’, and it shrugged off the queen’s complaint that Britain was being reduced to ‘a second-rate power’. Military spending was generally 2-3 percent of national income – about the same as today – but Britain’s wealth meant that this represented more money than in any other state except sometimes France. Yet it often seemed (as a senior officer admitted in 1899) that Britain was ‘attempting to maintain the largest empire the world has ever seen with instruments and reserves that would be insufficient for a third-class Military Power’.

“With limited material forces, it had to deal with robustly independent and relatively powerful European states. The navy, master of the oceans, had 40,000 – 50,000 men in mid-century, about the same as today. Its reach, as was often wryly observed, depended on there being water. The army was never more than a sizeable colonial police force by comparison with those of the other Great Powers. In 1857, on the eve of the Great Mutiny, there were only 23,000 British soldiers in the whole of northern India from the Khyber Pass to Rangoon, fewer than in Northern Ireland in the 1980s; and there were more British troops in Afghanistan in 2012 than in any of the Victorian Afghan wars. So the army was often over-exposed, sometimes disastrously so: 700 British troops, 3,800 Indian and 12,000 civilians were massacred in Afghanistan in 1841, another 1,700 men wiped out at Isandlwana in Zululand in 1879, and half a brigade lost at Marwand in Afghanistan in 1880. The Foreign Office in the 1820s had a staff of 36, and the separate Diplomatic Service remained unchanged between the 1860s and the 1910s at under 150 men, compared with a combined total of over 6,000 today. The Colonial Office numbered 113 clerks in 1903 – half the U.K. Ministry of Defence’s press office today – to oversee an empire that consisted of over 100 separated political units (not including some 600 Indian princely states). The Indian civil service in the late nineteenth century numbered no more than 2,000 – smaller than OFSTED, the school inspection service, today. Many, at the time and since, have

emphasized the fragility and even the illusory nature of British power during the once-vaunted 'Pax Britannica'.

"Yet if we look from the outside, as if from Paris, St. Petersburg or Constantinople, the picture is different. Britain was effectively invulnerable: all other major states, including the United States and Japan, were invaded during the nineteenth century, some several times. But no potential enemy since Napoleon has ever seriously prepared an invasion of Britain, and he would probably have failed if he mounted it; Hitler got no further than aspiration. No one between 1815 and 1914 dreamed of threatening its security in Europe. No major state until Japan in 1941 calculatedly attacked its empire. All were deterred by its naval power, its huge financial and economic capacity, and its ability to strike without being struck. Its dominance of the seas made any repetition of the global conflicts of the eighteenth century impossible, and restrained the imperialist ambitions of European powers. Simon Bolivar, the early-nineteenth-century South American revolutionary leader, declared that 'only England, mistress of the seas, can protect us against the united force of European reaction.' Despite continual complaints about excessive naval spending over the century, the Royal Navy maintained overwhelming superiority: in the 1880s it had thirty-eight large battleships, while all other navies combined had only forty; and although the numerical superiority declined later in the century as other countries built, it still maintained a 'two-power standard', a navy larger than those of the two next strongest naval powers combined. A striking sign of power is that in major areas Britain got its way, and even got more than it wanted. It had not wanted to rule Egypt, for example, but eventually did; the French did want it, but could not get it. It obtained practically all it wanted economically in South America without needing major political intervention. The most important international consequence of British naval power was to provide a guarantee of open international trading conditions for everyone, fostering an economic globalization in many ways more complete than in the twenty-first century, and, unlike previous periods of partial globalization, driven more by technology than by violence."³⁹

Britain's largely peaceful hegemony rested on her naval supremacy and industrial might. "Between 1760 and 1830," writes Paul Kennedy, "the United Kingdom was responsible for around 'two-thirds of Europe's industrial growth of output'; and its share of world manufacturing production leaped from 1.9 to 9.5 per cent; in the next thirty years, British industrial expansion pushed that figure to 19.9 per cent, despite the spread of the new technology to other countries in the West. Around 1860, which was probably when the country reached its zenith in relative terms, the United Kingdom produced 53 per cent of the world's iron and 50 per cent of its coal and lignite, and consumed just under half of the raw cotton output of the world. 'With 2 per cent of the world's population and 10 per cent of Europe's, the United Kingdom would seem to have had a capacity in modern industries equal to 40-45 per cent of the world's potential and 55-60 per cent of that in Europe. Its energy consumption from modern sources (coal, lignite, oil) was five times that of either the United States or Prussia/Germany, six times that

³⁹ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 540-544.

of France, and 155 times that of Russia! It alone was responsible for one-fifth of the trade in manufactured goods. Over one-third of the world's merchant marine flew under the British flag and that share was steadily increasing. It was no surprise that the mid-Victorians exulted at their unique state being now (as the economist Jevons put it in 1865) the trading centre of the universe: 'The plains of North America are our corn fields; Chicago and Odess our granaries; Canada and the Baltic are our timber forests; Australasia contains our sheep and on the western prairies of North America are our herds of oxen; Peru sends her silver, and the gold of South Africa and Australia flows to London; the Hindus and the Chinese grow our tea for us, and our coffee, sugar and spice plantations are in all the Indies. Spain and France are our vineyards and the Mediterranean our fruit garden; and our cotton grounds, which for long have occupied the Southern United States, are now being extended everywhere in the warm regions of the earth.'"⁴⁰

The mid-Victorians saw the British empire as the successor of the Roman. Thus on June 25, 1850 Lord Palmerston declared in the House of Commons: "As the Roman, in days of old, held himself free from indignity, when he could say *Civis Romanus sum* [I am a Roman citizen]; so also a British subject, in whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect him against injustice and wrong."

To which the classical scholar William Evert Gladstone replied in a similar vein: "What then, Sir, was a Roman citizen? He was the member of a privileged caste: he belonged to a conquering race, to a nation that held all others bound down by the strong arm of power. For him there was to be an exceptional system of law; for him principles were to be asserted, and by him rights were to be enjoyed, that were denied to the rest of the world. Is such, then, the view of the noble lord, as to the relation that is to subsist between England and other countries?"⁴¹

It was; and for the time being there was nobody to gainsay these masters of the universe.

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That the British Empire, like all great empires, had a religious underpinning is illustrated by William Blake's hymn *Jerusalem* – so popular even to this day in England:

*And did those feet in ancient time,
Walk upon England's mountains green:
And was the holy Lamb of God,
On England's pleasant pastures seen!
And did the Countenance Divine,
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?*

⁴⁰ Kennedy, *op. cit.*, pp. 193-194.

⁴¹ Palmerston and Gladstone, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 680.

*And was Jerusalem builded here,
Among these dark Satanic Mills?
Bring me my Bow of burning gold;
Bring me my Arrows of desire:
Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold!
Bring me my Chariot of fire!
I will not cease from Mental Fight,
Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand:
Till we have built Jerusalem,
In England's green & pleasant Land.*

Of course, Blake was speaking about the building of Jerusalem in England, not in a global empire. But subconsciously the two ideas merged into one. If England had been visited by Christ (by tradition, as a twelve-year-old boy, in the company of St. Joseph of Arimathea), and was the New Jerusalem, then Englishmen had the right – nay, the duty – to export their supremely Christian and moral dominion throughout the world... There were echoes here of the Third Rome messianism of Russian Orthodoxy: England was the Third Rome, and there would be no fourth.

And truly, writes Tombs, “the British saw themselves as having duties as well as interests, and, like other powerful peoples, saw their interests as the interests of all, spreading Christian civilization, breaking down vested interests, encouraging toleration, opening communications, and promoting international commerce. Governments upheld what they saw as the national interest and very rarely allowed themselves to be dictated by lobbies: they manipulated business interests rather than being manipulated by them. The broad aim was to project a favourable image of Britain as embodying constitutional freedoms, humanitarian rights and the rule of law. British politicians often felt moral pressure to intervene where states were failing or non-existent, most extensively in India and Africa. Inaction was seen as a shameful dereliction of duty. It was strongly felt to be an obligation to provide leadership and assist the forces of progress, preferably by peaceful means, but by force if necessary against ‘barbarity’. The moralizing, missionary aspect of nineteenth-century politics should not be underestimate, despite Cecil Rhodes’s cynical quip that empire was philanthropy plus 5 percent profit. So Britain was diplomatically very active and at war somewhere most of the time. There was lethal arrogance here, combined with naïvely optimistic generosity believing that the freedom and prosperity England had recently secured should be spread...”

“The ideological foundations of foreign policy were above all Whig ideas of English history as the triumph of Progress. This led Charles James Fox to commit the Whigs to supporting ‘civil and religious liberties all over the world’. Tories – often accused from Castlereagh onwards of complicity with reactionary regimes – did tend to be less assertive and ‘ethical’, though these were differences of degree. For generations, much of the energy came from evangelical Anglicans the Nonconformist conscience – what we might call the ‘religious left’. Radicals, both secular and Christian, believed in the universality of progressive values, which they considered Britain had a duty to uphold. The most pugnacious exponent of this muscular liberalism was Henry John Temple, 3rd Viscount Palmerston (1784-

1865), whose career spanned six decades. He was Secretary of War as early as 1809, Foreign Secretary from 1830 to 1841 and 1846 to 1851, and Prime Minister from 1855 to 1858 and 1859 to 1863 – the zenith of British power and overseas activity. Palmerston was a cosmopolitan Anglo-Irishman who liked to play John Bull: he could say unashamedly that inferior states needed to feel his stick across their shoulders from time to time, and also say that the extinction of the Atlantic slave trade was the greatest moment of his career. The brutality and the humanitarianism emerged from the same frame of mind.”⁴²

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The British Empire grew at an astonishing rate, “expanding (according to one calculation) at an average annual pace of about 100,000 square miles between 1815 and 1865.”⁴³ In the following age, Britain would be caught up by both Germany and the United States, but for the time being she truly ruled the seas, the world’s first truly global empire. And yet the whole of this vast empire, except for India, was administered by a single government institution, the Colonial Office; when run by Lord Bathurst it had a staff of no more than twenty!⁴⁴ One of the striking differences between British and French imperialism was the far fewer civil servants the British used to administer their empire. Thus in the 1920s “there were as many (5000) French officials in Indo-China as in the whole of British India, with fifteen times the population”.⁴⁵

Was the British Empire really a force more for good than for evil? It may well have been “the empire of good intentions” (Simon Schama), with a civilizing mission to bring true religion, prosperity and justice to its colonial possessions. But were those good intentions sincere, and were they really fulfilled?

Let us first look at the nature of these good intentions through the eyes of a historian, Andrew Roberts, who believes in their sincerity: “Ever since the mid-1830s, the English-speaking peoples had considered it their civilizing mission to apply – with varying degrees of force – their values and institutions to those areas of the world they believed would benefit from them. Although Britain was under no threat from them herself, [Foreign Minister] Lord Palmerston imposed regime change in Spain, Portugal and Belgium, using the power of the Royal Navy to force liberal constitutions on countries that baulked at first but later came to value them. ‘I hold that the real policy of England,’ he told the House of Commons in 1848, ‘is to be the champion of justice and right... not becoming the Quixote of the world, but giving the weight of her moral sanction and support wherever she thinks justice is, and wherever she thinks wrong has been done.’ The neo-conservatives of President George W. Bush’s Administration did not invent some brand new political philosophy in their desire to extend representative institutions to the Middle East.

⁴² Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 544-545.

⁴³ Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, London: William Collins, 1988, p. 199.

⁴⁴ David Cannadine, *Victorious Century. The United Kingdom, 1800-1906*, London: Viking, 2017, p. 117.

⁴⁵ Paul Johnson, *Modern Times*, New York: Harper Perennial, 1990, p. 149.

"In his 1833 speech on the renewal of the charter of the East India Company, which governed British India until 1858, the British statesman and historian Lord Macauley argue that, 'by good government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government; that having become instructed in European knowledge they may, in some future age, demand European institutions'. Macauley admitted that he could not say when such a time would come that such trusteeship would give way to independence, but when it did, 'it will be the proudest day in English history'.

"Much derided as merely an excuse for putting off indigenous self-government, in face men like Macauley believed profoundly in this sense of mission, just as today's neo-conservatives passionately believe in the advantages that might flow from instilling – through installing – democracy in such countries as Afghanistan and Iraq. Whether the Middle East proves too theocratic, obscurantist and in some places feudal to benefit from democracy remains to be seen, but neo-conservatism is certainly no new historical departure in the self-proclaimed mission of the English-speaking people..."⁴⁶

The problem was that the way in which the empire's intentions were expressed often seemed to foreigners to point in opposing directions. Thus in Europe, as sincere opponents of Jacobinism, the British were in alliance with the Austrians, Prussians and Russians to defend monarchical states, including the Ottoman empire. On the other hand, they sympathized with the liberal revolutions in Spain, Portugal, Naples and Latin America, and gave shelter to many revolutionaries from Bolivar to Herzen, from Louis Blanc to Kossuth, from Mazzini to Marx, especially after the failed revolutions of 1848. While *The Times* congratulated the British on their generosity to terrorists, Europeans had a very different opinion. "As King Leopold of the Belgians explained to his niece Queen Victoria, offering a very different opinion from that of *The Times*, the prevailing view across much of Europe was that 'to England a sort of menagerie of Kossuths, Mazzinis... etc is kept to be let occasionally loose on the continent to render its quiet and prosperity impossible'..."⁴⁷

Again, the often avaricious passions of British businessmen abroad often clashed with the ideals both of the government in London, and also of missionaries on the ground, who tried to protect the interests of indigenous peoples. Thus in New Zealand, the government had signed the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 that protected the rights of the Maoris. But when, in 1844, the New Zealand Company, supported by settlers, violated those rights, and fights broke out between the Maoris and the settlers, the New Zealand governor Robert Fitzroy was forced to call in troops from New South Wales to restore order.⁴⁸

From 1830 to 1865, as we have seen, the single most influential figure in British foreign policy was the Anglo-Irish Lord Palmerston. "He became the embodiment of a particular kind of robust patriotism, which claimed to be both nationally

⁴⁶ Roberts, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

⁴⁷ Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

⁴⁸ Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

beneficial and also globally enlightened, and which was well summed up in his own phrase that Britain had 'no eternal allies and no permanent enemies. Our interests are eternal, and those interest it is our duty to follow.' More particularly, this meant that one of Palmerston's main aims, as had previously been the case with Castlereagh and Canning, was to maintain the balance of power in Europe, which in the 1830s meant keeping post-Napoleonic France in check, and also curbing Russia's expansionist ambitions in the eastern Mediterranean and in Asia vis-à-vis India. Ideally, Palmerston hoped to constrain France and Russia by diplomatic rather than military means, thereby avoiding direct continental involvement, and this was also his preferred way of supporting those emerging liberal nationalists who were struggling to win independence from autocratic regimes such as the Russian and Ottoman empires. His wish was that these new nations would be established in emulation of Britain, on the basis of liberty and the rule of law: 'Constitutional states', Palmerston told the Commons, using this essentially shorthand term, 'I consider to be the natural allies of this country.' More globally, Palmerston aimed to protect and extend the opportunities for British traders and overseas investors overseas, thereby consolidating and expanding the United Kingdom's recently established position as the world's pre-eminent fiscal, industrial and trading power."⁴⁹

It is probably true that in their overseas wars, the regimes that the British overthrew in their role as defenders of "constitutionalism" were usually despotic, venal and cruel. Thus François Bernier, physician to two Indian Mughal princes, wrote: "The country is ruined by the necessity of defraying the enormous charges required to maintain the splendor of a numerous court, and to pay a large army maintained for the purpose of keeping the people in subjection. No adequate idea can be conveyed of the sufferings of the people. The cudgel and the whip compel them to incessant labour for the benefit of others..."⁵⁰

It helped the British – in India, as elsewhere – that many of these venal regimes were weak. Indeed, as Tombs writes, "British power and influence in the century following Waterloo – vastly more extensive than those of the United States since 1945 – are explicable in large part by the fluidity and fragility of much of the globe. The fragmentation of the Mughal Empire following Persian and Afghan invasions in the early eighteenth century was the condition of British power in India. The Chinese empire entered into a crisis in the mid-eighteenth century. The Persian Empire collapsed in the 1720s. The Ottoman Empire began its long agony after defeat by Austria and Russia in the late eighteenth century and Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798. The Napoleonic Wars also finished off the Spanish Empire, fragmented the Portuguese, and enfeebled the Dutch. New and sometimes aggressive polities were appearing in Africa and Asia, such as the Asante and Zulu kingdoms, the caliphate of Sokoto, the Sikh and Maratha confederations, and the kingdom of Siam. In other parts of the world, organization and identity were still local: there were 150 'nations' west of the Mississippi; over 200 language groups in Australia; hundreds of polities and thousands of language groups in Africa.

⁴⁹ Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

⁵⁰ Bernier, in Zareer Masani, "Revisiting the Raj", *World Histories*, 8, February/March, 2018, p. 32.

"In these circumstances, resistance to British power was weak, and its hegemonic position could be maintained on a shoestring. Many of the inhabitants of a pre-nationalist world were more or less acquiescent, and even cooperative..."⁵¹

Lord Shelburne, British Prime Minister in 1782-83 expressed the following explanation/justification of British expansionism: "England prefers trade without domination where possible, but accepts trade with domination when necessary."⁵² This was probably a truthful statement of British priorities most of the time. Shelburne himself had practiced what he preached: a supporter of the independence for the American colonies, he negotiated the Treaty of Paris with the Americans in 1783, which surrendered British domination but preserved a spacious domain for British commerce as the Americans expanded westwards...

Nevertheless, the acquisition of vast areas of other people's land and property – probably the biggest land-grab in history – required a justification stronger than commerce or the weakness and venality of native leaders... One justification was the enlightenment of the natives with Christianity and liberalism. Another was that Britons already living in the colonies had to be protected. There were certainly many sincere missionaries – although missionary zeal tended to peter out in time. But protection of Britons in the colonies often involved seeming to condone their rapacious acts towards the natives. Moreover, the puzzling moral paradox will not go away: how could a country whose official ideology was liberal democracy (albeit of a distinctly aristocratic kind), and which had fought, and would continue to fight, under the banner of freedom from tyranny for all peoples, then set about creating the largest empire the world had ever seen, enslaving – or, at any rate, enserfing – hundreds of millions of people to itself?

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

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

⁵¹ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 543-544.

⁵² Paul Johnson, *Modern Times*, New York: Harper Perennial, 1990, p. 151.

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

"Yet the fact remains that no organization in history has done more to promote the free movement of goods, capital and labour than the British Empire in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. And no organization has done more to impose Western norms of law, order and governance around the world. To characterize all this as 'gentlemanly capitalism' risks underselling the scale – and modernity – of the achievement in the sphere of economics; just as criticism of the 'ornamental' (meaning hierarchical) character of British rule overseas tends to overlook the signal virtues of what were remarkably non-venal administrations."⁵³

Of course, this analysis begs the question whether "the free movement of goods, capital and labour" is such an indubitable good. In England for generations, it was argued by many, it was an indubitable evil, in that it plunged much of the working population into terrible, soul-destroying poverty, while increasing the pride, cruelty and hypocrisy of the governing class to a proverbial degree ("Victorian hypocrisy" is still a byword). It is difficult to see how it could have been a boon for anyone else except the capitalists in the very long term. Thus the destruction of the indigenous Indian textile industry by competition with the factories of Northern England doomed millions of Indian peasants to even greater poverty. And while the British administration was indeed less venal than the Mughal one that it replaced, this was a relatively small benefit to place in the scale against the five million dead in the Bengal famine of 1773-74 and the famines that periodically recurred thereafter. Of course, in those days there was little that the British or anybody else could have done to help the starving Indians except on a small scale. Nevertheless, the suspicion remained, in India as in Ireland, that the *will* to help was also present only on a small scale...

One thing is certain: as Britain became poorer, the non-white lands upon which it had an important impact became dramatically poorer. Thus China's share in world manufacturing output fell from 32.8% in 1750 to 19.7% in 1860 to 6.2% in

⁵³ Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain Made The Modern World*, London: Penguin, 2004, pp. xxi-xxii.

1900. The corresponding figures for India are: 24.5%, 8.6% and 1.7%.⁵⁴ This vertiginous decline cannot be blamed entirely on Britain; but the figures cast considerable doubt on the claim that membership of the British Empire raised the standard of living of its peoples. If, say, the British introduction of railways into India helped the Indian economy, it can be said to have done so only in the very long term... But if it is argued that the infliction of such suffering by the imperialists was justified in that it was “a necessary stage on the path to modernity” and the modern, democratic India, then we are back with the Jesuit principle that the end justifies the means. The idea that the sufferings of one generation, undertaken unwillingly at the hands of foreigners, can compensate for the relatively greater prosperity of another, much later one that has imbibed the foreigners’ world-view, is difficult to justify...

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

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

“The last of these is perhaps the most important because it remains the most distinctive feature of the Empire, the thing that sets it apart from its continental rivals. I do not mean to claim that all British imperialists were liberals: some were very far from it. But what is striking about the history of the Empire is that whenever the British were behaving despotically, there was almost always a liberal critique of that behaviour from within British society. Indeed, so powerful and consistent was this tendency to judge Britain’s imperial conduct by the yardstick of liberty that it gave the British Empire something of a self-liquidating character. Once a colonized society had sufficiently adopted the other institutions the British brought with them, it became very hard for the British to prohibit that political liberty to which they attached so much significance for themselves.”⁵⁵

But prohibit it they did. Because for all their talk of liberty and equality, the British believed that they were superior to the peoples they governed, and therefore entitled to deprive them of their liberty indefinitely. So not only did the “liberal Empire” of Britain introduce the benefits of liberalism by illiberal means – coercion and conquest: these benefits, according to the racist views of the conquerors, could never really be absorbed or applied by the natives because they

⁵⁴ Kennedy, *op. cit.* p. 190.

⁵⁵ Ferguson, *op. cit.* pp. xxiii-xxiv.

were naturally slaves. This was because, as Ferguson admits, the spreading of liberalism was not the real motivation for the creation of the Empire, but rather commercial gain from the import of sugar, spices, cotton, etc., and the export of manufactures, financial services, etc. When that commercial gain was threatened for one reason or another, the British response was to send in the gunboats or the redcoats, and annex the territory in question before introducing those western institutions – property rights, contractual law, etc. – that would guarantee a stable, long-term trading relationship that might be in the interests of both sides but would in any case, of course, be in the interests of the British.

And so “the rise of the British Empire, it might be said, had less to do with the Protestant work ethic or English individualism than with the British sweet tooth.”⁵⁶

The generation after the Crimean War saw Britain reach the peak of her power. Far outstripping her competitors in industrial production (it was still some time before America and Germany caught up), mistress of the seas and of an ever-expanding empire (four times larger than the Roman empire) on which, as the saying went, the sun never set, British self-confidence grew with it. The British considered that theirs was the greatest civilization in the world, and that it would last forever... And yet Britain’s boast, as we have seen, was in something quite different: in being the world champion of freedom and liberalism in both political and economic life. But how – we return to the question – was it possible to be both liberal and imperialist at the same time?

The clue lay in the so-called *doctrine of benign intervention*: the teaching that Britain, alone among the empires of history, had acquired her empire for the benefit, not of her own, but of her subject peoples, to whom she communicated the fruits of her liberal civilization by her benign interventions in their lives – in other words, by her annexation of their territories and completely reconstructing their economies. This teaching was expounded by Britain’s foremost liberal thinker, John Stuart Mill, in his essay, “A Few Words on Non-Intervention”, in which he asserted that England was “incomparably the most conscientious of all nations... the only one whom mere scruples of conscience... would deter” and “the power which of all in existence best understands liberty”.⁵⁷

As Noam Chomsky writes, Mill “urged Britain to undertake the enterprise [of humanitarian intervention] vigorously – specifically, to conquer more of India. Britain must pursue this high-minded mission, Mill explained, even though it will be ‘held up to obloquy’ on the continent. Unmentioned was that by doing so, Britain was striking still further devastating blows at India and extending the near-monopoly of opium production that it needed both to force open Chinese markets by violence and to sustain the imperial system more broadly by means of its immense narco-trafficking enterprises, all well known in England at the time. But such matters could not be the source of the ‘obloquy’. Rather, Europeans are ‘exciting odium against us’, Mill wrote, because they are unable to comprehend

⁵⁶ Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

⁵⁷ Mill, in Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain made the Modern World*, p. 138.

that England is truly 'a novelty in the world.' A remarkable nation that acts only 'in the service of others'. It is dedicated to peace, though if 'the aggressions of barbarians force it to a successful war', it selflessly bears the cost while 'the fruits it shares in fraternal equality with the whole human race', including the barbarians it conquers and destroys for their own benefit. England is not only peerless but near perfect, in Mill's view, with no 'aggressive designs', desiring 'no benefit to itself at the expense of others'. Its policies are 'blameless and laudable'. England was the nineteenth-century counterpart of the 'idealistic new world bent on ending inhumanity', motivated by pure altruism and uniquely dedicated to the highest 'principles and values', though also sadly misunderstood by the cynical or perhaps paranoid Europeans..."⁵⁸

Mills' views undoubtedly express a dangerous degree of hubris and self-delusion. The main motive of Britain's imperial expansion was commercial profit. Moreover, this profit was unquestionably immoral when gained at the expense of jobless Indian textile workers⁵⁹ or Chinese opium addicts.⁶⁰

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"From another angle," continues Lieven, "Protestantism was vital to the whole English sense of imperial mission. From the sixteenth to the twentieth century, most Englishmen believed that the Protestant conscience was at the core of all progress. They were convinced that the Protestant had a sense of individual responsibility and a strong motivation to better himself and succeed in life. He was self-disciplined, purposeful and based his life on firm moral principles, which he derived for himself by reading the Bible and struggling to define his own path to salvation. Eighteenth-century Enlightenment and nineteenth-century liberalism had no doubt of their descent from the Protestant tradition even if they had sometimes lost faith in a personal god. By contrast, Catholics were seen to be the slaves of sentiment, tradition, ritual and ignorance. Muslims were worse, and Hindus and Buddhists worst of all. Racial stereotypes of Africans in the late nineteenth century were very familiar from sixteenth-century Ireland: the natives were shift, immoral and idle, and needed for their own good to be forced to work. Nor had English attitudes to Catholics in general or the Irish in particular necessarily changed much over the previous 300 years. In 1882 the Regius Professor of History at Oxford University commented that 'the Celts of Ireland are as yet unfit for parliamentary government... Left to themselves, without what

⁵⁸ Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance*, London: Metropolitan Books, 2003, pp. 44-45. Cf. Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire 1875-1914*, London: Abacus, 1994, p. 62-69.

⁵⁹ Chomsky again: "India was a real competitor with England: as late as the 1820s; while the British were learning advanced techniques of steel-making there, India was building ships for the British navy at the time of the Napoleonic Wars, they had a developed textiles industry, they were producing more iron than all of Europe combined – so the British just proceeded to de-industrialize the country by force and turn it into an impoverished rural society" (*Understanding Power: The Indispensable Chomsky*, London: Vintage, 2003, p. 257).

⁶⁰ "It is a remarkable fact," writes Ferguson, "that throughout the first half of the nineteenth century the amount the East India Company earned from its monopoly on the export of opium was roughly equal to the amount it had to remit to London to pay the interest on its huge debt. The opium trade was crucial to the Indian balance of payments." (*op. cit.*, p. 166, note).

they call English misrule, they would almost certainly be... the willing slaves of some hereditary despot, the representative of their old coshering chiefs, with a priesthood as absolute and as obscurantist as the Druids.'

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

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

"In the British imperial context this vision always had its doubters. They included pragmatists conscious of the social disruption and political danger liberal policy might create; financial officials aware that Westminster would insist on India living on its own revenues, and that the latter barely sufficed to pay for army, police and administration – let alone 'luxuries' like education. More ideological opposition to liberalism also existed. This encompassed an increasing tide of late Victorian racialism, which stressed the innate biological inferiority of non-Whites. It included too romantics and, later, anthropologists, who gloried in native culture and proclaimed the need to preserve its unique traditions.

"But the British Empire could never give up its basic, albeit stuttering commitment to progress and enlightenment, since these were essential to its British elite's understanding of history, their perception of themselves and of the legitimacy of Britain's empire. Clearly, British liberal values and ideology did convert growing sections of the indigenous elite, firstly in India and then

elsewhere: it was precisely in the name of these values that self-government and independence from Britain were demanded. But in this as in so much else formal empire was only one element in a much broader process of change and Westernization..."⁶¹

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Both of the liberal Anglo-Saxon empires, the British and the American, looked to the First Rome of the pagan emperors as their model rather than to the Second Christian Rome of Constantinople, still less, of course, to the Third Rome of Russia. This was obvious especially in, for example, the architectural style of Washington D.C. and of the buildings that housed the American organs of government – the White House and the Capitol. As for the British Empire, the architecture of the government buildings in New Delhi recalled nothing more than the classical style of the first, pagan Rome of the Caesars and Augusti. Again, in 1850, in his famous "Don Pacifico" speech, Lord Palmerston boasted of Britain's "unequalled capacity to project national power overseas, and it was therefore, he concluded, up to parliament to decide: 'whether, as the Roman, in days of old, held himself free from indignity when he could say *Civis Romanus sum*; so, also, a British subject, in whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect him against injustice and wrong.'"⁶²

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

Mammon, not God or liberalism, decided the issue...

⁶¹ Lieven, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-99.

⁶² Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

4. THE BRITISH IN INDIA AND CHINA

John Stuart Mill viewed countries such as India and China as having once been progressive, but were now stagnant and barbarous, thus legitimizing British rule as benevolent despotism, "provided the end is [the barbarians'] improvement."⁶³ However, there was still enough honesty in some, if not all, of the British to realize that the main motive of their imperial conquests was not "improvement", but something baser.

Thus "many in England," writes Tombs, "felt uncomfortable about India, less the jewel in the crown than the cuckoo in the nest... The British presence there had originally been commercial, through the chartered Honourable East India Company (HEIC). Over the second half of the eighteenth century it had increasingly become a territorial ruler, originally under nominal Mughal sovereignty and then as an agent of the British government – the greatest ever quango. But expansion had taken place haphazardly, often driven by the ambitions of men on the spot, months away from the restraining and parsimonious hands of Whitehall and Westminster. British actions had always aroused controversy as well as pride. 'How can the same nation pursue two lines of policy so radically different... despotic in Asia and democratic in Australia?... Why do we... involve ourselves in the anxiety and responsibility of governing two hundred millions of people in Asia?' asked Sir John Seeley, the pioneer Cambridge historian of empire, in 1883. Yet this view of the empire as a confederation of settler colonies ignored the immense economic and strategic importance of India, both directly as a market for British goods and as the source of the Indian Army that made Britain an Asian power from the Persian Gulf to Shanghai, and also indirectly, as Indians were the producers, merchants and labourers who constructed a vast economic network. As one historian sums it up, 'Across a large part of the world East of Suez, it would have been more accurate to talk not of a British, but of an Anglo-Indian empire.'"⁶⁴

Further expansion of British rule in India "occurred particularly," as Evans writes, "at the initiative of the Governor-General Lord Dalhousie (1812-60), appointed in 1848. Dalhousie considered Indian-controlled states were inefficient and that income for the East India Company... would be increased if he annexed them."⁶⁵

The Company was probably the largest corporation in history, even to this day. Indeed, the Company *was* British India; it had its own civil service and army – up to 350,000 men, larger than the British army, – in order to protect the vast territories it had annexed in pursuit of its business interests. Gradually, however, the British state took a deeper, more intrusive interest in the Company, bringing the first, purely commercial phase in its history to an end.

⁶³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Stuart_Mill.

⁶⁴ Tombs, *op. cit.*, p. 548.

⁶⁵ Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 637-638.

This intrusiveness took the form initially of making the company act as an aid to the missionary work advocated in parliament by the famous champion of the emancipation of slavery, William Wilberforce. "Wilberforce fostered and supported missionary activity in Britain and abroad. He was a founding member of the Church Missionary Society Church (since renamed the Church Mission Society) and was involved, with other members of the Clapham Sect, in numerous other evangelical and charitable organisations. Horrified by the lack of Christian evangelism in India, Wilberforce used the 1793 renewal of the British East India Company's charter to propose the addition of clauses requiring the company to provide teachers and chaplains and to commit to the 'religious improvement' of Indians. The plan was unsuccessful due to lobbying by the directors of the company, who feared that their commercial interests would be damaged. Wilberforce tried again in 1813, when the charter next came up for renewal. Using petitions, meetings, lobbying and letter writing, he successfully campaigned for changes to the charter. Speaking in favour of the Charter Act 1813, he criticized the British in India for their hypocrisy and racial prejudice, while also condemning aspects of Hinduism, including the caste system, infanticide, polygamy and suttee. 'Our religion is sublime, pure beneficent', he said, 'theirs is mean, licentious and cruel.'" ⁶⁶

"In one sense," writes Dominic Lieven, "religion was a relatively unimportant factor in Britain's empire. From the seventh and eighth centuries, for instance, Muslim conquerors converted the Near East and southern Mediterranean to Islam, in the process forever changing identities and geopolitics in a vast region. Religion was also very important in the Spanish conquest of the Americas, great effort being put into subsequent conversion of the indigenous population. Though Elizabethan imperialists sometimes talked the language of religious mission, in reality little effort went into converting indigenous peoples to Christianity in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Until 1813 the East India Company strictly limited missionary activity in India. Only with the onset of the Evangelical Movement in the late eighteenth century did missionaries begin to play a role of any significance in the British Empire. Even subsequently, however, missionaries never converted large communities and when compared to the activities of the Islamic or Spanish empires, their impact was very small." ⁶⁷

Indeed, it could be argued that the Indians were making more converts to Hinduism among the British Christians in India than the British were making converts to Anglicanism among the Indians... This threat of "going native" produced an exaggerated determination among the British to preserve their culture to the smallest detail (tea at 4, dressing up for dinner), while separating themselves completely from the life of the Indians, whom they despised. This was to bode ill for the future of the British in India...

This is not to say that their aim in trying to bring Christianity to India was wrong in itself: the preaching of the true religion, and protection from false religions, remains the only really defensible justification of one people's dominion

⁶⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Wilberforce.

⁶⁷ Lieven, *Empire*, London: John Murray, 2000, p. 97.

over another – so long, of course, as “the true religion” is not in fact heresy. Mission was at the root of the idea of Christian Rome, which brought Orthodoxy to the peoples of the Mediterranean basin and to the Slav nations to the north. The Russian Empire extended it still further into Asia and even America – and with much less damage to indigenous cultures than was inflicted by many of the Western missionaries.

In his *Considerations on Representative Government* (1861), John Stuart Mill had mentioned “the decay of usages or superstitions which interfere with the effective implementation of industry” as one of the main benefits of British imperialism. But why should “the implementation of industry” be more important than deliverance from “usages or superstition”, that is, false religion? After citing this phrase, Ferguson writes: “Nowadays, the modern equivalents of the missionary societies campaign earnestly against ‘usages’ in far-flung countries that they regard as barbaric: child labour or female circumcision. The Victorian non-governmental organizations were not so different. In particular, three traditional Indian customs aroused the ire of British missionaries and modernizers alike. One was female infanticide, which was common in parts of north-western India. Another was thagi (then usually spelt ‘thuggee’), the cult of assassin-priests, who were said to strangle unwary travellers on the Indian roads. The third, the one the Victorians most abhorred, was sati (or ‘suttee’): the act of self-immolation when a Hindu widow was burned alive on her husband’s funeral pyre... Between 1813 and 1825 7,941 women died this way in Bengal alone...”⁶⁸

Tombs continues: “Those driving the extension of power in India between the middle of the eighteenth century and the middle of the nineteenth had a potent mixture of motives: the ambition to make a name and a fortune; a growing belief in Britain’s destiny to rule as a ‘new Rome’; and a confident belief that they would ‘improve’ India, encouraged in some cases by a Christian zeal, and in all cases by the belief that Britain was in the vanguard of human Progress. Intervention and often annexation took place in what the British considered failing states, where there was internal conflict, disputed succession, serious human rights abuse or the danger of inter-state conflict. While there was, or seemed to be, a military threat – from the Marathas (whose cavalry were ferocious raiders), the Afghans or the Sikhs in the Punjab – they were fought and eventually defeated or at least checked. By 1850 the EIC directly governed most of northern, central and south-eastern India, and states under Indian rulers were subordinated. This security-led expansion of what has been called the ‘imperial garrison state’ was more important than trade or settlement in pushing forward the boundaries of empire.

“Perhaps the most notorious cultural imperialists were the Utilitarians James Mill and Thomas Babington Macaulay, who in 1835 drafted a Minute on education in India, arguing that money should be spent on teaching English and European science, philosophy and history, rather than ‘medical doctrines which would

⁶⁸ Ferguson, *op. cit.*, pp. 139, 141. There is a story from this time of a British commander, who was told that some locals were practicing sati. The commander saddled his horse and took some soldiers and went out to where this was going on, and told them to stop. The locals replied, “This is our tradition.” His answer was, ‘And it is our tradition to hang men who murder women. So if you will practice your tradition, we will practice ours.’ The woman was let go.

disgrace an English Farrier – Astronomy, which would move laughter in girls at an English boarding school – History, abounding with kings thirty foot high... and Geography, made up of seas of treacle and seas of butter.’ This is often quoted as an egregious example of racial arrogance; in fact, it was Utilitarian arrogance towards all traditional culture, English as well as Indian – Mill considered all poetry a relic of barbarism. Not all shared Mill’s sweeping modernism: Benares College, founded in 1791, preserved, even created a supposedly traditional Indian culture. The British were often torn between admiration and impatience, pride and guilt. One of the most influential voices of the age, Richard Cobden, regarded Britain’s record in India one of ‘spoliation and wrong’ and hoped for the ‘happy day when England has not an acre of territory in Continental Asia’.”⁶⁹

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British rule in India can be called one of the great confidence-tricks in history: a tiny group gaining power over a vast multi-million people by sheer force of – pride... It may be compared to the conquistadors’ conquest of Latin America, but it is a greater feat because it was not really accomplished by force of arms (although that was part of it), but by convincing the Indians of their superiority – for a time. Moreover, it was certainly not *maintained* by force of arms...

Kipling’s short story “The Man Who would be King” (1888), which was made into a superb film by John Huston (1975), is a parable of the rise and fall of the British Raj. Two unscrupulous ex-soldier adventurers set out to conquer a kingdom somewhere beyond the Hindu Kush. They succeed, initially through a display of arms (and the use of Masonic symbols), but more firmly through one of them, Danny (played by Sean Connery in the film), being accepted as a god, the son of Alexander the Great. At first King Alexander II does well, dispensing justice and helping the people. But then he plans to marry a native woman, Roxanne. This is disapproved of by the chief priest because a god cannot marry a mortal woman – she will be devoured by fire. The people begin to suffer natural disasters, and at the marriage ceremony the ruse is exposed: the terrified Roxanne scratches Danny’s face and blood comes out. So he was just a man pretending to be god... The people rise up in rebellion and cast out the blasphemers, killing Danny...

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While the Indians gained something from British rule, it is much more difficult to argue that the British did any good at all in China...

There was a huge contradiction at the heart of the British Empire. On the one hand, most British, being real racists, regarded themselves as innately superior to the native peoples they ruled. On the other hand, the ideology on the basis of which they justified their expansionist policies, Free Trade and Human Rights, was *universalist*. For, as Tombs writes, “free traders were universalistic: all mankind was morally and intellectually the same, human values were transnational, racial or ethnic differences were irrelevant, and civilization and

⁶⁹ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 548-549.

progress were the right and destiny of all. However, some nations were more advanced than others – with England economically and politically in the lead. This could mean, as one Englishman put it tartly in 1863, that his countrymen thought that ‘all men were morally and intellectually alike’ and all ‘equally inferior to himself’.

“Unquestioned belief in the morality and civilizing influence of commercial freedom explains how a country that was striving to stop the African slave trade was also striving to export opium to China. Some of the same people were involved, notably Palmerston. Although he believed that ‘Her Majesty’s Government cannot interfere for the purpose of enabling British merchants to violate the laws of the country to which they trade,’ he equally believed that ‘Commerce is the best pioneer of civilization,’ making mankind ‘happier, wiser, better’.”⁷⁰

Maria Hsia Chang writes: “It is difficult to imagine two civilizations more dissimilar than those of China and the West. Continental in proportion, agrarian China was insular and self-sufficient; industrial Western Europe was driven to export and championed free trade. Chinese culture deified authority and the group; Western civilization was rooted in individualism. Europeans were Judeo-Christians who regarded the Chinese, with their ancestor worship, as benighted pagans. Westerners believed in the rule of law, due process, and innocence until proven guilty; Chinese long opted for rule by Confucian ethics, in which the courts were a last recourse where the accused was presumed to be guilty until proven innocent. Although East and West were each other’s complete opposites, both were great and proud civilizations. The Chinese, an ancient people with a 5,000-year history, still thought they were the centre of the world; Westerners, with a civilization that reached back to Greco-Roman antiquity, found only confirmation of their superiority in their excursions across the globe. It does not take the gifts of a prophet to predict that contact between two such disparate civilizations could only lead to deadly conflict. Indeed, a British trader, writing in 1833 on the miserable trade conditions in China, ominously concluded that ‘war with the Chinese cannot be doubted’.”⁷¹

The problem was that the British wanted to trade with China, but the Chinese did not want to trade with the British. Nevertheless, in what he saw as a magnanimous gesture, Emperor Kangxi (1662-1722) had allowed western merchants to trade within a kind of ghetto in Canton with a monopolistic group of Chinese merchants, the Thirteen Hongs. But the British, the “proudest” and “stiffest” of the westerners, found these restrictions “tiresome, insulting, and stultifying”. Just as Rousseau had said that the people had to be “forced to be free” in the political sphere, so the British insisted that Free Trade had to be forced down the throats of every people they came into contact with...

“The China trade,” continues Chang, “had become important for both British consumers and their government. Until 1830, when India began the commercial

⁷⁰ Tombs, *op. cit.*, p. 559.

⁷¹ Chang, *Return of the Dragon*, Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 2001, p. 67.

cultivation of tea, tea could be bought only from China. In 1785, some 15 million pounds of Chinese tea a year were purchased by the British East India Company; tax on that tea accounted for a tenth of the British government's total revenue. In 1795, and again in 1816, envoys were sent from London to prevail upon the Chinese emperor to improve trade conditions by lifting the restrictions in favor of a modern commercial treaty. Both missions, like the earlier Dutch effort, returned empty handed. To add fuel to fuel, the emperor treated the representatives of the British monarch with customary imperiousness, sublimely oblivious that he was dealing with a new breed of 'barbarians'. That arrogance was only too evident in the letter to King George III from Emperor Qianlong (1736-1795), in response to the Macartney mission of 1795: 'My capital is the hub and centre about which all quarters of the globe revolve... Our Celestial Empire possesses all things in prolific abundance... [and has] no need to import the manufactures of outside barbarians... But as the tea, silk and porcelain which the Celestial Empire produces, are absolute necessities to... yourselves, we have permitted, as a signal mark of favor, that foreign *hongs* should be established at Canton, so that... your country thus participate in our beneficence.'

"What the Chinese did not realize was that Britain had the power to force them into making trade concessions. But before force could be resorted to, a *casus belli* had to be found. That pretext was opium..."⁷²

Paradoxically, in 1833, "the same year that slavery was abolished, the Whig government rescinded the last remaining trading monopolies of the East India Company, which were with China, and the Company was further instructed 'with all convenient speed to close their commercial business', thereby opening up a new overseas market to private enterprise and initiative. In fact, the Company did no such thing, but continued to trade in one infamous commodity in which, after 1833, it was joined by many new British dealers – namely opium. Between 1821 and 1837 sales of opium increased fivefold, and by 1828 the British were selling 1.400 tons of the narcotic annually to China."⁷³

Among the new traders were William Jardine and James Matheson. As Niall Ferguson writes, they "were buccaneering Scotsmen who had set up a trading company in the southern Chinese port of Guangzhou (then known as Canton) in 1832. One of their best lines of business was importing government-produced opium from India. Jardine was a former East India Company surgeon, but the opium he was bringing into China was for distinctly non-medicinal purposes. This was a practice that the Emperor Yongzheng had prohibited over a century before, in 1729, because of the high social costs of opium addiction. On 10 March 1839 an imperial official named Lin Zexu arrived in Canton under orders from the Daoguang Emperor to stamp out the trade once and for all. Lin blockaded the Guangzhou opium godowns (warehouses) until the British merchants acceded to his demands. In all, around 20,000 chests of opium valued at £2 million were surrendered. The contents were adulterated to render it unusable and literally thrown into the sea. The Chinese also insisted that henceforth British subjects in

⁷² Chang, *op. cit.*, p. 68; Kissinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 216-218.

⁷³ Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

Chinese territory should submit to Chinese law. This was not to Jardine's taste at all. Known to the Chinese as 'Iron-Headed Old Rat', he was in Europe during the crisis and hastened to London to lobby the British government. After three meetings with the Foreign Secretary, Viscount Palmerston, Jardine seems to have persuaded him that a show of strength was required, and that 'the want of power of their war junks' would ensure an easy victory for a 'sufficient' British force. On 20 February 1840 Palmerston gave the order. By June 1840 all the naval preparations were complete. The Qing Empire was about to feel the full force of history's most successful narco-state: the British Empire.

"Just as Jardine had predicted, the Chinese authorities were no match for British naval power. Guangzhou was blockaded, Chusan (Zhoushan) Island was captured. After a ten-month stand off, British marines seized the forts that guarded the mouth of the Pearl River, the waterway between Hong Kong and Guangzhou. Under the Convention of Chuenpi, signed in January 1841 (but then repudiated by the Emperor), Hong Kong became a British possession. The Treaty of Nanking, signed a year later after another bout of one sided fighting, confirmed this cession and also gave free reign to the opium trade in five so-called treaty ports: Canton, Amoy (Xiamen), Foochow (Fuzhou), Ningbo and Shanghai. According to the principle of extraterritoriality, British subjects could operate in these cities with complete immunity from Chinese law." ⁷⁴

The Chinese also had to pay a large indemnity for the losses incurred by British merchants and the cost of the expeditionary force, which caused much resentment...

The British Colonial Secretary at the time, Lord Stanley, was less ruthless and rapacious than Palmerston, and was dismayed when news of the agreement reached him in London. Already in 1840 he had written to the gung-ho Governor-General of India, Ellenborough: "There is little advantage and no glory in such affairs as the wholesale slaughter, without loss on our part, of Chinese..."

But now he had to put a brave face on the *fait accompli*. "Stanley had no choice but to accept the acquisition of Hong Kong as an unavoidable commitment... He hoped that the colony would become 'a great mart for the commerce of all nations and for the extension of legal commerce with China'. British traders soon established themselves as a thriving commercial presence in Hong Kong and Shanghai, and Stanley appointed Sir John Davies to be Governor of Hong Kong because he believed him to be truly committed to ending what now became the illegal opium trade..." ⁷⁵

"Thereafter," writes Chang, "the political integrity of China began to unravel. In 1844, without fighting a war, treaties were concluded with the United States and France that had effects more far-reaching than the Treaty of Nanjing. The Treaty of Wangxia with the United States introduced the most-favored-nation clause and the right of extraterritoriality, both of which had devastating impact

⁷⁴ Ferguson, *The Ascent of Money*, New York: The Penguin Press, 2008, pp. 289-292.

⁷⁵ Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

on China's well-being and sovereignty. The most-favored-nation clause extended all bilateral treaties between China and a foreign country to all other interested powers, thereby enabling the United States to obtain all the benefits that Britain had derived from the Treaty of Nanjing (excepting Hong Kong and the indemnity). The right of extraterritoriality, for its part, gave foreigners to China immunity from its laws and criminal justice system. Foreigners suspected of having committed crimes in China would be handed over to their consuls for trial in accordance with their own country's laws – which was rarely followed through in practice. More than that, the right of extraterritoriality was not mutual. Chinese immigrants in Western countries enjoyed no reciprocal legal immunity.⁷⁶

“France followed the United States by concluding the Treaty of Huangpu, which promptly invoked the most-favored-nation principle, thereby gaining for France every erstwhile concession obtained by Britain and the United States. Additionally, the Chinese agreed to lift their ban on Christianity, opening China to proselytization by French and other Western missionaries.”⁷⁷

The Second Anglo-Chinese War began in 1856 when “the Chinese authorities arrested the crew of a British-registered ship, the *Arrow*... [The war was] deliberately escalated by the governor of Hong Kong, Sir John Bowring, a free-trade fundamentalist, founder member of the Anti-Corn Law League and former Radical MP for Bolton. Believing that ‘Jesus Christ is Free Trade’ he acted in November 1856 to try to compel the Chinese by force to concede greater commercial access, and ordered the navy to shell the Canton defences – an enterprise denounced both by Tories and more pacifically minded free traders. In retaliation, the Chinese governor of Canton offered \$100 for every English head, and attacks on foreigners multiplied. The Earl of Elgin – who deplored imperial expansion as merely ‘increasing the area over which Englishmen... exhibit how hollow and superficial are both their civilization and their Christianity’ – was, ironically, sent to negotiate with the Chinese by force, though his arrival was delayed by the Indian Mutiny. Elgin confided in his diary that the ‘wretched’ *Arrow* case was ‘a scandal’. He loathed the Hong Kong merchants who ‘for blood and massacre on a great scale’, and who ‘for the most selfish objects are trampling under foot this ancient civilisation’. But he nevertheless permitted a fairly minor bombardment and occupation of Canton in December 1857. The French, determined not to be left out, contributed troops. After sporadic skirmishing, multi-national diplomatic wrangling and broken agreements, it was decided to mount an expedition to Peking. An Anglo-French force landed in August 1860, simultaneously negotiating and looting with gusto as they marched...”

When some British prisoners were tortured and killed, “a furious Elgin in October ordered the destruction of the vast Summer Palace, some 200 buildings in a park outside Peking – a unique cultural monument, though of varying taste.

⁷⁶ “Foreigners were placed under the legal jurisdiction of their consuls – a flagrant breach of Chinese sovereignty necessitated, in Western eyes, by the barbarity of Chinese law” (Tombs, op. cit., pp. 560-561). (V.M.)

⁷⁷ Chang, op. cit., pp. 70-71. Tombs (op. cit., p. 561) says “perhaps 50 million deaths”.

Thus Elgin, sneered Lytton Strachey, 'in the name of European civilization, took vengeance upon the barbarism of the East.'"⁷⁸

"The Convention of Peking (1860) confirmed and extended concessions to foreigners, ceded Kowloon to Britain, accepted foreign diplomats at Peking, and opened ports to foreign trade. The British were determined to prevent the Chinese Empire from collapsing and either becoming 'another India' or being partitioned by rivals, particularly Russia and France. So they treated China as an informal protectorate, preventing other states from obtaining more than minor commercial footholds. The Royal Navy tried to suppress piracy, sometimes at Chinese request. British and French troops defended Shanghai against the indomitable Taipings... Shanghai was developed by British business and remained largely under British control until 1937. The British consular service in China was the largest in the world, and the key Chinese Maritime Customs Service, a major source of state income, was run for forty-five years by the incorruptible Sir Robert Hart, who saw himself as a disinterested servant of China: 'I want to make China strong, and I want to make England her best friend.'"⁷⁹

The attitudes of Elgin and Hart show an interesting ambiguity. On the one hand, they were servants of the British crown, and therefore had to carry out the commandments of the British Gospel of Free Trade. And so British cotton exports to China multiplied – as did the export of opium. But they were also manifestly impressed by this ancient civilization and inwardly deplored the destruction that the British were clearly inflicting upon it. The question was: could the European imperialists be "friends" of China and strengthen its defences, while at the same time exploit it, imposing unequal treaties upon it at the point of a gun?

⁷⁸ Tombs *op. cit.*, pp. 570, 572-573,

⁷⁹ Tombs *op. cit.*, pp. 573-574. Hobsbawm writes: "Hart, who was Inspector General of Chinese Customs from 1863 until 1909, was the master of the Chinese economy and, though he came to be trusted by the Chinese governments and to identify himself with the country, in effect the arrangement implied the entire subordination of the imperial government to the interests of the westerners (*The Age of Capital*, p. 159).

5. AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

By the 1830s, the French revolution, in spite of its radicalism, had not attained its revolutionary aims. It required further revolutions – in 1830, in 1848 and even in 1871 – to remove from it the last remnants of Bonapartism and monarchism and reduce it to some kind of stable republicanism and democratism (not to mention atheism). America, by contrast, was more advanced than any other major European country from a liberal point of view. As Paul Johnson writes, “Independent America had never possessed an *ancien regime*, a privileged establishment based on prescriptive possession rather than natural justice. There was no irrational and inequitable existing order which the new breed of secular intellectual could scheme to replace by millenarian models based on reason and morality... There was no cleavage between the ruling and the educated classes. Then, too, as de Tocqueville noted, there was in the United States no institutionalized clerical class, and therefore no anti-clericalism, the source of so much intellectual torment in Europe. Religion in America was universal but under the control of the laity. It concerned itself with behaviour, not dogma. It was voluntary and multi-denominational, and thus expressed freedom rather than restricted it. Finally, America was a land of plenty and opportunity. There was none of the ocular evidence of flagrant injustice which, in Europe, incited clever, well-educated men to embrace radical ideas. No sins cried out to heaven for vengeance – yet. Most men were busy getting and spending, exploiting and consolidating, to question the fundamental assumptions of their society...”⁸⁰

There were both advantages and disadvantages to this stunning social homogeneity of the United States by comparison with Europe. On the one hand, from the point of view of the revolution, it meant that there was no need for the first, anti-monarchical and anti-clerical stage. For the Americans, having expelled King George, were all either middle-class bourgeois or workers with every opportunity of becoming bourgeois and comfortably middle class if they worked hard. Thus Engels argued that socialism was weak in America “just because America is so purely bourgeois, so entirely without a feudal past and therefore proud of its purely bourgeois organization.” Lenin thought that in the USA, “the model and ideal of our bourgeois civilization”, socialism had to deal with “the most firmly established democratic systems, which confront the proletariat with purely socialist tasks”. And Gramsci blamed “Americanism”, which he defined as “pure rationalism without any of the class values derived from feudalism”. H.G. Wells in *The Failure of America* (1906) attributed the absence of a powerful socialist party to the symmetrical absence of a conservative one: “All Americans are, from the English point of view, Liberals of one sort or another”.⁸¹

On the other hand, the comparative lack of social distinctions meant also a lack of subtlety, of richness of texture in social life. This may be why America’s greatest and most subtle novelist, Henry James, chose to spend his last days in class-ridden England rather than in his native America. He painted the contrast (with some exaggeration) in a biography of Hawthorne in 1878: “No sovereign, no court, no

⁸⁰ Johnson, *Intellectuals*, London: Harper Perennial, 1988, 2007, pp 138-139.

⁸¹ Johnson, *Modern Times*, New York: Harper Perennial, 1990, p. 213.

personal loyalty, no aristocracy, no church, no clergy, no army, no diplomatic service, no country gentlemen, no palaces, no castles, nor manors, nor old country houses, nor parsonages, not thatched cottages, nor ivied ruins; no cathedrals, nor abbeys, nor Norman churches, no great Universities, nor public schools – no Oxford, nor Eton, nor Harrow; no literature, no novels, no museums, no pictures, no political society, no sporting class – no Epsom nor Ascot.”⁸²

Of course, fallen human nature hates real egalitarianism, which would deny the passion of envy any material to feed on. So social distinctions are created where none existed before. And in America the few criteria that marked people off as “better” or “worse” than each other – race, above all the black/white divide, and wealth, above all wealth acquired by one’s own toil – became still more important. Of course, these criteria were also very prominent in Old Europe – where would the nineteenth-century novel, from Jane Austen onwards, be without distinctions of wealth? But for Europeans there was the important distinction between inherited wealth, which was not earned but proved innate “breeding”, and acquired wealth, which was looked down on precisely because it was not inherited. Americans compensated for their lack of inherited wealth, their “nouveau riche” status, by seeing their acquired wealth as evidence, not of “breeding”, but of moral virtue. This was completely in line with the old Puritan ethic, which never died out completely: if you worked hard and honestly, then God, rewarding your good moral character, would give you wealth. Here we see both the strength and the weakness of the American character: on the one hand, its sturdy moral individualism, which made it relatively impervious to socialist fairy-tales, and on the other, a love of money and luxury which, by the twentieth century, made it vulnerable to the assault of foreign socialists.

America’s government was more genuinely democratic than any other, with a by now stable party system; for the supposed European scourges of monarchism, class-war and feudalism had been more effectively removed from America – or rather, prevented from implanting themselves in her soil – than from any other country. So from one point of view, America was, as Hegel put it, “the land of the future, where, in the ages that lie before us, the burden of the world’s history shall reveal itself. It is a land of desire for all those who are weary of the historical lumber room of Europe.”⁸³

So America should be paradise on earth, according to liberal theory, truly a new world. However, the idea that America, whose genes, both physical and cultural, were largely European, could escape the inheritance of Europe’s original sin, her rejection of the Orthodox faith, was a fantasy; and no amount of dreaming about her “manifest destiny”, or speculation about the workings of the “World Spirit”, could eradicate the contradictions in her historical path. Nevertheless, disillusion with America lay far in the future; and in this period the dream looked real. That the republic, as Hugh Brogan writes, “was now a democracy, was patent to all. But it was a democracy of a particular kind. Every white male adult citizen

⁸² James, in Johnson, *Modern Times*, p. 226.

⁸³ Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, in M.J. Cohen and John Major, *History in Quotations*, London: Cassell, 2004, p. 576.

was, or could be, involved (the percentage of the electorate voting in 1840 was 80.2 – a proportion to be surpassed only in 1860 and 1870); a legal revolution could occur every four years. A permanent contest had sprung up spontaneously between the Ins and the Outs: whatever the good luck or the good management of the ruling party, there would always be an opposition ready to fight. The spoils system [whereby a new incoming government necessitated the removal and replacement of all existing officials] gave it something to hope for; the prospect of another election gave it something to hope for; and though a party might be defeated nationally, it would have great reserves of strength in the states, cities and counties which it still controlled – for no party victory has ever been absolutely complete – and, throughout the history of the American party system, local victory has always seemed, to some politicians, more important than a national one. The contest was by no means wholly cynical. Whigs and Democrats stood for significantly different economic programmes, and although both parties tried to appeal to all parts of the country equally, they did not sink all their beliefs in order to do so. The Democrats stuck by the doctrines they had inherited from Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson. The federal government, they believed, should be weak, the states strong. There should be no national bank, nor paper money, but instead a currency of gold and silver, and an independent Treasury where federal revenues, derived from the sales of public lands rather than the tariff (the Democrats were a party of free-traders), could be kept safe from aristocratic speculators and corrupters. The Whigs were equally loyal to the memory of Hamilton's reports on manufactures and banking, and to Henry Clay's American System, which contradicted the notions of the Democracy at every point. The Whigs wanted to build up American national strength by building up the economy; if that meant creating a class of rich men, so much the better. But they were not undemocratic, in the political sense: they enjoyed the game too much for that; nor were they illiberal or reactionary as to social policy. This was a great era of experimental reform, and of noisy egalitarianism. The Whigs, or some of them at any rate, espoused both. Seward, for example, began his career as a leader of the so-called Anti-Masonic Party in New York state, which in the early thirties suspected the Freemasons of dreadful conspiracies against democracy; and as governor of New York he showed himself a human supporter of prison reform."⁸⁴

The failure of the Anti-Masonic Party was perhaps the greatest failure of the American Republic, and doomed it to eventual disaster. For God's blessing could not be on the state whose main religion after Protestantism was anti-Christian Masonry (there were more Masonic lodges in America than in any other country), whose blasphemies and plotting against lawful authority was to destroy the Russian Empire in 1917. But leaving aside this most fundamental defect, American democracy had others, which even some democrats detected.

Some found American democracy much too egalitarian. Thus the New Yorker Thomas Whitney declared: "I take direct issue with democracy. If democracy implies universal suffrage, or the right of all men to take part in the control of the State without regard to the intelligence, the morals, or the principles of the

⁸⁴ Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA*, London: Penguin, 2019, p. 278.

man, I am no democrat... As soon would I place my person and property at the mercy of an infuriated mob... as place the liberties of my country in the hands of an ignorant, superstitious, and vacillating populace."⁸⁵ Lord Macaulay wrote in a similar vein to the American Henry Stephens Randall: "I have not the smallest doubt that if we had a purely democratic government here... either the poor would plunder the rich, and civilization would perish, or order and prosperity would be saved by a strong military government, and liberty would perish."⁸⁶

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The French aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville, who came to America in 1831, wrote in his *Democracy in America* (1835) that the Russians and the Anglo-Americans seemed each "to be summoned by a secret plan of Providence one day to hold in its hands the destinies of half the world".⁸⁷ He was remarkably prescient about that...

So, on the assumption that he shared the prejudice of almost all educated westerners that Russia was an evil despotism, how did he rate the world's only democratic superpower-to-be?

The short answer is: not as highly as one might expect...

"Following his famous visit to America," writes Stephen Holt, "he suggested that democracy, if unchecked by religion and other forms of association, could well be characterized by self-destructive individualism, oppressive egalitarianism and an anxious desire to acquire, or be provided with, material well being."⁸⁸

An important defect of American democracy, Tocqueville thought, was what he called "the tyranny of the majority": "In the United States, as in every country where the people rules, it is the majority which governs in the name of the people... If ever liberty dies in America, we shall have to blame it on the omnipotence of the majority which will have reduced the minorities to despair and compelled them to make an appeal to physical force. We shall then see anarchy, but it will come as the consequence of despotism."⁸⁹

"The moral authority of the majority is partly based on the notion that there is more enlightenment and wisdom in a numerous assembly than in a single man, and the number of the legislators is more important than how they are chosen. It is the theory of equality applied to brains. This doctrine attacks the last asylum of human pride; for that reason the minority is reluctant in admitting it and takes a long time to get used to it...

⁸⁵ Whitney, in David Reynolds, *America, Empire of Liberty*, London: Penguin, 2010, pp. 171-172.

⁸⁶ Macaulay, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 611.

⁸⁷ Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Bk. 1, pt. 2, ch. 10.

⁸⁸ Holt, review of Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* in *History Today*, May 2001, p. 58.

⁸⁹ Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Bk. 1, pt. 2, chs. 1,7.

"The idea that the majority has a right based on enlightenment to govern society was brought to the United States by its first inhabitants; and this idea, which would of itself be enough to create a free nation, has by now passed into mores and affects even the smallest habits of life..."⁹⁰

The worst aspect of this freedom was its extreme intolerance of any minority opinion. "I know of no country in which there is so little independence of mind and real freedom of discussion as in America. The majority raises formidable barriers around the liberty of opinion; within these barriers an author may write what he pleases, but woe to him if he goes beyond them."⁹¹

This contributed to a cultural "dumbing down", although it also prevented complete brutalization. "Few pleasures are either very refined or very coarse, and highly polished manners are as uncommon as great brutality of tastes. Neither men of great learning nor extremely ignorant communities are to be met with; genius becomes more rare, information more diffused. There is less perfection, but more abundance in all the productions of the arts."⁹²

This state of affairs was facilitated by the fact that there was no native American aristocracy, and few minority interests (except those of the Indians and Blacks) which were directly and permanently antagonistic to the interests of the majority. The Indians and the Blacks, however, continued to be persecuted. Thus from the 1930s the vast herds of bison, the Indians' main source of food, were systematically slaughtered. This slaughter reached a peak in the 1860s, when the railways started to be built across the prairies...

"Hence the majority in the United States has immense actual power and a power of opinion which is almost as great. When once its mind is made up on any question, there are, so to say, no obstacles which can retard, much less halt, its progress and give it time to hear the wails of those it crushes as it passes.

"The consequences of this state of affairs are fate-laden and dangerous for the future..."⁹³

One consequence was legislative instability, "an ill inherent in democratic government because it is the nature of democracies to bring new men to power.... Thus American laws have a shorter duration than those of any other country in the world today. Almost all American constitutions have been amended within the last thirty years, and so there is no American state that has not modified the basis of its laws within that period...

For "as the majority is the only power whom it is important to please, all its projects are taken up with great ardour; but as soon as its attention is turned elsewhere, all these efforts cease; whereas in free European states, where the

⁹⁰ Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, New York: Fontana, 1968, vol. I, pp. 305-306.

⁹¹ Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*.

⁹² Tocqueville, *On the Effects of Future Democratization*, 1840.

⁹³ Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, pp. 306-307.

administrative authority has an independent existence and an assured position, the legislator's wishes continue to be executed even when he is occupied by other matters."⁹⁴

But, continues de Tocqueville, "I regard it as an impious and detestable maxim that in matters of government the majority of a people has the right to do everything, and nevertheless I place the origin of all powers in the will of the majority. Am I in contradiction with myself?

"There is one law which has been made, or at least adopted, not by the majority of this or that people, but by the majority of all men. That law is justice.

"Justice therefore forms the boundary to each people's right.

"A nation is like a jury entrusted to represent universal society and to apply the justice which is its law. Should the jury representing society have greater power than that very society whose laws it applies?

"Consequently, when I refuse to obey an unjust law, I by no means deny the majority's right to give orders; I only appeal from the sovereignty of the people to the sovereignty of the human race."⁹⁵

In a believing age, instead of "the sovereignty of the human race", the phrase would have been: "the sovereignty of God" or "the authority of the Church as the representative of God". But after this obeisance to the atheist and democratic temper of his age, Tocqueville does in fact invoke the sovereignty of God. For the essential fact is that the majority – even the majority of the human race – can be wrong, and that only God is infallible. "Omnipotence in itself seems a bad and dangerous thing. I think that its exercise is beyond man's strength, whoever he be, and that only God can be omnipotent without danger because His wisdom and justice are always equal to His power. So there is no power on earth in itself so worthy of respect or vested with such a sacred right that I would wish to let it act without control and dominate without obstacles. So when I see the right and capacity to do all given to any authority whatsoever, whether it be called people or king, democracy or aristocracy, and whether the scene of action is a monarchy or a republic, I say: the germ of tyranny is there, and I will go look for other laws under which to live.

"My greatest complaint against democratic government as organised in the United States is not, as many Europeans make out, its weakness, but rather its irresistible strength. What I find most repulsive in America is not the extreme freedom reigning there, but the shortage of guarantees against tyranny.

"When a man or a party suffers an injustice in the United States, to whom can he turn? To public opinion? That is what forms the majority. To the legislative body? It represents the majority and obeys it blindly. To the executive power? It

⁹⁴ Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, pp. 307-308.

⁹⁵ Tocqueville, *op. cit.*, pp. 309-310.

is appointed by the majority and serves as its passive instrument. To the police? They are nothing but the majority under arms. A jury? The jury is the majority vested with the right to pronounce judgement; even the judges in certain states are elected by the majority. So, however, iniquitous or unreasonable the measure which hurts you, you must submit.”⁹⁶

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Towards the end of his great work, de Tocqueville describes in a remarkably prescient manner how he sees democracy as exemplified in America, the world’s first true democracy, changing into a sinister despotism: “I ask myself in what form will despotism reappear in the world. I see an immense agglomeration of people, all equal and alike, each of them restlessly active in getting for himself petty and vulgar pleasures which fill his whole being. Each of them, left to himself, is stranger to the fate of all the others. A vast, protecting power overshadows them. This power alone is responsible for securing their satisfaction and for watching over their fates. The power is absolute, concerned with every detail, smooth in operation, takes account of the future, and is not harsh... The power wants all citizens to be happy, provided that happiness is their sole aim. It works willingly for their well-being, but insists upon being the source of this well-being and the sole judge of what it should consist. It gives them security, foresees and supplies their needs, conducts the principal business of their lives, manages their industries, divides their properties and regulates their inheritances and, in short, saves them from the trouble of thinking and the difficulties of living.

“This tutelary power is continuously at work to render less useful and more infrequent the use of free-will; the sphere of liberty of decision is thus restricted more and more until every citizen loses, as it were, the control of himself. Equality has conditioned men for all these transformations and prepared to accept such things and even to welcome them as beneficial.

“After having brought the individual, stage by stage, into its mighty bonds and moulded him to its wishes, the sovereign extends its tentacles over the community as a whole, and covers the surface of society with a network of little rules, complicated, detailed and uniform, but from beneath which the more original minds and the more vigorous personalities can find no way of extricating themselves and rising above the crowd. The sovereign does not break the wills of the subjects; it enervates them, bends them to its purpose, directs them, rarely forcing them to act, but continually preventing them from action; it does not destroy, but merely prevents things from coming to life; it never tyrannizes, but it hampers, dumps down, constricts, suffocates, and at the last reduces every nation to the level of timid and industrious animals of whom the Government is the shepherd...

⁹⁶ Tocqueville, *op. cit.*, pp. 311- 313. “I am guided by Alexis de Tocqueville,” writes Charles C. Camosy, “in my assessment of the course of liberal democracy, who observed that as democracy becomes ‘more itself,’ it becomes ‘less itself.’ Thus, the end station of democracy, according to Tocqueville, was despotism” (“Why Individualist Liberalism Wins, and the Catholic Side Loses”, *Crux*, December 19, 2017).

"This kind of regulated servitude, well regulated, placid and gentle, could be combined – more easily than one would think possible – with the forms of liberty and could even establish itself under the shadow of the sovereignty of the people..."⁹⁷

In the light of our modern experience of democracy, it will be useful to examine the estimate of Tocqueville given by his fellow Frenchman and fierce anti-communist, Jean-François Revel: "Tocqueville the visionary depicted with stunning precision the coming ascension of the omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient state that twentieth-century man knows so well; the state as protector, entrepreneur, educator; the physician-state, helpful and predatory, tyrant and guardian, economist, journalist, moralist, shipper, trader, advertiser, banker, father and jailer all at once. The state ransoms and the state subsidizes. It settles without violence into a wheedling, meticulous despotism that no monarchy, no tyranny, no political authority of the past had the means to achieve. Its power borders on the absolute partly because it is scarcely felt, having increased by imperceptible stages at the wish of its subjects, who turn to it instead of to each other. In these pages by Tocqueville we find the germ both of George Orwell's 1984 and David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd*."

"In one sense, history has endorsed Tocqueville's reasoning and, in another, has invalidated it. He has been proved right insofar as the power of public opinion has indeed increased in the democracies through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But public opinion has not grown more consistent or uniform; it has in fact become increasingly volatile and diversified. And the state, instead of gaining strength in proportion to its gigantism, is increasingly disobeyed and challenged by the very citizens who expect so much from it. Submerged by the demands on it, called on to solve all problems, it is being steadily stripped of the right to regulate things."

"So the omnipotence based on consensus that Tocqueville forecast is only one side of the coin of modern government. The other is an equally general impotence to deal with the conflicting daily claims made on it by constituents eager for aid but less and less willing to assume obligations. By invading every area of life, the democratic state has stuffed itself with more responsibilities than powers. The very contradictions among special interests that are as legitimate as they are incompatible, all expecting to be treated with equal goodwill, show that the state's duties are expanding faster than its means of performing them. There is no denying how burdensome a tutelary government is on society – provided we add that its expansion makes it vulnerable, often paralysing it in its relations with client groups that are quicker to harry it than obey it."

"This sort of behavior splinters democratic societies into separate groups, each battling for advantage and caring little for the interests of others or society as a whole. Public opinion, instead of being united by uniform thinking, is fragmented into a variety of cultures that can be so different in tastes, ways of living, attitudes and language that they understand each other only dimly, if at all. They coexist

⁹⁷ De Tocqueville, *op. cit.*

but do not mingle. Public opinion in today's democracies forms an archipelago, not a continent. Each island in the chain ranks its own distinctiveness above membership in a national group and even higher above its association with a group of democratic nations.

"In one sense, we do live in a mass era as residents of a 'planetary village' where manners and fashions blend. But, paradoxically, we also live in an age of the triumph of minorities, of a juxtaposition of widely differing attitudes. While it is obvious that the passion for equality, identified by Tocqueville as the drive wheel of democracy, generates uniformity, let's not forget that democracy also rests on a passion for liberty, which fosters diversity, fragmentation, unorthodoxy. Plato, democracy's shrewdest enemy, saw this when he compared it to a motley cloak splashed with many colours. In a democracy, he said, everyone claims the right to live as he chooses [*Republic* 8], so that ways of living multiply and jostle each other. To Aristotle, too, liberty was the basic principle of democracy. He broke this down into two tenets: 'for all to rule and be ruled in turn' and 'a man should live as he likes'. In American democracy, the right to do one's own thing is as much or more cherished than equality"⁹⁸ - more cherished even than the Christianity that they so prided themselves on, which exhorted men to be "free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice" (*I Peter* 2.16)...

And yet a certain degree of equality, especially equality of opportunity, remains part of the American dream. Hence the blow dealt to that dream by the recent vast increase in inequality in American society, when, as John Plender writes, "finance has become a mechanism for recycling resources from the rest of the economy into the pockets of a global super-rich elite. It was against this background that President Obama declared late in 2013 that the basic bargain at the heart of the American economy had frayed, as increasing inequality combined with declining upward mobility posed a fundamental threat to the American dream, to Americans' way of life and to what the US stood for around the globe."⁹⁹

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This brings us to the question of American religion and the secular religion of Americanness. "In America," wrote Sir Roger Scruton in 2002, "religion has been a vital force in building the nation. The initial unity of faith among the Pilgrim Fathers rapidly disintegrated, however, and while religious worship remains an important feature of the American experience, freedom of conscience has been guaranteed from the beginning by the Bill of Rights. This does not mean that America is a secular nation, or that religion has no part to play in establishing the legitimacy of American institutions. It means, rather, that all the many religions of America are bound to acknowledge the authority of the territorial law, and that each renounces the right to intrude on the claims of the state. Furthermore, these religions come under pressure to divert their emotional currents into the common flow of patriotic sentiment: the God of the American sects speaks with an American accent.

⁹⁸ Revel, *How Democracies Perish*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1985, pp. 13-15.

⁹⁹ Plender, *Capitalism. Money, Morals and Markets*, London: Bloomsbury, 2016, p. 292.

“The patriotism that upholds the nation-state may embellish itself with far-reaching and even metaphysical ideas like the theories of race and culture that derive from Herder, Fichte and the German romantics. But it might just as easily rest content with a kind of mute sense of belonging – an inarticulate experience of neighbourliness – founded in the recognition that this place where we live is ours. This is the patriotism of the village, of the rural community, and also of the city street, and it has been a vital force in the building of modern America. Indeed, in the last analysis, national identity, like territorial jurisdiction, is an outgrowth of the experience of a common home.

“Of course, if people turn their backs on one another, live behind closed doors in suburban isolation, then this sense of neighbourliness dwindles. But it can also be restored through the ‘little platoons’ described by Burke and recognized by Tocqueville as the true lifeblood of America. By joining clubs and societies, by forming teams, troupes, and competitions, by acquiring sociable hobbies and outgoing modes of entertainment, people come to feel that they and their neighbours belong together, and this ‘belonging’ has more importance, in times of emergency, than any private difference in matters of religion or family life. Indeed, freedom of association has an inherent tendency to generate territorial loyalties and so to displace religion from the public to the private realm...”¹⁰⁰

This may have been true in the nineteenth century, or even in some parts as late as the 1950s, but it feels less so today, in the twenty-first century, when social cohesiveness has declined drastically, political divides have become much deeper and fiercer, and religion has been not only banished to the private realm, but been invaded and trampled on. True cohesiveness does not exist without the true faith, which the Americans never did possess (although they gave refuge to many immigrants having the true faith). Hence the sage words of President John Adams: “We have no government capable of contending with human passions, unbridled by morality and religion... Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people.”

Indeed, we can generalize this conclusion: no constitution in any country can survive the invasion of unbelief and immorality on a large scale. Constitutional “safeguards” are powerless to do anything but delay the eventual collapse of the impious state, abandoned by God, into anarchy or despotism. Therefore the best “constitution” is that which is united to the true religion and represents its natural political expression....

¹⁰⁰ Scruton, *The Rest and the West*, London: Continuum, 2002, pp. 47-49.

6. THE GEOPOLITICS OF SLAVERY

The movement for the abolition of slavery began in Britain in the second half of the eighteenth century. Several distinguished people contributed to the success of what became the first large-scale human rights campaign in history: the black former slave Ignatius Sancho, who became the first-ever published black composer, delighting all classes of London society with his minuets; the Anglo-Irish novelist Laurence Sterne, who, responding to an appeal by Sancho, included a sympathetic portrait of a black slave in his *Tristram Shandy*; the leading judge in the land, Lord Mansfield; and, above all, the parliamentarian William Wilberforce. In 1807 slavery was banned in Britain. But the struggle for the abolition of slavery worldwide had a long way to go. Its chief champion throughout the world was the British government...

"When in 1814," writes Robert Tombs, "Castlereagh successfully pressed the French to agree to abolish their slave trade in five years' time, this delay was denounced as the 'death warrant of a multitude of innocent victims' and a huge national campaign was organized, claiming 750,000 supporters. Wellington tried to renegotiate the treaty, and the government put pressure on its allies Spain and Portugal, the main slave-buying nations, to stop the trade. Castlereagh wrote: 'You must really press the Spanish... there is hardly a village that has not met and petitioned.' London even asked the Pope for support. Castlereagh persuaded the reluctant Great Powers to attach to the Treaty of Vienna (1815) a condemnation of the slave trade – the first such 'human rights' declaration in a major international treaty. This began a long effort to end slaving, against the resistance of the slave-trading and slave-holding nations and their African suppliers.

"Campaigning peaked in 1833 with more than 5,000 petitions containing nearly 1.5 million signatures. One, more than a mile long, was signed and sewn together by women, who played an unprecedented part in the campaign, among them Elizabeth Heyrick, author of *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition* (1824). Parliament responded in 1834 by emancipating 800,000 slaves in the empire, paying a huge £20m in compensation to the owners – equal to a third of the state budget – and requiring a four-year 'apprenticeship' by slaves. This was thus a compromise measure, but still its anniversary was publicly celebrated by American abolitionists as a great achievement. In 1843 British subjects were forbidden to own slaves anywhere else in the world. The abolition of slavery in the empire in practice applied to slave ownership by whites."¹⁰¹

As we have seen, the British saw themselves as the champions of liberty everywhere. "British foreign policy," writes Simms, "manifested an emancipatory and at times almost messianic streak. This reflected a strong sense that European peace and Britain's own security depended, as the Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, put it, on the 'maint[enance] of the liberties and independence of all other nations'. On his reading, the survival of freedom in Britain required its defence throughout Europe: constitutional states were thus her 'natural allies'. There was also a broader feeling that Britain should, as Palmerston argued in

¹⁰¹ Tombs, *The English and their History*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014, pp. 549-550.

August 1832, 'interfer[e] by friendly counsel and advice', in order to 'maintain the liberties and independence of all other nations' and thus to 'throw her moral weight into the scale of any people who are spontaneously striving for... rational gov[ernmen]t, and to extend as far and as fast as possible civilization all over the world'. In other words, Britain would not 'interfere' in the internal affairs of other countries, or impose her values on unwilling populations, but she pledged her support to those who were willing to take the initiative – who were 'spontaneously striving' – to claim their liberal birthright.

"Globally, the main battlefield was the international slave trade, and, increasingly, the institution of slavery itself. In 1833, slavery was finally abolished throughout the British Empire, which led a year later to the establishment of a French abolitionist society. A cross-Channel Franco-British agitation against the slave trade now began, and a joint governmental programme for its eradication became a real possibility. This cleared the way for a more robust policy against the international slave trade, which the Royal Navy had been battling with varying success since 1807. The newly independent Central and South American states had just abolished slavery, while Britain forced Madrid to give up the legal importation of slaves in 1820, and was increasing the pressure on Spain to abolish slavery altogether in her only remaining large colony of Cuba. In 1835, London and Madrid concluded a treaty to limit the slave trade... The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society was founded in 1838, and two years later the World Anti-Slavery Convention took place in London. Tensions with Portugal, whose ships still carried the lucrative human cargo to Brazil, rose..."¹⁰²

"Even when other states agreed to outlaw slave trafficking," continues Tombs, "- sometimes (as with Spain and Portugal) with compensation paid by Britain – they commonly winked at evasion. So the Royal Navy placed a permanent squadron from 1808 to 1870, at times equal to a sixth of its ships, to try to intercept slavers off West Africa. It was based at Freetown, the capital of the colony for freed slaves at Sierra Leone, which had the first African Anglican bishop, Samuel Crowther, rescued as a boy from a slave ship by the Royal Navy. Patrolling was a thankless and grueling effort, exposing crews to yellow fever, hardship and even personal legal liability for damages; it also cost a large amount of taxpayers' money. France and the United States refused to allow the Royal Navy to search ships flying their flags. There was continual diplomatic friction with slave-trading states. British officials were often threatened with violence. During the 1830s and 1840s several American ships forced by bad weather into British colonial territory had the slaves they were carrying released. In 1839 in the famous case of the slave ship *Amistad*, when captives rebelled and killed the captain, British testimony proving illegal action by American officials helped to secure their freedom. A serious dispute with the United States occurred in 1841 when American slaves on the ship *Creole*, being taken from Virginia to be sold in New Orleans, seized the ship and killed a slave-trader. They were given asylum in the British-ruled Bahamas, where they were acquitted of any crime and declared free.

¹⁰² Simms, *op. cit.*, pp. 198-200.

“Britain signed forty-five treaties with African rulers to stop the traffic at source. They were very reluctant to give it up, even threatening to kill all their slaves if they were prevented from selling them. In several cases, Britain paid them to abandon the traffic. Abolitionists urged that Britain should maintain a territorial preserve in West Africa, to combat illegal trafficking and promote legitimate commerce, such as palm oil, to wean African rulers and Liverpool merchants from slaving and towards soap manufacture – a good example of cleanliness being next to godliness. By 1830 palm oil exports were worth more than the slave trade. But the trade continued, and the Royal Navy adopted more aggressive tactics, including blocking rivers and destroying slave pens on shore, even when these were foreign property. In 1861 it occupied Lagos, deposing the ruler who refused to stop the trade, and thus blocked one of the main slave routes. Over sixty years the navy captured hundreds of slave ships off the African coast and freed some 160,000 captives. As one recalled it: ‘They took off all the fetters from our feet and threw them into the water, and they gave us clothes that we might cover our nakedness, they opened the water casks, that we might drink water to the full, and we also ate food, till we had enough.’ Several hundred thousand more were prevented from being shipped from Africa by naval and diplomatic pressure.

“Palmerston, as Foreign Secretary, was prepared to put pressure on slave-owners too. In 1839 he simply ordered the seizure of Portuguese slave ships, and in 1845 his successor, Lord Aberdeen, declared Brazilian slave ships to be pirates, and 400 were seized in five years. In 1850 the Royal Navy even forcibly entered Brazilian ports to seize or destroy hundreds of slave ships – decisive in forcing Brazil, the biggest slave-buyer of all, to end the largest forced emigrations in history. Palmerston said this had given him his ‘greatest and purest pleasure’. Cuba, supplied by fast United States ships, came under similar pressure. But American ships were treated more cautiously, as searches of suspected slave ships carrying the Stars and Stripes caused threats of war from Washington. As Palmerston expostulated, ‘every slave trading Pirate’ could escape by simply hoisting ‘a piece of Bunting with the United States emblems’. The American Civil War caused a reversal in American policy in 1862, when Abraham Lincoln’s government signed a secret treaty allowing the Royal Navy to intercept American slavers. The Spanish and Cuban authorities bowed to circumstances, and the Atlantic slave trade was effectively ended. Slavery itself remained legal in the United States until the 1860s, and in much of Latin America until the 1880s. As late as 1881 the Royal Navy arrested an American slave ship off the Gold Coast.

“The British campaign against the slave trade has often been debunked. French and American slave-traders accused Britain of using it as a pretext to try to gain control of West Africa, Cuba, even Texas. Some later historians claimed that slavery ended only because it was no longer profitable. But recent research is practically unanimous that slavery was booming, and it would have been in Britain’s economic interests to expand it, as the United States did. But Britain was rich enough to let its powerful humanitarian and religious lobby get its way.

“Did Britain – another accusation at the time and since – use the slave trade as a pretext for colonial expansion in Africa? In fact, successive governments were

reluctant to rule inhospitable and relatively profitless territory, and movement inland was negligible until the late-nineteenth-century 'scramble for Africa'. The exception, which involved campaigns against the aggressive slaving kingdom of Asante (Ashanti) – a magnificent and exceptionally cruel warrior society – was done at the request of Africans on the coast, who were subject to repeated attack from the 1820s onwards and requested British protection. Central Africa meanwhile was being devastated by Muslim slavers supplying the Middle East. The Foreign Office estimated that they were taking 25,000 – 30,000 people per year during the 1860s, and the nineteenth century total has been estimated at between 4 million and 6 million people, huge numbers dying as they were dragged across the Sahara or to the coast, and many others being killed in the violence of capture. British anti-slavery groups – inspired by the adventures and writings in the 1850s and 1860s of one of the most revered Victorian heroes, David Livingstone – demanded government intervention in what Livingstone had rightly called the open sore of the world. He hoped optimistically that a 'Christian colony' of 'twenty or thirty good Christian Scotch families' would lead to moral and commercial improvement and would put an end to slavery. Instead, a long diplomatic effort was required to throttle the trade, by persuading African rulers to stop supplying and Muslim states to close the great slave-markets of Egypt, Persia, Turkey and the Gulf. Britain had far less power to act directly in the Muslim world, where slavery had ancient social and religious sanction, so action had to be discreet. The consul-general at Cairo in the 1860s, Thomas F. Reade, spied out the Egyptian slave markets disguised as an Arab. He estimated that 15,000 Africans were sold at Cairo annually, and reported on 'the cruelties and abominations' involved. Other diplomats were active in helping escaped slaves, including by purchasing their freedom with official funds, and the consul in Benghazi maintained a safe house for escapees at his own expense. British interference in the slave trade – however cautious Whitehall tried to be – could cause serious tensions and even led to mass uprisings in Egypt and the Sudan. However, careful but persistent pressure on the Egyptian, Turkish and Persian governments to forbid the trade, backed up by naval patrols, treaties and even bribes to officials to apply law eventually had considerable effect. Pressure and financial inducements to the sultan of Zanzibar (a vast slaving entrepôt) shut its slave market in 1873..."¹⁰³

A special case was South Africa, where the Boers were particularly oppressive slave-owners, being "outraged that black people were 'placed on an equal footing with Christians, contrary to the laws of God'."¹⁰⁴ The problem began after a war with the Xhosa to the east of Cape Colony, when the British, as Evans writes, "withdrew and left the Xhosa with their land. This did not go down well, especially with the Dutch-descended Boer farmers, who bitterly resented the abolition of slavery by the British government in 1834 and were outraged by the minimal scale of the compensation paid to them. Some 5,000 Boer farmers expressed their lack of confidence in the British Empire by migrating northwards between 1835 and 1837 in the 'Great Trek.'"¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 550-553.

¹⁰⁴ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 550.

¹⁰⁵ Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 660.

"The main focus of the new geopolitics, however," writes Simms, "was Europe. With liberal – but not radical – governments in Paris after 1830, and in London from 1832, France and Britain were now ideologically aligned. In 1834, both powers responded to Münchengrätz by coming together with liberal-constitutionalist Spain and Portugal to form the Quadruple Alliance. 'The Triple League of despotic governments,' Palmerston exulted, 'will now be counter-balanced by a Quadruple Alliance in the west.' The continent was now split into two ideologically divided camps. Once hopeful of Alexander's intentions, liberal opinion saw the Tsarist Empire of Nicholas I as the bulwark of reaction across Europe. The British writer Robert Bremner noted at the end of the decade that the European press was teeming with books painting Russia as the 'most boundless, irresistible... most formidable, and best consolidated [power] that ever threatened the liberties and rights of man'."¹⁰⁶

And yet the institution of serfdom, for which Russia was particularly reproached (together with her autocracy), was by no means unique to her. In any case, serfs were not slaves, since they had rights as well as obligations; but they were tied to the land and the landowners in an essentially feudal relationship, being the basis of the agrarian economy of the whole of Central and Eastern Europe. After 1815, they were gradually emancipated throughout the region, with the greatest single act of emancipation in history taking place in Russia in 1861.

"The scale of these measures," as Evans writes, "was vast. In East-Elbian Prussia, 480,000 peasants became free proprietors in the wake of the emancipation edicts of the early nineteenth century. Even in a small country such as Romania, more than 400,000 peasants received ownership of their land, and another 51,000 households were given land enough for a house and garden. Nearly 700,000 peasants in Poland [which was, of course, in the Russian Empire] became landowners. In the German and Slav provinces of the Habsburg Empire, the emancipation involved more than two and a half million peasant households indemnifying nearly 35,000 landowners for the loss of 39 million days of labour services without animals and 30,000 days with them, plus over 10 million bushels of dues in kind. In Russia the emancipation was even more gargantuan in its effects, with some 10 million peasants on private estates receiving title to nearly 100 million acres of land, quite apart from the similar measures already enacted for the even larger number of serfs on state demesnes. Nevertheless, everywhere the measures were put into effect relatively quickly, with a minimum of fuss. In principle this was the greatest single act of emancipation and reform in Europe during the whole of the nineteenth century. A huge class of people who had hitherto been bound to the land in a form of neo-feudal servitude had been emancipated from its chains and given equal rights as full citizens. Legally prescribed social distinctions now came to an effective end. Encrusted status and privilege had been swept away and every adult male was now in almost every respect equal before the law and free to dispose over his person and his property.

¹⁰⁶ Simms, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

The last significant legal vestiges of the society of social orders assailed by the French Revolution of 1789 left the stage of history..."¹⁰⁷

This was true; and yet "the society of social orders" retained its basic structure in Europe until 1914...

¹⁰⁷ Evans, op. cit., p. 98.

7. FREE TRADE AND THE ANTI-CORN LAW LEAGUE

Industrialization brought about a change in the formerly paternal attitude taken by governments and landlords to agriculture and agricultural workers. By far the biggest employer in England, as in all countries, writes Tombs, “was agriculture, taking about a third of the male labour force. The booming wartime population and restricted imports had caused an extension of cultivation to common land and ‘waste’. Despite occasional serious shortages, the country had been fed. Landlords and tenant farmers had made profits; but the poor had lost customary common rights as land was ‘enclosed’, making them wholly dependent on wages, and creating a sense of injustice. Wartime conditions were clearly unsustainable, but again the solution was neither easy nor uncontentious. Should agriculture be encouraged to maximize production and try to feed the booming population? Or should cheaper overseas food supplies be sought, and some English land taken out of cultivation? In 1813 a notorious ‘Corn Law’ was adopted, which gave some protection to domestic producers by excluding imports of grain until the price reached a certain level – for wheat, eighty shillings a quarter (sixty-four gallons).

“Many, at home and abroad, thought that an overpopulated England was heading for famine. The most notorious and influential alarmist was an Anglican parson with radical connections, Thomas Malthus. His *Essay on Population* (1798) mixed heterodox Christianity with what would now be called finite ecology, arguing that population growth inevitably tended to outrun food supply, and would inevitably be ‘checked’ either by restraining births or by famine, hunger and war. In his own time and since he has been the subject of controversy and denunciation – he himself apologized for his ‘disheartening’ conclusions. Defended by political economists and attacked by a string of moralists, including Dickens, Carlyle, Coleridge, Byron, Cobbett and Disraeli, he had an immediate influence, for his argument seemed incontrovertibly logical, and it became, wrote one Utilitarian, ‘the fixed, axiomatic belief of the educated world’. Malthus’s theories caused moral and intellectual turmoil, and the perception of the poor as a danger. Attempts to relieve poverty would encourage population increase, and so merely make the danger worse. His ideas retained a hold until the 1850s. As late as 1852, the leading French radical Auguste Ledru-Rollin published a book prophesying gloatingly that England was doomed to mass starvation. The main target of such fears during the 1820s-1830s was the Poor Law, believed to encourage a feckless dependency culture and the breeding of too many children.

“One way of escaping future hunger was to import food. This required secure control of the seas by maintaining naval supremacy built up over the previous century (potential enemies looked forward to the day when England might be starved by a coalition of naval powers). It also meant exporting ever more goods and services to pay for imported food. These exports required increasing employment in manufacturing and commerce, and endlessly growing cities – an uncharted prospect. Was this just another road to disaster? Many thought so: only agriculture was ‘real’, the rest was a house of cards. ‘Perish commerce!’ declaimed the Radical William Cobbett. Many feared a future of ugly, polluted towns, crowded with degraded and lawless labourers. Could this be prevented, or must

it be adapted to? Was more government intervention required, or should things be left to work themselves out under the rules of political economy and Divine Providence?

“These questions reflected deep ideological and moral divisions. The philosopher and politician John Stuart Mill characterized it as ‘every Englishman of the present day [being] either a Benthamite or a Coleridgian’. This convenient labeling was derived from Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), whose Utilitarianism gave a fresh ideological thrust to Radicalism, and the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), an enthusiastic revolutionary turned mystical conservative. The division covered politics, economics, science, social relations and not least theology – we must always remember that most of the political class, and most of the country, had religious beliefs now rare outside the deepest recesses of the American Bible Belt. Other voices called for a plague on both Benthamites and Coleridgians, including Dickens and Thomas Carlyle, denouncing all and sundry like a modern Jeremiah.

“Benthamite Utilitarianism saw the universe as a self-regulating machine, with discoverable ‘axioms’, such as the ‘Principle of Utility’: ‘The greatest happiness of the greatest number... is the measure of right and wrong.’ Society should be reformed to work according to these axioms. This appealed both to political economists, who saw the rules as scientific, and to Evangelicals, who saw them as God’s will. Individual choice was central – there was no such thing as society.¹⁰⁸ Coleridge once said to Martineau, ‘You seem to regard society as an aggregate of individuals.’ She replied: ‘Of course I do.’ Government, professionally managed, must regulate individuals through a system of rewards and punishments, like intelligent laboratory rats. The virtuous man, taught Bentham, is an exact calculator. Utilitarianism was authoritarian, epitomized by the ‘Panopticon’, a prison (it could also be a school, hospital or factory) built so that inmates could be constantly observed by an all-seeing ‘inspection’. Millbank (1816) and Pentonville (1842) prisons in London adopted some of these features. Bentham, who considered the idea of natural rights ‘nonsense on stilts’, had thought of having a million poor and potentially antisocial people confined in factory-prisons. Not all his schemes were adopted, of course, but his fundamental maxims, his scorn for traditional thinking, and his bureaucratic utopianism were widely influential among modernizers. His embalmed body still sits inspecting University College London.

“The Coleridgian view – paternalist, interventionist, anti-liberal – saw the universe and human society not as machines but as complex organisms developing over time, under a Divine artist, not a celestial engineer. Society needed leadership and high-minded government to function. Coleridge advocated moral leadership by a ‘clerisy’, a public-spirited cultural and intellectual elite. Such views of society appealed to those who saw the traditional landowning class as having that duty – as Edmund Burke had put it, like great oaks shading a meadow. However idealized this view, there was a wide acceptance of gentry leadership, and recognition of obligations to the ‘deserving’

¹⁰⁸ Margaret Thatcher used the same phrase in the 1980s. (V.M.)

poor, through charity and the Poor Law. Coleridge and Wordsworth, their youthful hopes of the French Revolution dashed, found consolation in the English countryside, and social relations based on what Wordsworth called 'personal feeling' and 'moral cement'. Arguably, such a society could not survive population growth, urbanization and commercial expansion. Such was Wordsworth's fear: 'Everything has been put up to market and sold for the highest price', he wrote to a friend in 1818. The only hope was for society's moral basis to be restored, but for that 'they who govern the country must be something superior to mere financiers and political economists'..."¹⁰⁹

One of the main "axioms" of the Benthamite Radicals was free trade, the main principle of economic liberalism; it was a very important concept, first in England, and then in other countries that followed the English way.

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

"These were the sources of the long-enduring association between industrialism and liberalism; they were deplored by conservatives who regretted a hierarchical, agricultural order of mutual obligations and duties, settled ideas, and religious values. Yet liberals who welcomed the new age were by no means taking their stand on a simply negative and selfish base. The creed of 'Manchester', as it was called because of the symbolic importance of that city in English industrial and commercial development, was for its leaders much more than a matter of mere self-enrichment. A great political battle which for years preoccupied Englishmen in the early nineteenth century made this clear. Its focus was a campaign for the repeal of what were called the 'Corn Laws', a tariff system originally imposed to provide protection for the British farmer from imports of cheaper foreign grain. The 'repealers', whose ideological and political leader was a none-too-successful businessman, Richard Cobden, argued that much was at stake. To begin with, retention of the duties on grain demonstrated the grip upon the legislative machinery of the agricultural interest, the traditional ruling class, who ought not to be allowed a monopoly of power. Opposed to it were the dynamic forces of the future which sought to liberate the national economy from such distortions in the interest of particular groups. Back came the reply of the anti-repealers: the manufacturers were themselves a particular interest who only

¹⁰⁹ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 432-435.

wanted cheap food imports in order to be able to pay lower wages; if they wanted to help the poor, what about some regulation of the conditions under which they employed women and children in factories? There, the inhumanity of the production process showed a callous disregard for the obligations of privilege which would never have been tolerated in rural England. To this, the repealers responded that cheap food would mean cheaper goods for export. And in this, for someone like Cobden, much more than profit was involved. A worldwide expansion of Free Trade untrammelled by the interference of mercantilist governments would lead to international progress both material and spiritual, he thought; trade brought peoples together, exchanged and multiplied the blessings of civilization and increased the power in each country of its progressive forces. On one occasion he committed himself to the view that Free Trade was the expression of the Divine Will (though even this did not go as far as the British consul at Canton who had proclaimed that 'Jesus Christ is Free Trade, and Free Trade is Jesus Christ')....

"Only in England was the issue fought out so explicitly and to so clear-cut a conclusion. In other countries, paradoxically, the protectionists soon turned out to have the best of it. Only in the middle of the century, a period of expansion and prosperity, especially for the British economy, did Free Trade ideals get much support outside the United Kingdom, whose prosperity was regarded by believers as evidence of the correctness of their views and even mollified their opponents; Free Trade became a British political dogma, untouchable until well into the twentieth century. The prestige of British economic leadership helped to give it a brief popularity elsewhere, too. The prosperity of the era in fact owed as much to other influences as to this ideological triumph, but the belief added to the optimism of economic liberals. Their creed was the culmination of the progressive view of Man's potential as an individual, whose roots lay in Enlightenment ideas."¹¹⁰

"Free trade, which it was believed the repeal of the Corn Laws would usher in, was not just an economic doctrine. It was also a quasi-religious article of faith. If, so this argument ran, all the nations of the world abolished their tariffs, following the example provided by the United Kingdom, the result would be not only unhindered worldwide commerce but also international amity, global fellowship and universal peace. All that was standing in the way of this New Jerusalem was the arrogant self-interest of the landlords: 'the bread-taxing oligarchy, unprincipled, unfeeling and plundering', as one contemporary pamphleteer put it... [The League] was also a religious crusade, supported by Anglicans and Nonconformists alike, as exemplified by a meeting held in August 1841, when seven hundred ministers proclaimed the cause of repeal to be 'the politics of the gospel'."¹¹¹

Or rather, this was not so much "the politics of the gospel" as a massive step towards today's *politicization of the Gospel* or "the Social Gospel"...

¹¹⁰ Roberts, *History of the World*, Oxford: Helicon, 1996, pp. 571-573.

¹¹¹ Cannadine *op. cit.*, pp. 208-209.

The difference between the old patriarchal attitude towards social and economic relations and the new liberal attitude is seen particularly in the contrast between Lord Ashley and Richard Cobden.

Lord Ashley was a Christian Tory philanthropist who campaigned for the improvement of working conditions for the poor. He "hated the competitive atmosphere of factories. Visiting his ancestral seat, St. Giles in the county of Dorset, he noted in his diary on 29 June 1841, 'What a picture contrasted with a factory district, a people known and cared for, a people born and trained on the estate, exhibiting towards its hereditary possessors both deference and sympathy, affectionate respect and a species of allegiance demanding protection and repaying it in duty.' To the Northern factory-owners such patronizing attitudes led only to stultification. There was no movement, no struggle, in Ashley's view of society. Cobden, the Corn Law reformer *par excellence*, hated Ashley's attempts to set limits to an employer's powers – the length of hours he could make factory hands work, or the limiting of the age of his employees. 'Mine is that masculine species of charity which would lead me to inculcate in the minds of the labouring classes the love of independence, the privilege of self respect, the disdain of being patronised or petted, the desire to accumulate and the ambition to rise.'" ¹¹²

"Richard Cobden and John Bright," writes Tombs, "were promoters of what Disraeli called the 'Manchester School' of economics. Cobden, elected to Parliament for Stockport in 1841, was a self-made Manchester cotton magnate, the son of a small yeoman farmer who detested the landlord class: 'We will grapple with the religious feeling of the people – their veneration for God shall be our leverage to upset their reverence for the aristocracy.' Bright was a Quaker landowner from Rochdale, and MP for Durham from 1843. The league was to have a great impact on politics and economics than any single-issue group before or since. In Britain and elsewhere, exporters were quick to see the advantages of free trade and lower food costs, but there was far more to the league than merely business calculation. It condemned trade barriers as pillars of war, poverty and aristocratic oppression, whereas free trade promised freedom, peace and prosperity for all. The league combined the organizational dynamism of a new business class with the campaigning fervour of Evangelicals and Dissenters: in one week it mailed some 9 million leaflets, and it organized saturation press campaigns. The campaign tapped into the anti-slavery movement, which had just succeeded in abolishing slavery in the empire. Cobden adopted the slogan 'immediate abolition' because it was the old anti-slavery *shibboleth*. The league's optimistic message was the first effective answer to the Malthusian belief, so hated and so persuasive, that rising population would inevitably lead to poverty, starvation and conflict. What began as the campaign of a pressure group became the settled orthodoxy of the country until the 1930s and still influences English attitudes today.

¹¹² A. N. Wilson, *The Victorians*, London: Arrow Books, 2003, p. 60.

"Farmers led a counter-campaign in favour of continuing protection for agriculture, and a flood of rural support went to the Tories. This gave them a sweeping victory in 1841. The results show that a durable regional pattern was setting in. The Tories now dominated the English counties and smaller towns. The Whigs dominated the larger towns, especially south of the Trent, and were well ahead in Scotland and Ireland. These years set the scene for nearly half a century of Whig-Liberal hegemony once the Corn Law issue exploded, for the Whigs established an alliance with northern manufacturers and retailers, many of them Nonconformists, who dominated urban politics."¹¹³

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

The championship of free trade by Cobden and Bright became for them a kind of religious dogma, rejection of which was counted as heresy and hatred of mankind.

As John Ralston Saul writes, "Upon their first victory – the appeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 – nine thousand crowded into Manchester's Free Trade Hall to hear Cobden. '[H]aving the feeling I have of the sacredness of the principle, I say that I can never agree to tamper with it.' What did he mean by the sacred nature of free trade?..."

"Bright, 1845, in the House: '[I speak on behalf of those people] into whose hearts free trade principles have sunk, and become, verily, a religious question.'

"Cobden in 1846 explained that the buy-cheap, sell-expensive principle was not about selfishness, but was a matter of 'carrying out to the fullest extent the Christian doctrine of 'Do ye to all men as ye would they should do unto you.'..."

"Cobden, 1843: '[A law which prevents free trade is a] law which interferes with the wisdom of the Divine Providence, and substitutes the law of wicked men for the law of nature.'"¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 448-449.

¹¹⁴ Saul, *The Collapse of Globalism*, London: Atlantic Books, 2018, pp. 40-41.

In fact, Cobden had still wider, international aims in campaigning for the repeal of the Corn Laws. "It was expected not merely to destroy the domestic bases of British militarism by crushing landlord power, but also to link states commercially through what we would today call 'interdependence', thus making war all but impossible. Free trade, Cobden predicted, would inaugurate 'the greatest revolution that ever happened in the world's history', destroy 'the antagonism of race, and creed and language', and make 'large and mighty empires... gigantic armies and great navies' redundant."¹¹⁵

This elevation of an economic theory into dogmatic truth, no less than salvation for the world, was unknown in previous history. "In Athens, from which the West so insistently claims paternity, the market was understood to be essential, although not of primary importance for the citizens of the civilization. Those in trade were not even citizens, although they had to pay full taxes. Later, in the pre-Hellenistic period, the capitalists might be citizens, but their role was minor in the concept and running of society. In Rome – another popular source of Western historical paternity, and a pretty successful system – the market was probably weighted more to public enterprise than private. But again it was not central to the civilization's understanding of itself. Business was a utilitarian matter, not ideological. Neither business nor trade was about truth. The same sort of attitudes and structures could be found in the Buddhist world and the Confucian... Muslims carefully regulated manufacturing, trade and taxes. But they were more interested in urban planning, social obligation, science, mathematics, philosophy and literature. In the European Middle Ages, as the economic historian R.H. Tawney pointed out, 'at every turn, there [were] limits, restrictions, warnings against allowing economic interests to interfere with serious matters.' The warnings were very specific. 'Labour – the common lot of mankind – is necessary and honourable; trade is necessary but perilous to the soul; finance, if not immoral, is at best sordid and at worst disreputable.' The high Middle Ages and the Renaissance were filled with complex professional guild and trading systems. The trading systems were Europe-wide, but they also ran from Europe to Africa, from China to Europe, and before long involved crossing the Atlantic from Europe to the Americas. There was no suggestion that these represented the core of civilization or an ideology or a truth..."¹¹⁶

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When Sir Robert Peel became Tory Prime Minister in 1841, it looked as if Tory Paternalism had triumphed over Whig Utilitarianism. But it was not to be – Peel turned out to be the foremost champion of the repeal of the Corn Laws, for two major reasons: first, to save the reputation of the aristocratic landowners, thereby promoting their unity with the middle and lower classes, and secondly, to import cheap food to rescue the starving Irish peasants.

¹¹⁵ Trevelyan, in Simms, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

¹¹⁶ Saul, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.

Peel's conversion from paternalist to free trader was one of the biggest U-turns in British political history, with huge consequences for British politics. A schism was created in the Conservative Party, and although Peel succeeded in repealing the Corn Laws his political career was finished. But at his death, British workers mourned him and flocked to his funeral, contributing generously to its expense. He himself had prophesied such an outcome: "I shall have a name execrated by every monopolist... but it may be... sometimes remembered with expressions of goodwill in the abodes of those whose lot it is to labour and to earn their daily bread in the sweat of their brow."¹¹⁷

"The Irish crisis," continues Tombs, "had caused Peel to suspend grain tariffs as an emergency measure, and he then abolished the Corn Laws formally in January 1846 against the will of his own party. Passage through the Commons took thirty-two nights of angry debate, among the most dramatic in parliamentary history. The leading protectionist spokesmen were Lord George Bentinck, who obliquely accused Peel of 'double-dealing with the farmers of England... deceiving our friends, betraying our constituents,' and Benjamin Disraeli, who claimed to speak for 'the cause of labour – the cause of the people – the cause of England!' The Conservative party was split: two thirds voted against Peel, typically those representing the counties and smaller boroughs, and holding local office as JPs, lords lieutenant and sheriffs; they agreed with Disraeli that agriculture provided 'the revenues of the Church, the administration of justice, and the estate of the poor'. Liberals and Radicals voted overwhelmingly – 95 percent – for repeal. Soon after, Peel was defeated on a secondary issue, and his career was over. In his resignation speech he said that the working class would have 'abundant and untaxed food... no longer leavened by a sense of injustice'. His followers, including young disciples such as William Ewan Gladstone, gravitated to the Liberals. He died in 1850, after falling from a horse. Factories closed as crowds of working class people gathered to mourn. He was surely the most popular Conservative leader of all time with urban workers: 400,000 contributed a penny each for a memorial fund to buy books for working men's clubs and libraries. He did much to convince them that the established order was not their enemy.

"The repeal of the Corn Laws had little economic effect for a generation. But it had immense political and moral effect. It shattered the Conservative party and brought political divisions into private life to an unusual degree: for example, the Duke of Newcastle used all his influence to bring about his Peelite son's election defeat, and was only reconciled with him on his deathbed. More than material interests were at stake: there is no obvious correlation between Tory MPs' vote on repeal and their personal sources of income. Bentinck declared that repeal would save him £1,500 a year: 'I don't care that: what I cannot bear is being *sold*.' Disraeli's stance is usually dismissed as opportunistic – the accusation of his political opponents, aggravated by snobbery and anti-Semitism, and repeated by historians afraid of being branded naïve. In reality, he was a romantic English nationalist, a consistent supporter of protection against the cost-cutting commercialism of the 'Manchester School'. He also believed that Peel's betrayal

¹¹⁷ Peel, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 607.

of electoral commitments undermined the party system on which politics depended.

“Symbolically, and in the long term really, the end of the Corn Laws marked the end of a governing order and a set of political ideas. These ideas were of England as primarily an agricultural country, feeding itself, and governed by a paternalistic landed elite – the vision of Burke, Wordsworth and Coleridge. But by 1846 more than half the population lived in towns, and more people had worked in manufacturing than in farming since the 1820s. The new urban mechanistic ideologies of Utilitarianism, political economy and free trade became the norm. All their opponents – from Tories to socialist Owenites – had lost the argument...”¹¹⁸

By 1852, writes Rebecca Fraser, “free trade had so much been proved to be the most profitable way for Britain to function that it became national policy for all the parties; protectionism was quietly abandoned by Derby and Disraeli.¹¹⁹ The repeal of the corn laws had not destroyed British farming. Labourers had not been thrown out of work nor cornfields abandoned, as had been feared. It was only in the last quarter of the nineteenth century that surplus wheat from the North American prairies ruined prices in Britain. The price of corn had not dropped as dramatically in 1846 as the Anti-Corn Law League had expected, but that was because the cost of all commodities rose over the next ten years, repeal acted to offset that rise in the case of corn...”¹²⁰

The quarrel between the two sides in the Corn Laws debate had been bitter and divisive, but it did not destroy English democracy. Nor did the still more bitter rivalry between Disraeli and Gladstone (this time, as the heads of different parties) in the decades to come. Whatever the reason (perhaps the restrained, aristocratic culture of parliament’s “Honourable Gentlemen”), it drew the grudging admiration even of its worst enemies, such as Karl Marx. Writing in 1849, he noted perceptively: “England, the country that turns whole nations into its proletarians... seems to be the rock against which the revolutionary waves break, the country where the new society is stifled even in the womb... Only a *world* can overthrow the old England, as only this can provide the Chartists, the party of the organized English workers, with the conditions for a successful rising against their gigantic oppressors...”¹²¹

Two world wars, and innumerable smaller wars later, English democracy is still in existence. Without violence, but certainly under the threat of violence, the “gigantic oppressors” have conceded enough to keep them in power. But at a price, the price of the most radical transformation of the culture of old England, from which all trace, not only of aristocratic restraint and privilege, but also of Christian faith and morality, has been driven out...

¹¹⁸ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 454-455.

¹¹⁹ Therefore Disraeli’s barb against Peel: “A Conservative government is an organized hypocrisy” could with equal justice be applied to his own government. (V.M.)

¹²⁰ Fraser, *The People’s History of Britain*, London: Chatto & Windus, 2003, p. 551.

¹²¹ Marx, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 608.

The idea of free trade began to penetrate into Europe, although it was pursued with less dogmatism and more common sense than in England... Thus Prussia took the lead in abolishing tariff barriers between the members of the German Confederation, “first through a reform passed in 1818 and then through the German Customs Union founded in 1834, soon to be joined by South German states such as Baden, though not by Austria. The Customs Union [*Zollverein*] brought together a range of earlier, smaller tariff agreements on the basis of a uniform import duty based on the Prussian one. A major and often neglected effect of the Customs Union was to protect German industry from British competition; in 1844, for example, it was charging an import duty on pig iron of a pound a ton... The breaking down of internal tariff barriers was... vital for economic progress...”¹²²

The *Zollverein* was, with the rapid spread of the railways, the acid that broke down political and economic barriers, creating an international culture, almost a new pan-European identity.¹²³

Yanis Varoufakis sees in the *Zollverein* a precursor to the European Union. “Prior to 1833, what is Germany today encompassed a multitude of different states, city-states and jurisdictions, each with its own standards, time zone and currency. Trading across these multiple borders was nightmarish and the reason that Germany was so far behind Britain in terms of industrialization, innovation and governance. German unification began with a customs union known as the *Zollverein*, an 1833 agreement between the various territories promoted as a first step towards free trade and much needed economic integration.

“One shrewd observer at the time was deeply concerned with the *Zollverein*. Chancellor Klemens von Metternich of the Austro-Hungarian empire... could not fail to notice that the *Zollverein* treaty had been driven by Prussia, the dominant German kingdom, and excluded the Austro-Hungarian empire. Just as Beijing today sees as a major threat the American drive to forge a Pacific Basin free trade zone that excludes China in the form of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), Metternich too felt that Prussia was up to mischief. In a letter to his emperor he wrote: ‘Within the great Confederation, a smaller union is being formed, a status in statu in the full sense of the term, which will only too soon accustom itself to achieving its ends by its own machinery and will pay attention to the objectives and machinery of the Confederation only when convenient... [O]n every question that comes before the Diet [the Confederation’s parliament] (and not only commercial affairs) [it] will act and vote as one according to prior arrangements. Then there will no longer be any useful discussion in the Diet; debates will be replaced by votes agreed in advance and inspired not by the interests of the Confederation but by the exclusive interest of Prussia... Even now it is unfortunately easy to determine in advance how these votes will be cast on all the questions where the interest of Prussia conflicts with that of the federal body.’ This

¹²² Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

¹²³ See Orlando Figes, *The Europeans*, London: Penguin, 2020.

description could have been written, with very few emendations, to describe my experience of the Eurogroup deliberations as finance minister of a small European nation in 2015. Metternich could have been writing about the manner in which matters of crucial importance for various Eurozone member states, especially those with large deficits and unbearable debts, were settled on the basis of modern Prussia's 'exclusive interest'.

"In modern times we imagine that nineteenth-century politicians primarily used the sword to expand their empires, rather than appealing to the self-interest of prospective subjects. That was not true of the German Confederation. The idea of voluntary accession on the basis of the self-interest of the smaller states was indeed central to the Zollverein. Prussia persuaded the small German states to enter into the new arrangements by insisting that they would be better off inside the union, where they would be well positioned to influence matters, than outside, where they could only react to decisions the confederation reached.

"Even the notion of subsidiarity, or something close to it, was employed. The promise of decentralized power worked miracles in convincing the German states that feared a Prussian-dominated union to enter it. However, some argue that this was a well-laid trap. The German constitutionalist Heinrich Tiepel observed that 'a looser association of states encourages hegemony more than a tight one...'"¹²⁴

Another attempt to combine free trade with a European economic union was made when the French Emperor Napoleon III "suddenly agreed, partly to strengthen relations with Britain, to a commercial treaty, negotiated secretly between Richard Cobden and the French free-trade economist Michel Chevalier and signed in January 1860. The treaty opened the French market to a range of British goods. It became the core of a short-lived European economic community, extended by other treaties to the whole of western and central Europe, with free movement of population, certain rights of citizenship and an embryonic single currency, which became the Latin Currency Union. This was the apogee of the free traders' vision, and Europe became for a time Britain's main trading outlet..."¹²⁵

¹²⁴ Varoufakis, *And the Weak Suffer What They Must?* London: Vintage, 2017, pp. 213-215.

¹²⁵ Tombs, *op. cit.*, p. 571.

8. THE IRISH FAMINE

As we have seen, the dogma of free trade took a long time to establish itself, even in England. Moreover, the most successful economies of the late nineteenth century – Germany and the United States – protected their vital industries from foreign competition, keeping food prices relatively high. The result was that the poverty of the peasant and working classes increased, together with the propaganda of the socialists...

Poverty, especially in the countryside, where most of the population continued to live, was an increasing problem throughout Europe in the nineteenth century. Gradual improvements in medicine meant that child mortality went down and the numbers of mouths to feed went up. Improved agricultural techniques, developed mainly in England, were slow in reaching those areas where they were most needed. Emancipation of the peasants went ahead throughout the continent; but it was a painful, disputatious and complex affair that did not translate immediately, if at all, into increased prosperity, and not infrequently led to peasant uprisings. Periodic famines, such as those of 1816-17 and the late 1840s, killed hundreds of thousands.

The population of Ireland in 1841 was 8.1 million; that of Great Britain was 16.2 million. Britain had some hope of feeding its rapidly rising population because of its industry and flourishing exports. But Ireland had no industry or exports to speak of, and was therefore much more vulnerable.

The Irish famine, writes Tombs, was part of “a Europe-wide economic slump of extreme severity. Beginning in 1846, this was a combination of the last of the age-old dearths caused by harvest failures and the first great global financial panic. Rising prices, a rush to import food, government borrowing and interest rate increases burst a speculative bubble based on railway-building. This gave rise to an acute sense of change and crisis, inspiring both utopian hopes and a sense of dread, as mass hunger and unemployment precipitates in 1848 a bloody cycle of revolutionary and counter-revolutionary conflict across much of Europe. The 1840s were also the climax of agonized English self-examination, the decade of several of Dickens’s most popular works – including *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1840-41), *Barnaby Rudge* (1841), *A Christmas Carol* (1843), *Dombey and Son* (1848) and *David Copperfield* (1849-50); of Carlyle’s *Chartism* (1840), famously denouncing the ‘cash nexus’, and *Past and Present* (1843); of Disraeli’s *Coningsby* (1844) and *Sybil* (1845); Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* (1847); Charles Kingsley’s *Yeast* (1848); Thackeray’s *Vanity Fair* (1848) and Elizabeth Gaskell’s *Mary Barton* (1848); and impassioned poetry, including Thomas Hood’s ‘Song of the Shirt’, Elizabeth Barrett’s ‘The Cry of the Children’ and Tennyson’s ‘Locksley Hall’. Literature made metropolitan readers more aware of regional differences and problems, particularly those of the industrial north – though one reader declared that after reading the Brontës she would ‘rather visit the Red Indians than trust herself in Leeds’. The aim was to haunt readers’ imaginations and prick their consciences.

"Bad weather and the arrival of an unknown plant disease from America in 1845 began 'an ecological catastrophe almost unparalleled in modern history' by destroying potato crops. In 1846 wheat and rye harvests also failed from Spain to Prussia. Potatoes provided good and cheap nourishment across northern Europe, and the crop failures caused some 40,000-50,000 deaths in Belgium and similar numbers in Prussia. Far worse ensued in Ireland, whose population had risen to at least 8 million (compared with England's 13 million) and which was more dependent on potatoes than anywhere else, consuming some 7 million tons per year."¹²⁶

Robert Kee writes: "The autumn and winter of 1847-8 were as bad as anything the country had yet experienced with evictions increasing and corpses lying unburied even in a town like Limerick for days on end. Even in the kinder weather of June 1848 one inspector of roads near Clifden, County Galway, had to bury 140 corpses he found scattered along his route, while a man from the same district up on a charge of sheep-stealing was saved from imprisonment by stating in open court that his wife, maddened by hunger had been driven to eat the flesh of her own dead daughter. But the worst was still to come.

"In the early autumn of 1848, to an Ireland already reeling under three successive years of famine, came the final blow: news that all over the country the new potato crop was once again almost totally blighted. 1849 was to be the most terrible year of all..."¹²⁷

Ferguson writes: "It may have been *phytophthora infestans* that ruined the potatoes; but it was the dogmatic *laissez-faire* policies of Ireland's British rulers that turned harvest failure into outright famine."¹²⁸ Thus "key decision-makers, such as Charles Trevelyan, the assistant secretary of the Treasury, subscribed to doctrines of evangelical Christianity and political economy that argued against government intervention. 'It is hard upon the poor people that they should be deprived of knowing that they are suffering from an affliction of God's providence,' Trevelyan wrote on January 6, 1847. As God had ordained the famine 'to teach the Irish a lesson, that calamity must not be too much mitigated... The real evil with which we have to contend is not the physical evil of the Famine, but the moral evil of the selfish, perverse and turbulent character of the people.' On the basis of such arguments, exports of grain (mostly oats) from Ireland were not suspended..."¹²⁹

But Trevelyan's idea of God's Providence was inadequate. Whatever his purpose in relation to the "selfish, perverse and turbulent" Irish, it gave to the hard-hearted English the chance to display compassion – a chance they missed. It had been the same during the Bengal famine of 1770, when British negligence caused "between one and two million people, or up to 7 percent of the population" to starve.¹³⁰

¹²⁶ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 451-452.

¹²⁷ Kee, *Ireland. A History*, London: Book Club Associates, 1981, p. 100.

¹²⁸ Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain Made The Modern World*, p. 253.

¹²⁹ Ferguson, *Doom. The Politics of Catastrophe*, London: Allen Lane, 2021, p. 181.

¹³⁰ Ferguson, *Doom*, p. 180.

John Mitchel wrote in *The Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)* 1860: "The Almighty indeed sent the potato blight, but the English created the Famine." "These words," writes A.N. Wilson, "very understandably became the unshakeable conviction of the Irish, particularly those forced into exile by hunger. The tendency of modern historians is not so much to single out individuals for blame, such as Charles Edward Trevelyan, permanent head of the Treasury, as to point to the whole attitude of mind of the governing class and the, by modern standards, gross inequalities which were taken for granted. Almost any member of the governing class would have shared *some* of Trevelyan's attitudes.

"But there is more to John Mitchel's famous statement (one could almost call it a declaration of war) than mere rhetoric. Deeply ingrained with the immediate horrors of the famine was the overall structure of Irish agrarian society, which placed Irish land and wealth in the hands of English (or in effect English) aristocrats. It was the belief of a Liberal laissez-faire economist such as Lord John Russell that the hunger of Irish peasants was not the responsibility of government but of landowners. No more callous example of a political doctrine being pursued to the death – quite literally – exists in the annals of British history. But Lord John Russell's government, when considering the Irish problem, were not envisaging some faraway island in which they had no personal concern. A quarter of the peers in the House of Lords had Irish interests..."¹³¹

Another factor contributing to English callousness was the slogan "No Popery". In 1829, under the pressure especially of the Catholic Member of Parliament for County Clare, Daniel O'Connell, the British government repealed the anti-Catholic legislation that had been in place since the Gunpowder Plot. And yet anti-Catholic feeling remained. Thus, as Wilson writes, "there were plenty who saw [the famine] as 'a special "mercy", calling sinners both to evangelical truth and the Dismantling of all artificial obstacles to divinely-inspired spiritual and economic order', as one pamphlet put it."¹³²

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

¹³¹ Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

¹³² Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

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

"Both halves of this sentence are factually wrong. Ireland most astonishingly did *not* rebel in, or immediately after, the famine years; and we have said enough to show that though there was poverty, extreme poverty, before 1845, many Irish families survived heroically on potatoes alone. The economic structure of a society in which they could afford a quarter or a half an acre of land on which to grow a spud while the Duke of Devonshire owned Lismore, Bolton (and half Yorkshire), Chatsworth (and ditto Derbyshire), the whole of Eastbourne and a huge palace in London was not of the Irish peasant's making.

"By 1848/9 the attitude of Lord John Russell's government had become Malthusian, not to say Darwinian, in the extreme. As always happens when famine takes hold, it was followed by disease. Cholera swept through Belfast and Co. Mayo in 1848, spreading to other districts. In the workhouses, crowded to capacity, dysentery, fevers and ophthalmia were endemic – 13,812 cases of ophthalmia in 1849 rose to 27,200 in 1850. Clarendon and Trevelyan now used the euphemism of 'natural causes' to describe death by starvation. The gentle Platonist-Hegelian philosopher Benjamin Jowett once said, 'I have always felt a certain horror of political economists, since I heard one of them say that he feared the famine of 1848 in Ireland would not kill more than a million people, and that would scarcely be enough to do much good.' As so often Sydney Smith was right: 'The moment the very name of Ireland is mentioned, the English seem to bid adieu to common feeling, common prudence and common sense, and to act with the barbarity of tyrants and the fatuity of idiots.'" ¹³³

In defence of the English, Tombs writes: "When the blight was first reported to [Tory Prime Minister Lord] Peel in September 1845 – a potato merchant wrote warning him personally – he bought American maize for Ireland to feed 500,000 people for three months. In January 1846 he suspended the Corn Laws to allow

¹³³ Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-83.

untaxed imports. A Public Works (Ireland) bill was introduced to provide employment. But the early potato crop was good, and disguised the peril. Irish nationalists minimized the problem and rejected aid: 'No begging appeals to Ireland... For who could make men and freemen of a nation so basely degraded?' Peel's fall in June 1846, after repealing the Corn Laws, brought in a Whig government under Lord John Russell, which has long been condemned for dogmatic adherence to free trade. The traditional villain of the piece is Charles Trevelyan, Assistant Secretary to the Treasury, accused of dogmatism, racism and an Evangelical belief that the famine was the work of Providence. There is some truth in this, though Providentialist views were widespread, including in the Irish Catholic Church. The Whigs certainly believed in the beneficence of free trade, including exports from Ireland. They set up a public-works programme as a means of famine relief, though rejecting a large-scale plan of railway-building, aid to farmers and taxes on absentee landlords proposed by the Tory Lord George Bentinck. At the peak, over 700,000 people were being employed on public works – more than the total employment provided by Irish agriculture. But this was still insufficient. The potato crop failed disastrously again in 1846. Trevelyan wrote to a Catholic priest: 'The famine is increasing; deaths become more frequent; and the prospect may well appal the heart'. In January 1847 the government began direct food distribution through soup kitchens, which by July fed 3 million people daily, but this was considered only possible for a few months, and was cut back when the next harvest came. Trevelyan declared that 'Absolute famine still stares whole districts in the face,' and appealed for 'a great effort [of] human exertion' – voluntary contributions from the English people. A leading nationalist paper replied: 'We scorn, we repulse, we curse all English alms.' The main collection in England, despite its own economic depression, raised £435,000 – the equivalent of over £100 million today – smaller contributions came from the empire and America. The British Relief Association, a charity, was helping to feed up to 200,000 children. Another £0.5m came from public funds, equal to a sixth of total state spending and 'probably unprecedented in famine history'. Yet it was nowhere near enough. People continued to die in their thousands, mostly from untreatable epidemic diseases worsened by hunger, movement and overcrowding at soup kitchens and workhouses, where many doctors and clergy also died. Trevelyan and Russell doubtless believed that everything possible had been done, and that the only long-term remedies were migration and agricultural reform. Palmerston, Foreign Secretary and an Irish landlord, himself chartered ships to take his impoverished tenants to Canada and he supplied them with clothes and money.

"In the conditions of the time – when the United Kingdom was economically at about the level of Cameroon today – famine could not have been wholly prevented. It was immense in scale and duration: there was a total overall shortfall of some 50 million tons of potatoes. The food exported to England (a staple of the genocide accusation) accounted for only a fraction of what was needed to replace the potato and was 'dwarfed' by government purchases of maize. A measured judgement is that the Whig government 'may have lacked foresight and generosity' and 'may have been guilty of underestimating the human problems,' but it was 'not guilty of either criminal negligence or of deliberate heartlessness'. At the time, there was no clear demand within Ireland for a different policy, and

the disaster made Irish independence seem unfeasible. Yet British shortcomings, however they are judged, provided one of the pillars of Irish nationalism in future generations.

"Aid from England, however substantial, had limits. Public opinion blamed rapacious Irish landlords for the problem, especially when they evicted impoverished tenants (there the English agreed with Irish nationalists): hence a general determination that they should pay their share. In Russell's words, 'The owners of property in Ireland ought to feel the obligation of supporting the poor who have been born on their estates and have hitherto contributed to their yearly incomes. It is not just to expect the working classes of Great Britain should permanently support the burden.' Prosperous Irish tenant farmers also inspired little sympathy, in the light of reports that they were ignoring the crisis and even profiting from it. It was also reported that aid was being siphoned off to buy arms, while nationalists continued to collect political funds from the population. There developed a certain 'compassion fatigue', aggravated by the hostile responses of Irish nationalists – 'thank you for nothing is the Irish thanks for £10 million'. But racial prejudice does not seem to have been a significant barrier to aid, and policies in Ireland were the same as in Scotland, which was also suffering [from the highland enclosures]. Views for which English politicians were subsequently excoriated were shared by prominent Irish nationalists, one of whom, Justin McCarthy, a witness of the suffering, wrote later that 'terrible as the immediate effects of the famine are, it is impossible for any friend of Ireland to say that, on the whole, it did not bring much good with it.' There was a bitter irony in the polemic, at the time and since. English politicians insisted on the permanence of the Union, yet thought of Ireland as a semi-foreign country; Irish nationalists rejected the Union and 'appeals to England', yet later accused the English of lack of solidarity. The real English responsibility lies in the dysfunctional aspects of Irish society, in large part due to its long and troubled hegemony."¹³⁴

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Whatever the final verdict on the role of the British in the Irish famine, its impact was colossal. "Between 1848 and 1855," writes Sir Richard Evans, "the island's population fell from 8.5 to 6 million, and while much of the decline at the beginning of the period can be ascribed to the famine, the continuing fall, to under 4.5 million by the census of 1921, was almost entirely due to emigration. More than 700,000 had arrived on the British mainland by 1861, over 200,000 went to Canada and 289,000 left for Australia (many of them to join the gold rushes of the 1860s). But the bulk of the migrants found their way to the United States – more than three million in all between 1848 and 1921. By 1900 there were more Irish-born men and women living in the USA than in Ireland itself..."¹³⁵

The Irish famine, writes Tombs, "has left a dark stain on English history, because of the overall responsibility of predominantly English governments. The tragedy has been described as 'genocide', developing an accusation first put

¹³⁴ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 452-454.

¹³⁵ Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

forward by Irish nationalists in the 1860s. It bred generations of hatred, not least among Irish Americans. The genocide accusation, which can be found today on websites and in pop songs and was approved in the 1990s for teaching in schools in parts of the United States, alleges not merely that English aid was inadequate, but that the government deliberately blocked aid and created an artificial famine by extorting vast quantities of food from Ireland to feed England."¹³⁶

For many in Ireland, "the Great Famine provided further evidence that the Union with Britain had been a terrible mistake, and when it came to celebrating Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, they would arrange counter-demonstrations with the slogan: 'Sixty Years: Starved to Death'."¹³⁷

Ireland was England's first colony, the beginning of what John Dee in about 1580 had called "the British Empire". If it had remained her only colony, then as a consequence of the Irish famine, not to mention earlier troubles, the British Empire would have to be deemed an unequivocal failure...

Perhaps the most withering indictment of the whole episode comes from the Scottish-American historian Niall Ferguson: "It might be thought that no two ideologies had less in common than the classical liberalism of the Victorians and the bloody Marxism of the Bolsheviks; yet each in its different way could countenance mass starvation..."¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 451-452.

¹³⁷ Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

¹³⁸ Ferguson, *Doom*, p. 182.

9. THE UTOPIAN SOCIALISTS

The manifest failure of capitalism to feed the poor led quite naturally to the appearance of a system based on quite different principles: socialism... We have seen that the benefits of liberalism were largely confined to bourgeois property-owners with the purpose of benefiting all property owners. Socialist humanism, the third kind of humanism after liberal humanism and evolutionary humanism in Yuval's terminology, aimed to correct this fault in liberalism by extending liberal freedoms to the peasants and/or the workers. But this was only the first, and by no means the most important step for socialists: since the formerly dispossessed were the largest class and had suffered so long and so bitterly from the oppression of the higher classes, it was envisaged that the lower classes should take over the government of states, creating a completely new kind of society, a community of "comrades" rather than "citizens" or "nations", that would have no place at all for the beneficiaries of the earlier bourgeois revolutions.

According to M.S. Anderson, two main schools of socialist thought can be distinguished within early nineteenth-century socialism. "On the one hand was that which traced from the Jacobin regime of 1793-94 in France and which was uncompromisingly activist and power-oriented. Represented from the 1830s onwards most clearly by the fanatical professional revolutionary Auguste Blanqui, it believed that the new age could be ushered in, in any existing society, only by a violent *coup d'état* which must be the work of an enlightened minority, the agents of an inexorable historical process. Once established in power, this minority would establish a regime based on complete social and political equality, the end towards which history was inescapably moving. After some unavoidable coercion the majority, their eyes opened by education, would embrace the new regime with enthusiasm. It would then become permanent and unalterable, since no man, as a rational being, could wish to change it. Aspirations of this kind were first given practical expression in the Babeuf conspiracy of 1796 in Paris. Through the *Conspiration pour l'égalité* of Buonarrotti, a history of that conspiracy published in 1828 which became 'the manual of the communist movement in the 1830s and 1840s and the chief source of its ideology', they were to remain part of the European, later the world, revolutionary vision until our own day.

"Side by side with this harsh and uncompromising scheme there developed another current of thought, represented in Great Britain by Robert Owen and in France by Charles Fourier and to a lesser extent Louis Blanc and that most idiosyncratic of thinkers, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. These writers, dominated less by ideas of historical inevitability than by a desire for justice and for the lessening of human suffering, disliked the totalitarianism, the violence, the centralization of power which were essential to the Jacobin-Babeuvist-Blanquist outlook. They dreamed rather of a new society, achieved peacefully or with a minimum of violence, in which patterns and initiatives would emerge from below. Owen and Fourier, the most extreme representatives of this attitude, envisaged the dissolution of central authority and its transfer to small self-contained communities based on a perfect division of labour."¹³⁹

¹³⁹ M.S. Anderson, *The Ascendancy of Europe, 1815-1914*, London: Longman, 1985, pp. 340-341.

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

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

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

“This letter, written, in 1831, may be taken as the beginning of the long war between Capitalism and Socialism. In a later letter, James Mill [writes]: ‘These opinions if they were to spread, would be the subversion of civilized society; worse than the overwhelming deluge of Huns and Tartars.’”¹⁴⁰

Owen’s creed, writes Sir Isaiah Berlin, “was summarised in the sentence inscribed at the head of his journal, *The New Moral World*: ‘Any general character, from the best to the worst, from the most ignorant to the most enlightened, may be given to any community, even the world at large, by the application of proper means, which means are to a great extent at the command and under the control of those who have influence in the affairs of men.’ He had triumphantly demonstrated the truth of his theory by establishing model conditions in his own cotton mills in New Lanark, limiting working hours, and creating provision for health and a savings fund. By this means he increased the productivity of his factory and raised immediately the standard of living of his workers, and, what was even more impressive to the outside world, trebled his own fortune. New

¹⁴⁰ Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1946, pp. 808-809.

Lanark became a centre of pilgrimage for kings and statesmen, and, as the first successful experiment in peaceful co-operation between labour and capital, had a considerable influence on the history both of socialism and of the working class. His later attempts at practical reform were less successful. Owen, who died in deep old age in the middle of the nineteenth century, was the last survivor of the classical period of rationalism, and, his faith unshaken by repeated failures, believed until the end of his life in the omnipotence of education and the perfectibility of man."¹⁴¹

In his *Declaration of Mental Independence*, Owen declared that from then mankind should consider itself liberated from "the trinity of evils responsible for all the world's misery: traditional religion, conventional marriage and private property". And since traditional religion was the main buttress of conventional marriage and private property, it was the worst evil. Perhaps that is why he founded his own religion, becoming "the self-styled 'Social Father of the Society of Rational Religionists', before converting to Spiritualism and enjoying conversations with the shades of Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson..."¹⁴²

Kind-hearted entrepreneurs who would support Owen remained few and far between. His last scheme, in New Harmony, Indiana, failed because when he tried to put into effect his belief in the abolition of private property, his workers did not respond. Their nature, alas, was not as perfectible as Owen believed..."¹⁴³

Mill concluded from Owen's failure that only state action could solve the problem of poverty and inequity. In his *Principles of Political Economy*, he made another proposal that was to be seen as the essence of socialism: *redistribution*. With this proposal, writes Barzun, he "broke with the liberal school by asserting that the distribution of the national product could be redirected at will and that it should be so ordered for the general welfare. That final phrase, perpetually redefined, was a forecast.... It was [its] underlying idea - essential socialism - that ultimately triumphed, taking the twin forms of Communism and the Welfare State, either under the dictatorship of a party and its leader or under the rule of a democratic parliament and democracy."¹⁴⁴

However, the English liberal solutions of self-help and education (Owen) and redistribution of wealth (Mill) were rejected by radical thinkers on the continent, especially in France. The most radical was the anarchist Proudhon, who anticipated the nihilists of the following generation by calling for the destruction of *all* authorities, *even God*. "'The Revolution is not atheistic, in the strict sense of the word... it does not deny the absolute, it eliminates it...' 'The first duty of man, on becoming intelligent and free, is to continually hunt the idea of God out of his mind and conscience. For God, if he exists, is essentially hostile to our nature... Every step we take in advance is a victory in which we crush Divinity.' 'Humanity must be made to see that God, if there is a God, is its enemy.'"¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ Berlin, *Karl Marx*, London: Fontana, 195, pp. 32-33. Owen also wanted to abolish the family....

¹⁴² Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

¹⁴³ Alan Jacobs, *Original Sin: A Cultural History*, New York: HarperCollins, 2008, pp.174-188.

¹⁴⁴ Barzun, *From Dawn to Decadence*, New York, 2000, pp. 527-528.

¹⁴⁵ Proudhon, in Rose, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

It was Proudhon who uttered the famous words: "What is property? Property is theft."¹⁴⁶ "By this phrase," writes Evans, "he did not intend to dismiss all private property; rather, he wanted society to own all property but to lease it all out to prevent profiteering and unfair distribution. Nevertheless, his declarations resonated across the century as a slogan for socialists, communists and anarchists alike. Proudhon was vehemently opposed to female equality. If women obtained equal political rights, he declared, men would find them 'odious and ugly', and it would bring about 'the end of the institution of marriage, the death of love and the ruin of the human race'. 'Between harlot and housewife,' he concluded, 'there is no halfway point'."¹⁴⁷

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Proudhon belonged to the dominant, atheist and even anti-theist stream of socialist thinking. Other French thinkers, however, tried to be more constructive, even quasi-Christian. Among them was the Comte de Saint-Simon (1760-1825), "who had had a career more adventurous than most: he had served under Washington at Yorktown in 1781, narrowly escaped the guillotine during the Revolution of 1789, and been incarcerated as a lunatic with the Marquis de Sade (1740-1814) at the asylum in Charenton. He continued to live a troubled life thereafter, even attempting suicide in 1823 by shooting himself. His central concern was with developing a rational form of religion in which people would obtain eternal life 'by working with all their might to ameliorate the condition of their fellows'."¹⁴⁸

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

¹⁴⁶ Marx disagreed with the latter statement insofar as it presupposed real rights in property. Nevertheless, he admitted the importance of Proudhon's analysis of private property relations. "The two forces," writes Berlin, "which Proudhon conceived as fatal to social justice and the brotherhood of man were the tendency towards the accumulation of capital, which led to the continual increase of inequalities of wealth, and the tendency directly connected with it, which openly united political authority with economic control, and so was designed to secure a growth of a despotic plutocracy under the guise of free liberal institutions. The state became, according to him, an instrument designed to dispossess the majority for the benefit of a small minority, a legalised form of robbery..." (*Karl Marx*, pp. 82-83)

¹⁴⁷ Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

¹⁴⁸ Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 172-173.

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

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

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

“In Saint-Simon’s view, the French Revolution signified not so much the triumph of rationalist-democratic ideas as the total victory of the productive classes and the final swamping of feudal-theological values by positive forces. But this fundamental fact was distorted and obscured by those metaphysicians and lawyers who, having played an important part in helping the industrial classes to win, mistook their secondary role for a mission to impose their ideas and their rule upon society. Instead of stepping aside and letting the imperatives of

industrial endeavour shape new institutions, they set out to impose their conjectural ideas upon society, side-tracking the real issues and befogging them with rhetoric and sophistry. In effect their intention was not to abolish the old system which divided society into rulers and ruled, but to continue it, only substituting themselves for the feudal lords; in other words, to rule by force. For where the relationship between rulers and ruled is not grounded in the nature of things as is that, for example, between doctor and patient, teacher and pupil – that is, on division of functions – the only reality is the rule of man over man based on force. This form of relationship dated from the days when man was considered to need protection by superiors because he was weak, lowly and ignorant, or had to be kept from mischief because he was riotous and savage. It was no longer justified since the Revolution had proved that man had come of age. It was time for government, in other words the state, to make room for an administration of *things*, and conscious, sustained planning of the national economy. The need to keep law and order, allegedly always so pressing and relentless, would be reduced to a minimum when social relations were derived from objective necessities. The whole problem was thus reduced to the discovery of the ‘force of things’, the requirements of the mechanism of production. Once these had become the measure of all things, there would be no room for the distinction between rulers in the traditional political sense. The nexus of all human relationships would be the bond between expert knowledge and experience on the one hand, and discipleship, fulfillment of necessary tasks, on the other. The whole question of liberty and equality would then assume a quite different significance.

“In fact men would no longer experience the old acute craving for liberty and equality. A scientific apportioning of functions would ensure perfect cohesion of the totality, and the high degree of integration would draw the maximum potential from every participant in the collective effort. Smooth, well-adjusted participation heightens energy and stills any sense of discomfort or malaise. There is no yearning for freedom and no wish to break away in an orchestra, a choir, a rowing boat. Where parts do not fit and abilities go to waste, there is a sense of frustration and consequently oppression, and man longs to get away. The question of equality would not arise once inequality was the outcome of a necessary and therefore just division of tasks. There is no inequality where there is no domination for the sake of domination.

“Such a perfect integration remained to be discovered. Pursuing his quest, Saint-Simon stumbled upon socialism, and then found himself driven to religion. Waste, frustration, deprivation, oppression were the denial of both cohesion of the whole and the self-expression of the individual. Those scourges were epitomized in the existence of the poorest and most numerous class – the workers. And so what started with Saint-Simon as a quest for positive certainty and efficiency gradually assumed the character of a crusade on behalf of the disinherited, the underprivileged and frustrated. The integrated industrial productive effort began to appear as conditioned upon the abolition of poverty, and dialectically the abolition of poverty now seemed the real goal of a fully integrated collective endeavour.

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

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

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

"Saint-Simon called this new religion of his 'Nouveau Christianisme'. It was to be a real fulfillment of the original promise of Christianity, and was to restore that unity of life which traditional Christianity – decayed and distorted – had done its best to deny and destroy. The concept of original sin had led to a pernicious separation of mankind into a hierarchy of the perfect and the mass of simple believers. This carried with it the distinction between theory and practice, the perfect bliss above and the vale of tears below; the result was compromise and reconciliation with – in effect, approval of – evil here and now."¹⁴⁹

Saint-Simon reduced Christianity to "Love thy neighbour". "Applied to modern society," writes Edmund Wilson, this principle "compels us to recognize that the majority of our neighbours are destitute and wretched. The emphasis has now been shifted from the master mind at the top of the hierarchy to the 'unpropertied man' at the bottom; but the hierarchy still stands as it was, since Saint-Simon's whole message is still his own peculiar version of the principle of

¹⁴⁹ Talmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-65.

noblesse oblige. The propertied classes must be made to understand that an improvement in the condition of the poor will mean an improvement in their condition, too; the *savants* must be shown that their interests are identical with those of the masses. Why not go straight to the people? he makes the interlocutor ask in his dialogue. Because we must try to prevent them from resorting to violence against their governments; we must try to persuade the other classes first.

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

“‘Princess!’ he concludes, ‘hear the voice of God, which speaks to you through my mouth: Become good Christians again, throw off the belief that the hired armies, the nobility, the heretical clergy, the corrupt judges, constitute your principal supporters; unite in the name of Christianity and learn to accomplish the duties which Christianity imposes on the powerful; remember that Christianity command them to devote their energies to bettering as rapidly as possible the lot of the very poor!’”¹⁵⁰

Saint-Simon is an important link between the Masonic visionaries of the French revolution and the “scientific” vision of the Marxists. The importance he attached to economic factors and means of production formed one of the main themes of Marxism – although Marx himself dismissed him as a Utopian socialist. That he could still think in terms of a “New Christianity” shows his attachment to the religious modes of thought of earlier ages, although, of course, his Christianity is a very distorted form of the faith. Marx would purge the religious element in Saint-Simon and make the economic element the foundation of his theory. But he, too, was a Utopian in that he believed in a coming secular paradise, Communism, which would be achieved through scientific progress helped along by class war and the revolution.

One of Saint-Simon’s disciples was Auguste Comte (1798-1857), who founded the extremely influential doctrine of *positivism*. “Comte,” writes Norman Davies, “held that all knowledge passed through three successive stages of development, where it is systematized according to (respectively) theological, metaphysical, and ‘positive’ or scientific principles. The theological and metaphysical states had to be discarded in order to arrive at the state of true knowledge, which is science. Comte placed the sciences in a kind of hierarchy with a new “science of society”, or sociology, at the summit. The social scientists’ task was “to know in order to foresee, and to foresee in order to know”.¹⁵¹ Comtean positivism is one of the corner-stones of the modern world-view; and his idea of science as the *only* true knowledge became as accepted in the capitalist West as in the communist East.

¹⁵⁰ Wilson, *To the Finland Station*, London: Phoenix, 2004, pp. 84-85.

¹⁵¹ Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 790.

Another Utopian Socialist figure was Charles Fourier (1772-1837). He believed in the old chiliastic dream of Paradise on earth, in which men would live to be 144 years old.¹⁵² He had other dreams, too: "He believed that the world would last precisely 80,000 years and that by the end of that time every soul would have traveled 810 times between the earth and certain other planets which he regarded as certainly inhabited, and would have experienced a succession of existences to the precise number of 1626!"¹⁵³

"His starting point," according to Talmon, "was very much that of Rousseau. Man, he believed, had come out of the hands of nature a good and noble being. The institutions of civilization had brought about his undoing. Greed and avarice were the root of all evil. They had created the existing dichotomies between private morality and commercial and political codes of behaviour, between things preached and ways practiced. Morose, ascetical teachings about the evil character of the natural urges were motivated by the avarice and ambition of the greed and strong, who wished to instill into their victims a sense of sin, and with it humility and readiness to bear privations, perform the dirtiest jobs, and receive the whip. The attempt to stifle natural impulses had the effect of turning the energy contained in them into channels of perversion and aggressiveness.

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

"Here, however, we are concerned with Fourier's contribution to the problem of organization and freedom. In his view, the state and its laws were instruments of exploitation, and any large centralized state was bound to develop into an engine of tyranny. Fourier therefore held that the state ought to be replaced by a network of small direct democracies. Each should enjoy full autonomy and be at once a wholly integrated economic unit and a closely-knit political community. In

¹⁵² Hieromonk Damascene (Christensen), *Father Seraphim Rose: His Life and Writings*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 2003, p. 623.

¹⁵³ Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 89. These early socialists, in spite of their materialist bent of mind, were peculiarly susceptible to quasi-religious visions. Thus Saint-Simon had visions of Charlemagne, and it was revealed to him "in a vision that it was Newton and not the Pope whom God had elected to sit beside Him and to transmit to humanity His purposes" (Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 83). As for Owen, "he came in his last days to believe that all the magnanimous souls he had known, Shelley, Thomas Jefferson, Channing, the Duke of Kent... - all those who when living had listened to him with sympathy, of whom he had felt that they had really shared his vision, and who were lost to him now through death – he came to believe that they were returning from the other world, to make appointments with him and keep them, to talk to him and reassure him" (Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 97).

these 'phalanstères' all would be co-partners, everybody would know all the other members (Fourier laid down a maximum of 1800), and decisions would be reached by common consent. By these means men would never be subjected to some anonymous, abstract power above and outside them.

"Fourier also tackled the problem of reconciling integration with self-expression. He argued that it was absurd to expect to eliminate the love of property, desire to excel, penchant for intrigue or craving for change, let alone sex and gluttony. Such an attempt was sure to engender frustration and anti-social phenomena. And there was no escape from the fact that people had different characteristics and urges of different intensity. Happily, benevolent nature had taken care of that by creating different sorts of characteristics and passions, like symphonic compositions in which the most discordant elements are united into a meaningful totality. The task was therefore reduced to the art of composing the right groups of characteristics – perfectly integrated partnerships based on the adjustment of human diversities. It followed that the other task was to manipulate the human passions so cleverly that they would become levers of co-operative effort and increased production instead of impediments to collaboration. (This implies an ardent faith in education and environmental influence comparable to Robert Owen's.¹⁵⁴) To take first the love of property: it would not be abolished or made equal. There would be a secured minimum of private property, but beyond that it would depend on investment, contribution, type of work, degree of fatigue and boredom, and so on, with progressively decreasing dividends. Persons of diverse characteristics joined into one group would stimulate each other, and competition between groups would be strongly encouraged. The paramount aim was to turn labour into a pleasure instead of a curse. In order to obviate the danger of boredom, spells of work would be short and changes in the type of labour frequent. Gangs of children would be set the task of doing the dirty jobs in a spirit of joyous emulation. Finally, industry would be combined with an Arcadian type of agriculture.

"This is Fourier's solution to the dilemmas which have plagued our common sense for so long: who will do the disagreeable jobs in a perfectly harmonious society, and what will be the relationship between superiors and inferiors in it?"¹⁵⁵

"It was above all Fourier," writes Evans, "who propounded the identity of women's emancipation and general human emancipation, a belief shared by Flora Tristan: 'The extension of privileges to women,' he wrote, 'is the general principle of all social progress.' He too compared women to slaves: marriage for them was 'conjugal slavery'. In the phalanstery, women would have fully equal rights and would be free to marry and divorce as they wished. Just as Cabet invented the word 'communism', so Fourier invented the word 'feminism'. The Saint-Simonians were equally preoccupied with women's place in society. *Enfantin*

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Owen's words: "Every day will make it more and more evident that the character of man is, without a single exception, always formed for him; that it may be, and is, chiefly created by his predecessors: that they give him, or may give him, his ideas and habits, which are the powers that govern and direct his conduct. Man, therefore, never did, nor is it possible he ever can, form his own character" (in Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 341). (V.M.)

¹⁵⁵ Talmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-71.

proclaimed 'the emancipation of women' as a central goal of a new Church that he would lead. He included in this concept, however, the 'rehabilitation of the flesh', and his advocacy of the sexual emancipation of women brought a conviction for offending public morality in 1832. Far more conventional was Cabet, who, perhaps surprisingly, thought that the main constituent unit of communist society would not be the individual but the heterosexual married couple and their children, so that shared childrearing did not come into his vision. Every women should be educated, but the aim of her education should be to make her 'a good girl, a good sister, a good wife, a good mother, a good housekeeper, a good citizen'."¹⁵⁶

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

¹⁵⁶ Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 173-174.

“Man has come to form his soul according to his material situation. What an amazing thing! Now there is a poor man’s soul, a rich man’s soul, a tradesman’s soul... Man seems to be only an accessory to his position.”

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It is no accident that the period covered in this book was the period in which *both* the first major – and unequivocally ugly – fruits of modern capitalism *and* the first theoretical and practical attempts to build an alternative system of economic life in socialism appeared. There is of course no coincidence here: the one was intended to overcome the defects of the other. Unfortunately, as the whole of the rest of history to our time has showed, the remedy was even worse than the disease.

The question is: is there a third way, a truly Christian way of conducting economic activity? Although this is not the place to enter into this question in detail, it will not be out of place here to cite the summary of a third way, distributism, as set out by an Orthodox priest, Fr. Joseph Gleason: “Distributism works similarly to how God ordered the economy in ancient Israel. Nearly everyone was given the right to own land (a means of production), but no one was given handouts. If you refused to work, then you would starve. But if you were willing to work hard on your land, or if you were willing to rent your land to someone willing to work it, then you could earn a living and support your family. You could sell your land, but only temporarily. Once every 50 years, God ordered there to be a Jubilee, where all debts would be forgiven, and all land would return to its previous owners. You could sell your land for a while, but you did not have a right to sell the inheritance of your grandchildren. Even if you had sold the land, within a few decades the land would return to you or to your descendants.

“The goal was to keep the land – the means of production – fairly evenly distributed throughout society. Think of it as many small business owners, instead of a few megacorporations.

“This is vastly different from communism. In communism, a few powerful people run the government, and the government owns everything. Most individuals own little or nothing.

“Under communism, you get handouts from the government, regardless of whether you work productively or not.

“Under distributism, you get no handouts from the government. Each person owns some means of production (such as land), but the only way you will eat, is if you voluntarily work to make that land fruitful.

“This is also vastly different from capitalism. In capitalism, a few powerful people run the big megacorporations, and the corporations own the vast majority of everything. Most individuals own little or nothing.

“Under capitalism, you get paid if you are useful to the corporations. If you are not useful to them, they don't care whether you live or die.

“Under distributism, no one is at the mercy of corporations. Since each person actually owns some means of production (such as land, or tools, or a small business), each person has an opportunity to work and produce food/income for his family.

“In the initial stages, capitalism is more tolerable than communism, because for a few decades, there is enough competition between businesses to offset the downsides. As long as there are numerous small businesses, if one treats workers badly, they can just leave and go work somewhere else. But as companies take over and devour one another, you end up with less and less actual competition, and more and more global megacorporations. They begin to subtly (or not so subtly) exercise the power of monopolies, leading to situations where workers either accept their terms or starve. And ‘work for us or starve’ is not materially any different from slavery.

“God does not intend the ‘fruits’ of labor to be evenly distributed. That would be communism, and that would not encourage anyone to work. It would just be a bunch of free handouts. No one would work, and then eventually everyone would starve. Communism doesn't work.

“God also does not intend for the means of production to be owned by a few powerful people, neither in the government (via communism), nor in megacorporations (via capitalism).

“God intends for the means of production to be widely distributed, owned by a wide number of people. Then it is up to each person to work hard, making those means of production fruitful.

“That is not capitalism, and that is not communism.

“That is distributism. And for much of human history, that is how economics worked. Only in modern times have capitalism and communism raised their ugly heads, overturning the old order.”¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ Gleason, *Facebook*, July 16, 2020.

10. KARL MARX

Karl Marx (1818-1883) was considerably less Utopian than the Utopian socialists. For he believed that the dystopia of the revolution would have to come before the utopia of socialism. In fact, being a son of the devil himself, he believed more in a satanic dystopia than in a paradisiac utopia...

"Born in Trier in 1818, Marx grew up a spoiled child, bullying younger sisters, taunting schoolmates – a budding ruffian. He was not popular even then, since sharp sarcasm does not make friends. At Friedrich Wilhelm Gymnasium Karl received high marks for German, Greek and Latin. He received poorer marks in history, mathematics, and French. He eventually went to the university at Bonn to study law; and played the part of enthusiastic student drinker and brawler. He participated in duels, got into trouble with the police, squandered his 'allowance' and ran up debts. He wrote nihilistic poems about wandering 'godlike and victorious through the ruins' of the world, about Devil-possessed and Hell-doomed fiddlers. He even wrote a play. Its leading characters were satanic and corrupt, overspilling with curses, homosexual fantasies and other dark passions. In this tye Marx wrote a love poem about murdering his beloved if he could not possess her. This was very characteristic. He burned with the desire to destroy everything he could not own. And since Marx could not own the world, he had a peculiar faculty for relishing the destruction of the world. It seems he was obsessed with the idea that he would be either a ruler or a destroyer. Great deeds would transform him into the equal of God – or, at least, he might rank with the Devil...

"Between attacks on compatriots he threw punches at civilization, property, God, family, church, state, laws, democracy, Jews, Russians, Kalmucks. 'Nothing existed which wasn't worth destroying' – his favourite line from Goethe's *Faust*, from the lips of his hero, Mephistopheles. Marx... sometimes even signed himself 'Old Nick' or 'Devil'. His own son once addressed him in a note: 'My Dear Devil'. His wife once referred to him as her 'black master'." ¹⁵⁸

Surprising as it may seem, Marx in his early life was a kind of Christian. But something – it seems that God did not grant him the heart of a girl he loved - led him not only to reject Christianity, but also violently war against it. Thus not atheism, but active *antitheism*, warfare against God, became the driving-force of his life. Richard Wurmbrand has demonstrated this from Marx's poems, especially *Olanem* (an anagram of "Emmanuel"). Karl Kengor writes: "Marx's poems and plays are rife with pacts with the devil, suicide pacts, violence, vengeance, fire, despair, destruction, and death. Marx waxed poetic about 'Hellish vapors,' about the 'Prince of Darkness' selling a 'blood-dark sword [that] shall stab unerringly within thy soul,' of 'Heaven I've forfeited, I know it full well, My soul, once true to God, Is Chosen for Hell.'" ¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ J. R. Nyquist, *Origins of the Fourth World War*, Chula Vista, Co.: Black Forest Press, 1999, pp. 148, 150.

¹⁵⁹ Interview with Paul Kengor, "Why Karl Marx Hated God, and Marxists Hate Christians", *Stream*, September 11, 2020.

Moses Hess called him "Dr. Marx – my idol, who will give the last kick to medieval religion and politics" ... George Jung, another friend of Marx, wrote even more clearly: "Marx will surely chase God from his heaven and will even sue him. Marx calls the Christian religion one of the most immoral of religions." The revolutionary Karl Heinzen "found Marx 'intolerably dirty', a 'cross between a cat and an ape', with 'dishevelled coat-black hair and dirty yellow complexion'. It was, he said, impossible to say whether his clothes and skin were naturally multi-coloured or just filthy. He had small, fierce, malicious eyes, 'spitting out spurts of wicked fire', he had a habit of saying: 'I will annihilate you'."¹⁶⁰

"Marx did not speak much publicly about metaphysics, but we can gather his views from the men with whom he associated. One of his associates in the First International was [the Russian nobleman and anarchist Mikhail] Bakunin, who wrote: 'Satan is the first free-thinker and Saviour of the world. He frees Adam and impresses the seal of humanity and liberty on his forehead by making him disobedient'...

"Bakunin does more than praise Lucifer. He has a concrete program of revolution, but not one that would free the poor from exploitation. He writes: 'In this revolution *we will have to awaken the devil in the people*, to stir up the basest passion'...

"Bakunin reveals that Proudhon, another major Socialist thinker and at that time a friend of Karl Marx, also 'worshipped Satan.'... Hess had introduced Marx to Proudhon, who wore the same hair style typical of the nineteenth-century Satanist sect of Joanna Southcott.

"Proudhon in 'About Justice in the Revolution, and in the Church', declared that God was the prototype for injustice. 'We reach knowledge in spite of him, we reach society in spite of him. Every step forward is a victory in which we overcome the Divine.'

"He exclaims, 'God is stupidity and cowardice; God is hypocrisy and falsehood; God is tyranny. Where humanity bows before the altar, humanity, the slave of kings and priests, will be condemned.. I swear, God, with my hand stretched out towards the heavens, that you are nothing more than the executioner of my reason, the scepter of my conscience... God is essentially anti-civilized, anti-liberal, anti-human.' Proudhon declares God to be evil because man, his creation, is evil. Such thoughts are not original. They are the usual contents of sermons in Satan-worship.

"Marx later quarreled with Proudhon and wrote a book to contradict his *Philosophy of Misery*, which contains the words quoted above. But Marx contradicted only minor economic doctrines. He had no objection to Proudhon's demonic anti-God rebellion."¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ Paul Johnson, *Intellectuals*, London: Harper Perennial, 1988, 2007, p. 71.

¹⁶¹ Wurmbrand, *Was Karl Marx a Satanist?* Diane Books, 1976, pp. 18-19, 20-22.

But Marx's vision was not without a god, a god who retained some of the personal – and vengeful – traits of the Old Testament God he was brought up to believe in. Only his name was not Jehovah, but History. As he said in 1856, "History is the judge, its executioner – the proletariat" ...¹⁶²

"He was fond of quoting Mephistopheles' line from Goethe's *Faust*, 'Everything that exists deserves to perish'; he used it, for instance, in his tract against Napoleon III, 'The Eighteenth Brumaire', and this apocalyptic vision of an immense, impending catastrophe on the existing system remained with him throughout his life: it is there in the poetry, it is the background to the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848, and it is the climax of *Capital* itself.

"Marx, in short, is an eschatological writer from start to finish. It is notable, for instance, that in the original draft of *The German Ideology* (1845-46) he included a passage strongly reminiscent of his poems, dealing with 'the Day of Judgement', 'when the reflections of burning cities are seen in the heavens... and when the 'celestial harmonies' consist of the melodies of the *Marseillaise* and the *Carmagnole*, to the accompaniment of thundering cannon, while the guillotine beats times and the inflamed masses scream *Ca ira, ca ira*, and self-consciousness is hanged at the lamppost' ..."¹⁶³

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Richard Pipes writes: "Socialism is commonly thought of as a theory which aims at a fairer distribution of wealth for the ultimate purpose of creating a free and just society. Indisputably this is the stated program of socialists. But behind this program lurks an even more ambitious goal, which is creating a new type of human being. The underlying premise is the idea of Helvétius that by establishing an environment which makes social behaviour a natural instinct, socialism will enable man to realize his potential to the fullest. This, in turn, will make it possible, ultimately, to dispense with the state and the compulsion which is said to be its principal attribute. All socialist doctrines, from the most moderate to the most extreme, assume that human beings are infinitely malleable because their personality is the product of the economic environment: a change in that environment must, therefore, alter them as well as their behaviour.

"Marx pursued philosophical studies mainly in his youth. When, as a twenty-six-year-old émigré in Paris, he immersed himself in philosophy, he at once grasped the political implications of the ideas of Helvétius and his French contemporaries. In *The Holy Family* (1844-45), the book which marked his and Engels's break with idealistic radicalism, he took his philosophical and psychological premises directly from Locke and Helvétius: 'The whole development of man...', he wrote, 'depends on *education* and *environment*.' 'If man draws all his knowledge, sensations, etc., from the world of the senses and the experience gained from it, the empirical world must be arranged so that in it man

¹⁶² Marx, in Paul Johnson, *Intellectuals*, London: Harper Perennial, 1988, 2007, p. 55.

¹⁶³ Johnson, op. cit., p. 55.

experiences and gets used to what is really human... If man is shaped by his surroundings, his surroundings must be made human.'

"This, the *locus classicus* of Marxist philosophy, justifies a total change in the way society is organized – that is, revolution. According to this way of thinking, which indeed inexorably flows from the philosophical premises of Locke and Helvétius, man and society do not come into existence by a natural process but are 'made'. This 'radical behaviorism', as it has been called, inspired Marx in 1845 to coin what is probably his most celebrated aphorism: 'The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways: the point, however, is to change it.' Of course, the moment a thinker begins to conceive his mission to be not 'only' observing the world and adapting to it, but changing it, he ceases to be a philosopher and turns into a politician with his own political agenda and interests.

"Now, the world can conceivably be 'changed' gradually, by means of education and legislation. And such a gradual change is, indeed, what all intellectuals would advocate if their exclusive concern were with improving the human condition, since evolution allows for trial and error, the only proven road to progress. But many of those who want to change the world regard human discontent as something not to be remedied but exploited. Exploitation of resentment, not its satisfaction, has been at the center of socialist politics since the 1840s: it is what distinguished the self-styled 'scientific' socialists from their 'utopian' forerunners. This attitude has led to the emergence of what Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu called in 1902, in a remarkably prescient book, the 'politics of hatred'. Socialism, he noted, elevates 'hatred to the heights of principle', sharing with its mortal enemies, nationalism and anti-Semitism, the need 'chirurgically' to isolate and destroy the alleged enemy.' Committed radicals fear reform because it deprives them of leverage and establishes the ruling elite more solidly in power: they prefer the most savage repression. The slogan of Russian revolutionaries – '*chem khuzhe, tem luchshe*' ('the worse, the better') spelled out this kind of thinking."¹⁶⁴

What distinguished Marx from his fellow rebels against God was his ability to create a philosophical, historicist, pseudo-scientific justification for his rebellion. The others, especially Bakunin and Proudhon, were "pure" revolutionaries. Marx was, supposedly, a scientific one, but, as Paul Johnson has demonstrated, the science of both Marx and Engels was fraudulent...

As Evans writes, Marx "gravitated towards the Young Hegelians at the University of Berlin, one of whom, Feuerbach (1804-72), was the source of Marx's famous statement 'Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world: the point is to change it'. Marx became a freelance writer, penning articles for a recently founded radical paper based in Cologne, the *Rheinische Zeitung*. The paper was closed by the authorities in April 1843, and three months later Marx moved to Paris. His reading of the French socialists led him to see in the abolition of private property and the establishment of communal and collective forms of labour the way to overcome the alienation of the workers' labour through the

¹⁶⁴ Pipes, *Russia under the Bolsheviks, 1919-1924*, pp. 135-137.

appropriation of its products by the employers. Socializing with radicals in Paris also brought Marx for the first time into contact with Friedrich Engels (1820-95), who became his lifelong collaborator.”¹⁶⁵

What is the relationship between Hegelianism and its most influential offspring, Marxism? Marx proclaimed himself a disciple of the “great thinker”, Hegel and his “dialectical method”. “But, he says, his own ‘dialectical method’ is in ‘direct opposition’ to Hegel’s. For Hegel, the thought-process is the creator of the real, whereas in my view the ideal is nothing more than the material when it has been transposed and translated inside the human head.’ Hence, he argues, ‘in Hegel’s writings, dialectic stands on its head. You must turn it the right way up again if you want to discover the rational kernel that is hidden away within the wrappings of mystification.’”¹⁶⁶

Timothy Snyder explains: “G.W.F. Hegel’s ambition was to resolve the difference between what is and what should be. His claim was that something called Spirit, a unity of all thoughts and minds, was emerging over time, through the conflicts that defined epochs. Hegel’s was an appealing way of seeing our fractious world, since it suggested that catastrophe was an indication of progress. History was a ‘slaughter bench’, but the bloodshed had a purpose. This idea allowed philosophers to pose as prophets, seers of hidden patterns that would resolve themselves into a better world, judges of who had to suffer now so that all would benefit later. If Spirit was the only good, then any means that History chose for its realization was also good.

“Karl Marx was critical of Hegel’s idea of Spirit. He and other Left Hegelians claimed that Hegel had smuggled God into his system under the heading of Spirit. The absolute good, suggested Marx, was not God but humanity’s lost essence. History was a struggle, but its sense was man’s overcoming of circumstance to regain his own nature. The emergence of technology, argued Marx, allowed some men to dominate others, forming social classes. Under capitalism, the bourgeoisie controlled the means of production, oppressing the mass of workers. This very oppression instructed workers about the character of history and made them revolutionaries. The proletariat would overthrow the bourgeoisie, seize the means of production, and thereby restore man to himself. Once there was no property, thought Marx, human beings would live in happy cooperation...”¹⁶⁷

Sir Isaiah Berlin writes: “When Hegel, and after him Marx, describe historical processes, they too assume that human beings and their societies are part and parcel of a wider nature, which Hegel regards as spiritual, and Marx as material, in character. Great social forces are at work of which only the acutest and most gifted individuals are aware; the ordinary run of men are blind in varying degrees to that which truly shapes their lives, they worship fetishes and invent childish mythologies, which they dignify with the title of views or theories in order to explain the world in which they live. From time to time the real forces –

¹⁶⁵ Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

¹⁶⁶ Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-57.

¹⁶⁷ Snyder, *The Road to Unfreedom*, London: Vintage, 2018, pp. 30-31.

impersonal and irresistible – which truly govern the world develop to a point where a new historical advance is ‘due’. Then (as both Hegel and Marx notoriously believed) the crucial moments of advance are reached; these take the form of violent, cataclysmic leaps, destructive revolutions which, often with fire and sword, establish a new order upon the ruins of the old. Inevitably the foolish, obsolete, purblind, homemade philosophies of the denizens of the old establishment are knocked over and swept away together with their possessors.

“For Hegel, and for a good many others, though by no means all, among the philosophers and poets of the romantic movement, history is a perpetual struggle of vast spiritual forces embodied now in institutions – Churches, races, civilisations, empires, national States – now in individuals of more than human stature – ‘world-historical figures’ – of bold and ruthless genius, towering over, and contemptuous of, their puny contemporaries. For Marx, the struggle is a fight between socially conditioned, organised groups – classes shaped by the struggle for subsistence and survival and consequently for the control of power. There is a sardonic note (inaudible only to their most benevolent and single-hearted followers) in the words of both these thinkers as they contemplate the discomfiture and destruction of the philistines, the ordinary men and women caught in one of the decisive moments of history. Both Hegel and Marx conjure up an image of peaceful and foolish human beings, largely unaware of the part they play in history, building their homes, with touching hope and simplicity, upon the green slopes of what seems to them a peaceful mountainside, trusting in the permanence of their particular way of life, their own economic, social and political order, treating their own values as if they were eternal standards, living, working, fighting without any awareness of the cosmic processes of which their lives are but a passing stage. But the mountain is no ordinary mountain; it is a volcano; and when (as the philosopher always knew that it would) the inevitable eruption comes, their homes and their elaborately tended institutions and their ideals and their ways of life and values will be blown out of existence in the cataclysm which marks the leap from the ‘lower’ to a ‘higher’ stage. When this point is reached, the two great prophets of destruction are in their element; they enter into their inheritance; they survey the conflagration with a defiant, almost Byronic, irony and disdain. To be wise is to understand the direction in which the world is inexorably moving, to identify oneself with the rising power which ushers in the new world. Marx – and it is part of his attraction to those of a similar emotional cast – identifies himself exultantly, in his way no less passionately than Nietzsche or Bakunin, with the great force which in its very destructiveness is creative, and is greeted with bewilderment and horror only by those whose values are hopelessly subjective, who listen to their consciences, their feelings, or to what their nurses or teachers tell them, without realising the glories of life in a world which moves from explosion to explosion to fulfil the great cosmic design. When history takes her revenge – and every *enragé* prophet in the nineteenth century looks to her to avenge him against those he hates most – the mean, pathetic, ludicrous stifling human anthills will be justly pulverised; justly, because what is just and unjust, good and bad, is determined by the goal towards which all creation is tending. Whatever is on the side of victorious reason is just and wise; whatever is on the other side, on the side of the world that is doomed to destruction by the working of the forces of reason, is rightly called foolish,

ignorant, subjective, arbitrary, blind; and, if it goes so far as to try to resist the forces that are destined to supplant it, then it – that is to say, the fools and knaves and mediocrities who constitute it – is rightly called retrograde, wicked, obscurantist, perversely hostile to the deepest interests of mankind.

“Different though the tone of these forms of determinism may be – whether scientific, humanitarian and optimistic or furious, apocalyptic and exultant – they agree in this: that the world has a direction and is governed by laws, and that the direction and the laws can in some degree be discovered by employing the proper techniques of investigation; and moreover that the working of these laws can only be grasped by those who realise that the lives, characters and acts of individuals, both mental and physical, are governed by the large ‘wholes’ to which they belong, and that it is the independent evolution of these ‘wholes’ that constitutes the so-called ‘forces’ in terms of whose direction truly ‘scientific’ (or ‘philosophic’) history must be formulated. To find the explanation of why given individuals, or groups of them, act or think or feel in one way rather than another, one must first seek to understand the structure, the state of development and the direction of such ‘wholes’, for example, the social, economic, political, religious institutions to which such individuals belong; once that is known, the behaviour of the individuals (or the most characteristic among them) should become almost logically deducible, and does not constitute a separate problem. Ideas about the identity of these large entities or forces, and their functions, differ from theorist to theorist. Race, colour, Church, nation, class; climate, irrigation, technology, geopolitical situation; civilisation, social structure, the Human Spirit, the Collective Unconscious, to take some of these concepts at random, have all played their parts in theologico-historical systems as the protagonists upon the stage of history. They are represented as the real forces of which individuals are ingredients, at once constitutive, and the most articulate expressions, of this or that phase of them. Those who are more clearly and deeply aware than others of the part which they play, whether willingly or not, to that degree play it more boldly and effectively; these are the natural leaders. Others, led by their own petty personal concerns into ignoring or forgetting that they are parts of a continuous or convulsive pattern of change, are deluded into assuming that (or, at any rate, into acting as if) they and their fellows are stabilised at some fixed level for ever.

“What the variants of either of these attitudes entail, like all forms of genuine determinism, is the elimination of the notion of individual responsibility. It is, after all, natural enough for men, whether for practical reasons or because they are given to reflection, to ask who or what is responsible for this or that state of affairs which they view with satisfaction or anxiety, enthusiasm or horror. If the history of the world is due to the operation of identifiable forces other than, and little affected by, free human wills and free choices (whether these occur or not), then the proper explanation of what happens must be given in terms of the evolution of such forces. And there is then a tendency to say that not individuals, but these larger entities, are ultimately ‘responsible’. I live at a particular moment of time in the spiritual and social and economic circumstances into which I have been cast: how then can I help choosing and acting as I do? The values in terms of which I conduct my life are the values of my class, or race, or Church, or civilisation, or are part and parcel of my ‘station’ – my position in the ‘social

structure'. Nobody denies that it would be stupid as well as cruel to blame me for not being taller than I am, or to regard the colour of my hair or the qualities of my intellect or heart as being due principally to my own free choice; these attributes are as they are through no decision of mine. If I extend this category without limit, then whatever it is, is necessary and inevitable. This unlimited extension of necessity, on any of the views described above, becomes intrinsic to the explanation of everything. To blame and praise, consider possible alternative courses of action, accuse or defend historical figures for acting as they do or did, becomes an absurd activity. Admiration and contempt for this or that individual may indeed continue, but it becomes akin to aesthetic judgement. We can eulogise or deplore, feel love or hatred, satisfaction or shame, but we can neither blame nor justify. Alexander, Caesar, Attila, Mohammed, Cromwell, Hitler are like floods and earthquakes, sunsets, oceans, mountains; we may admire or fear them, welcome or curse them, but to denounce or extol their acts is (ultimately) as sensible as addressing sermons to a tree (as Frederick the Great pointed out with his customary pungency in the course of his attack on Holbach's *System of Nature*)..."¹⁶⁸

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If we cut through the philosophical and pseudo-scientific figleaf of Marxist theory, we find that the essence of Marxism consists in *rebellion based on envy*, the envy of the poor for the rich, on which motivational base Marx made two fundamental false prophecies. The first was that the poor would continue to get poorer, although already in the 1850s and 1860s it was obvious that they were getting richer. And the second was that the revolution would take place in the advanced capitalist economies (such as Germany or Britain), whereas, as we all know, its first major victory was in the relatively backward agrarian economy of Russia...

Although wrong in both these predictions, Marx was right in seeing inequality as a permanent and inescapable characteristic of capitalism. For as the great economist Joseph A. Schumpeter said: "Capitalism does not merely mean that the housewife may influence production by her choice between peas and beans; or that the youngster may choose whether he wants to work in a factory or on a farm; or that plant managers have some voice in deciding what and how to produce: it means a scheme of values, an attitude toward life, a civilization - the civilization of inequality and of the family fortune,"¹⁶⁹ But if capitalism is "the civilization of inequality", then so long as men are envious of those richer and more successful than themselves, the temptation to overthrow the system and civilization by force will continue to exist, which is why Marxism survives all demonstrations of its falsehood in theory and practice, and in our time is as vital as ever in its modern reincarnation as "Cultural Marxism"...

¹⁶⁸ Berlin, *Karl Marx*.

¹⁶⁹ Schumpeter, "The March into Socialism", in *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, December, 1949, p. 419.

11. THE 1848 REVOLUTION: (1) ITALY

In Europe meanwhile, revolution was brewing. The first sign of it was the 1844 Silesian Uprising of starving workers, which Marx discussed at length.

“The profound thinker V.A. Zhukovsky, in January, 1848, in an excerpt from a letter, *What is Going to Happen*, prophetically foretold the bloody chaos of which we are the witnesses in our own days.

“‘We live,’ wrote Zhukovsky, ‘on the crater of a volcano which not long ago was giving out fire, which calmed down and which is now again preparing to throw up. Its first lava flow has not yet cooled, and already in its depths a new one is bubbling, and the thunder of stones flying out of the abyss is announcing that it will soon pour out. One revolution has ended, and another stepping on its toes, and what is remarkable is that the course of the last is observing the same order as did the first, in spite of the difference in their characters. The two are similar in their first manifestations, and now, as then, they are beginning with a shaking of the main foundation of order: religion. But now they are doing it in a bolder way and on a broader scale. Then they attack the faith obliquely, preaching tolerance, but now they are directly attacking every faith and blatantly preaching atheism; then they were secretly undermining Christianity, apparently arming themselves against the abuses of Church authorities, but now they are yelling from the roots that both Christianity and the Church and the Church authorities and every authority is nothing other than abuse. What is the aim of the present reformers? – I am speaking about those who *sincerely* desire *what is better*, sincerely believe in the reality and beneficence of their speculations. What is the aim of the present reformers, who are entering on the same path which their predecessors trod, whose end we saw with shuddering, knowing that the desired improvement would never be found there? What is the aim of the present reformers? They themselves do not clearly see it. It is very probable that many of them are deceiving themselves, and, while going forward with banners on which there shine the words of our age: *forward, freedom, equality, humanity*, they themselves are sure that their path leads straight to the promised land. And perhaps it is fated for them, as for many others of their predecessors, to shudder on the edge or on the bottom of this abyss, which will soon open up under their feet.

“‘Behind these preachers of education and progress, who are acting *openly*, others are acting *in secret*, who are not blinded, who have a practical aim which they see clearly in front of them: for them it is no longer a matter of political transformation, or of the destruction of privileges and age-old historical formations (that was already accomplished in the first revolution), but simply of the annihilation of the difference between *yours and mine*, or, more correctly, of turning *yours into mine*.’”¹⁷⁰

¹⁷⁰V. F. Ivanov, *Russkaia Intelligentsia i Masonstvo: ot Petra I do nashikh dnei* (The Russian Intelligentsia and Masonry: from Peter I to our Days), Harbin, 1934, Moscow, 1997, pp. 337-338.

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

“A European economic cataclysm thus coincided with the visible corrosion of the old regimes. A peasant uprising in Galicia in 1846; the election of a ‘liberal’ Pope in the same year; a civil war between radicals and Catholics in Switzerland in later 1847, won by the radicals; one of the perennial Sicilian autonomist insurrections in Palermo in early 1848: they were not merely straws in the wind, they were the first squalls of the gale. Everyone knew it. Rarely has revolution been more universally predicted, though not necessarily for the right countries or the right dates. An entire continent waited, ready by now to pass the news of revolution almost instantly from city to city by means of the electric telegraph. In 1831 Victor Hugo had written that he already heard ‘the dull sound of revolution, still deep down in the earth, pushing out under every kingdom in Europe its subterranean galleries from the central shaft of the mine which is Paris’. In 1847 the sound was loud and close. In 1848 the explosion burst.”¹⁷¹

1848 was another explosion on the gunpowder trail set alight in 1789; it employed essentially the same slogans and, by the mercy of God, came to the same damp squib end. As the great Russian poet and diplomat, Fyodor Ivanovich Tiutchev, wrote: “The human I, wishing to depend only on itself, not recognizing and not accepting any other law besides its own will - in a word, the human I, taking the place of God, - does not, of course, constitute something new among men. But such has it become when raised to the status of a political and social right, and when it strives, by virtue of this right, to rule society. This is the new phenomenon which acquired the name of the French revolution in 1789.”¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*, pp. 370-371.

¹⁷² Tiutchev, *Russia and the Revolution*, 1848.

Let us look more closely at events in Rome, where, surprisingly, it all began. Now Rome was the most reactionary, the most absolutist of all the monarchies of Europe. Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh write: "Writing in the 1850s, an historian and Catholic apologist described the Papal States of the immediate post-Napoleonic period as 'a benevolent autocracy'. Between 1823 and 1846, some 200,000 people in this 'benevolent autocracy' were consigned to the galleys, banished into exile, sentenced to life imprisonment or to death. Torture by the Inquisitors of the Holy Office was routinely practised. Every community, whether small rural village or major city, maintained a permanent gallows in its central square. Repression was rampant and surveillance constant, with Papal spies lurking everywhere. Meetings of more than three people were officially banned. Railways were banned because Pope Gregory XVI believed they might 'work harm to religion'.¹⁷³ Newspapers were also banned. According to a decree of Pope Pius VIII, anyone possessing a book written by a heretic was to be considered a heretic himself. Anyone overhearing criticism of the Holy Office and not reporting it to the authorities was deemed as guilty as the critic. For reading a book on the Index, or for eating meat on Friday, one could be imprisoned."¹⁷⁴

A revolution in papal policy was created by Pope Pius IX (1846-1878), who envisioned himself, in his capacity of pontiff, serving as a divinely ordained conduit and instrument for Italy's rebirth. He dreamed of presiding over a confederation of Italian states. He even elicited hopeful appeals for support from Mazzini and Garibaldi, who in their naivety fancied they might find a new ally in the Church. Pius "began his career as a radical. His family, the Mastai, were supporters of Italy's revolutionary national movement and his predecessor Gregory XVI, complained that even Cardinal Mastai's cat was a Freemason... Mastai, whose Church career had been outside Rome, and who knew little of Vatican politics, was something of an innocent: approachable, informal and very devout. Having been elected in June 1846 as a compromise candidate between two high-profile cardinals, he quickly showed his political colours. He freed political prisoners and allowed political exiles to return, removed censorship, created an elected advisory council, and even established a French revolutionary-style National Guard of Roman citizens. He also announced his intention of modernizing his state by introducing the telegraph, gas lighting and railways.

"Reform-starved Roman were ecstatic. When Pius freed political prisoners people wept with joy and a huge crowd marched to the Quirinal Palace to give thanks. Thereafter, when Pius passed through the city people threw flowers from balconies, knelt down by the roadside, and even removed the horses from his carriage and pulled it along themselves. A patriotic fervour seized the city as

¹⁷³ Pope Gregory, according to Matthew Kneale (*Rome. A History in Seven Sackings*, London: Simon Schuster, 2017, p. 222), "banned the telegraph, gas lighting and also railways. The latter, whose French name was *chemins de fer*, he denounced as *chemins d'enfer*, or 'the ways of hell'." (V.M.)

¹⁷⁴ Baigent and Leigh, *The Inquisition*, London: Penguin, 1999, p. 196.

festivals were held, bands played revolutionary hymns and churches were illuminated with the Italian tricolour. It was not only Romans who were excited by the strange spectacle of a radical pope, and by 1847 his reforms raised expectations across Europe. These hopes became self-fulfilling and in early 1848 uprisings broke out in Palermo, Naples and across the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, whose intensely reactionary king, Ferdinand II, was forced to offer his people a constitution. In February and March revolutions engulfed mainland Europe. In Paris, Vienna, Berlin and across Germany and Italy, governments teetered as monarchs fled their palaces and offered constitutions to their peoples. After five days of street fighting the Milanese flung out a 19,000-strong Austrian garrison¹⁷⁵ and King Carlo Alberto of Piedmont declared war on Austria. To Romans it seemed it could only be a matter of time before Pius IX was president of a free and united Italy."¹⁷⁶

But then the counter-revolution began. On 24 July 1848 King Charles Albert "was routed at Custoza, a few miles from Verona. He fell back on Milan, with the old Austrian Marshal Josef Radetzky in hot pursuit; and on 4 August he asked for an armistice. Two days later the Milanese also surrendered, and the indomitable old marshal led his army back into the city."¹⁷⁷ The last Italian republic was Venice, which had proclaimed the "Republic of San Marco" under Daniele Manin. It was besieged by the Austrians, and on August 24, 1849 capitulated to Radetzky on honourable terms.¹⁷⁸ Manin fled on a French ship to Paris...

Meanwhile, Pope Pius IX had betrayed the revolution he had done so much to excite. "Pius enjoyed his popularity but he had no intention of losing his kingdom, even to become president of Italy. He also feared that if he provoked the Habsburgs, Austria might secede from the Catholic Church, as England had under Henry VIII. Stresses grew as Romans began to doubt his revolutionary convictions. On 29 April 1848, against the advice of his cabinet, who resigned en masse, Pius shocked Romans by announcing that he would not join other Italian states in going to war with Austria."¹⁷⁹

"How could he possibly condone a policy of such naked aggression, against a Catholic country [Austria] too? In any case, the last thing he wanted was a united Italy: apart from anything else, what would then become of the Papal States? Obviously he must make his position clear. He did so in his so-called Allocution of 29 April 1848. Far from leading the campaign for a united Italy, he declared, he

¹⁷⁵ "The great insurrection known to all Italians as the *cinque giornate* - the five days of 18-22 March - had driven the Austrians from the city and instituted a republican government. On the last of those days, in Turin, a stirring front-page article had appeared in the newspaper *Il Risorgimento*, written by its editor, Count Camillo Cavour. 'The supreme hour has sounded,' he wrote. 'One way alone is open for the nation, for the government, for the King. War!'" (John Julius Norwich, *France. From Gaul to De Gaulle*, London: John Murray, 2019, p. 274). (V.M.)

¹⁷⁶ Kneale, *Rome*, pp. 222-223.

¹⁷⁷ Norwich, *France*, p. 275.

¹⁷⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniele_Manin.

¹⁷⁹ Kneale, *Rome*, p. 223.

actively opposed it. God-fearing Italians should forget the whole thing and pledge their loyalty once again to their individual princes.

"The news of the Allocution was received with horror by all Italian patriots. The Pope's popularity disappeared overnight; now it was his turn to look revolution in the face. For seven months he struggled to hold the situation; but when on 13 November his chief minister, Count Pellegrino Rossi, was hacked to death as he was entering the Chancellery, Pius realized that – not for the first time – Rome was no longer safe for its pope. On the 24th, aided by the French ambassador and disguised as a simple priest, he fled [in the carriage of the Bavarian ambassador] to Gaeta – which was in Neapolitan territory, and where King Ferdinand gave him a warm welcome."¹⁸⁰

"The Pope's flight," writes Evans, "led to the proclamation of the Roman Republic, in which Mazzini, elected an honorary citizen by a unanimous vote of the democratic Assembly, played the leading role. Mazzini proved to be an unexpectedly competent administrator, winning general approval for his modest way of life, his probity and his effectiveness. He closed down the Inquisition and made over its premises for the accommodation of the poor, scrapped the censorship and abolished the death penalty, introduced public courts run by lay judges, set up a progressive taxation system and introduced religious toleration. His commissioner in Ancona, a town on the Adriatic coast of the Papal States, Felice Orsini (1819-58), a former *carbonaro*, restored order in the midst of a crime wave. The American writer Margaret Fuller (1810-50), visiting Rome at the time, called Mazzini 'a man of genius, an elevated thinker' and compared him to Julius Caesar..."¹⁸¹

However, "by early April 1849 Europe's revolutionary tide had ebbed to the point where Rome, Venice and Hungary were the last holdouts in a sea of reaction. Four powers – Austria, Spain, Naples and France – had pronounced their determination to defeat Rome's Republic and place Pope Pius back on his throne. Austria was in the process of seizing towns in the northern Papal States and Ferdinand of Naples – King Bomba – was threatening from the south and east."¹⁸²

It was surprising because "nearly twenty years before, Louis Napoleon had been implicated in an anti-papal plot and expelled from Rome."¹⁸³ The explanation was that in December, 1848 Louis Napoleon had been elected "Prince-President" of the French Second Republic. He "was aware of the need to win over conservatives and monarchists in France to his support, as well as to turn popular hostility to Austria to his own advantage. A French expedition to Rome to restore the Pope to his throne would win Catholic support in France and satisfy liberals and leftists by pre-empting the Austrian threat to do the same.

¹⁸⁰ Norwich, *France*, p. 274. Ferdinand was able to do this because he had "shelled his rebellious subjects into submission, earning himself the nickname 'King Bomba'" (Kneale, *Rome*, p. 224).

¹⁸¹ Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

¹⁸² Kneale, *Rome*, pp. 228-229.

¹⁸³ Norwich, *France*, p. 276.

"In March 1849 the Assembly approved the sending of an expedition, and on 24 April, 6,000 French troops led by Charles Oudinot (1791-1863), who had fought with the first Napoleon from 1809 to 1814, landed on the Italian coast and moved towards Rome. Mazzini had been joined in Rome by Garibaldi, who had come back from exile in South America the previous August and taken part with his band of 500 volunteers in the fighting in northern Italy. Mazzini put him in charge of military affairs in Rome. Eight thousand troops of the Roman Republic surprised the French on 30 April and drove them back with heavy losses in a fierce bayonet charge, led by Garibaldi himself brandishing a sabre. Further republican victories followed against a Neapolitan army approaching from the south. Louis-Napoleon knew that the humiliation of Oudinot's defeat had to be avenged if he was to continue to associate himself plausibly with the military legend of his uncle. Oudinot moved heavy artillery up to the heights around the Eternal City and began a systematic bombardment.

"On 3-4 June an assault on Italian positions allowed the French to move further forward, and by 22 June they had captured the outer walls of the city. With their ceaseless cannonades causing huge destruction and loss of life, the French entered the city on the night of 29-30 June, beating back Garibaldi's volunteers, who had now begun to wear the red shirts that later made them famous. Recognizing defeat, Garibaldi told Mazzini the game was up. The veteran revolutionary left for renewed exile in Switzerland, while Garibaldi led his volunteers out of Rome on an epic march across the mountains towards Venice, during which his wife Anita died and most of his followers were captured by the Austrians... Garibaldi himself managed to make his way to the coast and sail to the Americas, where he eked out a living in a variety of countries over the next few years..."¹⁸⁴

In 1850, Pius was restored to his throne. "His political position, however, now made no concessions of any kind to liberalism or reform; and the regime he established in his own domains was to become increasingly hated."¹⁸⁵ He "disregarded Louis-Napoleon's advice to respect the liberties of his subjects, re-established the Inquisition, forced the Jews back into the old ghetto, and refused to amnesty the majority of the Republic's officials."¹⁸⁶

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The deeper cause of the failure of the Italian revolution, at least in 1848-49, was the fact that Italy before 1848 was still little more than "a geographical expression", in Metternich's phrase; and, as the Tuscan radical, Giuseppe Montanelli, said, "there was no unity of direction; therefore there was no national government. We fought as Piedmontese, as Tuscans, as Neapolitans, as Romans, not as Italians." Garibaldi said that "nothing but a rope's end will serve to persuade us Italians to

¹⁸⁴ Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 216-217.

¹⁸⁵ Baigent and Leigh, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

¹⁸⁶ Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

pull together..."¹⁸⁷ Thus when the Austrians counter-attacked against revolutionary Milan and Venice, many of their soldiers were poor Italians who distrusted the urban revolutionaries. Again, the Bourbon King of the Two Sicilies Ferdinand II found allies amongst the Neapolitan poor.¹⁸⁸

Mazzini's slogan, *Italia farà da sé* (Italy will do it alone), had failed – for the time being.

¹⁸⁷ Garibaldi, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 561.

¹⁸⁸ Almond, *op. cit.*, pp. 103, 104.

12. THE 1848 REVOLUTION: (2) FRANCE

The pattern of events in France between 1848 and 1851 was remarkably similar to that of the First French Revolution: constitutional monarchy, followed by revolution, followed by one-man dictatorship under a man by the name of Napoleon... As Alfonse Karr wrote in *Le Figaro*, "plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose."¹⁸⁹

Another thing that did not change was the participation of the Masons. As was to be expected, the revolution in France was not without their secret participation. As L.A. Tikhomirov writes: "Revolutionary agitation between the years 1830 and 1848 was carried out mainly by the *Carbonari* and various 'Young Germanies', 'Young Italies', etc. In the Masonic world before 1848 something powerful, similar to 1789, was being planned, and preparations for the revolution went ahead strongly in all countries. In 1847 a big Masonic convention was convened in Strasbourg from deputies elected at several small conventions convened earlier... At the convention it was decided to 'masonize' the Swiss cantons and then produce a revolutionary explosion at the same time throughout Europe. As we know, movement did in fact follow, with a difference of several months, in a whole series of countries: Paris, Vienna, Berlin, Milan, Parma, Venice, etc. Reformist 'banquets' laying the beginning of the revolution in Paris were organized by the directors of the Masonic lodges..."¹⁹⁰

As a result of all this Masonic activity, the monarchical principle was now much weaker, making a restoration of the old hereditary monarchy still less problematic than after 1789. (As we shall see, the eventual victor, Louis-Napoleon III, was not really a king, but really a usurper on the model of his uncle, Napoleon I.) Thus in January, 1848 Tocqueville declared: "The old monarchy [of Louis XVI] was stronger than you, because of its [hereditary] origin; it had better support than you from ancient practices, old customs, ancient beliefs; it was stronger than you, and yet it fell into the dust. Can you not feel - how shall I put it? - the wind of revolution in the air?"¹⁹¹ These new, democratic winds could hardly fail to be felt when, as a result of it, many thousands of "Poles, Danes, Germans, Italians, Magyars, Czechs and Slovaks, Croats, and Romanians rose up in arms, claiming the right of self government."

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"On 1 January 1848," writes Zamoyski, "King Louis Philippe told a foreign diplomat that 'two things are from now on impossible in France: revolution and war.' In a sense that he did not intend, he was right. The great revolution that was meant to consummate the work of 1789 would abort itself, while the great war for the liberation of nations would never be declared. In effect, 1848 was to see the

¹⁸⁹ Karr, *The Wasps*, January, 1849, p. 305; in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 563.

¹⁹⁰ Tikhomirov, *Religiozno-Filosofskie Osnovy Istorii (The Religio-Philosophical Foundations of History)*, Moscow, 1997, p. 463.

¹⁹¹ Tocqueville, in Almond, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

death of the ideals of 1789. They were drowned beneath the waves of two new forces: a Darwinian nationalism based on the right of the strongest and a materialistic socialism that would, in time, enslave half the world...

"On 21 February the conservative government of François Guizot refused permission for the last in a series of public banquets held by radicals in order to air the grievances of the working classes. The organizers accepted this decision, but a group of students did not. The following day they assembled at the Panthéon and marched by a roundabout route taking in the poorest areas of Paris so that by the time they reached the Palais Bourbon, seat of the National Assembly, they had snowballed into a huge crowd. The police did their best to disperse it, but barricades began going up in various quarters. The National Guard was called out and troops went into action. A few of the barricades were taken and dismantled, after which the troops retired for the night. The persistent drizzle acted as a dampener on spirits, and there was none of the fire and passion of the July Days of 1830. But on the morning of 23 February there were fresh demonstrations, leading to clashes with troops. More barricades went up, and the red flag appeared in the rue Montmartre.

"What rattled the ageing Louis Philippe and stopped him from responding with firmness was that National Guardsmen from the poorer sections were joining the insurgents and only those from the wealthier *quartiers* were standing by him. He therefore dismissed Guizot and promised a measure of reform. This defused the situation, and by the evening of 23 February the streets were full of celebration, some of it admittedly a little rowdy. On the Boulevard des Capucines there was an altercation between troops and a group of civilians, during which tempers frayed. A random shot was taken by the troops as a signal to open fire. The result was a heap of corpses, which were duly arrayed on a wagon and paraded around the city by torchlight. More barricades went up, and by the evening of 24 February the revolution had started in earnest.

"Louis-Philippe tried to restore order through a combination of military force and another change of government, but soon realized that it was too late. He abdicated in favour of his grandson, the Comte de Paris, and left the Tuileries, which were promptly sacked.¹⁹² But the Comte de Paris was not to reign..."¹⁹³

The Masons loudly expressed their joy at the initial success of the revolution in Paris. "On March 10, 1848 the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite welcomed the Provisional government. On March 24 a delegation of the Grand Orient also welcomed the Provisional government and was received by two ministers, Crémieux and Garnier-Pagès... who came out in their Masonic regalia..."¹⁹⁴

"Soon," wrote Mikhail Bakunin on March 13, "perhaps in less than a year, the monstrous Austrian empire will be destroyed. The liberated Italians will proclaim

¹⁹² He fled with his wife to England, disguised as Mr. and Mrs. Smith. (V.M.)

¹⁹³ Zamoycki, *op. cit.*, pp. 329, 334-335.

¹⁹⁴ Tikhomirov, *op. cit.*, p. 464.

an Italian republic. The Germans, united into a single great nation, will proclaim a German republic. The Polish democrats after seventeen years in exile will return to their homes. The revolutionary movement will stop only when Europe, the whole of Europe, *not excluding Russia*, is turned into a federal democratic republic..."¹⁹⁵

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"The overthrow of Louis-Philippe," writes John Julius Norwich, "left France once again in a quandary: who or what was to be put in his place? The Second French Republic was duly proclaimed [in the Chamber of Deputies], in the name of a provisional government, by the poet and statesman Alphonse de Lamartine, but from the beginning it was split down the middle into two hostile groups: the *National*, based at the Hotel Bourbon and represented by Lamartine himself, who wanted a normal republic based on traditional institutions, with early elections to decide who was to run it; and the *Réforme*, based at the Hotel de Ville and headed by the extreme left-wing Louis Blanc, who sought something a good deal more drastic – a proto-communist reform of society, with an equalisation of wages and a merging of personal interests in the common good. They also wanted elections to be delayed while plans for this new order were worked out. The *National* called for the retention of the Tricolour; the *Réforme* for the adoption of the Red Flag. Tension grew, until in June there was a minor three-day civil war between the eastern and western quarters of Paris, with the inevitable loss of life. 'France needs a Napoleon,' wrote the Duke of Wellington, 'but I cannot yet see him.'

"In fact he was nearer than the duke knew. After the failure of his second attempted coup Prince Louis-Napoleon had spent six years in prison at the fortress of Ham, fully aware that the popularity of the mob was once again increasing. Huge crowds had gathered in Paris when the emperor's remains were returned to the capital in December 1840 and received by Louis Philippe; the time was clearly soon coming when he must make a third attempt at power – and this time he would be successful. On 25 May 1846, with the help of friends outside, he disguised himself as a labourer and simply walked out of the prison. A carriage was waiting to drive him to the coast, where had arranged for a boat to take him to England.

"The moment he heard of the 1848 revolution and the abdication of Louis Philippe, he decided to return to France: the two actually passed each other in the Channel. On arrival he wrote at once to Lamartine, saying that he was in France 'without any other ambition than that of serving my country'. Lamartine replied politely, asking him to stay away from Paris until the city was calmer, 'and on no account to return before the elections'. At this point Louis-Napoleon had not intention of making trouble and obediently took ship back to England, but by the early summer he was in France again to stand for the elections on 4 June, when candidates could run in several departments together. He was elected in no fewer

¹⁹⁵ Bakunin, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 555.

than four, though in Paris he was narrowly beaten by Adolphe Thiers and Victor Hugo.

"Lamartine's reaction to this news was somehow symptomatic of the hopeless confusion that the Second Republic was never able to overcome. He announced that the law of 1832 banning Louis-Napoleon from setting foot in France was still in effect, and ordered his arrest if he appeared in any of the departments for which he had been elected. Once again the prince backed down, declining to take his seat. 'My name,' he wrote, 'is a symbol of national glory, and I should be sincerely grieved if it were used to worsen the disorders and divisions of the nation.' His advisers all told him that he was being unduly cautious, he had been legally elected and the government could hardly have prevented him taking his seat. Once again, however, he was proved right: in June there was yet another insurrection, when it was announced that the government intended to close the National Workshops, recently created by Louis Blanc to provide work for the countless unemployed. {They had been a failure from the start, providing only dead-end jobs that brought in hardly enough money for survival.) The National Guard under General Louis Cavaignac was called out to quell the rioters - which it did, but only at enormous cost. Killed and injured amounted to 10,000, while some 4,000 of the insurgents were deported to Algeria. And that was the *Réforme*."¹⁹⁶

The Provisional Government of this Second Republic was definitely leftist, even including a worker in its ranks, Albert Martin. According to Tocqueville, the revolution "seemed to have been the work of forces completely outside the framework of the bourgeoisie and directed against it."¹⁹⁷ But now a reaction took place: in the elections to the Constituent Assembly, now on the basis of universal male suffrage, the liberal bourgeoisie, fearing social revolution, voted for the right¹⁹⁸, as did the property-owning peasantry.

Perhaps it was the spectre of communism as set out in Marx and Engels' *Communist Manifesto*, published earlier in 1848, that had set the Masons thinking. Communist theory played little direct role in the events of 1848-49 (apart from Blanc's *Réforme* party); it was still too little-known and too extreme for the majority even of leftists. Nevertheless, the *threat* of Communism, the spectre of a truly radical social upheaval overtaking and replacing the milder liberal and nationalist revolutions, probably played an important part in stiffening the right-wing reaction that eventually crushed the revolution...

This threat was quite explicit: "The Communists," wrote Marx and Engels, "disdain to conceal their views. They openly declare that their ends can be attained

¹⁹⁶ Norwich, *op. cit.*, pp. 270-272.

¹⁹⁷ Tocqueville, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 556.

¹⁹⁸ As predicted by Count Cavour, the future architect of a united Italy, in 1846: "If the social order were to be genuinely menaced, if the great principles on which it rests were to be at serious risk, then many of the most determined oppositionists, the most enthusiastic republicans would be, we are convinced, the first to join the ranks of the conservative party" (in Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, p. 28).

only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workers of the world, unite!"¹⁹⁹

So "*the* problem today," said Charles de Montalembert in the National Assembly in September, 1848, was "of creating respect for property in people who do not have any... You have to make them believe in God., the God who dictated the ten commandments and who gives robbers their everlasting punishment."²⁰⁰

But how do you that? How do you re-instill faith and morality in a people whom you have indoctrinating with unbelief, and encouraging to steal and kill, and for the last 60 years? That is the problem of all governments that come to power on the crest of the revolution – that is, *all* contemporary governments - and then try and create a stable society.

So what seems to have happened in June is that the Masons, being mainly bourgeois, underwent a change of heart in the middle of the revolution, and decided, out of fear, not to allow it to proceed to its logical conclusion of a workers', socialist-dominated government. For during the bloody "June days", the Masons switched sides, supporting the government of General Cavaignac against the workers in the streets. Thus on June 27, writes Jasper Ridley, the historian of Masonry, "the day after the revolutionaries had been defeated, the Grand Orient issued a statement supporting Cavaignac."²⁰¹

"The 'June Days'," writes Simon Jenkins, "became a metaphor for bourgeois treachery against revolution. The composer Hector Berlioz noted that the statue of Liberty on the Bastille column had a stray bullet hole in her breast.

"The spectacle of the French republic killing its own devastated the revolutionary cause. In December 1848 elections were held for a new president of France. One candidate was the exiled pretender to Napoleon's crown, his nephew Louis Bonaparte. Dismissed as a charlatan and even a cretin, he had been living incognito in London, where he served as a constable during the Chartists' rally. All Bonapartes were supposedly banned from France. However, Louis's appearance in Paris caused a sensation. The sheer celebrity of his name won him over five million votes and the presidency."²⁰²

Prince Louis Napoleon was the third Napoleon. The first Napoleon's only son – "Napoleon II", "The Eaglet" – "had died young in Austria. Louis-Napoleon was his political heir. Until 1848 his career had been a bad joke. He made absurd attempts in 1836 and 1840 to seize power, was imprisoned, escaped, and lived as a man-about-town in London. After the revolution, he returned to France and found himself a political celebrity. When he announced his candidature to be the

¹⁹⁹ Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*.

²⁰⁰ Montalembert, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 558.

²⁰¹ Jasper Ridley, *The Freemasons*, London: Constable, 1999, p. 207.

²⁰² Jenkins, *A Short History of Europe*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2018, p. 213.

first elected president of the republic, it soon became clear that he would win by a landslide; and in December 1848 he duly did."²⁰³

"He moved at once to the Elysée Palace, where he hung a portrait of his uncle in coronation robes. To every Parisian the symbolism was clear. The kings of France had lived at the Tuileries; the Elysée had been occupied by the emperor, and was now occupied by his nephew and successor..."²⁰⁴

Napoleon had not been the Freemasons' candidate in December, 1848. As Ripley writes, "The Freemasons' journal, *Le Franc-Maçon*, called on its readers to vote for Lamartine [though he was not a Mason], because he believed in 'the sacred words, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity'."²⁰⁵ So why did he win – and win so convincingly?

The answer must be: his famous name. "My name is a programme in itself", he said. "He had created an image of concern for social problems. The political alternatives - republican, royalist, socialist - had all made themselves unpopular. He attracted support for different, even contradictory, reasons: he would both prevent further revolution and stop royalist counter-revolution; he would both help the poor and restore business confidence; he would both make France great and keep the peace. However, the new constitution allowed presidents to serve for only one four-year term, which was not enough for a Bonaparte. To stay in power he carried out a coup d'état on 2 December 1851, which involved brief fighting in Paris and a major insurrection in the provinces. A plebiscite gave him overwhelming popular support [and dictatorial power]; but it was never forgotten that he had shed French blood and transported thousands to penal colonies."²⁰⁶

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

²⁰³ Robert Tombs and Isabelle Tombs, *My Sweet Enemy*, London: Pimlico, 2007, p. 349.

²⁰⁴ Norwich, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

²⁰⁵ Ripley, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

²⁰⁶ Tombs and Tombs, *op. cit.*, p. 350. However, there were clearly those who were not impressed by his name. Thus in 1851 Victor Hugo said: "Now you have come along to... grasp in your tiny fist the scepter of titans, the sword of giants. And for what purpose? What after Augustus but Augustulus? What now? Because we have had the Great Napoleon, must we now have the Little Napoleon?" (in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 668)

"The Grand Orient thought it would be wise to revise their constitution. In 1839, when they were living happily under Louis Philippe, they had stated that 'Masonry is a universal philanthropic association' and that one of their objectives was 'the examination and discussion of all social and economic questions which concern the happiness of humanity'. In August 1848, after the June Days and the legislation suppressing secret political societies, they changed this article in their constitution by deleting the words 'social and economic'; and a year later, on 10 August 1849, the Grand Orient stated that all Freemasons must believe in God and in the immortality of the soul."²⁰⁷

When Napoleon, in order to win the Catholic vote, sent his troops to crush the Roman republic under Mazzini, it must have seemed that the Masons would now, at last, turn against him. And indeed, when he established his dictatorship on December 2, 1851, "there was an attempt at resistance in Paris next day, led by the deputy Baudin, a Freemason." But Baudin was shot on the barricade; and when Napoleon held a plebiscite on whether he should continue as President for ten years, the Grand Orient called on all Masons to vote for him. And on October 15, 1852, the Masons addressed Napoleon and said: "Guarantee the happiness of us all and put the emperor's crown on your noble head".²⁰⁸

Why did the Masons support the man who crushed Mazzini's Roman republic? Some light is cast on this mystery by Tikhomirov: "Soon after the coup of 1851 (more precisely: on February 7, 1852), [the historian] Michelet wrote to Deschamps: 'By this time a great convention of the heads of the European societies had taken place in Paris, where they discussed France. Only three members (whose leader was Mazzini) demanded a democratic republic. A huge majority thought that a dictatorship would better serve the work of the revolution - and *the empire was decreed 'sur les promesses formelles'* (on the basis of the formal promises) of Louis Napoleon to give all the forces of France to the services of Masonry. All the people of the revolution applied themselves to the success of the state coup. Narvaets, who was in obedience to Palmerston [British Prime Minister in 1855-1858 and from 1859], even loaned Louis Napoleon 500,000 francs not long before December 2."²⁰⁹

"If Napoleon III really gave 'formal promises', then this could refer only to the unification of Italy, and consequently, to the fate of the Pope's secular dominion... In general Masonry protected Napoleon III.²¹⁰ At any rate Palmerston, who had,

²⁰⁷ Ridley, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-208. Later in the century, however, the Grand Orient reverted to atheism, which caused a schism with English Masonry.

²⁰⁸ Alexander Selyanin, *Tajnaia sila masonstva* (The Secret Power of Masonry), St. Petersburg, 1911, p. 82.

²⁰⁹ Queen Victoria and Prince Albert "were outraged: they disliked what they regarded as their Foreign Secretary's high-handed behaviour combined with his loose eighteenth-century morals, and they urged [Prime Minister] Russell to dismiss him, which he duly did before the year was out" (Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 283). (V.M.)

²¹⁰ However, in spite of the Masons' support for Napoleon III, the Freemason Benito Juarez, president of Mexico from 1861 to 1872, succeeded in driving out the French occupation under the Emperor Maximilian. This shows yet again that Freemasonry was not a united force - Masons were on opposite sides in many conflicts from the American revolution onwards. (V.M.)

as they affirm, been the highest leader of European Masonry (the Orient of Orients), supported Napoleon with all his strength, and, perhaps, would not have allowed his fall, if he had not died five years before the Franco-Prussian War."²¹¹

So here we see why Napoleon was able to retain the support of the Masons, while supporting their mortal enemy, the Catholic Church: he had a very powerful friend, Lord Palmerston, the British Prime Minister, a former supreme head of Masonry. Nor, as we have seen, were the Catholics as irreconcilably opposed to the liberal revolution as before... And so Britain under Palmerston, France under Napoleon, the Pope and the Sultan all worked together to humble the *real* enemy of Masonry, Russia, in the Crimean War of 1854-1856...

It was above all the use by Napoleon III of the plebiscite that demonstrated that Europe had entered a new age, the age of the nation-state (as opposed to the state-nation of Napoleon I), in which the *demos*, rather than the state, was truly king. For, as Philip Bobbitt writes, "when Louis Napoleon resorted to the plebiscite, he first used it to legitimate a new constitution, and later in 1852 in order to confer the title of emperor and to make this title hereditary. [But] the use of the national referendum to determine the constitutional status of a state is more than anything else the watermark of the nation-state. For on what basis other than popular sovereignty and nationalism can the mere vote of a people legitimate its relations with others? It is one thing to suppose that a vote of the people legitimates a particular policy or ruler; this implies that, within a state, the people of that state have a say in the political direction of the state. It is something else altogether to say that vote of the people legitimates a state within the society of states. That conclusion depends on not simply a role for self-government, but a right of self-government. It is the right of which Lincoln spoke at Gettysburg."²¹²

²¹¹ Tikhomirov, *op. cit.*, p. 465.

²¹² Bobbitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-180.

13. THE 1848 REVOLUTION: (3) GERMANY AND AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

"The 'Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation,'" writes Fritz Fischer, "which succumbed to Napoleon in 1806 consisted of more than three hundred principalities and Free Cities. In the German Confederation (*Deutsche Bund*) created to succeed it by the Congress of Vienna, and presided over by the new Austrian Empire, this number was reduced to about thirty, amalgamating the smaller units into 'secondary states'. This federation never satisfied the German people, who tried in the revolution of 1848 to create 'unity and liberty' from below under the inspiration of west European ideas and on the model of the American federal constitution. But the liberal bourgeoisie was defeated by its own weaknesses and by its own dread of red revolution, which drove it into alliance with the princes. Another reason for the failure to achieve national unification lay in the rivalry between the two leading states in the federation, the Austrian Empire which sought to defend its position by the '*Grossdeutsch* solution', and the rising economic and military power of the kingdom of Prussia, with its '*Kleindeutsch* solution'." ²¹³

However, the immediate cause of the revolution in Germany was not dreams of unification but an economic downturn in the late 1840s that caused prices to rise 400%.

"There were riots in Berlin and Hamburg, while large numbers of wandering poor and restless mobs in cities created a sense of threat and instability.

"With its numerous universities, Germany produced a surfeit of educated people, with too many graduates chasing too few jobs. 'In Germany, the intellectual proletariat is the real, fighting church of the fourth estate,' wrote the German conservative Wilhelm Riehl, listing 'civil servants, schoolmasters, perennial students of theology, starving academic instructors, literati, journalists, artists of all kinds ranging downwards from the travelling virtuosi to the itinerant comedians, organ-grinders and vaudeville singers', and concluding that 'Germany produces more mental product than she can use or pay for'. This redundant 'mental product' was an unstable element, and when news of the risings in Sicily and then France reached Germany, it was at the forefront of a wave of demonstrations, strikes and attacks on authority that swept through the whole country. Liberal concessions were exacted in Württemberg, Baden, Saxony and other states. In Bavaria a combination of outrage at the king's patronage of the Irish dancer Lola Montez, and liberal pressure, brought about his abdication. In Berlin, events took a more drastic turn.

"On 10 March large demonstrations ignited a fuse that led to the Prussian army opening fire on an unarmed crowd a week later. The populace was aroused and fierce street-battles ensued. After a few hours of blood-letting [300 were killed],

²¹³ Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, New York: W.W. Norton, 1967, pp.3-4.

King Frederick William IV [publicly asked forgiveness of the people and] ordered his troops to leave the city and agreed to the formation of a liberal ministry. The Polish prisoners of 1846 were released from the Moabit gaol. In heroic pose and crowned with laurels, Mieroslawski and his colleagues²¹⁴ were drawn around the city on open carriages in a carnival triumph. When the convoy reached the royal palace, the king, no doubt grinding his teeth, came out to the balcony to salute the exultant rebels. A civil guard was formed, and the king was henceforth attended in his palace by a cohort of students dressed in a medieval Teutonic version of the Calabrian look.²¹⁵

"Independently of the revolutions taking place in various parts of the country, the Diet of the German Confederacy passed a number of reforms in the first months of 1848. On 1 March, for instance, it voted to allow individual states to appeal the laws imposed by Metternich in 1819, and a few days later adopted the black, red and gold colours. On 3 March some fifty liberals met at Heidelberg and called for an all-German parliament, and the Diet decided to summon it straightaway in provisional form."²¹⁶

During the March revolution in Berlin, King Frederick-William IV had walked through the streets brandishing a red, black and gold flag, symbol of German nationalism, and had declared that the unification of Germany was imminent. However, immediately he left liberal Berlin and rejoined his troops, he went back on his brief flirtation with the revolution. "Liberalism is a disease," he said on May 13. "Black is called white, darkness light and the victims (convicts, galley slaves, Sodomites, etc.)... succumb to a sinful, God-damned frenzy... I know only one medicine for it: 'The Sign of the Cross on Breast and Forehead.'"²¹⁷

Meanwhile, after news broke of the February revolution in Paris, an uprising also took place in [Vienna](#) in March, where the Diet of [Lower Austria](#) demanded the resignation of [Prince Metternich](#). "With no forces rallying to Metternich's defense, nor word from [Ferdinand I of Austria](#) to the contrary, he resigned on 13 March. Metternich fled to London, and Ferdinand appointed new, nominally liberal, ministers."²¹⁸

In Prussia, a National Assembly convened on May 22. In the following months, an increasingly recalcitrant king and an increasingly radicalized assembly argued about what the March revolution really meant, and who was

²¹⁴ Creators of an abortive uprising in Poznan and Galicia in 1846 (V.M.)

²¹⁵ On March 25 "the king travelled to Potsdam to see the commanders of the army, still furious over their removal from Berlin. 'I have come to speak to you,' he told the assembled officers, 'in order to prove to the Berliners that they need expect no revolutionary strike from Potsdam.' The climax came with the king's extraordinary declaration that he had 'never felt freer or more secure than under the protection of his citizens.' According to one eyewitness, Otto von Bismarck, these words were greeted by 'a murmuring and clattering of sabre-scabbards such as a king of Prussia in the midst of his officers has never heard and will hopefully never hear again.'" (Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, p. 477) (V.M.)

²¹⁶ Zamoycki, *op. cit.*, pp. 337-338.

²¹⁷ King William Frederick IV, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 561.

²¹⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revolutions_of_1848_in_the_Austrian_Empire.

the real ruler of the country, until the army was sent in to adjourn the assembly on November 9. It was the loyalty of the army to the king, the divisions in the left, and the increasing conservatism of opinion in the country as a whole (especially in the East) that allowed the king to reassert control of the situation.

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In May, meanwhile, an all-German preparatory parliament (*Vorparlament*) convened in Frankfurt. But there were arguments over what kind of constitution a united Germany should have, whether a single unitary German republic should be created or not, and whether it should be a "great Germany" with Austria or a "little Germany" without her.

The Frankfurt parliament ignored the demands of the non-German nationalities – notably, the Prussian Poles – for national self-determination. The Austrians were similarly unyielding. But the Czechs, among other national minorities, "saw the Empire as a less unattractive solution than absorption by some expansionist nationalism such as the Germans' or the Magyars'. 'If Austria did not already exist,' Professor Palacky, the Czech spokesman, is supposed to have said, 'it would be necessary to invent it.'"²¹⁹

The Czechs were tempted by the Frankfurt Parliament to join the German revolution. But they did not trust the Germans... In June they summoned a meeting of all the Slav nations in the Habsburg dominions, but the Congress dissolved in disagreements. The Poles called for a war against Russia, but neither the Czechs nor the Serbs want to fight the Russians. In the end the Czechs and Moravians decided that "their best protection was the cloak of the Habsburg monarchy. They were rural nations, whose peasants were more conservative than their nobles, so they found it easy to accept the reactionary solution."²²⁰

"At its first session," writes Jenkins, the Frankfurt parliament "invited Prussia's Frederick William to become its constitutional monarch. He declined, worried both over the intrusion on the autonomy of the [Prussian] German state and over the likely reaction of Vienna and St. Petersburg. By early 1849 scepticism towards the parliament was growing across Germany and members were failing to attend. By summer it was inquorate and collapsed. Engels dismissed it as 'a mere debating club, an accumulation of gullible wretches'."²²¹

Meanwhile, the Austrian monarchy, having been driven out of Vienna, recovered its nerve in the summer and autumn of 1848 and reconquered Vienna and Prague. In December 1848, [Emperor Ferdinand](#) abdicated the throne at [Olomouc](#), allowing his nephew Franz Joseph to accede to the throne. Emperor Franz Joseph steadied the Austrian ship of state and preserved the Austrian monarchy until his death in November, 1916...

²¹⁹ Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital, 1848-1875*, London: Abacus, 1997, p. 25

²²⁰ Zamoyski, *op. cit.*, p. 353.

²²¹ Jenkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-215.

As Evans writes, this “had profoundly negative effects on the prospects of German unification. On 10 December the Frankfurt Parliament, after many months of discussion, finally promulgated the Basic Rights of the German People, guaranteeing all the liberal freedoms, secularizing marriage, abolishing aristocratic titles and privileges, introducing trial by jury in open court, and abolishing the death penalty. Yet these would prove impossible to enforce. Since Austria and Bohemia had definitely rejected inclusion in a unitary German nation state, the Parliament was left with no choice but to go for a smaller Germany, with the King of Prussia as hereditary sovereign, able to delay legislation but not reject it. Sufficient numbers of democrats were persuaded to support the idea with the inclusion of the vote for all men over the age of twenty-five in the Constitution, which narrowly passed on 27 March 1849. Twenty-eight German states adopted the Constitution, including Prussia, where the newly elected, largely liberal Parliament endorsed it on 21 April. Immediately, however, Friedrich Wilhelm IV, who referred to the imperial crown as a ‘dog-collar with which people want to chain me to the 1848 Revolution’, dissolved the Parliament, shortly afterwards declaring that he would never accept an office given him by election rather than Divine Right. This severely undermined the political position of the moderate constitutionalists and played into the hands of the radical democrats and republicans, who now seized the initiative. However, it was striking that they were able to do so only in relatively peripheral regions of Germany, in Saxony and the Rhineland.”²²²

The last stand of the radicals took place in May, 1849 in Dresden, the capital of Saxony, where they were crushed by the king’s troops. 2000 survivors – who included the composer Richard Wagner and the anarchist Mikhail Bakunin – fled to Switzerland. The revolution was over...

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However, the failed revolution in Germany left its mark. German politics became predominantly centrist, and Prussia became a constitutional state with an elected parliament, with which the king was forced to cooperate. Other liberal measures, such as freedom from censorship were introduced in the 1850s...

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Returning now to Austria: “At one o’clock on Monday, 13 March 1848,” writes John Suchet, “a small detachment of soldiers fired a volley of shots into a motley crowd of students, workers and general malcontents who had forced their way past heavy gates into the courtyard outside the Lower Austrian Landhaus. Their orders had been to fire warning shots above the heads of the demonstrators, but they panicked and fired directly into the crowd.

²²² Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 209-210.

“At least five fell dead and many more were wounded. What could have remained a little local trouble rapidly escalated. Angry demonstrators broke into the city armoury. Outside the gates, which had been closed, government buildings were smashed, machinery destroyed and factories set on fire.

“By the end of the day several dozen people had been killed. It was enough to precipitate a series of events that would change Vienna and Austria for ever. The demands of the demonstrators were the culmination of more than thirty years of repression. In themselves they were not particularly extreme: freedom of the press, public accounting of government expenditure, an end to constantly rising food prices, more representation for the middle classes in government.

“But they were, in effect, a declaration of war against the rule of law and the chancellor who had single-mindedly and ruthlessly imposed it for the past several decades: Klemens von Metternich....

“Metternich, who had until this point been able to rely on the total support of the Habsburg monarchy, now found that support haemorrhaging away. The ineffectual emperor, beset with ill health, allowed others around him to wield power, and they needed a scapegoat. They found it in the man who had governed so ruthlessly for decades but now found that events were slipping from his control. The chancellor must resign, they declared. And not just resign, but fell the city and the country.”²²³

Metternich fled to England, never to return...

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“Beyond their domestic demands, there was something else on the revolutionaries’ agenda: an end to Austrian rule in northern Italy...

“As part of the Austrian empire’s expansionist policy, its army was in occupation of northern Italy. With Vienna in disarray the order soon went south to the commander of the Austrian army not to engage the Italian nationalist forces but to maintain a ceasefire. The commander ignored the order and engaged the Italians at Custozza, where he scored a decisive victory on 24 and 25 July.

“Milan and Lombardy were preserved for the empire, to the joy of the old guard in Vienna. But while the governing class and the military celebrated, the revolutionaries vented their disgust. What right did Austria have to occupy any territory beyond its borders? Their anger increased when the Austrian army went on to further victories, shoring up Austrian rule across northern Italy.”²²⁴

²²³ Suchet, *The Last Waltz. The Strauss Dynasty and Vienna*, London: Elliott and Thompson, 2015, pp. 70-71, 74.

²²⁴ Suchet, op. cit., pp. 71-72.

What about the other nationalities of the empire? As we have seen, the Austrians reconquered Prague in the autumn of 1848. But of the non-German nationalities, the most powerful was the Magyars; and Magyar nationalism, centred in Budapest, was a hard nut to crack...

"[Magyar] Nationalists were well represented in the Hungarian Diet which met at Pressburg towards the end of November 1847. The run-up to the elections had been unusually agitated, with the anti-Habsburg opposition campaigning on brazenly nationalist grounds. People paraded in colourful Hungarian costumes, with grand ladies dressed as peasant women in diamonds and poets decked out like cattle drovers from the *Puszta*. News of the February revolution in Paris reached Pressburg on 1 March 1848 and two days later Lajos Kossuth made a thundering speech demanding total reform of the Habsburg monarchy. Kossuth had become a Mason in Italy (perhaps even earlier), and was an extreme anti-monarchist. When asked what to do with the Hungarian Crown – the nation's greatest treasure, a work of wonderful Byzantine workmanship encircled with icons – Kossuth replied: "You can throw it in the Danube!" Fortunately, it wasn't.

On 13 March revolution broke out in Vienna, sparked partly by Kossuth's speech, and Metternich, linchpin of the Congress System, was swept from office.

"On 14 March the Hungarian Diet agreed to demand constitutional autonomy for Hungary. That evening there were torchlight processions around Pressburg, and when Kossuth appeared on the balcony he was greeted as 'the Liberator of Hungary'. The aristocrats who had hitherto eyed him with a mixture of disdain and alarm, were swept along. The following day a delegation drawn from both Chambers climbed aboard a steamer, the *Bela*, and paddled up the Danube. When, a couple of hours later, the Hungarian noblemen, with their gem-studded sabres and fur caps adorned with egret feathers, hove in sight of Vienna, they were dubbed 'the Argonauts' by the Austrian press. Crowds lined the streets as they began their stately progress to the imperial chancellery to lodge their petition. People cheered and wept by turns, women surged forward to kiss Kossuth's cloak, and students unharnessed the horses from his carriage so that they could pull it themselves. Again and again he was obliged to stop and talk to the crowd."²²⁵

But the Magyars had a problem: they constituted only 40% of the population of Hungary; the rest were Slavs. They could not hope to liberate themselves from the Austrians without the cooperation of the Slavs, and without offering them, too, some measure of liberty. But they despised them²²⁶, and had no intention of liberating them or cooperating with them...

²²⁵ Zamoyski, *op. cit.*, pp. 338-339.

²²⁶ Thus Sandor Petöfi wrote in September, 1849, after the Russians had invaded and crushed all nationalist dreams:

*You Serbs, Croats, Germans, Slovaks, Romanians,
Why do you all ravage the Hungarian?
There shall be no peace until the last drop of blood
Flows from your evil hearts.
(in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 559)*

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

Hobsbawm explains: "Unlike Italy, Hungary was already a more or less unified political entity ('the lands of the crown of St. Stephen'), with an effective constitution, a not negligible degree of autonomy, and indeed most of the elements of a sovereign state except independence. Its weakness was that the Magyar aristocracy which governed this vast and overwhelmingly agrarian area ruled not only over the Magyar peasantry of the great plain, but over a population of which perhaps 60 per cent consisted of Croats, Serbs, Slovaks, Rumanians and Ukrainians, not to mention a substantial German minority. These peasant peoples were not unsympathetic to a revolution which freed the serfs, but were antagonised by the refusal of even most of the Budapest radicals to make any concession to their national difference from the Magyars, as their political spokesmen were antagonised by a ferocious policy of Magyarisation and the incorporation of hitherto in some ways autonomous border regions into a centralised and unitary Magyar state. The court at Vienna, following the habitual imperialist maxim 'divide and rule', offered them support. It was to be a Croat army, under Baron Jellacic [Jelačić], a friend of Gay, the pioneer of a Yugoslav nationalism, which led the assault on revolutionary Vienna and revolutionary Hungary."²²⁷

Misha Glenny explains what happened: "The initiative to appoint Jelačić [as Imperial Ban or Viceroy of Croatia] had originated in a petition to the [Austrian] Kaiser, signed jointly by representatives of Croatia's gentry and its aristocracy. They had been prompted to do so by the vigorous rebellion that swept through Croatia and Slavonia in March 1848. They saw Jelačić as a guarantor both of greater autonomy and of law and order against a restless peasantry, potentially the most powerful revolutionary force in Croatia in 1848. His appointment was also the first move in a complicated game played by the court in Vienna to set Hungarian and Croatian nationalism against each other. The resulting collision played a key role in the defeat of revolution in the Empire."²²⁸

An important role in the revolution here was played by the Serbs of Novi Sad, who were much wealthier and savvier than their Free Serb brothers across the Danube. In March they "presented a petition to the Hungarian government, demanding the restoration of autonomy for the Orthodox Church and the recognition of Serbian as a state language. In exchange, the Serbs said they would back the Hungarian struggle against Vienna. Kossuth dismissed their demands

²²⁷ Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, pp. 31-32.

²²⁸ Glenny, *The Balkans, 1804-1999*, London: Granta Books, 2000, pp. 47-48.

with a brusque warning that 'only the sword would decide the matter'. In doing so he sealed the unspoken alliance between Serbs and Croats - the 'one-blooded nation with two faiths' - and, as a result, the fate of the Hungarian revolution. "On 2 April, a Serb delegation in Vienna appealed for the unification of the Banat and Bačka (two provinces within Vojvodina) with Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia. With the approval of Serbia's Prince Alexander Karadjordjević, who had come to power in 1842, and Ilija Garašanin in Belgrade, Serb leaders at Novi Sad decided to convene a Serb National Assembly. At the beginning of May, Serbs from all over the Banat streamed into Sremski Karlovci, the former seat of the Orthodox Church in the Habsburg Empire. Joined by Croats, Czechs, Poles and Slavs, they gathered in the streets and began chanting 'Rise up, rise up, Serbs!' Through popular acclamation, the government of the Serbian Vojvodina was proclaimed, headed by Colonel Josip Šupljikac, the supreme Vojvoda (Military Leader or Duke). Rajačić was named Patriarch of the restored see in Karlovci. Conspicuously, the new assembly did not rescind allegiance either to Vienna or to the Kingdom of Hungary. But the concluding words of the proclamation breathed life into the Yugoslav idea for the first time: 'Before all else, we demand resolutely a true and genuine union with our brothers of the same blood and tribe, the Croats. Long Live Unity! Long Live the Triune Kingdom!'"²²⁹

Immediately, war broke out between the Hungarians and the Serbs...

"This was a modern conflict," writes Bernard Simms, "triggered by imperial collapse and the nationalist rivalry of two liberal bourgeoisies. It was not an explosion of ancient tribal hatreds, as is so often claimed. And the Serbs and Croats, after all, were fighting side by side as brothers..."

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

"Reaction had triumphed throughout the Habsburg Empire. In Hungary, the newly restored Austrian authorities exacted a terrible retribution against the rebels. Elsewhere in the Empire, the demands of other national communities, especially the Croats and Serbs, who had contributed significantly to the exhaustion of the Hungarian forces, were simply ignored by the Kaiser. Liberal nationalism had apparently suffered a catastrophic defeat."²³⁰

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²²⁹ Glenny, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

²³⁰ Bernard Simms, *Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy*, London, 2011, pp. 115-116.

Tsar Nicholas intervened in the 1848 revolution not simply because of his membership of the Holy Alliance and hatred of revolution in general. There was also the question of *Poland*. Already in 1846 a rebellion in the Austrian-controlled region of Galicia had been crushed by the Austrian army, and in November an Austrian-Russian Treaty had abolished the free status of the city of Crakow, the centre of the revolt, and merged it into Galicia. Now, in 1848, the Poles, joined by Bakunin from Paris, were arming in Poznania... "Liberal and socialist plans for the reconstitution of Poland threatened the very core of the Tsarist Empire. 'Poland as understood by the Poles,' the Russian diplomat Baron Peter von Meyendorff warned in March 1848, 'extends to the mouth of the Vistula and Danube, as well as to the Dnieper at Kiev and Smolensk.' 'Such a Poland,' he continued, 'enters Russia like a wedge, destroys her political and geographical unity, throws her back into Asia, [and] puts her back two hundred years.' Stopping this, Meyendorff concluded, was the cause of 'every Russian'."²³¹ And so when the Russians made their decisive intervention against the Hungarian revolution through Transylvania in 1849, they were driven, according to Stephen Winder, "by disgust at insurrection, but also because they could not help noticing how many Poles were joining the Hungarian army: a liberal, republican, independent Hungary providing a shelter for Poles would have featured very high in the long list of the Tsar's nightmares..."²³²

An important coda to Russia's relations with the Germanic powers took place in 1850, when the Elector of Hesse-Kassel attempted to force through some counter-revolutionary measures against the will of the territorial diet, or *Landtag*. He appealed to the revived German Confederacy in Frankfurt, whose president was Austria. The Austrians seized their opportunity to reduce the influence of Prussia in the affairs of the "Third Germany", and in November Bavarian troops, in obedience to the Confederacy's order, crossed the Hessian border. The Prussians prepared to mobilize, but then the Austrians, backed by the Russians, "served an ultimatum to Berlin demanding a complete Prussian withdrawal from Hesse-Kassel within forty-eight hours. Just as time was running out, Prussia agreed to further negotiations and everyone backed away from war. At a conference in Olmütz, Bohemia on 28-29 November, the Prussians stood down. Berlin undertook to participate in a joint federal intervention against Hesse-Kassel and to demobilize the Prussian army. Prussia and Austria also agreed to work together as equals in negotiating a reformed and restructure Confederation. These negotiations duly took place, but the promise of reform was not fulfilled; the old Confederation was restored, with some minor modifications, in 1851."²³³

The Punctation of Olmütz, as it was called, "temporarily ended their [Prussia's and Austria's] jockeying for advantage in the German question when Prussia agreed to demobilize its army and to abandon its own schemes for unification. A diplomatic humiliation, in Frederick William's view, was preferable to a risky war so shortly after the 1848 revolution. And even those Prussian nationalists like

²³² Winder, *Danubia*, London: Picador, 2013, pp. 334-335.

²³³ Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, pp. 496, 497.

Bismarck, smarting at such a retreat before Austrian demands, felt that little could be done elsewhere until 'the struggle for mastery in Germany' was finally settled.

"One quite vital factor in Frederick William's submission at Oelmuetz had been the knowledge that the Russian czar supported Austria's case in the 'German question'. Throughout the entire period from 1812 until 1871, in fact, Berlin took pains to avoid provoking the military colossus to the east. Ideological and dynastic reasons certainly helped to justify such obsequiousness, but they did not fully conceal Prussia's continued sense of inferiority, which the Russian acquisition of most of Congress Poland in 1814 had simply accentuated. Expressions of disapproval by St. Petersburg over any moves toward liberalization in Prussia, Czar Nicholas I's well-known conviction that German unification was utopian nonsense (especially if it was to come about, as was attempted in 1848, by a radical Frankfurt assembly offering an emperor's crown to the Prussian king!), and Russia's support of Austria before Oelmuetz were all manifestations of this overshadowing foreign influence."²³⁴

But German unification was not "utopian nonsense": only ten years later, Prussia under Bismarck would radically transform the German political scene...

²³⁴ Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, London: William Collins, 1988, p. 207.

14. REACTION AND REALISM

The western world reacted to the failure of the 1848 revolutions in two ways: by a reaction against liberalism in politics (Napoleon III's new French empire, Bismarck's Prussianism, Disraeli's Victorianism) and by a reaction against romanticism in art. Neither reaction was profound or universal: in music, for example, romanticism deepened and intensified, while in politics the liberal ideal of "responsible", i.e. parliamentary, government remained powerful. But the reactions were important. They placed a temporary damper on the romantic, mystical and irrationalist tendencies of the previous age. The post-1848 era was the age of reaction in politics, of the realistic novel in art and of positivism in philosophy, when "the real" was defined as exclusively "the rational" – that is, the empirically observed and proven. Interest in spiritual matters still existed, but it had to fight a powerful materialist *Zeitgeist*.

Even before Bismarck, Germany was turning away from liberalism and towards a more authoritarian kind of nationalism. As Zamoyski writes, "There were two questions pivotal to the whole enterprise of the [Frankfurt] Assembly: that of consistency and that of dominant authority, and it failed to address either with honesty. It did not define the Germany it meant to represent because it could not bring itself to forfeit claims to alien territories such as Poznan and Bohemia. It failed to establish a legitimate authority in Germany because it slavishly threw itself at the feet of, first, the Austrian emperor and then of the Prussian king. The metaphysical audacity and the literary recklessness of its Deputies were born of books and lecture-halls. They blustered about renewal and liberty, but they were really looking for a master.

"Contemplating the Germans in a state of revolutionary excitement, Alexander Herzen was reminded of 'the playfulness of a cow when the excellent and respectable animal, adorned with all the domestic virtues, takes to frisking and galloping in the meadow, and with a serious face kicks up her two hind legs or gallops sideways chasing her own tail.' But there was nothing amusing about the conclusion of the Frankfurt Assembly's sally into liberalism.

'Faced with the prospect of relinquishing territory, even the most liberal members of the Assembly drew back from their earlier enthusiasm. As the constitutional historian Professor Dahlmann put it, the Germans had found out that their thirst for freedom could only be satisfied by power. 'They threw in their lot with autocratic princes in order to achieve it, and drew emotional compensations for the democratic dreams they had buried from myths of national destiny and German cultural superiority. Not for the last time, a desire for social and political reform by the middle classes was bought off with a dream of national greatness.

"In July 1848 the German minority in Poznan demanded the province's incorporation into the Confederation. This embarrassed the liberals. But it was championed by Wilhelm Jordan, a left-wing Deputy from Prussia, who made one

of those speeches that figure as milestones in European history. 'It is high time that we awaken from the romantic self-renunciation which made us admire all sorts of other nationalities while we ourselves languished in shameful bondage, trampled on by all the world; it is high time that we awaken to a healthy national egoism which, to put it frankly, places the welfare and honour of the fatherland above everything else,' he said. Egged on by enthusiastic applause, Jordan argued that the Slavs were an inferior race, and that the Poles were a nation 'of lesser cultural content' than the Germans. Having thus demoted them, he went on to suggest that it was Germany's mission to civilize the Poles. But that was not his clinching argument.

"'I admit without beating about the bush that our right is only the right of the stronger, the right of the conqueror,' Jordan declared defiantly. Another delegate ventured that 'self-preservation is the First Commandment of the political catechism'. 'I stand by the fatherland, by our Germany,' spelled out a delegate from Moravia, 'and that is to me *über alles*.' By this stage, even polite liberals like Gagern had changed their tune. 'I believe that it is the role of the German people to be great, to be one of those who rule,' he stated. After decades of agonizing rumination over their destined role in the scheme of things, they had found their mission..."²³⁵

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Another consequence of the failure of the 1848 revolution was that the socialist revolutionaries – who had taken little part in the revolution, but had hoped to profit from it – now believed that a proletarian revolution was not on the cards for at least another generation. Marx and Engels now thought that society had to go through all the stages of bourgeois development before the proletariat could rise up and take power. That meant that the revolution would not come first in peasant societies such as Russia (the European peasantry had proved frustratingly conservative in 1848), but in highly industrialized ones, such as Britain or Germany, as the proletariat there became poorer. Again, writing in *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in January, 1849, Marx said that several nations in Europe – including the Basques, the Scottish Highlanders and the Serbs – would have to perish in the coming revolution, because they were too primitive in their development, they were still two stages behind the capitalists... But these predictions turned out to be wrong. In the West no revolution took place as the workers' lot was improved by trade-union agitation from below and prudent concessions from above. The revolution finally took place in the predominantly peasant country of Russia...

Also as a result of the failure of 1848, Marx and Engels came to see no role in the revolution for the smaller nations, of which there were so many in Central and Eastern Europe. For the Croats, for example, had fought on the side of counter-revolution. And so they damned the Croats, writes Mark Almond, "as the arch-collaborators with tottering reaction: 'An Austria shaken to its very foundations was kept in being and secured by the enthusiasm of the Slavs for the black and

²³⁵ Zamoyski, *op. cit.*, pp. 356-357.

yellow;... it was precisely the Croats, Slovenes, Dalmatians...' But the two prophets of Marxism tinged their savage political condemnation of the Croats with a genocidal, albeit 'progressive', racism.

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

"Engels remained decidedly unsympathetic to the aspirations of the South Slavs for independence or unity until the end of his days. Even in the 1880s, *after* all the public outrage in Britain about the Bosnian and Bulgarian atrocities, he could still write to Bernstein that the Hercegovinians' 'right to cattle-rustling must be sacrificed *without mercy* to the interests of the European proletariat', which lay in peace at that time. Both Marx and Engels bequeathed to the left in the twentieth century a powerful tendency to sympathise with large-scale 'progressive' states at the expense of the poor and small."²³⁶

Several factors contributed to the collapse of the revolution. One was the continued support of the armies for the dynastic principle. Another was the distrust of the peasants, still the majority of the population in most countries, for the urban intellectuals. A third was the fear of the propertied classes for their property.

This had been predicted by Count Cavour, the future architect of a united Italy, in 1846: "If the social order were to be genuinely menaced, if the great principles on which it rests were to be a serious risk, then many of the most determined oppositionists, the most enthusiastic republicans, would be, we are convinced, the first to join the ranks of the conservative party".²³⁷

²³⁶ Almond, *Europe's Backyard War*, London: Mandarin, 1994, pp. 70-71. Already in 1849 Engels was declaring that small nations such as the Basques, the Scottish highlanders and the Serbs should be exterminated because they were not one, but two stages behind in the dialectical progress of History.

²³⁷ Cavour, in Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, p. 28.

Even Garibaldi “was growing restive. He was ‘terrified at the likely prospect of never again wielding a sword’ for Italy... For him, Italy was ‘the cult and religion of my entire life’, and to fight for her was ‘the Paradise of my belief’. He could not conceive of happiness while the motherland was enslaved. Yet most Italians, as far as he could see, cared little. ‘The Italians of today think of the belly, not of the soul,’ he complained.”²³⁸

Nor only revolutionaries, but even moderate liberals, felt that the “miasma of the fifties”, as Nietzsche put it, compared badly with the idealism of the forties. Thus the historian Johann Gustav Droysen wrote: “Our spiritual life is deteriorating rapidly; its dignity, its idealism, its intellectual integrity are vanishing... Meanwhile the exact sciences grow in popularity; establishments flourish where pupils will one day form the independent upper middle class as farmers, industrialists, merchants, technicians and so on; their education and outlook will concentrate wholly on material issues. At the same time the universities are declining... At present all is instability, chaos, ferment and disorder. The old values are finished, debased, rotten, beyond salvation and the new ones are as yet unformed, aimless, confused, merely destructive... we live in one of the great crises that lead from one epoch of history to the next...”²³⁹

The impact of 1848 was profound. “Europe’s thrones had been shaken to their foundations. Figures like Metternich and Louis-Philippe, who had long dominated the political world had been ousted. Monarchs had been pressured into abdicating, abjuring a large part of their powers, or surrendering their claim to rule by Divine Right and undergoing the humiliating experience of bowing before enraged crowds of their citizens. Representative assemblies had come into being across Europe, and where they had existed already, gained significant new powers. The principle of national self-determination had been successfully asserted in one country after another. Vast and far-reaching social and economic reforms had been put in train in a dramatic expression of the principle of equality before the law. The 1848 Revolutions have often been dismissed in retrospect as half-hearted failures, but that is not how they seemed at the time. Nothing in Europe would ever be the same again after the events of January to July 1848. True, there had been setbacks. But in the summer of ‘the crazy year’, as it was later called in Germany, or, more optimistically, ‘the springtime of the peoples’, there still seemed everything to play for.”²⁴⁰

Thus did 1848’s “springtime of the nations” turn into a bitter “winter of discontent”. Many of the exiles gathered in London to reminisce and celebrate the glories of the past. But the bitter truth was that they had failed in the short term... And the basic reason for that failure was an even harder pill to swallow: the great majority of the peoples in the various nations, even if they did not like their rulers, did not want to risk everything by joining the revolution.

²³⁸ Zamoyski, *op. cit.*, p. 394.

²³⁹ Droysen, in Mann, *A History of Germany since 1789*, London: Pimlico, p. 124.

²⁴⁰ Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 197-199.

The question raised by this defeat was: could liberalism and nationalism coexist in the long term? And the answer provided by history since the French revolution appears to be: no. Liberalism demands freedom and equality for each individual citizen, regardless of his race or creed. Nationalism, on the other hand, calls for the freedom and equality of every nation, no matter how small. It is impossible to fulfill both demands simultaneously. No state is able to fulfill the endless list of human rights demanded by every citizen and every minority without descending into anarchy. And no state is able to fulfill the supposed national rights of every nation without descending into war, as the demand that one nation have its own sovereign, inclusive and homogeneous territory inevitably involves the "ethnic cleansing" of other groups on the same territory. The only solution, it seemed, was the multi-national empire, which suppressed both liberalism and nationalism and in which the emperor stood above all his empire's constituent national groups, being, at least in theory, the guarantor of the rights of every individual citizen.

Such were the empires of Russia, Austro-Hungary and Turkey. The empires of France and Britain (which did not suffer from revolutionary disturbances) were in a slightly different category, having made significant concessions to liberalism. Germany was in yet another category, still in the process of unification and, as we have seen, showing signs of succumbing to nationalism...

Of course, many nations within these empires saw themselves as being tyrannized by the dominant nation from which the empires took their names. But at any rate all the subordinate nations had a kind of brotherhood in misery, being equally prisoners in a "prison of the peoples". This suppressed age-old rivalries among themselves. Moreover, many members of national minorities acquired a kind of sincerely *imperial* patriotism. Only when central authority began to falter did this supra-national patriotism weaken and national conflicts return with a vengeance, as we see in the 1848 revolution in Austro-Hungary.

"Henceforth, there was to be no general social revolution of the kind envisaged before 1848 in the 'advanced' countries of the world. The centre of gravity of such social revolutionary movements, and therefore of twentieth-century socialist and communist regimes, was to be in the marginal and backward regions... The sudden, vast and apparently boundless expansion of the world capitalist economy provided political alternatives in the 'advanced' countries. The (British) industrial revolution had swallowed the (French) political revolution."²⁴¹

This increasing general prosperity, together with the gradual liberalization of many European regimes, blunted the hunger for combat both of the more moderate revolutionaries and of the masses. For now they had more than their chains to lose... "In 1848-9 moderate liberals therefore made two important discoveries in western Europe: that revolution was dangerous and that some of their substantial demands (especially in economic matters) could be met without it. The bourgeoisie ceased to be a revolutionary force."²⁴²

²⁴¹ Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, pp. 14-15.

²⁴² Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, p. 33.

As for the Church, there were still some Catholics who spoke the truth in public. Thus Montalembert said in a speech to the Chamber of Deputies in September, 1848: "The church has said to the poor: you shall not steal the goods of others, and not only shall you not steal them, you shall not covet them. In other words, you shall not listen to this treacherous teaching which ceaselessly fans in your soul the fire of covetousness and envy. Resign yourself to poverty and you will be eternally rewarded and compensated. That is what the church has been saying to the poor for a thousand years, and the poor have believed it – until the day when faith was snatched from their hearts."²⁴³

However, the leaders of the Church – with the important exception of the Pope – were moving to come to terms with the prevailing socialist *Zeitgeist*. Thus Cardinal de Bonald told his priests: "Show the faithful the example of obedience and submission to the Republic. Frequently make a vow to yourselves to enjoy this freedom which makes our brothers in the United States so happy; you will have this freedom. If the authorities wish to deck religious buildings with the national flag, attentively heed the desires of the magistrates. The flag of the Republic will always be a flag which protects religion... Agree to all measures which may improve the lot of the workers... Citizens, Jesus Christ was the first, from up on his cross, to make the magnificent words 'Freedom, equality, brotherhood' resound throughout the world. The Christ who died for you on the tree of liberty is the holy, the sublime Republican of all times and all countries."²⁴⁴

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

²⁴³ Montalembert, in Comby, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

²⁴⁴ De Bonald, in Comby, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 132.

dreams of Frederick William IV had lost all significance before he himself collapsed into insanity in 1858. Tempered by the fires of successfully resisted revolution, fortified by new technical aids and helped by a favourable economic climate, the governments of Europe were entering a new era..."²⁴⁵

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And what of the Russians, the only European nation not directly affected by the 1848 revolution, and the one that finally put an end to it? The Russian leftists were of course deeply disappointed by the failure of the revolution. Especially disillusioned was Alexander Herzen. In 1848 he had called for the destruction of the world by which the "new man" was being strangled. "Hail, chaos and destruction! Hail, death! Make room for the future!"²⁴⁶ But after the failure of the French revolution his radicalism became somewhat muted.

He even seemed to turn against democracy and socialism. Thus in 1849 he wrote of 1848: "A curse upon you, year of blood and madness, year of the triumph of meanness, beastliness, stupidity!... What did you do, revolutionaries frightened of revolution, political tricksters, buffoons of liberty?... Democracy can create nothing positive... and therefore it has no future... Socialism left a victor on the field of battle will inevitably be deformed into a commonplace bourgeois philistinism. Then a cry of denial will be wrung from the titanic breast of the revolutionary minority and the deadly battle will begin again..."²⁴⁷

Nevertheless, "he could not forget the betrayal of the revolution in Paris by the bourgeois parties in 1848, the execution of the workers, the suppression of the Roman revolution by the troops of the French Republic, the vanity, weakness and rhetoric of the French radical politicians."²⁴⁸

So the soft Russian left, disillusioned by the failure of "soft" socialism, left the field of battle, embittered but unrepentant. Meanwhile, the hard Russian left prepared to renew the battle when the public mood would change again...

The Russian right also drew far-reaching conclusions from the failure of the revolution. Thus the poet and diplomat Fyodor Tiutchev wrote: "The revolution is an illness devouring the West... The revolution is the purest product, the last word and the highest expression of that which we have been accustomed to call, already for three centuries now, the civilization of the West. It is contemporary thought, in all its integrity, from the time of its break with the [Orthodox] Church. The thought is as follows: man, in the final analysis, depends only on himself both in the government of his reason and in the government of his will. Every authority comes from man; everything that proclaims itself to be higher than man is either

²⁴⁵ Anderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-100.

²⁴⁶ Herzen, *From the Other Shore*.

²⁴⁷ Herzen *From the Other Shore*, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 563.

²⁴⁸ Isaiah Berlin, "Herzen and his Memoirs", in *The Proper Study of Mankind*, London: Pimlico, 1998, p. 515.

an illusion or deception. In a word, it is the apotheosis of the human *I* in the most literal meaning of the word... We are quite possibly present at the bankruptcy of the whole civilization... The revolution is not simply an opponent clothed in flesh and blood. It is more than a Principle. It is Spirit, reason, in order to gain victory over it, we must know how to drive it out...

"The revolution is the logical consequence and final end of contemporary civilization, which antichristian rationalism has won from the Roman church. The revolution has in fact become convinced of its complete inability to act as a unifying principle, and has to the same degree become convinced, on the contrary, that it possesses a disintegrating power. On the other hand, the elements of the old society which have been preserved in Europe are still sufficiently alive that, in case of necessity, they can throw everything that has been done by the Revolution back to its point of origin. But they have also been so penetrated by the revolutionary principle, so distorted by it, that they are almost incapable of creating anything that could be accepted by European society as a lawful authority. That is the dilemma which rears its head with all its exceptional importance at the present time...

"The European West is only half of a great organic whole, but the difficulties undergone by it, difficulties that are from an external point of view insoluble, will acquire their resolution only in its other half,"²⁴⁹ that is, in *the Russian Empire*.

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The clearest symbol of the new, thoroughly materialist age was the Great Exhibition in London. "Having finally settled on the site, the building and the funding, the Commissioners were overwhelmed with offers of objects for display; when it opened the Crystal Palace (as Paxton's building became known) would house more than 100,000 exhibits sent in by 14,000 individual and corporate leaders, selected by hundreds of committees from Britain, its colonies and other countries. As one contemporary observed, the alphabetical list of exhibits stretched all the way from 'Absynthian', provided by a Sardinian, to 'Ziters' sent in by two Viennese manufacturers, and the exhibits were divided into four categories: raw materials (minerals, metals, chemicals, food); machinery (ranging from railway engines via industrial equipment to military engineering and agricultural implements); manufactures (cotton, leather, clothing, cutlery, jewellery, glass, ceramics); and the fine arts (painting, architecture, sculpture, mosaics, enamels). To the relief of the Commissioners, the Great Exhibition was opened by Queen Victoria on time on 1 May 1851 in the presence of a glittering array of national worthies and international visitors; more than 20,000 people mobbed the Crystal Palace on the first day alone; thousands more lined the streets of London to catch a glimpse of the queen and Prince Albert. During the next five months more than six million people paid to visit what many considered the eighth wonder of the world, and by the time the exhibition closed in October 1851

²⁴⁹ Tiutchev, in Fomin and Fomina, *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Moscow, 1994, vol. 2, pp. 83-84.

it had probably been seen by one-fifth of the entire population of Britain. There had never been anything quite like it before in the whole of human history. *The Times* described the opening as 'the first morning since the creation of the world that all peoples have assembled from all parts of the world that all peoples have assembled in the United Kingdom – and it could only have happened in London.

"For most among the millions of visitors it was the sheer, miraculous abundance of the *things* that were on display, drawn from all the four corners of the globe, that was so extraordinary and unforgettable: 'All of beauty, all of use,' Tennyson wrote in his 'Exhibition Ode', 'that one fair planet can produce'."²⁵⁰

But what was so great in just an abundance of *things*? "To its critics, the Crystal Palace was a latter-day Tower of Babel, where hedonism, godlessness and worship of material things were rife, and which deserved, and would receive, godly punishment and retribution. But to its admirers, it was a divinely inspired undertaking: at the opening ceremony the Archbishop of Canterbury had prayed for the Almighty's blessing on the exhibition, massed choirs had sung Handel's Hallelujah Chorus, and it was confidently proclaimed that 'we are carrying out the will of the great and blessed God.'"²⁵¹

Be that as it may, this worship of matter, however tastefully exhibited, could not fail to be reflected in the arts, in an upsurge in realism. It was time, in any case, for a reaction against romanticism, which, as we have seen, is characterized by the love of the exotic, the erotic and the extreme in human nature. Realism, on the other hand, describes the commonplace... It therefore befitted the age of the common man, of democracy, and of the Great Exhibition of all that was commonplace.

Perhaps the earliest realist in the field of the novel was Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850), whose, *Comédie Humaine*, "is made up of nearly 100 works, which contain more than 2000 characters and together create an alternative reality that extends from Paris to the provincial backwaters of France. Balzac's works transformed the novel into a great art form capable of representing life in all its detail and colour, so paving the way for the ambitious works of writers such as Proust and Zola...

"His imaginative gift and powers of description set the tone for the development of the 19th-century realist novel. As Oscar Wilde said, Balzac 'created life, he did not copy it.'..."²⁵²

Balzac had talented followers in many European countries, especially Russia. One of the earliest works of Russian literary realism was Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev's collection of short stories describing peasant life, *A Sportsman's Sketches* (1852), which was rumoured to have inspired the emancipation of the Russian peasantry in 1861. He was followed by the greatest of the Russian realist

²⁵⁰ Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

²⁵¹ Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

²⁵² Montefiore, *op. cit.*, pp. 343, 345.

novelists, Lev Sergeyevich Tolstoy, whose *War and Peace* (1868) and *Anna Karenina* (1877) raised the genre to a peak of perfection.

The novel, writes Orlando Figes, “was the medium par excellence for engaging readers with this contemporary reality. Poetry was caught in the Romantic past, although some poets, such as Elizabeth Barrett Browning in *Aurora Leigh* (1856), called for it to deal with the commonplaces of the present day.

*No, if there's room for poets in this world
A little overgrown, (I think there is)
Their sole work is to represent the age,
Their age, not Charlemagne's – this live, throbbing age,
That brawls, cheats, maddens, calculates, aspires,
And spends more passion, more heroic heat,
Betwixt the mirrors of its drawing rooms,
Than Roland with his Roncesvalles.*

“For Champfleury the task of an artist to focus on the present arose from the new realities highlighted by the revolutions of 1848. He saw the revolutions as a fundamental break in time: the old certainties were swept away, events moved faster, and history appeared, more than ever, to be directed by transient contingencies. The social problems exposed by the popular uprisings made it all the more important for the arts to reach out to common people and lay bare the real conditions of contemporary society. ‘It was only after 1848,’ the critic wrote, ‘that realism became one of the numerous religions with an “ism” at the end: one could see it every day displayed in advertising posters on the walls, acclaimed in the clubs, worshipped by its followers in small temples [galleries]’.”²⁵³

It was as if realism in art was a way of fighting back against the victors on the battlefields of 1848, of continuing the struggle...

Richard Evans suggests that realism in art was linked with the advent of photography – the Duke of Wellington and the battlefields of the Crimean War were among the first subjects to be photographed. And he continues: “By mid-century the age of Romanticism was drawing to a close with the growing turn to Realism in the work of painters such as Gustave Courbet (1819-77), who eschewed mythical and religious themes of the past for the concerns of contemporary life. His landscapes abandoned the dramatic exaggeration and compositional artifice employed by the Romantics in favour of a naturalistic approach that suggested he had just come upon a scene and decided on the spot to paint it. In *The Stone-Breakers* (1849) Courbet depicted two peasants breaking rocks by the side of a road, while in *A Burial at Ornans* (1849) he showed the funeral of his great-uncle, depicting not richly clad models but the actual people who attended the event, participating in orderly manner rather than indulging in the emotional gestures that would have been expected in a Romantic representation of the same subject. ‘The burial at Ornans, Courbet remarked, ‘was in reality the burial of

²⁵³ Figes, *The Europeans*, London: Penguin, 2020, pp. 184-185.

Romanticism.’ Later he complained that ‘the title of Realist was thrust upon me just as the title of Romantic was imposed upon the men of 1830.’ But his paintings undoubtedly inaugurated a new cultural style. Courbet was a political radical and a committed participant in the Paris Commune of 1871, and he painted scenes of poverty that were intended as social criticism rather than presentations of the picturesque. In *The Gleaners* (1857) Jean-François Millet (1814-75) showed poor peasant women bending over to pick up small ears of corn left on the fields after the harvest, while *The Potato Eaters* (1885) by Vincent van Gogh depicted a group of rough peasants sitting round a table eating the potatoes by the light of a little lamp. Van Gogh wanted, he said, to indicate by their appearance the fact that they had ‘tilled the earth themselves with these hands they are putting in the dish’.

“Realist in a very different way were the English painters of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, founded in 1848. From one point of view their paintings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-82), William Holman Hunt (1827-1910), John Everett Millais (1829-96) and their colleagues reflected the concern of Romanticism, with their focus on the Middle Ages and religious subjects and their break with Classical models and techniques in the search for authenticity of expression. But they also follow the new Realism in using ordinary people, including working-class girls and prostitutes, as models. Millais’ painting *Christ in the House of His Parents*, exhibited in 1850, was widely condemned: instead of employing transcendental religious imagery, it was set amid the dirt and mess of a carpenter’s workshop and showed the Holy Family as ordinary, poor people. Even more controversial was the sculptor Auguste Rodin (1840-1917), whose sculptures were a far cry from the smooth Classicism of the Academies...

“Realism spread rapidly to other countries, reaching Russia for example in the shape of ‘The Wanderers’, fourteen young artists who abandoned the Imperial Academy of Arts in 1863 to form their own co-operative, painting scenes such as the celebrated *Barge Haulers on the Volga* (1873) by Ilya Yefimovich Repin (1844-1930). Similarly, the Realist novel was often, though not invariably, set in the present rather than in the Romantic past. It allowed readers to inhabit a world parallel to their own, where moral and social dramas were played out in ways that were recognizably similar to their own lives, but more eventful and exciting, and which sometimes prompted the desire to subscribe to the reforming ideas of the author. The chronology of literary Realism did not match that of its counterpart in the visual arts precisely: already in the 1830s, Balzac was turning away from writing historical fiction in the manner of Walter Scott, as in early novels such as *Les Chouans* (1829) and fantasy-fables like *La Peau de Chagrin* (1831), to writing in a Realist manner his series *La Condition humaine*. Of course some artists continued to paint Biblical, Classical and historical scenes regardless of the Realist trend. But there is no doubt that artworks and novels addressing contemporary life and attempting to portray it in a manner that was true to life predominated after the middle years of the century.

“It was above all industrialization that called forth the Realist novel as a means of portraying the collectivity of society, with its teeming mass of characters and its description of the shifting relations between them. The master here was Charles

Dickens, many of whose works sought to lay bare in literary form the evils of the age and to advocate by showing their dramatic consequences the urgent need to tackle them: *Oliver Twist* (1837-9) addressed the state of crime and disorder in London, *Bleak House* (1853) the expense and injustice of the antiquated English system of civil law, *Hard Times* (1854) the cruelties inflicted by the utilitarian philosophy of the new industrialists. The 'social novel' carried a strong charge of social criticism: *Alton Locke* (1849) by Charles Kingsley (1819-75) reflected its author's Chartist sympathies in its depiction of the exploitation of agricultural labourers and workers in the garment industry, while *Mary Barton* (1848) by Elizabeth Gaskell (1810-65) showed what its author called the 'misery and hateful passions caused by the love of pursuing wealth as well as the egoism, thoughtlessness and insensitivity of manufacturers'. *Les Misérables* (1862) addressed the three great problems of the age, identified by Victor Hugo as 'the degradation of man by poverty, the ruin of women by starvation, and the dwarfing of childhood by physical and spiritual night'. In *L'Assommoir* (1877), Émile Zola painted a drastic portrait of poor housing conditions in a Parisian slum, while his *Germinal* (1885) brought together the political and social features of life in a coal mining community over several decades in a dramatic narrative of a strike followed by an uprising. More drastic still was the account of impoverished Russians living in a shelter for the homeless in *The Lower Depths* (1902) by Maxim Gorky.

"Realist novels could flourish in many European countries not least because of the emergence of a new market for books, as the middle classes grew in numbers and wealth, and merchants, industrialists, lawyers, bankers, employers and landowners were joined in the ranks of the affluent by doctors, teachers, civil servants, scientists, and white-collar workers of various kinds, numbering more than 300,000 in the 1851 census in the United Kingdom for example, the first time they were counted, and more than double that number thirty years later. Books became cheaper and more plentiful as steam-driven presses replaced hand-operated ones in the printing industry, and as mechanical production reduced the cost of paper while hugely increasing the supply. Novels, including those of Dickens and Dostoyevsky, were commonly printed in instalments and read in serial form. Alongside the 'penny dreadful' and the *colportage* serial a new type of bourgeois novel emerged, catering for an educated readership. Altogether, if 580 books were published in the United Kingdom every year between 1800 and 1825, more than 2,500 appeared annually in mid-century, and more than 6,000 by the end of the century. In 1855 some 1,020 book titles were published in Russia, and by 1894 this figure had increased tenfold, to 10,691, a figure equal to the output of new titles in Britain and the United States combined.

"In all of this, despite the growing taste for non-fiction, ranging from encyclopedias and handbooks to triple-decker biographies, the proportion of works of fiction published in Britain increased from 16 per cent in the 1830s to nearly 25 per cent half a century later. Novel-reading, once the province of upper-class women, became a general habit among the middle classes of both sexes. Perhaps by necessity, in order to gain a following, Realist artists and writers focused on the comfortably off as well as on the poor and the exploited. Portraits

continued to be a significant source of income for painters, while in literature the bourgeoisie featured centrally in the family sagas of the age. *Fathers and Sons* (1862) by Ivan Turgenev dissected the fraught relationship between a conservative elder generation and young nihilistic intellectuals; Zola's *Les Rougon-Macquart* (1871-1893), a cycle of twenty novels, attempted, as the author said, 'to portray, at the outset of a century of liberty and truth, a family that cannot restrain itself in its rush to possess all the good things that progress is making available and is derailed by its own momentum, the fatal convulsions that accompany the birth of a new world'.

"In *Middlemarch: A Study of Provincial Life* (1871-2), [the female novelist] George Eliot tackled the impact of change brought by the railways, medicine and other harbingers of modernity on a deeply conservative small-town society; *Madame Bovary* (1856), written by Gustave Flaubert after his friends had persuaded him to abandon early efforts at historical fantasy, described in realistic detail the daily life and love affairs of the bored wife of a weak provincial doctor; both Theodor Fontane in *Effi Briest* (1894) and Tolstoy in *Anna Karenina* (1877) dealt with adultery, real or imagined, and the constrained lives of married women in the upper reaches of society; and in the six-novel sequence *The Barsetshire Chronicles* (1855-67), Anthony Trollope traced the fortunes of the leading inhabitants of an imaginary provincial town, while *The Pallisers* (1865-80) focused on the engagement of a much grander family with parliamentary politics. As the American writer Henry James (1843-1916) remarked, in a somewhat backhanded compliment, Trollope's 'inestimable merit was a complete appreciation of the usual'. However quotidian their concerns, Realist novels and paintings shared one thing in common with the cultural products of Romanticism: their appeal to the emotions, achieved not least by plumbing the depths of character and arousing sympathy and identification in the reader or the viewer..."²⁵⁴

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In spite of the triumph of political reaction and artistic realism, both the romance of revolution and the revolution of romanticism remained powerful. The revolutionary personality even became a subject of realistic art, as in Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and *The Devils*. Music, the most romantic of the arts, became an important vehicle of nationalist feeling. The demand for the official recognition of a nation's language and culture was a great stimulus to art and, especially, music. And this in turn added an extra energy to nationalism. We think of Sibelius for the Finns, Grieg for the Norwegians²⁵⁵, Smetana and Dvorak for the Czechs, Liszt for the Hungarians – even, somewhat later, Albeniz and De Falla for the Spanish and Elgar and Vaughan Williams for the English.

²⁵⁴ Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 520-524.

²⁵⁵ However, as Evans writes, Grieg "came to dislike what was perhaps his most famous composition, 'In the Hall of the Mountain King', part of his incidental music for Ibsen's 1867 play *Peer Gynt*, 'because it absolutely reeks of cow-pats [and] exaggerated Norwegian nationalism'" (*op. cit.*, p. 528).

But perhaps the most characteristic fusion of nationalism and music was to be found in the Italian Giuseppe Verdi. Verdi's operas, from *Nabucco* in 1842 (whose chorus of the Hebrew slaves became a kind of national anthem of Italian nationalism) to *Don Carlos* in 1870, written three years before Italian troops entered Rome and completed the task of national unification, "provided the soundtrack to the desire for independence. Through his many works, Verdi reflected, and even shaped, the struggle for Italian unification." As an Italian writer wrote in 1855: "With what marvelous avidity the populace of our Italian cities was seized by these broad and clear melodies, singing as they went..., confronting the grave reality of the present with aspirations for the future."²⁵⁶

And so music, alone among the arts, never went through a realist reaction, but went on to still wilder emotional extremes, as in Wagner's *Tristan* or Strauss's *Salome*. For the virus of romanticism had established itself in the European bloodstream, never to be removed... The legacy of romanticism is also evident in the philosophy of the era, where, while the hard-boiled realists might insist that man was just a complicated animal or machine, the romantics still dreamed dreams and saw visions and believed in the world spirit and their own inner divinity...

²⁵⁶ "Giuseppe Verdi: The Sounds of Freedom", *National Geographic History*, January/February, 2017.

15. THE INDIAN MUTINY

By the end of the 1850s representative or so-called “responsible” government had been implanted by London in all its white settler dominions – Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. So they began to govern themselves while foreign policy remained in the hands of the metropolis. However, in the non-white colonies the trend was in the opposite direction. There, having been taught the philosophy of liberalism and human rights by their masters, the colonial subjects began to think of having those rights introduced in their own lands...

Thus “Lord Dalhousie, whose high-minded actions had caused so much offence, left India in 1856, and the accumulated dissatisfactions with what the British had been doing in the country finally boiled over in the following year...”²⁵⁷

The Indian Mutiny of 1857 – known in India as the First War of Independence – deeply impressed upon the British the limitations of their power and could be said to have been the first step towards Indian independence ninety years later..

It began, as Tombs writes, “when mutinies in the East India Company’s Bengal army in February, April and May 1857 turned into a revolt across north-central India, involving both peasants and princes. The causes were many and have been debated ever since. The withdrawal of British troops from India for the Crimea, the exposed failings of the British army [in the Crimean war] – dangerous for a regime so reliant on prestige – and expectation of Russian or Persian intervention created a sense of opportunity among discontented Indians, and perhaps fed prophecies that the British would be defeated one hundred years after Clive’s 1757 victory at Plassey. There were political, military, economic and religious grievances among the Company’s subject peoples and its troops. The Bengal army, largely high-caste Hindu gentry, resented deteriorating conditions of service for what had been the most attractive employer in India, but which now seemed to bring social degradation. Peasants resented taxation and changes in land tenure. Princes, dispossessed princes, would-be princes and their military retainers bitterly resented British takeover of ‘lapsed’ states, when there was no direct heir, or when the British considered them badly governed, as in the Muslim-ruled Awadh (Oudh), just annexed. Nana Sahib, who became the most notorious rebel leader, had been refused recognition as adopted heir of a Maratha prince. The Rani of Jhansi, later a heroine to both Indian nationalists and feminists, was alienated by British rejection of her similar claim. The British later liked to think that it was their modernizing reforms, such as railway-building, that were resented by reactionaries. Some reforms certainly had caused resentment – for, example, banning the burning of widows, ‘suttee’ (also ‘sati’), legalizing their remarriage, and permitting (against sharia law) inheritance by Muslim converts to Christianity. The abolition of suttee caused one of the first major campaigns against British rule and stimulated the creation of Hindu newspapers. Christian missionary activity (which the Company traditionally disliked as a nuisance) was

²⁵⁷ Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 313.

a further aggravation. These resentments were expressed in an anonymous manifesto sent to all the princes of India: 'The English are people who overthrow all religions... the common enemy of both [Hindu and Muslims, who] should unite in their slaughter... for by this alone will the lives and faiths of both be saved.' The final spark for the mutiny was the introduction of new rifle cartridges, supposedly greased with pork and cow fat, polluting for both Muslims and Hindus and seen as a plot to force mass conversion to Christianity.²⁵⁸

"This inextricable confusion about causes illustrates a fundamental problem of foreign rule: the difficulties of understanding and communicating with the ruled. The British were horrified and enraged by the savage violence suddenly inflicted not only on supposedly popular army officers, but on any British person (other than converts to Islam), on women and children, and on Indian Christians – an unmistakable sign of the religious hatreds British rule had aroused, and of the absence of basic human solidarity between them and many of their subjects. Though there were several vicious episodes, the most notorious took place at Cawnpore (Kanpur) in June and July 1857 – a traumatic event constantly retold in British accounts. A few hundred British and loyal Indian soldiers, civilians, women and children witnessed a three-week siege in harrowing conditions. They were persuaded to surrender by promises of safe conduct by river, but as they tried to embark, they were ambushed and several boats set alight. Few men escaped. Nearly 200 captured women and children were subsequently butchered and thrown down a well, some still alive. British troops arriving soon after found their prison 'ankle deep in blood, ladies' hair torn from their heads... poor little children's shoes lying here and there, gowns and frocks and bonnets... scattered everywhere.'

"The British and their Indian supporters [particularly Gurkhas and Sikhs] fought with savage desperation first for survival and then for revenge. Men whose families had been killed often took the lead. Villages suspected of harbouring rebels or mistreating British fugitives were burned. Suspected mutineers were indiscriminately massacred. At Cawnpore, condemned men were forced to clean the blood-stained floor – polluting to Hindus, who, wrote General James Neill, 'think that... they doom their souls to perdition. Let them think so.' Some were forced to eat pork and beef before being killed. [At Peshawar] another notorious punishment – copied from the Mughals and Marathas – was to be tied to a cannon and 'blown away': 'His head flew up into the air some thirty or forty feet – an arm yonder, another yonder, while the gory, reeking trunk fell in a heap beneath the gun.'

"The governor-general, Lord Canning, a former Peelite and son of the 1820s Foreign Secretary George Canning, tried to rein in the reprisals and was attacked as 'Clemency Canning': 'As long as I have breath in my body... I will not govern in anger.' He was supported by some of the government in London. Palmerston called a National Day of Fast, Humiliation and Prayer on 7 October 1857. The day inspired calls for clemency and criticism of misgovernment. Radical newspapers

²⁵⁸ "At root the Vellore mutiny was about religion" (Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 145). (V.M.)

expressed sympathy with the Indians. There was a wider conviction that rule in India had to be reformed: the mutiny, thought the Earl of Elgin, proved 'the scandalous treatment the natives receive at our hands.' The queen wrote that 'for the perpetrators of these awful horrors no punishment can be severe enough... But... the native at large... should know there is no hatred of brown skin.' But for many British in India there certainly was. Wrote one young officer, Edward Vibart: 'These black wretches shall atone with their blood for our murdered countrymen,' and he and others made sure they did."²⁵⁹

"In retaliation, they assembled an army in the recently conquered Punjab; they recaptured Delhi by the end of 1857; and additional troops, belatedly sent from Britain, fought their way up the Ganges, exacting savage reprisals. Resistance smouldered on into 1859; but the Great Rebellion had been broken.

"This eventually successful outcome helped restore national and military morale that had been severely dented by the disasters of the Crimean War, but the Great Rebellion was the greatest nineteenth-century crisis the British Empire faced. The government in London played little direct role, the initial British military response was slow, and the medical back-up was no better than in the Crimea. Moreover, the failings of the East India Company could no longer be ignored, and in 1858, once the Rebellion was largely over, Palmerston announced that the Company would be abolished. His administration fell before the necessary legislation could be passed, but it was carried by Lord Derby's second minority government in a significant display of bipartisanship. All the Company's territories and property were transferred to the British government, the Board of Control was abolished, and a new cabinet post was created, that of Secretary of State for India. As the representative of the monarch, the Governor General, who would be responsible to the Secretary of State, was upgraded to the exalted rank of Viceroy, and in future all British territories would be administered by an Indian civil service, whose high-minded and disinterested ethos was very different from that which had prevailed before. The Company's sepoy army was put under crown control and drastically reduced in numbers, while the proportion of British troops was subsequently increased (again at the expense of the Indian tax-payer). Henceforward, there would be more investment in railways, but the wider aim of 'modernizing' Indian society, which had been so appealing to the likes of Bentinck, Macaulay and Dalhousie, was largely relinquished. The Mughal emperor was deposed and the last of his line was tried for treason and exiled to Rangoon. In an accompanying proclamation [on November 1, 1858], Queen Victoria declared that Britain no longer harboured any more territorial ambitions in India, and would in future respect and safeguard the rights of the native princes, most of whom had been loyal in 1857. This meant that henceforward British government in South Asia would be more on the side of tradition than of modernity."²⁶⁰

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²⁵⁹ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 563-567.

²⁶⁰ Cannadine, *op. cit.*, pp. 313-314.

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

"My friends, what crimes they have committed... The Indian government never ought to have tolerated the religion of the Hindoos at all. If my religion consisted of bestiality, infanticide and murder, I should have no right to it unless I was prepared to be hanged. The religion of the Hindoos is no more than a mass of the rankest filth that imagination ever conceived. The gods they worship are not entitled to the least atom of respect. Their worship necessitates everything that is evil and morality must put it down. The sword must be taken out of its sheath, to cut off our fellow subjects by their thousands.'"²⁶¹

In fact, the British response to the Mutiny was anything but liberal. "On 4 October 1857 the novelist Charles Dickens assured his readers in London that were he commander-in-chief in India, he would 'do my utmost to exterminate the Race on whom the stain of the late cruelties rested... and with all convenient dispatch and merciful swiftness of execution, to blot out of mankind and raze it off the face of the earth.' He meant Indians, of all ages, and, presumably, men, women and children alike..."²⁶²

This resulted in a significant change in British imperial policy with regard to the conversion of the natives. From now on, the emphasis would be less on the saving of souls and more on the political and economic benefits of British rule.

This proved once and for all that the British empire was no successor of Christian Rome; it had neither the true faith nor the enduring love and patience of the real missionary power. Nor would any truly Christian power have invaded another Christian power in order to preserve the rickety existence of the world's main Muslim power, as Britain (and France, a third pretender to the Roman succession) did in the Crimean War of 1854-56. Indeed, the only truly missionary state left in the world was Russia, Britain's great rival.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the British, quite irrationally, suspected the Russians of having designs on India – which was the main reason for their notably

²⁶¹ Ferguson, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-151.

²⁶² Dickens, in Wheatcroft, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

unsuccessful wars in Afghanistan²⁶³ and more successful (but very minor) war in Persia.²⁶⁴ The “great game”, the rivalry between Russia, the real successor of Rome, and Britain, the pseudo-successor, would occupy the minds and strategies of both governments to a quite unnecessary degree. For politically and militarily, they were no real threat to each other. But the stakes for Asia were high: would the world’s main refuge of paganism be converted to the true faith of Orthodoxy or to the false faith of liberalism and westernism? Rudyard Kipling, writing several decades later, thought not: while the capitalist “gods of the market-place” “followed the March of Mankind”, the pagan essence of fallen mankind would remain unchanged:

*As I pass through my incarnations in every age and race,
I Make my proper prostrations to the Gods of the Market-Place.
Peering through reverent fingers I watch them flourish and fall,
And the Gods of the Copybook Headings, I notice, outlast them all.
We were living in trees when they met us. They showed us each in turn
That Water would certainly wet us, as Fire would certainly burn:
But we found them lacking in Uplift, Vision and Breadth of Mind,
So we left them to teach the Gorillas while we followed the March of Mankind.
We moved as the Spirit listed. They never altered their pace,
Being neither cloud nor wind-borne like the Gods of the Market-Place.
But they always caught up with our progress, and presently word would come
That a tribe had been wiped off its icefield, or the lights had gone out in Rome.
With the Hopes that our World is built on they were utterly out of touch
They denied that the Moon was Stilton; they denied she was even Dutch.
They denied that Wishes were Horses; they denied that a Pig had Wings.
So we worshipped the Gods of the Market Who promised these beautiful things.
When the Cambrian measures were forming, They promised perpetual peace.
They swore, if we gave them our weapons, that the wars of the tribes would cease.
But when we disarmed They sold us and delivered us bound to our foe,
And the Gods of the Copybook Heading said: «Stick to the Devil you know.”
On the first Feminian Sandstones we were promised the Fuller Life
(Which started by loving our neighbour and ended by loving his wife)
Till our women had no more children and the men lost reason and faith,
And the Gods of the Copybook Headings said: «The Wages of Sin is Death.”
In the Carboniferous Epoch we were promised abundance for all,
By robbing selected Peter to pay for collective Paul;
But, though we had plenty of money, there was nothing our money could buy,
And the Gods of the Copybook Headings said: «If you don`t work you die.”
Then the Gods of the Market tumbled, and their smooth-tongued wizards withdrew,
And the hearts of the meanest were humbled and began to believe it was true
That All is not Gold that Glitters, and Two and Two make Four --
And the Gods of the Copybook Headings limped up to explain it once more.*

²⁶³ In the First Afghan War of 1841-42, the British force of 16,000 troops under General Elphinstone was completely wiped out during the retreat from Kabul to British India.

²⁶⁴ The war between Britain and Persia in 1857-58 was launched to prevent the Persians gaining control over Heirat, and ended in a British victory.

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*As it will be in the future, it was at the birth of Man --
There are only four things certain since Social Progress began --
That the Dog returns to his Vomit and the Sow returns to her Mire,
And the burnt Fool's bandaged finger goes wabbling back to the Fire --
And that after this is accomplished, and the brave new world begins
When all men are paid for existing and no man must pay for his sins
As surely as Water will wet us, as surely as Fire will burn
The Gods of the Copybook Headings with terror and slaughter return!*

The real significance of the Indian Mutiny lies in the fact that the gospel of English liberalism, having shed its pseudo-Christian trappings, would consolidate itself in the world's second-largest state - while leaving its pagan, anti-Christian roots intact...

16. VICTORIANISM: THE RELIGION OF DUTY

No great - in the sense of successful and powerful from a worldly point of view - civilization has ever been without religion or morality; and the great civilization of Victorian England was no exception. However, it is not easy to define precisely in what Victorian religion and morality consisted. As a first approximation we may define it as a mixture of Roman republican stoicism, Roman Imperial Messianism, Puritan-Protestant Christianity and the religion of liberalism, in short: *the religion of Duty*.

This potent mixture, which changed the character of the Victorians into natural rulers of the world, did not come about immediately.

"It would be easy," writes Robert Tombs, "to present Victorian England as a mass of contradictions. It rang with moral exhortation: listening to sermons was a popular pastime, even on honeymoon. Yet vices were not only secretly indulged but publicly flaunted. Politicians could show off their mistresses: for example, the Marquess of Hartington, Liberal MP and later holder of many ministerial offices, who openly took the well-known courtesan Catherine ('Skittles') Walters to the Derby in 1862. Aggressive prostitution made parts of London's West End no-go areas for respectable women, and the staff of the well-known Trocadero restaurant were so nervous about prostitutes that any unknown unaccompanied woman was shunted off into a corner so that 'in case of misbehavior we can screen the table off'. Property and convention ruled, but emotion was constantly bursting out as men sobbed and women swooned, sometimes over things that even we would find embarrassingly sentimental: one elderly peer sobbed all night after reading one of Dickens's death scenes. Modernity was lauded; but some of the most creative cultural impulses came from a reinvention of tradition in architecture, art and music. Religion exerted enormous power over people's lives. Yet never before had its power been so publicly questioned. Matthew Arnold's poem 'Dover Beach' (1851), with its sonorous description of Faith ebbing with a 'melancholy, long, withdrawing roar', is said to be the most widely reprinted poem in the language..."²⁶⁵

Arnold's poem well describes the decline of faith in the Victorian era, as well as the Victorian's uneasiness at its decline:

*The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long withdrawing roar,
Retreating to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.*

²⁶⁵ Tombs, *The English and Their History*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014, p. 463.

However, it could be argued that with regard to religion, the situation had been worse in the pre-Victorian, Napoleonic era; and part of the Victorians' self-image was as the restorers of Christian culture, recovering it from the abyss of French-inspired atheism. For at the beginning of the century, religion was not something that gentlemen practiced or talked about much. Thus, as David Starkey and Katie Greening write, "the Church of England had fallen to a new low... Its buildings were crumbling, and Anglican church services had become not only devoid of ceremony and ritual, but were often badly organized, understaffed and sparsely attended. On Easter Sunday, 1800, only six communicants attended the morning celebration in St. Paul's Cathedral."²⁶⁶

William Palmer, looking back in 1883 to England fifty years earlier, wrote: "Allusions to God's being and providence became distasteful to the English parliament. They were voted ill-bred and superstitious; they were the subjects of ridicule as overmuch righteousness. Men were ashamed any longer to say family prayers, or to invoke the blessing of God upon their partaking of His gifts; the food which He alone had provided. The mention of His name was tabooed in polite circles."²⁶⁷

And yet only a few decades later, the English could be counted among the more religious nations of Europe. A religious census taken on March 30, 1851 revealed that a good half of the population went to church (half Anglican, and half dissenters).²⁶⁸ Continental atheism found little response in English hearts. True, Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein* (1816) expressed a fear, not only that science might go off the right path and produce monsters, but that it might reveal that man, like Frankenstein, did not have a soul, but was purely material, so that God did not exist. The rapid growth of science, and the emergence of such atheist theories as Darwinism (Darwin's *Origin of the Species* was published in 1859), accentuated these fears. But in the second half of the century, at any rate, the English remained stubbornly "pious" – externally, at any rate. And if some surprising blasphemies did escape the lips of senior public servants – such as the British consul in Canton's remark: "Jesus Christ is Free Trade, and Free Trade is Jesus Christ"²⁶⁹ – this was not common. True, Free Trade *was* probably the real faith of many in the English governing classes. But officially England was a "most Christian" nation.

As in the patriotic and religious revival of the mid-eighteenth century, music played an important part in this movement. The German Jewish composer Felix Mendelssohn, with the help of Victoria and Albert, raised the level of church music, and recalled Handel in his composing the oratorios *St. Paul* (1836) and *Elijah* (1846).²⁷⁰

²⁶⁶ Starkey and Greening, *Monarchy & Music*, London: BBC Books, 2013, p. 301.

²⁶⁷ Palmer, in Geoffrey Faber, *The Oxford Apostles*, London: Penguin, 1954, pp. 319-320.

²⁶⁸ Cannadine, *op. cit.*, pp. 253-254.

²⁶⁹ J.M. Roberts, *The Penguin History of Europe*, London: Penguin Books, 1997, p. 382.

²⁷⁰ Starkey and Greening, *op. cit.*, p. 30).

This was encapsulated in the movement of religious and moral revival that we know as Victorianism, which has been described by the sociologist Francis Fukuyama as follows: "The Victorian period in Britain and America may seem to many to be the embodiment of traditional values, but when this era began in the mid-nineteenth century, they were anything but traditional. Victorianism was in fact a radical movement that emerged in reaction to the kinds of social disorder that seemed to be spreading everywhere at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a movement that deliberately sought to create new social rules and instill virtues in populations that were seen as wallowing in degeneracy. The shift toward Victorian values began in Britain but was quickly imported into the United States beginning in the 1830s and 1840s. Many of the institutions that were responsible for its spread were overtly religious in nature, and the changes they brought about occurred with remarkable speed. In the words of Paul E. Johnson: 'In 1825 a northern businessman dominated his wife and children, worked irregular hours, consumed enormous amounts of alcohol, and seldom voted or went to church. Ten years later the same man went to church twice a week, treated his family with gentleness and love, drank nothing but water, worked steady hours and forced his employees to do the same, campaigned for the Whig Party, and spent his spare time convincing others that if they organized their lives in similar ways, the world would be perfect.' The nonconformist churches in England and the Protestant sects in the United States, particularly the Wesleyan movement, led the Second Great Awakening in the first decades of the century that followed hard on the rise in disorder and created new norms to keep that order under control. The Sunday school movement grew exponentially in both England and America between 1821 and 1851, as did the YMCA movement, which was transplanted from England to America in the 1850s. According to Richard Hofstadter, U.S. church membership doubled between 1800 and 1850, and there was a gradual increase in the respectability of church membership itself as ecstatic, evangelical denominations became more restrained in their religious observances. At the same time, the temperance movement succeeded in lowering per capita alcohol consumption on the part of Americans back down to a little over two gallons by the middle of the century...

"These attempts to reform British and American society from the 1830s on in what we now label the Victorian era were a monumental success..."²⁷¹

We can measure the success of Victorianism by the sharp reversal in the trends for crime and illegitimacy, which increased through the first half of the nineteenth century (and especially during the Napoleonic wars), but from about 1845 declined steadily until the end of the century. "Victorian times," writes Gordon Kerr, "saw a definite decline in many insalubrious practices such as gambling, horse racing and obscene theatres. Patronage of brothels fell and the debauched behaviour of English aristocrats that had been commonplace in the eighteenth century was consigned to history."²⁷²

²⁷¹ Fukuyama, *The Great Disruption*, London: Profile Books, 1999, pp. 266-267, 268.

²⁷² Kerr, *A Short History of the Victorian Era*, Harpenden: Oldcastle Books, 2019, pp. 94-95.

We find a similar pattern in America, with the peak in crime coming about thirty years later.²⁷³

However, in spite of its undoubted success in raising the external morality and efficiency of the Anglo-Saxon nations, Victorianism has had a bad press. It has been seen as the product of pride and hypocrisy. Moreover, it coincided, paradoxically, with a decline in faith in many spheres.

“Victorian England,” writes Tombs, “was a highly religious society: this was one of the best and worst things about it. But so had the country been in previous centuries, and so were all contemporary societies. How religious was it? Its favourite books included the Bible and *Pilgrim’s Progress*. But when for the first and only time a census recorded religious practice on Sunday, 30 March, 1851, the statistics shocked many. They showed a relatively high number ‘neglecting’ religious services – estimated at 5.3 million people, 29 percent of the population. However, 7.3 million did attend church – 41 percent of the population, about 70 percent of those able to do so. These levels are similar to those in the United States in the 2000s, though five times higher than the 8 percent attending Sunday worship in Britain in 2000.

“More than half of 1851 attendances were at Nonconformist chapels, not the Church of England. England had since the seventeenth century been unusually diverse and divided in its beliefs – ‘sixty sects and only one sauce,’ joked a French observer. Yet over the eighteenth century Old Dissent (Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Quakers) legally tolerated in 1689, stagnated, and Anglican dominance seemed unchallengeable. The explosion of ‘New Dissent’ (especially Methodism) from the 1770s to the 1840s marked one of the most dramatic social and cultural changes in the country’s history. English religion no longer consisted of a national Church with a few licensed dissenters, but of some ninety churches and sects. The omnipresent Church of England remained by far the largest – 85 percent of marriages in 1851 were in church, and only 6 percent in chapel. But the 1832 Reform Act had increased the voting power of Nonconformists – about 20 percent of the new electorate. Many of them demanded outright disestablishment, some vehemently denouncing ‘the white-chokered, immoral, wine-spilling, degraded clergy, backed by debauched aristocrats and degraded wives and daughters.’ To understand the continuing importance of the Church, and the vehemence of both its defenders and attackers, we would have to imagine an institution today combining the BBC, the major universities, parts of the Home Office, and much of the welfare, judicial and local-government systems.

“Anglicanism was both strengthened and weakened by its ancient institutional structures. It was strongest in the Midlands and the south of England, and weak around the edges – the north, the south-west, the Scottish and Welsh borders, and Wales. This was originally for basic material reasons – scattered populations, low

²⁷³ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, pp. 268-269.

incomes and inability to support a resident clergy. But from the 1750s these areas boomed in population and industry. By the time the Church responded – building over 4,000 churches between 1820 and 1870, an effort unique in history – many people had been integrated into Nonconformist sects, especially Methodism: on ‘census Sunday’ its chapels attracted about 2.25 million, over 20 percent of the total, and up to half of those in towns. John Wesley’s flexible and even opportunistic methods (moving on when there was no response and consolidating where converts were made) proved highly successful: Methodism was the only denomination that positively thrived on socio-economic change – including population growth, industrialization, migration and social mobility. So, in its various forms, it became the most powerful catalyst of cultural dissidence in England. Chapels and their Sunday schools, often staffed by self-taught artisans and miners, became a channel of revolt against the squire and the parson, providing an autonomous religious environment affording moral legitimacy, solidarity and self-confidence. In rural society, this might attract farmers who resented paying church rates and tithes, labourers in dispute with their bosses – even poachers. In short, all who detested parsons, who were also often Poor Law guardians or JPs: Radicals never forgot that it was a clerical magistrate who had read the Riot Act at Peterloo [in 1819]. The Primitive Methodists (the ‘Prims’), who doubled their numbers during the conflictual 1830s, remained a sect of the poor, preaching a lively message of ‘the 3 Rs’: ‘ruin, repentance and redemption’; and their preachers provided a constant stream of trade union leaders. Mainstream Methodism attracted the hard-working, respectable and newly prosperous businessmen who now had the vote and became one of the most dynamic forces in English politics.

“Smaller older sects, such as the Quakers and Unitarians, became the religion of urban and business elites, at least as much as the Church of England was that of the squirearchy... Some were also influential philanthropists and campaigners: pious Dissenting families regarded their wealth and privilege as imposing a God-given duty to society. Similarly, Evangelicalism, which influence both Church and Dissent, was a call to public and political action in almost every sphere. It created vast numbers of charities and philanthropic lobby groups – many still in existence – largely depending on the voluntary labours of middle-class women. Women as well as men were politically organized and powerful as lobby groups, despite lacking the vote. To their pressure is due much of what is ‘Victorian’ in social and cultural life: anti-slavery, animal protection, Sunday Observance, prison reform, temperance, protection of women, and prosecution of obscenity and illicit sexuality. The so-called Nonconformist conscience was willing to use political action and law enforcement as a means of extending moral behaviour.

“A challenge to Anglicanism from the other end of the spectrum was the Oxford Movement, an 1820s High Church dons’ revolt led by the poet John Keble, the Regius Professor of Hebrew Edward Pusey, and the vicar of St. Mary’s, John Henry Newman. The rebels were determined, in Newman’s words, to resist ‘Rationalism’ and ‘Liberalism’ in the Church which led to the subversive

conclusion that 'no theological doctrine is any thing more than an opinion.' During the 1840s Pusey was banned from preaching and Newman censured."²⁷⁴

In his famous *Tract 90*, Newman sought to interpret the Anglican 39 Articles in such a way as to make them consistent with Catholic teaching. This led to a backlash, which eventually forced Newman to leave Anglicanism and join the Roman Church, where he became a cardinal. The Oxford Movement then devolved into the Cambridge Camden Society, which explored medieval liturgy, music and architecture, and which was led by Edward Pusey.

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

Another problem that troubled the Victorians was the doubts engendered by the so-called "critical" school of Biblical interpretation. This, "the work", writes Paul Johnson, "mainly of German scholars, dismissed the Old Testament as a historical record and classified large parts of it as religious myth. The first five books of the Bible, or Pentateuch, were now presented as orally transmitted legend from various Hebrew tribes which reached written form only after the Exile, in the second half of the first millennium BC. These legends, the argument ran, were carefully edited, conflated and adapted to provide historical justification and divine sanction for the religious beliefs, practices and rituals of the post-Exile Israelite establishment. The individuals described in the early books were not real people but mythical heroes or composite figures denoting entire tribes.

"Thus not only Abraham and the other patriarchs, but Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Sampson, dissolved into myth and became no more substantial than Hercules and Perseus, Priam and Agamemnon, Ulysses and Aeneas. Under the influence of Hegel and his followers, Jewish and Christian revelation, as presented in the Bible, was reinterpreted as a determinist sociological development from primitive tribal superstition to sophisticated urban ecclesiology. The unique and divinely ordained role of the Jews was pushed into the background, the achievement of Mosaic monotheism was progressively eroded, and the rewriting of Old Testament history was pervaded by a subtle quality of anti-Judaism, tinged even with anti-Semitism. The collective work of German Biblical scholars became the academic orthodoxy, reaching a high level of persuasiveness and complexity

²⁷⁴ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 465-467.

in the teachings of Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918), whose remarkable book, *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*, was first published in 1878. For half a century Wellhausen and his school dominated the approach to Biblical study, and many of his ideas influence the historian's reading of the Bible even today. Some outstanding twentieth-century scholars, such as M. Noth and A. Alt, retained this essentially skeptical approach, dismissing the pre-conquest traditions as mythical and arguing that the Israelites became a people only on the soil of Canaan and not before the twelfth century BC; the conquest itself was largely myth, too, being mainly a process of peaceful infiltration. Others suggested that the origins of Israel lay in the withdrawal of a community of religious zealots from a Canaanite society they regarded as corrupt. These and other theories necessarily discarded all Biblical history before the Book of Judges as wholly or chiefly fiction, and Judges itself as a medley of fiction and fact. Israelite history, it was argued, does not acquire a substantial basis of truth until the age of Saul and David, when the Biblical text begins to reflect the reality of court histories and records."²⁷⁵

Fortunately, however, for those whose faith is weak, modern archaeology has come to the rescue, providing confirmation of the existence of the supposedly mythical persons and stories of the Old Testament. So the "critical" approach to Bible Study has begun to lose its icy Hegelian grip on Biblical scholarship...

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This Victorian attachment to Duty in the place of God and Immortality highlights the puzzling fact that while the Anglican Church tolerated a wide range of beliefs, in the realm of *morals*, as George Mosse writes, "very little freedom was allowed. For Liberals accepted and furthered that change in morality which came about at the turn of the century. It is important, therefore, to discuss this morality in connection with liberalism, even though it became the dominant morality in England generally and in much of Europe as well. Liberal freedom... was severely circumscribed and restricted by this development.

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

²⁷⁵ Johnson, *A History of the Jews*, London: Phoenix, 1995, pp. 5-6.

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

“Two other factors strengthened this reawakened moral passion. There was a moral reaction against the French Revolution and its antireligious bent. Madame de Staël had seen in the Reign of Terror a moral failing on the part of the people; many Englishmen linked the events of the French Revolution to the prevalence of immorality in that nation. Men and women of the nobility and middle classes called for moral reform at home in order that Revolutionary immorality might be better withstood in the struggle between the two nations. Pamphlets and diaries give ample evidence of an attempted reform of manners. Frivolity, worldly and sexual excesses were regarded as unworthy of a nation engaged in a life and death struggle with forces which symbolized all that was immoral. The Evangelicals in England benefited from this feeling of distaste. Sunday observances were revived; frivolity was taken as a sign of levity in a time of serious crisis. William Wilberforce persuaded King George III to issue a royal proclamation in 1787 which condemned vice. Considering the immoral tone of his sons, this could not have lacked irony.

“The second factor, associated with the expanding economy, was the rapid rise within the social hierarchy of the newly rich. This self-assertive and ambitious bourgeoisie brought with them a dedication to hard work and a sense of the superiority of the values of the self-made man to those of the old aristocracy. These values blended in with the revived Puritan impetus exemplified by the evangelical movement. Never a part of the idle and sophisticated aristocracy, these men, through the increasing fluidity of English class lines, now infiltrated that class. No wonder that Edmund Burke lamented the vanished ‘unbought grace of life’ of a previous age. Now the grace of membership in the upper classes was bought and that, in itself, created a different attitude toward life. Piety, moral revulsion against the French Revolution, and the attitudes of the bourgeoisie all contributed to the new moral tone. This was not confined to England; such conditions were present in all of western Europe, but it was England which best exemplified these moral attitudes, for they fitted in with liberal thought which now took up and furthered this morality as suited to its ideology in the age of the Industrial Revolution. Individualism stood in the forefront combined with the

kind of toughness which made for victory in the struggle for existence. What was needed was sobriety, hard work, and an emphasis on action. Such a life exemplified the true Christian spirit and on the basis of the individuality of one's own character led to self-fulfillment.

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

"This action was exemplified by what the Victorians called the 'gospel of work'. As Carlyle put it: '.... Not what I have but what I do is my kingdom.' It was in work that duty was exemplified. John Henry Newman shared this emphasis on work: 'We are not here that we might go to bed at night, and get up in the morning, toil for our bread, eat and drink, laugh and joke, sin when we have a mind and reform when we are tired of sinning, rear a family and die.' Work had to be done in the right spirit: the service of God in one's secular calling.

"Samuel Smiles's *Self Help* (1859), which propagandised this morality and its application to work, was the most successful book of the century – over a quarter of a million copies were sold by 1905. Its popularity was as great outside England as within the country. Garibaldi was a great admirer of the book, as was the Queen of Italy. In Japan it was the rage under the title *European Decision and Character Book*. The mayor of Buenos Aires compared Smiles, surprisingly, to Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Quite rightly these underdeveloped countries saw in Smiles's book a reflection of attitudes which were making an important contribution to the successful industrialization of England.

"The aim of *Self Help* was to aid the working classes in improving themselves so as to reach the top. This path was marked by the improvement of the individual character of those who desired to be a success in life. 'The crown and glory of life is character.' What this character should be Smiles illustrated through examples of men who raised themselves to fame and fortune. Character had to be formed by morals, for to Smiles, social and economic problems were really problems for morality. When he talked about thrift and saving it was the moral aspect of self-reliance and restraint which appealed to him and not the economic consequences

of such practices. Character was also shaped by the competitive struggle – stop competition and you stop the struggle for individualism. This struggle had to be conducted in a ‘manly way’ if success was to follow. He exhorted the workers to become gentlemen, for this meant the acquisition of a keen sense of honor, scrupulously avoiding mean actions. ‘His law is rectitude – action in right lines.’ Here was a rooted belief in a moral code as the sole road to worldly success...”²⁷⁶

“Respectability,” writes Tombs, “was a much broader process than merely compelling the working classes to accept middle-class standards of decorum. It meant working people themselves wishing to create security, cleanliness and safety for their families, asserting a social status, ‘keeping up appearances’, and raising children according to various ideals of Progress, Christianity, manliness and femininity... The attainment of respectability was a source of pride and the basis of political assertion. For example, mid-century Chartists and later Radicals demanded democratic rights on the grounds that they were respectable heads of households.”²⁷⁷

The Victorians with their “self-help” philosophy did not like the idea of the “grandmotherly state” – what we call the “nanny state” – because it offended their pride in themselves as being able to help themselves. And if that meant that the state intruded less, this was balanced by the fact that the neighbours intruded more. As the Russian exile Alexander Herzen, who lived in London in the 1850s, put it: “The freer a country is from government interference... the more intolerant grows the mob: your neighbour, your butcher, your tailor, family, club, parish keep you under supervision and perform the duties of a policeman.”²⁷⁸

The Victorians’ keen sense of character, honour and manliness appears to go back to an attitude of the Italian Renaissance. Thus in about 1860 Jacob Burckhardt wrote about “that moral force which was then the strongest bulwark against evil. The highly gifted man of that day thought to find it in the sentiment of honour. This is that enigmatic mixture of conscience and egotism which often survives in the modern man after he has lost, whether by his own fault or not, faith, love and hope. This sense of honour is compatible with much selfishness and great vices, and may be the victim of astonishing illusions; yet, nevertheless, all the noble elements that are left in the wreck of a character may gather around it, and from this foundation may draw new strength. It has become, in a far wider sense than is commonly believed, a decisive test of conduct in the minds of the cultivated Europeans of our own day, and many of those who yet hold faithfully by religion and morality are unconsciously guided by this feeling in the gravest decisions of their lives...”²⁷⁹

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²⁷⁶ Mosse, *The Culture of Western Europe*, Boulder & London: Westview Press, 1988, pp. 111-114.

²⁷⁷ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 477, 479.

²⁷⁸ Herzen, *My Past and Thoughts*; in Tombs, *op. cit.*, p. 477.

²⁷⁹ Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, London: Penguin, 1990, p. 273.

The Victorians' extreme emphasis on respectability in morals may have been a kind of psychological compensation for an uneasy feeling that they were betraying the faith in the realm of theology. In any case, it provided another important kind of compensation: Victorian morality proved to be a sure road to worldly success, both at home and abroad. For it protected them from certain sins such as laziness and the more blatant forms of dishonesty that proved unprofitable in the long term.

But, unfortunately, it only reinforced in them the more serious vices of pride, hypocrisy and avarice (although it must be acknowledged that the Victorian era was a time of charities and alms-giving on a large scale). For the cult of self-help and duty could not fail to bring forth the fruit of self-satisfaction. Thus in 1858 "the assembled members of a metropolitan dining society known as the Club, which had been in existence since 1764, concluded during the course of their post-prandial discussion on 'the highest period of civilization' that was occurring 'in London at the present moment'."²⁸⁰

The Victorians are often accused of having been sexual hypocrites, with outward respectability covering many dark deeds of lust, especially among men.²⁸¹ However, according to Robert Tombs, "we should be skeptical of the idea that hypocrisy was a Victorian hallmark: 'As a matter of plain fact, sexual hypocrisy in the recorded lives of notable Victorians is rare.'"²⁸²

And yet we may question this judgement of Tombs. In spite of the pressures to conform to Christian morality, at least outwardly, which were huge, there were several famous sinners. Thus the heir to the throne, the future King Edward VII, showed himself a libertine from an early age. The greatest writer of the age, Charles Dickens, had a mistress and separated from his wife and ten children. Again, the greatest female writer of the age, George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans), openly lived with a married man, the philosopher and critic George Henry Lewes. The couple met in 1851, and by 1854 they had decided to live together. "Lewes was already married to Agnes Jervis, although in an open marriage. In addition to the three children they had together, Agnes also had four children by Thornton Leigh Hunt...

"It was not so much the adultery itself, but the refusal to conceal the relationship, that was felt to breach the social convention of the time, and attracted so much disapproval..."²⁸³

²⁸⁰ Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 328.

²⁸¹ However, men (as in most cultures) had a better deal in the law-courts than women. Thus "in divorce law a man could divorce his wife for one act of adultery, but a woman could divorce for adultery only if it was combined with another offence such as incest, cruelty, bigamy, desertion, and so on." (Kerr, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-96). Cf. Kate Summerscale, "Divorce, Victorian Style", *Seven*, April 29, 2012, pp. 12-13).

²⁸² Tombs, *op. cit.*, p. 482.

²⁸³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Eliot#cite_note-29.

However, in spite of her immoral life-style, Eliot is a striking example of the power of the religion of Duty over the Victorians. Thus “on a rainy May evening [F.W.H.] Myers walked with his famous guest [Eliot] in the Fellows’ Garden of Trinity College, Cambridge, and she spoke of God, Immortality, and Duty. God, she said, was inconceivable. Immortality was unbelievable. But it was beyond question that Duty was ‘peremptory and absolute’. ‘Never, perhaps,’ Myers says, ‘have sterner accents affirmed the sovereignty of impersonal and unrecompensing Law. I listened and night fell; her majestic countenance turned towards me like a sybil in the gloom; it was as though she withdrew from my grasp the two scrolls of promise, and left me with the third scroll only, awful with inscrutable fate.’ Much as George Eliot had withdrawn from her host, she had not, we may perceive, left him with nothing. A categorical Duty – might it not seem, exactly in its peremptoriness and absoluteness, to have been laid down by the universe itself and thus to validate the personal life that obeyed it? Was a categorical Duty wholly without purpose, without *some* end in view, since it so nearly matched one’s own inner imperative, which, in the degree that one responded to it, assured one’s coherence and selfhood? And did it not license the thought that man and the universe are less alien to each other than they may seem when the belief in God and Immortality are first surrendered?”²⁸⁴

²⁸⁴ Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity*, Oxford University Press, 1974, p. 118.

17. VICTORIAN ENGLAND IN THE EYES OF FOREIGNERS

What did foreign intellectuals think of Victorian England? This was an important question because Victorianism, as a result of the great political and economic power of Victorian England, had great influence overseas. It spread throughout bourgeois Europe, and even beyond. Thus Samuel Smiles's *Self Help* was popular even in Japan...

In general, the opinion entertained by foreigners of the Victorian English was negative. Part of this may be explained by envy towards the world's most powerful nation, and the general pomposity with which English lords and gentlemen conducted themselves - but not entirely. In his *English Traits* (1856), the American writer Ralph Waldo Emerson, "the Sage of Concord", believed that, the English had no religious belief and therefore nothing was "so odious as the polite bows to God" which they constantly made in their writings.

As for the Europeans, they complained, not about a lack of religiosity (there was too much of it, in their view, making Sundays in London very boring), as about the bad climate and bad food. They also found the English cold, arrogant, melancholic, inhospitable (as individuals, if not as a nation) and very materialistic. The French, as might have been expected, complained that Englishmen spoke little French and did not understand them when they tried to speak English. The Germans complained that England was "a land without music". Nevertheless, more and more Europeans either sought refuge, or chose to take up residence, in England, mainly because of the liberal freedoms and the economic opportunities. Artists such as the painter Manet, the pianist Clara Schumann and the composers Chopin, Berlioz and Verdi came to England because the English, however lacking in great artists themselves, were prepared to pay very handsomely for foreign art and artists.²⁸⁵

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Russian visitors to England were in a special category, more penetrating than the Continental tourists. The Russian novelist Turgenev, thought similarly to the Europeans. "The English have some good qualities - but they all - even the most intelligent - lead a very hard life. It takes some getting used to - like their climate. But then where else can one go?"²⁸⁶

Another Russian novelist, Lev Tolstoy, visited London in 1861. He wrote: "I was struck when I saw in the streets of London a criminal escorted by the police, and the police had to protect him energetically from the crowd, which threatened to tear him in pieces. With us it is just the opposite, police have to drive away in force the people who try to give the criminal money and bread. With us, criminals and prisoners are 'little unhappy ones'."²⁸⁷

²⁸⁵ Orlando Figes, *The Europeans*, London: Penguin, 2020, chapter 6.

²⁸⁶ Figes, *The Europeans*, p. 333.

²⁸⁷ Tolstoy, in A.N. Wilson, *Tolstoy*, London: Atlantic Books, 2012, p. 159.

Tolstoy noted the sexual hypocrisy of the city with its thousands of prostitutes, but thought they had an important role to play in preserving the institution of the family! "Imagine London without its 80,000 magdalenes – what would happen to families?" he wrote.²⁸⁸

However, Tombs argues that the "widely repeated estimate of 80,000 or more prostitutes in London should probably be closer to 5,000."²⁸⁹ A proof of the power of respectable Nonconformity to shape actual behaviour was the rarity of prostitution in the northern towns. "²⁹⁰

The Slavophile writer Alexei Khomiakov was in general severely critical of Western Europe. And yet he "speaks of it in one of his poems as 'the land of holy miracles'. He was particularly fond of England. The best things in her social and political life were due, he thought, to the right balance being maintained between liberalism and conservatism. The conservatives stood for the organic force of the national life developing from its original sources while the liberals stood for the personal, individual force, for analytical, critical reason. The balance between these two forces in England has never yet been destroyed because 'every liberal is a bit of a conservative at bottom because he is English'. In England, as in Russia, the people have kept their religion and distrust analytical reason. But Protestant scepticism is undermining the balance between the organic and the analytic forces, and this is a menace to England in the future..."²⁹¹ In another place, Khomiakov saw the menace to England in her conservatism: "England with her modest science and her serious love of religious truth might give some hope; but – permit the frank expression of my thoughts – England is held by the iron chain of traditional custom."²⁹²

Another Russian visitor to London was Dostoyevsky, who was also struck by the prostitutes he saw during his visit in 1862. "On the streets," writes Geir Kjetsaa, Dostoyevsky "saw people wearing beautiful clothes in expensive carriages, side by side with others in filth and rags. The Thames was poisoned, the air polluted; the city seemed marked by joyless drinking and wife abuse. The writer was particularly horrified by child prostitution:

²⁸⁸ Tolstoy, in Rosamund Bartlett, *Tolstoy: A Russian Life*, Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, Harcourt, 2011, p. 187.

²⁸⁹ Kerr (*op. cit.*, p. 95) writes: "It is estimated that there were 8,000 prostitutes working in London alone in 1857." (V.M.)

²⁹⁰ Tombs, *The English and their History*, New York: Alfred Knopf, 2015.

²⁹¹ Lossky, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

²⁹² Khomiakov, "First Letter to William Palmer", in Birkbeck, *op. cit.*, p. 6; *Living Orthodoxy*, N 138, vol. XXIII, N 6, November-December, 2003, p. 13. It is interesting to compare the Slavophile Khomiakov's estimate of England with that of the westerner Herzen: "He admired England. He admired her constitution; the wild and tangled wool of her unwritten laws and customs brought the full resources of his romantic imagination into play... But he could not altogether like them: they remained too remote from the moral, social and aesthetic issues which lay closer to his own heart, too materialistic and self-satisfied." (Isaiah Berlin, "Herzen and his Memoirs", *The Proper Study of Mankind*, London: Pimlico, 1998, pp. 516, 517)

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

“When he visited the London World’s Fair with ‘civilization’s shining triumphs’, Dostoyevsky again found himself possessed by feelings of fear and dejection. Appalled, he recoiled from the hubris that had created the Crystal Palace’s ‘colossal decorations’. Here was something taken to its absolute limit, he maintained, here man’s prideful spirit had erected a temple to an idol of technology: “This is a Biblical illustration, this speaks of Babylon, in this a prophet of the Apocalypse is come to life. You feel that it would take unbelievable spiritual strength not to succumb to this impression, not to bow before this consummate fact, not to acknowledge this reality as our ideal and mistake Baal for God.”²⁹³

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

“In this there is much that is touching and also much enthusiasm. Here there is actual deification of humankind and a passionate urge to reveal their love. Still, what a thirst for prayer, for worship; what a craving for God and faith among

²⁹³ Kjetsaa, *Fyodor Dostoyevsky: A Writer’s Life*, London: Macmillan, 1987, p. 145.

these atheists, and how much despair and sorrow; what a funeral procession in lieu of a live, serene life, with its gushing spring of youth, force and hope! But whether it is a funeral or a new and coming force – to many people this is a question.”²⁹⁴

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

“‘I picture to myself, my dear,’ he began, with a pensive smile, ‘that the battle is over and that the strife has calmed down. After maledictions, lumps of mud and whistles, lull has descended and men have found themselves *alone*, as they wished it; the former great idea has abandoned them; the great wellspring of energy, that has thus far nourished them, has begun to recede as a lofty, receding Sun, but this, as it were, was mankind’s last day. And suddenly men grasped that they had been left all alone, and forthwith they were seized with a feeling of great orphanhood. My dear boy, never was I able to picture people as having grown ungrateful and stupid. Orphaned men would at once begin to draw themselves together closer and with more affection; they would grasp each other’s hands, realizing that now they alone constituted everything to one another. The grand idea of immortality would also vanish, and it would become necessary to replace it, and all the immense over-abundance of love for Him who, indeed, had been Immortality, would in every man be focused on nature, on the universe, on men, on every particle of matter. They would start loving the earth and life irresistibly, in the measure of the gradual realization of their transiency and fluency, and theirs would now be a different love – not like the one in days gone by. They would discern and discover in nature such phenomena and mysteries as had never heretofore been suspected, since they would behold nature with new eyes, with the look of a lover gazing upon his inamorata. They would be waking up and hastening to embrace one another, hastening to love, comprehending that days are short and that this is all that is left to them...’

“Isn’t there here, in this fantasy, something akin to that actually existent ‘Atheists’ Church’?”²⁹⁵

*

Nietzsche, though poles apart from the great Russians in his views on Christianity and morality, saw the same vices of de facto atheism and hypocrisy among the English, who made up for their lack of faith in the Christian God by an exaggerated show of Christian morality: “They are rid of the Christian God and

²⁹⁴ Dostoyevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, London: Cassell, trans. Boris Brasol, vol. I, pp. 265-266.

²⁹⁵ Dostoyevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, p. 266.

now believe all the more firmly that they must cling to Christian morality. That is an English consistency; we do not wish to hold it against little moralistic females à la [George] Eliot. In England one must rehabilitate oneself after every little emancipation from theology by showing in a veritably awe-inspiring manner what a moral fanatic one is: That is the penance they pay there.

“We others hold otherwise. When one gives up the Christian faith, one pulls the right to Christian morality from under one’s feet. This morality is by no means self-evident: this point has to be exhibited again and again, despite the English flatheads. Christianity is a system, a *whole* view of things thought out together. By breaking one main concept out of it, the faith in God, one breaks the whole: nothing necessary remains in one’s hands. Christianity presupposes that man does not know, *cannot* know, what is good for him, what evil: he believes in God, who alone knows it. Christianity is a command; its origin is transcendent, it is beyond all criticism, all right to criticism; it has truth only if God is the truth – it stands and falls with faith in God.

“When the English actually believe that they know ‘intuitively’ what is good and evil, when they therefore suppose that they no longer require Christianity as the guarantee of morality, we merely witness the *effects* of the dominion of the Christian value-judgement and an expression of the strength and depth of this dominion: such that the very conditional character of its right to existence is no longer felt. For the English morality is not yet a problem...”²⁹⁶

²⁹⁶ Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Gods*, in Michael Tanner, “Nietzsche”, in *German Philosophers: Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 380-381.

18. THE TAIPING REBELLION

In China, writes Ferguson, "the first Opium War ushered in an era of humiliation. Drug addiction exploded.²⁹⁷ Christian missionaries destabilized traditional Chinese beliefs. And in the chaos of the Taiping Rebellion – a peasant revolt against a discredited dynasty led by the self-proclaimed younger brother of Christ [called Hong Xiuquan] – between 20 and 40 million people lost their lives [although only a few of these deaths were in battle]."²⁹⁸

"At first," writes Tombs, "the rebels' quasi-Christianity won some sympathy from the West. British naval officers were officially sent fifty theological questions: 'Does any one among you know 1. How tall God is, or how broad, 2. What his appearance or colour is, 3. How large his abdomen is, 4. What kind of beard he grows?' etc., to which they gave 'courteous and thorough' answers, but also said that they 'think it right to state to you distinctly that we... can subscribe to none of your [dogmas].'"

There were other western influences, notably communistic ideas. Thus J.M. Roberts writes: "The basis of Taiping society was communism: there was no private property but communal provision for general needs. The land was in theory distributed for working in plots graded by quality to provide just shares. Even more revolutionary was the extension of social and educational equality to women. The traditional binding of their feet was forbidden and a measure of sexual austerity marked the movement's aspirations (though not the conduct of the 'Heavenly King' himself). These things reflected the mixture of religious and social elements which lay at the root of the Taiping cult and the danger it presented to the traditional order."²⁹⁹

Such elements might lead one to think that this rebellion was undertaken under the direct influence of the West, being an eastern offshoot of the European Age of Revolution. But this would be a mistake, according to Jacques Gernet, insofar as Hung "was only following in the footsteps of other rebel leaders and usurpers who had been regarded as reincarnations of Maitreya, the saviour Buddha... This view fails to recognize the role played by heterodox religions in the big rebellions of Chinese history and the opposition – a basic factor in China – between the official cults, patronized by the legitimate authority, and the religious practices frowned on by the state (*yin-ssu*). Taoism, Buddhism, and Manicheism all provided popular risings with the messianic hope of a world at peace, harmony, and general prosperity; the Christianity of the T'ai P'ing comes into the same category."³⁰⁰

²⁹⁷ "In the late nineteenth century, about 40 million Chinese, a tenth of the country's population, were opium addicts" (Harari, *Homo Sapiens*, p. 364).

²⁹⁸ Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 292.

²⁹⁹ Roberts, *History of the World*, Oxford: Helicon, 1992, p. 666.

³⁰⁰ Gernet, *A History of Chinese Civilization*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 550, 556.

Be that as may, it is intriguing that this enormous rebellion, together with the later rebellions it gave rise to, should have taken place at just the time when western ideas were beginning to enter into China. Some kind of causal link seems highly probable. Thus we may agree with the judgement of Eric Hobsbawm that "these convulsions were in important respects the direct product of the western impact on China.

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

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

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

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

“Paradoxically the rulers of China had been rather less ready to adopt western innovations than the plebeian rebels, long used to living in an ideological world in which unofficial ideas drawn from foreign sources (such as Buddhism) were acceptable. To the Confucian scholar-bureaucrats who governed the empire what was not Chinese was barbarian. There was even resistance to the technology which so obviously made the barbarians invincible. As late as 1867 Grand Secretary Wo Jen memorialised the throne’s warning that the establishment of a college for teaching astronomy and mathematics would ‘make the people proselytes of foreignism’ and result ‘in the collapse of uprightness and the spread of wickedness’, and resistance to the construction of railways and the like

remained considerable. For obvious reasons a 'modernising' party developed, but one may guess that they would have preferred to keep the old China unchanged, merely adding to it the capacity to produce western armaments. (Their attempts to develop such production in the 1860s were not very successful for that reason.) The powerless imperial administration in any case saw itself with little but the choice between different degrees of concession to the west. Faced with a major social revolution, it was even reluctant to mobilise the enormous force of Chinese popular xenophobia against the invaders. Indeed, the overthrow of the Taiping seemed politically by far its most urgent problem, and for this purpose the help of the foreigners was, if not essential, then at any rate desirable; their good-will was indispensable. Thus imperial China found itself tumbling rapidly into complete dependence on the foreigners."³⁰¹

³⁰¹ Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital 1848-1875*, pp. 155-159. Stephen Platt writes: "China was not a closed system, and globalism is hardly the recent phenomenon we sometimes imagine it to be. By consequence, the war in China was tangled up in threads leading around the globe to Europe and America, and it was watched from outside with a sense of immediacy and horror." (*Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom: China, the West and the Epic Story of the Taiping Civil War*, 2012, pp. xxiii, xxvi reviewed by Samuel Burt in *Open Democracy*, August 18, 2012)

19. EMANCIPATED JEWRY: (1) BENJAMIN DISRAELI

Among the nationalisms that became such an important feature of European life in the nineteenth century, none is more important than that of *the Jews*. Jewish nationalism is a particularly complex variety that does not fit easily into the category of the nationalisms either of the great, "historic" nations (*Nationen*) or of the lesser, newer nationalities (*Nationalitätchen*) that grew up in reaction to the former.³⁰²

Of course, Jewish nationalism of one kind had existed for thousands of years, being closely linked with the religion, first, of the Old Testament and, later, after their rejection of Christ, of the Talmud. But nineteenth-century Jewish nationalism was of a different kind, being strongly influenced by the western varieties that arose out of the French revolution. Its development was slow because it had to contend with other currents of thought that also arose out of the revolution and were particularly strong among the Jews: *anti-nationalism* or *assimilationism*, union with the prevailing liberal-secular culture of the West, and *violent rejection* of that same culture on the basis of the creed of *the internationalist proletarian revolution*. (In a speech in the House of Commons in 1852 Disraeli spoke of the secret societies aiming to destroy tradition, religion and property. And he said that at the head of all of them stood people of the Jewish race...) Other factors making for the great complexity of Jewish nationalism were: the lack of a territorial base or homeland, the different conditions of Jews in different parts of Europe, and the different relationships between the *religion* and the *nation* of the Jews in the different regions.

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

Disraeli is usually contrasted with his great parliamentary rival from the 1850s to the 1880s – William Ewart Gladstone, leader of the Liberal Party. Both, writes Tombs, were "highly unusual men by any standards. In some ways both were characteristically but differently 'Victorian' – Gladstone in his agonized and introspective religiosity, Disraeli in his romantic devotion to aristocratic leadership and grandiose patriotism."³⁰³

³⁰² David Vital, *A People Apart: The Jews in Europe, 1789-1939*, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 253.

³⁰³ Tombs, *op. cit.*, p. 504.

“With his goatee beard, his dandified clothing, his profession as a writer of novels (which he continued to publish during his tenure of office), and his often frivolous wit, [Disraeli] hardly seemed cut out to lead a party of stolid gentry and landowners. Part of his secret was that he had a firm belief in the virtues of the aristocracy, strong-minded, independent, and not to be overawed by the mob; indeed, he believed that Jews themselves were natural aristocrats. The architect of the 1867 extension of the franchise, he was the founder of ‘Tory Democracy’, turning the Conservatives into a modern political party in terms not only of organization but also of ideology. On the death of Lord Palmerston in 1865, Disraeli was quick to appropriate his mantle of patriotism for the Conservatives.”³⁰⁴

“One of Disraeli’s most influential achievements,” writes Montefiore, “was in creating an imperial ethos for the British empire. He sang the virtues of *imperium et libertas* (empire and liberty), and he saw Britain’s mission as not just to trade and establish colonial settlements, but also to bring British civilization and values to the diverse peoples of its ever expanding dominion...”³⁰⁵

In his early novels, such as *Coningsby* and *Sybil*, Disraeli showed himself to be a passionate monarchist, a defender of the old aristocratic order based on the land and an enemy of the contemporary worship of Mammon that produced such a lamentable contrast between the “two nations” of England, the rich and the poor. “Toryism,” he predicted, “will yet rise... to bring back strength to the Crown, liberty to the subject, and to announce that power has only one duty: to secure the social welfare of the PEOPLE.”³⁰⁶

Such a creed, combined with his Anglicanism (he was a baptized Jew from an upper-middle-class family) might lead us to believe that Disraeli was trying, like so many assimilated Jews, to distance himself as far as possible from his Jewish roots and make himself out to be a High Tory Englishman. But this was only half true. He once answered a taunt in parliament: “Yes, I am a Jew, and when the ancestors of the Right Honourable Gentleman were living as savages in an unknown island, mine were priests in the Temple of Solomon...” And, as Constance de Rothschild wrote, “he believed more in the compelling power of a common ancestry than in that of a common faith. He said to me, as he has said over and over again in his novels, ‘All is race, not religion – remember that.’”³⁰⁷

It was extraordinary how a Jew to the leadership of the greatest and proudest Gentile empire while not disguising his belief that he belonged to a superior race that was not British. It was in 1847 that he first made this belief public, first in the third novel of his trilogy, *Tancred*, published in March, and then in his famous speech pleading Jewish emancipation in the Commons in December.

³⁰⁴ Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 575.

³⁰⁵ Montefiore, *Titans of History*, pp. 357-358.

³⁰⁶ Disraeli, *Sybil*; in Sarah Bradford, *Disraeli*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982, p. 136.

³⁰⁷ Rothschild, in Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

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

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

"This was hardly a tactful way of putting his argument to his English readers; but when Disraeli gets Tancred to the East, his statements become even odder and, to his Victorian Gentile audience, more offensive. Tancred visits Jerusalem and establishes himself in Syria... He meets and falls in love with a beautiful Jewess named Eva, whom Disraeli uses as a mouthpiece for his main message. 'Half Christendom worships a Jewess,' Eva tells Tancred, 'and the other half a Jew. Now let me ask you. Which do you think should be the superior race, the worshipped or the worshippers?' Disraeli goes even further, for not only do Christians owe a debt of gratitude to the Jews as the forerunners of their religion, but if the Jews had not crucified Christ there would be no Christianity. He aims his argument at a specifically British audience: 'Vast as is the obligation of the whole human family to the Hebrew race, there is no portion of the modern population indebted to them as the British people.'

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

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

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

"... *The Times*... reproved Disraeli for writing a novel with a message: 'It is a bastard kind of writing - that of fiction "with a purpose", ... the "unsubstantial" aim of "converting the whole world back to Judaism".' The reviewer ridiculed this notion by pointing out the anxiety of contemporary Jewry to approximate itself ever more nearly to Gentile society, with particular reference to the Rothschilds: 'Whilst Mr. Disraeli eloquently discourses of a speedy return to Jerusalem, Sidonia buys a noble estate in Bucks, and Sidonia's first cousin is high-sheriff of the county. So anxious, indeed, are the Hebrews generally to return to the Holy Land as a distinct race, that they petition Parliament for all the privileges of British citizens... During the last ten years the Western Jew has travelled faster and farther from Jerusalem than he journeyed during ten centuries before.'...

"Disraeli was not deterred by the public reaction to *Tancred*; he was to repeat his arguments in the debate on Jewish Disabilities on 16 December. The background to the bill was the election, in August of that year, of Disraeli's friend, Baron Lionel de Rothschild, as Liberal candidate for the City of London. As a Jew, Baron Lionel had felt unable to take the oath requiring a member of Parliament to swear 'on the true faith of a Christian' and was therefore debarred from taking his seat...

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

"'The Jews,' Disraeli began, 'are persons who acknowledge the same God as the Christian people of this realm. They acknowledge the same divine revelation as yourselves.' No doubt many of the listening squires did not greatly like the idea of their Anglican faith being equated with that of 'the Ikys and Abys', but worse

was to come. They should be grateful, Disraeli told them, because 'They [the Jews] are, humanly speaking, the authors of your religion. They unquestionably those to whom you are indebted for no inconsiderable portion of your known religion, and for the whole of your divine knowledge.' At this point the first outraged cries of 'Oh!' broke out, but Disraeli only warmed to his theme. 'Every Gentleman here,' he told the astonished House, 'does profess the Jewish religion, and believes in Moses and the Prophets', a statement that provoked a chorus of angry cries.

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

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

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

"He ended defiantly: 'I, whatever may be the consequences – must speak what I feel. I cannot sit in this House with any misconception of my opinion on the subject. Whatever may be the consequences on the seat I hold... I cannot, for one, give a vote which is not in deference to what I believe to be the true principles of religion. Yes, it is as a Christian that I will not take upon me the awful responsibility of excluding from the Legislature those who are of the religion in the bosom of which my Lord and Saviour was born.'"³⁰⁸

It is difficult to know at whom to be more amazed – at the audacity of Disraeli in telling the highest assembly of perhaps the most powerful Christian nation on

³⁰⁸ Bradford, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-184.

earth that all the greatest Christians were in fact Jews, and that Christianity was merely a variety of Judaism, or the ignorance of the English, who in essence bought the argument, eventually passed the Bill (Lionel Rothschild became MP for the City in 1858) and from then on acted as the main protectors of the Jews and Judaism on the stage of world history! This confirms Keble's charge in his Assize Sermon of 1833 that "under the guise of charity and toleration we are come almost to this pass: that no difference, in matters of faith, is to disqualify for our approbation and confidence, whether in public or domestic life."

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

Disraeli's speech was a sign of the times, a sign that the Jews had now truly broken through the barrier of "anti-Semitism" to reach the highest positions in the western world, the top of the "greasy pole" (Disraeli's phrase), where, as Tombs writes, he believed himself "himself destined to wield British power, 'to sway the race that sways the world in an epic global chess game for world civilization against the forces of revolution, nationalism, militarism and pan-Slav imperialism.'"³⁰⁹

But the speech also showed that the Jews *would unfailingly use their position to advance the interests of their race, whether baptised or unbaptised*. In other words, if we were to judge from the behaviour of the Rothschilds and Montefiores and Disraelis, at any rate, *the Jews would never be fully assimilated*. For, as Disraeli himself said: "All is race, not religion – remember that..."

³⁰⁹ Tombs, *op. cit.*, p. 505.

20. EMANCIPATED JEWRY: (2) HEINRICH HEINE

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

According to Norah Webster, “religious feeling appears to have played an entirely subordinate part” among the Jews in the French Revolution. “The Jews... were free before the Revolution to carry on the rites of their faith. And when the great anti-religious campaign began, many of them entered whole-heartedly into the attack on all religious faiths, their own included... The encouragement accorded by the Jews to the French Revolution appears thus to have been prompted not by religious fanaticism but by a desire for national advantage...”³¹⁰

However, after the revolution the situation changed again. There were as many Jews as ever in the secret societies³¹¹; but nationalism no longer seems to have been their motive. For the Jews were now, as we have seen, thoroughly emancipated in some western countries, such as Britain and France, and on the way there in many more. Their financial power, symbolized by the Rothschilds, was enormous. And except to some extent in Germany, there were no real barriers to their political advancement, either. Even in Germany, according to William Marr, “we Germans completed in the year 1848 our abdication in favour of the Jews... Life and the future belong to Judaism, death and the past to Germandom.”³¹²

But the Jews who poured into the socialist revolutionary movements in the second quarter of the nineteenth century were neither Judaists nor interested in the fate of their fellow Jews. Rather, they tended to identify Jewry and Jewishness

³¹⁰ Webster, *Secret Societies and Subversive Movements*, The National Book Club of America, 1924, pp. 249, 250, 251.

³¹¹ This fact was well-known to Disraeli, from “the exceptional intelligence service linking the London house of Rothschild with the branches in Paris, Frankfurt, Vienna and Naples” (Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 187). However, he chose not to mention it when, on July 14, 1856, he said in the House of Commons: “There is in Italy a power which we seldom mention in this House... I mean the secret societies... It is useless to deny, because it is impossible to conceal, that a great part of Europe – the whole of Italy and France and a great portion of Germany, to say nothing of other countries – is covered with a network of these secret societies, just as the superficies of the earth is now being covered with railroads. And what are their objects? They do not attempt to conceal them. They do not want constitutional government; they do not want ameliorated institutions... they want to change the tenure of land, to drive out the present owners of the soil and to put an end to ecclesiastical establishments... Some of them may go further...”

³¹² Wilhelm Marr, *Der Sieg des Judentums über das Germanentum (The Victory of Jewry over the German Spirit)*, 1879, pp. 27, 44; in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 630.

with the most hated aspects of the capitalist system. A forerunner of this phenomenon was the German Jewish poet Heinrich Heine.

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

“Heine suffered from a destructive emotion which was soon to be commonplace among emancipated and apostate Jews: a peculiar form of self-hatred. He attacked himself in [his attacks on the baptised Jew] Gans. Later in life he used to say he regretted his baptism. It had, he said, done him no good materially. But he refused to allow himself to be presented publicly as a Jew. In 1835, lying, he said he had never set foot in a synagogue. It was his desire to repudiate his Jewishness, as well as his Jewish self-hatred, which prompted his many anti-Semitic remarks. A particular target was the Rothschild family. He blamed them for raising loans for the reactionary great powers. That, at any rate, was his respectable reason for attacking them. But his most venomous remarks were reserved for Baron James de Rothschild and his wife, who showed him great kindness in Paris. He said he had seen a stockbroker bowing to the Baron’s chamber-pot. He called him ‘Herr von Shylock in Paris’. He said, ‘There is only one God – Mammon. And Rothschild is his prophet.’... Heine was both the prototype and the archetype of a new figure in European literature: the Jewish radical man of letters, using his skill, reputation and popularity to undermine the intellectual self-confidence of established order.”³¹³

But there are strong indications that while trying to repudiate his Jewishness, Heine remained loyal to his race. Thus “I would fall into despair,” he wrote to a friend in 1823, “if you approved of my baptism”. Again, in one work he described three symbolic beauties: Diana – ancient classical art, Abondona – romantic art, and Herodias – a Jewess, and declared himself to prefer “the dead Jewess”. Indeed, according to the Jewish historian Graetz, Heine only superficially renounced Jewry, “and was like those warriors who remove the arms and banner from the enemy, so as to use them to beat and annihilate him more thoroughly!”³¹⁴

³¹³ Johnson, *A History of the Jews*, London: Phoenix, 1995, pp. 342, 343, 345.

³¹⁴ Alexander Andreyevich Chernov, *Bol'shoe Pochemu ili Strategicheskij Plan v Dejstvii* (The Great 'Why', or The Strategic Plan in Action), Kiev, 1974, pp. 100, 101 (MS).

To prove the point, some four or five years before his death (from syphilis), Heine returned to the Judaist faith...

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

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

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

"Then again he saw Communism not as a system under which men would enjoy the material benefits of life but as one under which they would slave at their jobs with dreary monotony; once he even predicted [with Dostoyevsky] the marriage of the Catholic Church with the Communists and foresaw an empire of asceticism, joylessness and strict control of ideas as the child of this union. Heine made himself few friends by such prophecies. The conservatives, the good German citizens, regarded him as a rebel and a frivolous wit. The Left saw in him a faithless ally, a socialist who was afraid of the revolution, who took back today what he had said yesterday and who behaved like an aristocrat. It is true that Heine, the artist, was both an aristocrat and a rebel. He hated the rule of the old military and noble caste, particularly in Prussia, despised the role of the financiers, particularly in France, and yet feared a leveling reign of terror by the people....

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

point of treachery, his work has remained more alive than that of his more resolute contemporaries.

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

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

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

“The French must not believe that it would be a pro-French revolution, though it might pretend to be republican and extreme. German nationalism, unlike that of the French, was not receptive to outside influences filled with missionary zeal; it was negative and aggressive, particularly towards France. ‘I wish you well and therefore I tell you the bitter truth. You have more to fear from liberated Germany than from the entire Holy Alliance with all its Croats and Cossacks put together...’ Heine toyed with things cleverly and irresponsibly. At the time it was thought in France, in Italy and in Germany too that nationalism was international, closely related to the republican and the democratic cause; that nations, once they were free and united at home, would join forces in one great league of nations. Heine did not share this view. He regarded nationalism, particularly German nationalism, as a stupid, disruptive force motivated by hatred...”³¹⁵

Heine warned the French “of the ‘demonic powers of ancient German pantheism.’ One day, he said, their German neighbours, ‘fired by a terrible combination of absolutist metaphysics, historical memories and resentment, fanaticism savage strength and fury, would fall upon them, and would destroy the great monuments of Western civilisation’.”³¹⁶ For he “was vouchsafed an uncanny prophetic insight into the terrifying potentialities of German Romantic pantheism, with its vision of man as a being swallowed up or impelled by cosmic forces, the all-embracing Will of History, and the destiny of the Race.”³¹⁷

³¹⁵ Mann, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-82.

³¹⁶ Simon Callow, *Being Wagner*, London: William Collins, 2017, p. 95.

³¹⁷ Talmon, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

21. EMANCIPATED JEWRY: (3) KARL MARX

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

"What the two men had most in common was their extraordinary capacity for hatred, expressed in venomous attacks not just on enemies but (perhaps especially) on friends and benefactors. This was part of the self-hatred they shared as apostate Jews. Marx had it to an even greater extent than Heine. He tried to shut Judaism out of his life... Despite Marx's ignorance of Judaism as such, there can be no doubt about his Jewishness. Like Heine and everyone else, his notion of progress was profoundly influenced by Hegel, but his sense of history as a positive and dynamic force in human society, governed by iron laws, an atheist's Torah, is profoundly Jewish. His Communist millennium is deeply rooted in Jewish apocalyptic and messianism. His notion of rule was that of the cathedocrat. Control of the revolution would be in the hands of the elite intelligentsia, who had studied the texts, understood the laws of history. They would form what he called the 'management', the directorate. The proletariat, 'the men without substance', were merely the means, whose duty was to obey – like Ezra the Scribe, he saw them as ignorant of the law, the mere 'people of the land'³¹⁸.

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

"Marx replied to Bauer's work in two essays published in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbucher* in 1844, the same year Disraeli published *Tancred*. They are called 'On the Jewish Question'. Marx accepted completely the savagely anti-Semitic context of Bauer's argument, which he said was written 'with boldness, perception, with thoroughness in language that is precise as it is vigorous and meaningful'. He quoted with approval Bauer's maliciously exaggerated assertion that 'the Jews determines the fate of the whole [Austrian] empire by his money power... [and] decides the destiny of Europe'. Where he differed was in rejecting

³¹⁸ Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

Bauer's belief that the anti-social nature of the Jew was religious in origin and could be remedied by tearing the Jew away from his religion. In Marx's view, the evil was social and economic. 'Let us,' he wrote, 'consider the real Jew. Not the *Sabbath Jew*... but the *everyday Jew*.' What, he asked, was 'the profane basis of Judaism? *Practical need, self-interest*. What is the worldly cult of the Jew? *Huckstering*. What is his worldly god? *Money*.' The Jews had gradually conveyed this 'practical' religion to all society: 'Money is the jealous God of Israel, besides which no other god may exist. Money abases all the gods of mankind and changes them into commodities. Money is the self-sufficient *value* of all things. It has, therefore, deprived the whole world, both the human world and nature, of their own proper value. Money is the alienated essence of man's work and existence: this essence dominates him and he worships it. The god of the Jews has been secularised and has become the god of this world.'

"The Jews, Marx continued, were turning Christians into replicas of themselves, so that the once staunchly Christian New Englanders, for example, were now the slaves of Mammon. Using his money-power, the Jew had emancipated himself and had gone on to enslave Christianity. The Jew-corrupted Christian 'is convinced he has no other destiny here below than to become richer than his neighbours' and 'the world is a stock exchange'. Marx argued that the contradiction between the Jew's theoretical lack of political rights and 'the effective political power of the Jew' is the contradiction between politics and 'the power of money in general'. Political power supposedly overrides money; in fact 'it has become its bondsman'. Hence: 'It is from its own entrails that civil society ceaselessly engenders the Jew.'"³¹⁹

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

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

³¹⁹ Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 350-351.

“In creating economics on the antichristian foundations of the Talmud, Jewry not only acquired for itself financial power. Through Jewry money became a world power, by means of its control over the Christian peoples. The gold-digging spirit of Jewish economics, crossing the frontiers of Jewry, began to corrupt the Christians themselves; and in the precise expression of K. Marx, ‘with the help of money the Jews liberated themselves to the same extent as the Christians became Jews.’”³²⁰

There was much truth in Marx’s analysis; but it was one-sided. Contemporary European and American civilization was based on a complex intertwining of apostate Jewry and heretical Christianity. If the Jews had taught the Christians the worship of money, and gone on to enslave them thereby, the Christians had nevertheless prepared the way for this by betraying their own Christian ideals and introducing to the Jews the semi-Christian, semi-pagan ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity, human rights, etc. The Jews had seized on these ideas to emancipate themselves and then take them to their logical extreme in the proletarian revolution, taking control both of money power in the heights, and of political power in the depths of society. And so the relationship between the Jews and the Christians was mutually influential and mutually destructive.

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

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

³²⁰ Platonov, *Ternovij Venets Rossii* (Russia’s Crown of Thorns), Moscow, 1998, p. 147.

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

"Hence the militant socialism Marx adopted in the later 1840s was an extended and transmuted form of his earlier anti-Semitism. His mature theory was a superstition, and the most dangerous kind of superstition, belief in a conspiracy of evil. But whereas originally it was based on the oldest form of conspiracy-theory, anti-Semitism, in the later 1840s and 1850s this was not so much abandoned as extended to embrace a world conspiracy theory of the entire bourgeois class. Marx retained the original superstition that the making of money through trade and finance is essentially a parasitical and anti-social activity, but he now placed it on a basis not of race and religion, but of class. The enlargement does not, of course, improve the validity of the theory. It merely makes it more dangerous, if put into practice, because it expands its scope and multiplies the number of those to be treated as conspirators and so victims. Marx was no longer concerned with specific Jewish witches to be hunted but with generalized human witches. The theory remained irrational but acquired a more sophisticated appearance, making it highly attractive to educated radicals. To reverse Bebel's saying, if anti-Semitism is the socialism of fools, socialism became the anti-Semitism of intellectuals. An intellectual like Lenin, who clearly perceived the irrationality of the Russian anti-Semitic pogrom, and would have been ashamed to conduct one, nevertheless fully accepted its spirit once the target was expanded into the whole capitalist class – and went on to conduct pogroms on an infinitely greater scale, killing hundreds of thousands on the basis not of individual guilt but merely of membership of a condemned group."³²¹

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

³²¹ Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 352-353.

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

However, with the gradual assimilation of the Jews into Western Christian society during the nineteenth century, Jewish radicals such as Marx joined with Gentile intellectuals such as Engels to create a new strain of the virus, a strain directed not against Jews alone or Christians alone, but against a whole *class*, the class of the bourgeois rich. In this perspective we can see that Marx's view that the solution of “the Jewish question” lay in economics was wrong. Bauer was right that its solution was religious; but he was wrong in thinking that simply destroying the Talmud would cure the disease. For what was to be put in its place? The heretical, lukewarm Christianity of the West, which hardly believed in itself any more and was in any case, as we have seen, deeply infected by both Jewish and pagan elements?

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

Although English and French socialism contributed to Marx's thought, he probably owed even more to German *atheism* and *historicism*. Marx had no need of teachers in respect of atheism. As we have seen, there is some evidence that in his youth he turned against God and became a Satanist because God did not give him the girl he loved. In later life he was known as “Old Nick”, and his little son used to call him “devil”.³²² As he said: “I shall build my throne high overhead”, which is a more or less direct quotation of Satan's words in *Isaiah* 14.13.³²³ Again, in his doctor's thesis he wrote: “Philosophy makes no secret of the fact: her creed is the creed of Prometheus - ‘In a word, I detest all the gods.’ This is her device against all deities of heaven or earth who do not recognize as the highest divinity the human self-consciousness itself.”³²⁴

³²² Feuerback, *The Essence of Christianity*, New York, 1957, pp. 14, 230.

³²³ Richard Wurmbrand, *Was Karl Marx a Satanist?*, Diane Books (USA), 1976.

³²⁴ Wilson, *To the Finland Station*, p. 122.

"In spite of all Marx's enthusiasm for the 'human'," writes the socialist Edmund Wilson, "he is either inhumanly dark and dead or almost superhumanly brilliant".³²⁵

Marx's atheism received an impetus from Feuerbach's *The Essence of Christianity* (1841), which reduced God to a psychological idea: "The divine being," he said, "is nothing else than the human being; or, better, it is the essence of man when freed from the limitations of the individual, that is to say, actual corporeal man, objectified and venerated as an independent Being distinct from man himself... All the attributes of the divine nature are, therefore, attributes of the human nature... Man is the real God."³²⁶ Marx, too, defined religion as a purely human product: "the heart of a heartless world, as it is the spirit of spiritless conditions, the *opium* of the people."³²⁷ He praised Feuerbach, according to Isaiah Berlin, "for showing that in religion men delude themselves by inventing an imaginary world to redress the balance of misery in real life - it is a form of escape, a golden dream, or, in a phrase made celebrated by Marx, the opium of the people; the criticism of religion must therefore be anthropological in character, and take the form of exposing and analysing its secular origins. But Feuerbach is accused of leaving the major task untouched: he sees that religion is an anodyne unconsciously generated by the unhappy to soften the pain caused by the contradictions of the material world, but then fails to see that these contradictions must, in that case, be removed: otherwise they will continue to breed comforting and fatal delusions: the revolution which alone can do so must occur not in the superstructure - the world of thought - but in its material substratum, the real world of men and things. Philosophy has hitherto treated ideas and beliefs as possessing an intrinsic validity of their own; this has never been true; the real content of a belief is the action in which it is expressed. The real convictions and principles of a man or a society are expressed in their acts, not their words. Belief and act are one; if acts do not themselves express avowed beliefs, the beliefs are lies - 'ideologies', conscious or not, to cover the opposite of what they profess. Theory and practice are, or should be, one and the same. 'Philosophers have previously offered various interpretations of the world. Our business is to change it.'"³²⁸

By the mid-1840s, writes Edmund Wilson, Marx and Engels had taken what they wanted from the utopian socialists. "From Saint-Simon they accepted as valid his [supposed] discovery that modern politics was simply the science of regulating production; from Fourier, his arraignment of the bourgeois, his consciousness of the ironic contrast between 'the frenzy of speculation, the spirit of all-devouring commercialism', which were rampant under the reign of the bourgeoisie and 'the brilliant promises of the Enlightenment' which had preceded them; from Owen, the realization that the factory system must be the root of the social revolution. But they saw that the mistake of the utopian socialists had been to imagine that socialism was to be imposed upon society from above by disinterested members of the upper classes. The bourgeoisie as a whole, they

³²⁵ Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

³²⁶ Feuerbach, in Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, vol. 7, part II: Schopenhauer to Nietzsche, Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1965, p. 63.

³²⁷ Marx-Engels, *Werke*, Berlin, 1956, I, p. 378; in Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*, p. 279.

³²⁸ Berlin, *Karl Marx*, pp. 106-107.

believed, could not be induced to go against its own interests. The educator, as Marx was to write in his *Theses on Feuerbach*, must, after all, first have been educated: he is not really confronting disciples with a doctrine that has been supplied him by God; he is merely directing a movement of which he is himself a member and which energizes him and gives him his purpose. Marx and Engels combined the aims of the utopians with Hegel's process of organic development."³²⁹

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

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

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

"The ultimate objective for Marx and Engels was the creation of a worldwide communist society. They believed that communism had existed in the distant centuries before 'class society' came into being. The human species had supposedly known no hierarchy, alienation, exploitation or oppression. Marx and Engels predicted that such perfection could and inevitably would be reproduced after the overthrow of capitalism. 'Modern communism', however, would have the benefits of the latest technology rather than flint-stone. It would be generated by global proletarian solidarity rather than by disparate groups of illiterate, innumerate cavemen. And it would put an end to all forms of hierarchy. Politics would come to an end. The state would cease to exist. There would be no distinctions of personal rank and power. All would engage in self-administration on an equal basis. Marx and Engels chastised communists and socialists who would settle for anything less. They were maximalists. No compromise with

³²⁹ Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

capitalism [although Engels was a factory owner] or parliamentarism was acceptable to them. They did not think of themselves as offering the watchword of 'all or nothing' in their politics. They saw communism as the inevitable last stage in human history; they rejected their predecessors and rival contemporaries as 'utopian' thinkers who lacked a scientific understanding."³³⁰

The other fundamental axiom of Marx's theory was economic materialism. Everything is determined, according to Marx, by man's struggle for economic survival, which in turn depends on his relationship to the economic conditions of production. The juridical, political, religious, aesthetic and philosophical aspects of man's existence are all simply "ideological forms of appearance" of the only true reality, his economic position in society – that is, his class membership. As he put it in his famous epigram: "It is not the consciousness of man that determines his existence – rather, it is his social existence that determines his consciousness."³³¹ For "I was led," he wrote, "to the conclusion that legal relations, as well as forms of state, could neither be understood by themselves, nor explained by the so-called general progress of the human mind, but that they are rooted in the material conditions of life which Hegel calls... civil society. The anatomy of civil society is to be sought in political economy."

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

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

"It follows that socialism could only be a product of a fully developed economy. As early as the *German Ideology* of 1845, Marx had insisted that socialist revolution could come only to advanced industrial systems because only those systems would inherit the productive potential to fully satisfy human needs without having recourse to invidious class distinctions and oppressive political

³³⁰ Service, *Comrades*, London: Pan Books, 2007, pp. 20, 26-27.

³³¹ Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*.

rule. If an attempt were made to introduce socialism into an economically underdeveloped environment, Engels foresaw the consequence to be a 'slide back... to [the] narrow limits' of the old system. True socialist liberation was a function of 'the level of development of the material means of existence'. To attempt to build communism on a primitive economic base could only be a 'chiliastic, dream fantasy'."³³²

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

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

³³² Chang, *Return of the Dragon*, Oxford: Westview Press, 2001, pp. 151-152.

"Like Hegel, Marx treats history as phenomenology. In Hegel the Phenomenology of the human Spirit is an attempt to show... an objective order in the development of human consciousness and in the succession of civilisations that are its concrete embodiment. Influenced by a notion prominent in the Renaissance, but reaching back to an earlier mystical cosmogony, Hegel looked upon the development of mankind as being similar to that of an individual human being. Just as in the case of a man a particular capacity, or outlook, or way of dealing with reality cannot come into being until and unless other capacities have first become developed – that is, indeed, the essence of the notion of growth or education in the case of individuals – so races, nations, churches, cultures, succeed each other in a fixed order, determined by the growth of the collective faculties of mankind expressed in arts, sciences, civilisation as a whole. Pascal had perhaps meant something of this kind when he spoke of humanity as a single, centuries old, being, growing from generation to generation. For Hegel all change is due to the movement of the dialectic, which works by a constant logical criticism, that is, by struggle against, and final self-destruction of, ways of thought and constructions of reason and feeling which, in their day, had embodied the highest point reached by the ceaseless growth (which for Hegel is the logical self-realisation) of the human spirit; but which, embodied in rules or institutions, and erroneously taken as final and absolute by a given society or outlook, thereby become obstacles to progress, dying survivals of a logically 'transcended' stage, which by their very one-sidedness breed logical antimonies and contradictions by which they are exposed and destroyed. Marx translated this vision of history as a battlefield of incarnate ideas into social terms, of the struggle between classes. For him alienation (for that is what Hegel, following Rousseau and Luther and an earlier Christian tradition, called the perpetual self-divorce of men from unity with nature, with each other, with God, which the struggle of thesis against antithesis entailed) is intrinsic to the social process, indeed it is the heart of history itself. Alienation occurs when the results of men's acts contradict their true purposes, when their official values, or the parts they play, misrepresent their real motives and needs and goals. This is the case, for example, when something that men have made to respond to human needs – say, a system of laws, or the rules of musical composition – acquires an independent status of its own, and is seen by men, not as something created by them to satisfy a common social want (which may have disappeared long ago), but as an objective law or institution, possessing eternal, impersonal authority in its own right, like the unalterable laws of Nature as conceived by scientists and ordinary men, like God and His Commandments for a believer. For Marx the capitalist system is precisely this kind of entity, a vast instrument brought into being by intelligible material demands – a progressive improvement and broadening of life in its own day that generates its own intellectual, moral, religious beliefs, values and forms of life. Whether those who hold them know it or not, such beliefs and values merely uphold the power of the class whose interests the capitalist system embodies; nevertheless, they come to be viewed by all sections of society as being objectively and eternally valid for all mankind. Thus, for example, industry and the capitalist mode of exchange are not timelessly valid institutions, but were generated by the mounting resistance by peasants and artisans to dependence on the blind forces of nature. They had had

their moment; and the values these institutions generated will change or vanish with them.”³³³

Marx differed from Hegel also in his vision of the final outcome of the historical process. Whereas for Hegel the self-realization of the Divine Idea culminated in the Prussian State (although, looking towards America, he was inclined to hedge his bets), for Marx it culminated in the victory of the proletariat, and finally in the withering away of the now unnecessary state. (In practice, however, by contrast with Bakunin, he was for the building up of the revolutionary state.)

One thing was certain: the bourgeoisie could not stand. For Marx and Engels understood the characteristic of the industrial, bourgeois age that distinguished it from all previous ages – its dynamism. Whereas previous ages aimed to preserve the social structure in order to preserve their place in it, the bourgeois were in effect constantly changing it, knowing that technological advance was constantly making present relationships obsolete and unprofitable. Not only did it overthrow the old, patriarchal and feudal society that came before it: it was constantly working to overthrow itself. “The bourgeoisie,” they wrote, “cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society. Conservation of the old modes of production in unaltered form, was, on the contrary, the first condition of existence for all earlier industrial classes. Constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their trace of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into the air.”³³⁴

But this constant change, though promoted by the bourgeoisie, at the same time built up the numbers and resources of the proletariat. “Not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons – the modern working class – the proletarians. In proportion as the bourgeoisie, i.e. capital, is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed.”³³⁵

The first axiom of Marx’s theory, the idea that class conflict is the sole determinant of world history, is clearly false: there are countless counter-examples that disprove it.³³⁶ If his second axiom, that man’s thought is determined by his economic status, is true, then there is no reason for believing it to be true insofar as Marx’s thought, too, must be determined by his economic status; so it, too, is false.

And so, since both his fundamental axioms are false, there is no reason for believing the rest of his theory. As for his prediction that true socialism could only

³³³ Berlin, *op. cit.*

³³⁴ Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, London: Penguin Books, 2004, p. 7.

³³⁵ Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, pp. 11-12.

³³⁶ Popper cites the conflict between the popes and emperors, both of the same class (*op. cit.*, p. 116).

succeed in an economically advanced society, this is disproved by its “success” in such peasant societies as Russia and China. The almost universal fall of those same societies in the late twentieth century is still further proof that Marx was a false prophet.

Marxism is “a creed complete with prophet, sacred texts and the promise of a heaven shrouded in mystery. Marx was not a scientist, as he claimed. He founded a faith. The economic and political systems he inspired are dead or dying. But his religion is a broad church, and lives on.”³³⁷

It is too kind to describe Marxism, as some have done, as a burning love of justice clothed in a false economic theory. Its motive power is neither the love of justice nor the love of men, but simply *hatred* – hatred of God and God’s order in the first place, but hatred also of men. Marx despised not only the ruling classes and the bourgeoisie, but even the proletariat whose triumph he falsely predicted, rejecting the notion that “the poor in society were inherently decent and altruistic”.³³⁸ He delighted in the destruction and death that the revolution would bring (he brought only misery to his own relatives), consigning all those who opposed the laws of dialectical materialism (and many of those who did not) to “the dustbin of history”. He loved only the cold goddess History, the Moloch of the twentieth century, whose most zealous and merciless servant he was...

³³⁷ “Marx after Communism”, *The Economist*, December 19, 2002.

³³⁸ Service, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

22. UNEMANCIPATED JEWRY: MOSES HESSE AND THE PROTO-ZIONISTS

Jewry was being emancipated throughout the nations of Central and Western Europe. But in Jewry itself this movement encountered strong opposition, both in secular and religious circles.

Alfred Lilienthal writes: "The early 19th-century Jewish settlements in Palestine were completely non-nationalist in motivation. Political Zionism, spurred by the writings of Moses Hess (*Rome and Jerusalem*, 1862) and Leo Pinsker (*Auto-Emancipation*, 1882) and the inspired, dedicated leadership of Theodor Herzl, did not succeed in winning wide support among the Jews of Europe or America. The 9,000 Jews whom Sir Moses Montefiore found in Palestine on his first visit in 1837 had barely reached 50,000 at the turn of the century. The settlements that he founded, and Baron Rothschild generously supported after him, benefited only the new colonists and posed no threat to the indigenous Arab population..."³³⁹

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

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

"Hess's task," writes Michael Hoffman, "was to see that the Judaics did not succumb to the new winds of reform and religious indifferentism with which Catholics and Protestants under the spell of *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*, had fallen..."

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

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

³³⁹ Lilienthal, *The Zionist Connection*, New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1987, p. 11.

"Hess termed as 'nihilists' all liberal Judaics who sought to abolish the influence of the Talmud, which he regarded as the 'fountain of life'. Hess endeavoured to build a Hegelian-Kabbalistic bridge between the Judaic liberals and the rabbinic traditionalists. 'The new seminaries, modelled after the Breslau school... ought to make it their aim to bridge the gap between the nihilism of the Reformers, who never learn anything, and the staunch conservatism of the Orthodox, who never forget anything.'

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

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

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

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

"Hess the Communist sought to extirpate the Gentile's connection to the land by weakening private property rights and in particular, the right to inherit land. In keeping with the conjunction of seeming opposites, in which Communism often is backed by capitalists, Hess believed that the modernizing trends of free trade and commerce would contribute to Communism through the demise of property rights. He also favoured the factory system which he believed would 'guarantee abundance'."³⁴⁰

³⁴⁰ Hoffman, "Moses Hess", *Revisionist History*,

In 1862, under the influence of the Italian *Risorgimento*, Hess wrote *Rome and Jerusalem: the Last National Question*, which explores the possibility of the Jews becoming a nation in the way that the Italians were becoming one.³⁴¹ In his first paragraph he stated his most important conclusion: that the Jews could *never* become fully assimilated into western culture: "After an estrangement of twenty years, I am back with my people. I have come to be one of them again, to participate in the celebration of the holy days, to share the memories and hopes of the nation, to take part in the spiritual and intellectual warfare going on within the House of Israel, on the one hand, and between our people and the surrounding civilized nations, on the other; for though the Jews have lived among the nations for almost two thousand years, they cannot, after all, become a mere part of the organic whole." (*First Letter*).

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

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

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

³⁴¹ http://www.zionisontheweb.org/Moses_Hess_Rome_and_Jerusalem.htm.

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

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

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

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

Reform Judaism, therefore, is anathema to Hess: "The threatening danger to Judaism comes only from the religious reformers who, with their newly-invented ceremonies and empty eloquence have sucked the marrow out of Judaism and left only its skeleton... Their reforms have only a negative purpose - if they have any

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

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

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

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

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

The new, life-giving religion is the religion of freedom - individual freedom and national freedom - that the French Revolution has given to the world. The Jewish religion, paradoxically, can come to life within the new context of this new religion bequeathed by the French: "The rigid forms of orthodoxy, the existence of which was justified before the century of rebirth, will naturally, through the power of the national idea and the historical cult, relax and become fertile. It is

only with the national rebirth that the religious genius of the Jews... will be endowed with new strength again be re-inspired with the prophetic spirit." (*Fifth Letter*)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

granted by the Germans to their Jewish brethren in arms was exclusion from civil life. And, truly, the German people and the German Jews do not deserve any better lot when they allow themselves, in spite of the examples of history, to be entrapped by medieval reaction." (*Appendix V. The Last Race Rule*)

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

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

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

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

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

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

"As Graetz puts it, there have obviously been mortal peoples that vanished in history and others that are immortal. Nothing is left of the Hellenic and Latin races, which have dissolved into other human divisions. By contrast, the Jewish race has succeeded in preserving itself and surviving, and is about to renew its marvelous biblical youth. Its revival after the Babylonian exile and the return to Zion revealed its potential for renewal. Thus, the people are an organic body with a marvelous capacity for rebirth, which distinguishes them from ordinary biological organisms. The existence of the Jewish race had been unique from the start, which is why its history is a marvel. For Graetz, the teleology of the chosen people is more moral than political, retaining some dusty remnants of a crumbling traditional belief..."³⁴²

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

Hirsch's work, as Dan-Sherbok writes, was "a defence of Orthodoxy in the form of essays by a young rabbi to a friend who questioned the importance of remaining a Jew. The work began with a critique of Judaism of this period: 'While the best of mankind climbed to the summit of culture, prosperity, and wealth, the Jewish people remained poor in everything that makes human beings great and noble and that beautifies and dignifies our live' "In response Hirsch maintained that the purpose of human life is not to attain personal happiness and perfection. Instead human beings should strive to serve God by doing his will. As an example of such devotion, the Jewish people was formed so that through its way of life all nations would come to know that true happiness lies in obeying God. Thus, Hirsch maintained, the people of Israel were given the Promised Land so that they would be able to keep the Covenant. When the nation was exiled, they fulfilled this mission by remaining loyal to God and the Torah despite continual persecution and suffering. According to Hirsch, the purpose of the divine commandments is not to repress physical gratification of material prosperity;

³⁴² Sand, *op. cit.*, pp. 72, 80-81.

rather the goal of following God's law is to lead a religious life and thereby bear witness to the messianic ideal of universal brotherhood. Given this vision of God's plan, Reform Judaism was denounced for abandoning this sacred duty. For Hirsch citizenship rights are of little importance, since Jews are united by a bond of obedience to God's laws until the time when the 'Almighty shall see fit in his inscrutable wisdom to unite again his scattered servants in one land, and the Torah shall be the guiding principle of a state, a model of the meaning of Divine revelation and the mission of humanity'.³⁴³

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

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

³⁴³ Dan Cohn-Sherbok, *An Atlas of Jewish History*, London: Routledge, 1996, pp. 147-148.

propitiatory role. This separation of two Messianic periods, one for which man would strive while the other would be decided by God, was explicitly proposed by Kalischer.

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

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

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

"For what purpose was this human energy thus liberated to be used? Here again an original distinction made it possible for the Forerunners of Zion to justify an active role for man. In Jewish tradition there was only one true remedy for sin: repentance (*teshuva*), i.e. explicit renunciation of evil and adoption of behaviour in accordance with the Law. The idea of inner repentance was so essential that it was supposed to have coexisted with the Law before the proclamation on Mount Sinai, and even to have existed before the creation of the world. This was above all of an individual nature in Talmudic literature, but took on a collective dimension from the sixteenth century, under the impetus of the Kabbala of Isaac Luria. After that the return to a life of holiness ensured not only the salvation of the individual soul, but also restored the original fullness of the world. *Teshuva* was no longer limited solely to the existential level, within the narrow confines of the individual; it also concerned the historic level of the national group, and beyond that the cosmic level of mankind. Alkalai went so far as to consider, differing from the classical idea, that collective repentance must necessarily precede individual repentance. There remained the final question: what did this general *teshuva* involve?

"It involved physical re-establishment of the Jews in the Land of Israel to recreate the national community. Playing on the double meaning of the word *teshuva*, which strictly means return, Kalischer stated that collective repentance meant a geographical return to Zion and not, at least not directly, a spiritual return. So Jews who returned to Palestine were not breaking the religious Law, since in the first instance their return was a purely material one. It was only later, when they were gathered in Zion, that by the grace of God the truly supernatural

redemption would start, bringing with it the individual repentance of every Jew and union with God. This bold idea, based on exegesis of religious texts, was a powerful call to action. It meant that Jews could legitimately cooperate and meet together to prepare for and organise their settlement in the Holy Land. By turning to the traditional scholarly interpretation based on the Talmud and Midrash literature, the Forerunners of Zionism encouraged the adoption of an unconventional way ahead, in which the Jewish man had a direct responsibility for the way the world was to develop. Even if it was in a confused way and probably unconsciously, they started a Copernican revolution which Herzl's Zionism was to bring to full flower, placing man, not God, at the centre of Jewish destiny."³⁴⁴

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Alexander Shimon writes: "In 1873, Alexander Dumas-son wrote the play " Wife Claudia ", which was not successful with the public. But one of the positive heroes was Danielle, dreaming of the revival of her people in the land of Israel. Who criticised Dumas for the image of Danielle? Some French Jews, especially from Alsace. Two years before, Alsace had been annexed by the German Empire, and local Jews leaving for Paris radiated French superpatriotism. They were the ones who were outraged by Danielel's dreams and said they 'don't want to think about any other homeland than our beautiful France '.

"In the midst of these persuasions, the 49-year-old Dumas wrote to his Jewish friend, the 28-year-old Baron Edmond de Rothschild: "'If any nation managed to create a code of morality for all humanity in ten short poems, it can truly call itself the people of God. I wondered: if I belong to this people, what mission should I put on myself? And in reply, I told myself that I would have but one thought - to conquer the land of my ancient homeland and restore the Temple of Jerusalem.'

"Nine years later, Edmond de Rothschild would start donating personally to the first Jewish settlements in the land of Israel, the first Jewish vineyards, first workshops and factories, first Jewish schools, hospitals, agrotechnical schools, to drain the swamps and reclamation. In 52 years of charity, he gave more than two billion dollars to the development of Israel's future in terms of today's money...

"Twenty years after the letter of Dumes to Rothschild, an Alsatian Jew, a superpatriot of his beloved France, was falsely accused of treason (1894). When captain Alfred Dreyfus was stripped of his epaulette and had his sabre broken, the Paris crowd behind the fence hissed: "Death to Jews!" This scene was watched by a journalist of a Viennese newspaper, Teodor Herzl, who would soon write the book *The Jewish State* and create the World Zionist Organization..."³⁴⁵

³⁴⁴ Dieckhoff, *The Invention of a Nation*, London: Hurst and Company, 2003, pp. 16-19.

³⁴⁵ Briman, https://vk.com/wall-23953205_1129904. The translation has been slightly altered (V.M.)

23. THE WORLD AS WILL: SCHOPENHAUER

One of those who profited from the change in mood after 1848 was the philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer, whose main work, *The World as Will and Representation*, had been written in 1819 but only now became popular. He became famous, writes Golo Mann, "because of historical trends which he would have disapproved of if he had been clear about them: post-revolutionary disappointment of the middle class, a temporary lack of interest in politics. These trends helped Schopenhauer, who despised history and politics."³⁴⁶

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

According to Bertrand Russell, "Schopenhauer's system is an adaptation of Kant's, but one that emphasizes quite different aspects of the *Critique* from those emphasized by Fichte or Hegel. They got rid of the thing-in-itself, and thus made knowledge metaphysically fundamental. Schopenhauer retained the thing-in-itself, but identified it with will. Kant had maintained that a study of the moral law can take us beyond phenomena, and give us knowledge which sense-perception cannot give; he also maintained that the moral law is essentially concerned with the will."³⁴⁷

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

As John Gray has pointed out, Schopenhauer anticipated Freud in his emphasis on the dominance of unconscious desire over conscious thought, on the

³⁴⁶ Mann, *A History of Germany*, p. 141.

³⁴⁷ Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, p. 783.

importance of the sexual impulse, slips of the tongue, repressed emotions, and so on. Yanis Varoufakis develops this theme, which links Schopenhauer not only with Freud but also with Nietzsche and Marx: "The German philosopher Schopenhauer castigated us modern humans for deceiving ourselves into thinking that our beliefs and customs are subject to our consciousness. Nietzsche concurred, suggesting that all the things we believe in, at any given time, reflect not truth but someone else's power over us. Marx dragged economics into this picture, reprimanding us all for ignoring the reality that our thoughts have become hijacked by capital and its drive to accumulate. Naturally, although it follows its own steely logic, capital evolves mindlessly. No one designed capitalism and no one can civilize it now that it is going at full tilt..."³⁴⁸

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

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

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

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

"Besides being described as blind impulse, endless striving, eternal becoming and so on, the metaphysical Will is characterized as the Will to live. Indeed, to say 'the Will' and to say 'the Will to live' are for Schopenhauer one and the same thing.

³⁴⁸ Varoufakis, *The Global Minotaur*, London: Zed Books, 2013, p. 39.

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

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

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

"We may not that it is the egoism, rapacity and hardness and cruelty of men which are for Schopenhauer the real justification of the State. So far from being a divine manifestation, the State is simply the creation of enlightened egoism which tries to make the world a little more tolerable than it would otherwise be."³⁴⁹

³⁴⁹ Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, vol. 7, part II, pp. 37-39.

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

Only two things relieve the bleakness of this nihilist vision to any degree: art and asceticism... In the contemplation of art - especially music, which exhibits the inner nature of the Will, the thing-in-itself - desire is temporarily stilled. For "it is possible for me to regard the beautiful object neither as itself an object of desire nor as a stimulant to desire but simply and solely for its aesthetic significance."³⁵⁰

However, "aesthetic contemplation affords no more than a temporary or transient escape from the slavery of the Will. But Schopenhauer offers a lasting release through renunciation of the Will to live. Indeed, moral progress must take this form if morality is possible at all. For the Will to live, manifesting itself in egoism, self-assertion, hatred and conflict, is for Schopenhauer the source of evil. 'There really resides in the heart of each of us a wild beast which only waits the opportunity to rage and rave in order to injure others, and which, if they do not prevent it, would like to destroy them.' This wild beast, this radical evil, is the direct expression of the Will to live. Hence morality, if it is possible, must involve denial of the Will. And as man is an objectification of the Will, denial will mean self-denial, asceticism and mortification."³⁵¹

"We must banish the dark impression of that nothingness which we discern behind all virtue and holiness as their final goal, and which we fear as children fear the dark; we must not even evade it like the Indians, through myths and meaningless words, such as reabsorption in Brahma or the Nirvana of the Buddhists. Rather do we freely acknowledge that what remains after the entire abolition of will is for all those who are still full of will certainly nothing; but, conversely, to those in whom the will has turned and has denied itself, this our world, which is so real, with all its suns and milky ways - is nothing."³⁵²

With the surrender of the Will, "all those phenomena are also abolished; that constant strain and effort without end and without rest at all the grades of objectivity in which and through which the world consists; the multifarious forms succeeding each other in gradation; the whole manifestation of the will; and, finally, also the universal forms of this manifestation, time and space, and also its last fundamental form, subject and object; all are abolished. No will: no idea, no world. Before us there is certainly only nothingness."³⁵³

³⁵⁰ Copleston, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

³⁵¹ Copleston, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-48.

³⁵² Schopenhauer, in Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 785. Here, perhaps, we see the influence of Buddhism. "In his study," notes Russell, "he had a bust of Kant and a bronze Buddha." (*op. cit.*, p. 785).

³⁵³ Schopenhauer, in Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 785.

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

The most a man can hope for as a result of his self-denial is to "penetrate the veil of Maya [illusion] to the extent of seeing that all individuals are really one. For they are all phenomena of the one undivided Will. We then have the ethical level of sympathy. We have goodness or virtue which is characterized by a disinterested love of others. True goodness is not, as Kant thought, a matter of obeying the categorical imperative for the sake of duty alone. True goodness is love, *agape* or *caritas* in distinction from *eros*, which is self-directed. And love is sympathy. 'All true and pure love is sympathy (*Mitleid*), and all love which is not sympathy is selfishness (*Selbstsucht*). *Eros* is selfishness; *agape* is sympathy.'"³⁵⁴

However, the existence of a "true and pure love" attainable by philosophy and self-denial seems to be inconsistent with the premises of Schopenhauer's system. For how can there be a selfless love when all that exists is the selfish Will to live? Indeed, for Schopenhauer "existence, life, is itself a crime: it is our original sin. And it is inevitably expiated by suffering and death."³⁵⁵ Since for Schopenhauer there is no paradisiac innocence, but only original sin, there can be no escape from sin, and no return to paradise, but only the vain and self-contradictory attempt of existence to deny itself.

Schopenhauer's vision represents a significant new turn in European philosophy. On the one hand, it reflects the highly practical spirit (*will* rather than mind) of the early industrial, capitalist age. On the other, it reflects the underlying scepticism of the post-1848 age in which it was read (rather than the age in which it was written). Gone is the optimism of the Enlightenment, and its belief in reason and the perfectibility of man; gone, too, the innocence and freshness of the first wave of Romanticism. In its place we find Byronic despair and Eastern pessimism, the despair of a man who has cut himself off from the last vestiges of the Christian Good News³⁵⁶, who believes neither in God nor in anything else except his baser instincts, and is preparing to escape from his suffering by plunging into what he insists will be a sea of nothingness, but which he fears will be something very different and much more terrifying...

³⁵⁴ Copleston, *op. cit.*, pp. 48.

³⁵⁵ Copleston, *op. cit.*, pp. 48.

³⁵⁶ "Nevertheless," writes Mann, "he was a Christian [!] and distinguished between two basic tendencies in Christianity: an optimistic one promising paradise on earth, which he regarded as Jewish in origin, and an ascetic one proclaiming the misery and treachery of the world, teaching resignation and compassion" (*op. cit.*, pp. 142-143).

24. WAGNER ON MONARCHISM AND ANTI-CAPITALISM

There were many diverse reactions to the failure of the 1848 revolution. One of the most unexpected was the conversion to monarchism of the famous composer Richard Wagner.

Wagner's youthful faith was in the socialist revolution. Thus during the revolutionary year of 1848 he wrote: "I will destroy every evil that has power over mankind. I will destroy the domination of one over another, of the dead over the living; I will shatter the power of the mighty, of the law and of property. Man's sole master shall be his own will, his only law his own desire, his only property his own strength, for only the free man is holy and there is nothing higher than he. Let there be an end to the evil that gives one man power over millions... since all are equal I shall destroy every dominion of one over another."³⁵⁷ Here we see not only the influence of the revolution, but also of the concept of *Will*, even before his meeting with Schopenhauer, together with the embryo of a *Will to Power* such as we find later in Nietzsche, who greatly admired Wagner (until he thought that he had sold out to the bourgeoisie in his later years).

The collapse of the 1848 revolution forced Wagner into exile from his native Saxony, where he had been Royal Capellmeister, for many years. Nevertheless, he never completely shook off his early faith, but combined it in an original way with other ideas: *anti-capitalism* with *anti-communism*, and *republicanism* with *monarchism*. Thus his early anti-capitalism found expression also in his later music dramas. One of leitmotifs of these dramas was the corrupting power of *money*. For example, his most famous work, the four-opera *Ring* cycle, describes how the love of money, symbolized by a golden ring possessed by Alberich and sought by the hero, Siegfried, is incompatible with true love and happiness. The libretto for the *Ring* was completed in 1853, and the prelude to *Rheingold* - 1853.

The contemporary symbol of the love of money gone wild was London, which he visited for the first time (to earn some money) in 1855. In 1877, during a trip down the Thames in a steamer, as A.N. Wilson writes, "Wagner said, 'This is Alberich's dream come true - *Nibelheim*, world dominion, activity, work, everywhere the oppressive feeling of steam and fog.'..."

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

³⁵⁷ Wagner, *The Revolution*, in Stephen Johnson, *Wagner. His Life and Music*, London: Naxos, 2007, p. 60.

while Karl Marx was an optimist, Trollope's later years were suffused with pessimism and gloom.

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

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

"No allegory of any work is exhausted by drawing too punctilious a match between symbol and signified. The audience to Wagner's musical drama is caught up in an experience which is profound in itself, and to say Alberich = the Big Capitalist or that the befriending of Alberich by Loki and Wotan = the Church and the Law embracing the power of capital is too narrow and too specific an account of what stands as a universal work of art. Shaw was right, however, to say that Wagner's masterpiece was rooted in its time. What is suggested in the final opera of the cycle is a universal collapse - the Gods themselves hurtling towards self-destruction. As the 'storm-clouds of the nineteenth century' - John Ruskin's phrase - gather, we sense impending disaster in many of the great art-works of the period."³⁵⁸

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Wagner managed to combine *anti-capitalism* with *anti-communism*, and *republicanism* with *monarchism*. In his celebrated "Fatherland Club Speech", delivered on June 14, 1848 in Dresden, Wagner declared that his aim was that the "demoniac idea of Money vanish from us, with all its loathsome retinue of open and secret usury, paper-juggling, percentage and bankers' speculations. That will be the *full emancipation of the human race*; that will be the *fulfilment of Christ's pure teaching*, which enviously they hide from us behind parading dogmas, invented to bind the simple world of raw barbarians, to prepare them for a development towards whose higher consummation we now must march in lucid consciousness. Or does this smack to you of *Communism*? Are ye foolish or ill-disposed enough to declare the necessary redemption of the human race from the flattest, most demoralising servitude to vulgarest matter, synonymous with carrying out the most preposterous and senseless doctrine, that of Communism? Can ye not see that this doctrine of a mathematically equal division of property and earnings is

³⁵⁸ Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 413-414, 415.

simply an unreasoning attempt to solve that problem, at any rate dimly apprehended, and an attempt whose sheer impossibility itself proclaims it stillborn? But would ye denounce therewith the task itself [i.e. the removal of the power of money] for reprehensible and insane, as that doctrine of a surety [i.e. Communism] is? *Have a care!* The outcome of three-and-thirty years of unruffled peace shews you Human Society in such a state of dislocation and impoverishment, that, at end of all those years, ye have on every hand the awful spectacle of pallid Hunger! Look to it, or e'er it be too late! Give no *alms*, but acknowledge a *right*, a God-given *right of Man*, lest ye live to see the day when outraged Nature will gird herself for a battle of brute force, whose savage shout of victory were of *a truth that Communism*; and though the radical impossibility of its continuance should yield it but the briefest spell of reign, that short-lived reign would yet have sufficed to root up every trace, perchance for many an age to come, of the achievements of two thousand years of civilisation. Think ye, I *threaten*? Nay, I *warn!*"³⁵⁹

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

He called for "*the King to be the first and sterlingest Republican of all. And who is more called to be the truest, faithfulest Republican, than just the Prince?* REPUBLICA means: the affairs of the nation. What individual can be more destined that the Prince, to belong with all his feelings, all his thoughts and actions, *entirely to the Folk's affairs?* Once persuaded of his glorious calling, what could move him to belittle himself, to cast in his lot with one exclusive *smaller* section of his Folk? However warmly each of us may respond to feelings for the good of all, so pure a Republican as the Prince can he never be, for *his* cares are undivided: their eye is single to the One, the Whole; whilst each of us must needs divided and parcel out his cares, to meet the wants of everyday." ³⁶⁰

Here Wagner is expressing one of the key ideas of Orthodox Christian monarchism: that only the king is able to transcend individual and party political factionalism and self-interest, and labour for the nation *as a whole*. In this sense the king is the guarantee of the freedom of his people rather than its destroyer; for only he can preserve the freedom of individuals and parties from encroachment from other individuals and parties. And so "if he is the genuine free Father of his Folk, then with a single high-hearted resolve he can plant peace where war was unavoidable." ³⁶¹

³⁵⁹ Wagner, "What Relation bear Republican Endeavours to the Kingship?" in *Art and Politics*, London and Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996, pp. 139-140.

³⁶⁰ Wagner, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

³⁶¹ Wagner, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

At the same time, Wagner claims, he *is* a Republican. But the Republic will be proclaimed by - the King! "Not we, will proclaim the republic, no! *this prince, the noblest, worthiest King, let him speak out: -*

"I declare Saxony a Free State."

"And let the earliest law of this Free State, the edict giving it the fairest surety of endurance, be:- '*The highest executive power rests in the Royal House of Wettin, and descends therein from generation to generation, by right of primogeniture.*'

"The oath which we swear to this State and this edict, will never be broken: not *because* we have sworn it (how many an oath is sworn in the unthinking joy of taking office!) but because we have sworn it in full assurance that *through this proclamation, through that law, a new era of undying happiness has dawned, of utmost benefit, of most determinant presage, not alone for Saxony, no! for Germany, for Europe.* He who thus boldly has expressed his enthusiasm, believes with all his heart that never was he *more loyal* to the oath he, too, has sworn his King, than when he penned these lines today."³⁶²

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

³⁶² Wagner, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-143.

his person he raises the concept of Freedom itself to the loftiest, to a God-implanted consciousness.

"The farther back we search among Germanic nations for the Kinghood's meaning, the more intimately will it fit this new-won meaning."³⁶³

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

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

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

"For, as the King on the one hand gives assurance of the State's solidity, on the other his loftiest interest soars high beyond the State. Personally he has naught in common with the interests of parties, but his sole concern is that the conflict of these interests should be adjusted, precisely for the safety of the whole. His sphere is therefore equity, and where this is unattainable, the exercise of grace (*Gnade*). Thus, as against the party interests, he is the representative of purely-human interests, and in the eyes of the party-seeking citizen he therefore occupies in truth a position well-nigh superhuman. To him is consequently accorded a reverence such as the highest citizen would never dream of distantly demanding for himself."³⁶⁴

³⁶³ Wagner, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

³⁶⁴ Wagner, "On State and Religion", *op. cit.*, pp. 11-13.

"The subject relates to the King through the self-sacrificing emotion of *patriotism*. In a democracy, on the other hand, the position of the King is taken by *public opinion*, the veneration of which is far more problematic, leading as it does to "the most deplorable imbroglios, into acts the most injurious to Quiet".³⁶⁵

"The reason lies in the scarcely exaggerable weakness of the average human intellect, as also in the infinitely diverse shades and grades of perceptive-faculty in the units who, taken all together, create the so-called *public opinion*. Genuine respect for this 'public opinion' is founded on the sure and certain observation that no one is more accurately aware of the community's true immediate life-needs, nor can better devise the means for their satisfaction, than the community itself: it would be strange indeed, were man more faultily organised in this respect than the dumb animal. Nevertheless we often are driven to the opposite view, if we remark how even for this, for the correct perception of its nearest, commonest needs, the ordinary human understanding does not suffice - not, at least, to the extent of jointly satisfying them in the spirit of true fellowship: the presence of beggars in our midst, and even at times of starving fellow-creatures, shews how weak the commonest human sense must be at bottom. So here already we have evidence of the great difficulty it must cost to bring true reason into the joint determinings of Man: though the cause may well reside in the boundless egoism of each single unit."³⁶⁶

Another problem with public opinion is that it has an extremely unreliable "pretended vice-regent" in *the press*. The press is made out to be "the sublimation of public spirit, of practical human intellect, the indubitable guarantee of manhood's constant progress." But in fact "it is at all times havable for gold or profit." In fact, "there exists no form of injustice, of onesidedness and narrowness of heart, that does not find expression in the pronouncements of 'public opinion', and - what adds to the hatefulness of the thing - forever with a passionateness that masquerades as the warmth of genuine patriotism, but has its true and constant origin in the most self-seeking of all human motives. Whoso would learn this accurately, has but to run counter to 'public opinion', or indeed to defy it: he will find himself brought face to face with the most implacable tyrant; and no one is more driven to suffer from its despotism, than the Monarch, for very reason that he is the representative of that selfsame Patriotism whose noxious counterfeit steps up to him, as 'public opinion', with the boast of being identical in kind.

"Matters strictly pertaining to the interest of the King, which in truth can only be that of purest patriotism, are cut and dried by his unworthy substitute, this Public Opinion, in the interest of the vulgar egoism of the mass; and the necessitation to yield to its requirements, notwithstanding, becomes the earliest source of that higher form of suffering which the King alone can personally experience as his own."³⁶⁷

³⁶⁵ Wagner, "On State and Religion", *op. cit.*, p. 18.

³⁶⁶ Wagner, "On State and Religion", *op. cit.*, p. 18.

³⁶⁷ Wagner, "On State and Religion", *op. cit.*, pp. 20, 20-21.

Ordinary men pursue definite, practical aims associated with their particular, lowly station in life. But "the King desires the Ideal, he wishes justice and humanity; nay, wished he them not, wished he naught but what the simple burgher or party-leader wants, - the very claims made on him by his office, claims that allow him nothing but an ideal interest, by making a traitor to the idea he represents, would plunge him into those sufferings which have inspired tragic poets from all time to paint their pictures of the vanity of human life and strife. True justice and humanity are ideals irrealisable: to be bound to strive for them, nay, to recognise an unsilenceable summons to their carrying out, is to be condemned to misery. What the thoroughly noble, truly kingly individual directly feels of this, in time is given also to the individual unqualified for knowledge of his tragic task, and solely placed by Nature's dispensation on the throne, to learn in some uncommon fashion reserved for kings alone. The highly fit, however, is summoned to drink the full, deep cup of life's true tragedy in his exalted station. Should his construction of the Patriotic ideal be passionate and ambitious, he becomes a warrior-chief and conqueror, and thereby courts the portion of the violent, the faithlessness of Fortune; but should his nature be noble-minded, full of human pity, more deeply and more bitterly than every other is he called to see the futility of all endeavours for true, for perfect justice."³⁶⁸

"To him more deeply and more inwardly than is possible to the State-citizen, as such, is it therefore given to feel that in Man there dwells an infinitely deeper, more capacious need than the State and its ideal can ever satisfy. Wherefore as it was Patriotism that raised the burgher to the highest height by him attainable, it is *Religion* alone that can bear the King to the stricter dignity of manhood."³⁶⁹

Therefore just as Monarchy is more purely disinterested, more truly solicitous of the needs - the *deepest* as well as the more temporary needs - of *all* its citizens, than "Franco-Judaico-German Democracy"³⁷⁰, so through this very necessity of having to rise above individual, partial, lower interests and needs, it ascends into the realm of religion. And, we should add, receives its strength and confirmation and sanctification from true religion. In this Wagner, paradoxically, while still far from the true faith, is not far from the Orthodox conception of true kingship...

³⁶⁸ Wagner, "On State and Religion", *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23. We remember the great speech of the king in Shakespeare's *Henry V* (IV.1): *Upon the king! Let us our lives, our souls,/ Our debts, our careful wives,/ Our children, and our sins lay on the king!/ We must bear all. O hard condition!/ Twin-born with greatness, subject to the breath/ Of every fool, whose sense no more can feel/ But his own wringing. What infinite heart's ease/ Must kings neglect that private men enjoy!*

³⁶⁹ Wagner, "On State and Religion", *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.

³⁷⁰ Wagner, "What is German?", *op. cit.*, p. 166.

25. DARWINISM AND ITS EARLY CRITICS

The year 1859, according to M.S. Anderson, "can be seen as the beginning of a new era in intellectual life"; for it "gave birth not merely to the *Origin of Species* but also to Marx's *Critique of Political Economy* and Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*".³⁷¹ If eighteenth-century Deism had banished God to the heavens, leaving for Him only the function of Creator, Darwinism deprived Him even of this function, ascribing all creation to the blind will of nature working entirely through chance.

The Victorians – that is, approximately the generations from 1830 to 1900 – were probably the most successful breed of human beings in history up to that time. Energetic, wealthy, inventive and courageous, the English Victorians dominated the world not only politically and economically, but even intellectually. They did not create the dominant *Zeigeist* of the era - the belief that *development* governs all spheres of human activity, from science and politics to theology and morality. That "honour" must belong, first of all, to the Germans in the persons of such philosophers as Hegel, such scientists as Humboldt and such statesmen as Bismarck. But it was the English who propelled the *Zeitgeist* forward throughout the world outside Europe, and provided it with its main pseudo-scientific justification, Charles Darwin's theory of evolution.

Of course, Darwinism can be seen as the height of irrationalism - which it was, and a return to the pre-Christian nature-worship of men such as Anaximander and Epicurus in a more sophisticated form - which it also was. But Darwin succeeded in ascribing to his pagan mysticism the aura of *science* - and few there were, in that era, who dared to question the authority of science. The trouble is: it was very poor science and even worse philosophy. Thus already in 1866 the Moravian monk Gregor Mendel published his *Experiments on Plant Hybrids*, which laid the foundations for the laws of heredity and the science of genetics, which through the discovery of DNA in 1953 would explode the last remnant of scientific justification for Darwinism...

Darwin was a fantastically industrious man, absolutely devoted to his work; and the Victorians in general were great lovers of knowledge. And yet this love of knowledge was a "grey spirit", in Tennyson's words, fantastically ambitious, at times satanically blasphemous, that led him away from the true wisdom:

*And this grey spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.*

Darwin incarnated this "grey spirit" in his life, in his appearance and in his work. His theory led him gradually away from belief in God into a grey realm from which all the colour and wonder at God's creation had been drained away...

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³⁷¹ Anderson, *The Ascendancy of Europe, 1815-1914*, London: Longman, 1985, p. 365.

Darwin's theory maintains that all life, even the most complex, has evolved from the simplest organisms over a period of hundreds of millions of years. This process is entirely random, being propelled forward by one mechanism according to Darwin himself: *natural selection*, which "selects out" for survival those organisms with advantageous variations, and, according to his modern followers, the neo-Darwinists, by *two* mechanisms: *natural selection* and *genetic mutation*, which introduces variations into the genotypes of the organisms (Darwin himself knew nothing about genes). Darwin defines natural selection in Malthusian terms as follows: "As many more individuals of each species are born than can possibly survive; and as, consequently, there is a frequently recurring struggle for existence, it follows that any being, if it vary however slightly in any manner profitable to itself, under the complex and sometimes varying conditions of life, will have a better chance of surviving, and thus be *naturally selected*. From the strong principle of inheritance, any selected variety will tend to propagate its new and modified form."³⁷²

According to Darwin, wrote Bertrand Russell, "among chance variations those that are favourable will preponderate among adults in each generation. Thus from age to age deer run more swiftly, cats stalk their prey more silently, and giraffes' necks become longer. Given enough time, this mechanism, so Darwin contended, could account for the whole long development from the protozoa to *homo sapiens*."³⁷³

"Given enough time..." Time - enormous amounts of it - was indeed a critical ingredient in Darwin's theory; in fact it took the place of a satisfactory causal mechanism. But such a theory chimed in with the historicist temper of the times - and with the *Principles of Geology* of his friend Charles Lyell. It also chimed in with the idea, as Jacques Barzun writes, "that everything is alive and in motion - a dynamic universe"³⁷⁴, which in turn chimed in with the great dogma of the day, the idea of PROGRESS.

Liberals believed in gradual progress, socialists believed in revolutionary progress, everyone except for a few diehards like the Pope believed in progress, that things in general were changing for the better. For evolution appealed to man's pride, to the belief that he is destined for ever greater things. "You know," says Lady Constance in Disraeli's novel *Tancred* (1847), "all is development - the principle is perpetually going on. First, there was nothing; then - I forget the next - I think there were shells; then fishes; then we came - let me see - did we come next? Never mind, we came at last and the next change will be something very superior to us, something with wings."³⁷⁵ It will be noted that this was written twelve years before Darwin's *Origin of the Species*, which shows that the "scientific" theory filled an emotional need already expressed by poets and novelists.

³⁷² Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*, introduction.

³⁷³ Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, London: Allen Lane, 1946, p. 752.

³⁷⁴ Barzun, *From Dawn to Decadence*, New York: Perennial, 2000, p. 501.

³⁷⁵ Disraeli, in Barzun, *op. cit.*, p. 502.

A.N. Wilson's recent biography of Darwin, which begins with the striking sentence: "Darwin was wrong", argues that "Darwinism succeeded for precisely the reason that so many critics of religions believe that religions succeed. Darwin offered to the emergent Victorian middle classes a consolation myth. He told them that all their getting and spending, all their neglect of their own poor huddled masses, all their greed and selfishness was in fact *natural*. It was the way things were. The whole of nature, arising from the primeval slime and evolving through its various animal forms from amoebas to the higher primates, was on a journey of improvement, moving onwards and upwards, from barnacles to shrimps, from fish to fowl, from orang-outangs to silk-hatted Members of Parliament and leaders of British industry. It was all happening without the interference or tiresome conscience-pricking of the Almighty. He, in fact, had been conveniently removed from the picture, as had the names of many other thinkers and scientists, including Darwin's own grandfather, who had posited theories of evolution a good deal more plausible than his own. Copernicus had removed the earth – and by implication the human race – from the centre of the universe. Darwin in effect put them back. For all the brave, Darwinian talk of natural selection being non-purposive and impersonal, it breathes through the pores of everything which Darwin and Darwinists write that natural selection in fact favours white middle-class people, Western people, educated people, over 'savages'. The survival of the fittest was really the survival of the Darwin family and of their type – a relatively new class, which emerged in the years after the Napoleonic Wars in Britain and held sway until relatively recently. It remains to be seen, as this class dies out, to be replaced by quite different social groupings, whether the Darwinian idea will survive, or whether, like other cranky Victorian fads – the belief in mesmerism or in phrenology, for example – it will be visited only by those interested in the quainter byways of intellectual history..."³⁷⁶

Darwin knew that his theory was incompatible with Christianity. He had studied theology at Cambridge, and was impressed by Paley's *View of the Evidences of Christianity*. But as an older man he was less impressed: "Although I did not think much about the existence of a personal God until a considerably later period of my life, I will here give the vague conclusions to which I have been driven. The old argument from design in Nature, as given by Paley, which formerly seemed to me so conclusive, fails, now that the law of natural selection has been discovered..."³⁷⁷

As H.G. Wells put it: "If all animals and man evolved, then there were no first parents, no paradise, no fall. And if there had been no fall, then the entire historic fabric of Christianity, the story of the first sin, and the reason for the atonement, collapses like a house of cards."³⁷⁸ Again, in 1880 Darwin wrote to Francis McDermott: "I am sorry to have to inform you that I do not believe in the Bible as a divine revelation & therefore not in Jesus Christ as the son of God."³⁷⁹

³⁷⁶ Wilson, *Charles Darwin, Victorian Mythmaker*, London: John Murray, 2017, pp. 17-18.

³⁷⁷ Wilson, *Charles Darwin*, p. 81.

³⁷⁸ Wells, *The Outline of History*, London: Cassell, 1925, p. 616.

³⁷⁹ "A Matter of Faith for Darwin", *The Irish Times*, Fine Arts and Antiques Section, September 19, 2015, p. 21.

The destruction of faith in the Bible, in Christ, in the Holy Trinity, had already been underway for a long time. In the nineteenth century, the complete allegorization of the Genesis narrative – a teaching already known to, and clearly rejected by, the Holy Fathers as early as St. Basil the Great's *Hexaemeron* – was supplemented by a method of Biblical criticism coming from Germany called "Higher Criticism", a trend that was exemplified in English-speaking world by "the South African Bishop Colenso's *The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua Critically Examined* (7 volumes, 1862-1875), or the fearlessly demythologizing *Essays and Reviews* authored by six ultra-liberal churchmen (1860), which treated the Bible essentially like a secular text. David Strauss's *Life of Jesus*, translated into English by George Eliot (*nom de plume* of MaryAnn Evans, 1846), which emphasized Christ's humanity rather more than his divinity, was another influential publication in the same vein..."³⁸⁰

But the great and the good of the British establishment managed – to their satisfaction at any rate – to square the circle of believing that the Bible was the word of God and the atheism of evolutionism. Evolution was soon seen as the *means* by which God "created" the world; this was "theological evolutionism". One of its adherents was the famous Cardinal Newman, who "regarded Darwin's theory as compatible with his Catholic beliefs. As the devout High Church Anglican Gladstone put it, 'Evolution, if it be true, enhances in my judgement the proper idea of the greatness of God.'"³⁸¹

Darwin had been ruminating on his ideas – which were by no means original, similar ideas had been circulating in many places in both Britain and Europe – for at least twenty years before the publication of *Origin of Species*. However, Darwin delayed to publish out of fear of the reaction of the conservative believers who still dominated the Church, the government and the universities. And he also feared the criticisms of other scientists, which were frequent in the early decades.

However, the book, when it came out, was a sensation and the first edition quickly sold out. Then, the next year, a famous debate on Darwinism took place in Oxford between Thomas Huxley and Samuel Wilberforce ("Soapy Sam"), the Bishop of Oxford, at the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Wilberforce was the son of the famous social reformer, William Wilberforce, who had succeeded in getting slavery outlawed in the British empire. "Soapy Sam" was not a scientist, but a clever and highly educated man who hit on two problems with the theory to which the Darwinists have no real answer to this day. "The first concerned the analogy Darwin wished to draw with the selective breeding of domesticated species. Darwin envisaged natural selection, a sort of impersonal deity, 'daily and hourly' scrutinizing species over the space of entire geological epochs. The problem with the analogy, Wilberforce said, was that domestic breeders do not, in fact, create new species – they merely modify existing species – and the wild descendants of domesticated types, rather than continuing to 'develop', in fact revert to the original type. If anything, therefore, the behaviour

³⁸⁰ Neil Thomas, *Taking Leave of Darwin*, Seattle: Discovery Institute, 2021, p. 34.

³⁸¹ Tombs, *op. cit.*, p. 470.

of animals under domestication disproved rather than proved the Darwinian thesis.

"Wilberforce's second accusation was that Darwin, if not misrepresenting Lyell, misused him. Lyell's *Geology* shows that there is no geological evidence which proves the existence of transitional forms, of one species turning into another. Darwin acknowledged 'gaps' in the geological evidence, but appeared to be enlisting Lyell for his argument. In fact, there were no 'gaps', simply insufficient evidence. Darwin [in his writings – he was not present at the Oxford debate] acknowledged that Wilberforce's argument was 'uncommonly clever' and that 'he picks out with skill all the most conjectural parts, and brings forward well all the difficulties.'...

"Had the Bishop of Oxford left his argument there he might well have been deemed the victor in the debate that morning. But having scrutinized Darwin's inductive methodology for about half an hour, the Bishop could not help disobeying [Darwin's old friend] Henslow's injunction that speakers should keep the discussion on a scientific footing. Christianity, he stated, offered a nobler view of life than Darwinism. The Bishop shuddered to think of a world where Darwinian evolution would be adopted as a creed. He rejoiced that the 'greatest names in science' had already rejected Darwin's theory, which, he believed, was 'opposed to the interests of science and of humanity'.

"Even now Soapy Sam, in spite of having spoken for too long, could have sat down covered with honour. He had the audience on his side, however, and their excitement went to the Bishop's head. He could not resist a little quip. He turned to Huxley who was, he patronizingly said, 'about to demolish me' and inquired: 'Was it through his grandfather or his grandmother that he traced his descent from an ape?'"³⁸²

"On this," wrote a Darwinist witness, Isabelle Sidgwick, "Mr. Huxley slowly and deliberately arose. A slight tall figure stern and pale, very quiet and very grave, he stood before us and spoke these tremendous words – words which no one seems sure of now, nor I think, could remember just after they were spoken for their meaning took away our breath, though it left us in no doubt as to what it was. He was not ashamed to have a monkey for his ancestor, but he would be ashamed to be connected with a man who used great gifts to obscure the truth..."³⁸³

³⁸² Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 258-259, 263.

³⁸³ Sidgwick, in Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 472. Disraeli once said that as between the idea that man was an ape or an angel, he was "on the side of the angels"; but he forgot that, as Lady Constance had opined in his novel *Tancred*, evolution was for many a way of attaining angelic status ("something with wings") in the very long run. For those who did not believe in the deification of man through Christ, evolution provided another, secular and atheist form of deification – more like the kind offered by Satan in the Garden of Eden. This elicited the not unfounded derision of the conservatives. Thus Gobineau said that man was "not descended from the apes, but rapidly getting there". (Barzun, *op. cit.*, p. 571)

In fact, Huxley turned out to be dishonest: he personally did not believe in natural selection, but simply used Darwinism to undermine the doctrine of Divine creation.

Paradoxically, Darwin's book never actually discussed the very first and simplest step in evolution, the supposed transformation of inorganic matter into organic. This was perhaps because Darwin knew of Louis Pasteur's contemporary discovery that spontaneous generation is impossible.³⁸⁴ But modern scientists have continued to try and prove the impossible to be possible in their laboratories - with no success whatsoever, even with the huge advantage possessed by human empirical purposiveness over blind chance.

Darwin himself had doubts about natural selection. "To suppose," he wrote. "that the eye with all its inimitable contrivances for adjusting the focus to different distances, for admitting different amounts of light, and for the correction of spherical and chromatic aberration, could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree."³⁸⁵

Instead he turned to the discredited theory of Lamarck, that acquired characteristics are inherited - a theory accepted, in modern times, only by Stalin's Lysenko...

Darwin was right to be troubled by the example of the eye. Fr. Job Gumerov writes: "Evolutionism is fundamentally at odds with the systemic methodology. Consider the human eye. It is a complex, finely ordered system. If you remove at least one element, the system will lose its properties and will not be able to perform its functions. The eye could not have arisen in the process of evolution. Evolutionists place a person, a bird, and a frog in a certain sequence on the axis of progress. However, the eyes of each of these species are different systems. They are distinguished not by the degree of perfection, but by a different system-constructive principle."³⁸⁶

The German philosopher Nietzsche rejected Darwinism, pointing out, as Copleston writes, "that during most of the time taken up in the formation of a certain organ or quality, the inchoate organ is of no use to its possessor and cannot aid it in its struggle with external circumstances and forces. The influence of 'external circumstances' is absurdly *overrated* by Darwin. The essential factor in the vital process is precisely the tremendous power to shape and create forms from *within*, a power which *uses* and *exploits* the environment."³⁸⁷ Thus Nietzsche anticipated "the tremendous power to shape and create form from within", which some 150 years later, was discovered to reside in the DNA molecule...

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³⁸⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spontaneous_generation

³⁸⁵ Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, 1909, Harvard Classics edition, p. 190.

³⁸⁶ Gumerov, "The Orthodox Church Rejects Evolution & Accepts Genuine Science", *Russian Faith; Science as a Confirmation of the Biblical Doctrine of Creation*, Samara, 2001, pp. 26-27.

³⁸⁷ Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, vol. 7, part II: Schopenhauer to Nietzsche, Garden City, N.Y.: Image Books, 1965, pp. 185-186.

The idea that all things came into being out of nothing by chance was rejected already in the fourth century by St. Basil the Great: "Where did you get what you have? If you say that you received it by chance, you are an atheist, you do not know your Creator and are not grateful to your Benefactor."³⁸⁸

"Accounts of the evolutionary emergence of life were also central in the debates between science and religion from the late nineteenth century in Greece, as elsewhere. This was the issue that consistently polarized the Greek public sphere, producing a number of political disputes. Particularly prominent in this debate was the exchange between the journal *Prometheus* (founded in 1890 by K. Mitsopoulos, a modernist who was at the same time devoutly Orthodox, as a 'periodical of physical and applied sciences') and the Orthodox journal *Anaplassis*. Both sides were unrelenting in the defense of what they saw as a moral and intellectual undertaking. An exchange of pointed articles between the two journals took place in 1890–1891, the period during which the short-lived *Prometheus* was published, but the issue was raised as early as 1876 and discussed as late as 1936. It is not easy to identify what the sides of the debate were, however. Many scientists, such as the University of Athens Chair of Zoology N. Apostolidis (1856–1916), proudly declared that they would not be teaching Darwinism in their university courses. Other Greek intellectuals tried to defend Darwinism, claiming that the idea of evolution actually had a Greek ancestry. Finally, the suicide of a depressive student at the University of Athens in the 1880s was linked to the teaching of Darwinism, sparking moral outrage in ecclesiastical circles."³⁸⁹

St. Nectarius, Metropolitan of Pentapolis, writing in 1885, was withering in his rejection of this new version of a very old heresy: "The followers of *pithecogeny* [the derivation of man from the apes] are ignorant of man and of his lofty destiny, because they have denied him his soul and Divine revelation. They have rejected the Spirit, and the Spirit has abandoned them. They withdrew from God, and God withdrew from them; for, thinking they were wise, they became fools... If they had acted with knowledge, they would not have lowered themselves so much, nor would they have taken pride in tracing the origin of the human race to the most shameless of animals. Rightly did the Prophet say of them: 'Man being in honour, did not understand; he is compared to the dumb beasts, and is become like unto them.'³⁹⁰

The Russian St. Theophan the Recluse (+1894) spoke of the "geological madness" of Darwinism: "Once a man came to me who simply couldn't believe that there had been a flood. Then I told him that on very high mountains in the sand are found shells and other remains from the ocean floor, and how geology testifies to the flood, and he came to believe. You see how necessary learning is at times." And again the elder said: "God not only permits, but demands of man that

³⁸⁸ St. Basil the Great, *Sermon on Avarice*.

³⁸⁹ Efthymios Nicolaidis, Eudoxie Delli, Nikolaos Livanos, Kostas Tampakis, and George Vlahakis, "Science and Orthodox Christianity: An Overview", *Isis*, volume 107, number 3., 2016.

³⁹⁰ St. Nectarios, *Sketch concerning Man*, Athens, 1885.

he grow in knowledge. However, it is necessary to live and learn so that not only does knowledge not ruin morality, but that morality not ruin knowledge."³⁹¹

And again: "They have heaped up a multitude of fanciful suppositions for themselves, elevated them to the status of irrefutable truths and plumed themselves on them, assuming that nothing can be said against them. In fact, they are so ungrounded that it is not even worthwhile speaking against them. All of their sophistry is a house of cards – blow on it and it flies apart. There is no need to refute it in its parts; it is enough to regard it as one regards dreams. When speaking against dreams, people do not prove the absurdity in their composition or in their individual parts, but only say, 'It's a dream,' and with that they resolve everything. It is the same with the theory of the formation of the world from a nebula and its supports, with the theory of abiogenesis and Darwin's origin of genera and species, and with his last dream about the descent of man. It is all like delirium. When you read them you are walking in the midst of shadows. And scientists? Well, what can you do with them? Their motto is "If you don't like it, don't listen, but don't prevent me from lying."

And again, St. Theophan wrote: "These days many nihilists of both sexes, naturalists, Darwinists, Spiritists, and Westernizers in general have multiplied among us. All right, you're thinking – would the Church have been silent, would it not have proffered its voice, would it not have condemned or anathematized them if there had been something new in their teaching? To be sure – a council would have done so without doubt, and all of them, with their teachings, would have been given over to anathema. To the current Rite of Orthodoxy only the following item would have been added: 'To Büchner, Feuerbach, Darwin, Renan, Kardec, and all their followers – anathema! But there is no need, either for a special council or for any kind of addition. All of their false teachings were anathematized long ago. At the present time, not only in principal cities but in all places and churches the Rite of Orthodoxy ought to be brought in and celebrated, so that all the teachings contrary to the word of God might be collected and that it might be proclaimed to everyone what they must fear and from what teachings they must flee, and all might know. Many are seduced intellectually only through ignorance, and therefore a public condemnation of pernicious teachings would save them from destruction. If the action of an anathema is terrible to someone, then let him avoid the teachings that lead to it. Let him who is afraid of it for the sake of others bring them back to a healthy teaching. If you who are not favorably disposed to this action are Orthodox, then you are going against yourself; and if you have already lost sound teaching, then what business do you have concerning what is done in the Church that supports it? After all, you've already separated yourself from the Church and have your own convictions, your own way of looking at things – well, live with them then. It's all the same whether or not your name and your teaching are uttered under the anathema: you are already under anathema if you philosophize against the Church and persist in this philosophizing.'"³⁹²

³⁹¹ *Zhitia prepodobnykh Startsev Optinoj Pustyni* (The Lives of the Holy Elders of Optina Desert), Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1992.

³⁹² St. Theophan, *Sozertsanie i razмышlenie* (Contemplations and Reflections), 1998, p. 146.

The most famous monastery in Russia was Optina Desert. Its elders were unanimous in rejecting Darwinism. Thus St. Ambrose of Optina (+1891) wrote: "Don't believe at face value all kinds of nonsense without investigation: that something can come into being [of itself] from dust, and that people used to be apes."³⁹³ A little later, St. Nektary of Optina (+1928) affirmed that the fossils, the only scientific evidence for evolution, were actually laid down by the Great Flood, which is why so many of them were to be found on the tops of high mountains.³⁹⁴

Again, the future hieromartyr and Metropolitan of Kiev Vladimir (Bogoiavlensky) wrote: "Only at the present time has such an audacious philosophy found a place for itself, which overthrows human worth and tries to give its false teaching a wide dissemination ... Man did not originate from God's hands, it says; in an endless and gradual transition from imperfection to perfection he developed from the animal kingdom, and as little soul as animals have, so little does man have ... How immeasurably deeply does all this degrade and insult man! From the highest step in the progression of creation he is reduced to the same level as the animals ... There is no need to refute such a teaching on a scientific basis, although it would not be difficult to do so, since unbelief has far from proved its position ... But if such a teaching finds more and more followers at the present time, this is not because the teaching of unbelief has supposedly become inarguably true, but because it does not hinder a corrupt heart that is inclined to sin from giving itself over to its passions. For if man is not immortal, if he is nothing more than the attainment of the highest development of the animals, then he has no business with God ...

"Brethren, do not listen to the pernicious, poison-bearing teaching of unbelief, which lowers you to the level of animals and, depriving you of human worth, promises you nothing but despair and an inconsolable life."³⁹⁵

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

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

³⁹³ St. Ambrose, *Soviety suprugam i roditeliam* (Counsels to spouses and parents).

³⁹⁴ *Zhitia prepodobnykh Startsev Optinoj Pustyni*.

³⁹⁵ St. Vladimir, "Gde istinnoe shchast'e: V vere ili neverii? (Where is true happiness? In faith or unbelief?), 1905.

Heraclitus and as retrogressive as the pre-Christian religions of Egypt and Babylon. Darwin's idea of species evolving into and from each other also recalls the Hindu idea of reincarnation.

More recent influences included Hegel. The dialectical structure of Hegel's philosophy is congruent with Darwin's. Thus the organism (thesis) comes into conflict with nature (antithesis), which produces a new species (synthesis).

But a more likely direct and contemporary influence was Schopenhauer's philosophy of Will. For both Schopenhauer and Darwin the blind, selfish Will to live was everything; for both there was neither intelligent design nor selfless love, but only the struggle to survive; for both the best that mankind could hope for was not Paradise but a kind of Buddhist nirvana.

Schopenhauer in metaphysics, Darwin in science, and Marx in politics formed a kind of unholy trinity of false prophets, whose essential concept was *Will*.³⁹⁶ Marx liked Darwinism because it appeared to justify class struggle as the fundamental mechanism of human evolution. "The idea of class struggle logically flows from 'the law of the struggle for existence'. It is precisely by this law that Marxism explains the emergence of classes and their struggle, whence logically proceeds the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Instead of racist pre-eminence class pre-eminence is preached."³⁹⁷

However, Darwinism's blind historicism and implicit atheism was also congenial to Marx. As Richard Wurmbrand notes: "After Marx had read *The Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin, he wrote a letter to Lassalle in which he exults that God - in the natural sciences at least - had been given 'the death blow'".³⁹⁸

"Karl Marx," writes Hieromonk Damascene, "was a devout Darwinist, who in *Das Kapital* called Darwin's theory 'epoch making'. He believed his reductionist, materialistic theories of the evolution of social organization to be deducible from Darwin's discoveries, and thus proposed to dedicate *Das Kapital* to Darwin. The funeral oration over Marx's body, delivered by Engels, stressed the evolutionary basis of communism: 'Just as Darwin discovered the law of evolution in organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of evolution in human history.'"³⁹⁹

"Darwinism and Marxism," wrote Fr. Seraphim Rose, "are inextricably linked. Karl Marx, one of world history's biggest villains, dedicated his book *Das Kapital* to Darwin. The five biggest mass murderers in world history, Pol Pot, Hitler, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao, were all heavily influenced by Darwin. With Darwinist-utilitarian logic, Pol Pot stated, 'Keeping you is no gain. Losing you is no loss.' Adolf Hitler dedicated his memoir *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle) to the subtitle of *The*

³⁹⁶ Marx's task was "to convert the 'Will' of German philosophy and this abstraction into a force in the practical world" (A.N. Wilson, *After the Victorians*, London: Hutchinson, 2005, p. 126).

³⁹⁷ Fr. Timothy Alferov, *Pravoslavnoe Mirovozzrenie i Sovremennoe Estestvoznaniye* (The Orthodox World-View and the Contemporary Science of Nature), Moscow: "Palomnik", 1998, p. 158.

³⁹⁸ Wurmbrand, *Was Karl Marx a Satanist?*, Diane Books (USA), 1976, p. 44.

³⁹⁹ Hieromonk Damascene, in Fr. Seraphim Rose, *Genesis, Creation and Early Man*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 2000, p. 339, note.

Origin of Species, and tried to put Darwin's theory into practice by conducting the Holocaust. Vladimir Lenin said, 'Darwin put an end to the belief that the animal and vegetable species bear no relation to one another, except by chance, and that they were created by God, and hence immutable.' He also owned a bronze statue of an ape gazing at an oversized human skull on a stack of his books, one of them being *The Origin of Species*. His right-hand man Leon Trotsky also talked about Darwin's influence on himself. When Joseph Stalin came across Darwin as a young kid, he became convinced that God does not exist, and told a classmate all about him. When he took power, he said, 'There are three things that we do to disabuse the minds of our seminary students. We had to teach them the age of the earth, the geologic origin, and Darwin's teachings.' Stalin also tried to create apemen super warriors by putting human semen into female apes. Mao Tse-tung listed Darwin as the most influential Westerner in his life, along with Darwin's followers Thomas Huxley, Darwin's cousin Francis Galton, and Herbert Spencer. Mao also said 'The basis of Chinese socialism rests on Darwin and his theory of evolution.'" ⁴⁰⁰

"The years after 1870," writes Gareth Stedman Jones, "were dominated by the prestige of the natural sciences, especially that of Darwin. Playing to these preoccupations, Engels presented Marx's work, not as a theory of communism or as a study of capitalism, but as the foundation of a parallel 'science of historical materialism'. Socialism had made a transition from 'utopia' to 'science'"... ⁴⁰¹

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

"Darwinian competition was not of this limited sort; there were no rules against hitting below the belt. The framework of law does not exist among animals, nor is war excluded as a competitive method. The use of the State to secure victory in competition was against the rules as conceived by the Benthamites, but could not be excluded from the Darwinian struggle. In fact, though Darwin himself was a Liberal, and though Nietzsche never mentions him except with contempt, Darwin's 'Survival of the Fittest' led, when thoroughly assimilated, to something much more like Nietzsche's philosophy than like Bentham's. These developments,

⁴⁰⁰ Rose, *Genesis, Creation, and Early Man*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Press.

⁴⁰¹ Gareth Jones, "The Routes of Revolution", *BBC History Magazine*, vol. 3 (6), June, 2002, p. 36.

however, belong to a later period, since Darwin's *Origin of Species* was published in 1859, and its political implications were not at first perceived...⁴⁰²

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

Darwin's theory is definitely racist, however much contemporary liberals might argue otherwise. In *The Descent of Man* he wrote, "At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate, and replace, the savage races throughout the world. The break between man and his nearest allies will then be wider, for it will intervene between man in a more civilised state, as we may hope, even than the Caucasian, and some ape as low as a baboon, instead of as now between the negro or Australian and the gorilla."⁴⁰³

Very soon different races or classes or groups of men were being viewed as if they were different species. "Applied to politics," writes Jacques Barzun, "[Darwinism] bred the doctrine that nations and other social groups struggle endlessly in order that the fittest shall survive. So attractive was this 'principle' that it got the name of Social Darwinism."⁴⁰⁴

Thus Social Darwinism may be defined as the idea that "human affairs are a jungle in which only the fittest of nations, classes, or individuals will survive".⁴⁰⁵

Social Darwinism leads to the conclusion that certain races are congenitally superior to others. "Only congenital characteristics are inherited," writes Russell, "apart from certain not very important exceptions. Thus the congenital differences between men acquire fundamental importance."⁴⁰⁶

Darwin's views in *The Descent of Man*, writes Wilson, "when placed beside even the most reactionary or fascistically inclined readers of the twenty-first century, seem simply monstrous. For here in all its fullness is an exposition of his belief in the survival of the fittest, by which he meant the white races of the globe in preference to the brown-skinned races, the supremacy; among the British, of the class to which Darwin happened himself to belong, and among that class, the Darwin family, and himself, in particular. The grand end of the struggle for life was to allow the rentier class to live in comfort while lower ranks toiled..."⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰² Russell, *op. cit.*, pp. 807-808

⁴⁰³ Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, London: John Murray, 1873, p. 178.

⁴⁰⁴ Barzun, *op. cit.*, pp. 571-572.

⁴⁰⁵ Norman Davies, *Europe*, London: Pimlico, 1997, p. 794.

⁴⁰⁶ Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 753.

⁴⁰⁷ Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 296-297.

As Fr. Timothy Alferov writes: "The ideas of racial pre-eminence - racism, Hitlerism - come from the Darwinist teaching on the origin of the races and their unequal significance. The law of the struggle for existence supposedly obliges the strong races to exert a strong dominance over the other races, to the extent of destroying the latter. It is not necessary to describe here the incarnation of these ideas in life in the example of Hitlerism, but it is worth noting that Hitler greatly venerated Darwin."⁴⁰⁸

Social Darwinism also had an important effect on criminology. Thus, as Evans writes, "Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909), who served with the Italian army in 1863 fighting brigands in Calabria, came to the view that criminals were not made but born, representing throwbacks to an earlier stage of human evolution. In 1876 he published *Criminal Man*, which took advantage of the development of photography to argue that born criminals had long arms, simian features and other physical attributes of the ape. Lombroso's idea of atavism, of criminals as evolutionary throwbacks, never received much support, and as time went on he modified his arguments to suggest that hereditary criminality was also the consequence of generations of alcoholism, or sexually transmitted diseases, or malnutrition; but more generally the basic idea that criminality was inherited began to exert a growing influence across Europe in the late nineteenth century.

"The consequences of Lombroso's basic argument, popularized by his student Enrico Ferri (1856-1929) in Italy, by Gustav Aschaffenburg (1866-1944) in Germany, by Francis Galton (1822-1911) in Britain, and by Rafael Salillas (1854-1923) in Spain, were momentous. The study of crime and criminality became the province not of law and its practitioners but of medicine and of professional criminology. Increasingly, In the 1890s and beyond, arguments began to be raised in favour of the compulsory sterilization of the 'inferior' who might be found work but should not be allowed to reproduce. Lombroso himself, along with many others who shared at least some of his views, began to argue for capital punishment on new grounds, namely that the extremely degenerate offender, the criminal with inherited violent traits, could neither be rendered safe nor removed from the chain of heredity unless he or she was eliminated altogether. Punishment had come full circle, from the medieval and early modern punishment of the body to the Enlightenment and Victorian punishment of the mind, and back again to the turn-of-the-century punishment of the body again."⁴⁰⁹

However, while appearing to widen the differences between races and classes of men, Social Darwinism also *reduces* them between men and other species - with startling consequences. Thus Bertrand Russell writes: "If men and animals have a common ancestry, and if men developed by such slow stages that there were creatures which we should not know whether to classify as human or not, the question arises: at what stage in evolution did men, or their semi-human ancestors, begin to be all equal? Would *Pithecanthropus erectus*, if he had been properly educated, have done work as good as Newton's? Would the Piltdown

⁴⁰⁸ Alferov, *Pravoslavnoe Mirovozzrenie i Sovremennoe Estesvoznanie* (The Orthodox World-View and the Contemporary Science of Nature), Moscow: "Palomnik", 1998, pp. 157-158.

⁴⁰⁹ Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 439-440.

Men have written Shakespeare's poetry if there had been anybody to convict him of poaching? A resolute egalitarian who answers these questions in the affirmative will find himself forced to regard apes as the equals of human beings. And why stop at apes? I do not see how he is to resist an argument in favour of Votes for Oysters. An adherent of evolution should maintain that not only the doctrine of the equality of all men, but also that of the rights of man, must be condemned as unbiological, since it makes too emphatic a distinction between men and other animals."⁴¹⁰

Since Russell's time this idea of the essential equality between men and animals has come to be taken more seriously than even the Social Darwinists evidently took it...

Thus a British Channel 4 television programme once seriously debated the question whether apes should have the same rights as human beings, and came to a positive conclusion...⁴¹¹ However, practical steps do not seem to have been made to this end, which shows that common sense still prevails against the march of "enlightened science" – at least some of the time...

Arthur Balfour, who became British Prime Minister in 1902, and issued his famous Declaration on a Homeland for the Jews in 1917, described universal evolutionism as follows: "A man - so far as natural science is able to teach us, is no longer... the Heaven-descended heir of all the ages. His very existence is an accident, his story a brief and transitory episode in the life of one of the meanest of the planets. Of the combination of causes which first converted a dead organic compound into the living progenitors of humanity, science indeed, as yet knows nothing. It is enough that from such beginnings famine, disease, and mutual slaughter, fit nurses of the future lords of creation, have gradually evolved after infinite travail, a race with conscience enough to feel that it is vile, and intelligent enough to know that it is insignificant. We survey the past, and see that its history is of blood and tears, of helpless blundering, of wild revolt, of stupid acquiescence, of empty aspirations. We sound the future, and learn that after a period, long compared with the individual life, but short indeed compared with the divisions of time open to our investigation, the energies of our system will decay, the glory of the sun will be dimmed, and the earth, tideless and inert, will no longer tolerate the race which has for a moment disturbed its solitude. Man will go down into the pit, and all his thoughts will perish..."⁴¹²

A truly melancholy philosophy... C.S. Lewis wrote: "By universal evolutionism I mean the belief that the very formula of universal process is from imperfect to perfect, from small beginnings to great endings, from the rudimentary to the elaborate, the belief which makes people find it natural to think that morality springs from savage taboos, adult sentiment from infantile sexual maladjustments, thought from instinct, mind from matter, organic from inorganic,

⁴¹⁰ Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 753.

⁴¹¹ Cf. See Joanna Bourke, *What it Means to be Human*, London: Virago, 2011.

⁴¹² Balfour, *The Foundations of Belief*, 1895, pp. 30-31; in Wilson, *The Victorians*, London: Hutchinson, 2002, p. 557.

cosmos from chaos. This is perhaps the deepest habit of mind in the contemporary world. It seems to me immensely implausible, because it makes the general course of nature so very unlike those parts of nature we can observe. You remember the old puzzle as to whether the owl came from the egg or the egg from the owl. The modern acquiescence in universal evolutionism is a kind of optical illusion, produced by attending exclusively to the owl's emergence from the egg. We are taught from childhood to notice how the perfect oak grows from the acorn and to forget that the acorn itself was dropped by a perfect oak. We are reminded constantly that the adult human being was an embryo, never that the life of the embryo came from two adult human beings. We love to notice that the express engine of today is the descendant of the 'Rocket'; we do not equally remember that the 'Rocket' springs not from some even more rudimentary engine, but from something much more perfect and complicated than itself - namely, a man of genius. The obviousness or naturalness which most people seem to find in the idea of emergent evolution thus seems to be a pure hallucination..."⁴¹³

⁴¹³ Lewis, "Is Theology Poetry?" in *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses*, New York: Macmillan, 1949.

26. THE TRIUMPH OF ENGLISH LIBERALISM

By the middle of the nineteenth century, after their triumph in the revolutions of 1789, 1830 and 1848, the bourgeoisie settled into a comfortable rhythm in which a non-revolutionary kind of liberalism was the norm in politics, and a non-atheistic, but at the same time vaguely Christian kind of ecumenism was the norm in religion.

The dominant power in Europe was England. The 1850s saw England at her peak from an external, material point of view. Her navies ruled the seas; her trade and industry was far greater than any other country's; and while revolutions periodically broke out on the continent, in England things remained remarkably stable. The nearest that the English ever had to a large-scale revolutionary movement of the workers was Chartism; but the Chartists refrained from violence, confining themselves to huge protests and the handing in of petitions (which were ignored); and after 1848 even these faded away – together with strikes, which came to be frowned upon even by union leaders.

"The English proletariat", concluded Engels in 1858, "is becoming more and more bourgeois".

"What impressed European liberals," writes Evans, "was the ability of the British political system to avoid revolution through timely concessions to liberal demands."⁴¹⁴ As Jacques Barzun writes: "This knack of judging when and how things must change without upsetting the apple cart was painfully acquired by the English over the centuries. They were long reputed the ungovernable people. But fatigue caught up at last and a well-rooted anti-intellectualism helped to keep changes unsystematic and under wraps. Forms, titles, décor remain while different actions occur beneath them; visual stability maintains confidence. It was the knack of rising above principle, the reward of shrewd inconsistency."⁴¹⁵

The Germans were especially taken by the ability of the English political system to combine freedom with stability, individualism with solidarity, power with prosperity (for the few), the gradual extension of civil rights with traditional deference to title and rank, science and progress with morality and religion. The German encyclopaedist Carl Welcker called it "the most glorious creation of God and nature and simultaneously humanity's most admirable work of art". "The brand-new field of linguistic scholarship had revealed that there were distinct groups of languages in Europe. Since English clearly belonged to the *Germanic* group, it was claimed that some timeless affinity existed between the Germans and the English. In the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century, it was common for the English and the Germans to write about each other as *cousins*. This led some Germans to believe that Anglo-Saxon liberty was in fact an ancient *Germanic* idea, not some foreign, western imposition like those the French (and indeed the Romans) had tried to bolt on Germany.

⁴¹⁴ Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

⁴¹⁵ Barzun, *From Dawn to Decadence*, New York: Perennial, 2000, p. 529.

"Hegel himself mused on the possibility that *World History* would next be revealed in the *Nordic principle of the Germanic peoples* as a sea-going, colonial *Empire of the Germans (Reich der Germanen)*, by which he meant an alliance of Protestant Germany and England.

"This wasn't just a philosopher's dream. It obsessed one of the most politically influential Germans on the planet. Albert of Saxe-Coburg, Prince Consort of Britain's Queen Victoria (herself, of course, of German family) was tireless in pursuit of what was called the *Coburg Plan*. Backed by King Leopold of Belgium among others, Albert and his German advisers proposed that Prussia should first reform along British constitutional lines, then unite all of Germany, which in the process would become (as Victoria put it) *a most useful ally* for Britain."⁴¹⁶

German Anglophilia reached its peak in 1856, with the engagement of Victoria and Albert's daughter Victoria to Frederick, second in line to the throne of Prussia. Bismarck was annoyed by this "stupid admiration of the average German for Lords and Guineas, the Anglomania of parliament, of the newspapers, of sportsmen, of landlords and of presiding judges".⁴¹⁷ But he would get his revenge: largely through his own successful policies of "blood and iron"; German Anglophilia would soon turn to Anglophobia...

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Why was England able to avoid the continual upheavals that we see in contemporary France and on the continent? One factor enabling the country to combine relative freedom in governance with stability was undoubtedly the authorities' ability to use the improved methods of communication, especially the railways, to concentrate the power of a greatly increased police force against troublemakers more quickly than on the continent. For example, 80,000 new constables were quickly created and deployed at the peak of the Chartist riots.

Again, the unprecedentedly large emigration to America and the White Dominions (in the case of Australia, of course, this "emigration" of convicts was compulsory) served as a safety-valve to expel the desperately poor and potentially rebellious (especially the Irish).

A third factor was that the lower middle classes, though poor, were getting richer, and so tended to support the existing system. They needed the patronage of the rich, and looked down on the proletarians below them, whose desperation they feared. The rulers took this into account, and so were able to introduce just enough reforms to maintain stability without creating what would be from a liberal point of view an intolerably authoritarian state.

This attitude was shared by both the main tendencies in English political life. The distinction between conservatives and liberals in England had its roots in the rivalry between Tories and Whigs in the late seventeenth century, and was

⁴¹⁶ James Hawes, *The Shortest History of Germany*, Devon: Old Street Publishing, 2018, pp. 97-98.

⁴¹⁷ Hawes, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

consolidated by the French revolution. Broadly speaking, Conservatives were in favour of monarchy, the Church, the Empire, patriotism, hierarchy, traditional mores and the countryside, while the liberals were in favour of freedom and democracy (for the middle classes), human rights, laissez-faire economics, internationalism and middle-class Victorian values. The July Days revolution in 1830 in France, and the First Reform Act of 1832 in Britain guaranteed that the nineteenth century would be a liberal, bourgeois century, while the repeal of the Corn Laws guaranteed that conservatives would forever be trying to slow down, but not reverse, the liberal revolution. And since most of the leading liberals were themselves aristocrats and leading land-owners, this meant that there was an implicit agreement on what was politically possible between the two parties.

Liberalism in England was represented above all by William Gladstone, while conservatism, which had gone into temporary eclipse after the Corn Laws debate split their party, was revived by Gladstone's rival and personal enemy, Benjamin Disraeli. However, there was not a big distance between Gladstone's Liberals and Disraeli's Conservatives. For it was Disraeli who, stealing Gladstone's clothes, introduced a significant broadening of the franchise in his Second Reform Act of 1867, a process completed for men in 1884. (The First Reform Act of 1832 had enfranchised only the bourgeois middle classes.) This ensured a remarkable degree of continuity between Conservative and Liberal governments – in domestic, if not in foreign policy.

Political stability was further enhanced by the two-party, first-past-the-post political system provided for a relatively stable, non-violent alternation of conservative and liberal governments until the socialist Labour Party more or less took the place of the liberals in the 1920s.

Disraeli's motto was "One Nation Conservatism", by which he meant, not what it means now, that is, the wooing of the centre ground in British politics, but the uniting of the upper classes, the landowning aristocrats, with the workers into one patriotic conservative entity bound together by a very imperial patriotism and a distaste for the cosmopolitan liberalism represented by Gladstone and the urban liberals. He believed that his Conservative party did more for the workers than the Liberals.

And he had a case, if we consider the string of welfare legislation passed by Disraeli's government in the mid-1870s. Indeed, in the judgement of David Starkey, it was Disraeli's wooing of the workers in this way that guaranteed the electoral dominance of the Conservatives until the early 1960s.

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It was to give a theoretical underpinning to this concept of liberalism that John Stuart Mill wrote his famous essay *On Liberty*, - produced in the same epochal year of 1859 as *The Origin of Species*. It remains to this day the most elegant and influential defence of English liberalism.

Mill admired Tocqueville, and shared his hatred of “the tyranny of the majority”. To protect society against this tyranny he proposed a single “very simple” principle which would place a limit on the ability of the state to interfere in the life of the individual: “The object of this essay is to assert one very simple principle, as entitled to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control, whether the means to be used by physical force in the form of legal penalties or the moral coercion of public opinion. That principle is that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinion of others, to do so would be wise or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him, but not for compelling him or visiting him with any evil in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to someone else. The only part of the conduct of anyone or which it is amenable to society is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.”⁴¹⁸

Mill asserted that this “Liberty Principle” or “Harm Principle” applied only to people in “the maturity of their faculties”, not to children or to “those backward states of society in which the race itself may be considered as in its nonage.”⁴¹⁹ For “Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved through free and equal discussion”.⁴²⁰

This qualification provided a neat justification for the spread of the British Empire among the pagan nations; and in general, in spite of the fact that Mill was concerned above all to protect the liberty of the individual against the tyranny of the majority and popular morality, his theory fitted in remarkably well with the prejudices of the majority in the England of his time. Thus the English prided themselves on their freedom of speech, and their giving refuge to political exiles of every kind, from Louis XVIII and Louis Napoleon to Herzen and Bakunin, Kossuth and Marx.⁴²¹ No tyranny of the majority here!

⁴¹⁸ Mill, *On Liberty*, London: Penguin Classics, 1974, pp. 68-69.

⁴¹⁹ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 69.

⁴²⁰ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 69.

⁴²¹ Dostoyevsky described how a Member of Parliament, Sir Edward Watkins, welcomed Don Carlos to England: “Of course, he himself knew that the newly arrived guest was the leading actor in a bloody and fratricidal war; but by meeting him he thereby satisfied his patriotic pride and served England to the utmost of his ability. Extending his hand to a blood-stained tyrant, in the name of England, and as a member of Parliament, he told him, as it were: ‘You are a despot, a tyrant, and yet you came to the land of freedom to seek refuge in it. This could have been expected: England receives everybody and is not afraid to give refuge to anyone: *entrée et sortie libres*. Be welcome’” (*The Diary of a Writer*, 1876, London: Cassell, part I, trans. Boris Brasol, pp. 262-263).

Mill provided a passionate defence of the widest possible freedom of thought and speech. "First," he argued, 'the opinion which it is attempted to suppress by authority may possibly be true. Those who desire to suppress it, of course, deny its truth; but they are not infallible. They have no authority to decide the question for all mankind and exclude every other person from the means of judging. To refuse a hearing to an opinion because they are sure that it is false is to assume that *their* certainty is the same thing as *absolute* certainty. All silencing of discussion is an assumption of infallibility."⁴²²

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

Mill anticipates this objection, writing: "Men and governments must act to the best of their ability. There is no such thing as absolute certainty, but there is assurance sufficient for the purposes of human life. We may, and must assume our opinions to be true for the guidance of our own conduct; and it is assuming no more when we forbid bad men to pervert society by the propagation of opinions which we regard as false and pernicious."⁴²³

But Mill will have none of this; it is only by allowing our opinion to be contested by those who think otherwise, he argues, that we come to know whether it is really deserving of confidence, and hence whether the opposite opinion should be censored. "The most intolerant of churches, the Roman Catholic Church, even at the canonization of a saint admits, and listens patiently to, a 'devil's advocate'. The holiest of men, it appears, cannot be admitted to posthumous honours until all that the devil could say against him is known and weighed."⁴²⁴

In practice, this means that no opinion should ever be censored; "the lists have to be kept open" in case someone appears who will expose the flaw in the accepted "truth". And this applies even if the dissenting opinion goes against one's most treasured and vital convictions concerning God or morality. For "however positive anyone's persuasion may be, not only of the falsity but of the pernicious consequences – not only of the pernicious consequences, but (to adopt expressions

⁴²² Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 77.

⁴²³ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 79.

⁴²⁴ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 81.

which I altogether condemn) the immorality and impiety of an opinion – yet if, in pursuance of that private judgement, though backed by the public judgement of his country or his contemporaries, he prevents the opinion from being heard in its defence, he assumes infallibility. And so far from the assumption being less objectionable or less dangerous because the opinion is called immoral or impious, this is the case of all others in which it is most fatal. These are exactly the occasions on which the men of one generation commit those dreadful mistakes which excite the astonishment and horror of posterity.”⁴²⁵ And then Mill cites the examples of Socrates and Jesus Christ, who, though the most admirable of men, became the victims of the censoriousness of their generation.

Mill’s most powerful argument in favour of complete liberty of speech – an argument expressed before him in More’s *Utopia* and Milton’s *Areopagitica* – is that it is only in an atmosphere of complete intellectual freedom that truth can be truly understood and become well rooted. “Truth gains more even by the errors of one who, with due study and preparation, thinks for himself than by the true opinions of those who only hold them because they do not suffer themselves to think. Not that it is solely, or chiefly, to form great thinkers that freedom of thinking is required. On the contrary, it is as much and even more indispensable to enable average human beings to attain the mental stature which they are capable of. There have been, and may again be, great individual thinkers in a general atmosphere of mental slavery. But there never has been, nor ever will be, in that atmosphere an intellectually active people.”⁴²⁶

Mill cites the Reformation, the late eighteenth-century in France and the early nineteenth-century in Germany as admirable periods of intellectual freedom. “In each, an old mental despotism had been thrown off, and no new one had yet taken its place. The impulse given at these three periods has made Europe what it now is. Every single improvement which has taken place either in the human mind or in institutions may be traced distinctly to one or other of them.”⁴²⁷

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

As for the Anglo-Saxon world, in the one-and-a-half centuries since Mill’s time, although it has attained a still greater degree of freedom of thought and speech

⁴²⁵ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 84.

⁴²⁶ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 91.

⁴²⁷ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 96.

than prevailed in those three epochs, yet it has been at the expense of the almost complete decay of traditional Christian belief and morality, something which Mills, though not a real Christian himself, would undoubtedly have been dismayed by...

The first step on this downward slope towards atheism, as Dostoyevsky perceived it, was, besides Darwin's *Origin of Species*, Renan's *Vie de Jesus* (1863), which argued against the Divinity of Christ. Neither of these books would have passed the censor in a Christian society, but both were widely read in a world ruled by Millsean liberalism. "Written in a lively and accessible prose, the *Vie de Jesus* became a *success de scandale*. It sold 168,000 copies by the end of 1864, and was soon translated into all the major European languages. The book's success, according to Saint-Beuve, was its appeal to what he called the 'large and indecisive floating mass of minds' – the religious disposition of most people in the nineteenth century who were 'neither believing nor disbelieving' in the Bible but accepted it as a source of moral values while they got on with the pursuit of their worldly happiness. Catholics attacked the book. Some Church leaders tried to get it banned. Others condemned its appearance as a mark of the decadent immorality of the [French Second] Empire's liberal culture and called for stricter censorship."⁴²⁸

Evidently, contrary to liberal dogma, freedom does *not* necessarily lead to truth...

Nor did the Truth incarnate ever claim that it would, declaring rather the reverse relationship, namely, that "ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8.32) – free in a spiritual, not a liberal sense. And part of the truth consists in the sober recognition that men's minds are fallen, and for much of the time do not even *want* the truth (II Thessalonians 2.10), so that if given complete freedom to say what they like, the result will be the falling away of society from truth into the abyss of destruction. And so "evil men and imposters will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (II Timothy 3.13) – which is exactly what we have seen happen as liberalism has swept the world... Against this horror the only strong defence, apart from "the pillar and ground of the truth" itself (I Timothy 3.15), the Church, is a right-believing king who will undertake to defend the truth and teach it to the masses: "But as for me, I was established as king by Him, upon Sion His holy mountain, proclaiming the commandment of the Lord" (Psalms 2.6). But the liberals were nothing if not anti-monarchists: if monarchs such as Queen Victoria or Emperor Louis Napoleon still existed, they were to shut up, silenced by the masks of constitutionalism...

As Timothy Snyder writes: "The core texts of liberal toleration, such as Milton's *Areopagitica* and Mill's *On Liberty*, take for granted that individuals will wish to know the truth. They contend that in the absence of censorship, truth will eventually emerge and be recognised as such. But even in democracies this may not always be true."⁴²⁹

⁴²⁸ Orlando Figes, *The Europeans*, London: Penguin, 2020, p. 268.

⁴²⁹ Snyder, "War is Peace", *Prospect*, November, 2004, p. 33.

In fact, in democracies *especially* this may not always be true. For the pressure to follow the majority opinion is greater in democracies than in monarchies, as is the power of demagoguery...

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

James Fitzjames Stephen, in his *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* (1873) pointed to another flaw in Mill's argument. Liberty was like fire, he said; it could be used for good and ill; to assume otherwise was naïve and dangerous. It was by no means certain that full freedom from interference by others would lead to greater searching for truth; it could just as easily lead to idleness and lack of interest in social affairs. Moreover, writes Gertrude Himmelfarth, "what disturbed him about Mill's doctrine was the possibility that its adoption would leave society impotent in those situations where there was a genuine need for social action. Implicit too was the possibility that the withdrawal of social sanctions against any particular belief or act would be interpreted as a sanctioning of that belief or act, a licence to do that which society could not prohibit."⁴³⁰

Stephen's argument was developed by Lord Devlin in *The Enforcement of Morals* (1968). "The occasion for Devlin's essay," writes Himmelfarth, "was the Report of the Wolfenden Commission recommending the legalization of homosexuality between consenting adults. Against the Commission's claim that private morality and immorality were 'not the law's business', Devlin argued that 'the suppression of vice is as much the law's business as the suppression of subversive activities; it is not more possible to define a sphere of private morality than it is to define private subversive activity.'"⁴³¹

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

⁴³⁰ Himmelfarth, in Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 40.

⁴³¹ Himmelfarth, in Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 41.

general a ponce exploits a prostitute no more than an impresario exploits an actress.”⁴³²

Mill justifies the prohibition of certain acts, such as public indecency, on the grounds that they “are a violation of good manners, ... coming thus within the category of offences against others”. And yet, as Jonathan Wolff points out, it is difficult to see how such a prohibition can be justified on the basis of the Harm Principle alone. For “what harm does ‘public indecency’ do? After all, Mill insists that mere offence is no harm. Here Mill, without being explicit, seems to allow customary morality to override his adherence to the Liberty Principle.

Few, perhaps, would criticize his choice of policy. But it is hard to see how he can render this consistent with his other views: indeed, he appears to make no serious attempt to do so. “Once we begin to consider examples of this kind we begin to understand that following Mill’s ‘once simple principle’ would lead to a society of a kind never seen before, and, perhaps, one which we would never wish to see...”⁴³³

And so, while Mills’ liberalism carefully sought to protect society both from the continental-style tyranny of one man, and from the American-style tyranny of the majority, it ended up delivering society into a series of tyrannies of *minorities*, which is best exemplified by the European Human Rights Act that is devastating Christian faith and morality in contemporary Britain. This should not surprise us; for liberalism is in essence a pagan doctrine, owing its origin more to fifth-century Athens than to any period of Christian history. Mills extolled the Liberty or Harm Principle not simply because it supposedly guaranteed freedom from tyranny and the triumph of truth, but because it fostered that ideal of the human being, vigorous, independent, unafraid of being different, even eccentric, which he found in Classical Greece.

Indeed, he openly rejected the ascetic, Christian ideal in favour of the pagan Athenian: “There is a different type of human excellence from the Calvinistic: a conception of humanity as having its nature bestowed on it for other purposes than merely to be abnegated. ‘Pagan self-assertion’ is one of the elements of human worth, as well as ‘Christian self-denial’. There is a Greek ideal of self-development, which the Platonic and Christian ideal of self-government blends with, but does not supersede. It may be better to be a John Knox than an Alcibiades, but it is better to be a Pericles than either; nor would a Pericles, if we had one in these days, be without anything good which belonged to John Knox...”⁴³⁴

⁴³² Devlin, in Jonathan Wolff, *An Introduction to Political Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 141.

⁴³³ Wolff, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-141. For the difficulties created for Mills’ theory by public indecency, see several articles in *Philosophy Now*, issue 76, November-December, 2009.

⁴³⁴ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 127.

27. THE RISORGIMENTO RESUMED: CAVOUR AND GARIBALDI

The revival of the Italian revolution after its initial failure in the early part of the century was owing especially to King Victor Emmanuel II of Piedmont and his Prime Minister, Count Camillo Cavour. Cavour, writes Sir Llewellyn Woodward, "was as remarkable a man in his way as Bismarck. In some respects indeed Cavour was even more remarkable since he had to do his work without the powerful support of instruments like the Prussian Army and bureaucracy. Cavour was born in 1810; he began his career in the army but soon left it and occupied himself with large-scale agriculture. He founded a newspaper, *Il Risorgimento*, in 1847, but the confusion and failure of the revolutionary movement turned him against complete democracy and strengthened his view that economic reform was a pre-condition of Italian unity.

"Cavour became Prime Minister of Piedmont in 1852; he died in 1861. Before his death he had modernized the Piedmontese state, secured the expulsion of the Austrians from Lombardy and persuaded the other Italian principalities, including (with Garibaldi's help or rather, dangerously independent initiative) the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, to accept a united Italy under the house of Savoy. Cavour never won the support of Mazzini, who remained an irreconcilable republican and died in exile in London, but he managed to use, cajole and outwit Garibaldi. Cavour had to begin by bringing together moderate opinion in Piedmont in a centre party with a programme of economic reform. He continued to reassure this moderate opinion by his rejection of Mazzini's revolutionary methods and, at the same time, by putting into effect long necessary internal reforms. These reforms lost him the support of the Church. The attitude of Pius IX to all forms of liberalism made it almost impossible for Cavour or anyone else wanting sensible change not to be anti-clerical; the Pope's refusal to surrender his temporal sovereignty forced Italian nationalists into an absolute opposition. In any case the financial and political privileges of the Church in Piedmont were not compatible with the organization of a modern state. One in every 214 Piedmontese was an ecclesiastic (including the religious orders); the figure for catholic Austria and Belgium was one in 500 or 600. The Church had its own courts and a total control of education. The archbishop of Turin, with full papal approval, refused to give up any of the privileges or endowments of the Church.

"Cavour was not anti-Catholic; to the end of his life he hoped that he might persuade the hierarchy to accept the principle of 'a free church in a free state', but no compromise could be reached with Pius IX and, after Cavour's death, clerical refusal to come to terms not only with Italian nationalism but with the ideas and assumptions of modern society reached its climax."⁴³⁵

The other leader who revived the Italian dream was Napoleon III, Emperor of the French. But of course Napoleon had helped crush the revolution of 1848. So why this *volte-face*?

⁴³⁵ Woodward, *Prelude to Modern Europe 1815-1914*, London: Methuen, 1972, pp. 155-156.

Apart from a desire for glory, Napoleon was drawn to Italy by his childhood memories of Rome. "As a youth," writes David Gilmour, "he considered himself an Italian patriot, planning an insane plot in Rome in 1830".⁴³⁶

After the revolution of 1848 Napoleon fled to England, staying until he was able to return and seize power in 1851. For "the British sense of liberty extended to the protection of revolutionaries against foreign governments. Mazzini, Marx and Engels, Louis Blanc, Ledru-Rollin and Herzen all used London as their propaganda base. In 1858, after an attempt by the Italian revolutionary Felice Orsini to assassinate Napoleon III, the French government demanded measures against Orsini's collaborators in Britain, where the bombs he had thrown at the emperor's carriage had been made. Palmerston's government introduced a bill to make conspiracies to murder outside Britain a felony in British law. But the law was defeated in the House of Commons, which passed a vote of censure against the government for caving in to Napoleon, forcing Palmerston to resign."⁴³⁷

Napoleon's love of Italy – or had he been influenced by the British love of liberty? – compelled him to try and save Orsini from the guillotine, "and when this proved politically impossible – Orsini's bombs had missed their target but killed eight bystanders – he asked the Italians to appeal to him in a public letter to support the patriotic cause".⁴³⁸

But he also had darker reasons of a less personal nature. During the plebiscite that elected him President of the Republic in December, 1851, Napoleon had been supported, somewhat surprisingly, by the leadership of the Grand Orient. The Masons' motivation in backing Napoleon was complex. On the one hand, they feared the real radical Freemasons, such as Ledru-Rollin, who with Marx and Herzen had marched against Napoleon. On the other hand, they wanted to weaken the monarchical powers of Austria and the Papacy in accordance with the plans of anti-monarchist and anti-Christian Masonry.

And so Napoleon, in payment of his debt to the Masons, decided to support the Italian revolution against the same Pope...⁴³⁹ In 1859, writes Philip Bobbitt, he "concluded a secret agreement with Cavour, the Piedmontese prime minister, providing that the kingdom of Piedmont would be extended into a Kingdom of Upper Italy to include Lombardy, Venetia, and the Romagna. France would receive Nice and Savoy. A Kingdom of Central Italy, composed of Tuscany, Parma, Modena, Umbria, and the Marches, would be given to Napoleon's cousin, Prince Napoleon. As with the French demands against the Ottoman Empire, French intrigue had singled out another vulnerable state-nation: the Austrian empire.

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

⁴³⁶ Gilmour, *The Pursuit of Italy*, London: Penguin, 2012, p. 182.

⁴³⁷ Figes, *The Europeans*, London: Penguin, 2020, p. 334.

⁴³⁸ Gilmour, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

⁴³⁹ Jasper Ridley, *The Freemasons*, London: Constable, 1999, pp. 208-210.

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

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

"Piedmont annexed the Duchies and the Legations and promptly organized a plebiscite, based on universal suffrage, held in March 1860. The Piedmontese king, Victor Emmanuel, took over the new territories by decree. Elections to a single Italian parliament were held in Piedmont-Sardinia, Lombardy, the Duchies, and the Legations. The first task of this legislature was to ratify the annexations to Piedmont as well as those to France. The French annexations of Nice and Savoy had been similarly endorsed by local plebiscites." ⁴⁴⁰

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At this point the most swashbuckling hero of Italian reunification, Giuseppe Garibaldi, re-enters the story. A man of astonishing courage and charisma, the veteran already of many uprisings, revered almost as a god by thousands around the world, his and Mazzini's refusal to give in after the failure of 1848 had kept the cause alive.

But there was a blasphemous element to his movement, which he himself may or may not have taken seriously, but which was ominous for the future of nationalism in general.

Thus Zamoyksi writes of a decorative poster produced by the Garibaldini in 1864 headed "The Doctrine of Giuseppe Garibaldi": "This opens with the words: 'In the name of the Father of the Nation', shamelessly substituting Garibaldi for God, and the service of Italy for Catholic practice. The catechetical question of how many Garibaldis there are elicits the answer that there is only one Garibaldi, but that there are three distinct persons in him: 'The Father of the Nation, the Son of the People, and the Spirit of Liberty'. Garibaldi was, of course, made man in order to save Italy, and to remind her sons of the ten commandments, which are:

⁴⁴⁰ Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles*, London: Penguin, 2002, pp. 182-183.

*I am Giuseppe Garibaldi, your General.
 Thou shalt not be a soldier of the General's in vain.
 Thou shalt remember to keep the National Feast-days.
 Thou shalt honour thy Motherland.
 Thou shalt not kill, except those who bear arms against Italy.
 Thou shalt not fornicate, unless it be to harm the enemies of Italy.
 Thou shalt not steal, other than St. Peter's pence in order to use it for the redemption of
 Rome and Venice.
 Thou shalt not bear false witness like the priests do in order to sustain their temporal
 power.
 Thou shalt not wish to invade the motherland of others.
 Thou shalt not dishonour thy Motherland.*

"The poster contains an 'Act of Faith' to be recited daily, as well as an act of contrition for those who have transgressed the commandments and offended the Father. There is also a travesty of the Lord's Prayer which contains such gems as 'Give us today our daily cartridges'."⁴⁴¹

Here we see that the "holy madness" of early nineteenth century nationalism had become distinctly unholy without ceasing to be mad...

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Now the Italian revolution was supported by the British. This was partly because of Britain's traditional anti-authoritarianism and support of liberal nationalism⁴⁴², and partly from complicated considerations of *Realpolitik*. Thus while the British helped Napoleon and Cavour in the north, in the south they supported Garibaldi as a counter-weight to the northern powers. (Garibaldi was anti-French because the French had conquered his native Nice.) For perhaps, they wondered, Napoleon, in spite of his traditional friendliness towards the English (they had, after all, been allies in the Crimean War), was becoming the new European hegemon...

And so "when in 1860 France launched the world's most powerful warship, the ironclad *Gloire*, Britain prepared for the worst. Huge fortifications – 'Palmerston's follies' – were hastily built to defend England and the empire, with the biggest forts protecting Portsmouth and Plymouth in case of a surprise French invasion. An even bigger warship than the *Gloire*, HMS *Warrior*, was quickly launched, the first large warship to be built wholly of iron, and a naval arms race began...."⁴⁴³

"London did not want to see Napoleon dominant in Italy, so in August 1860 the Royal Navy permitted Garibaldi to land a tiny army in Sicily, and then invade Naples. There were some English volunteers with him – merely tourists visiting Mt. Etna, announced Palmerston with characteristic effrontery. The small Italian

⁴⁴¹ Zamoyski, *Holy Madness*, pp. 408-409.

⁴⁴² Thus one of Gladstone's friends declared: "I side with those who are at war with Russia and Rome, with earthly and spiritual despotisms." (Tombs, *op. cit.*, p. 57!)

⁴⁴³ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 571-572.

states collapsed, and the British encouraged the Sardinian government, under King Victor Emmanuel and his liberal and pro-British prime minister, Cavour, to unite the whole peninsula as a single kingdom of Italy. This was a cheap success for Britain and a boost to its people's self-confidence; a popular cause had triumphed and the possibility of French dominion had receded, with Britain using only diplomatic influence and a peaceful naval presence. Garibaldi declared that 'England was the representative of God' in the battle against 'tyranny and evil priests.' Italy, said Gladstone, had adopted 'the English way'. The English reciprocated enthusiastically. Garibaldi visited England in 1864, and was feted by all parties and sections of the population. Thomas Cook began taking tourist parties to Italy. Both the Foreign Office in Whitehall and the Free Trade Hall in Manchester were built in Italianate style..."⁴⁴⁴

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

⁴⁴⁴ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 571-572.

28. THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

Only in the USA did the increasingly global movement for the abolition of slavery or serfdom not only not advance, but go backwards. Thus in 1808 the importation of slaves from Africa was banned by federal law – but then Virginia, exploiting its rights as a semi-sovereign state, promptly stepped in to export slaves to the south. Slavery was extremely profitable for the southern slave-owners, who exported raw cotton from their slave plantations to the Lancashire mills, from where the British exported the finished articles at competitive prices around the world (thereby destroying the Indian textile industry). Nor did it pay to treat the slaves even a little better than very cruelly. For, as the famous black abolitionist Frederick Douglass (1818-1895) said: “Beat and cuss your slave. Keep him hungry and spiritless, and he will follow the chain of his master like a dog. But feed and clothe him well, - work him immoderately, - surround him with physical comfort, - and dreams of freedom intrude. Give him a *bad* master, and he aspires to a *good* master; give him a *good* master, and he aspires to be his *own* master.”

“Yet the slaves on the whole did not try to alter their hated condition. They knew their injuries, but they also knew their weakness. It is a striking fact that in the half-century before the Civil War there were no slave risings of any great account, and those that did occur – the abortive Denmark Vesey conspiracy at Charleston in 1822, the Nat Turner rebellion in Virginia in 1831, in which some sixty whites were murdered – owed their notoriety chiefly to the terror they inspired in the master race. From time to time there would be outbreaks in solitary plantations; or a white family might be slain, suddenly, by its slaves, with poison or knives. These were isolated events, leading to nothing, meaning nothing, except that in one place, at one particular time, matters had reached a crisis point. Nevertheless, the slave-owners could not afford to take such affairs coolly. They too knew insecurity: they dared not trust the people they lived among. Periodically something would terrify them into renewed excesses of cruelty. After the Turner rebellion they hanged not only the murderers but also scores of the innocent...

“... Guilty slave-owners could not believe that their victims would not take a horrible revenge at the first opportunity... So it was emotionally very difficult to contemplate emancipating the blacks; and as the number of slaves increased, so did the difficulty.

“Not that the economic argument was neglected. Slavery meant power and prosperity for the planter class; a huge amount of capital had been invested in it; and no white believed that the crops of the South could be grown and harvested except by slave-labour. Free blacks, it was assumed, would abandon the cotton-fields, or insist on working only for themselves, as happened in the British sugar islands after emancipation in 1833. And then what would happen to the planter and his family?

“In these circumstances there was no chance that the majority of voters in any Southern state would support abolition. Even enlightened Virginia, after long and

anguished debate, rejected the idea in 1832. Private acts of manumission (never very numerous) came to be frowned on as irresponsible. What right had a man to undermine his neighbour's safety and prosperity merely to gratify his private conscience? Besides, a free Negro population was anomalous only in the slave South, it was unsettling to discipline. Consequently, in state after state, manumission was outlawed, and the status of the free black was reduced. In this way the South bound itself anew to slavery and to the proposition that slavery was to be eternal. Thereby, Southerners excluded the possibility that black servitude could be ended peaceably, an exclusion that they were well able to enforce. They also denied that it would be ended violently. This they were not so able to command..."⁴⁴⁵

Now the difference in social structure and mores between the Northern and Southern states, and the hostility of northern abolitionists to the southern slave-owning culture, tended towards the creation of different national consciousnesses in North and South. For states can create nations, and nations - states. As Norman Davies writes, in the nineteenth century nationalism "came in two opposing variants. One of them, state or civil nationalism, was sponsored by the ruling establishments of existing states. The other, popular or ethnic nationalism, was driven by the demands of communities living within those states and against the policy of those governments. There are as many theories on the essence of nations as there are theorists. But the essential qualities would seem to be spiritual in nature. 'The nation is a soul,' wrote Renan, 'a spiritual principle. [It] consists of two things. One is the common legacy of rich memories from the past. The other is the present consensus, the will to live together.'"⁴⁴⁶ By these criteria, the South of the United States was on the way to becoming a separate nation... However, the 1848 revolutions in Europe, and the wars of Italian and German unification, showed how difficult it was to define a nation, and how destructive could be the wars and revolutions started for the sake of reuniting the "nation" in a single, ethnically and culturally homogeneous state.

Clearly, there was much uniting the Northern and Southern American States in terms of language, culture, religion and race. In his famous Gettysburg Address Abraham Lincoln emphasized that the United States was a single nation, using the word "nation" five times.⁴⁴⁷ But if one group of people feels itself to constitute a different nation from another group, this psychological fact alone creates an important difference. Thus insofar as the Southerners *felt* themselves to be a different nation, they *were* a different nation. And so, if the revolution of 1776 had been justified in the name of the liberty of the new nation called America, although it had previously been one nation with Britain, then that of the Southerners in 1861 was no less justified, in their view - not least because, as they argued, the Constitution of the United States permitted the secession of individual States.⁴⁴⁸

⁴⁴⁵ Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA*, London: Penguin, 2019, pp. 282-283, 289.

⁴⁴⁶ Davies, *Europe*, London: Pimlico, 1997, pp. 812, 813.

⁴⁴⁷ Renan in David Reynolds, *America, Empire of Liberty: A New History*, London: Penguin, p. 205.

⁴⁴⁸ James Ostrowski, "An Analysis of President Lincoln's Legal Arguments against Secession". Paper delivered at the academic conference on secession-, "Secession, State, and Economy", April, 1995.

"Each side," writes J.M. Roberts, "accused the other of revolutionary designs and behaviour. It is very difficult not to agree with both of them. The heart of the Northern position, as Lincoln saw, was that democracy should prevail, a claim assuredly of potentially limitless revolutionary implication. In the end, what the North achieved was indeed a social revolution in the South. On the other side, what the South was asserting in 1861 (and three more states joined the Confederacy after the first shots were fired) was that it had the same right to organize its life as had, say, revolutionary Poles or Italians in Europe."⁴⁴⁹

The truth seems to be that the South was indeed a nation, but the Civil War destroyed the possibility of its becoming a *nation-state*, accelerating the process of making all the states a single nation, in spite of resentments that last to the present day.

Dominic Lieven writes: "William Gladstone, then the Chancellor of the Exchequer, commented in 1862 that Confederate independence seemed assured not just by the South's military victories but above all because the Confederacy had proved itself to be a true nation. His statement was reasonable. Over three quarters of white male Southerners of military age served in the armed forces, and a third of them died, an exceptionally high level of commitment by any comparison. The myths and memories of war create nations. Had the Confederacy survived on the battlefield, the immense sacrifices made by Southerners in its cause would have guaranteed the consolidation of a Southern nation-state for generations. Instead, the Confederacy was destroyed in one of the most important and brilliant [*sic*] examples of nation-killing in history. Above all defeat was owed to the massive mobilization and intelligent direction of Northern military and economic power and to the hold of American nationalism on the Northern imagination. No amount of military or economic power would have sufficed to destroy the Confederacy unless backed by the willingness of Northern young men to die in massive numbers and far from home in the cause of an American nation that they believed must include all the territories of the Union and would stretch from ocean to ocean..."⁴⁵⁰

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The war arose because of a quarrel over whether the new western states should be allowed to have slaves or not. Ian Rimmer writes: "After the war with Mexico ended in 1848... expansion into the new territories to the west began, but disputes about whether they should become free or slave were fierce, and at times violent. Various compromises and short-term fixes gave some stability but the ultimate problem was crystallized by a speech on 16 June 1858 in Springfield, Illinois. It was given by the newly formed Republican Party's candidate for the Illinois senate seat. He argued: 'A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently, half slave and half free. I do not expect

⁴⁴⁹ Roberts, *History of the World*, Oxford: Helicon, 1992, p. 620.

⁴⁵⁰ Lieven, *Towards the Flame: Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia*, London: Allen Lane, 2015, p. 22.

the Union to be dissolved. I do not expect this house to fall. But I do expect it will cease to be divided.' The candidate's name was Abraham Lincoln."⁴⁵¹

When Lincoln was elected president in 1860, the Southern states began to secede from the Union, beginning with South Carolina and followed by Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas. In April, 1861 the South Carolinians captured the Union stronghold of Fort Sumter, near Charleston, and the war had begun.

In the early period of the war, in accordance with his inaugural address in March, 1861, Lincoln did not talk about slavery: "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists." And again he said: "If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that."

"Lincoln believed he wasn't able to challenge state-sanctioned servitude under the Constitution, which kept the important border slave states of Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland and Delaware loyal to the Union."⁴⁵²

And so his professed justification for war in this period was not the liberation of the slaves but the reunification of North and South - and "democracy", by which Americans meant, in Hugh Brogan's words, "the ability to go west, to run your own life, to make your own future, to worship your own God, to bring up your children in your own way, to speak your mind. The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and eighty-odd years of political experience not only reinforced, deepened and broadened the commitment to freedom, they had incarnated it in the United States, in a nation. It was not, perhaps, true that American freedom could not have survived the defeat of the North in the Civil War; but the great majority of Northerners, from Lincoln downwards, believed it to be true. Everything they valued in life seemed to be at risk with the Union. No wonder they fought..."⁴⁵³

A series of brilliant Confederate victories in 1862 persuaded Lincoln to turn a war for American democracy into a war for black emancipation. On January 1, 1863, nearly two years into the Civil War, he signed an Emancipation Declaration freeing four million black slaves. This, he judged, would win him the support of White abolitionists in the North, persuade Northern Blacks to join the army - and incite a rebellion of black slaves in the South.

He was right. "In the North they thronged about the recruiting-offices, waiting for the call. In the South they preserved their usual calm appearance before their masters, but wherever Union armies drew near they ran away in enormous numbers. Soon every federal unit in the South was followed by a straggling crowd of escaped slaves. They had to be looked after, which was a nuisance; but they

⁴⁵¹ Rimmer, "Lincoln's Civil War", *All About History*, p. 28.

⁴⁵² Rimmer, *op. cit.*

⁴⁵³ Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA*, London: Penguin, 2019, p. 319.

were also put to work, as cooks, drivers, navvies. It was not long before voices were heard suggesting that they might make soldiers..."⁴⁵⁴

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There has been much debate over Lincoln's real motives and beliefs. He famously said that he did not want to be tarred with the brush of abolitionism, and Michael Hutcheson argues that he was not a real abolitionist, but simply a good politician: "Although there was some opposition to slavery in the country, the government was willing to concede everything the South wanted regarding slavery to keep it in the Union. Given all these facts, the idea that the South seceded to protect slavery is as absurd as the idea that Lincoln fought the war to end slavery. Lincoln himself said in a famous letter after the war began that his sole purpose was to save the Union, and not to either save or end slavery; that if he could save the Union without freeing a single slave, he would. Nothing could be clearer.

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

"Only after the Union had suffered two years of crushing defeats in battle did Lincoln resolve to 'emancipate' the slaves, and only as a war measure, a military tactic, not for moral or humanitarian purposes. He admitted this, remarking, 'We must change tactics or lose the game.' He was hoping, as his original draft of the document shows, that a slave uprising would occur, making it harder for Southerners to continue the war. His only interest in freeing the slaves was in forcing the South to remain in the Union. His Emancipation Proclamation was denounced by Northerners, Southerners and Europeans alike for its absurdity and hypocrisy; for, it only 'freed' the slaves in the seceded states — where he could not reach them — and kept slavery intact in the North and the border states — where he could have freed them at once."⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵⁴ Brogan, *op. cit.*, pp. 319-320.

⁴⁵⁵ Hutcheson, "The Terrible Truth about Abraham Lincoln and the Confederate War", *America, Snap out of it!*, <https://snapoutofitamerica.wordpress.com/2014/01/20/the-terrible-truth-about-abraham-lincoln-and-the-confederate-war/amp/>.

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

"Most Southerners held the opposite, believing that unless the inequality of blacks was legally enforced, their own way of life would be overthrown. Some Southern ideologues argued fervently that slavery was a guarantee of freedom, not only the freedom of the whites to live as they did and to organise the Southern states as they were organised but the freedom of the blacks also, since slavery protected the blacks from the economic harshness suffered by the labouring poor in the Northern factory system. Books were written to argue and demonstrate the case, and Southern polemicists advocated unashamedly with their Northern opponents. There is no doubt that it was believed also, since the spectacle of happy blacks living under paternal care on well-run plantations did seem to support the idea of slavery as a sort of welfare system."⁴⁵⁶

Thus Senator James Hammond of South Carolina said that the "difference between us is that our slaves are hired for life and well compensated, there is no starvation, no begging, no want of employment among our people, and not too much employment either. Yours are hired by the day, not cared for, and scantily compensated, which may be proved in the most painful manner, at any hour in any street in any of your large towns. Why you meet more beggars in one day, on any single street of the city of New York, than you would meet in a lifetime in the whole South."⁴⁵⁷

Hammond had a point, and other observers favourably compared the situation of black slaves in America to that of some white English workers of the time. Thus the British socialist Robert Owen noted: "Bad and unwise as American slavery is and must continue to be, the white slavery in the manufactories of England was at this unrestricted period far worse than the house slaves which I afterwards saw in the West Indies and in the United States, and in many respects, especially as regards health, food and clothing, the latter were much better provided for than were those oppressed and degraded children and work-people in the home manufactories of Great Britain."⁴⁵⁸

Nevertheless, however bad the condition of workers in England, they were not *slaves* - and their working conditions did improve over time with the introduction of welfare legislation and generally increasing levels of prosperity. Moreover, there were real abuses associated only with the slavery culture of the South - for example, the very liberal use of the whip by slave-owners, their sexual abuse of black slave women, and the fact that they had the power to break up slave families

⁴⁵⁶ Keegan, *The American Civil War*, London: Hutchinson, 2009, pp. 31-32.

⁴⁵⁷ Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

⁴⁵⁸ Owen, in A.N. Wilson, *The Victorians*, p. 89.

by selling the breadwinner alone and keeping his family (this was the theme of the famous novel of the time, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*).

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

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

"Of course, personhood was not straightforwardly located in an identifiably 'human' face and figure. For one thing, both were highly racialized. Indeed, the prosecutor could just as easily have gestured towards Amy to illustrate the point that she was *not* a 'natural person'. This was exactly what racists did, on a routine basis. Pro-slavery arguments often introduced the idea of polygeny, or the view that Africans and Europeans had evolved from two entirely different species. As physician Josiah Nott put it in a lecture given in 1844, the 'Caucasian and Negro differ in their Anatomical and Physiological character' and these differences 'could not be produced by climate and other physical causes'. There were, he insisted, 'several species of the human race'; these 'species differ in perfection of their moral and intellectual endowments'; and 'a law of nature' was 'opposed to the mingling of white and black races'. He ended his lecture by quoting Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man*: 'One truth is clear: WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT'. In other words, slavery was 'natural': the 'black races' were 'naturally' property, like many other species. Or, as William Harper put it in the mid-nineteenth century, just as it was right and proper for humans to 'exercise dominion over the beasts of the field', so too, it was 'as much in the order of nature, that men should enslave each other.'"⁴⁵⁹

The slave-owners of the Southern States were quite explicit in declaring that whites were naturally superior to blacks. Thus Annette Gordon-Reed writes: "The founding documents of the Confederacy [the Southern States], under which the purported citizens of that entity lived, just as Americans live under the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, announced that African slavery would form the 'cornerstone' of the country they would create after winning the Civil War. In 1861, a few weeks before the war began, Alexander Stephens, the vice president of the Confederacy, put things plainly: 'The new constitution has put at rest, forever, all the agitating questions relating to our peculiar institution – African slavery as it exists amongst us – the proper status of the negro in our form of civilization. This was the immediate cause of the late rupture and present revolution. Jefferson in his forecast had anticipated this and as the "rock upon which the old Union would split." He was right... The prevailing ideas entertained by him and most of the leading statesmen of the time of the formation of the old constitution, were that the enslavement of the African was in violation of the laws of nature; that it was wrong in principle, socially, morally, and politically... Those ideas, however, were fundamentally wrong. They rested upon the assumption of the equality of races. This was an error. Our new government is founded on exactly the opposite idea; its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery – subordination to the superior race – is his natural and normal condition.'"⁴⁶⁰

While there can be no doubt that the North had a strong moral case in opposing the South's supposed "great truth", it does not follow that the Yankees were justified in the means they employed. Moreover, by no means all the southerners were racists, and some had noble motives in resisting the invasion of their

⁴⁵⁹ Bourke, *What it Means to be Human*, London: Virago, 2011, pp. 146-148.

⁴⁶⁰ Gordon-Reed, "America's Original Sin", *Foreign Affairs*, January/February, 2018, pp. 4-5.

Homeland. Thus when Lee was faced with the North's intention to destroy the South, he recommended resistance to the Confederate Congress on the following grounds: "Considering the relation of master and slave, controlled by humane laws and influenced by Christianity and an enlightened public sentiment, as the best that can exist between the white and black races while intermingled as at present in the country, I would deprecate any sudden disturbance of that relation unless it be necessary to avert a greater calamity to both."

But, he went on, in the present crisis, "I think we must decide whether slavery shall be extinguished by our enemies and the slaves be used against us, or use them ourselves at the rise of the effects that may be produced on our social institutions. My own opinion is that we should employ them without delay," and the "best means of securing the efficiency and fidelity of this auxiliary force would be to accompany the measures with a well-digested plan of gradual and general emancipation."⁴⁶¹

Fr. Steven Allen writes: "Many Southerners, including Robert E. Lee, believed in gradual emancipation, in which owners would receive compensation, the freed slaves would receive land to farm, and a peaceful transition could be made to an all-free society. They never had a chance to try it, because the federal government sent an army to destroy the South and turn the black people loose with no land, no education, and no help. It was their old masters who took them in, gave them work, and fed them. Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy, had an adopted black son whom Union soldiers cruelly tore away from his family in order to 'liberate' him."⁴⁶²

"This is what William Mack Lee the body Servant of General Robert E. Lee said about Lee and slavery. He stayed with General Lee throughout the war and until the day Lee died in 1870. Mack said of General Lee after his death 'I was raised by one of the greatest men in the world. There was never one born of a woman greater than General Robert E. Lee, according to my judgment. All of his servants were set free ten years before the war, but all remained on the plantation until after the surrender.' General Lee left Mack \$360 in his will, which Mack used to go to school and started 14 churches."⁴⁶³

⁴⁶¹ Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

⁴⁶² Allen, on *Facebook*, August 25, 2017.

⁴⁶³ Rene Morgan, on *Facebook*. Indeed, many Northerners, including famous generals, had slaves. Thus "William T. Sherman had many slaves that served him until well after the war was over and did not free them until late in 1865. U.S. Grant also had several slaves, who were only freed after the 13th amendment in December of 1865. When asked why he didn't free his slaves earlier, Grant stated: 'Good help is so hard to come by these days.' Contrarily, Confederate General Robert E. Lee freed his slaves (which he never purchased - they were inherited) in 1862!!! Lee freed his slaves several years before the war was over, and considerably earlier than his Northern counterparts. And during the fierce early days of the war when the South was obliterating the Yankee armies! Lastly, and most importantly, why did NORTHERN States outlaw slavery only AFTER the war was over? The so-called "Emancipation Proclamation" of Lincoln only gave freedom to slaves in the SOUTH! NOT in the North! This pecksniffery even went so far as to find the state of Delaware rejecting the 13th Amendment in December of 1865 and did not ratify it... until 1901!" ("Confederate History - Dispelling the Myths")

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

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

"Civil war exploded in mid-April 1861, and Jackson promptly offered his sword to his native state. Virginia's close ties with the South, and its opposition to the federal government using troops to coerce a state, were the leading issues behind Virginia's secession. The state regarded as unacceptable the idea of federal troops marching through Virginia to wage war on other states. The nation was still so young that the rights of states remains strongly ingrained in political thinking. Jackson had been a strong believer in the union until Virginia left it. When this happened Jackson felt the same as thousands of his neighbours: Virginia, the Old Dominion, had been in existence for 180 years before a 'United States' was established. The roots of families like the Lees and Jacksons ran deep within Virginia's soil. In 1861 an American's birthright and heritage was his state, not a federation which, during the last fifteen of its seventy-four years, had been in turmoil over the slavery question."⁴⁶⁴

⁴⁶⁴ Robertson, "The Christian Soldier: General Thomas 'Stonewall' Jackson", *History Today*, vol. 53 (2), February, 2003, pp. 31-32.

29. THE RESULTS OF THE WAR

The war ended on April 9, 1865, when the Confederacy of the South's finest general, Robert E. Lee, broke his sword before the North's General Ulysses S. Grant, who had employed a ruthless scorched-earth policy in forcing the South to its knees.

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

General Lee said bitterly: "Any army that wars against defenseless civilians, no matter its excuse, is no army, but barbarians unworthy of the name of Christian." Fast forward to Hiroshima in 1945, and we see that Lee's criterion of a just war was not applied by the United States also in later times...

As a result of the war the power of the American State was vastly increased, in both North and South. States can truly liberate their subjects, as Tsar Alexander II did in Russia in 1861; but as often as not liberation by the State leads to greater subjection to the State. Indeed, perhaps the main lesson of the American Civil War for future generations was that the attempt to force freedom as often as not leads to still greater slavery. Thus President Woodrow Wilson was a southerner who saw the evil effects of Reconstruction at first hand. These influenced his vaunted neutrality between the Entente and Axis Powers in the First World War (until 1917), his refusal to take sides and advocacy of "peace without victory".

For, as Adam Tooze writes, "one of Wilson's earliest memories of childhood in Virginia was of hearing the news of Lincoln's election and the rumours of a coming civil war. Growing up in Augusta, Georgia, in the 1860s – what he would describe to Lloyd George at Versailles as a 'conquered and devastated country' – he experienced from the side of the vanquished the bitter consequences of a just war, fought to its ultimate conclusion. It left him deeply suspicious of any crusading rhetoric. Nor was it just the Civil War that scarred Wilson. The peace that followed was, if anything, even more traumatic. Throughout his life he would denounce the Reconstruction era that followed, the effort made by the North to impose a new order on the South that enfranchised the freed black population. In Wilson's view it had taken America more than a generation to recover. Only in the 1890s had something like reconciliation been achieved..."⁴⁶⁵

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Protopresbyter James Thornton writes, "the government of Abraham Lincoln was particularly vigorous in its attempts to keep the European powers from interfering in the War Between the States. Britain and France were both warned that formal recognition of the Confederacy by them would mean war with the

⁴⁶⁵ Tooze, *The Deluge*, London: Penguin, 2015, p. 44.

United States. Whether the United States would actually have declared war as a result of recognition is another matter.

“War between the United States and Britain nearly erupted as a result of what is known as the Trent Affair. On November 8, 1861, the USS *San Jacinto* stopped the British mail steamer HMS *Trent* as she was sailing toward the Caribbean island of St. Thomas (then a Danish possession). On board were two Confederate diplomats, James Mason and John Slidell, on their way to Europe for discussions with British and French authorities. The U.S. captain, Charles Wilkes, arrested the two diplomats, declaring them ‘contraband of war’; removed them to the *San Jacinto*; and transported them to Boston, where they were held as prisoners. While many people in the North were delighted with the seizure of the Confederates, a careful review of maritime law brought forth serious doubts about the legality of the action. In Britain, news of the seizure, seen as a flagrant insult to the British flag, brought an explosion of outrage. London demanded an apology and the immediate release of the Confederate diplomats. Meanwhile, British troops were dispatched to Canada in case war broke out. Though initially reluctant to back down, Lincoln ultimately acquiesced to the British demands, realizing that were Britain to declare war at the same time the war with the Confederacy was being fought, the United States would be hard pressed to prevail.”⁴⁶⁶

“The official British attitude was one of strict neutrality between the North and the South: there was nothing the United Kingdom could do or should do militarily to intervene in a domestic quarrel half a world away, but for good reason, political and popular opinion was deeply divided. From one perspective, the South was a quasi-aristocratic society, and as such it was greatly admired by many British patricians and landowners, and it was also the United Kingdom’s most significant supplier of raw cotton. Moreover, for much of the duration of the conflict, Palmerston, Russell and (especially Gladstone) were generally sympathetic to its cause. This meant that radicals such as John Bright naturally espoused the cause of the North, and so did many Lancashire workers, despite (or because) the North’s blockade of the South meant they were unemployed as there was no American cotton available for them to spin or to weave...”⁴⁶⁷

In spite of the profits British industrialists made through trade with the South, anti-slavery feeling in the country as a whole was strong. In 1862 the workers of Manchester wrote to Abraham Lincoln supporting the abolitionist cause. Lincoln was moved, especially in view of the fact that the Manchester workers suffered much unemployment as a direct result of the American Civil War. Frederick Douglas was also impressed by the Manchester workers: he arrived in the city as a runaway slave, and was redeemed by their contributions.

“Harriet Beecher Stowe’s anti-slavery novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852), also produced as a stage play, had had a stunning emotional impact on working-class audiences. So there was potential sympathy in England for the Northern states, and certainly reluctance to give active help to the South. President Abraham

⁴⁶⁶ Thornton, “Partnering with Putin”, *New American*, November 20, 2015.

⁴⁶⁷ Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 316.

Lincoln, however, repeatedly declared that he was not fighting to end slavery, but to preserve the Union, and this confused matters for the British government and public. If they condemned slavery, they also had mixed feelings about the Union – not least because of the threat its expansion posed to Canada – and thought that perhaps the Confederate states had the right of self-determination. The Southern states, moreover, were the main suppliers of raw material to England's huge cotton industry. Disruption of the supply by a Northern naval blockade of the South caused social and economic damage, especially in Lancashire, where it caused mass unemployment; consequently, the labour press (such as *Reynold's News* and *The Working Man*) sided with the South. Volunteers from England and other European countries, whether as adventurers or idealists, fought on both sides in the war, which some saw as having parallels with social and political divisions at home. As a Stockport weaver who fought for the North put it, 'I detested slavery of every kind whether among the white factory operatives at home or among the negroes of America. I always went with the dog that was down.'

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

"Then, in the summer of 1862, with North and South deadlocked in an increasingly bloody and destructive struggle, Napoleon III suggested joint mediation by France, Britain and Russia to end the war, which could have resulted in a break-up of the United States. Gladstone, Chancellor of the Exchequer, reflected in September that: 'the case of Lancashire is deplorable, but this is a trifle... compared with the wholesale slaughter that is going on, and its thoroughly purposeless character, since it has long been (I think) clear enough that Secession is virtually an established fact, & that Jeff. Davis [the Confederate president] & his comrades have made a nation.' – an opinion he later repeated in a sensational speech in November, and later still regarded as a grave error. Abolitionists strongly disagreed with Gladstone, whose views the leading Liberal John Bright explained as due to the 'taint' of coming from a slave-owning family. But part of the public, including many suffering Lancashire workers, thought Gladstone might be right. Palmerston, as well as being cautious, was, as we have seen, strongly opposed to slavery and considered that 'slavery... was from the beginning the obvious difficulty in our way as mediators'. To impose a two-state settlement would mean giving 'the guarantee of England' to the perpetuation of

Southern slavery, which was unthinkable. The Cabinet decided for the time being against mediation. Lincoln's sudden cooperation with London in 1862 over suppressing the slave trade, his belated proclamation of abolition in January 1863 – though many thought this was mere opportunism – and a change in the military situation marked by a Union victory at the bloody battle of Gettysburg in July decided the issue. Without Britain, France could not act. British reluctance to support the Confederacy caused disappointment and anger in the South, and an attempt to foment conflict between Britain and the North, including minor violations of Canadian neutrality...

"As well as the economic effects on Lancashire, the American Civil War also hit Jamaica, sparking one of the most notorious episodes in colonial history, the Morant Bay rebellion of October 1865. The former slave population was impoverished and dependent on a white and mixed-race landowning class. Protest, articulated by revivalist Baptist preachers, led to a small uprising in which twenty people were killed and several plantations looted. The leaders insisted on their loyalty to Queen Victoria and hoped that she would send 'fresh gentlemen from England and we and those gentlemen will quite agree'. But there was panic among the white and mixed-race minorities, and rumours of atrocities. The governor was Edward Eyre, the son of a clergyman, who had previously been a humane and successful Protector of Aborigines in South Australia. He saw Jamaica very differently and declared martial law. This permitted local militia and regular British and West Indian troops and sailors to go on a looting and killing spree. Houses were burned and people were shot, flogged and hanged indiscriminately or after derisory courts-martial. Nearly 500 were killed. They included a prominent local politician and a Baptist minister. A senior official wrote to the Colonial Secretary: 'No one will ever believe the things that were done here in that mad, bad time. And very few will hear of the tenth part of them – including some of the worst.' There was an outcry in England, led by the Anti-Slavery Society, and Eyre was removed. He was prosecuted, unsuccessfully, for murder and abuse of power by a committee led by John Stuart Mill and supported by Charles Darwin. But another committee supported Eyre, and included Thomas Carlyle, Charles Dickens, John Ruskin, Charles Kingsley and Alfred Tennyson. These advocates of progress and civilization identified it with the imposition of imperial rule, however brutal the means..."⁴⁶⁸

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After the war, the South had to be "reconstructed", draining resources. And so for a time America's military might lagged behind her economic power, and did not begin to impact on the Old World until 1917. But the way was now open in principle for a second liberal empire to replace Britain as global hegemon.

The United States had been Russia's only ally in the Crimean War⁴⁶⁹, and Tsar Alexander II sympathized with Lincoln, although the tsar's own liberation of his

⁴⁶⁸ Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 574-577.

⁴⁶⁹ In 1862 Lord Salisbury blusteringly said that American support for the Russians in the Crimean War and of the Indians in the Indian Mutiny "was of no more practical importance than

serfs, as we shall see, was achieved at nothing like the cost in blood and destruction of Lincoln's. When the American president appealed to the Russian tsar for help, the latter "immediately, in great secrecy, sent to America two squadrons of military vessels under the command of Admiral Leskovsky, who occupied the ports of New York and San Francisco. This unexpected help shocked the whole of Europe, and England refrained from intervention, which guaranteed the victory of Lincoln..."⁴⁷⁰

The Ecumenical Patriarch, Joachim II, also supported the North. At the close of 1862, he wrote: "The United States of America, after many years of union and peace, after gigantic material and moral development, are separated into two hostile camps. The Northern States, guided by true reason and evangelical principles, persistently seek the abolition of the slavery of the blacks. The Southern States, blinded by a badly understood material interest and anti-Christianity, obstinately seek the perpetuation of slavery. This war of ideas and physical interests is prosecuted to desperation. Bloody battles are delivered, but victory until the present is doubtful, and the return of peace does not seem near. But if we cast a careful eye upon the wonderful events of this age, we shall be inclined to believe that those who contend so nobly for the most unquestionable and humane rights, will, God helping them, reach the object of their desires."⁴⁷¹

It should be noted that the Christian faith does not forbid slavery, as long as Christian masters and slaves treat each other with love, as befits brothers in Christ. Some of the saints even owned slaves – for example, the family of St. Basil the Great. St. John of Damascus owned slaves before he became a monk.⁴⁷² For, as Archbishop Averky of Jordanville (+1966) writes: "The epistle to Philemon vividly witnesses to the fact that the Church of Christ, in liberating man from sin, does not at the same time produce a forcible rupture in the established inter-relationships of people, and does not encroach on the civil and state order, waiting patiently for an improvement in the social order, under the influence of Christian ideas. Not only from this epistle, but also from others, it is evident that the Church, while unable, of course, to sympathize with slavery, at the same time did not abolish it, and even told slaves to obey their masters. Therefore here the conversion of Onesimus to Christianity, which made him free from sin and a son of the Kingdom of God, did not, however, liberate him, as a slave, from the authority of his master. Onesimus had to return to Philemon, in spite of the fact that the Apostle loved him as a son, and needed his services, since he was in prison in Rome. The Apostle's respect for civil rights tells also in the fact that he could order Philemon to forgive Onesimus, but, recognizing Philemon's right as master, begs him to forgive his guilty and penitent slave. The words of the Apostle:

the opinion of Rio de Janeiro. And as a question of sentiment, it was a matter of profound indifference to us whether our neighbours praised us or blamed us."

⁴⁷⁰ Nikolai Boeikov, "O rossijskoj monarkhii" (On the Russian Monarchy), in Protopriest Benjamin Zhukov (ed.), *Nikolaj II*, Paris, 2013, p. 15.

⁴⁷¹ *Anatolikos Aster* (Oriental Star), translated in *The Liberator*, April 24, 1863. See <http://orthodoxhistory.org/2015/04/27/ecumenical-patriarch-opposes-american-slavery-in-1862>.

⁴⁷² St. Dmitri of Rostov, *The Great Collection of the Lives of the Saints*, vol. IV: December, House Springs, Mo: Chrysostom Press, 2000, p. 76.

'Without your agreement I want to do nothing' clearly indicate that Christianity really leads mankind to personal perfection and the improvement of the social legal order on the basis of fraternity, equality and freedom, but not by way of violent actions and revolutions, but by the way of peaceful persuasion and moral influence."⁴⁷³

⁴⁷³ Archbishop Averky (Taushev), *Rukovodstvo k izucheniu Sviaschennago Pisania Novago Zaveta* (Guide to the Study of the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament), Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, vol. II, pp. 354-355.

II. THE EAST: THE GENDARME OF EUROPE

30. NATIONALISM AND THE NATIONS: (1) POLAND

For a short time after Tsar Alexander I's triumphant entry into Paris in 1814, the West had conducted a love affair with the exotic nation that had liberated it from Napoleon. However, the growth of liberalism, and Russia's primary role in preserving the monarchical order in Europe, changed that perception; and the publication in 1843 of the Marquis de Custine's Russophobic travelogue, *La Russie en 1839* "did more than any other publication to shape European attitudes towards Russia in the nineteenth century".⁴⁷⁴ Still more influential was Tsar Nicholas I's suppression of the Polish rebellion of 1830...

The Poles had been given a very liberal constitution by Tsar Alexander in 1815. But the Russian practice of coopting the local elites of subject nations, which had worked well with Tatars and Georgians, failed completely with the Poles. Stirred up by the Roman Catholic Church, as well as by their own very specific, ultra-romantic brand of nationalism, the Poles rose in rebellion late in 1830.

"In November, 1830," writes Plokhy, "young Polish cadets tried to assassinate their Russian military commander, Grand Duke Constantine, sparking a revolt that would become known as the November Uprising. The grand duke survived the attempt, fleeing his residence in women's clothes, but the façade of dynastic union between Russia and Poland was now gone. The Polish Diet convoked by the rebels not only declared the secession of the Kingdom of Poland from the Russian Empire but also sought to regain the pre-partition Polish territories that were not part of the kingdom. The rebels sent troops and reinforcements to Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine and chose delegates to go to St. Petersburg to demand those territories."⁴⁷⁵

Tsar Nicholas saw it as his duty and destiny to suppress the revolution not only at home, but also abroad. He had decided not to intervene in the revolutions in France and Belgium in 1830. This time, however, he did act. As he wrote to his brother, Grand Duke Constantine Pavlovich, who ruled the Polish Kingdom: "It is our duty to think of our security. When I say *ours*, I mean the tranquility of Europe."⁴⁷⁶

Archpriest Lev Lebedev writes: "The revolutions of 1830 in France and Belgium gave an impulse to the Masonic movement in Poland. It had two basic tendencies – an extreme republican one (headed by the historian Lelevel) and a more moderate aristocratic one (headed by A. Czartoryski). At the end of 1830 there began a rebellion in Warsaw. Great Prince Constantine Pavlovich with a detachment of Russian soldiers was forced to abandon Poland. In 1831 there arrived the armies of General Deibitsch, who had no significant success, in

⁴⁷⁴ Orlando Figes, *The Europeans*, London: Penguin, 2020, p. 65.

⁴⁷⁵ Plokhy, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

⁴⁷⁶ Tsar Nicholas, in M.J. Cohen and John Major (eds.), *History in Quotations*, London: Cassell, 2004, p. 551.

particular by reason of a very strong outbreak of cholera, from which both Diebitsch and Great Prince Constantine died. Meanwhile the revolutionaries in Warsaw created first a 'Provisional government' with a 'dictator' at its head, and then convened the Sejm. The rebels demanded first the complete independence of Poland with the addition to it of Lithuania and western Rus', and then declared the 'deposition' of the Romanov dynasty from the throne of the Kingdom of Poland. Count Paskevich of Erevan was sent to Poland. He took Warsaw by storm and completely destroyed the Masonic revolutionary armies, forcing their remnants abroad [especially to Paris, where they played a significant role in the revolutionary movement]. Poland was divided into provinces and completely included into the composition of the Russian Empire. The language of business was declared to be Russian. Russian landowners received land in Poland. A Deputy was now placed at the head of the Kingdom of Poland. He turned out to be Paskevich with the new title of Prince of Warsaw.

"In connection with all this it became clear that the Polish magnates and landowners who had kept their land-holdings in Belorussia and Ukraine had already for some time been persecuting the Orthodox Russians and Little Russians and also the uniates, and had been occupied in polonizing education in general the whole cultural life in these lands. Tsar Nicholas I was forced to take severe measures to restore Russian enlightenment and education in the West Russian and Ukrainian land. In particular, a Russian university was opened in Kiev. The part of the Belorussian and Ukrainian population headed by Bishop Joseph Semashko which had been in a forcible unia with the Catholic Church since the end of the 16th century desired reunion with Orthodoxy. Nicholas I decided to satisfy this desire and in 1839 all the uniates (besides the inhabitants of Kholm diocese) were united to 'to the ancestral Orthodox All-Russian Church', as they put it. This was a great feast of Orthodoxy! Masses of uniates were united *voluntarily*, without any compulsion. All this showed that Russia had subdued and humbled Poland not because she wished to lord it over her, and resist her independence, but only because *Poland* wanted to lord it (both politically and *spiritually*) over the age-old Russian population, depriving it of its own life and 'ancestral' faith! With *such* a Poland as she was then striving to be, there was nothing to be done but completely subdue her and *force her to respect the rights* of other peoples! But to the Polish Catholics Russia provided, as usual, every opportunity of living in accordance with their faith and customs."⁴⁷⁷

Favourable conditions for the restoration of the West Russian uniates to their homeland had been created by the fall of Poland in 1815, the expulsion of the Jesuits from Russia in 1820 and the suppression of the Polish rebellion in 1830-1831 (which many Uniates supported).

In 1835, a secret committee on the uniate question was formed in St. Petersburg consisting of uniate bishop Joseph Semashko, Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, the over-procurator of the Holy Synod and the minister of the interior.

⁴⁷⁷ Lebedev, *Velikorossia*, St. Petersburg, 1999, p. 326. About 1,600 uniate priests and 1.5 million laypeople were joined to Orthodoxy in the Act of Union (Ploky, *op. cit.*, p. 100).

Semashko was the heart and soul of the movement of reunion. "Compelled to choose either a Polish or a Russian identity (he saw no other option), Semashko decided that he was a Russian and, as such, had to belong to the Russian church. To achieve that, he had to make his Uniate Church Russian, which meant Orthodox.

"'Immeasurable Russia, bound by one faith and one language, directed by a single will toward a blessed goal, became for me a great attractive fatherland. I considered it my sacred duty to serve it and promote its welfare,' remembered Semashko. In 1827, he prepared a memorandum for the government outlining his plan for the gradual conversion of the Uniates to Orthodoxy, which caught the emperor's eye and won his full approval.

"Semashko's plan was in many ways a continuation of the official policy toward Uniates during the liberal rule of Alexander I. The forcible conversion of Uniates to Orthodoxy that had marked the rule of Catherine II was no longer practiced. The change of policy was due not only to the tsar's ideological preference for toleration but also to the failure of the pressure applied to the Uniates to yield the desired result...

"With the support of the Orthodox authorities and the backing of the civil administration, Semashko convoked a Uniate Church council [at Polotsk in February, 1839] to consider the issue. The synod was supposed to issue an appeal to the tsar drafted by Semashko. 'With Lithuania's detachment of Russian provinces in troubled times and their subsequent annexation to Poland, their Russian Orthodox inhabitants were subjected [to persecution],' Semashko wrote: 'Since then, those people, separated from the broad Russian masses, have constantly been subjected to all the devices of a policy of fanaticism intended to make them alien to Russia.' Semashko continued: 'A million and a half Uniates, Russian by language and origin... would have remained somewhat alien to the broad mass of their actual brethren, the Russians.'" ⁴⁷⁸

By the time of the Synod, 1,600,000 had converted to Orthodoxy⁴⁷⁹, and by the Act of Union adopted by the Synod on February 12, 1839, 1,600 parishes were united to Orthodoxy.

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Unfortunately, the Poles and the West did not see it like that. 55,000 Polish troops and 6,000 civilians made a great exodus to the West and Paris and kept this cult alive, not in Polish hearts only, but throughout Europe. The tsar had earned the undying hatred of Poles: "I know they want to kill me" he said, "but if God doesn't will it, nothing will happen, so I am quite calm."⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁷⁸ Plokhy, *Lost Kingdom. A History of Russian Nationalism*, London: Allen Lane, 2017, pp. 99-100.

⁴⁷⁹ A.P. Dobroklonsky, *Rukovodstvo po Istorii Russkoj Tserkvi* (Handbook to the History of the Russian Church) Moscow, 2001, pp. 654-657.

⁴⁸⁰ Montefiore, *op. cit.*, p. 356.

The composer Frederick Chopin wrote, somewhat blasphemously: "The suburbs [of Warsaw] are destroyed, burned... Moscow rules the world! O God, do You exist? You're there and You don't avenge it. How many more Russian crimes do You want – or – are You a Russian too!?"⁴⁸¹

"Poland will arise," wrote the poet Mickiewicz, "and free nations of Europe from bondage. *Ibi patria, ubi male*; wherever in Europe liberty is suppressed and is fought for, there is the battle for your country."⁴⁸²

The Anglo-Polish historian Adam Zamoyski writes that Mickiewicz turned "the spiritual fantasies of a handful of soldiers and intellectuals into the articles of faith that built a modern nation. Mickiewicz had been a friend of the Russian poet Pushkin in his earlier, liberal days. But now Pushkin's poem in support of Russia, "To the Slanderers of Russia", set the two great poets against each other.

"Mickiewicz had established his reputation as Poland's foremost lyric poet in the 1820s, and enhanced his political credentials by his exile in Russia, where he met several prominent Decembrists and grew close to Pushkin. In 1829 Mickiewicz received permission to go to Germany to take the waters. He met Mendelssohn and Hegel in Berlin, Metternich in Marienbad, and August Schlegel in Bonn, and attended Goethe's eightieth birthday party in Weimar. Goethe kissed him on the forehead, gave him the quill with which he had worked on Faust, and commissioned a portrait of him for his collection. Mickiewicz then went to Italy where, apart from a de rigueur trip to Switzerland (Chillon and Altdorf, with Byron and Schiller's Wilhelm Tell in his hand), he spent the next year-and-half. It was in Rome that news of the November Rising [in Warsaw] reached him. He set off for Poland, but his attempts to cross the border were foiled by Cossack patrols, and he was obliged to watch the debacle from Dresden.

"In this tranquil Saxon city he was gripped by inspiration and wrote frantically in fits lasting up to three days, without pausing to eat or sleep. The fruit was the third part of a long poetic drama entitled *Forefathers' Eve*, which can only be described as a national passion play. Mickiewicz had also seen the significance of the holy night [of November 29, 1830], and he likened all monarchs, and Nicholas in particular, to Herod – their sense of guilty foreboding led them to massacre the youth of nations. The drama describes the transformation through suffering of the young poet and lover, Konrad, into a warrior-poet. He is a parable for Poland as a whole, but he is also something more. 'My soul has now entered the motherland, and with my body I have taken her soul: I and the motherland are one,' he declares after having endured torture. 'My name is Million, because I love and suffer for millions... I feel the sufferings of the whole nation as a mother feels the pain of the fruit within her womb.'

"In Paris in 1832 Mickiewicz published a short work entitled *Books of the Polish Nation and of the Pilgrimage of Poland*. It was quickly translated into several languages and caused a sensation. It is a bizarre work, couched in biblical prose,

⁴⁸¹ Chopin, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 551.

⁴⁸² Mickiewicz, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 551.

giving a moral account of Polish history. After an Edenic period, lovingly described, comes the eighteenth century, a time when 'nations were spoiled, so much so that among them there was left only one man, both citizen and soldier' – a reference to Lafayette. The 'Satanic Trinity' of Catherine of Russia, Frederick of Prussia and Maria Theresa of Austria decided to murder Poland, because Poland was Liberty. They crucified the innocent nation while degenerate France played the role of Pilate.⁴⁸³ But that was not to be the end of it. 'For the Polish nation did not die; its body lies in the tomb, while its soul has left the earth, that is public life, and visited the abyss, that is the private life of peoples suffering slavery at home and in exile, in order to witness their suffering. And on the third day the soul will re-enter the body, and the nation will rise from the dead and will liberate all the peoples of Europe from slavery.'⁴⁸⁴ In a paraphrase of the Christian Creed, Liberty will then ascend the throne in the capital of the world, and judge the nations, ushering in the age of peace.

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

"Rousseau would have been proud of this generation. As one freedom fighter writes in his memoirs: 'Only he loves Poland with his heart and his soul, only he is a true son of his Motherland who has cast aside all lures and desires, all bad habits, prejudice and passions, and been reborn in the pure faith, he who, having recognized the reasons for our defeats and failures through his own judgement and conviction, brings his whole love, his whole – not just partial, but whole – conviction, his courage and his endurance, and lays them on the altar of the purely national future.' He had taken part in the November Rising and a conspiratorial fiasco in 1833, for which he was rewarded with fifteen years in the Spielberg and Küfstein prisons. Yet decades later he still believed that the November Rising had 'called Poland to a new life' and brought her 'salvation' closer by a hundred years. Such feelings were shared by tens of thousands, given expression by countless poets and artists, and understood by all the literate classes.

⁴⁸³ Chopin also blamed the French. For "Lafayette moved heaven and earth to make France go to war in support of Poland, but he could not move Louis Philippe. He formed a committee to help the Poles, with the participation of Victor Hugo and a string of artists and heroes" (Zamoyski, *Holy Madness*, p. 278). (V.M.)

⁴⁸⁴ The passage continues: "And three days have already passed; the first ending with the first fall of Warsaw; the second day with the second fall of Warsaw; and the third day cometh but it shall have no end. As at the resurrection of Christ the sacrifice of blood ceased upon the earth, so at the resurrection of the Polish Nation shall war cease in Christendom." "This," comments Neal Ascherson, "was the extraordinary doctrine of Messianism, the identification of the Polish nation as the collective reincarnation of Christ. Messianism steadily gained strength over the next century-and-a-half. History saw to that" (*Black Sea*, London: Vintage, 1995, p. 160). (V. M.)

"Most of Mickiewicz's countrymen read his works and wept over them. They identified with them and learned them by heart. They did not follow the precepts laid down in them, nor did they really believe in this gospel in any literal sense. These works were a let-out, an excuse even, rather than a guiding rule. But they did provide an underlying ethical explanation of a state of affairs that was otherwise intolerable to the defeated patriots. It was an explanation that made moral sense and was accepted at the subconscious level. It was a spiritual and psychological lifeline that kept them from sinking into a Slough of Despond. It made misfortune not only bearable, but desirable..."⁴⁸⁵

Not all were seduced by Mickiewicz's eloquence. Pushkin, in spite of the Decembrist sympathies of his youth, "was a most passionate enemy of the Polish revolution and in this respect, as a Russian, was practically a fanatic," Zhukovsky commented after his death. On 9 December he gave his first reaction to the events in a letter to his usual correspondent on political matters, Elise Khitrovo. After the uprising had been suppressed, the privileges granted by Alexander, including the constitution, would have to be withdrawn and continued: "... The war which is about to begin will be a war of extermination – or should be. Love of one's fatherland, such as it can exist in a Polish soul has always been a gloomy emotion. Look at their poet Mickiewicz..."⁴⁸⁶

In general, however, Pushkin's friends did not agree with him, and even considered him to be a "barbarian".

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A generation later, the Russians tried again to cut the Polish knot. "In May 1856," continues Zamoyski, "the new Tsar, Alexander II, visited Warsaw and promised reform. Martial law, which had been introduced in 1831, was suspended. Thousands of political convicts were released from Siberian captivity, and an amnesty was extended to émigré who wished to return. In 1857 the first Polish institution of higher education came into being since the closure of Warsaw University in 1831. In the same year the landowners were permitted to form an Agricultural Society, which became a kind of senate bringing together the most active members of the Polish aristocracy. This was of particular significance in view of the fact that the greatest single reform challenging the whole Russian Empire involved the peasantry.

"The Polish lands within the Empire had been growing prosperous throughout the 1840s and 1850s, and the only segment of the population that did not share in this were the poorest peasants. Unlike the rest of the Empire, there was no serfdom in the former Polish lands. Landless peasants were nevertheless in a state of bondage, as the only way they could rent land was by paying for it with their labour. The fact that the lord of the manor was usually the local magistrate meant that they were often legally as well as financially subjected to the same master. It behoved the Polish landed nobility to improve the lot of these people. Poland's

⁴⁸⁵ Zamoyski, *op. cit.*, pp. 284-287.

⁴⁸⁶ T.J. Binyon, *Pushkin. A Biography*, London: HarperCollins, 2003, p. 348.

Russian master was moving towards reform in this area, and it would be desirable for the Polish peasant to owe his future well-being to his countrymen rather than to a foreign despot – the Galician jacquerie was but a decade past.

“No pipe-dreams please, gentlemen,” the Tsar had warned while declaring his openness to reform. He was determined that the concessions he might make should not revive aspirations to Polish independence. The overwhelming majority of the population welcomed the improving economic and political conditions and was prepared to wait for further concessions that would, it was hoped, lead to a return to the kind of national autonomy existing before 1830. But they and the Tsar were fooling themselves. The lives of many revolved around dreams, and the poets kept alive the vision of revolt as the ultimate act of human expression, bringing sanctification through death. And a Napoleon on the French throne stirred all sorts of memories, while events in Italy suggested no end of possibilities...”⁴⁸⁷

And so once again the hopes of the overwhelming majority of Poles for a peaceful and prosperous future were dashed by a fanatical minority. About 9000 exiles returned to their homes from Siberia between 1857 and 1860 bringing with them the virus of nationalism, as did firebrands such as Lukwik Mieroslawski, who lambasted his fellow Poles for the “moral decay” – i.e. desire to avoid war – seeping through the nation. On 25 February, 1861 a group of activists consisting of students and junior army officers organized a demonstration commemorating the Battle of Grochow in 1831, the Poles’ first victory in the November Rising. Although the Russians tried to exercise restraint, and offered concessions⁴⁸⁸, the demonstrations got out of hand, some demonstrators were killed. Foreign revolutionaries, such as Bakunin, Mazzini and Garibaldi got involved. By the end of 1862 there were as many as 100,000 Russian troops in the country, not counting garrisons and frontier companies, against a maximum of 20,000 Poles at any one time (although as many as 200,000 may have fought at various times). It was a lost cause...

The rebellion was fully ignited in January, 1863, when the Russians tried to take the radical youth off the streets by conscripting them into the army. The Polish irregulars fought the vastly superior Russian army in over a thousand skirmishes. As John van de Kiste writes, “they slaughtered Russian soldiers asleep in their Warsaw barracks, and national resistance turned to general uprising. This spread through the kingdom into the nine formerly Polish provinces known as Russia’s Western region, where powerful landlords and Catholic clergy were ready to give vent to their hatred of Russian domination. For a while it looked as if England, France and Austria might join in on the side of Warsaw after giving their tacit blessing to the rebels, but Russia put down the unrest at no little cost to the Poles.... While the Poles butchered scores of Russian peasants including women and children, the Russians erected gibbets in the streets where rebels and civilians

⁴⁸⁷ Zamoyski, *Holy Madness*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999, p. 412.

⁴⁸⁸ Thus on the day after the Tsar’s brother, Grand Duke Constantine, was made viceroy of Poland, he was shot in the shoulder. He persisted with a programme of “re-Polonization” – more liberal state administration and local government regulations governing the use of the Polish language, and Polish educational institutions. But this did not appease the nationalists.

were hanged in their hundreds, with thousands more sent to Siberia. The insurrection was finally quelled in May 1864, when the more conservative Count Theodore Berg was sent to replace Constantine as viceroy.”⁴⁸⁹

What successive wars against Poland – in 1815, in 1831 and in 1863 – taught the Russians was the folly of Pan-Slavism. No amount of common Slavic blood could make the two nations one as long as they *felt* themselves to be different, and, above all, as long as they confessed different religions. If two people were not brothers in Christ, they were not brothers in any other profound sense even if, by the Providence of God, they found themselves within the same state...

⁴⁸⁹ Van der Kiste, *The Romanovs: 1818-1959*, Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1999, p. 35.

31. NATIONALISM AND THE NATIONS: (2) UKRAINE

It was only natural that the Russians should fear the spread of the nationalist virus from Poland eastwards, into the Ukrainian lands that had once been under Polish dominion. The separation of Ukraine from the Empire would have been disastrous. As long as the Ukrainians considered themselves “Russian” in some sense (or “Little Russians” as the Great Russians called them), they would probably remain in the Russian empire without rebelling. But the calculation might be different if they saw themselves as a separate nation...

Fortunately for the empire as a whole, “by the second half of nineteenth century,” as Sir Geoffrey Hosking writes, “the Ukrainian sense of separate identity was [still] rather weak, being borne mainly by intellectuals and professional people in the smaller towns. Large numbers of peasants spoke variants of Ukrainian, but they had no wider national consciousness, and their colloquial tongue was viewed by most Russians as a farmyard dialect of Russian. However, the survival of Ukrainian culture was quite strong, thanks to the heritage of the poet Taras Shevchenko, the writings of historians such as Mykhaylo Drahomaniw, and the possibility of smuggling materials across the frontier from Habsburg Galicia, where Ukrainian identity was officially fostered as a counterweight to Polish influence.”⁴⁹⁰

Shevchenko was typical of this early, Proto-Ukrainian nationalism. “Born as a serf in the early nineteenth century, [he] published *Kobzar*, his first collection of poetry, when he was twenty-six. The series of musings on Ukrainian identity, written in the Ukrainian language, probably did more than anything else to create a sense of nation among the descendants of the Cossacks.”⁴⁹¹

Things began to change on March 31, 1847, when a young professor of history at Kiev University, Mykola (Nikolai) Kostomarov, was arrested in accordance with an order proceeding from the emperor himself. “It was given,” writes Serhii Plokhyy, “by Count Aleksei Orlov, head of the Third Section of the Imperial Chancellery – the body responsible for political surveillance. The heir to the throne, the future Tsar Alexander II, was briefed on the case, which involved a number of Kyivan intellectuals – government officials, teachers, and students... Shevchenko... was arrested on April 5, upon his arrival in Kyiv and also escorted to St. Petersburg. There were further arrests and more deportations to the capital, where the liberal public was at a loss to explain the authorities’ actions.

“The governor general of Kyiv, Podolia, and Volhynia, Dmitrii Bibikov, was then in St. Petersburg, reporting on, among other things, a proclamation that had been found on the wall of a building in Kyiv. It read: ‘Brothers! A great hour is upon us, an hour in which you are being given the opportunity to wash off the dishonor inflicted on the dust of our ancestors, on our native Ukraine, by the base hand of our eternal foes. Who among you will not lend a hand to this great

⁴⁹⁰ Hosking, *Russia, People and Empire*, London: HarperCollins, 1997, p. 378.

⁴⁹¹ Shaun Walker, *The Long Hangover, Putin's New Russia and the Ghosts of the Past*, Oxford University Press, 2018, p. 170.

undertaking? God and good people are with us! The ever loyal sons of Ukraine, foes of the *katsapy* [derogatory term for Russians].’

“The appeal was as anti-Russian as could be imagined, but it was written in Russian, not Polish, and not addressed to the Polish nobles who then dominated Kyiv society. It was addressed to ‘the faithful sons of Ukraine’ – people whom the imperial government considered Russian by nationality. Bibikov was sent back to Kyiv with order to take over supervision of the Kyiv educational district...

“There was no doubt that this manifestation of disloyalty came from the very institutions that had been created to ensure the loyalty of the region’s inhabitants to tsar and empire. Mykola Kostomarov taught at the university, while Taras Shevchenko, who had been appointed instructor of drawing there, had earlier been employed by the Archaeographic Commission, which aimed to document the Russian identity of Right-Bank Ukraine. Official policy appeared to have backfired. Instead of solidifying a common front between the government and the ‘Russian’ population of the western provinces against the Polish threat, it had contributed to dividing the imperial Russian nation and promoted the development of a separate nation that would claim equal rights with the Great Russians in the core areas of the empire in the course of the next few decades. A new Ukrainian nation was emerging from the cocoon of the old Little Russian identity. The imperial government would do everything in its power to stop its development and put the Ukrainian genie back into the Little Russian bottle.

“The Third Section’s investigation into the activities of Kostomarov, Shevchenko and others uncovered the existence of a clandestine organization, the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius. Its goal was the creation of a voluntary federation of Slavic nations, with Ukraine at its core. The investigation of the brotherhood became known in government circles as the Slavophile case, later renamed the case of the Ukrainian Slavophiles...”⁴⁹²

“It was Kostomarov who formulated the true aims of the Brotherhood, and his thinking was strongly marked by the works of Mickiewicz, the historical writings of Lelewel and the example of the Polish communes of penitents at Portsea and on the island of Jersey.

“Kostomarov’s *The Books of the Birth of the Ukrainian People* was modeled on Mickiewicz’s similarly titled work. Its theme was that the Slavs had received Christianity as a holy destiny, but had failed to fulfill God’s divine purpose on earth – or at least Russia and Poland had, leaving only the Ukraine, suffering, devastated but still pure and unbending. The Ukraine had brought about the brotherhood of man in the form of the Cossack way of life and defended Christendom from the infidel Turk. And for this, according to Kostomarov, she had crucified by her sister Slav nations. ‘Ukraine is lying in the grave, but she has not died,’ he wrote. ‘And her voice, calling on all Slavs to liberty and brotherhood, resounded throughout the Slavic world.’ Eventually, her voice would be heard, and then Slavdom would triumph.

⁴⁹² Plokyh, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-107.

"In an 'Appeal to the Russians and the Poles,' the Brotherhood called on these nations to cast off their hierarchical social patterns and return to Slavic simplicity. 'Russian and Polish Brothers! It is the Ukraine that calls to you, your poor sister, which you divided up and destroyed, and which does not remember evil, sympathizes with your misfortunes and is ready to shed her blood for your liberty.' Kiev, where the Brotherhood were based, had been the capital of ancient Rus, and they saw it as the future capital of a kind of United States of Slavdom, modeled on the USA. 'We were not able to precisely draw the map of where our planned federation of states was to arise, and we left the final picture to history,' wrote Kostomarov. History is still at it..."⁴⁹³

"Among the key figures of the Slavophile movement mentioned by investigators of the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius in their reports were two Moscow University professors, Mikhail Pogodin and Stepan Shevyrev. Pogodin, whom Uvarov had rejected as the prospective author of a Russian history textbook integrating the western provinces into the empire, taught history at Moscow University; Shevyrev lectured there on philology and literature. The two also served as co-publishers of the journal *Moskvitianin* (The Muscovite), which later became a mouthpiece of the Slavophile movement in the 1840s. Pogodin was a leading figure in the emerging pan-Slavic movement, which regarded all Slavs as a single family. By stressing the uniqueness (*samobytnost'*) and self-awareness (*samosoznanie*) of the Russian nation, the Slavophiles, for all their pan-Slavic ecumenism, set an example to non-Russian Slavs who wished to celebrate the distinctiveness of their own peoples and, consequently, their right to autonomy and independence.

"Early on, Ukraine took a special place in the Slavophile imagination. Pogodin and Shevyrev in particular showed great interest in the culture and history of Ukraine, or, as they called it, Little Russia. In the 1830s, Mykola Kostomarov, then a student at Kharkiv University in eastern Ukraine, had been strongly influenced by Stepan Shevyrev, whose lectures he attended. Shevyrev, who referred to Little Russia as Great Russia's elder sister, put a strong emphasis on nationality and encouraged the study of popular culture. But there was a problem, since 'nationality' meant different things in Moscow and Kharkiv. When Kostomarov went to the people to collect their lore, he had to speak to them in Ukrainian, and by 1839 he was already writing in that language. Kostomarov was not the first admirer of nationality to bring back texts from his field trip that were written in a language difficult to understand, if not entirely foreign, to enthusiasts of nationality in Moscow and St. Petersburg...

"Mikhail Pogodin saw cultural differences between Russians and Ukrainians that went beyond language and history. He wrote in 1845, 'The Great Russians live side by side with the Little Russians, profess one faith, have shared one fate and, for many years, one history. But how many differences there are between the Great Russians and the Little Russians!'

⁴⁹³ Zamoyiski, *Holy Madness*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999, pp. 319-320.

"By the mid-nineteenth century, the Slavophiles' belief in the unity of Great and Little Russia and their treatment of the latter as the fountainhead of Russian culture was being challenged by the Little Russians' search for a nationality of their own. Encouraged by like-minded individuals in Moscow and St. Petersburg to investigate and embrace issues of nationality, the Ukrainians brought to the salons of St. Petersburg and Moscow not only a language quite different from Russian but also a history distinct from that of the Russian people and state. It would soon become clear that language, history, and culture could be used not only to construct a past separate from that of the Great Russians but also a different future. In that new vision, Little Russia would turn into Ukraine, an entity still close to Russia but also very different and quite separate from it..."⁴⁹⁴

When Shevchenko died in 1861, "a funeral procession accompanied his coffin down the Dnieper River from Kiev to Kaniv, where he was buried as a national hero, albeit of a nation that as yet had no state..."⁴⁹⁵

The great Ukrainian – but at the same time classical Russian – writer Nikolai Gogol wrote as follows about this most problematic of national relationships in 1844: "I would give no preference either to the Little Russian over the Russian or to the Russian over the citizen of the Little Russian. Both natures are too richly endowed by God, and each includes in itself what is not in the other – a clear sign that they must complement each other. For this each of the very histories of their past life includes that which is not in the other, so that their different strengths and characters should be nourished separately, so that later, having been merged into one, they might constitute that which is most perfect in humanity."

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If Nicholas I did not have to worry about the definition of the Russian nation, Alexander II did not enjoy such a luxury. In his reign, the Russian nation was defined as having three parts: the Great Russian, the Little Russian (Ukrainian) and the White Russians (Belorussian). The diversity of the three parts was admitted, but the emphasis was on their unity.

"The tripartite Russian nationality emerged as the dominant model of Russian nation-building in the wake of the Polish uprising of 1863-64. In political terms, it was a means of dealing with Polish nationalism while accommodating the cultural demands of the growing Ukrainian national movement. In purely conceptual terms, it was a way of reconciling the principle of Russian nationality formulated by Uvarov back in 1832 with the growing realization that the big Russian nation was in fact diverse and could be imagined in a number of ways. Whereas Pavel Pestel [the Decembrist] counted five Russian nationalities to be merged in a pan-Russian entity, the Russian Slavophiles and imperial nationalists of the post-1863 era agreed on three. The vernacular languages spoken by the three branches were termed 'dialects', and there was to be one literary language, Russian or all-Russian, allegedly created by all three groups. The union of the three branches

⁴⁹⁴ Plokhyy, *op. cit.*, pp. 108, 111.

⁴⁹⁵ Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

was justified by *raison d'état*: the Russian Empire had to be a politically viable unit like the nationalizing states of Europe.

"In historical terms, the tripartite model harked back to the mid-seventeenth century, when, after attaching Cossack Ukraine and conquering eastern Belarus, the Muscovite tsar added the names of Great, Little, and White Rus' to his title. This was a two-stage process. The terms 'Great' and 'Little' Rus' were the first to come into use, reflecting Muscovite expansion into the Ukrainian-Belarusian lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth... Now, in the mid-nineteenth century, the tripartite division of Rus' /Russia was recognized once again, but this time on linguistic rather than political grounds. But the recognition of differences was not intended to prepare for a federal arrangement, with local autonomy for Russia's constituent part. The goal was to unite the three branches, not only in dynastic and religious terms but also under the cultural cloak of the Russian state..."⁴⁹⁶

However, bringing Ukraine and Belarus' "under the cultural cloak" of the Russian state meant allowing only one official language, Russian. In a circular dated June 18, 1863 the Russian Interior Minister Peter Valuev, fearing that Polish nationalism might infect the neighbouring Ukraine, banned most Ukrainian-language publications. As a result, between 1863 and 1868 their number dropped from thirty-three to one. "Valuev's circular," writes Serhii Plokyh, "was directed mainly against the Ukrainian intellectuals, whose efforts to introduce their language into churches and schools he regarded as part of a Polish intrigue to undermine the empire. 'That phenomenon is all the more deplorable and deserving of attention,' stated the circular, 'because it coincides with the designs of the Poles and is all but obliged to them for its origin; judging by the manuscripts received by the censors and by the fact that most of the Little Russian compositions actually come from the Poles.' Valuev claimed that the 'adherents of the Little Russian nationality' were turning to the common people for political reasons. He noted that many of them had already been investigated by the government and were being accused by their own compatriots of 'separatists designs hostile to Russia and fatal for Little Russia.'"⁴⁹⁷

"On June 21, 1863," continues Plokyh, "a month before Valuev signed his circular, Katkov added his voice to the discussion on prohibiting Ukrainian-language publications in an article with a telling title, 'The Coincidence of Ukrainophile Interests with Polish Interests'. In complete agreement with the adherents of pan-Russian Orthodoxy in [the ex-uniate Bishop] Iosif Semashko's camp, Katkov accused the Ukrainophiles of being instruments not only of Polish but also of Jesuit intrigue. In doing so, Katkov not only politicized the question of Ukrainian-language publications but in fact criminalized it, opening the door to the politically damaging Polish-Ukrainian connection in Valuev's circular. More importantly in the long run, Katkov provided intellectual foundations for the repressive policies vis-à-vis the Ukrainian cultural and political movement that would be adopted by the imperial government and last for decades. Katkov

⁴⁹⁶ Plokyh, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-135.

⁴⁹⁷ Plokyh, *op. cit.*, pp. 137-138.

argued that 'Ukraine has never had its own history, never been a separate state: the Ukrainian people are an authentic Russian people, an indigenous Russian people, an essential part of the Russian people, without which it can hardly remain what it is now.' Although he recognized linguistic and cultural differences between the branches of the 'Russian nation', he considered them only locally significant. If the big Russian nation was to develop and prevail, the cultivation of local dialects would have to be arrested..."⁴⁹⁸

However, Ukrainian national consciousness continued to grow...

Now, as Hosking writes, "most of the elites of 'Little Russia' were non-Ukrainian: Russian and Polish landowners; Jewish, German and Russian townfolk. Some of the national deficit was made good from sources across the border in Galicia, part of the Habsburg monarchy, where Ukrainian culture (there known as Ruthenian) was officially encouraged as a counterweight to Polish. With the help of smuggled Galician material, by the 1860s Russian Ukrainians were investigating and publishing their own folklore, collecting antiquities, and beginning to write their own history as a people distinct from the 'Muscovites', Hromady, Ukrainian cultural societies, were being formed in the towns and launching educational programs for the more emancipated peasants."⁴⁹⁹

But the Russians refused to accept the existence either of a distinct Ukrainian people or of a Ukrainian language. "There never has been a distinct Little Russian language, and there never will be one", declared Valuev. The Ukrainians were called "Little Russians" by contrast with the "Great Russians" to the north, the important point being that they were all Russians, being really one nation, not two.

As Dominic Lieven writes, tsarist statesmen "focused their attention on the linguistic and cultural foundations of national identity and therefore of subsequent political nationalism. In 1863 General Annenkov, the governor-general of the Kiev region, flatly opposed the publication of the bible in Ukrainian, commenting that by its publication Ukrainian nationalists 'would achieve so to speak the recognition of the independence of the Little Russian language, and then of course they will make claims to autonomy for Little Russia.' Thirteen years later a key government memorandum [by Valuev] warned of the dangers of 'various doctrines which superficially contain nothing political and seem to relate only to the sphere of purely academic and artistic interests'. In the long run their danger could be very great. 'Nothing divides people as much as differences in speech and writing. Permitting the creation of a special literature for the common people in the Ukrainian dialect would signify collaborating in the alienation of Ukraine from the rest of Russia.' The memorandum went on to emphasize the very great importance of the Ukrainians to the Russian nation and state: 'To permit the separation... of thirteen million Little Russians would be the utmost political carelessness, especially in view of the unifying movement which is going on alongside us among the German tribe.' In the light of such views the tsarist regime

⁴⁹⁸ Plokyh, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

⁴⁹⁹ Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, p. 336.

did its utmost from 1876 to stop the development of a written Ukrainian language or high culture,"⁵⁰⁰ prohibiting the publication of books, other than belles lettres and folklore, in Ukrainian, as well as the use of Ukrainian in the theatre and the import of Ukrainian books from abroad.

"This measure inevitably transferred the center of gravity across the border to Habsburg Galicia, a region with very different traditions. If the roots of Ukrainian distinctiveness within Russia originated in the Cossack tradition of volia, then in Galicia the Ruthenians had their own Greek Catholic, or Uniate, Church. They had, moreover, imbibed the strong estate consciousness now present in all ranks of Habsburg society and the relatively more robust legal traditions prevalent there. All the same, the Habsburg Ruthenians remained a highly disadvantaged ethnos, economically backward and without national leaders outside the clergy.

The Russian government, writes Lieven, "faced a difficult dilemma. On the one hand, Petersburg was not wrong to see the potential danger of Ukrainian nationalism rooted in the local language. The restrictions imposed on the Ukrainian language and civil society did impede the emergence of Ukrainian nationalist movement in the Russian Empire. Even after the 1905 revolution, when these restrictions were relaxed, the Ukrainian movement was constrained by the lack of Ukrainian-speaking teachers, journalists, and other professionals. In the big Ukrainian towns, Russian or Jewish culture usually prevailed..."⁵⁰¹

"Altogether," writes Hosking, "by the early twentieth century the prospects for the emergence of a separate Ukrainian nation looked very dim. They had no elites outside the small towns, their cities were in the hands of other national groups, and their written culture was weakly developed and poorly disseminated. Only the revolutionary developments of the twentieth century, combined with the collapse of the empires in which they lived, could provide the conditions for national independence..."⁵⁰²

⁵⁰⁰ Lieven, *Nicholas II*, pp. 279-280.

⁵⁰¹ Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, p. 54.

⁵⁰² Hosking, *op. cit.*, pp. 336-337.

32. NATIONALISM AND THE NATIONS: (3) GREECE

East European nationalism was influenced more by the more mystical, blood-and-soil nationalism of Germany than by the more rationalist, civic nationalism of France. A particularly important influence coming from Germany was that of Johann Gottfried von Herder, whose concept of the unique essence of each nation was also to influence Russian Hegelian thinkers in the 1840s. Tom Gallagher calls this idea "romantic nationalism": "With its emphasis on the unique value of every ethnic group and on each group's 'natural right' to carve out a national home of its own, romantic nationalism was able to undermine the multi-cultural traditions of the Eastern world. When Herder hailed the Slavs as 'the coming leaders of Europe', intellectuals were encouraged to explore the past and all-too-often invent glorious historical pedigrees meant to give reborn nations the inalienable right to enjoy contemporary greatness. If this meant dominating territories shared by more than one ethnic group, then many nationalists justified such a course even if it meant that they were imitating the imperialists whose rule they were seeking to throw off...."

"The appeal of romantic nationalism for European public opinion was first revealed by the Greek War of Independence in the 1820s..."⁵⁰³

According to Daniel P. Payne, "the importance of Herder for East European nationalism" has been demonstrated by Peter Sugar. According to Sugar, Herder's concept of the Volk was transformed in the Eastern European context. In the concept of the Volk, Herder simply meant nationality and did not imply the nation as such. In his arguments against the search for the ideal state, Herder maintained that the concept of liberty must conform to the needs of each particular nationality. Sugar notes: 'This is a romantic and, even more, a humanitarian concept. It condemns those who place the state, even the ideal state, ahead of people.' Consequently, in Eastern Europe this contextualization on the basis of each particular nationality led to a unique messianism in the particularization of each Volk. In this particularization a 'confusion of nationality and nation, of cultural, political, and linguistic characteristics was further extended to justify the Volk's mission. This mission could be accomplished only if it had free play in a Volksstaat, nation-state.' Thus, the concept of the nation-state as it developed in Eastern Europe was very different from the Western understanding. In the East each Volk needed its own nation-state in order to fulfill its messianic mission rooted in the Volkville. Herder's romanticism combined with the political ideas of the West, creating the form of cultural-political nationalism that is uniquely its own."⁵⁰⁴

However, there were special factors that distinguished Balkan nationalism from German, Herderian nationalism. The most important of these was the role of the Orthodox Church. Whereas in Western Europe the Churches, with the exception of the Catholic Church in Ireland, played only a small role, in the

⁵⁰³ Gallagher, "Folly & Failure in the Balkans", *History Today*, September, 1999, p. 47.

⁵⁰⁴ Payne, "Nationalism and the Local Church: The Source of Ecclesiastical Conflict in the Orthodox Commonwealth", *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 35, No. 5, November 2007.

Balkans the Orthodox Church played a decisive part. We have seen how it was Metropolitan Germanos of Patras who actually raised the standard of revolution in the Peloponnese in 1821, and the Church was equally important in the Serbian revolution. At the same time, the Church by her nature, being an international community with a universalist message, was opposed to the divisive tendencies introduced by the various nationalisms.

Thus on the one hand the Orthodox Church supported the struggles for national independence insofar as they were struggles for the survival of the Orthodox faith against Islam. The Ottoman Muslim yoke had a similar effect in stimulating nationalism in the Balkans as Napoleon's victories had had in stimulating nationalism in Germany. And the Church was on the side of the people against the infidel oppressor.

On the other hand, the Church in the Ottoman Empire could not afford to identify too closely with the individual national revolutions. And this for two main reasons. First, because the revolutions had caused atrocities – for example, the wiping out of every Turkish man, woman and child in the Peloponnese (57,000 people) – that the Church could not possibly approve of. And secondly because while the Orthodox Christian people of the Balkans constituted a single *millet*, or people, ruled by a single head – the Ecumenical Patriarch, the individual nationalisms competed with each other and even fought wars against each other. Thus Serbs fought Bulgarians, and Bulgarians fought Greeks – and all three nations fought the Turks, not together, but in competition with each other. Even the Patriarch, who should have been the symbol of Orthodox unity, tended to further Greek interests at the expense of those of his Slav parishioners. This encouraged anti-clerical tendencies among the Slav nationalists.

Thus Payne writes: "With the advent of nationalism in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Eastern Europe, which led to the eventual dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the various nationalities revolted not only against their Ottoman overlords but also their clerical authorities, especially the Ecumenical Patriarch (EP). Under the leadership of the Greek patriarch, a process of Grecification had occurred to insure ecclesiastical unity in the millet. Instead of the use of Church Slavonic in the Slav churches, the Greek liturgy and practice was enforced, especially in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Additionally, the high taxes placed upon the Orthodox people by the hierarchical authorities to insure their positions with the Sublime Porte produced increasing anti-clericalism in the Balkan peoples. This anti-clericalism against the Greek bishops was also rooted in the Enlightenment ideas of Western Europe. Borrowing the Erastian model of church-state relations that developed in Western Europe, whereby the Church was placed under the authority of the state, East European secular nationalists, desiring their own independent churches, argued for the creation and subjection of national churches to the political authorities. As Aristeides Papadakis argues, 'Significantly, one of the first steps taken by these independent states was to separate the church within their frontiers from the authority of Constantinople. By declaring it autocephalous, by "nationalizing" it, they hoped to control it.'

“At the time of the development of nationalism *in the Balkans*, there were two differing opinions as to the direction of the polity to succeed the Ottoman Empire. On the one hand, many of the Phanariots believed that the Ottoman Empire eventually would become Greek, allowing for the resurrection of the Byzantine Empire. Thus, they did not support the various nationalist movements that led to the breakup of the Ottoman Empire. Instead, they looked to its natural devolution. This understanding was supported by the traditional Byzantine political ideology of the *oikoumene*, which holds that the one empire has only one church. In a modified position, Rigas Pheraios Vestinlis articulated an understanding of an Orthodox commonwealth of nations in the succeeding empire, with the EP as its head. However, the Western-educated secular nationalists contested the vision of Rigas and what Zakynthos calls ‘neo-byzantine universalism,’ employing instead the Enlightenment ideas of Voltaire to articulate the development of independent nation-states with autocephalous national churches. Adopting the secular national vision of the state with its concomitant national church led to the transmogrification of the Orthodox understanding of the ‘local church.’

“Greek sociologist Paschalis Kitromilides argues similarly, using Benedict Anderson’s concept of ‘imagined communities,’ that the national historiographies smoothed over the antinomical relationship between Orthodoxy and nationalism. He states: ‘It was the eventual abandonment of the ecumenicity of Orthodoxy, and the “nationalization” of the churches, that brought intense national conflicts into the life of the Orthodox Church and nurtured the assumption concerning the affinity between Orthodoxy and nationality.’ The various national histories created imagined national communities whereby the Church’s opposition to nationalism was dismissed and its support as a nation-building institution was promoted. Kitromilides argues that the Church instead opposed nationalism and the Enlightenment ideas underlying it in order to sustain its traditional theological position of being the ‘one’ Church. However, under the influence of secular nationalism, the Church’s position eventually changed, assuming a nationalist position, especially in regards to the Macedonian crisis of the late nineteenth century...”⁵⁰⁵

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On May 7, 1832, after the Battle of Navarino, Britain, France, Russia and Bavaria signed a treaty in London guaranteeing Greece’s independence and naming the seventeen-year-old Prince Otto von Wittelsbach (1815-67), son of King Ludwig I of Bavaria, as king. “As a good Classicist,” writes Evans, “Otto moved the capital from Nafplio to Athens, but he imported so many of his fellow countrymen into government and administration that his reign was popularly known in Greece as Bavarokratia, the rule of the Bavarians. In the following years Otto was to struggle vainly to retain control over events, though he won some support by backing Greek nationalist attempts to enlarge Greece’s borders to as to include many Greeks who were still under Ottoman rule, a policy that itself was hardly designed to bring stability to the region.”⁵⁰⁶

⁵⁰⁵ Payne, *op. cit.*

⁵⁰⁶ Evans, *The Pursuit of Power. Europe 1815-1914*, London: Penguin, 2017, p. 61.

And yet Greece's independence was purely nominal. The country had to bribe the Ottomans to recognize them, and Otto remained on his throne only thanks to the support of the European powers. When Byron was dying in Greece in 1824, the Duc d'Orléans had commented "that he was dying so that one day people would be able to eat sauerkraut at the foot of the Acropolis". He was not far from the truth; for Greece was now under a German Catholic king ruling through German ministers and maintained in power by German troops.

However, the Russians were not far away. Having signed the Peace of Adrianople with the Turks in 1829, they had no intention of overthrowing the Sultan. At the same time, they had the power to interfere on the Greeks' behalf if necessary. Thus, as Norman Lowe writes, "In 1833 the Russians sent a fleet and 10,000 troops to help the Sultan of Turkey deal with a rebellion in Anatolia, on the Asian side of the straits. There was international consternation as the other European powers feared the Russians would take Constantinople. But Nicolas I was far too shrewd [and legitimist] to risk a war with the whole of Europe. After the Turks had signed the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi (1833), Russian forces were withdrawn. The agreement was to run for eight years and included promises of mutual assistance as well as a Turkish guarantee to close the straits to all foreign warships. This was a great achievement for the Russians, since it meant they became special protectors of the 'sick man of Europe' and gave them a permanent excuse to interfere in Turkish affairs."⁵⁰⁷

However, not all the Greeks welcomed Russian protection... Until King Otto came of age, three regents were appointed by the Great Powers to rule Greece in his name: Colonel Heideck, a Philhellene and the only choice of the Tsar but a liberal Protestant, Count Joseph von Armansperg, a Catholic but also a Freemason, and George von Maurer, a liberal Protestant. Pressed by the British and French envoys, von Armansperg and von Maurer worked to make Greece as independent of Russia and the patriarchate in Constantinople as possible. Russian demands that the king (or at any rate his children) become Orthodox, and that the link with the patriarchate be preserved, were ignored... It was Maurer who was entrusted with working out a new constitution for the Church. He "found an illustrious collaborator, in the person of a Greek priest, Theocletus Pharmacides. This Pharmacides had received his education in Europe and his thought was exceedingly Protestant in nature; he was the obstinate enemy of the Ecumenical Patriarch and of Russia."⁵⁰⁸

Helped by Pharmacides, Maurer proceeded to work out a constitution that proposed autocephaly for the Church under a Synod of bishops, and the subordination of the Synod to the State on the model of the Bavarian and Russian constitutions, to the extent that "no decision of the Synod could be published or carried into execution without the permission of the government having been obtained".

⁵⁰⁷ Lowe, *Mastering Twentieth-Century Russian History*, Houndmills: Palgrave, 2002 p. 70.

⁵⁰⁸ Fr. Basile Sakkas, *The Calendar Question*, Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1973, p. 61.

As Frazee comments: "If ever a church was legally stripped of authority and reduced to complete dependence on the state, Maurer's constitution did it to the church of Greece."⁵⁰⁹

In spite of the protests of the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Tsar, and the walk-out of the archbishops of Rethymnon and Adrianople, this constitution was ratified by thirty-six bishops on July 26, 1833.

The conservative opponent of Pharmacides in the government was Protopresbyter Constantine Oikonomos. He said that the constitution was "from an ecclesiastical point of view invalid and non-existent and deposed by the holy Canons. For this reason, during the seventeen years of its existence it was unacceptable to all the Churches of the Orthodox, and no Synod was in communion with it."⁵¹⁰

Not only did the Ecumenical Patriarchate condemn the new Church: many Greeks in Greece were also very unhappy with their situation. In effect, the Greek Church had exchanged the uncanonical position of the patriarchate of Constantinople under Turkish rule for the even less canonical position of a Synod unauthorized by the patriarch and under the control of a Catholic king and a Protestant constitution! In addition to this, all monasteries with fewer than six monks were dissolved (425 out of 500, according to one estimate, 600 according to another), and heavy taxes imposed on the remaining monasteries. And very little money was given to a Church which had lost six to seven thousand clergy in the war, and whose remaining clergy had an abysmally low standard of education.

Among the westernising reforms envisaged at this time was the introduction of the new, Gregorian calendar. Thus Cosmas Flammiatos wrote: "First of all they were trying in many ways to introduce into the Orthodox States the so-called new calendar of the West, according to which they will jump ahead 12 days [now 13], so that when we have the first of the month they will be counting 13 [now 14]. Through this innovation they hope to confuse and overthrow the feastdays and introduce other innovations."⁵¹¹

And again: "The purpose of this seminary in Halki of Constantinople which has recently been established with cunning effort, is, among other things, to taint all the future Patriarchs and, in general, all the hierarchy of the East in accordance with the spirit of corruption and error, through the proselytism of the English, so that one day, by a resolution of an 'ecumenical council' the abolition of Orthodoxy and the introduction of the Luther-Calvinist heresy may be decreed; at the same time all the other schools train thousands and myriads of likeminded individuals and confederates among the clergy, the teachers and lay people from among the Orthodox youth."

⁵⁰⁹ Frazee, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

⁵¹⁰ Oikonomos, quoted by Bishop Macarius of Petra, 1973-2003: *Thirty Years of Ecclesiastical Developments: Trials-Captivity-Deliverance* (MS, translated from the Greek).

⁵¹¹ Flammiatos, cited in Monk Augustine, "To imerologiakon skhisma apo istorikis kai kanonikis apopseos exetazomenou" (The calendar schism from an historical and canonical point of view), *Agios Agathangelos Esphigmenitis*, 129, January-February, 1992, p. 12 (in Greek).

For his defence of Orthodoxy, Cosmas was imprisoned together with 150 monks of the Mega Spilaion monastery. The monks were released, but Cosmas died in prison through poisoning.⁵¹²

In 1843 “a conspiracy of leading civilian politicians and army veterans of the War of Independence in the 1820s staged a bloodless coup against the ‘Bavarocracy’ of German officials brought in by King Otto when he had been imposed on the country by the Great Powers in 1832. Storming out of their barracks, the soldiers gathered before Otto’s palace window, shouting ‘Long Live the Constitution!’ Reluctantly, the king yielded, appointing one of the leading conspirators, Andreas Metaxas (1790-1860), Prime Minister in what was now a constitutional monarchy with a restored legislative assembly elected by universal male suffrage. Otto never fully accepted the Constitution, and his continued intrigues against it, combined with his failure to produce an heir, eventually led to another conspiracy that overthrew him in 1863. Told to accept this fait accompli by Britain and France, who had called the shots in Greece throughout his reign, Otto went back to Munich, where he would regularly appear in the Bavarian Court in traditional Greek dress...”⁵¹³

In 1852 the schism between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Free Greek Church was healed. But there was no sign that the Greeks (on either side) had fully understood the cause of the schism - the evil doctrine of revolutionary nationalism. To this day, March 25 is a national holiday in Greece; those who died in the revolution are “ethnomartyrs” (a term unknown to the Holy Fathers); and the “great idea”, while watered down to correspond to the realities of modern Greece’s small-power status, remains a potent psychological force...

The question that arose after 1832 was: who were the Greeks? “Although,” as Roderick Beaton writes, “just about all the citizens of the kingdom with the exception of the king and his advisers who came from Bavaria, were united by the Greek language and the Orthodox religion, many more co-religionists and Greek speakers lived beyond its boundaries, in territories still under the control of the Ottomans. Since a state now existed, and the very concept of European statehood had previously been foreign to traditional Greek concepts of themselves, it followed that in order to live up convincingly to that concept, the Greek state would have to include all the Greeks. Greek irredentism is therefore as old as the Greek state, a logical consequence of the Romantic concept of nationhood used to define that state from the beginning.

“The inescapable requirement for the state to incorporate all its ‘nationals’ within its boundaries in order to justify its own self-definition, was first articulated in a famous speech to the Constituent Assembly in Athens in January 1844 by Ioannis Kolettis, a veteran strategist of the war of independence and soon to become prime minister: ‘Greece is geographically placed at the centre of

⁵¹² “A Biographical Note concerning Cosmas Flamiatos”, *Orthodox Christian Witness*, vol. XVIII, № 30 (833), March 18/31, 1985.

⁵¹³ Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

Europe, between East and West, her destiny in decline [i.e. the destiny of ancient Greece] to spread light to the West, but in her rebirth in the East. The former task our forefathers achieved, the latter falls to us. In the spirit of this oath [i.e. to liberate Greece] and of this great idea I have consistently seen the nation's representatives gathered here to decide the fate not only of Greece, but of the Greek race.'..."⁵¹⁴

In the same speech Kolettis went on to say: "The kingdom of Greece is not Greece; it is only a part, the smallest and poorest, of Greece. The Greek is not only he who inhabits the kingdom, but also he who lives in Janina, or Thessaloniki, or Serea, or Adrianople, or Constantinople, or Trebizond, or Crete, or Samos, or any other country of the Greek history or race. There are two great centers of Hellenism, Athens and Constantinople. Athens is only the capital of the kingdom; Constantinople is the great capital, the City, I Polis, the attraction and the hope of all the Hellenes."⁵¹⁵

So the revolutionary aim of the new nationalism was to unite Constantinople and Greek-speaking Anatolia – and perhaps, among the biggest dreamers, even the whole of the territory formerly ruled by Alexander the Great and the Byzantine autocrats! – to the Kingdom of Greece, although Athens and Constantinople were disunited not only politically but also ecclesiastically. Fortunately, the ecclesiastical schism, as we have seen, was healed in 1852. However, the political schism was never healed because the revolution failed disastrously during the second Greek revolution in 1922. The vast majority of Anatolian Greeks were indeed united with their Free Greek cousins, but only through an exchange of populations in 1922-23. Even after the collapse of the Ottoman empire, Constantinople and Anatolia remained in Turkish hands...

Sir Steven Runciman writes: "Throughout the nineteenth century, after the close of the Greek War of Independence, the Greeks within the Ottoman Empire had been in an equivocal position. Right up to the end of the Balkan Wars in 1913 they were far more numerous than their fellow-Greeks living within the boundaries of the Kingdom of Greece, and on average more wealthy. Some of them still took service under the Sultan. Turkish government finances were still largely administered by Greeks. There were Greeks in the Turkish diplomatic service, such as Musurus Pasha, for many years Ottoman Ambassador to the Court of St. James. Such men served their master loyally; but they were always conscious of the free Greek state, whose interests often ran counter to his. Under the easygoing rule of Sultans Abdul Medjit and Abdul Azis, in the middle of the century, no great difficulties arose. But the Islamic reaction under Abdul Hamit led to renewed suspicion of the Greeks, which was enhanced by the Cretan question and the war, disastrous for Greece, of 1897. The Young Turks who dethroned Abdul Hamit shared his dislike of the Christians, which the Balkan

⁵¹⁴ Beaton, "Romanticism in Greece", in Roy Porter and Mikulas Teich, *Romanticism in National Context*, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 95.

⁵¹⁵ Kolettis, in Glenny, *op. cit.* Italics mine (V.M.).

War seemed to justify. Participation by Greeks in Turkish administrative affairs declined and eventually was ended.

"For the Orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople the position throughout the century was particularly difficult. He was a Greek but he was not a citizen of Greece. By the oath that he took on his appointment he undertook to be loyal to the Sultan, even though the Sultan might be at war with the Kingdom of Greece. His flock, envious of the freedom of the Greeks of the Kingdom, longed to be united with them; but he could not lawfully encourage their longing. The dilemma that faced Gregory V in the spring of 1821 was shared, though in a less acute form, by all his successors. He no longer had any authority over the Greeks of Greece. Hardly had the Kingdom been established before its Church insisted on complete autonomy [i.e. autocephaly] under the Archbishop of Athens. It was to Athens, to the King of Greece, that the Greeks in Turkey now looked for the fulfilment of their aspirations. Had the Christian Empire been restored at Constantinople the Patriarch would indeed have lost much of his administrative powers; but he would have lost them gladly; for the Emperor would have been at hand to advise and admonish, and he would have enjoyed the protection of a Christian government. But as it was, he was left to administer, in a worsening atmosphere and with decreasing authority, a community whose sentimental allegiance was given increasingly to a monarch who lived far away, with whom he could not publicly associate himself, and whose kingdom was too small and poor to rescue him in times of peril. In the past the Russian Tsar had been cast by many of the Greeks in the role of saviour. That had had its advantages; for, though the Tsar continually let his Greek clients down, he was at least a powerful figure whom the Turks regarded with awe. Moreover he did not interfere with the Greeks' allegiance to their Patriarch. Whatever Russian ambitions might be, the Greeks had no intention of ending as Russian subjects. As it was, the emergence of an independent Greece lessened Russian sympathy. Greek politicians ingeniously played off Britain and France against Russia, and against each other and Russia found it more profitable to give her patronage to Bulgaria: which was not to the liking of the Greeks.

"We may regret that the Patriarchate was not inspired to alter its role. It was, after all, the Oecumenical [i.e. Universal] Patriarchate. Was it not its duty to emerge as leader of the Orthodox Oecumene? The Greeks were not alone in achieving independence in the nineteenth century. The Serbs, the Roumanians, and, later, the Bulgarians all threw off the Ottoman yoke. All of them were alive with nationalistic ardour. Could not the Patriarchate have become a rallying force for the Orthodox world, and so have checked the centrifugal tendencies of Balkan nationalism?

"The opportunity was lost. The Patriarchate remained Greek rather than oecumenical. We cannot blame the Patriarchs. They were Greeks, reared in the Hellene tradition of which the Orthodox Church was the guardian and from which it derived much of its strength. Moreover in the atmosphere of the nineteenth century internationalism was regarded as an instrument of tyranny and reaction. But the Patriarchate erred too far in the other direction. Its fierce and fruitless attempt to keep the Bulgarian Church in subjection to Greek

hierarchs, in the 1860s, did it no good and only increased bitterness. On Mount Athos, whose communities owed much to the lavish, if not disinterested, generosity of the Russian Tsars, the feuds between the Greek and Slav monasteries were far from edifying. This record of nationalism was to endanger the very existence of the Patriarchate in the dark days that followed 1922."⁵¹⁶

The philhellene Russian diplomat C.N. Leontiev wrote in the 1880s: "The movement of contemporary political nationalism is nothing other than the spread of cosmopolitan democratization with the difference only in the methods. There has been no creativity; the new Hellenes have not been able to think up anything in the sphere of higher interests except a reverent imitation of progressive-democratic Europe. As soon as the privileged Turks, who represented something like a foreign aristocracy among the Greeks, had removed themselves, nothing was found except the most complete plutocratic and grammatocratic egalitarianism. When a people does not have its own privileged, more or less immobile classes, the richest and most educated of the citizens must, of course, gain the superiority over the others. Therefore in an egalitarian-liberal order a very mobile plutocracy and grammatocracy having no traditions or heritage inevitably develop. At that time [1821-32] the new Greece could not produce a king of their own blood, to such a degree did her leaders, the heroes of national liberty, suffer from demagogic jealousy! It, this new Greece, could not even produce a president of her native Greek blood, Count Kapodistrias, without soon killing him."

According to Leontiev, the Greek revolution, which continued throughout the nineteenth century, represented a new kind of Orthodox nationalism, a nationalism influenced by the ideas of the French revolution that did not, as in earlier centuries, seek to strengthen national feeling for the sake of the faith, but rather used religious feeling for the sake of the nation. This was the reason why, in spite of the fact that the clergy played such a prominent role in the Greek revolution, their influence fell sharply after the revolution in those areas liberated from the Turks. "The Greek clergy complain that in Athens religion is in decline (that is, the main factor insulating [the Greeks] from the West has weakened), and makes itself felt much more in Constantinople than in Athens, and in general more under the Turks than in pure Hellas."⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁶ Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity*, Cambridge University Press, 1968, pp. 407-410.

⁵¹⁷ Leontiev, "Natsional'naia politika kak orudie vsemirnoj revoliutsii" (National Politics as a Weapon of Universal Revolution), in *Vostok, Rossia i Slaviansstvo*, *op. cit.*, pp. 513, 514-515. However, religious zeal had by no means been banished from the Free Church of Greece. Thus "in 1901 there were riots in Athens over a new translation of the New Testament into demotic Greek, carried out in London and published in Athens by the daily newspaper, *Acropolis*. After it was condemned as blasphemous by the Patriarchate, students took to the streets, trashed the paper's offices, and on 8 November held a mass demonstration outside the Temple of Zeus to demand the excommunication of the translators. The Prime Minister called in the army, who shot eight demonstrators dead and wounded another seventy. In the ensuing furore he was forced to resign, along with the Metropolitan, who had approved the translation." (Richard Evans, *The Pursuit of Power. Europe 1815-1914*, London: Penguin, 2017, p. 462).

"The religious idea (Orthodoxy) was taken by the Greek movement only as an aid. There were no systematic persecutions of Orthodoxy itself in Turkey; but there did exist very powerful and crude civil offences and restrictions for people not of the Mohammedan confession. It is understandable that in such a situation it was easy not to separate faith from race. It was even natural to expect that the freedom of the race would draw in after it the exaltation of the Church and the strengthening of the clergy through the growth of faith in the flock; for powerful faith in the flock always has as its consequence love for the clergy, even if it is very inadequate. With a strong faith (it doesn't matter of what kind, whether unsophisticated and simple in heart or conscious and highly developed) mystical feeling both precedes moral feeling and, so to speak, crowns it. It, this mystical feeling, is considered the most important, and for that reason a flock with living faith is always more condescending also to the vices of its clergy than a flock that is indifferent. A strongly believing flock is always ready with joy to increase the rights, privileges and power of the clergy and willingly submits to it even in not purely ecclesiastical affairs.

"In those times, when the peoples being freed from a foreign yoke were led by leaders who had not experienced the 'winds' of the eighteenth century, the emancipation of nations did not bring with it a weakening of the influence of the clergy and religion itself, but even had the opposite effect: it strengthened both the one and the other. In Russian history, for example, we see that from the time of Demetrius Donskoj and until Peter I the significance, even the political significance of the clergy was constantly growing, and Orthodoxy itself was becoming stronger and stronger, was spreading, and entering more and more deeply into the flesh and blood of the Russian nation. The liberation of the Russian nation from the Tatar yoke did not bring with it either the withdrawal of the clergy from the political sphere or a lessening of its weight and influence or religious indifference in the higher classes or cosmopolitanism in morals and customs. The demands of Russian national emancipation in the time of St. Sergei of Radonezh and Prince Ivan Vasilievich III were not combined in the souls of the people's leaders with those ideals and ideas with which national patriotism has been yoked in the nineteenth century in the minds of contemporary leaders. What seemed important then were the rights of the faith, the rights of religion, the rights of God; the rights of that which Vladimir Soloviev so successfully called God's power.

"In the nineteenth century what was thought to be important first of all was the rights of man, the rights of the popular mob, the rights of the people's power. That is the difference."

Leontiev concludes: "Now (after the proclamation of 'the rights of man') every union, every expulsion, every purification of the race from outside admixtures gives only cosmopolitan results [by which he means 'democratization within and assimilation (with other countries) without'].

"Then, when nationalism had in mind not so much itself as the interests of religion, the aristocracy, the monarch, etc., then it involuntarily produced itself. And whole nations and individual people at that time became more varied, more original and more powerful.

"Now, when nationalism seeks to liberate and form itself, to group people not in the name of the various, but interrelated interests of religion, the monarchy and privileged classes, but in the name of the unity and freedom of the race itself, the result turns out everywhere to be more or less uniformly democratic. All nations and all people are becoming more and more similar and as a consequence more and more spiritually poor.

"In our time political, state nationalism is becoming the destroyer of cultural, life-style nationalism."⁵¹⁸

⁵¹⁸ Leontiev, "Plody natsional'nykh dvizhenij na pravoslavnom Vostoke", op. cit., pp. 536-537, 538.

33. NATIONALISM AND THE NATIONS: (4) SERBIA

As we have seen, a major idea underpinning the varieties of Balkan nationalist ideologies was that the national state had the right to extend its boundaries to include everyone of the same race within its territory, even if these ethnic enclaves had for centuries belonged to other states. Since no state was ethnically homogeneous, and since almost every nation had ethnic enclaves in more than one state, this was a recipe for almost permanent nationalist warfare and revolution, and especially in the bewildering patchwork of interwoven national enclaves that constituted the Balkans. The most consistent and determined advocates of this idea were the Serbs...

As we have seen, the Greek revolution was to a large extent inspired by the ideology of the French revolution. This was not the case in Serbia, which had very few western-educated intellectuals infected by this ideology. But in both countries' liberation the Orthodox Church played an important role.

There were two Serbian Orthodox Churches: the metropolitanate of Karlovtsy in Slavonia, founded in 1713, which by the end of the nineteenth century had six dioceses with about a million faithful⁵¹⁹, and the Peć patriarchate, which was abolished by the Ecumenical Patriarch Samuel in 1766, but which recovered its autocephaly in the course of the revolution.⁵²⁰ In spite of this administrative division, and foreign oppression, the Serbian Church preserved the fire of faith in the people. "For the Cross and Golden Freedom" was the battle-cry.

In 1791 Austria-Hungary ended its war with Turkey at the Treaty of Sistovo. Simon Winder writes: "A critical element at Sistov, now the Danubian Bulgarian town of Svishtov, was the decision to hand over Belgrade to the Turks. This gesture was designed to be generous enough to ensure that fighting could come to an end and troops moved to France, but it had head-spinning and quite unintended consequences. If Belgrade had been part of the new Habsburg Empire as it emerged during the following decade, then not only would Vienna have controlled the only major hub in the northern Balkans, but the Serbs would have become an important group in the Empire much like the Czechs, rather than just a small element in parts of Hungary. The history of the nineteenth century then takes a dazzlingly different turn. As it was, the Serbs soon revolted and pushed the Turks out of Belgrade on their own. This formed the kernel of an independent state that would never have been allowed to exist if it had still been under Habsburg rule."⁵²¹

But the Serbian revolution was hindered by the rivalry of its two main peasant leaders, Karadjordje and Obrenović.

⁵¹⁹ Adrian Fortescue, *The Orthodox Eastern Church*, London: Catholic Truth Society, 1920, p. 308.

⁵²⁰ The Serbian Peć Patriarchate was founded as an autocephalous archiepiscopate by St. Savva in 1218-19, raised to the rank of a patriarchate with its see in Peć in 1375, and abolished in 1766. It should not be confused with the Bulgarian Ochrid archiepiscopate, which was founded by Emperor John Tsimiskēs in Preslava in 971, moved to Sophia, Voden, Prespa and finally Ochrid, and was abolished on January 16, 1767.

⁵²¹ Winder, *Danubia*, London: Picador, 2013, p. 286.

"Black George" Karadjordje took command of the first uprising in 1804, which paradoxically was fought by the Serbian peasants in the name of the Sultan against four Dahi, local Muslim lords who had rebelled against the Sultan's authority and had begun to oppress the Serbian peasantry. As a result of Karadjordje's victories over the Dahi, he was able to extract some concessions from the Sultan for the Serbian pashalik. But the Serbs could not hope to liberate their nation fully and permanently from the Ottomans without the active support of the Russians, who in 1806 declared war on the Porte. However, in 1812, the Russian Tsar Alexander was forced to sign the Treaty of Bucharest with the Sultan and withdraw his troops from the Balkan to face Napoleon's Great Army in Russia. And so in 1813 the Ottomans were free to invade Serbia, Karadjordje was forced to flee, and his rival Obrenović took over the leadership of the liberation movement.

Several Serbs were martyred at this time, including the holy New Martyr Paisius who was igumen of the Annunciation monastery in Trnava near Cacak. After the collapse of Karageorge's revolt in 1813, the Turks began a reign of terror against the Serbs. Disease also swept the area because of the many bodies left unburied. The people attempted another revolt under Hadj-Prodan Gligorijevic, and the monks of Trnava became involved in it.

The rebellion took place on the Feast of the Cross (September 14), but it was crushed by the Turks. Many people were captured, and some were executed on the spot as a warning to others. Some of the prisoners were sent to Suleiman Pasha in Belgrade, among whom were Sts Paisius and Avvakum. The holy deacon Avakum sang "God is with us" (from Compline) in the prison cell, while St Paisius prayed. The Turks offered to free anyone who would convert to Islam. Some of the prisoners agreed to this, but not St Paisius, who was taken from prison and forced to carry a stake to the place of execution. He was impaled, and the stake was set into the ground. The holy martyr exclaimed, "Glory to God." Then the vizier clapped his hands to signal his soldiers to draw their swords and begin killing some of the other prisoners. Forty-eight people were killed, and their bodies were raised up on posts. After suffering for some time, St Paisius surrendered his soul to God, thereby obtaining the crown of martyrdom on December 17, 1814.

"In 1817," writes Tim Judah, "Karadjordje slipped back into Serbia. Sensing danger for both himself and his plans, Obrenović sent his agents who murdered Karadjordje with an axe. His skinned head was stuffed and sent to the sultan. This act was to spark off a feud between the families which was periodically to convulse Serbian politics until 1903.

"Miloš Obrenović was as rapacious as any Turk had been in collecting taxes. As his rule became ever more oppressive, there were seven rebellions against him including three major uprisings between 1815 and 1830. In 1830 the sultan nevertheless formally accepted Miloš's hereditary princship."⁵²²

⁵²² Judah, *The Serbs*, London: Yale University Press, 1997, pp. 51-52, 52-54.

Mazower writes: "The two new states [Serbia and Greece] were impoverished, rural countries. Serbia was, in Lamartine's words, 'an ocean of forests', with more pigs than humans. Serbian intellectual life in the Habsburg lands was far more advanced than in Belgrade. Perhaps 800,000 Greeks inhabited the new Greek Kingdom, while more than 2 million still remained subjects of the Porte. No urban settlement in Greece came close to matching the sophistication and wealth of Ottoman cities such as Smyrna, Salonika and the capital itself. There were, to be sure, impressive signs of revitalization for those who wished to look: the rapidly expanding new towns built on modern grid patterns which replaced the old Ottoman settlements in Athens, Patras, Tripolis and elsewhere, for example, or the neo-classical mansions and public buildings commissioned by newly independent government. 'some barracks, a hospital, a prison built on the model of our own,' wrote Blanqui from Belgrade in 1841, 'announce the presence of an emergent civilization.' In fact, similar trends of town planning and European architecture were transforming Ottoman cities as well.

"The inhabitants of the new states were as viciously divided among themselves in peace as they had been in war. In Serbia adherents of the Karageorge and Obrenović factions tussled for power, locals vied with the so-called 'Germans' (Serb immigrants from the Habsburg lands), Turcophiles fought Russophiles. In Greece there were similar struggles between regional factions, between supporters of the various Powers, who each sponsored parties of their own, and between 'autochthones' and 'heterochthones'. These divisions embittered politics from the start..."⁵²³

The early history of the Serbian principedom was not inspiring. Karadjordje had killed his stepfather before being killed by his godfather, and the pattern of violence continued. But "behind the drama of intrigue, shoot-outs and murder," writes Misha Glenny, "lay a serious struggle concerning the constitutional nature of the Serbian proto-state. Karadjordje wanted to establish a system of monarchical centralism while his baronial opponents were fighting for an oligarchy in which each leader would reign supreme in his own locality. A third, weaker force was made up of tradesmen and intellectuals from Vojvodina in the Habsburg Empire. They argued for an independent judiciary and other institutions to curb the power of both Karadjordje and the regional commanders. The modernizing influence of the Vojvodina Serbs was restricted to the town of Belgrade."⁵²⁴

Gradually the monarchical idea prevailed over the oligarchical one. But somehow the idea of the sacred person of the monarch, and the sacred horror at the thought of regicide, never caught on in Serbia... For, as Christopher Clark writes, "The pairing of rival dynasties, an exposed location between the Ottoman and the Austrian empire and a markedly undifferentiated political culture dominated by peasant smallholders: these factors in combination ensured that monarchy remained an embattled institution. It is striking how few of the nineteenth-century Serbian regents died on the throne of natural causes. The

⁵²³ Mazower, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

⁵²⁴ Glenny, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

principality's founder, Prince Miloš Obrenović, was a brutal autocrat whose reign was scarred by frequent rebellions. In the summer of 1839, Miloš abdicated in favour of his elder son, Milan, who was so ill with the measles that he was still unaware of his elevation when he died thirteen days later. The reign of the younger son, Mihailo, came to a premature halt when he was deposed by a rebellion in 1842, making way for the installation of a Karadjordjević – none other than Alexandar, the son of 'Black George'. But in 1858, Alexandar, too, was forced to abdicate, to be succeeded by Mihailo, who returned to the throne in 1860. Mihailo was no more popular during his second reign than he had been during the first; eight years later he was assassinated, together with a female cousin, in a plot that may have been supported by the Karadjordjević clan."⁵²⁵

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In 1844 Ilija Garašanin, Minister of Internal Affairs under Prince Alexander, published his *Načertanije*, or "Blueprint", "a Programme for the National and Foreign Policy of Serbia". "Garašanin's project," writes Misha Glenny, "was informed by a historicist approach, recalling the supposed halcyon days of Tsar Dušan's medieval Serbian empire, and by a linguistic-cultural criterion. The sentiment underlying the *Načertanije* seemed to imply that where there was any doubt, it could be assumed that a south Slav was a Serb, whether he knew it or not."⁵²⁶

The *Načertanije*, according to John Etty, "was the main development in Serbian nationalism. Though concerned about upsetting them, this secret document identified Turkey and Austria-Hungary as obstacles to Serbian greatness and detailed, in order of ease of acquisition, the annexation of all Serbian-speaking regions. Although implementation was delayed by domestic disruption, such expansionist aspirations were significant. Before 1890, Nikolai Pašić (future Prime Minister) referred to the *Načertanije* when he explained that 'the Serbs strive for the unification of all Serb tribes on the basis of tradition, memory and the historical past of the Serb race.'"⁵²⁷

"It would be difficult," writes Clark, "to overstate the influence of this document on generations of Serb politicians and patriots; in time it became the Magna Carta of Serb nationalism. Garašanin opened his memorandum with the observation that Serbia is 'small, but must not remain in this condition'. The first commandment of Serbian policy, he argued, must be the 'principle of national unity'; by which he meant the unification of all Serbs within the boundaries of a Serbian state. 'Where a Serb dwells, that is Serbia.' The historical template for this expansive vision of Serbian statehood was the medieval empire of Stephan Dušan, a vast swathe of territory encompassing most of the present-day Serbian republic, along with the entirety of present-day Albania, most of Macedonia, and all of Central and Southern Greece, but not Bosnia, interestingly enough.

⁵²⁵ Clark, *The Sleepwalkers. How Europe Went to War in 1914*, London: Penguin, 2013, p. 6.

⁵²⁶ Misha Glenny, *The Balkans, 1804-1999*, London: Granta Books, 2000, p. 46.

⁵²⁷ Etty, "Serbian Nationalism and the Great War", *History Today*, February 27, 2014.

“Tsar Dušan’s empire had supposedly collapsed after a defeat at the hands of the Turks on Kosovo Field on 28 June 1389. But this setback, Garašanin argued, had not undermined the Serbian state’s legitimacy; it had merely interrupted its historical existence. The ‘restoration’ of a Greater Serbia unifying all Serbs was thus no innovation, but the expression of an ancient historical right. ‘They cannot accuse [us] of seeking something new, unfounded, of constituting a revolution or an upheaval, but rather everyone must acknowledge that it is politically necessary, that it was founded in very ancient times and has its roots in the former political and national life of the Serbs.’ Garašanin’s argument thus exhibited that dramatic foreshortening of historical time that can sometimes be observed in the discourses of integral nationalism; it rested, moreover, upon the fiction that Tsar Dušan’s sprawling, multi-ethnic, composite, medieval polity would be conflated with the modern idea of a culturally and linguistically homogeneous nation-state. Serb patriots saw no inconsistency here, since they argued that virtually all the inhabitants of these lands were essentially Serbs. Vuk Karadžić, architect of the modern Serbo-Croat literary language and author of a famous nationalist tract, *Srbi svi i svuda* (Serbs all and everywhere, published in 1836), spoke of a nation of 5 million Serbs speaking the ‘Serbian language’ and scattered from Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Banat of Temesvar (eastern Hungary, now in western Romania), the Bačka (a region extending from northern Serbia into southern Hungary), Croatia, Dalmatia and the Adriatic coast from Trieste to northern Albania. Of course, there were some in these lands, Karadžić conceded (he was referring in particular to the Croats), ‘who still find it difficult to call themselves Serbs, but it seems likely that they will gradually become used to it.’

“The unification programme committed the Serbian polity, as Garašanin knew, to a long struggle with the two great land empires, the Ottoman and the Austrian, whose dominions encroached on the Greater Serbs of the nationalist imagination. In 1844, the Ottoman Empire still controlled most of the Balkan peninsula. ‘Serbia must constantly strive to break stone after stone of the façade of the Turkish State and absorb them into itself, so that it can use this good material on the good old foundations of the Serbian Empire to build and establish a great new Serbian state. Austria, too, was destined to be a foe. In Hungary, Croatia-Slavonia and Istria-Dalmatia there were Serbs (not to mention many Croats who had not yet embraced Serbdom) supposedly awaiting liberation from Habsburg rule and unification under the umbrella of the Belgrade state.

“Until 1918, when many of its objectives were met, Garašanin’s memorandum remained the key policy blueprint for Serbia’s rulers, while its precepts were broadcast to the population at large through a drip-feed of nationalist propaganda partly coordinated from Belgrade and partly driven by patriotic networks within the press. The Greater Serbian vision was not just a question of government policy, however, or even of propaganda. It was woven deeply into the culture and identity of the Serbs. The memory of Dušan’s empire resonated within the extraordinarily vivid tradition of Serbian popular epic songs. These were long ballads, often sung to the melancholy accompaniment of the one-stringed gusla, in which singers and listeners relived the great archetypal moments of Serbian history. In villages and markets across the Serbian lands, these songs established a remarkably intimate linkage between poetry, history and identity. An esrly

observer of this was the German historian Leopold von Ranke, who noted in his history of Serbia, published in 1829, that 'the history of the nation, developed by its poetry, has through it been converted into a national property, and is thus preserved in the memory of the people'...

"The commitment to the redemption of 'lost' Serbian lands, coupled with the predicaments of an exposed location between two land empires, endowed the Serbian foreign policy of the Serbian state with a number of distinct features. The first of these was an indeterminacy of geographical focus. The commitment in principle to a Greater Serbia was one thing, but where exactly should the process of redemption begin? In the Vojvodina, within the Kingdom of Hungary? In Ottoman Kosovo, known as 'Old Serbia'? In Bosnia, which had never been part of Dušan's empire but contained a substantial population of Serbs? Or in Macedonia to the south, still under Ottoman rule? The mismatch between the visionary objective of 'unification' and the meager financial and military resources available to the Serbian state meant that Belgrade policy makers had no choice but to respond opportunistically to rapidly changing conditions on the Balkan peninsula. As a result, the orientation of Serbian foreign policy between 1844 and 1914 swung like a compass needle from one point on the state's periphery to another. The logic of these oscillations was as often as not reactive. In 1848, when Serbs in the Vojvodina rose up against the Magyarizing policies of the Hungarian revolutionary government, Garašanin assisted them with supplies and volunteer forces from the principality of Serbia. In 1875, all eyes were on Herzegovina, where the Serbs had risen in revolt against the Ottomans – among those who rushed to the scene of that struggle were [the future Prime Minister] Pašić and the military commander and future King Petar Karadjordjević, who fought there under an alias. After 1901, following an abortive local uprising against the Turks, there was intensified interest in liberating the Serbs of Ottoman Macedonia. In 1908, when the Austrians formally annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina (having held them under military occupation since 1878), the annexed areas shot to the top of the agenda. In 1912 and 1913, however, Macedonia was once again the first priority.

"Serbian foreign policy had to struggle with the discrepancy between the visionary nationalism that suffused the country's political culture and the complex ethnopolitical realities of the Balkans. Kosovo was at the centre of the Serbian mythscape, but it was not, in ethnic terms, an unequivocally Serbian territory. Muslim Albanian speakers had been in the majority there since at least the eighteenth century. Many of the Serbs Vuk Karadžić counted in Dalmatia and Istria were in fact Croats, who had no wish to join a greater Serbian state. Bosnia, which had historically never been part of Serbia, contained many Serbs (they constituted 43 per cent of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878, when the two provinces were occupied by Austria-Hungary) but it also contained Catholic Croats (about 20 per cent) and Bosnian Muslims (about 33 per cent). (The survival of a substantial Muslim minority was one of the distinctive features of Bosnia – in Serbia itself, the Muslim communities had for the most part been

harassed into emigration, deported or killed during the long struggle for independence.)”⁵²⁸

The concept of the homogeneous, or near-homogeneous Serbian national state, corresponding to St. Sava’s concept of the Serbian state, was in danger of being undermined by that of the international empire. Bishop Nikolai Velimirović, wrote: “What does the national church mean? It denotes an independent church organization, with its central authority from the people; with a national priesthood, the folk language and the national folk expression of the faith. On the other hand, an international or non-national church, with a center outside of the people, with a priesthood from all over, with a language other than a native population, is imperial. and with a uniform, uniformed expression of his religion. What is more natural and useful? Undoubtedly the national church. It has its own justification in the Gospel. The Savior himself commanded his apostles: Go and teach all nations. With these words He recognized the nations as natural units of His church of the universe.”

“The People's State of St. Sava meant the homeland, the land of our fathers, in which one and the same people live. A nation state stretches as far as the sword can reach, but the sword must reach only to the borders of a national state, that is, the fatherland. If the state is allowed to spread as long as the sword can go without this border, then the state ceases to be national, it ceases to be a fatherland and becomes an empire. In this case the state gains in territory but loses in morals; it gains in the material realm but is diminished in the intensity of spiritual and moral power. [This is] because it becomes a mixture of blood, language and peoples, and such a mixture produces fear, restlessness, selfishness and the feeling of constant uncertainty.”⁵²⁹

⁵²⁸ Clark, *The Sleepwalkers. How Europe Went to War in 1914*, London: Penguin, 2013, pp. 21-25.

⁵²⁹ Velimirović,, “The Nationalism of St. Sava,” (1935) translation by Dr. Matthew Raphael Johnson.

33. NATIONALISM AND THE NATIONS: (5) MONTENEGRO

The Serbs would need allies in their struggle, and Garašanin looked to Russia as a likely patron. But Nicholas I's foreign minister Nesselrode was not interested in the idea of a Greater Serbia. For that would inevitably drag Russia into yet another war with the Ottoman empire...

However, the Russians were already fully committed to supporting one corner of the Serbian lands, Montenegro, a tiny principality on the Adriatic coast that was *de jure* part of the Ottoman Empire, but *de facto*, as Norman Russell writes, "autonomous under the vague suzerainty of Russia. Since the end of the seventeenth century Montenegro had been ruled by a member of the Petrovich family, who was also the bishop, and who passed on the succession to a nephew or cousin."⁵³⁰ Its history shows that Tennyson's calling it "a rough rock-throne of freedom" was well-merited.

Probably the greatest of the Montenegrin Prince-Bishops was Petar I, who became a monk at the age of twelve and metropolitan at the age of twenty-three. "He ruled almost half a century, from 1782 to 1830. Petar I was a wise bishop and a great military commander who won many crucial victories against the Ottomans, including at Martinici and Krusi in 1796. With these victories, Petar I liberated and consolidated control over the Highlands that had been the focus of constant warfare, and also strengthened bonds with the Bay of Kotor, and consequently the aim to expand into the southern Adriatic coast.

"In 1806, as French Emperor Napoleon advanced toward the Bay of Kotor, Montenegro, aided by several Russian battalions and a fleet of Dmitry Senyavin, went to war against the invading French forces. Undeclared in Europe, Napoleon's army was however forced to withdraw after defeats at Cavtat and at Herceg-Novi. In 1807, the Russian-French treaty ceded the Bay to France. The peace lasted less than seven years; in 1813, the Montenegrin army, with ammunition support from Russia and Britain, liberated the Bay from the French. An assembly held in Dobrota resolved to unite the Bay of Kotor with Montenegro. But at the Congress of Vienna, with Russian consent, the Bay was instead granted to Austria. In 1820, to the north of Montenegro, the Montenegrins won a major battle against an Ottoman force from Bosnia.

"During his long rule, Petar strengthened the state by uniting the often quarreling tribes, consolidating his control over Montenegrin lands, and introducing the first laws in Montenegro. He had unquestioned moral authority strengthened by his military successes. His rule prepared Montenegro for the subsequent introduction of modern institutions of the state: taxes, schools and larger commercial enterprises. When he died, he was by popular sentiment proclaimed a saint."⁵³¹

⁵³⁰ Norman Russell, review of Zika Prvulovich, *Prince-Bishop Njegosh's Religious Philosophy*, in *Sobornost*, vol. 7, no. 2, 1985, p. 61.

⁵³¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prince-Bishopric_of_Montenegro

St. Petar always lived in a narrow monastic cell. His incorrupt relics and many healings bear witness to his sanctity.⁵³²

He died in 1830 and was succeeded by his nephew, Petar Petrovic Njegoš, who was then only seventeen years old. "He was nevertheless immediately tonsured and three years later sent to Russia to be made a bishop. He had not had any inclination towards the ecclesiastical life but accepted the burden as part of his duty to his people.

"He was a good and enlightened ruler, attempting in very different circumstances to create the rudiments of a modern state. On his return from Russia to Cetinje, the capital, he opened the first school. He built cisterns and a windmill, and opened a gunpowder works. The last project must have commended itself to the warlike people, but when he attempted to introduce a modest degree of taxation they rebelled. The exploitation of the situation by Austria and Turkey was only one of the many serious problems which continually confronted him. Njegosh was acutely conscious of his lonely isolation. 'I am a ruler among barbarians and a barbarian among rulers,' he once exclaimed. Under the strain of single-handed government his health broke down, and he died in 1851 at the age of thirty-eight."⁵³³.

In view of the Serbian wars of the 1990s, it is important to note the long-term influence of Njegoš's poem, *The Mountain Wreath* (1847), which "glorified the mythical tyrant-slayer and national martyr Miloš Obilić and called for the renewal of the struggle against alien rule. *The Mountain Wreath* entered the Serb national canon and has stayed there ever since."⁵³⁴

The poem glorifies the mass slaughter of Muslims who refuse to convert to Christianity. Thus the principal character, *Vladyka Danilo*, says: "The blasphemers of Christ's Name We will baptize with water or with blood! We'll drive the plague out of the pen! Let the son of horror ring forth, A true altar on a blood-stained rock!"

In another poem Njegoš writes that "God's dearest sacrifice is a boiling stream of tyrant's blood".⁵³⁵ A defensive armed struggle against the infidel for the sake of Christ can be a good deed. But there is little that is Christian here. Even Bishop Nikolai Velimirović, an admirer of Njegoš, had to admit: "Njegoš's Christology is almost rudimentary. No Christian priest has ever said less about Christ than this metropolitan from Cetinje."⁵³⁶ Some of his ideas, such as that of the pre-existent celestial Adam appear to be gnostic.⁵³⁷

⁵³² See <https://oca.org/saints/lives/2015/10/18/108067-st-peter-of-cetinje>.

⁵³³ Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

⁵³⁴ Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

⁵³⁵ Quotations in Anzulović, *Heavenly Serbia*, London and New York: New York University Press, 1999, pp. 51-52, 55.

⁵³⁶ Velimirović, *Religija Njegoševa* (The Religion of Njegoš), p. 166, quoted in Anzulović, p. 55.

⁵³⁷ Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

In 1852, Njegoš was succeeded by his nephew Danilo, who wanted to marry. So he "refused to be ordained bishop and turned the prince-bishopric into an ordinary secular principedom."⁵³⁸

Njegoš's bloodthirsty and only superficially Christian tradition was continued by such figures as the poet Vuk Karadžić, who called the Serbs "the greatest people on the planet" and boosted the nation's self-esteem "by describing a culture 5,000 years old and claiming that Jesus Christ and His apostles had been Serbs."⁵³⁹ However, it must be remembered that the truly Christian tradition of St. Savva continued to exist alongside the bloodthirsty one in Serbia...

In 1918 Montenegrin statehood and independence was crushed by King Alexander I of Serbia. However, in the 1990s, after the collapse of the unified state of Yugoslavia, Montenegro recovered its independence. It remains dispute, both in Church and State, to the present day...

⁵³⁸ Adrian Fortescue, *The Orthodox Eastern Church*, London: Catholic Truth Society, 1920, p. 309.

⁵³⁹ Zamoyiski, *Holy Madness*, p. 318.

35. NATIONALISM AND THE NATIONS: (6) ROMANIA

Romania, unlike the other Balkan Christian States, had never had a long spell as a unified, independent State. The reign of Stephen the Great in the fifteenth century was the nearest they ever came to it; but this brief moment of genuine Romanian Orthodox autocracy, sandwiched between the fall of the Byzantine autocracy and the rise of the Russian one, had been snuffed out by the Ottoman sultans, who handed over administration of Wallachia and Moldavia to rich Greek Phanariots from Constantinople. From the end of the sixteenth century until 1711, Romanian rulers were crowned by the Ecumenical Patriarch, but the Ottomans took over closer control thereafter. As for the Church, it was under the Serbian Church in medieval times, and under Constantinople thereafter, while its liturgy was in Slavonic. The Romanian language was introduced in the seventeenth century, but the Slavonic script was not changed to Latin until the end of the nineteenth.⁵⁴⁰

Closer geographically to Russia than Bulgaria or Serbia, but without the Slavic blood ties that linked those States to Russia (although there were many Slavic words in the Romanian language), Romania finally regained her unity and independence as a result, first, of Russia's gradual weakening of Ottoman power in a series of wars (between 1711 and 1829, seven major wars were fought on Romanian territory), and then of the power vacuum created by Russia's defeat in the Crimean War.

Dan Ioan Mureşan writes: "During the last Russian occupation, the Holy Synod of the Russian Church named Gavril Bănulescu Bodoni as exarch (1787-92, 1806-12), interfering directly in the jurisdiction of the ecumenical patriarchate. This prelate of Romanian origin encouraged a movement of opposition against Greek influence that led directly to the autocephaly of the reunited Romanian Church. In 1812, after the annexation of the eastern half of Moldavia (Bessarabia) by the Russian Empire, Bodoni became the new metropolitan of Chişinău, developing here a Romanian cultural politics. But all his Russian successors strove for the integration of the diocese in the bosom of the Russian Church. One of them even confiscated all the Romanian books in the monasteries and burnt them in an unmatched *auto-da-fé*."

A movement towards Romanian independence began during the Greek revolution of 1821. "In January 1821," writes Glenny, "Tudor Vladimirescu, a minor boyar and former soldier in the Russian army, led an uprising of militiamen whose primary aim was to depose the Greek prince, the *hospodar*, and banish Phanariot rule from the two Principalities, Wallachia and Moldavia. Throughout the eighteenth century the *hospodars* had sucked the cultural and economic lifeblood out of the Principalities, as illustrated by the mutation of the Greek word *kiverneo*, meaning 'to govern', into its Romanian derivative *chiverniseala*, which means 'to get rich'. Subordinate to the Porte, the *hospodars* administered an economic region that forced Romania's indigenous aristocracy, the boyars, to sell a large part of their produce to Constantinople at prices fixed below the value of

⁵⁴⁰ Runciman, *op. cit.*, pp. 25, 379.

the goods in Western Europe. At a time when the Ottoman Empire's ability to harvest declining resources was under pressure, the *hospodar* system, which ensured the steady flow of annual tribute, commodities and tax revenue, was extremely useful.

"The Vladimirescu uprising was driven by hostility to Greeks. Herein lies a bizarre paradox: carried out by Romanians in the heart of Wallachia, the uprising was conceived and executed as the first act of the Greek Revolution. It was intended to soften up the Principalities' defences to facilitate Alexander Ypsilantis's invasion from Russia into Moldavia. The affair was planned by the Philiki Etairia whose leadership hoped it would trigger a wave of instability throughout the Empire, leading to the eventual liberation not of the Romanians but of the Greeks.

"Vladimirescu and Ypsilantis failed to ignite a broader revolution because they did not receive the expected support from Russia. St. Petersburg and Istanbul were old enemies, but Tsar Alexander was deeply conservative and felt obliged to resist revolution wherever it occurred, whether in Russia or in neighbouring empires. While it was legitimate to beat the Turk on the battlefield, it was not done to subvert him from within. Thus the first lesson from the debacle was that no revolutionary movement in the Principalities could succeed without the backing of a great power... The Principalities stood at the intersection of the Russian, Austrian and Turkish empires, and acted as the last land bridge which Russian armies had to cross into the Balkan peninsula. In the eyes of St. Petersburg, their strategic importance among the proto-states of the Balkans was unparalleled...

"Disillusioned with Ypsilantis and the Etairia, Vladimirescu nonetheless found himself in control of Bucharest. Here he assumed the role of revolutionary Prince to replace the *hospodar* who had been poisoned by Vladimirescu's co-conspirators. But Vladimirescu soon found himself in trouble with his own people. The peasants around Bucharest seized the revolutionary moment to make their own demands, mainly to abolish the hated feudal obligation, the *clacă*, which obliged the peasant to work an unlimited number of days for his landlord every year. When the Turkish army crossed the Danube to restore order, the Romanian landowners were greatly relieved.

"The Turks did agree to do away with the *hospodars*, who had become too unreliable. The boyars were happy to continue collecting the tribute for the Porte while augmenting their economic power with political influence. For the peasantry, however, a greedy Romanian oligarchy had replaced a Greek kleptocracy. Landowners did not pay taxes, peasants did. In Greece and Serbia, the peasants had formed the backbone of the military force that shook Ottoman rule, and while this did not eliminate tension between the emerging elites and the peasantry, it did mean that peasant interests were not ignored. In Wallachia and Moldavia, it never entered the boyars' heads that the peasants had any legitimate demands whatsoever..."⁵⁴¹

⁵⁴¹ Glenny, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59.

In 1828 war broke out between Russia and Turkey, and until 1834, the country was effectively ruled by the Russian General Pavel Dmitrievich Kiselev. Boia writes: "Under his supervision, the boyars formulated the first Romanian constitution, known as the 'Réglement Organique' [or *Regulamentul Organic* ('Organic Rules')], which was almost identical in Wallachia and Moldavia – another step towards unification. Kiselev took an interest in everything, from the condition of the peasants to the appearance and hygiene of the towns; it was to him that Romanian society owed the first great attempt at its systematic modernization.

"Defeated by the Russians, the Turks restored the Danube ports (Turnu, Giurgiu and Brăila) to Wallachia, gave up their commercial monopoly with regard to the principalities, and recognized freedom of navigation on the Danube, all by the Treaty of Adrianople (Edirne) of 1829. All of this served to stimulate the growth of agricultural production for export. The two Romanian lands (and, later, Romania) came to constitute one of the granaries of Europe. The principalities remained vassals of the Sublime Porte, but with an increased degree of autonomy. Their rulers were elected for life by a 'Community Assembly' made up of boyars⁵⁴² – a provision intended to put an end to political instability and Ottoman interventions, though in fact no ruler in the period up to 1866 actually remained in power until his death! Turkish suzerainty was complemented by Russian 'protection'. Kiselev's behaviour had been excellent, but it was hard to say how this 'protection' would manifest itself in the end..."⁵⁴³

There now began a very rapid westernization of the upper classes in Romania. The Cyrillic script began to be sprinkled with Roman letters, and in 1860 the Roman alphabet was introduced officially; borrowings from French were so common that one in five Romanian words was French in origin. Bucharest became, in its architecture and the style of upper class women's clothes, a "little Paris".

But the worst aspect of this Westernizing process from an Orthodox point of view was that it became a channel for revolutionary ideas. "French revolutionary ideas", writes Glenny, "were transmitted to Romania more swiftly than to anywhere else in the Ottoman Empire because of the close linguistic affinity between Romanian and French. The sons of rich boyars, especially from Wallachia, were sent to study in Paris where they quickly adopted French political culture as their own. During the reign of the *hospodars*, the hitherto hereditary title of boyar had been devalued by regulations allowing its sale. The proliferation of noble titles created a new type of boyar, less wedded to the countryside but eager to exercise political influence. This urban boyar became first the agent of western

⁵⁴² The two National Assemblies were composed of 800 boyars subordinated to an elected prince. Each Assembly comprised a legislature under the control of high-ranking boyars - 35 in Moldavia and 42 in Wallachia, voted into office by no more than 3,000 electors in each principality. The judiciary, however, was removed from the control of the *hospodars*. Although the Orthodox had a privileged position in the state and a political say, it was closely supervised by the government, with clergy being given salaries
(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regulamentul_Organic0). (V.M.)

⁵⁴³ Lucian Boia, *Romania*, London: Redakction, 2006, p. 76.

ideas in the Principalities and later the backbone of the Liberal party, just as the landowning boyar would later support the Conservatives.

"The works of Montesquieu, Voltaire and Rousseau flooded into the private and public libraries of the Principalities, particularly Wallachia. Boyars, intellectuals, and merchants from Bucharest and Iași made the pilgrimage to Paris. The appearance of Romanian cities was transformed over a twenty-year period from the mid-1820s. The boyars embarked on the large-scale cultivation of wheat, which was sent up the Danube to western markets. The barges returned loaded with clothes, furniture and cigars. Fashion changed dramatically, as the Ottoman robes of the east were discarded in favour of the hats and suits of St. Petersburg and Vienna. One contemporary commentator noted in 1829 how Bucharest had been struck by 'the disease of love'. Divorce, affairs, elopement and rape appear to have been part of the staple culture of the Wallachian capital's nobility.

"With their awakened passion for national revival, the boyars established the principle of joint citizenship for the people of Wallachia and Moldavia. The idea of being Romanian, with a common heritage, was invented in its modern form. The demand for the unification of the Principalities was heard ever louder, especially in Bucharest where people regarded the city as the natural centre of power in a future Romanian state. Although dramatic, these changes affected a small proportion of society. As the leading historian of modern Romania puts it, the boyars had listened to only one part of the revolutionary message from France, 'the foreign policy and the revival of nationalism, completely ignoring its democratic aspect, social equality'."⁵⁴⁴

"After the February Days [of 1848], a delegation of Romanians in Paris announced to Lamartine that Romania demanded the right to exist. In March there was a Romanian uprising in Jassy, which was easily put down, and on 2 May the Transylvanian Romanians assembled in a field outside Blaj and called for greater recognition within the Habsburg Empire. In June their fellows in Turkish-ruled Wallachia rose under Balcescu, took Bucharest and passed a constitution, but they were quickly put down by the Turks. Only the 150-strong Bucharest fire brigade put up a stiff resistance. Those leaders who did not manage to get away were incarcerated on a hulk in the Danube. 'That boat, holy ark of a ship-wrecked people, contained its government, its literature, its soul and its thought, and, we hope, its future!' in the words of Michelet. But the future looked bleak for Romania, the only hope of survival lay in a policy of loyalism to the Habsburgs, which was welcome to the latter as it sought to hem in Hungarian ambitions."⁵⁴⁵

As we have seen, the tsar crushed the revolution in Hungary, thereby relieving the pressure of the Hungarian Catholics on the Romanian Orthodox in the Hungarian province of Transylvania. But when the Organic Regulations were burned in Bucharest, the tsar, ever the legitimist and enemy of revolution, joined with the Sultan to occupy the Principalities and suppress the revolution.

⁵⁴⁴ Glenny, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-60.

⁵⁴⁵ Zamoyiski, *op. cit.*, p. 353.

"A central goal of the revolutionaries had been unification of the two Principalities, but they faced internal opposition. A broad political division separated the Moldavian and Wallachian elites, symbolized by the different intellectual influences in their two capitals, Iași and Bucharest. Among intellectuals in the Moldavian capital, the influence of German Romantic nationalism, especially the ideas of J.G. Herder, was paramount. Herder's work suggested that the essence of national identity was transmitted through popular language and culture. During the nineteenth century his theories were adopted by conservative nationalists who believed that national identity could not be learned, but only transmitted through blood. In contrast, the Bucharest intellectuals had imbibed the French conception of nationhood which saw commitment to a particular culture as the central requirement in establishing a person's national identity. (Everyone could be considered French provided they accepted French culture - unless, of course, they had yet to attain 'civilization', like the Algerians.) For this latter group, anyone, regardless of origin, could join the Romanian national struggle by accepting its goals (but Romania's Jews were excluded from this liberal embrace).

"Bucharest intellectuals, like Ion C. Brătianu and C.A. Rosetti, who established the revolutionary government of 1848 and would later inspire the founding of the Liberals, were the first to advance the theory that Romanians formed the last outpost of western culture in south-eastern Europe. Their ethnic identity and autonomous traditions, they believed, meant that they shared much more in common with French and English culture than with the 'Asiatic' values of the other regions of the Ottoman Empire."⁵⁴⁶

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These anti-Orthodox ideas, if allowed to develop, would have been extremely dangerous for the future of Romania, and would have torn her away from the Orthodox Christian commonwealth. Not coincidentally, therefore, Divine Providence arranged for foreign intervention. Thus in 1853 Tsar Nicholas occupied the Principalities in the opening stage of the Crimean War. "The two princes of Moldavia and Wallachia were forced out of office and fled to Vienna. The Russian authorities introduced a harsh military regime and suppressed political organizations."⁵⁴⁷

However, facing defeat in the Crimea, the Russians in their turn were forced out by the Austrians and Ottomans, who occupied the country until the end of the war. In spite of that, things turned out reasonably well for the Romanians. For, as Barbara Jelavich writes, "primarily with French aid, the Romanian leaders were able to secure the election of a single prince, Alexander Cuza, for both Wallachia and Moldavia. He then united the administrations and legislatures of the two

⁵⁴⁶ Glenny, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.

⁵⁴⁷ Glenny, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

provinces. During Cuza's reign important reforms to improve the condition of the peasants were introduced."⁵⁴⁸

Romania's greatest saint, Callinicus of Cernica, "took part in the sessions of the Parliament of 1857, as one of the deputies representing the clergy of Oltenia [of which he was bishop]. It was this Parliament which on 2nd November 1857 requested that those who should inherit the throne of the united Romanian lands should be of the Orthodox religion, and that the language to be written and spoken in Parliament should be that which 'the people understand'. On 12th December 1857 St. Callinicus was among those who declared that they would not participate in further sessions of the Parliament, until the great powers of Europe had accepted the desires of the Romanian nation for unity and national independence. During this time of struggle for the Romanian people he urged his clergy, through his diocesan letters to pray in their churches 'for the union of the Romanians in a single heart and soul'. When, on 24th January 1859, Prince Cuza was elected as Prince of both the Romanian principalities, Moldavia and Wallachia, St. Callinicus was one of the members of the Assembly. He was amongst those who signed the official statement sent to Cuza, at Iaşy, informing him that he had been elected Prince of Romania."⁵⁴⁹

St. Callinicus was constantly at the side of Prince Cuza, supporting his measures of reform, and dissenting only in some of his ecclesiastical "reforms", such as the seizure of monastic lands. The Prince for his part, as N. Iorga observes, 'knew how to honour this man of many qualities, even though so different from his own'. Cuza honoured and appreciated him, since he saw in him 'a true and holy man of God', declaring that 'such another does not exist in all the world'..."

However, Prince Cuza, who was a Freemason in the Danube Lodge, did not always follow the holy hierarch's advice. In 1864, he tried, under the pressure of Freemasonry, to change the church calendar with the Gregorian one. In the hall where this meeting is held, there were many clerics, including Metropolitan Nifon of Wallachia, as well as the pillar of Orthodoxy, the Holy Hierarch Callinicus of Cernica, the bishop of the diocese of Râmnicu Severin. As soon as St. Callinicus heard what Prince Alexander wanted to do, that he wanted to change the church calendar with that of the papists, he left the Synod Hall. As he was about to leave the hall, he said, "And I will not count myself with the wicked!" Thus, the prince, who regarded the great Hierarch as a living Saint, gave up this plan.⁵⁵⁰

Under the saint's influence, as Mureşan writes, Cuza "proclaimed the autocephaly of the Romanian Church in 1865 under the presidency of a new primate, the metropolitan of Walachia.... It has recently been proved that in 1864 Alexandru Ioan Cuza became the last Romanian prince to accept princely unction in the ancient Byzantine rite by the ecumenical patriarch. The prince seems then

⁵⁴⁸ Jelavich, *History of the Balkans: vol. 2, Twentieth Century*, Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 4.

⁵⁴⁹ Patriarch Justinian of Romania, "St. Callinicus: Abbot, Bishop, Man of God", in A.M. Allchin (ed.), *The Tradition of Life: Romanian Essays in Spirituality and Theology*, London: Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius, 1971, p. 15.

⁵⁵⁰ Narcis Iftimescu, Facebook communication, April 24, 2021.

to have arrogated a series of prerogatives derived from this ceremony, acting in some crucial instances with an authority imitating that of a Byzantine emperor: like Nicephorus Phokas, he tried to delimit the abuses of monastic property; [and] he created an autocephalous church in opposition to the patriarchate...

"The autocephaly of the church was inscribed in the Constitution of 1866 and finally in the church law of 1872. After the proclamation of the kingdom in 1881, the Romanian Synod itself consecrated the holy chrism in 1882. This aroused the stern opposition of Patriarch Joachim III, but Joachim IV bowed to the reality: the Synod in Constantinople officially recognized the autocephaly by the Tomos of 25 April 1885."⁵⁵¹

For a brief moment under Prince Cuza Romania had acquired something like that "symphony of powers" which is the only normal and Divinely blessed form of government for an Orthodox nation. January 24, the day of Romanian independence, became a feast of celebration in the nation's calendar, similar to March 21 in the Greek calendar. But compared with the Greek revolution, the Romanian revolution was remarkably free of bloodshed, and its outcome – a unified state with an autocephalous Church blessed in the end by Constantinople – remarkably close to the aspirations of the best Romanians.

However, Romania's brief idyll under Prince Cuza was interrupted in 1866, when a group of conspirators led by Brătianu and called "the monstrous coalition" forced their way into Prince Cuza's bedroom and forced him to abdicate (perhaps because he rebelled against his brother Masons). The revolution was underway again! Agents scoured Europe for a western prince that would be favoured by the western powers and came up with Charles of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, a member of the Catholic branch of the Prussian royal family, later known as King Carol I. The Moldavian Orthodox hierarchy protested, and for half a day there were demonstrations in Iași with placards such as: 'Revolution: Fear Not. Hold on a Few Hours, the Russians Are Coming to Our Aid'".⁵⁵²

⁵⁵¹ Mureșan, *op. cit.*, p. 149. The Romanian Synod gave a humble but firm reply on November 23, 1882 (<https://orthodoxsynaxis.org/2020/05/01/the-synodal-act-of-the-romanian-orthodox-church-of-november-23-1882/#like-989>). Only the Romanians of Bessarabia (under Russian rule) and Transylvania (under Hungarian rule) remained outside the unity of the Romanian Church. Originally, the Karlovtsy metropolitanate in Slavonia had had jurisdiction over the Romanians of Transylvania. However, in 1864 (or 1865) the authorities allowed the creation of a separate Romanian Church in Hungary, the metropolitanate of Hermannstadt (Nagy-Szeben) (Fortescue, *op. cit.*, p. 316) And from 1873 there was also a metropolitanate of Černovtsy with jurisdiction over all the Orthodox (mainly Serbs and Romanians) in the Austrian lands. (Fortescue, *op. cit.*, pp. 323-325) "In Transylvania," writes Mureșan, "Bishop Andrei Șaguna (1848-73) achieved the restoration of his metropolitanate in 1865, emancipating it from Serbian jurisdiction, and established cordial relations with the Romanian Uniate Church which in 1852 had herself been released from Hungarian jurisdiction and reorganized as a metropolitanate. A specialist of canon law and excellent manager, Șaguna issued the new Organic Rules of his metropolitanate, founded on the autonomy of the church in respect of the state and the large participation of the Christian laity in the affairs of the church. At the same time, the Orthodox Church of Bukovina also acceded to the metropolitan rank (1873), almost a century after the annexation of this ancient Moldavian province by the Habsburg Empire (1775)." (*op. cit.*, pp. 149-150)

⁵⁵² Glenny, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

But the Russians didn't come, and all the other great powers abstained from intervention. Romania was "free". However, this was not the freedom that St. Callinicus had prayed for. Freedom from Ottoman rule - yes. Monarchy, albeit one limited by a parliament and constitution - a qualified yes. But a Catholic monarch, with all that that implied for the future penetration of Romania by western heresy - no. The saint died on April 11, 1868 *standing*, as if there was still an important job to be done, a vital war to be won...⁵⁵³

⁵⁵³ Fr. Dumitru Staniloae, "St. Callinicus of Cernica", in Allchin, op. cit., p. 29.

36. THE RUSSIAN CHURCH AND THE ANGLICANS

It was in the reign of Tsar Nicholas I that a beginning was made to ecumenical relations with the western confessions. Surprisingly, in view of the political tensions between the two Great Powers, it was with England and the Anglican Church that these relations were the warmest.

The pioneer in these ecumenical relations on the Orthodox side was the famous Russian Slavophile theologian Alexis Stepanovich Khomiakov (+1860). He was an anglophile, who wrote: "Germany has in reality no religion at all but the idolatry of science; France has no serious longings for truth, and little sincerity; England with its modest science and its serious love of religious truth might give some hopes..."⁵⁵⁴

England seemed to him, in the midst of her "Babylonian" materialism, as exemplified above all by the 1851 Great Exhibition, to have "higher thoughts": "England, in my opinion, has never been more worthy of admiration than this year. The Babylonian enterprise of the Exhibition and its Crystal Palace, which shows London to be the true and recognized capital of Universal Industry, would have been sufficient to engross the attention and intellectual powers of any other country; but England stands evidently above its own commercial wonders. Deeper interests agitate her, higher thoughts direct her mental energy..."⁵⁵⁵

Khomiakov's interest was especially aroused by Pusey's Branch theory of the Church, according to which Anglicanism, Catholicism and Orthodoxy were three branches of the One Church.⁵⁵⁶ Khomiakov hoped that this belated interest of English Protestantism in *ecclesiology, the dogma of the Church*, would elicit a genuine rapprochement between Anglicans and Orthodox.

⁵⁵⁴ Khomiakov, First Letter to William Palmer, in W.J. Birkbeck, *Russia and the English Church*, London: Rivington, Percival & Co., 1895, p. 6. Cf. the Fourth Letter: "An almost boundless Individualism is the characteristic feature of Germany, and particularly of Prussia. Here in Berlin it would be difficult to find one single point of faith, or even one feeling, which could be considered as a link of true spiritual communion in the Christian meaning of the word. Even the desire for harmony seems to be extinguished, and that predominance of individualism, that spiritual solitude among the ever-busy crowd, sends to the heart a feeling of dreariness and desolation.... Still the earnestness of the German mind in all intellectual researches is not quite so disheartening as the frivolous and self-conceited gaiety of homeless and thoughtless France." (Birkbeck, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-78).

⁵⁵⁵ Khomiakov, Sixth Letter to William Palmer, in Birkbeck, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

⁵⁵⁶ Dr. Joseph Overbeck, one of the first Western converts to Orthodoxy, wrote about Pusey: "Dr. Pusey is the father of the so-called Anglo-Catholics, sometimes styled Puseyites, though by this by-name are generally understood those High-Churchmen who revel in decorative tom-fooleries and stylish ceremonies. He was, though not the originator, still a mighty support of the Tractarian movement. He quieted the passions of the young hot-brained Tractarians, smoothed down the Romanizing tendencies, and was always an upright friend of the Eastern Church, which he considered to be in unison with his own. Still he remained a Western Churchman, guided by the true idea that both Churches are fully entitled to have their own way and subsistence, only linked by the bond of common Catholic truth and Catholic Constitution. He would be quite right, provided his Church were a true branch of the Western Catholic Church."

And indeed, "the whole point of the [Oxford] Movement," writes Geoffrey Faber, "lay in the assertion – no less passionately made than the Evangelical's assertion of his private intimacy with God – that men deceive themselves if they seek God otherwise than through the Church. It should be needless to add that in the teachings of Keble, Pusey, Newman, and the Tractarians generally, the relationship of the individual soul to God was just as important as in the teaching of John Wesley. But the importance of that relationship was not to be thought of as transcending the importance of the Church. The Church was the divinely established means of grace. But she was something else and something greater. She was the continuing dwelling place of God's spirit upon earth, and as such she had owed to her all the honour and glory within the power of men to pay."⁵⁵⁷

Encouraged by such sentiments, Khomiakov entered into a long and very interesting correspondence with the Anglican deacon William Palmer, which ended only when Palmer joined the Roman Catholic Church.⁵⁵⁸ And his illusions about England fell away when England joined with "insincere" France and infidel Turkey in the Crimean War against Holy Russia. However, Khomiakov's correspondence with Palmer is one of the earliest and best examples of how to conduct ecumenical relations without betraying the truth. He was very well informed about the religious situation in both East and West, clearly longed for union, and was not seeking merely to "score points" over an adversary. He was generous about what was good in the West, and not afraid to admit weaknesses in the East. But he was unbendingly firm in his defence of the Orthodox position on questions of faith (e.g. the *Filioque*) and ecclesiology (i.e. where the True Church is and where it is not). In this correspondence, as well as in his famous tract, *The Church is One*, Khomiakov convincingly refused Pusey's branch theory. As Fr. Georges Florovsky writes, "the Russians were staggered, as Palmer himself stated, 'at the idea of one visible Church being made up of three communions, differing in doctrines and rites, and two of them at least condemning and anathematizing the others.'"⁵⁵⁹

In spite of his ardent desire for union, Khomiakov was pessimistic about its prospects; and this not so much because of the doctrinal obstacles, as of the *moral* obstacles. As he explained to Palmer: "A very weak conviction in points of doctrine can bring over a Latin to Protestantism, or a Protestant to the Latins. A Frenchman, a German, an Englishman, will go over to Presbyterianism, to Lutheranism, to the Independents, to the Cameronians, and indeed to almost every form of belief or misbelief; he will not go over to Orthodoxy. As long as he does not step out of the circles of doctrines which have taken their origin in the Western world, he feels himself at home; notwithstanding his apparent change, he does not feel that dread of apostasy which renders sometimes the passage from

⁵⁵⁷ Faber, *The Oxford Apostles*, London: Penguin, 1954, p. 325.

⁵⁵⁸ Palmer was shocked to learn that the Greeks would receive him into communion by baptism, and the Russians by chrismation only. He considered this divergence in practice to indicate a fundamental confusion in thinking. In spite of Khomiakov's attempts to explain the Orthodox use of condescension or "economy", Palmer remained dissatisfied by what he saw as a difference in ecclesiology between the Greeks and the Russians, and eventually joined the Roman Catholics.

⁵⁵⁹ Florovsky, "The Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Movement", *Christianity and Culture*, Belmont, Mass.: Nordland Publishing Company, 1974, p. 200.

error to faith as difficult as from truth to error. He will be condemned by his former brethren, who will call his action a rash one, perhaps a bad one; but it will not be utter madness, depriving him, as it were, of his rights of citizenship in the civilized world of the West. And that is natural. All the Western doctrine is born out of the Latins; it feels (though unconsciously) its solidarity with the past; it feels its dependence on one science, on one creed, on one line of life; and that creed, that science, that life was the Latin one. This is what I hinted at, and what you understand very rightly, *viz.*, that all Protestants are Crypto-Papists; and, indeed, it would be a very easy task to show that in their theology (as well as philosophy) all the definitions of all the objects of creed or understanding are merely taken out of the old Latin System, though often made negative in the application. In short, if it was to be expressed in the concise language of algebra, all the West knows but one datum, *a*; whether it be preceded by the positive sign +, as with the Latins, or with the negative -, as with the Protestants, the *a* remains the same. Now, a passage to Orthodoxy seems indeed like an apostasy from the past, from its science, creed, and life. It is rushing into a new and unknown world, a bold step to take, or even to advise.

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

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

“Do not, I pray, nourish the hope of finding Christian Truth without stepping out of the former protestant circle. It is an illogical hope; it is a remnant of that pride which thought itself able and wished to judge and decide by itself without the Spiritual Communion of heavenly grace and Christian love. Were you to find all the truth, you would have found nothing; for we alone can give you that without which all would be vain – the assurance of Truth.”⁵⁶⁰

When Palmer criticised the dominance of the State over the Church in Russia, Khomiakov replied: “That the Church is not quite independent of the state, I allow; but let us consider candidly and impartially how far that dependence affects, and whether it does indeed affect, the character of the Church. The question is so important, that it has been debated during this very year [1852] by serious men in Russia, and has been brought, I hope, to a satisfactory conclusion. A society may be dependent in fact and free in principle, or vice-versa. The first case is a mere historical accident; the second is the destruction of freedom, and has no other issue but rebellion and anarchy. The first is the weakness of man; the second the depravity of law. The first is certainly the case in Russia, but the principles have by no means been damaged. Whether freedom of opinion in civil and political questions is, or is not, too much restrained, is no business of ours as members of the Church (though I, for my part, know that I am almost reduced to complete silence); but the state never interferes directly in the censorship of works written about religious questions. In this respect, I will confess again that the censorship is, in my opinion, most oppressive; but that does not depend upon the state, and is simply the fault of the over-cautious and timid prudence of the higher clergy. I am very far from approving of it, and I know that very useful thoughts and books are lost in the world, or at least to the present generation.

“But this error, which my reason condemns, has nothing to do with ecclesiastical liberty; and though very good tracts and explanations of the Word of God are oftentimes suppressed on the false supposition of their perusal being dangerous to unenlightened minds, I think that those who suppress the Word of God itself should be the last to condemn the excessive prudence of our ecclesiastical censors. Such a condemnation coming from the Latins would be absurdity itself. But is the action of the Church quite free in Russia? Certainly not; but this depends wholly on the weakness of her higher representatives, and upon their desire to get the protection of the state, not for themselves, generally speaking, but for the Church. There is certainly a moral error in that want of reliance upon God Himself; but it is an accidental error of persons, and not of the Church, and has nothing to do with our religious convictions. It would be a different case, if there was the smallest instance of a dogmatic error, or something near to it, admitted or suffered without protestation out of weakness; but I defy anybody to find anything like that...”⁵⁶¹

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⁵⁶⁰ Khomiakov, “Third Letter to William Palmer”, in Birkbeck, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-69, 71; *Living Orthodoxy*, N 138, vol. XXIII, N 6, November-December, 2003, pp. 26-27.

⁵⁶¹ Khomiakov, “Eighth Letter to William Palmer”, in Birkbeck, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-127.

In spite of Khomiakov's pessimism, successive Russian over-procurators, supported by the Holy Synod, took great interest in the idea of an Orthodox mission in England. In the not-so-distant past, Anglicanism, together with other western confessions, had had a deep damaging influence on the life of the Orthodox Church. Thus something of the atmosphere of St. Petersburg at that time can be gathered from the recollections of the future Metropolitan Philaret (Drozdov), when he went there to teach in the newly reformed ecclesiastical schools in 1809. "The Synod greeted him with the advice to read 'Swedenborg's *Miracles*' and learn French. He was taken to court to view the fireworks and attend a masquerade party in order to meet Prince Golitsyn..., quite literally 'amidst the noise of a ball'... This was Philaret's first masquerade ball, and he had never before seen a domino. 'At the time I was an object of amusement in the Synod,' Philaret recalled, 'and I have remained a fool'"⁵⁶² – but a holy fool who would play a great part in formulating the Orthodox doctrine of the State in the next reign...

And in the next reign, that of Nicholas I, the tide of influence began to flow in the opposite direction. Thus in 1856 the convert Stephen Hatherley, who had been baptized in the Greek Church, turned for help to the Russians, who decided to bless and financially support his idea of a mission church in Wolverhampton. However, the Russians did not satisfy Hatherley's request that he be ordained for that mission; so he turned to the Greeks and received ordination in Constantinople in 1871. But then the Greeks, succumbing to intrigues on the part of the Anglicans, banned Hatherley from making any English converts. Hatherley obeyed this directive, which unsurprisingly led to the collapse of his mission...⁵⁶³

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

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

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

"Father Wassilief," continues Fr. Christopher Birchall, "was frustrated by the lack of any real desire to face the dogmatic issues and ascribed this, in part, to the fact that the Church of England had existed for centuries without any real unity of belief. Consequently, [they] assumed that union with the Orthodox could be achieved on the same basis. Part of the Anglican hierarchy would have liked to

⁵⁶² Fr. Georges Florovsky, *The Ways of Russian Theology*, Belmont, 1979, part I, pp. 202-203.

⁵⁶³ 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, pp. 114-135, 139-143.

strengthen its position by being recognized by the Orthodox, but nothing could be done without the consent of Parliament and the laity, who would resist any change. 'The past and its customs give support to any opposition,' he wrote, 'in England they are virtually idolized.' Echoing the ideas of Khomiakov, he continued, 'One of the reasons for the Anglican's faithfulness to his tradition and establishment lies in an exaggerated sense of superiority before other people, and in personal and national pride. He also extends this feeling to his Church, which is a national creation and thus national property. It is extremely difficult for the Anglican to admit that his forefathers constructed the Anglican Church unsuccessfully, that this sphere of life is higher, truer and firmer in Russian and among other Eastern peoples, who in all other respects are less favoured than the English.'

"Another factor hindering unity, Wassilief noted, was the Anglican Church's 'enormous possessions and income.' 'If only some of the Anglican bishops together with a number of priests and faithful would unite with the Orthodox Church in rejecting the 39 heretical Articles of the Anglican Church as ratified by Parliament, then the government might well consider this society a sect, and might deprive its pastors of their worldly benefits by which they profit in the Anglican Church and condemn them to a life which would be the more arduous since their present life is so full of abundance and luxury. For a bishop or a dean to renounce his salary, he would have to possess an immutable belief and an exceptional faith...'"⁵⁶⁴

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

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

⁵⁶⁴ Birchall, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-110.

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

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

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

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

“Indeed, if Dr. Overbeck were walking upon the Earth today, it would not just be Papism and Protestantism he would target, but, it would be the modern Ecumenical Patriarchate and its sister Patriarchates for their desired union with the former in the heresy of ecumenism; not to mention their wholesale embrace of the modernist heresy.”⁵⁶⁵

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

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

“The question as to whether an Anglican priest can be received into the Orthodox Church as an actual priest awaits the decision of a Church Council, because it has not yet been clarified whether the unbroken Apostolic Succession of hierarchical ordination exists in the Anglican Church, and also because the Anglican Church does not acknowledge ordination as a sacrament, although it recognizes the power of grace in it...”⁵⁶⁶

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

⁵⁶⁵ “Rome’s Rapid Downward Course by Dr. J. Joseph Overbeck (1820-1905)”, *NFTU News*, November 10, 2016. <http://nftu.net/romes-rapid-downward-dr-j-joseph-overbeck/#49561562>.

⁵⁶⁶ Birchall, *op. cit.*, pp. 607-608.

1. How can the 39 articles not be a stumbling-block to the union of the Churches?
2. How can the teaching of the American Episcopal Church's teaching on the procession of the Holy Spirit [the *Filioque*] be made to agree with the teaching of the Eastern Church?
3. Is the uninterruptedness of apostolic hierarchical ordination fully proven in the American Church?
4. Does the American Church recognize reliable Church Tradition to be a subsidiary guiding principle for the explanation of Holy Scripture and for Church orders and discipline?
5. What is the view of the American Church on the sevenfold number of sacraments in the Eastern Church?

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

Although the two sides parted on friendly terms, nothing positive came from the meeting. The public in America were not ready for this, and there even began something in the nature of a reaction. Learning about this, Philaret sadly remarked: "The reconcilers of the churches... are weaving a cover for division, but are not effecting union." "How desirable is the union of the Churches! But how difficult to ensure that the movement towards it should soar with a pure striving for the Truth and should be entirely free from attachment to entrenched opinions." "O Lord, send a true spirit of union and peace."⁵⁶⁷

"Will the idea of the union of the churches, which has lit up the west like a glow on the horizon, remain just the glow of sunset in the west, or will it turn into an Eastern radiance of sunrise, in the hope of a brighter morning? Thou knowest, O Lord."⁵⁶⁸

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Although the talks between the Orthodox Church and heterodox confessions produced little concrete fruit, the West was now beginning to take note of the Orthodox Church, especially the Russian Church, which showed herself quite capable of attracting the souls of westerners like Guettée and Overbeck dissatisfied with the sterility of the western heterodox confessions. Thus the Anglican priest John Mason Neale wrote in his *History of the Eastern Church*: "Uninterrupted successions of Metropolitans and Bishops stretch themselves to Apostolic times; venerable liturgies exhibit doctrine unchanged, and discipline uncorrupted; the same Sacrifice is offered, the same hymns are chanted, by the Eastern Christians of today, as those which resounded in the churches of St. Basil or St. Firmilian... In the glow and splendor of Byzantine glory, in the tempests of the Oriental middle ages, in the desolation and tyranny of the Turkish Empire, the

⁵⁶⁷ Snychev, *op. cit.*, p. 357.

⁵⁶⁸ Birchall, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

testimony of the same immutable church remains. Extending herself from the sea of Okhotsk to the palaces of Venice, from the ice-fields that grind against the Solovetsky monastery to the burning jungles of Malabar⁵⁶⁹, embracing a thousand languages, and nations, and tongues, but binding them together in the golden link of the same Faith, offering the Tremendous Sacrifice in a hundred Liturgies, but offering it to the same God, and with the same rites, fixing her Patriarchal Thrones in the same cities as when the Disciples were called Christians first at Antioch, and James, the brother of the Lord, finished his course at Jerusalem, oppressed by the devotees of the False Prophet, as once by the worshippers of false gods, - she is now, as she was from the beginning, multiplex in her arrangements, simple in her faith, difficult of comprehension to strangers, easily intelligible to her sons, widely scattered in her branches, hardly beset by her enemies, yet still and evermore, what she delights to call herself, One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic..."⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁹ Neale is probably thinking here of the Monophysite "Church of St. Thomas" in Southern India, which was not in fact Orthodox. (V.M.)

⁵⁷⁰ Neale, in Christopher K. Birchall, *Embassy, Emigration, and Englishmen: The Three-Hundred Year History of a Russian Orthodox Church in London*, Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Publications, 2014, pp. 98-99.

37. THE RUSSIAN CHURCH AND THE OLD RITUALISTS

From 1843 the Old Ritualists had begun to seek a degree of legality from the State and permission to build churches and prayer houses. Tsar Nicholas would have none of it, and large Old Ritualist centres were closed: first in Irgiz (1839), then in Vyg, in Moscow and Petersburg (at the beginning of the 1850s). "At the closing of the Irgiz monasteries," writes S.A. Zenkovsky, "the Old Ritualists resisted and, in view of the application by the administration of armed force, many of them suffered physically. But again these were victims of the conflict, and not of tortures or executions of arrested Old Ritualists. These were not religious persecutions, but the desire of Nicholas I and his ministers of the interior to introduce 'order' into the religious life of the country and control the religious communities of the Old Ritualists that were *de facto* independent of the administration."⁵⁷¹

Metropolitan Philaret supported the Tsar's policy. He was very disturbed by the Old Ritualists' not commemorating the Emperor during their services. And he reported that in the Preobrazhensky workhouse the Old Ritualists were distributing books that taught "that no marriages should be recognized; the schismatics in marital unions with people not belonging to the schism should have their union broken; that bodily relationship should not be recognized in Christian marriages; that from 1666 married Christians are a satanic nest of vipers and the most shameful dwelling-place of his demons; that now satan is thinking about the multiplication of the human race and a soul is being given from the devil for the conception of a child."⁵⁷²

The *Popovtsi* Old Ritualists began to look for a bishop overseas. No such bishop was found in the Caucasus or the Middle East. Finally, writes Dobroklonsky, they "lured to themselves a former metropolitan of Bosnia, the Greek Ambrose, who had been deprived of his see and was living in Constantinople."⁵⁷³ In 1846 he was brought to Belaia Krinitza (in Bukovina, in Austria) and was received into the communion of the *Popovtsi* by cursing some supposed heresies and chrismation. In 1847, in accordance with the wish of the schismatics, he consecrated Bishop Cyril as his deputy and Arcadius for the *Nekrasovtsy* (in Turkey). Thus was the existence of the Belokrinitsky hierarchy established. Although in the following year, at the insistence of the Russian government, Ambrose was removed from Belaia Krinitza to restricted residence in the city of Tsilla (in Styria) and the Belokrinitsky monastery was sealed, in 1859 the Austrian government again recognised the lawfulness of the Belokrinitsky metropolia and the monastery was

⁵⁷¹ Zenkovsky, "Staroobriadchestvo, Tserkov' i Gosudarstvo" (Old Ritualism, the Church and the State), *Russkoe Vozrozhdenie* (Russian Regeneration), 1987 - I, pp. 93-94.

⁵⁷² Metropolitan Ioann (Snychev), *Zhizn' i Deiatel'nost' Filareta, Mitropolita Moskovskogo*, Tula, 1994, p. 319.

⁵⁷³ "In 1866 Patriarch Anthimus of Constantinople wrote an epistle to Metropolitan Joseph of Karlovtsy, in which he wrote the following about Metropolitan Ambrose: 'The hierarch whom we are discussing, being considered subject to trial because of his flight, canonically cannot carry out hierarchical actions'" (Archbishop Nikon (Rklitsky), *Zhizneopisanie Blazhennejshago Antonia, Mitropolita Kievskago i Galitskago* (Life of his Beatitude Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich), volume 3, New York, 1957, p. 167). (V.M.)

unsealed. Cyril, who succeeded Ambrose, took care to consecrate new bishops, and such soon appeared for the Turkish, Moldavian and, finally, Russian schismatics. The first of the Russians was the shopkeeper Stephen Zhironov, who was made bishop of Simbirsk with the name Sophronius in 1849; by 1860 there were already up to 10 schismatic dioceses within the boundaries of Russia. A 'spiritual council' was formed in Moscow to administer church affairs; it was composed of false bishops and false priests. Sophronius was dreaming of founding a patriarchate, and even set up a patriarch, but, at the insistence of the schismatics, himself condemned his own undertaking. At first the government repressed the Old Ritualist hierarchs and the priests ordained by them. However, the Austrian priesthood continue to spread. From the time of Alexander II it began to enjoy toleration, although the government did not recognize it as lawful. In spite of a visible success, the Austrian hierarchy from the very beginning of its existence displayed signs of disintegration. Quarrels constantly arose between the schismatic bishops. They became especially fierce after the publication in 1862 in the name of the spiritual council of a certain 'encyclical of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church'. It was composed by an inhabitant of Starodub, Hilarion Egorovich Kabanov with the aim of condemning the reasonings of the *Bespopovtsi*, whose distribution had dealt a blow to the Austrian priesthood. Having examined several books of the *Bespopovtsi*, the epistle expressed [the following] view of the Orthodox Church: 'The ruling church in Russia, as also the Greek, believe in the same God as we (the Old Ritualists), the Creator of heaven and earth & Therefore, although we pronounce and write the name of the Saviour 'Isus', we do not dare to condemn that which is written and pronounced 'Iisus' as being the name of some other Jesus, the opponent of Christ, as certain *Bespopovtsi* think to do. Similarly, we do not dishonour and blaspheme the cross with four ends.' It was also recognised that the true priesthood of Christ continued in the Orthodox Church (Great Russian and Greek) and would remain until the day of judgement. While some accepted the epistle, others condemned it. Thus there appeared mutually opposing parties of 'encyclicalers' and 'anti-encyclicalers'. The latter, who had tendencies towards *Bespopovshchina*, began to affirm that the name 'Iisus', as accepted by the Orthodox Church, is the name of another person than 'Isus', and is the name of the Antichrist. Both parties had their own bishops."⁵⁷⁴

After the creation of the Belokrinitsky hierarchy, the attitude of the Russian government towards the Old Ritualists became stricter. In 1854 they were deprived of all rights as merchants, and their chapel in the Rogozhsky cemetery was closed. However, from Alexander II's accession, they were allowed to have services in the cemetery, and their marriages were recognized. In 1865 the

⁵⁷⁴ Dobroklonsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 702-703. For more on Bishop Ambrose, see S.G. Wurgaft, I.A. Ushakov, *Starobriadchestvo* (Old Ritualism), Moscow, 1996, pp. 18-22. The following revelation given to Novice John Sorokin (a former Old Ritualist) is found in the Solovetski Patericon: "One morning," he (the future Novice John) related "after the cell prayer in which I asked God with tears: 'Lord, tell me the way I should follow'; I fell asleep and dreamt that I was in some splendid palace and I heard a voice coming from above: 'Go to the Church for it is impossible to be saved outside the Church.' I answered: 'There are many temptations and tares in the Church.' The voice said: 'Why should you worry about that? You will be more special than wheat.' I said: 'There is a Church with a bishop and clergy in Austria.' The voice replied: 'The Austrian Church is not a true Church, because it separated from the Eastern Church, and there is no salvation in it.'"

government wanted to introduce a further weakening of the legislation against the Old Ritualists, and only the voice of Metropolitan Philaret stopped it. "In 1858, for example, he complained that the Old Believers [Ritualists] were increasingly confident that the government would refrain from enforcing various restrictions on their influence and activities. Warning of the Old Believers' pernicious moral influence, Philaret insisted on the need for strict control and rejected the idea of religious tolerance then gaining popularity in educated society. Philaret appealed not to tradition or canons, but to the state's own self-interest: 'The idea [of religious tolerance] appears good, but it is fair only when the subject and limits are precisely and correctly determined. The idea of protecting the unity of the ruling confession in the state (thereby preserving the popular spirit - a source of strength for the state and an important aid to governance) should come before the idea of religious tolerance and should impose limits on the latter.' Hence, he noted, European countries (even liberal England) imposed limits on religious freedom. Moreover, the state had a particular interest in defending the Church against the Old Belief: 'But tolerance extended without limits to the schism (which emerged as much from a refusal to obey the Church as from a rebellion against the state, and through its intensified proselytism constantly acts to harm the unity of the Church and state) would be both an injustice to the Church and a serious political mistake.' Despite such arguments, Philaret could do little to halt the gradual liberalization of policy toward Old Believers that only fuelled their expectations for still more concessions. Unable to arrest this process, Philaret darkly warned that, 'if the secular government fails to show sufficient caution against the pseudo-bishops and pseudo-priests [of the schism], then this will fall on its conscience before God, the Church, and the fatherland.'"⁵⁷⁵

However, Snychev argues that "the struggle of the holy hierarch with the schism in the last years of his life had, if not a very large, at any rate a definite success. Many of the schismatics joined either Orthodoxy or the *Yedinoverie*. Thus in 1854 some schismatics from the Preobrazhensky cemetery joined the *Yedinoverie*, and in 1865 the following activists of the Belokrinitsky metropolia joined the Orthodox Church with the rights of the *Yedinoverie*: among the bishops, the metropolitan's deputy, Onuphrius of Braila, Paphnutius of Kolomna, Sergei of Tula and Justin of Tulchinsk; Hieromonk Joasaph; the archdeacon of Metropolitan Cyril, his secretary and the keeper of the archives Philaret; Hierodeacon Melchizedek, who was able to take the archive of the metropolia and transfer it across the Russian frontier. The success might have been greater if the government had more actively supported Philaret."⁵⁷⁶

⁵⁷⁵ George Frazee, "Skeptical Reformer, Staunch *Tserkovnik*: Metropolitan Philaret and the Great Reforms", in Vladimir Tsurikov (ed.), *Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow 1782-1867*, Jordanville: Variable Press, 2003, pp. 169-170.

⁵⁷⁶ Snychev, *op. cit.*, p. 359.

38. THE JEWS UNDER NICHOLAS I

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

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

"(150 years passed. And because these distant events had been forgotten, an enlightened and learned physicist formulated Jewish life at that time as 'the Pale of Settlement in conjunction with a ban [!] on peasant activity'. But the historian-publicist M.O. Gershenzon has a broader judgement: 'Agriculture is forbidden to the Jew by his national spirit, for, on becoming involved with the land, a man can more easily become rooted to the place'.)"⁵⁷⁷

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

⁵⁷⁷ A.I. Solzhenitsyn, *Dvesti Let Vmeste (Two Hundred Years Together)*, Moscow, 2001, p. 114.

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

"For a State that held millions of its population in serfdom, all this cannot be characterised as a cruel system..."⁵⁷⁸

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

"In 1827," writes Montefiore, "he ordered conscription into the army of Jewish boys from the age of twelve for twenty-five years 'to move them most effectively to change their religion.'"⁵⁷⁹

Of particular importance were the Tsar's measures encouraging Jewish education, by which he hoped to remove the barriers built up around the Jews by the rabbis. "Already in 1831 he told the 'directing' committee that 'among the measures that could improve the situation of the Jews, it was necessary to pay attention to their correction by teaching... by the building of factories, by the banning of early marriage, by a better management of the *kahals*,... by a change of dress'. And in 1840, on the founding the 'Committee for the Defining of Measures for the Radical Transformation of the Jews in Russia', one of its first aims was seen to be: 'Acting on the moral formation of the new generation of Jews by the establishment of Jewish schools in a spirit opposed to the present Talmudic teaching'..."⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁷⁸ Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, pp. 115-117.

⁵⁷⁹ Montefiore, *op. cit.*, p. 372.

⁵⁸⁰ Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

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

“However, the school reform took its course in... 1844, in spite of the extreme resistance of the ruling circles among the *kahals*. (Although ‘the establishment of Jewish schools by no means envisaged a diminution in the numbers of Jews in the general school institutions; on the contrary, it was often pointed out that the general schools had to be, as before, open for Jews’.) Two forms of State Jewish schools [‘on the model of the Austrian elementary schools for Jews’] were established: two-year schools, corresponding to Russian parish schools, and four-year schools, corresponding to *uyezd* schools. In them only Jewish subjects were taught by Jewish teachers. (As one inveterate revolutionary, Lev Deutsch, evaluated it: ‘The crown-bearing monster ordered them [the Jews] to be taught Russian letters’.) For many years Christians were placed at the head of these schools; only much later were Jews also admitted.

““The majority of the Jewish population, faithful to traditional Jewry, on learning or guessing the secret aim of Uvarov [the minister of enlightenment], looked on the educational measures of the government as one form of persecution. (But Uvarov, in seeking possible ways of bringing the Jews and the Christian population closer together through the eradication ‘of prejudices instilled by the teaching of the Talmud’, wanted to exclude it completely from the educational curriculum, considering it to be an antichristian codex.) In their unchanging distrust of the Russian authorities, the Jewish population continued for quite a few years to keep away from these schools, experiencing ‘school-phobia’: ‘Just as the population kept away from military service, so it was saved from the schools, fearing to give their children to these seed-beds of “free thought”’. Prosperous Jewish families in part sent other, poor people’s children to the State schools instead of their own... And if by 1855 70 thousand Jewish children were studying in the ‘registered’ *heders* [rabbinic schools], in the State schools of both types there were 3,200.”⁵⁸¹

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

They were also taught by foreign Jews – like Sir Moses Montefiore, “a wealthy baronet and brother-in-law of the banker N.M. Rotshchild”. As his descendant relates, he came to Petersburg in 1861 and met Tsar Alexander II, who thought that he was “‘kind and honest yet a Jew and a lawyer – and for this it is forgivable for him to wish many things.’ On his way home, Montefiore was mobbed by the Jews of Vilna, the Jerusalem of the North. The Third Section secret policeman reported the excitement of the ‘greedy Yids’ who flocked to ‘the English Messiah’...”⁵⁸²

⁵⁸¹ Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-124.

⁵⁸² Montefiore, *op. cit.*, p. 373.

39. THE PEASANTS' MIR AND PRAVDA

As we have seen, there were two schools of thought in the intelligentsia on the nature and destiny of Russia: the westerners, who basically thought that the westernizing path chosen by Peter the Great had been correct, and the Slavophiles, who believed in Orthodoxy, in the pre-Petrine symphony of powers, and in a special, distinct path chosen by God for Russia. Almost the whole of the public intellectual life of Russia until the revolution could be described as increasingly complex variations on these two viewpoints and the various intermediate positions: Chaadaev and Pushkin, Belinsky and Gogol, Herzen and Khomiakov, Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky, Soloviev and Pobedonostev, Lenin and Tikhomorov.

In spite of their differences, however, the Slavophiles and Westerners had some important things in common: their belief in Russia (Chaadaev is an exception), and their veneration of the institution of the rural commune, the *mir*, as expressing the essence of Russianness. For Slavophiles, the *mir* was a patriarchal institution of pre-Petrine Russia, while for the Westerners it was "Russian socialism".

However, Fr. Lev Lebedev points out that the commune was by no means as anciently Russian as was then thought: "In ancient Rus' (Russia) the peasants possessed or used plots of land completely independently, according to the right of personal inheritance or acquisition, and the commune (*mir*) had no influence on this possession. A certain communal order obtained only in relation to the matter of taxes and obligations. To this ancient 'commune' there corresponds to a certain degree only the rule of 'collective responsibility' envisaged by the Statute of 1861 in relation to taxes and obligations. But in Rus' there was never any 'commune' as *an organization of communal land-use* with the right of the *mir* to distribute and redistribute plots among members of the 'commune'." ⁵⁸³

According to Richard Pipes, "the origins of the Russian commune are obscure and a subject of controversy. Some see in it the spontaneous expression of an alleged Russian sense of social justice, while others view it as the product of state pressures to ensure collective responsibility for the fulfilment of obligations to the Crown and landlord. Recent studies indicate that the repartitional commune first appeared toward the end of the fifteenth century, became common in the sixteenth, and prevalent in the seventeenth. It served a variety of functions, as useful to officials and landlords as to peasants. The former it guaranteed, through the institution of collective responsibility, the payment of taxes and delivery of recruits; the latter it enabled to present a united front in dealings with external authority. The principle of periodic redistribution of land ensured (at any rate, in theory) that every peasant had enough to provide for his family and, at the same time, to meet his obligations to the landlord and state." ⁵⁸⁴

Hosking has an interesting and convincing take on the origins of the *mir* based on the meaning of the word – "peace". Life in a "geopolitically vulnerable and

⁵⁸³ Lebedev, *op. cit.*, pp. 341-342.

⁵⁸⁴ Pipes, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

agriculturally marginal" land such as Russia created the need for peace and solidarity, and the organization of the *mir* went some way to providing that. Moreover, "communal solidarity was needed not only at times of emergency", such as the fires and droughts and famines that were so common in the Russian countryside. "The narrowness of the margins of survival made it unusually important that members of rural settlements should reach a consensus on such matters as use of timber and common lands, gleaning rights, access to water, and the upkeep of roads and bridges. Conflict was not merely damaging: it might threaten the community's existence. The ideal of the rural community was *mir*, which meant 'peace' but in time came to be adopted as the name of the community itself. In England the 'king's peace' was imposed from above, through sheriffs and royal courts. In medieval Rus, the prince was too far away and communications too poor; the community had to devise its own means of providing harmony. Our sources do not tell us how this was done, though it seems likely that regular meetings of heads of households were the normal practice, to thrash out problems and disagreements, and if possible to reach a consensus which did not override individual interests too flagrantly. 'Joint responsibility' (*krugovaia poruka*) was a well-developed custom long before it became an administrative device, to facilitate tax collecting and recruitment, in the seventeenth century.

"It was all the more important because, in practice, conflict, latent or open, was the rule within rural communities, between indigent and affluent, young and old, men and women. Peasants were suspicious of both the rich and the poor, for they undermined community principle, the poor by draining resources from their neighbors, the rich because they did not need their neighbors. As a popular saying had it, 'Wealth is a sin before God, and poverty is a sin before one's fellow villagers.' Egalitarianism and mutual harmony were not often achieved, but they remained ideals for all that."⁵⁸⁵

The strength of the *mir*, at the bottom of Russian life, and that of the autocracy, at its apex, between them determined much of Russian history. The autocrat looked to the peasants of the *mir* to support him, just as the peasants looked to the tsar to support them. The enemy of both tended to be the classes in the middle – the landowners and serf-owners in the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, and the bourgeois and professional classes (including the *raznochintsy*, "of indeterminate rank") that came to the fore only in the nineteenth century. As long as tsar and peasant united their respective strengths in support of each other, Russia remained strong – or at any rate, strong enough to survive.

Old Russia fell when the autocracy itself fell to the intrigues of the "middle men", having been weakened by the gradual alienation of the peasants who joined the Old Ritualist schismatics or one of the revolutionary parties or conducted arson attacks against the estates of the landowners (as in 1905).

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⁵⁸⁵ Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, London: Penguin, second edition, 2012, pp. 15, 16.

Peasant values, continues Hosking, “were summed up in the single word *pravda*. It meant ‘truth’, but also much more, in fact everything the community regarded as ‘right’: justice, morality, God’s law, behaving according to conscience. The criterion for any decision taken by the village assembly was that it must accord with *pravda*. *Pravda* was the collective wisdom of the community, accumulated over the generations. The whole of life was regarded as a struggle between *pravda* and *nepravda* or *krivda* (crookedness). *Pravda* was order and beauty, where the home was clean and tidy, family life was harmonious, the fields were well cultivated and the crops grew regularly. *Nepravda* was a world of disorder and ugliness, where families were riven by conflict, the home was dirty and untidy, the fields were neglected and famine reigned. The orderly world was created by God and was under the protection of the saints, the disorderly one was the province of the ‘unclean spirit’ (*nechistaia sila*), the devil. Outside the community, officials were judged according to whether their behavior exemplified *Pravda* or not. The grand prince or tsar was assumed to embody it through his status as God’s anointed: if he manifestly did not, then he must be a ‘false tsar’, and the true one had to be found.

“Given the rigid and demanding norms of community life, it is not surprising that, at least subconsciously, peasants yearned to escape them, to break away and begin a new life of *volia* (freedom). Many young men did so, either by simply establishing a new household or, more radically, by fleeing to the frontier and becoming a brigand or perhaps joining the Cossacks (the term ‘cossack’ derives from a Turkish word meaning ‘free man’, as distinct from serf). Hence migration rates were very high... *Volia* is not freedom as that is understood in modern democratic societies, for which another word exists: *svoboda*. Rather, *volia* is the absence of any constraint, the right to gallop off into the open steppe, the ‘wild field’ (*dikoe pole*), and there to make one’s living without humble drudgery, by hunting or fishing, or if necessary by brigandage and plunder. *Volia* does not recognize any restriction imposed by the equivalent freedom of others: it is nomadic freedom rather than civic freedom. The scholar Dmitrii Likhachev has called it ‘*Svoboda* plus open spaces’. It helps to explain the otherwise unbelievably rapid penetration of Siberia, a territory which, in the words of the writer Valentin Rasputin, ‘originated in runaway serfs and Cossacks’.

“Members of a village community not only needed each other; they also needed if possible a protector, someone from the elite who could direct a minimum of material wealth in their direction, provide for them in case of disaster, and help to mitigate or divert the disfavor of the mighty. One reason, then, why serfdom became so widespread in Russia was that it could be useful to the serfs as well as the serf-owners. Not that all the serf-owners fulfilled their role properly. Some of them merely practiced repression and exploitation. However, they too had an interest in the survival of their serfs. Some kept granaries to supplement the peasant diet in case of famine, or provided employment to tide villagers over a period of idleness and poverty. In all cases, however, whether the patron was good or bad, the elected village elder (*starosta*) was the key intermediary who

communicated to him the village's needs, brought back his commands, and saw that they were carried out."⁵⁸⁶

These peasants had their own customary law quite distinct from that of the educated classes. It embodied a distinctive world-view with potential for both good and evil. "The peasant-class courts", writes Oliver Figes, "often functioned in a random manner, deciding cases on the basis of the litigants' reputations and connections, or on the basis of which side was prepared to bribe the elected judges with the most vodka. Yet, amidst all this chaos, there could be discerned some pragmatic concepts of justice, arising from the peasants' daily lives, which had crystallized into more-or-less universal legal norms, albeit with minor regional variations.

"Three legal ideas, in particular, shaped the peasant revolutionary mind. The first was the concept of family ownership. The assets of the peasant household (the livestock, the tools, the crops, the buildings and their contents, but not the land beneath them) were regarded as the common property of the family. Every member of the household was deemed to have an equal right to use these assets, including those not yet born. The patriarch of the household, the *bol'shak*, it is true, had an authoritarian influence over the running of the farm and the disposal of its assets. But customary law made it clear that he was expected to act with the consent of the other adult members of the family and that, on his death, he could not bequeath any part of the household property, which was to remain in the common ownership of the family under a new *bol'shak* (usually the eldest son). If the *bol'shak* mismanaged the family farm, or was too often drunk and violent, the commune could replace him under customary law with another household member. The only way the family property could be divided was through the partition of an extended household into smaller units, according to the methods set out by local customary law. In all regions of Russia this stipulated that the property was to be divided on an equal basis between all the adult males, with provision being made for the elderly and unmarried women. The principles of family ownership and egalitarian partition were deeply ingrained in Russian peasant culture. This helps to explain the failure of the Stolypin land reforms (1906-17), which, as part of their programme to create a stratum of well-to-do capitalist farmers, attempted to convert the family property of the peasant household into the private property of the *bol'shak*, thus enabling him to bequeath it to one or more of his sons.⁵⁸⁷ The peasant revolution of 1917 made a clean sweep of these reforms, returning to the traditional legal principles of family ownership.

"The peasant family farm was organized and defined according to the labour principle, the second major peasant legal concept. Membership of the household was defined by active participation in the life of the farm (or, as the peasants put it, 'eating from the common pot') rather than by blood or kinship ties. An outsider adopted by the family who lived and worked on the farm was usually viewed as a full member of the household with equal rights to those of the blood relatives, whereas a son of the family who left the village to earn his living elsewhere

⁵⁸⁶ Hosking, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19.

⁵⁸⁷ As we shall see, Stolypin's reforms were by no means a complete failure. (V.M.)

eventually ceased to be seen as a household member. This same attachment of rights to labour could be seen on the land as well. The peasants believed in a sacred link between land and labour. The land belonged to no one but God, and could not be bought or sold. But every family had the right to support itself from the land on the basis of its own labour, and the commune was there to ensure its equal distribution between them. On this basis – that the land should be in the hands of those who tilled it – the squires did not hold their land rightfully and the hungry peasants were justified in their struggle to take it from them. A constant battle was fought between the written law of the state, framed to defend the property rights of the landowners, and the customary law of the peasants, used by them to defend their own transgressions of these property rights. Under customary law, for example, no one thought it wrong when a peasant stole wood from the landlord's forest, since the landlord had more wood than he could personally use and, as the proverb said, 'God grew the forest for everyone'. The state categorized as 'crimes' a whole range of activities which peasant custom did not: poaching and grazing livestock on the squire's land; gathering mushrooms and berries from his forest; picking fruit from his orchards; fishing in his ponds, and so on. Customary law was a tool which the peasants used to subvert a legal order that in their view maintained the unjust domination of the landowners and the biggest landowner of all: the state. It is no coincidence that the revolutionary land legislation of 1917-18 based itself on the labour principles found in customary law.

"The subjective approach to the law – judging the merits of a case according to the social and economic position of the parties concerned – was the third specific aspect of the peasantry's legal thinking which had an affinity with the revolution. It was echoed in the Bolshevik concept of 'revolutionary justice', the guiding principle of the People's Courts of 1917-18, according to which a man's social class was taken as the decisive factor in determining his guilt or innocence. The peasants considered stealing from a rich man, especially by the poor, a much less serious offence than stealing from a man who could barely feed himself and his family. In the peasants' view it was even justified... to kill someone guilty of a serious offence against the community. And to murder a stranger from outside the village was clearly not as bad as killing a fellow villager. Similarly, whereas deceiving a neighbour was seen by the peasants as obviously immoral, cheating on a landlord or a government official was not subject to any moral censure; such 'cunning' was just one of the many everyday forms of passive resistance used by peasants to subvert an unjust established order. Within the context of peasant society this subjective approach was not without its own logic, since the peasants viewed justice in terms of its direct practical effects on their own communities rather than in general or abstract terms. But it could often result in the sort of muddled thinking that made people call the peasants 'dark'. In *The Criminal*, for example, Chekhov tells the true story of a peasant who was brought to court for stealing a bolt from the railway tracks to use as a weight on his fishing tackle. He fails to understand his guilt and in trying to justify himself repeatedly talks of 'we' (the peasants of his village): 'Bah! Look how many years we have been removing bolts, and God preserves us, and here you are talking about a crash, people killed. We do not remove all of them – we always leave some. We do not act without thinking. We do understand.'

"Here, in this moral subjectivity, was the root of the peasant's instinctive anarchism. He lived outside the realm of the state's laws – and that is where he chose to stay. Centuries of serfdom had bred within the peasant a profound mistrust of all authority outside his own village. What he wanted was *volia*, the ancient peasant concept of freedom and autonomy without restraints from the powers that be. 'For hundreds of years,' wrote Gorky, 'the Russian peasant has dreamt of a state with no right to influence the will of the individual and his freedom of action, a state without power over man.' That peasant dream was kept alive by subversive tales of Stenka Razin and Emelian Pugachev, those peasant revolutionaries of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, whose mythical images continued as late as the 1900s to be seen by the peasants flying as ravens across the Volga announcing the advent of utopia. And there were equally fabulous tales of a 'Kingdom of Opona', somewhere on the edge of the flat earth, where the peasants lived happily, undisturbed by gentry or state. Groups of peasants even set out on expeditions in the far north in the hope of finding this arcadia.

"As the state attempted to extend its bureaucratic control into the countryside during the late nineteenth century, the peasants sought to defend their autonomy by developing ever more subtle forms of passive resistance to it. What they did, in effect, was to set up a dual structure of administration in the villages: a formal one, with its face to the state, which remained inactive and inefficient; and an informal one, with its face to the peasants, which was quite the opposite. The village elders and tax collectors elected to serve in the organs of state administration in the villages (*obshchestva*) and the volost townships (*upravy*) were, in the words of one frustrated official, 'highly unreliable and unsatisfactory', many of them having been deliberately chosen for their incompetence in order to sabotage government work. There were even cases where the peasants elected the village idiot as their elder. Meanwhile, the real centre of power remained in the *mir*, in the old village assembly dominated by the patriarchs. The power of the tsarist state never really penetrated the village, and this remained its fundamental weakness until 1917, when the power of the state was removed altogether and the village gained its *volia*." ⁵⁸⁸

⁵⁸⁸ Figes, *A People's Tragedy*, pp. 99-102.

40. RUSSIA AND EUROPE: (1) CHAADAEV VS. PUSHKIN

The great debate between Slavophiles and Westerners began on October 3, 1836 with the publication, by Peter Chaadaev, of the first of his *Philosophical Letters*, written in French. A few days later Pushkin received from the author an offprint of the article. It was not a new piece of work: the letters had been written between 1828 and 1830. Pushkin had read them in manuscript when in 1830-31; had indeed taken two with him to Tsarskoe Selo, and had unsuccessfully attempted to get them published."⁵⁸⁹

N.O. Lossky writes: "The letters are ostensibly addressed to a lady who is supposed to have asked Chaadaev's advice on the ordering of her spiritual life. In the first letter Chaadaev advises the lady to observe the ordinances of the Church as a spiritual exercise in obedience. Strict observance of church customs and regulations may only be dispensed with, he says⁵⁹⁰, when 'beliefs of a higher order have been attained, raising our spirit to the source of all certainty;' such beliefs must not be in contradiction to the 'beliefs of the people'. Chaadaev recommends a well-regulated life as favorable to spiritual development and praises Western Europe where 'the ideas of duty, justice, law, order' are part of the people's flesh and blood and are, as he puts it, not the psychology, but the physiology of the West. He evidently has in mind the disciplinary influence of the Roman Church.

"As to Russia, Chaadaev is extremely critical of her. Russia, in his opinion, is neither the West nor the East. 'Lonely in the world, we have given nothing to the world, have taught it nothing; we have not contributed one idea to the mass of human ideas.' 'If we had not spread ourselves from [the] Behring Straits to [the] Oder, we would never have been noticed.' We do not, as it were, form part of the human organism and exist 'solely in order to give humanity some important lesson'."⁵⁹¹

According to Chaadaev, "not a single useful thought has sprouted in our country's barren soil; not a single great truth has emerged from our ambit.... Something in our blood repulses all true progress. In the end we have lived and now live solely to serve as some inscrutable great lesson for the distant generations that will grasp it; today, whatever anyone may say, we are a void in the intellectual firmament."⁵⁹²

Chaadaev, writes Edvard Radzinsky, "blamed Russian Orthodoxy, and said it was a 'fatal flaw' that Russia 'took Christianity from hopelessly outdated Byzantium, which was despised by other nations by then.' 'This did not only create a schism in Christianity. This kept us from going hand in hand with other civilized nations. Isolated in our heresy, we could not absorb anything that went on in Europe. The separation of churches violated the general course of history

⁵⁸⁹ Binyon, *Pushkin*, p. 549.

⁵⁹⁰ The idea that Church regulations and customs, such as fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays, could be dispensed with was an attitude of the nobility that St. Seraphim of Sarov, in particular, criticized. He said that he who does not fast is not Orthodox. (V.M.)

⁵⁹¹ N.O. Lossky, *History of Russian Philosophy*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1952, p. 48.

⁵⁹² Translated in Serena Vitale, *Pushkin's Button*, London: Fourth Estate, 2000, p. 82.

toward universal unification of all nations of the Christian faith, violated 'Thy Kingdom come'."⁵⁹³

"It is clear," he writes, "that if the weakness of our faith and the inadequacy of our doctrine has hitherto kept us outside this universal movement in which the social idea of Christianity is being developed and formulated, and has thrown us back into the category of people who can profit from Christianity to the full extent only indirectly and far too late, it is clear that we must try with all possible means to breathe new life into our faith and to give ourselves a truly Christian impulse. For it is Christianity alone which has brought all this to pass there [in Europe]. That is what I mean when I say that among us the upbringing of the human race must begin again..."

Sir Isaiah Berlin sums up his enormous influence: "Chaadaev's attack, with its deification of Western traditions, ideas and civilisation, was the key to later Russian 'social thought'. Its importance was enormous. It set the tone, it struck the dominant notes which were echoed by every major Russian writer up to and beyond the Revolution. Everything is there: the proclamation that the Russian past is blank or filled with chaos, that the only true culture is the Roman West, and that the Great Schism robbed Russia of her birthright and left her barbarous, an abortion of the creative process, a caution to other peoples, a Caliban among nations. Here, too, is the extraordinary tendency toward self-preoccupation which characterises Russian writing even more than that of the Germans, from whom this tendency mainly stems. Other writers, in England, France, even Germany, write about life, love, nature and human relations at large; Russian writing, even when it is most deeply in debt to Goethe or Schiller or Dickens or Stendhal, is about Russia, the Russian past, the Russian present, Russian prospects, the Russian character, Russian vices and Russian virtues. All the 'accursed questions' (as Heine was perhaps the first to call them) turn in Russian into notorious *proklyatye voprosy* – questions about the destinies (*sud'by*) of Russia: Where do we come from? Whither are we bound? Why are we who we are? Should we teach the West or learn from it? Is our 'broad' Slav nature higher in the spiritual scale than that of the 'Europeans' – a source of salvation for all mankind – or merely a form of infantilism and barbarism destined to be superseded or destroyed? The problem of the 'superfluous man' is here already; it is not an accident that Chaadaev was an intimate friend of the creator of *Eugene Onegin* [Pushkin]. No less characteristic of this mental condition is Chaadaev's contrary speculation that was also destined to have a career in subsequent writing, in which he wondered whether the Russians, who have arrived so late at the feast of the nations and are still young, barbarous and untried, do not thereby derive advantages, perhaps overwhelming ones, over older or more civilised societies. Fresh and strong, the Russians might profit by the inventions and discoveries of the others without having to go through the torments that have attended their mentors' struggles for life and civilisation. Might there not be a vast positive gain in being late in the field? Herzen and Chernyshevsky, Marxists and anti-Marxists, were to repeat this with mounting optimism. But the most central and far-reaching question was still that posed by Chaadaev. He asked: Who are we and what should be our path?

⁵⁹³ Radzinsky, *Alexander II. The Last Great Tsar*, London: Free Press, 2005, p. 78.

Have we unique treasures (as the Slavophiles maintained) preserved for us by our Church – the only true Christian one – which Catholics and Protestants have each in their own way lost or destroyed? Is that which the West despises as coarse and primitive in fact a source of life – the only pure source in the decaying post-Christian world? Or, on the contrary, is the West at least partially right: if we are ever to say our own word and play our part and show the world what kind of people we are, must we not learn from the Westerners, acquire their skills, study in their schools, emulate their arts and sciences, and perhaps the darker sides of their lives also? The lines of battle in the century that followed remained where Chaadaev drew them: the weapons were ideas which, whatever their origins, in Russian became matters of the deepest concern – often of life and death – as they never were in England or France or, to such a degree, in Romantic Germany. Kireyevsky, Khomiakov and Aksakov gave one answer, Belinsky and Dobrolyubov another, Kavelin yet a third.”⁵⁹⁴

Chaadaev’s letter had an enormous impact on Russian society; Herzen remarked that it “shook the whole of intellectual Russia”. The tsar was furious. Klementy Rosset, an officer of the General Staff, wrote to the famous poet Alexander Pushkin: “The Emperor has read Chaadaev’s article and found it absurd and extravagant, saying that he was sure ‘that Moscow did not share the insane opinions of the Author’, and has instructed the governor-general Prince Golitsyn to inquire daily as to the health of Chaadaev’s wits and to put him under governmental surveillance...”⁵⁹⁵

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

*Comrade, believe: joy’s star will leap
Upon our sight, a radiant token;
Russia will rise from her long sleep;
And where autocracy lies, broken,
Our names shall yet be graven deep.*⁵⁹⁶

But even here anti-autocratic sentiments are combined with a belief in Russia. So although Pushkin admitted that he would have participated in the Decembrist rebellion if he had not been in exile, he was never a typical westernizer. This fact, combined with his deep reading in Russian history (thanks largely to Karamzin but also owing to his own research) and an enlightening interview with the Tsar himself, led Pushkin to a kind of conversion to Russia, to Tsarism and to a belief in her significance as a phenomenon independent of Europe.

⁵⁹⁴ Berlin, “Russian Intellectual History”, in *The Power of Ideas*, London: Chatto & Windus, 2000, pp. 74-75.

⁵⁹⁵ Michael Binyon, *Pushkin*, London: HarperCollins, 2002, p. 551.

⁵⁹⁶ Pushkin, “To Chaadaev”, quoted in Walicki, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

Vital to Pushkin's understanding of autocracy was his relationship with Tsar Nicholas I. This was very far from a servile or idolatrous relationship, as some have asserted. "Although I am personally heartily attached to the Emperor," he wrote to Chaadaev, "I am far from admiring everything I see around me: as a man of letters I am embittered [by his censorship], as a man of prejudices I am offended – but I swear to you on my honour, that not for anything in the world would I wish to change my fatherland, nor to have any other history than that of my ancestors, such as God has given to us."⁵⁹⁷

What Pushkin valued above all in the autocracy was its *standing above the law* – the precise opposite of the western conception, which declared that nobody, not even the king, is above the law. For, being above the law, the tsar can soften its impact, make exceptions, show mercy. "Why is it necessary," he asked, "that one of us [the tsar] should become higher than all and even higher than the law itself? Because in the law a man hears something cruel and unfraternal. You don't get far with merely the literal fulfillment of the law: but none of us must break it or not fulfill it: for this a higher mercy softening the law is necessary. This can appear to men only in a fully-empowered authority. The state without a fully-empowered monarch is an automaton: many, many [automata?], if it attains to what the United States has attained. But what is the United States? A corpse. In them man has disappeared to the point that he's not worth a brass farthing. A state without a fully-empowered monarch is the same as an orchestra without a conductor. However good the musicians, if there is not one among them who gives the beat with the movement of his baton, the concert gets nowhere..."⁵⁹⁸

"Of course," writes Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev), "when Pushkin pronounced [these words], he knew well that there were big defects in state administration under the tsarist autocracy. These inevitably occur when the autocratic monarchs violate this, the best state order, by their opposition to the Divine laws. Nevertheless, as we see from his words, it was impossible to compare this form of government in Russia with any other form of government in the countries that did not have autocracy, just as it is impossible to compare heaven with the earth."⁵⁹⁹

The sincerity of his conversion was demonstrated during the Polish rebellion in 1830. Although "enlightened" Europe condemned the Tsar for crushing the rebellion, on August 2, 1830, just three weeks before the taking of Warsaw by Russian troops, Pushkin wrote "To the Slanderers of Russia". From that time, as the friend of the poet's brother, Michael Yuzefovich, wrote, "his world-view changed, completely and unalterably. He was already a deeply believing person: [he now became] a citizen who had changed his mind, having understood the demands of Russian life and renounced utopian illusions."⁶⁰⁰

⁵⁹⁷ Binyon, *Pushkin*, pp. 550-551.

⁵⁹⁸ *Razgovory Pushkina* (The Conversations of Pushkin), Moscow, 1926.

⁵⁹⁹ Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev), *Russkaia Ideologia* (The Russian Ideology), St. Petersburg, 1992, p. 59.

⁶⁰⁰ Yuri Druzhnikov, "O Poetakh i Okkupantakh", *Russkaia Mysl'*, N 4353, February 15-21, 2001, p. 8.

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

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

"Pushkin agreed with his friend of many years that 'we did not take part in any of the great events which shook her (Europe)'. But it does not occur to Chaadaev to ask the simple question: why *should* Rus' have taken part? Or, for example, would not this 'participation' have been for the worse, both for Europe and for Rus'? Pushkin gives a simple, but principled reply at this point: Russia has 'her own special calling', which Pushkin in another place calls 'lofty': 'It was Russia and her vast expanses that were swallowed up by the Mongol invasion. The Tartars did not dare to cross our western frontiers and leave us in their rear. They departed for their deserts, and Christian civilization was saved... By our martyrdom the energetic development of Catholic Europe was delivered from all kinds of hindrances'. From Pushkin's reply it follows that indirectly at any rate Russia did take part in the life of Western Europe, and, in accordance with its historical significance, this participation was weighty and fraught with consequences for the West. It was not a direct participation insofar as Russia had a different calling. The complete opposition of Pushkin's and Chaadaev's views on the problem is characteristic. For the latter the Tartar-Mongol yoke was a 'cruel and humiliating foreign domination'. For Pushkin this epoch was sanctified by the lofty word 'martyrdom', which Russia received not only for herself, but also for her western brothers, for Christian civilization generally. In his reply Pushkin links the special calling of Russia with her reception of Orthodoxy, and see in it not 'the will of fate', but Russia's preparation of herself for this martyrdom.

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

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

“Both Chaadaev and Pushkin highly esteemed the role of Christianity in world history. In his review of *The History of the Russian People* by N. Polevoj, the latter wrote: ‘The greatest spiritual and political turning-point [in the history of] of our planet is Christianity. In this sacred element the world disappeared and renewed itself. Ancient history is the history of Egypt, Persia, Greece, Rome. Modern history is the history of Christianity.’ Chaadaev would also have signed up to

these words, but immediately after this common affirmation differences would have arisen. For Chaadaev true Christianity rules, shapes and 'lords over everything' only in Catholic Europe - 'there Christianity accomplished everything'. Chaadaev even considers the history of Catholic Europe to be 'sacred, like the history of the ancient chosen people'.

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

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

"Pushkin also disagreed with Chaadaev concerning the unity of Christianity, which for Chaadaev 'wholly consisted in the idea of the merging of all the moral forces of the world' for the establishment of 'a social system or Church which would have to introduce the kingdom of truth among people'.⁶⁰¹

⁶⁰¹ For Chaadaev "the supreme principle" was "unity", which he saw incarnate in Western Catholic Christendom - completely forgetting that the West was torn by the division between Catholicism and Protestantism. See Pushkin's remark below. (V.M.)

"To this Pushkin objected already in his letter of 1831: 'You see the unity of Christianity in Catholicism, that is, in the Pope. Does it not consist in the idea of Christ, which we find also in Protestantism?' Pushkin notes the Catholicocentrism of Chaadaev, and reminds him of the Protestant part of the Western Christian world. But the main point is that Pushkin turns out to be better-prepared theologically than Chaadaev. The Church is the Body of Christ, and Christ Himself is Her Head, according to the teaching of the Apostle Paul (Ephesians 1.23, 4.16; Colossians 1.18, etc.). Here Pushkin in a certain sense anticipates the problems of Dostoyevsky, who considered that Rus' had preserved that Christ that the West had lost, and that the division of the Churches had taken place precisely because of different understandings of Christ.

"Pushkin considered it necessary to say a few words also about the clergy, although Chaadaev had not directly criticized them in his first letter. 'Our clergy,' writes the poet, 'were worthy of respect until Theophan [Prokopovich]. They never sullied themselves with the wretchednesses of papism..., and, of course, they would never have elicited a Reformation at a moment when mankind needed unity more than anything.' In evaluating the role of the clergy in Russian history, Pushkin distinguished between two stages: before Peter and after Peter. The role of the clergy in Russian life before Peter was exceptionally great. Ancient Rus' inherited from Byzantium, together with the two-headed eagle on her arms, the idea of the symphony of secular and ecclesiastical power. This idea was equally foreign both to caesaropapism and papocaesarism and the democratic idea of the separation of the Church from the State. Of course, symphony never found its full incarnation in State life, but it is important that as an idea it lived both in the Church and in the State, and the role of the clergy as the necessary subject of this symphony was naturally lofty and indisputable. But even outside the conception of 'symphony', the clergy played an exceptionally important role in the history of Russia. In the epoch of the Tatar-Mongol yoke they were almost the only educated class in Russian society: 'The clergy, spared by the wonderful quick-wittedness of the Tatars alone in the course of two dark centuries kept alive the pale sparks of Byzantine education'. In another place Pushkin even found it necessary to contrast the Russian and Catholic clergy – true, without detailed explanations of his affirmation: 'In Russia the influence of the clergy was so beneficial, and in the Roman-Catholic lands so harmful... Consequently we are obliged to the monks of our history also for our enlightenment'.

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

"In Pushkin's opinion, a serious blow against the clergy was later delivered by Catherine II. And if we are to speak of the backwardness of the Russian clergy, it

is there that we must see its source. 'Catherine clearly persecuted the clergy, sacrificing it to her unlimited love of power, in the service of the spirit of the times... The seminaries fell into a state of complete collapse. Many villages did not have priests... What a pity! For the Greek [Orthodox Christian] confession gives us our special national character'. If Chaadaev reproaches Russia for not having 'her own face', then for Pushkin it is evident that Russia has 'her own face' and it was formed by Orthodoxy. Therefore a sad note is heard in Pushkin's evaluation of the era of Catherine: she has her own face, her own 'special national character', if only she does not lose it because of ill-thought-out reforms and regulations foreign to the spirit of Russian life. In contrast to Chaadaev, Pushkin linked the backwardness of the contemporary clergy not with the reception of Christianity from Byzantium, but with the recent transformations in Russian State and Church life, and sought the roots of this backwardness not in the 10th century but in the 18th century, in the reforms of Peter and in the epoch of the so-called Enlightenment..."⁶⁰²

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Such was the debate in its main outlines. And yet, just as Pushkin moved towards the Slavophile position later in life, so, less surely, did Chaadaev. Thus in 1830 he praised Pushkin's nationalist poems on the Warsaw insurrection. And later, in his *Apology of a Madman* (1837), he was inclined to think that the very emptiness of Russia's past might enable her to contribute to the future. Indeed, he then believed that Russia was destined "to resolve the greater part of the social problems, to perfect the greater part of the ideas which have arisen in older societies, to pronounce judgement on the most serious questions which trouble the human race".⁶⁰³ Moreover, in the same *Apology*, he spoke of the Orthodox Church as "this church that is so humble and sometimes so heroic". And in a conversation with Khomiakov in 1843 he declared: "Holy Orthodoxy shines out for us from Holy Byzantium".⁶⁰⁴

However, while Slavophile tendencies sometimes surfaced in Chaadaev, as in other westerners, his fundamentally westernizing radicalism was revealed by his anti-monarchical remark on the occasion of the European revolutions in 1848: "We don't want any king except the King of heaven" ...⁶⁰⁵

⁶⁰² Lepakhin and Zavarzin, "Poet i Filosof o Sud'bakh Rossii" (A Poet and A Philosopher on the Destinies of Russia), *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia* (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), N 176, II-III, 1997, pp. 167-196.

⁶⁰³ Andrzej Walicki, *A History of Russian Thought*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1988, p. 89.

⁶⁰⁴ But Byzantium, he notes, was still in communion with Rome at that time, and "there was a feeling of common Christian citizenship". (Wil van den Bercken, *Holy Russia and Christian Europe*, London: SCM Press, 1999, p. 198).

⁶⁰⁵ Lossky, *op. cit.*, p. 49. Moreover, in 1854, during the Crimean War, he wrote: "Talking about Russia, one always imagines that one is talking about a country like the others; in reality, this is not so at all. Russia is a whole separate world, submissive to the will, caprice, fantasy of a single man, whether his name be Peter or Ivan, no matter – in all instances the common element is the embodiment of arbitrariness. Contrary to all the laws of the human community, Russia moves only in the direction of her own enslavement and the enslavement of all the neighbouring peoples. For this reason it would be in the interest not only of other peoples but also in that of her own that she be compelled to take a new path" (in Pipes, *op. cit.*, p. 266).

41. RUSSIA AND EUROPE: (2) BELINSKY VS. GOGOL

The figure of Peter the Great continued to be a critical point of difference between the Westerners and the Slavophiles. The Westerners admired him (for Chaadaev he was, with Alexander I, almost the only significant Russian): the Slavophiles criticized him as the corrupter of the true Russian tradition. All felt they had to interpret his place in Russian history.

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

Unlike most of the intellectuals of the time, Belinsky was not a nobleman, but a *raznochinets* (that is, of undetermined rank, a nobleman by birth who did not occupy himself with a nobleman's pursuits). Moreover, he was an atheist. In fact, he rejected all the traditional pillars of traditional Russian life...

"Hegelian in outlook, Belinskii believed that literature was the vehicle through which the Universal Spirit would come to self-awareness and self-expression in Russia, the means by which the Russian people would make their own distinctive contribution to world culture and the development of mankind.

"Literature, he declared, would heal the rift within Russian culture, reintegrating the common people by giving it a detailed and authentic account of their life and assimilating their spoken language, not for ethnographic reasons but for moral and cultural ones, to express the Russian national essence. It followed that the mainstream of Russian literature would be realism, or what Belinskii called the 'natural school'. By describing the life of the common people vividly and sympathetically but also critically, the writer would arouse the concern and compassion of the reader and stimulate improvement and progress. He identified Pushkin's long narrative poem, *Evgenii Onegin*, and the first part of Gogol's novel, *Dead Souls*, as exemplars of the new tendency."⁶⁰⁶

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

⁶⁰⁶ Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, p. 274.

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

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

"Before Russians could be transformed into a nation it was necessary to break up their stagnating society... Belinsky argued that the emergence of every modern nation was accompanied by an apparently contradictory phenomenon – namely the cleavage between the upper and lower strata of society that so disturbed the Slavophiles. He regarded this as confirmation of certain general rules applying to the formation of modern nation-states: 'In the modern world,' he wrote, 'all the elements within society operate in isolation, each one separately and independently... in order to develop all the more fully and perfectly... and to become fused once more into a new and homogeneous whole on a higher level than the original undifferentiated homogeneity'. In his polemics with the Slavophiles, who regarded the cleavage between the cultivated elite and the common people as the prime evil of post-Petrine Russia, Belinsky argued that 'the gulf between society and the people will disappear in the course of time, with the progress of civilization'. This meant 'raising the people to the level of society', he was anxious to stress, and not 'forcing society back to the level of the people', which was the Slavophiles' remedy. The Petrine reforms, which had been responsible for this social gulf, were therefore, in Belinsky's view, the first and decisive step toward modern Russia. 'Before Peter the Great, Russia was merely a people [*narod*]; she became a nation [*natsiia*] thanks to the changes initiated by the reformer.'"⁶⁰⁷

Berlin writes: "The central question for all Russians concerned about the condition of their country was social, and perhaps the most decisive single influence on the life and work of Belinsky was his social origin. He was born in poverty and bred in the atmosphere, at once bleak and coarse, of an obscure country town in a backward province. Moscow did, to some degree, soften and civilize him, but there remained a core of crudeness, and a self-conscious, rough,

⁶⁰⁷ Walicki, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-94.

sometimes aggressive tone in his writing. This tone now enters Russian literature, never to leave it. Belinsky spoke in this sort of accent because this kind of raised dramatic tone, this harshness, was as natural to him as to Beethoven. Belinsky's followers adopted his manner because they were the party of the *enragés*, and this was the traditional accent of anger and revolt, the earnest of violence to come, the rough voice of the insulted and the oppressed peasant masses proclaiming to the entire world the approaching end of their suffering at the hands of the discredited older order.

"Belinsky was the first and most powerful of the 'new men', the radicals and revolutionaries who shook and in the end destroyed the classical aristocratic tradition in Russian literature. The literary *élite*, the friends of Pushkin, despite radical ideas obtained abroad after the Napoleonic wars, despite Decembrist tendencies, was on the whole conservative, if not in conviction, yet in social habits and temper, connected with the court and the army, and deeply patriotic. Belinsky, to whom this seemed a retrograde outlook, was convinced that Russia had more to learn from the West than to teach it, that the Slavophile movement was romantic illusion, at times blind nationalistic megalomania, that Western scientific progress offered the only hope of lifting Russia from her backward state. And yet this same prophet of material civilization, who intellectually was so ardent a Westerner, was emotionally more deeply and unhappily Russian than any of his contemporaries, spoke no foreign language, could not breathe freely in any environment save that of Russia, and felt miserable and persecution-ridden abroad. He found Western habits worthy of respect and emulation, but to him personally quite insufferable. When abroad he began to sigh most bitterly for home and after a month away was almost insane with nostalgia. In this sense he represents in his person the uncompromising elements of a Slav temperament and way of life to a far sharper degree than any of his contemporaries, even Dostoyevsky.

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

"To some degree this peculiar amalgam of love and hate is intrinsic to contemporary Russian feeling about Europe: on the one hand intellectual respect, envy, admiration, desire to emulate and excel; on the other emotional hostility and suspicion and contempt, a sense of being clumsy, *de trop*, of being outsiders; leading as a result to an alternation between excessive self-prostration before, and aggressive flouting of, Western values. No recent visitor to the Soviet Union can have failed to remark this phenomenon: a combination of intellectual inadequacy

and emotional superiority, a sense of the West as enviably self-restrained, clever, efficient and successful; also cramped, cold, mean, calculating and fenced in, incapable of large views or generous emotion, incapable of feeling which at times rises too high and overflows its banks, unable to abandon everything and sacrifice itself in response to some unique historical challenge; incapable of ever attaining a rich flowering of life. This attitude is the most constant element in Belinsky's most personal and characteristic writings: if it is not the most valuable element in him, it is the most Russian: Russian history past and present is not intelligible without it, today more palpably than ever..."⁶⁰⁸

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

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One of the first to see this clearly was Gogol. While Belinsky looked forward to the rationalism of Tolstoy, Gogol's views on the Westernizer-Slavophile controversy both looked back to Pushkin and forward to Dostoyevsky's *Pushkin Speech*. "All these Slavists and Europeans," he wrote, "or old believers and new believers, or easterners and westerners, they are all speaking about two different sides of one and the same subject, without in any way divining that they are not contradicting or going against each other." The quarrel was "a big misunderstanding". And yet "there is more truth on the side of the Slavists and easterners", since their teaching is more right "on the whole", while the westerners are more right "in the details".⁶⁰⁹

Having made his name by satirical and fantastical works such as *Notes of a Madman*, *The Greatcoat*, *The Government Inspector* and, above all, *Dead Souls*, Gogol suddenly and quite unexpectedly began to talk about Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationhood. This change of heart was clearly proclaimed in *Selected Passages from*

⁶⁰⁸ Berlin, "The Man who became a Myth", in *The Power of Ideas*, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-87.

⁶⁰⁹ V. Sapov, "Gogol, Nikolai Vasilyevich", in *Russkaia Filosofia: malij entsiklopedicheskij slovar'* (Russian Philosophy: A Small Encyclopaedic Dictionary), Moscow: Nauka, 1995, pp. 132-133.

Correspondence with Friends, which, according to Oliver Figes, “was meant to serve as a sort of ideological preface to the unfinished volumes [two and three] of *Dead Souls*. Gogol preached that Russia’s salvation lay in the spiritual reform of every individual citizen. He left untouched the social institutions. He neglected the questions of serfdom and the autocratic state,... claiming that both were perfectly acceptable as long as they were combined with Christian principles...”⁶¹⁰

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

⁶¹⁰ Figes, *Natasha’s Dance*, London: Penguin, 2002, p. 317.

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

"The enemies were particularly disturbed and annoyed by Gogol's sincere and convinced approval of the foundations of those social-political orders which to so-called 'enlightened' people seemed completely unsustainable."⁶¹¹

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Belinsky was furious with Gogol's work. "Russia expects from her writers salvation from Orthodox, Nationality and Autocracy," he wrote in his *Letter to Gogol* in 1847. And he now called Gogol a "preacher of the knout, apostle of ignorance, champion of superstition and obscurantism". Russia, he thundered, "does not need sermons (she has had her fill of them!), nor prayers (she knows them by heart), but the awakening in people of the feeling of human dignity, for so many centuries buried in mud and dung; she needs laws and rights compatible not with the doctrines of the church, but with justice and common sense."⁶¹²

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

"The failure of the book had an exceptionally powerful effect on Gogol. After some resistance and attempts to clarify 'the whirlwind of misunderstandings', without rejecting his principled convictions, Gogol humbled himself and acknowledged his guilt in the fact that he had dared to be a prophet and preacher of the Truth when he personally was not worthy of serving it. Even to the sharp and cruel letter of Belinsky Gogol replied meekly and humbly: 'God knows, perhaps there is an element of truth in your words.'"⁶¹³

A very important influence on Gogol was the Optina Elder Makary (Ivanov), who was one of the critics of *Correspondence*. Unfortunately, Gogol also suffered from the censor.⁶¹⁴

⁶¹¹ Andreyev, "Religioznoe litso Gogolia" ("The Religious Face of Gogol"), *Pravoslavniy Put'* (The Orthodox Way), 1952, pp. 173, 174.

⁶¹² Hosking, *op. cit.*, p. 299.

⁶¹³ Andreyev, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

⁶¹⁴ Thus in 1847 he wrote to A.O. Smirnov that the censor, A.V. Nikitenko, "was, it seems, in the hand of people of so-called European views, overcome by the spirit of all kinds of transformations, to whom the appearance of my book is distasteful." F. I. Chizhikov, *Polnoe*

According to St. Barsanuphy of Optina, Gogol became more firmly established in Orthodoxy towards the end of his life. "Our great writer Gogol was spiritually reborn under the influence of talks with Elder Macarius, which took place in this very cell, and a great turning point resulted in him. As a man of sound nature, not fragmented, he was not capable of compromise. Having understood that he could not live as he had done previously, he, without looking back, turned to Christ and strove towards the Heavenly Jerusalem. From Rome and the holy places which he visited, he wrote letters to his friends, and these letters comprised an entire book, for which his contemporaries condemned him. Gogol had not yet begun to live in Christ – hardly had he begun to wish for this life – and the world, which is at enmity with Christ, raised a persecution against him and passed a harsh sentence on him, considering him half crazy."

Another important influence on the writer, as we have seen, was the Rzhev Protopriest Fr. Matthew Konstantinovsky, who pointed him towards Elder Macarius. It was under Fr. Matthew's influence that Gogol gradually turned away from writing altogether, to the extent that he even burned his best work. Fr. Matthew is reported to have said: "Artistic talent is a gift of God.... True, I advised [Gogol] to write something about good people, that is, to depict people of positive types, not negative ones."

Some churchmen did not share the ascetic approach to his art of Gogol and his spiritual fathers. Thus Archimandrite Feodor (Bukharev), as Robert Bird writes, "in his famous 'Letters to Gogol' elaborated a markedly different approach to the religious significance of artistic creativity. Archimandrite Feodor regretted the way that Gogol, who had once 'unconsciously' followed Christ in his 'powerful and free creative work', had fallen under the influence of the 'slavish fearfulness and mercilessness' of Father Matvei Konstantinovsky, who rejected everything that 'did not openly bear the imprint of Christ'... Bukharev concluded that any genuine literary or intellectual work can inspire a Christian: 'another tendency of thought and discourse, without explicitly recognizing Christ as its leading principle, nonetheless can be under His invisible leadership and be led by Him to be of direct use to faith and love for Christ's truth.' Significantly, Archimandrite Feodor's work was not approved for publication by Metropolitan Philaret. Philaret alleged that Bukharev saw the mere 'flickering of the light'."

Gogol came to believe that his work would be harmful because of the imperfection of its creator; as he put it, "One should not write about a holy shrine without first having consecrated one's soul".

In 1845 he burned the second half of his masterpiece, *Dead Souls*. But he could not keep away from writing, which was his life, and in 1851 he began again the second part of *Dead Souls*, which was highly praised by those friends

Sobranie Sochinenij N.V. Gogolia, second edition of his heirs, added to from the author's manuscript, vol. 3, Moscow, 1867.

to whom he read it... However, on the night of 11th to 12th February, 1852, he burned the manuscript of the second part of *Dead Souls* for the second time. Then he made the sign of the cross, lay down on the sofa and wept...

The next day he wrote to Count A.N. Tolstoy: "Imagine, how powerful the evil spirit is! I wanted to burn some papers which had already long ago been marked out for that, but I burned the chapters of *Dead Souls* which I wanted to leave to my friends as a keepsake after my death."

"What were the true motives," asks Andreyev, "for the burning of the completed work which Gogol had carefully kept, accurately putting together the written notebooks and lovingly rebinding them with ribbon? Why did Gogol burn this work, with which he was himself satisfied, and which received an objective and very high evaluation from very competent people who had great artistic taste? Let us try to answer this complex and difficult question.

"In his fourth letter with regard to *Dead Souls*, which was dated '1846' and published in his *Correspondence*, Gogol gives an explanation why he for the first time (in 1845) burned the chapters of the second part of his poem.

"'The second volume of *Dead Souls* was burned because it was necessary. 'That will not come alive again which does not die', says the Apostle. It is necessary first of all to die in order to rise again. It was not easy to burn the work of five years, which had been produced with some painful tension, in which every line was obtained only with a shudder, in which there was much that constituted my best thoughts and occupied my soul. But all this was burned, and moreover at that moment when, seeing death before me, I very much wanted to leave at any rate something after me which would remind people of me. *I thank God that He gave me strength to do this.* Immediately the flame bore away the last pages of my book, its content was suddenly resurrected in a purified and radiant form, like a phoenix from the ashes, and I suddenly saw in what a mess was everything that I had previously considered to be in good order. The appearance of the second volume in that form in which it was would have been harmful rather than useful.'... 'I was not born in order to create an epoch in the sphere of literature. My work is simpler and closer: my work is that about which every person must think first of all, and not only I. My work is my soul and the firm work of life.'...

"Such was the motivation for the first burning of *Dead Souls* in 1845.

"But this motivation also lay at the root of the second burning of the already completed work – but now much deeper, depending on the spiritual growth of Gogol.

"In his *Confession of an Author* written after *Correspondence*, Gogol for the first time seriously began to speak about the possibility of rejecting his writer's path in the name of a higher exploit. With striking sincerity he writes (how much it would have cost him!): 'It was probably harder for me than for anybody else to reject writing, for this constituted the single object of all my thoughts, I had

abandoned everything else, all the best enticements of life, and, like a monk, had broken my ties with everything that is dear to man on earth, in order to think of nothing except my work. It was not easy for me to renounce writing: some of the best minutes in my life were those when I finally put on paper that which had been flying around for a long time in my thoughts; when I am certain to this day that almost the highest of all pleasures is the pleasure of creation. But, I repeat again, as an honourable man, I would have to lay down my pen even then, if I felt the impulse to do so.

"I don't know whether I have had enough honour to do it, if I were not deprived of the ability to write: because – I say this sincerely – life would then have lost for me all value, and not to write for me would have meant precisely the same as not to live. But there are no deprivations that are not followed by the sending of a substitute to us, as a witness to the fact that the Creator does not leave man even for the smallest moment.'...

"From the last thought, as from a small seed, during the years of Gogol's unswerving spiritual growth, there grew the decision to burn his last finished work and fall silent.

"The burning before his death of the second part of *Dead Souls* was Gogol's greatest exploit, which he wanted to hide not only from men, but also from himself.

"Three weeks before his death Gogol wrote to his friend Zhukovsky: 'Pray for me, that my work may be truly virtuous and that I may be counted worthy, albeit to some degree, to sing a hymn to the heavenly Beauty'. The heavenly Beauty cannot be compared with earthly beauty and is inexpressible in earthly words. That is why 'silence is the mystery of the age to come'.

"Before his death Gogol understood this to the end: he burned what he had written and fell silent, and then died."

St. Barsanuphy of Optina expressed a similar view to Andreyev. "Gogol," he said, "wanted to depict Russian life in all of its multifaceted fullness. With this goal he began his poem, *Dead Souls*, and wrote the first part. We know in what light Russian life was reflected: the Plyushkins, the Sobakevitches, the Nosedreys and the Chichikovs; the whole book constitutes a stifling and dark cellar of commonness and baseness of interests. Gogol himself was frightened at what he had written, but consoled himself that this was only scum, only foam, which he had taken from the waves of the sea of life. He hoped that in the second volume he would succeed in portraying a Russian Orthodox man in all his beauty and all his purity.

"How was he to do this? Gogol did not know. It was at about this time that his acquaintance with Elder Makary [of Optina] took place. Gogol left Optina with a renewed soul, but he did not abandon the thought of writing the second volume of *Dead Souls*, and he worked on it.

"Later, feeling that it was beyond his power to embody in images that Christian ideal which lived in his soul in all its fullness, he became disappointed with his work. And this is the reason for his burning of the second volume of *Dead Souls*..."

Shortly before he died, Gogol wrote in a letter to Optina: "For Christ's sake, pray for me. Ask your respected Abbot and all the brothers, and ask all who pray more diligently there, to pray for me. My path is hard. My work is of such a kind that without the obvious help of God every minute and every hour, my pen cannot move. My power is not only minimal but it does not even exist without refreshment from Above..."

And again he said, with truly Christian humility: "I ask everyone in Russia to pray for me, beginning with the bishops, whose whole life is a single prayer. I ask prayers also of those who humbly do not believe in the efficacy of their prayers, as well as of those who do not believe in prayer at all and even consider it useless."

42. RUSSIA AND EUROPE: (3) HERZEN VS. KHOMIAKOV

Belinsky had deified the West, but never felt at home there. Alexander Herzen was the first Westernizer to symbolize the westerners' exile from Russian values by permanently settling in London. From there, writes Berlin, "he established his free printing press, and in the 1850s began to publish two periodicals in Russia, *The Pole Star* [recalling the Masonic lodge of the same name] and *The Bell* (the first issues appeared in 1855 and 1857 respectively), which marked the birth of systematic revolutionary agitation – and conspiracy – by Russian exiles directed against the tsarist regime."⁶¹⁵

Herzen followed Belinsky and the westerners in his disdain for Russia's pre-Petrine past: "You need the past and its traditions, but we need to tear Russia away from them. We do not want Russia before Peter, because for us it does not exist, but you do not want the new Russia. You reject it, but we reject ancient Rus'".⁶¹⁶

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

"A curse on you," he wrote with regard to 1848, "year of blood and madness, year of the triumph of meanness, beastliness, stupidity!... What did you do, revolutionaries frightened of revolution, political tricksters, buffoons of liberty?... Democracy can create nothing positive... and therefore it has no future... Socialism left a victor on the field of battle will inevitably be deformed into a commonplace bourgeois philistinism. Then a cry of denial will be wrung from the titanic breast of the revolutionary minority and the deadly battle will begin again... We have wasted our spirit in the regions of the abstract and general, just as the monks let it wither in the world of prayer and contemplation."⁶¹⁷

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

⁶¹⁵ Berlin, "A Revolutionary without Fanaticism", in *The Power of Ideas*, op. cit., p. 91.

⁶¹⁶ Herzen, in Lebedev, op. cit., p. 333.

⁶¹⁷ Herzen, *From the Other Shore*, 1849; in Cohen & Major, op. cit., p. 563.

must be closer – at the very least the labourer's wage, or pleasure in work performed."⁶¹⁸

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

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

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

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

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

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

"'Who knows what will come out of this blood? But whatever comes out, it is enough that in this paroxysm of madness, revenge, discord and retribution the world that restricts the new man, and hinders him from living, hinders him from establishing himself in the future, will perish. And that is good, and for that reason let chaos and destruction flourish and may the future be constructed.'"⁶¹⁹

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

⁶¹⁸ Herzen, *From the Other Shore*, in Isaiah Berlin, "The Pursuit of the Ideal", *The Proper Study of Mankind*, London: Pimlico, 1998, pp. 13-14.

⁶¹⁹ Ivanov, *op. cit.*, pp. 341-342.

"In 1851 in a letter to Michelet Herzen wrote: 'Amidst this chaos, amidst this dying agony and tormented regeneration, amidst this world falling into dust around its cradle, men's gaze is involuntarily directed towards the East.'" ⁶²⁰

And when Alexander II prepared to emancipate the peasants, he hailed him in the dying words of Julian the Apostate to Christ: "You have conquered, Galilaean!" ⁶²¹

That which particularly aroused the hopes of Herzen for Russia was the peasant commune or *mir*. He thought that this was a specifically Russian kind of socialism. As N.O. Lossky writes: "Disappointed with Western Europe and its 'petty bourgeois' spirit, he came to the conclusion that the Russian village commune and the *artel* hold a promise of socialism being realized in Russia rather than in any other country. The village commune meant for him peasant communism ['The Russian People and Socialism', 1852, II, 148]. In view of this he came to feel that reconciliation with the Slavophiles was possible. In his article 'Moscow Panslavism and Russian Europeanism' (1851) he wrote: Is not socialism 'accepted by the Slavophiles as it is by us? It is a bridge on which we can meet and hold hands' (I, 338)." ⁶²²

What was the truth about the commune?

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

"Through the village assembly, the commune resolved issues of concern to its members, including the calendar of field work, the distribution of taxes and other fiscal obligations (for which its members were held collectively responsible), and disputes among households. It could expel troublesome members and have them exiled to Siberia; it had the power to authorize passports, without which peasants could not leave the village, and even to compel an entire community to change its religious allegiance from the official church to one of the sects. The assembly reached its decisions by acclamation: it did not tolerate dissent from the will of the majority, viewing it as antisocial behaviour." ⁶²³

⁶²⁰ Ivanov, *op. cit.*, p. 342.

⁶²¹ And yet he continued his revolutionary agitation against "the Galilaean", especially in Poland. But when the Polish uprising failed in 1863, subscriptions to *Kolokol* fell by a factor of six times.

⁶²² Lossky, *History of Russian Philosophy*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1952, p. 58.

⁶²³ Pipes, *The Russian Revolution, 1899-1919*, London: Collins Harvill, 1990, pp. 87-98.

Certainly, Herzen had some reason for hoping for some agreement with the Slavophiles on the commune. Their leader, Alexis Stepanovich Khomiakov, praised "its meetings that passed unanimous decisions and its traditional justice in accordance with custom, conscience, and inner truth."⁶²⁴ As Pipes writes, the Slavophiles "became aware of the peasant commune as an institution confined to Russia, and extolled it as proof that the Russian people allegedly lacking in the acquisitive 'bourgeois' impulses of western Europeans, were destined to solve mankind's social problems. Haxthausen popularised this view in his book, published in 1847. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Russian *mir* became in Western Europe the starting-point of several theories concerning communal land-tenure of primitive societies..."⁶²⁵ Moreover, there seemed to be some *prima facie* similarity between Herzen's idea of "Russian socialism" and Khomiakov's key idea of *sobornost'*, although the latter is religious in essence.

Khomiakov had not gone through the tormenting journey from westernism to Orthodoxy that his friend Ivan Kireyevsky had undergone, but had remained that rarity in the Russian educated classes – a committed Orthodox who practised his faith openly and without shame while remaining completely *au courant* with modern developments (he had several technological inventions to his credit). As Roy Campbell writes, "he was as far removed from the 'ridiculousness of conservatism' as he was from the revolutionary movement with its 'immoral and passionate self-reliance'" ⁶²⁶.

Archimandrite Luke (Murianka writes): "Khomiakov's love for the Slavs and his vision of their universal mission is legendary and a major theme in his work as the leader of the Slavophiles. However, here, as in nearly all his writings, his faith played a definitive role. He supported and promoted the idea of pan-Slavism based on the principle of Orthodoxy. It was noted by a minister, Uvarov, in his remarks to Nicholas I concern-ing Khomiakov's pro-Slav poem *Kiev*, 'The last stanzas here are related to another poem [Orel] in which Khomiakov sings of the union of all Slav nations under the banner of Russia...The deep religious feeling (in which Khomiakov is entirely different from Pushkin) gives this beloved

⁶²⁴ Lossky, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

⁶²⁵ Pipes, *op. cit.*, p. 17. "In 1854, however, this whole interpretation was challenged by Boris Chicherin, a leading spokesman for the so-called Westerner camp, who argued that the peasant commune as then known was neither ancient nor autochthonous in origin, but had been introduced by the Russian monarchy in the middle of the eighteenth century as a means of ensuring the collection of taxes. Until then, according to Chicherin, Russian peasants had held their land by individual households. Subsequent researches blurred the lines of the controversy. Contemporary opinion holds that the commune of the imperial period was indeed a modern institution, as Chicherin claimed, although older than he had believed. It is also widely agreed that pressure by the state and landlord played a major part in its formation. At the same time, economic factors seem also to have affected its evolution to the extent that there exists a demonstrable connection between the availability of land and communal tenure: where land is scarce, the communal form of tenure tends to prevail, but where it is abundant it is replaced by household or even family tenure" (*op. cit.*, pp. 17-18).

⁶²⁶ Roy E. Campbell, "Khomiakov and Dostoyevsky: A Genesis of Ideas", 1988 (MS).

thought a special warmth and loftiness.' Although the government and the Church were not initially entirely accepting of the Slavophiles they were eventually won over and Khomiakov received the approval of Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow and Elder Makary of Optina. To the end of his life he supported Orthodoxy and the Slavic ideal.

"His views on government were also permeated with his Orthodox *Weltanschauung*. He wrote, 'As Christians we live in the state but are not of the state.' Rule in the state according to Khomiakov and the Slavophiles could be centered on the autocracy, which itself, in the words of Khomiakov's son Dimitrii, 'understood authority as a burden, not as a privilege....'"⁶²⁷

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

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

While attached to England, when it came to comparing the Eastern and Western forms of Christianity, Khomiakov was severe in his judgements. Influenced by Elder Ambrose of Optina as Kireyevsky had been by Elder Macarius, he had a deep, unshakeable confidence in the Orthodox Church. "Peter Christoff characterizes Khomiakov's belief as follows, 'Although Khomiakov respected and valued much in the Western nations he was absolutely convinced of the superiority of Orthodoxy.' The Slavic world-view and the Russian peasant commune specifically served as a foundation for a new social order with the emphasis on the Orthodox Church. To refer to Khomiakov's Christian Orthodox messianism would in no way do him an injustice. Khomiakov believed that Russia had a mission to bring the whole world under the 'roof' of the Orthodox Church."⁶²⁸

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⁶²⁷ Murianka, "A. Khomiakov: A Study of the Interplay of Piety and Theology".

⁶²⁸ Christoff, in Archimandrite Luke (Murianka), "Aleksei Khomiakov: A Study of the Interplay of Piety and Theology", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 54, N 1, January-February, 2005, p. 11.

"The Church," Khomiakov wrote in his famous ecclesiological tract, *The Church is One*, "does not recognize any power over herself other than her own, no other's court than the court of faith".⁶²⁹ The Church is One, declared Khomiakov, and that Church is *exclusively the Orthodox Church*. "Western Christianity has ceased to be Christianity," he wrote. "In Romanism [Roman Catholicism] there is not one word, not one action, upon which the seal of spiritual life might lie". "Both Protestantisms (Roman and German)... already bear death within themselves; it is left to unbelief only to take away the corpses and clean the arena. And all this is the righteous punishment for the crime committed by the 'West'".⁶³⁰

This points to the fundamental difference between the Slavophiles and westerners: their attitude to the faith: the Slavophiles embraced Orthodoxy, while the westernizers rejected it. "It is to Herzen that there belongs the most apt word expressing the difference between the two camps. Not without sorrow at the collapse of his friendship with Kireyevsky, Herzen wrote: 'The walls of the church were raised between us.'⁶³¹

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

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

Indeed, as Fr. Georges Florovsky writes, "the hidden meaning of the Slavophile teaching becomes completely clear only when we divine that both these, at first sight discordant teachings coincide completely, in that what the commune should be in the sphere of external inter-human relationships, in the sphere of 'earthly' life, is what the Church is in the order of the spiritual life of the person. And the other way round: the commune is that form of social existence which is realized as a result of the application of the principles of Orthodox ecclesiasticism to the question of social inter-relations."⁶³²

"One could even say," writes S. Khoruzhij, "that the social aspect, the interpretation of *sobornost'* as the principle of social existence, in time came to occupy centre stage, leaving the original ecclesiological meaning of the concept in the background and almost forgotten. Here we see a fairly systematic evolution. From the beginning there lived in the minds of the early Slavophiles an idea of the

⁶²⁹ Khomiakov, *The Church is One*, in *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenij* (Complete Works), Moscow, 1907, vol. II.

⁶³⁰ Khomiakov, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 127, 139, 141; quoted in S. Khoruzhij, "Khomiakov i Printsip Sobornosti" (Khomiakov and the Principle of *Sobornost'*), *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia*, NN 162-163, II-III, 1991, p. 103.

⁶³¹ Kusakov, "Iuridicheskaia eres' i Pravoslavnaia Vera", in Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), *Dogmat Iskuplenia* (The Dogma of Redemption), Moscow, 2013, pp. 76-77.

⁶³² Florovsky, "Vechnoe i prekhodiaschee v uchenii russkikh slavianofilov" (The eternal and the passing in the teaching of the Russian Slavophiles"), in *Vera i Kul'tura*, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

communal ideal expressing the harmonious management of social life. They were in agreement in considering the closest historical approximation to it the village commune, the peasant *mir*, and, correspondingly, the ideal was usually called 'communality' or 'communal unity', being defined as 'unity which consists in... the concept of a natural and moral brotherhood and inner justice' (I, 99). It is a banal tradition to reproach the Slavophiles for idealizing the communal set-up and Russian history. For all its triteness, the reproach is just; although Khomiakov tried to moderate this tendency (especially after the Crimean war), he never managed to measure with one measure and judge with an equal judgement home and abroad, Russia and the West. But we must point something else out here. However embellished were his descriptions of the sources and bases of Russian history and statehood, embellishment never became deification, nor was communality identified with *sobornost'*. They were two different principles, and Khomiakov did not think of merging them into each other, bringing a human, secular matter to the level of the Theandric and grace-filled. He saw an impassible boundary between the one and the other.

"However, it was not long before people with frightening ease lost the ability to discern this boundary – and then learned to deny it. *Sobornost'* was inexorably, with greater and greater strength and openness, brought down to earth, deprived of its grace-filled content and reduced to a simple social and organic principle: to a certain degree this process was the very essence of the ideological evolution of Slavophilism, from its earlier to its later variants, and from it to the conservatism of the last reign, to post-revolutionary Eurasianism and still further. In this process of the degeneration of the path of *sobornost'* it crossed paths with the socialist idea: as has been pointed out more than once, 'in this attraction to the ideal of... the commune it is not difficult to discern a subconscious and erroneous *thirst for sobornost'* [Florovsky]. Therefore in the same descending line we find in the end all the communard variations on the theme of collectivisation, Soviet patriotism and even National Bolshevism... At the same time as grace freedom is cast out – and, as a result, *sobornost'* completely lost its spiritual nature, being turned into the regulative principle either of mechanical statehood, or of the organic life of the primitive community. The link with the Church, churchness, was for the most part preserved externally. However, it goes without saying that the very idea of the Church could here degenerate as much as the idea of *sobornost'*. In the first case the Church was likened to the state to the point of being indistinguishable from it, and in the second it was a primitively pagan institution for the sanctification of life and manners. They claimed to be preserving churchness, while rejecting the principle of freedom – and this was spiritual blindness."⁶³³

Khomiakov's works expressed his faith admirably. "Concerning his active Christian love we read that during a crop failure Khomiakov's wife wrote to her brother, 'Imagine that in Tula grain is sold for six rubles a pood. It's horrible. All the fields are still black. Alexei has used up nearly all our revenue to feed the peasants.' Although emancipation of the serfs in 1861 deprived them of assistance from the landlord, almost all of Khomiakov's serfs had been already practically freed or situated on a work/rent system.

⁶³³ Khoruzhij, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-99.

“Despite the contemporary dangers of cholera over a hundred years ago, Khomiakov personally, although not a medical professional but only with a layman’s interest and concern, provided medical care for over one thousand patients. As a result he contracted the fatal disease.

“A half-hour before his death [in September, 1860]”, having received the sacraments, he felt better. His neighbor, present at his side, decided to write of the ‘good news’ of his recovery to his relatives. Khomiakov stopped him. ‘It’s true,’ exclaimed the neighbor, ‘look how you’ve come around and how your eyes have lit up.’ Khomiakov replied for the last time, ‘And how bright they will be tomorrow!’”⁶³⁴

⁶³⁴ Murianka, op. cit. According to one report, Khomiakov’s body was found to be incorrupt after his death.

43. RUSSIA AND EUROPE: (4) TURGENEV VS. DOSTOYEVSKY

The profession of novelist came into prominence as a social force after 1815. The first, most famous and most successful novelist was the Scottish writer Walter Scott, followed by Charles Dickens. Not far behind them came a string of French writers: Honore Balzac, Alexandre Dumas, Victor Hugo, Gustave Flaubert. The Italians could boast Alessandro Manzoni. And the Russians contributed Pushkin and Gogol, and, a little later, Turgenev, Goncharov, Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky.

Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev (1818-83) was perhaps the most archetypical of all westernizers. Dostoyevsky, by contrast, was a Slavophile novelist – but not a typical one. Both men had been protégés of Belinsky. But Dostoyevsky (like Gogol) eventually broke with Belinsky because of his atheism and readiness to subordinate art to propaganda. Both Turgenev and Dostoyevsky, in spite of their belonging to opposite poles of the Westernizer-Slavophile ideological spectrum, suffered from the censor and the Tsar's wrath – Dostoyevsky very seriously so, being sentenced to death for his participation in the socialist Petrashevtsy circle, and then sentenced to exile and hard labour in Siberia. But this harsh sentence, through God's Providence, was the saving of him. It was the beginning of his long, tortuous return to Orthodox Christianity, and rejection of socialism and westernism.

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A gentle giant, who made no secret of his preference for Europe over the Russia of Nicholas I and his cruel, overbearing mother, Turgenev spent many years in Europe and was well acquainted with all the leading intellectuals and artists, especially the Franco-Spanish opera singer Pauline Viardot, for whom he professed a long, undying love and whom, with her atheist republican husband Louis, he followed like a lapdog.

Turgenev first came to prominence with the publication of his *Sketches from a Hunter's Album* in 1851, which contained no direct attack on tsarism or the social system of serfdom, but which, almost for the first time, portrayed ordinary peasants and their sufferings realistically and sympathetically. Ironically, in this, his first published work, Turgenev was doing something very similar to what Dostoyevsky was doing in his first published work. He was highlighting the plight of the rural poor as Dostoyevsky was the plight of the urban poor.

“‘I am reading your *Sketches from a Hunter's Album*,’ Aksakov wrote to Turgenev on 4 October 1852. The book is a subtle series of attacks, a whole battalion of gunfire against the landed order.’ The *Sketches* were a sensation. No book did more to raise the awareness of society about the suffering of the peasantry. For the first time the portrayed not as simple ‘rustic types’ with stock expressions and characteristics, as they had been in Romantic literature, but as thinking, feeling, complicated individual human beings. By simple observation of the ways that serfdom shaped their lives, Turgenev had aroused the moral indignation of his readers more effectively than any political manifesto ever could

have done. The impact of the *Sketches* was immense. Published in the same year as *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, they had as big an impact in swaying Russia against serfdom as Harriet Beecher Stowe's book had on the anti-slavery movement in America. It was commonly believed that Tsar Alexander II, who would come to the throne in 1855, had not only read them but was influenced by them in his decision to abolish serfdom in 1861. Turgenev would later claim that the proudest moment in his life came shortly after the Emancipation Decree, when two peasants approached him on a train from Orel to Moscow and bowed down to the ground in the Russian manner to 'thank him in the name of the whole people'..."⁶³⁵

Much of his life was spent travelling from one European capital to another, mixing with the continent's major intellectuals and artists, and imbibing their *esprit de corps* as the leaders of a specifically *European* culture. Orlando Figes writes: "This emerging European sensibility was most strongly felt among Europe's cultural elites. For them it was part of a cosmopolitan world-view formed by international travel, the learning of languages, and openness to foreign cultures, without any necessary weakening of their national identity. Turgenev was a living example of this cosmopolitanism. He travelled constantly. His ability to make himself at home in Berlin, Paris, Baden-Baden, London or St. Petersburg (and he would live in all of them) was the essence of his Europeaness. The 'Europe' he inhabited was an international civilization, a Republic of Letters based on the Enlightenment ideals of reason, progress and democracy. This is what he meant when he proclaimed: 'I am a European, and I love Europe. I put my faith in its banner, which I have carried since my youth.' His literary personality was formed by Goethe, Shakespeare and Cervantes before he came to Gogol. His library at [his estate at] Spasskoe contained books in nine European languages. Although he felt himself to be a Russian, and at times such as the Crimean War could be fiercely patriotic, he was opposed to nationalism in all its forms, and refused to believe that the calls of any country should come before those of humanity. His long absence from the country of his birth earned him the reproaches of compatriots who, in the words of Annenkov, writing in his memoirs in 1880, saw it as 'a lack of national beliefs, the cosmopolitanism of a man of means willing to exchange his civil obligations for the comfort and entertainment of foreign life.' Annenkov defended Turgenev: 'It was not the lack of national sympathies in his soul and not haughty disdain for the tenor of Russian life that made Europe a necessity for his existence, but the fact that intellectual life flowed more generously there, engulfing shallow ambitions, and that in Europe he felt himself simpler, more effective, truer to himself and free from petty temptations than when he stood face to face with Russian reality.'

"Tensions between national feeling and cosmopolitanism shaped not only the identity of Europeans like Turgenev but European politics as well. While the nineteenth century can be seen in terms of the rise of nationalist movements in Europe, there was at the same time a strong counter-current of internationalist sentiment, rooted in the Kantian Enlightenment ideal of a world political community, which gave rise to optimistic hopes for European unification. The dream of a United States of Europe had been articulated by Napoleon, who came

⁶³⁵ Orlando Figes, *The Europeans*, London: Penguin, 2020, p. 158.

close to realizing it through the Confederation of the Rhine, formed in 1806 by sixteen German states under the protection of the French Empire, and later joined by other European client states. According to one of his admirers, the historian Emmanuel de las Cases, who followed Napoleon into exile on the island of St. Helena after his defeat and took down notes of his reflections, the ex-emperor had aimed to found a European legal system and a European currency. 'Europe would be nothing more or less than a single people, and everyone, wherever they went (in Europe), would find themselves in a common fatherland.

"For the next three decades, Europe's revolutionaries and national liberation movements looked for inspiration to the ideas of European unity developed by the Jacobins. An international fraternity was their best means of struggle against the conservative status quo. This internationalism was an important aspect of the 1848 revolutions. Its most influential voice belonged to Giuseppe Mazzini, leader of Young Italy (Giovine Italia), a revolutionary movement aiming to create an Italian republic, whose democratic nationalism was an inspiration for similar societies in Italy, Poland and Germany. In the Mazzinian view, the establishment of democratic nations would strengthen international brotherhood, leading to a European union of democracies to promote peace. National sentiment and cosmopolitanism were complementary, so long as the moral force of internationalism was strong enough to prevent patriotic feelings from becoming aggressive..."⁶³⁶

However, the principle of unity for such an internationalist and pan-European movement was no longer, as it has been in the Middle Ages, the common religious faith of Europeans – Christianity, but a vague democratic fraternity of nations that because of their new faith in secular democratism excluded Russia from their midst. This was ironic, because at its first proclamation during the French Revolution this new creed had resulted in anything but a democratic fraternity of nations, but rather in a bloody despotism, and had been defeated and curbed only by the might of autocratic Russia. Dostoyevsky felt this irony very sharply, and especially after autocratic Russia had had to intervene again to curb the revolution in 1848. Indeed, the philosophical antagonism between Orthodox Christian, autocratic Russia and atheist (in effect), democratic Europe became the motivational spring of his creative life as a writer.

For Turgenev and his cohort of European brothers, on the other hand, the despotic nightmare of the Jacobins and Napoleon was an aberration – even when another Emperor Napoleon came to power in France in 1851 (whom the republican Louis Viardot detested, forcing the Viardots to leave Paris). The enemy was always Russia. Even Turgenev, who loved his country and remained in some ways the quintessential Russian writer, did not demur: he consistently confessed to being a European first and foremost and believed that Russia, being a part of Europe, had to join the European mainstream. Dostoyevsky despised him for this. Not that Dostoyevsky was any less of a passionate admirer of European culture. And in his way he was no less of an advocate of pan-European and even pan-

⁶³⁶ Figes, *The Europeans*, pp. 239-240.

human unity than Turgenev and his European friends. Only he saw the only possible principle of unity as being Orthodox Christianity.

He saw that there was a snake in the grass of Europeanism, that the dreams of European unity, while democratic in theory, still concealed a conscious or subconscious desire for the domination of one nation – France, and one far from liberal ideology – socialism. Figes cites Victor Hugo, who “developed this idea at a peace conference in Paris in August 1849. The democratic revolutions of the previous year had led him to believe the diverse peoples of the European states would form themselves into an international republic, which he called, at various times, ‘*les Etats-Unis d’Europe*’, ‘*la Republique d’Europe*’, ‘*les Peuples-Unis d’Europe*’, and ‘*La Communaute Europeene*’. The foundation of the Second Empire did not change his view, even though it forced him into exile in Brussels, Jersey and then Guernsey. Appalled by the slaughter in the Crimean War – when Europe’s railways and steamers, instead of carrying the bountiful gifts of nature to and fro, as friendly exchanges of men, were carrying soldiers and engines of destruction’ – he reiterated his belief in ‘European brotherhood’ as an antidote to nationalism and its tendency to lead to wars. Yet here was an irony. For Hugo’s vision of this fraternity was one in which the French would dominate. As he saw it, France was destined to become the leader of any European union by virtue of the international standing of its republican principles. In his introduction to a Paris guide for the Universal Exposition in 1867, he looked forward to a time in the twentieth century when there would be ‘one extraordinary nation’ on the continent called ‘Europe’, which had Paris as its capital. Paris may not have become the twentieth-century capital of a united Europe, but it was the centre of the European world in which Hugo’s generations lived – as Walter Benjamin would put it, the ‘capital of the nineteenth century’.”⁶³⁷

This was anathema to Dostoyevsky, for whom France was *the homeland of socialism and antichristianity*. To a certain degree Turgenev shared this viewpoint, at least as regards socialism, whose revolutionary violence he hated. Moreover, he hated the way in which educated Russians aped the ideas and fashions of the Parisians (he satirized them bitinglly in his novel *Smoke* (1867)). He did not like Paris and eventually settled in Baden in Germany. Dostoyevsky’s critique of socialism was not yet fully articulate in his early works; he was still drawn to it, and the main theme of his writings, such as *Poor Folk* (1845), was the sufferings of the poor. But an anti-liberal and anti-socialist tendency was already revealing itself in his relations with Belinsky, of whom he wrote: “Treasuring above all reason, science and realism, at the same time he comprehended more keenly than anyone that reason, science and realism alone can merely produce the ant’s nest, and not social ‘harmony’ within which man can organize his life. He knew that moral principles are the basis of all things. He believed, to the degree of delusion and without any reflex, in the new moral foundations of socialism (which, however, up to the present have revealed nothing but abominable perversions of nature and common sense). Here was nothing but rapture. Still, as a socialist he had to destroy Christianity in the first place. He knew that the revolution must necessarily begin with atheism. He had to dethrone that religion whence the moral

⁶³⁷ Figes, *The Europeans*, pp. 240-241.

foundations of the society rejected by him had sprung up. Family, property, personal moral responsibility – these he denied radically. (I may observe that, even as Herzen, he was also a good husband and father.) Doubtless, he understood that by denying the moral responsibility of man, he thereby denied also his freedom; yet, he believed with all his being (much more blindly than Herzen, who, at the end, it seems, began to doubt) that socialism not only does not destroy the freedom of man, but, on the contrary, restores it in a form of unheard-of majesty, only on a new and adamant foundation.

“At this juncture, however, there remained the radiant personality of Christ Himself to contend with, which was the most difficult problem. As a socialist, he was duty bound to destroy the teaching of Christ, to call it fallacious and ignorant philanthropy, doomed by modern science and economic tenets. Even so, there remained the beatific image of the God-man, its moral inaccessibility, its wonderful and miraculous beauty. But in his incessant, unquenchable transport, Belinsky did not stop even before this insurmountable obstacle, as did Renan, who proclaimed in his *Vie de Jésus* – a book permeated with incredulity – that Christ nevertheless is the ideal of human beauty, an inaccessible type which cannot be repeated even in the future.

“‘But do you know,’ he screamed one evening (sometimes in a state of great excitement he used to scream), ‘do you know that it is impossible to charge man with sins, to burden him with debts and turning the other cheek, when society is organized so meanly that man cannot help but perpetrate villainies; when, economically, he has been brought to villainy, and that it is silly and cruel to demand from man that which, by the very laws of nature, he is impotent to perform even if he wished to...?’

“That evening we were not alone: there was present one of Belinsky’s friends whom he respected very much and obeyed in many ways. Also present was an author, quite young, who later gained prominence in literature [Dostoyevsky himself].

“‘I am even touched to look at him,’ said Belinsky, suddenly interrupting his furious exclamations, turning to his friend and pointing at me. ‘Every time I mention Christ his face changes expression, as if he were ready to start weeping... But, believe me, naïve man,’ he jumped at me again, ‘believe me that your Christ, if He were born in our time, would be a most imperceptible and ordinary man; in the presence of contemporary science and contemporary propellers of mankind, He would be effaced!’”⁶³⁸

The essence of “The Parable of the Grand Inquisitor” is in that scene, with Belinsky in the role of Inquisitor and Dostoyevsky – in that of the silent Christ.

However, Dostoyevsky was not yet ready to break decisively with the socialist camp. As he wrote: “All these new ideas of those days were very appealing to us in Petersburg; they seemed holy in the highest degree and moral, and – most

⁶³⁸ Dostoyevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, 1873, London: Cassell, p. 7.

important of all – cosmopolitan, the future law of all mankind in its totality. Even long before the Paris revolution of '48 we fell under the fascinating influence of these ideas. Already in '46 I had been initiated by Belinsky into the whole *truth* of that future 'regenerated world' and into the whole *holiness* of the forthcoming communist society. All these convictions about the immorality of the very foundations (Christian) of modern society, the immorality of religion, family, right of property; all these ideas about the elimination of nationalities in the name of universal brotherhood of men, about the contempt for one's native country as an obstacle to universal progress, and so on and so forth – all these constituted such influences as we were unable to overcome and which, contrariwise, swayed our hearts and minds in the name of some magnanimity. At any rate, the theme seemed lofty and far above the level of the then prevailing conceptions, and it was precisely this that was tempting...

"The human mind, once having rejected Christ, may attain extraordinary results. This is an axiom. Europe, in the persons of her highest intellectual representatives, renounces Christ, while we, as is known, are obligated to imitate Europe..."⁶³⁹

At the time of his arrest in 1849, Dostoyevsky belonged to the "Petrashevtsy", named after its leader, Michael Petrashevsky. He believed in: Naturalism, by which he meant "a science which holds that by thought alone, without the help of tradition, revelation, or divine intervention, man can achieve in real life a state of permanent happiness through the total and independent development of all his natural faculties. In the lower phases of its evolution, naturalism considers the appearance of the divine element in positive religions to be a falsehood, the result of human rather than divine action. In its further evolution, this science - having absorbed pantheism and materialism - conceives divinity as the supreme and all-embracing expression of human understanding, moves towards atheism, and finally becomes transformed into anthropotheism - the science that proclaims that the only supreme being is man himself as a part of nature. At this stage of its rational evolution, naturalism considers the universal fact of the recognition of God in positive religions to be a result of man's deification of his own personality and the universal laws of his intellect; it considers all religions that reflected the historical evolution of mankind to be a gradual preparation for anthropotheism, or - in other words - total self-knowledge and awareness of the vital laws of nature."⁶⁴⁰

The Petrashevtsy especially admired Fourier; and on his birthday D.D. Akhsharumov declared: "We venerate his memory because he showed us the path we must follow, he revealed the source of wealth, of happiness. Today is the first banquet of the Fourierists in Russia, and we are all here: ten people, not much more! Everything begins from something small and grows into something big. Our aim is to destroy the capitals and cities and use all their materials for other buildings, and turn the whole of this life of torments, woes, poverty and shame

⁶³⁹ Dostoyevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, 1873, pp. 148-149, 151.

⁶⁴⁰ Petrashevtsy, in Andrej Walicki, *A History of Russian Thought*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988, pp. 157-58.

into a life that is luxurious, elegant, full of joy, wealth and happiness, and cover the whole poor land with palaces and fruits and redecorate them in flowers. We here, in our country, will begin its transfiguration, and the whole land will finish it. Soon the human race will be delivered from intolerable sufferings..."⁶⁴¹

One member of the circle, the proud, silent and handsome Nikolai Speshnev, considered all distinctions between beauty and ugliness, good and evil to be "a matter of taste". He did not believe in the transformation of Russia from the top, but in a socialist revolution from below, to which end only verbal propaganda was necessary. "I intend to use it, without the slightest shame or conscience, to propagandize socialism, atheism, terrorism, and all that is good."⁶⁴² Speshnev formed his own "Russian Society", which was joined by Dostoyevsky. He called him his "Mephistopheles", and was fascinated by him. But he was never wholly convinced by him, and continued to believe in Christ...

However, in 1849 the Petrashevtsy, including Dostoyevsky, were arrested – Dostoyevsky, for reading Belinsky's *Letter to Gogol* in public. They were imprisoned in the Peter and Paul fortress, and then, after a mock-execution, sent to four years' hard labour in Siberia. The experience – recounted in *The House of the Dead* – brought Dostoyevsky to repentance. As he wrote to his brother: "In my absolute spiritual solitude, I re-examined the whole of my former life. I scrutinized every minute detail. I thought very carefully about my past. Alone as I was, I judged myself harshly, without mercy. Sometimes I even thanked my fate because it had sent me into solitude, for without it, this new judgement of myself would never have happened..."⁶⁴³

As St. Ambrose of Optina said of him many years later: "This is a man who repents!"⁶⁴⁴

Then, in Siberia, by being "personally classed with villains", he came to know the Russian people as they really were for the first time. And through them, as he wrote later, "I again received into my soul Christ, Who had been revealed to me in my parents' home and Whom I was about to lose when, on my part, I transformed myself into a 'European liberal'."⁶⁴⁵ "The moral idea is Christ," wrote Dostoyevsky. "In the West, Christ has been distorted and diminished. It is the kingdom of the Antichrist. We have Orthodoxy. As a consequence, we are the bearers of a clear understanding of Christ and a new idea for the resurrection of the world... If faith and Orthodoxy were shaken in the people, then they would begin to disintegrate... The whole matter lies in the question: can one believe, being civilized, that is, a European, that is, believe absolutely in the Divinity of the Son of God, Jesus Christ? (for all faith consists in this)... You see: either everything is contained in faith or nothing is: we recognize the importance of the world through Orthodoxy. And the whole question is: can one believe in Orthodoxy? If

⁶⁴¹ Akhsharumov, in Ivanov, *op. cit.*, pp. 323-324.

⁶⁴² Geir Kjetsaa, *Fyodor Dostoyevsky*, London: Macmillan, 1987, p. 63.

⁶⁴³ Dostoyevsky, in Kjetsaa, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

⁶⁴⁴ Fr. Sergius Chetverikov, *Elder Ambrose of Optina*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1997, p. 213.

⁶⁴⁵ Dostoyevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, 1880.

one can, then everything is saved: if not, then better to burn... But if Orthodoxy is impossible for the enlightened man, then... all this is hocus-pocus and Russia's whole strength is provisional... It is possible to believe seriously and in earnest. Here is *everything*, the burden of life for the Russian people and their entire mission and existence to come..."⁶⁴⁶

"I am a child of my time, a child of unbelief and doubt until now and even (I know that) to my grave. What terrible torments has this thirst to believe cost me and still costs me no. The thirst is the stronger in me the more opposing reasons rise up in me. And yet God sometimes sends me minutes during which I am completely calm, when I LOVE and find that I am loved by other, and in such moments I have formed for myself a creed, in which everything is clear and holy for me. This creed is very simple, this is it: to believe that there is nothing more beautiful, profound, sympathetic, reasonable, courageous and perfect than Christ. And not only that there is not: I also say to myself with a jealous love that there cannot be. Moreover, if someone were to prove to me that Christ is outside the truth, and it really were the case that Christ is outside the truth, then for me it would be better to remain with Christ than with the truth."

And so Dostoyevsky became, after Pushkin and Gogol, the third great Russian writer to be rescued from European atheism and converted to "the Russian God", Jesus Christ... Like the other Slavophiles, Dostoyevsky saw the beginning of the European disease in the reforms of Peter the Great. Unlike them, however, he came to believe that this turning to the West was providential – and not only in that enabled Russians to acquire European arts and sciences. It was providential in that it enabled the truth of Orthodoxy to return to old Europe from Russia as "light from the East".

"Throughout these hundred and fifty years after Peter we have done nothing but live through a communion with all human civilization, affiliating ourselves with their history and their ideals. We have learned, and trained ourselves, to love the French, the Germans and everybody else, as if they were our brethren – notwithstanding the fact that they never liked us and made up their minds never to like us. However, this was the essence of our reform – the whole Peter cause; we have derived from it, during that century and a half, an *expansion* of our view, which, perhaps, was unprecedented and cannot be traced in any other nation, whether in the ancient or the new world. The pre-Peter Russia was active and solid, although politically she was slow to form herself; she had evolved unity within herself and she had been ready to consolidate her border regions. And she had tacitly comprehended that she bore within herself a treasure which was no longer existent anywhere else – Orthodoxy; that she was the conservatrix of Christ's truth, genuine truth – the true image of Christ which had been dimmed in all other religions and in all other nations. This treasure, this eternal truth inherent in Russia and of which she had become the custodian, according to the view of the best Russians of those days, as it were, relieved their conscience of the duty of any other enlightenment. Moreover, in Moscow the conception had been formed that any closer intercourse with Europe might even exercise a harmful and corrupt influence upon the Russian mind and the Russian *idea*; that it might distort Orthodoxy itself and lead Russia along the path to perdition 'much in the same

⁶⁴⁶ Dostoyevsky, in K. Mochulsky, *Dostoyevsky: His Life and Work*, Princeton, 1967.

way as all other peoples'. Thus ancient Russia, in her isolation, *was getting ready to be unjust* – unjust to mankind, having taken the resolution to preserve passively her treasure, her Orthodoxy, for herself, to seclude herself from Europe – that is, mankind – much as our schismatics who refuse to eat with you from the same dish and who believe it to be a holy practice that everyone should have his own cup and spoon. This is a correct simile because prior to Peter's advent, there had developed in Russia almost precisely this kind of political and spiritual relation with Europe. With Peter's reform there ensued an unparalleled broadening of the view, and herein – I repeat – is Peter's whole exploit. This is also that very treasure about which I spoke in one of the preceding issues of the *Diary* – a treasure which we, the upper cultured Russian stratum, are bringing to the people after our century-and-a-half absence from Russia, and which the people, after we ourselves shall have bowed before their truth, must accept from us *sine qua non*, 'without which the fusion of both strata would prove impossible and everything would come to ruin.' Now, what is this 'expansion of the view', what does it consist of, and what does it signify? Properly speaking, this is not enlightenment, nor is it science; nor is it a betrayal of the popular Russian moral principles for the sake of European civilization. No, this is precisely something inherent only in the Russian people, since nowhere and at no time has there ever been such a reform. This is actually, and in truth, almost our brotherly fifty-year-long living experience of our intercourse with them. This is our urge to render universal service to humanity, sometimes even to the detriment of our own momentous and immediate interests. This is our reconciliation with their civilizations; cognition and *excuse* of their ideals even though these be in discord with ours; this is our acquired faculty of discovering and revealing in each one of the European civilizations – or, more correctly, in each of the European individualities – the truth contained in it, even though there be much with which it would be impossible to agree. Finally, this is the longing, above all, to be just and to seek nothing but truth. Briefly, this is, perhaps, the beginning of that active application of our treasure – of Orthodoxy – to the universal service of mankind to which Orthodoxy is designated and which, in fact, constitutes its essence. Thus, through Peter's reform our former idea – the Russian Moscow idea – was broadened and its conception was magnified and strengthened. Thereby we got to understand our universal mission, our individuality and our role in humankind; at the same time we could not help but comprehend that this mission and role do not resemble those of other nations since, there, every national individuality lives solely for, and within, itself. We, on the other hand, will begin – now that the hour has come – precisely with becoming servants to all nations, for the sake of general pacification. And in this there is nothing disgraceful; on the contrary, therein is our grandeur because this leads to the ultimate unity of mankind. He who wishes to be first in the Kingdom of God must become a servant to everybody. This is how I understand the Russian mission *in its ideal*."⁶⁴⁷

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⁶⁴⁷ Dostoyevsky, "The Utopian Conception of History", *The Diary of a Writer*, June, 1876, London: Cassell, pp. 360-362.

For some years, and throughout the fifties, the paths of Turgenev and Dostoyevsky did not cross. But then, in 1867 Dostoyevsky, desperate from his gambling losses, came with his newly-married second wife Anna to the Bavarian spa town of Baden-Baden. There he met Turgenev again, and they had an embarrassing contre-temps. This seems somewhat surprising at first, since the novel *Smoke* (1867) that Turgenev wrote about Baden and its Russian inhabitants contains descriptions of the westernizing Russians, speaking in French and grasping always at the latest fashion from Paris, that is as biting as anything Dostoyevsky wrote in the same vein. What seems to have particularly annoyed Dostoyevsky about Turgenev was the weakness of his belief in Christ, which for Dostoyevsky was the cardinal issue between Slavophiles and Westerners. If, as Gogol put it, the Westerners were right about many small things, and the Slavophiles were right about one thing, then that "one thing necessary" for Dostoyevsky was Christ.

"The moral idea is Christ. In the West, Christ has been distorted and diminished. It is the kingdom of the Antichrist. We have Orthodoxy. As a consequence, we are the bearers of a clearer understanding of Christ and a new idea for the resurrection of the world... There the *disintegration*, atheism, began earlier: with us, later, but it will begin certainly with the entrenchment of atheism... The whole matter lies in the question: can one, being civilized, that is, a European, that is, believe absolutely in the Divinity of the Son of God, Jesus Christ? (for all faith consists in this)... You see: either everything is contained in faith or nothing is: we recognize the importance of the world through Orthodoxy. And the whole question is, can one believe in Orthodoxy? If one can, then everything is saved: if not, then, better to burn... But if Orthodoxy is impossible for the enlightened man, then... all this is hocus-pocus and Russia's whole strength is provisional... It is possible to believe seriously and in earnest. Here is *everything*, the burden of life for the Russian people and their entire mission and existence to come..."⁶⁴⁸

Nor was this universalist love confined to Russia's brothers in the faith: it extended even to her enemies in Western Europe – that "graveyard of holy miracles" in Khomiakov's phase. The lost half of Europe, immersed in Catholicism and its child, Protestantism, and its grandchild, atheism, would be converted from Russia: "The whole destiny of Russia lies in Orthodoxy, in the light from the East, which will suddenly shine forth to the mankind of the West, which has become blinded and has lost its faith in Christ. The cause of the whole misfortune of Europe, all of its ills, everything without exception, hearkens back to its loss of Christ with the establishment of the Roman Church, followed by its subsequent decision that it could manage just fine without Christ at all."⁶⁴⁹

648 Dostoyevsky, in K. Mochulsky, *Dostoyevsky: His Life and Work*, Princeton, 1967.

649 Dostoyevsky, "Letter to A. N. Maikov", 1870. V. Weidle writes: "'Europe is a mother to us, as is Russia, she is our second mother; we have taken much from her and shall do so again, and we do not wish to be ungrateful to her.' No Westernizer said this; it is beyond Westernizers, as it is beyond Slavophiles. Dostoyevsky wrote it at the height of his wisdom, on the threshold of death... His last hope was Messianism, but a Messianism which was essentially European, which developed out of his perception of Russia as a sort of better Europe, which was called upon to save and renew Europe" (*The Task of Russia*, New York, 1956, pp. 47-60).

44. SLAVOPHILE WRITERS ON MONARCHISM

With the exception of Kireyevsky, the Slavophiles had little to say about Autocracy, the third in the trio of Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality. As Lev Alexandrovich Tikhomirov writes, "the greatest merit of the Slavophiles consisted not so much in their working out of a *political* teaching, as in establishing the *social* and *psychological* bases of public life."⁶⁵⁰

Nevertheless, it was impossible to avoid the subject of Autocracy in the reign of Tsar Nicholas I, and what the Slavophiles had to say was important...

1. Alexis Khomiakov. The Slavophiles were not opposed to the autocracy; but the emphasis of their thought, especially Khomiakov's, was on *the people* rather than on the autocracy.⁶⁵¹ Thus Khomiakov wrote: "The people transferred to the Emperor all the power with which it itself was endowed in all its forms. The sovereign became the head of the people in Church matters as well as in matters of State administration. The people could not transfer to its Emperor rights that it did not itself have. It had from the beginning a voice in the election of its bishops, and this voice it could transfer to its Emperor. It had the right, or more precisely the obligation to watch that the decisions of its pastors and their councils were carried out – this right it could entrust to its chosen one and his successors. It had the right to defend its faith against every hostile attack upon it, - this right it could also transfer to its Sovereign. But the Church people did not have any power in questions of dogmatic teaching, and general Church piety – and for that reason it could not transfer such power to its Emperor." Here again we see the idea of an early pact between the Tsar and the people. For this was what the Slavophiles were above all concerned to emphasize: that the Tsar is not separated from his people, that Tsar and people form one harmonious whole and have a single ideal.

Khomiakov was also concerned to emphasize that it was not the Tsar who ruled the Russian Orthodox Church, as the Fundamental Laws of the Russian Empire might have suggested. "'It is true,' he says, 'the expression "the head of the local church" has been used in the Laws of the Empire, but in a totally different sense than it is interpreted in other countries' (II, 351). The Russian Emperor has no rights of priesthood, he has no claims to infallibility or 'to any authority in matters of faith or even of church discipline'. He signs the decisions of the Holy Synod, but this right of proclaiming laws and putting them into execution is not the same as the right to formulate ecclesiastical laws. The Tsar has influence with regard to the appointment of bishops and members of the Synod, but it should be observed that such dependence upon secular power is frequently met with in many Catholic countries as well. In some of the Protestant states it is even greater (II, 36-38, 208)."⁶⁵²

⁶⁵⁰ Tikhomirov, *Monarkhicheskaia Gosudarstvennost'*, St. Petersburg, 1992, p. 310.

⁶⁵¹ Florovsky writes that the Slavophiles "opposed their 'socialism' to the statism of West European thought, both in its absolutist-monarchist and in its constitutional-democratic varieties" ("The Eternal and the Passing in the Teaching of the Russian Slavophiles", in *Vera i Kul'tura*, p. 95).

⁶⁵² Lossky, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.

2. Konstantin and Ivan Aksakov. The Slavophiles were not against the autocracy, but they believed that since Peter a rift had opened up between the Tsar and the people that had to be overcome. "In the words of Aksakov, 'There arose a rift between the Tsar and people, and the ancient union of land and state was destroyed. In its place the state imposed its yoke on the land. The Russian land was, as it were, conquered, and the state was the conqueror. Thus the Russian monarch became a despot, and people who had been his free subjects became slaves and prisoner in their own land.'

"The political ideal of the Slavophiles was a return to what they took to have been the organic, truly Russian monarchy of pre-Petrine days. The monarch should restore *sobornyi* government by reconvening the *zemskii sobor* as a regular institution representing the various strata of the population. As a father caring for his people, he would not need to be bound by any juridical guarantees such as were laid down in Western constitutions, but he did need the regular contact with them which a *zemskii sobor* would ensure. The church had also become bureaucratized and needed to return to its own basic principles by abolishing the Holy Synod and restoring the *pomestnyi sobor* (local council) as its governing body, properly elected to give due weight to the voices of prelates, monks, priests and laity. At the lowest level, the parish council must also be reinstated, as an autonomous body empowered to elect its own priest and tend the material life of the congregation."⁶⁵³

"The whole pathos of Slavophilism," writes Bishop Dionysius (Alferov), "lay in 'sobornost', 'zemstvo', in 'the popular character of the monarchy, and not in its service as 'he who restrains [the coming of the Antichrist]'. Byzantium, in which there were neither *Zemskie Sobory* nor self-government of the land, elicited only irritation in them and was used by them to put in the shade the free 'Slavic element'. The Russian Tsar for the Slavophiles was first of all 'the people's Tsar', and not the Tsar of the Third Rome. According to the witness of Konstantin Leontiev, Tsar Nicholas Pavlovich himself noticed that under the Slavophiles' Russian caftan there stuck out the trousers of the most vulgar European democracy and liberalism."⁶⁵⁴

As for the people, did they really love the Tsar? Yes, even the liberal Turgenev thought so. As he wrote to Herzen in 1862: "Enemy of mysticism and absolutism, you mystically bow down before the Russian sheepskin coat and see in it the great abundance, innovation and originality of future social forms... You rise your altar to this new unknown god. But... your god loves madly what you hate and hates what you love. Your god accepts precisely what you reject on his behalf."⁶⁵⁵

In Konstantin Aksakov we see a certain, if not liberal, at any rate *anti-statist* tendency, an attempt to bypass the state as being irrelevant to the deeper life of the people, the "ancient Russian freedom" that existed in the peasant communes

⁶⁵³ Hosking, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

⁶⁵⁴ Alferov, "Ob Uderzhanii i Simfonii" (On Restraining and Symphony), <http://www.monarhist-spb.narod.ru/D-ST/Dionisy-1.htm>, p. 11.

⁶⁵⁵ Turgenev, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 676.

and the Church. "Republican liberty, he argued, was political freedom, which presupposed the people's active participation in political affairs; ancient Russian freedom, on the other hand, meant *freedom from politics* – the right to live according to unwritten laws of faith and tradition, and the right to full realization in a moral sphere on which the state would not impinge.

"This theory rested on a distinction the Slavophiles made between two kinds of truth: the 'inner' and the 'external' truth. The inner truth is in the individual the voice of conscience, and in society the entire body of values enshrined in religion, tradition, and customs – in a word, all values that together form an inner unifying force and help to forge social bonds based on shared moral convictions. The external truth, on the other hand, is represented by law and the state, which are essentially conventional, artificial, and 'external' – all the negative qualities Kireyevsky and Khomiakov ascribed to institutions and social bonds that had undergone a rationalizing and formalizing process. Aksakov went even further than the other Slavophiles in regarding *all* forms of legal and political relations as inherently evil; at their opposite pole was the communal principle embodied in the village commune, based (in Aksakov's view) purely on truth and unanimity and not on any legal guarantees or conditions and agreements characteristic of a rational contract. For Aksakov the difference between Russia and the West was that in Russia the state had not been raised to the 'principle' on which social organization was largely founded. When the frailty of human nature and the demands of defense appeared to make political organization necessary, Russians 'called' their rulers from 'beyond the sea' in order to avoid doing injury to the 'inner truth' by evolving their own statehood; Russian tsars were given absolute powers so that the people might shun all contacts with the 'external truth' and all participation in affairs of state. Relations between 'land' (that is the common people who lived by the light of the inner truth) and state rested upon the principle of mutual non-interference. Of its own free will the state consulted the people, who presented their point of view at Land Assemblies but left the final decision in the monarch's hands. The people could be sure of complete freedom to live and think as they pleased, while the monarch had complete freedom of action in the political sphere. This relationship depended entirely on moral convictions rather than legal guarantees, and it was this that constituted Russia's superiority to Western Europe. 'A guarantee is an evil,' Aksakov wrote. 'Where it is necessary, good is absent; and life where good is absent had better disintegrate than continue with the aid of evil.' Aksakov conceded that there was often a wide gap between ideal and reality, but ascribed this entirely to human imperfections. He strongly condemned rulers who tried to interfere in the inner life of the 'land', but even in the case of Ivan the Terrible, whose excesses he condemned, he would not allow that the 'land' had the right to resistance and he praised its long-suffering loyalty."⁶⁵⁶

Although there is some truth in this account, it is exaggerated. Certainly, the "inner truth" of Orthodoxy was more important than the "external truth" of government and law; and it was true that the presence of this inner truth in Russia had prevented statehood becoming the "primary principle" it had become in the

⁶⁵⁶ Walicki, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-97.

West, where “inner truth” had been lost. And yet from the beginning the Russian State had always taken a very active and essential role in Russian life in *protecting and fostering* the internal freedom provided by the Orthodox way of life, and was accepted as such with gratitude by the people.

Moreover, it was inaccurate to represent the power of the Russian tsars as being “external” to the true life of the people. For the tsars were themselves Orthodox Christians anointed for their role by the Church and guided in their decisions by the Church...

The Aksakov brothers, like Tiutchev, combined a belief in the autocracy and the imperial mission of Russia with a belief in civil liberties. This sometimes brought them into conflict with Tsar Nicholas. Thus in his memorandum, *The Eastern Question* (February, 1854), Konstantin hoped that the Tsar would promote “an alliance of all Slavs under the supreme patronage of the Russian Tsar... Galicia and the whole Slavonic world will breathe more easily under the patronage of Russia once she finally fulfills her Christian and fraternal duty.”

Konstantin’s brother Ivan was somewhat more cautious. He recognized that “The Catholicism of Bohemia and Poland constitutes a hostile and alien element” and in any case “the greater part of these Slavic peoples are already infected by the influence of Western liberalism which is contrary to the spirit of the Russian people and which can never be grafted onto it.”⁶⁵⁷

So Ivan was less “Pan-Slavist” than Constantine...

However, both brothers believed in the spiritual freedom of the individual within the autocratic state. Thus, as N. Lossky writes, “on the accession of Alexander II to the throne in 1855 [Konstantin] Aksakov submitted to him, through Count Bludov, a report ‘On the Inner Condition of Russia’. In it he reproached the Government for suppressing the people’s moral freedom and following the path of despotism, which has led to the nation’s moral degradation. He pointed out that this might popularise the idea of political freedom and create a striving to attain it by revolutionary means. To avoid these dangers he advised the Tsars to allow freedom of thought and of speech and to re-establish the practice of calling Zemski Sobors.”⁶⁵⁸

3. Fyodor Tiutchev. Another Russian supporter of Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality who is sometimes classified as a Slavophile was the poet and diplomat Fyodor Ivanovich Tiutchev. Already at the age of 19, in his poem, *On Pushkin’s Ode on Freedom*, he had rebuked his fellow-poet for disturbing the hearts of the citizens by his call to freedom. While sharing the world-view of the Slavophiles, he took their sympathies and antipathies to their logical conclusions.⁶⁵⁹ Thus he posed the contrast between Russia and the West as a struggle between Christ and

⁶⁵⁷ Aksakov, in Almond, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

⁶⁵⁸ Lossky, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.

⁶⁵⁹ As Demetrius Merezhkovsky expressed it, Tiutchev put bones into the soft body of Slavophilism, crossed its ‘t’s and dotted its ‘i’s (*Dve tajny russkoj poezii. Nekrasov i Tiutchev* (Two Mysteries of Russian Poetry. Nekrasov and Tiutchev), St. Petersburg, 1915).

Antichrist. "The supreme power of the people," he wrote, "is in essence an antichristian idea." Popular power and Tsarist power mutually exclude each other. So it was not a question of two cultures living side by side with each other and complementing each other in some sense. No: it was a fight to the death between the Russian idea and the European idea, between the Rome of the Papacy and the political and social structures it evolved, and the Third Rome of the Orthodox Tsar...

Tiutchev believed in "the Great Greco-Russian Eastern Empire", whose soul was the Orthodox Church and whose body the Slavic race. The Empire's destiny was to unite the two halves of Europe under the Russian Emperor, with some Austrian lands going to Russia. There would be an Orthodox Pope in Rome and an Orthodox Patriarch in Constantinople. The Empire was a principle, and so indivisible. Western history had been a struggle between the schismatic Roman papacy and the usurper-empire of Charlemagne and his successors. This struggle "ended for the one in the Reformation, i.e. the denial of the Church, and for the other in the Revolution, i.e. the denial of the Empire". The struggle between Russia and Napoleon had been the struggle "between the lawful Empire and the crowned Revolution".⁶⁶⁰

Tiutchev believed that the Russian Empire could liberate the East Europeans, including even the Czechs and Moravians, from the false empire, church and civilization of the West. According to V. Tsimbursky, Tiutchev called on Nicholas I "to play on the revolutionary self-destruction of western civilization to place on its ruins the 'ark' of the new Empire: may 'the Europe of Peter' take the place of 'the Europe of Charles'. With Tiutchev, as in the fears of the West, the Europeanization of Russia becomes the growth of a power called to take the place and replace Romano-German Europe. Tiutchev... in return for the Florentine unia of 1439, puts forward a project for helping the Roman papacy out of the corner it was driven into by the Italian revolution on condition of its honourable return to Orthodoxy."⁶⁶¹

As a diplomat Tiutchev knew much about the threat to the Orthodox autocracy posed by the 1848 revolution; and in April, 1848, just as this revolution was gathering pace, he wrote: "There have long been only two real powers in Europe – the revolution and Russia. These two powers are now opposed to each other, and perhaps tomorrow they will enter into conflict. Between them there can be no negotiations, no treaties; the existence of the one is equivalent to the death of the other! On the outcome of this struggle that has arisen between them, the greatest struggle that the world has ever seen, the whole political and religious future of mankind will depend for many centuries.

"The fact of this rivalry is now being revealed everywhere. In spite of that, the understanding of our age, deadened by false wisdom, is such that the present generation, faced with a similar huge fact, is far from completely comprehending its true significance and has not evaluated its real causes.

⁶⁶⁰ Tiutchev (1849), in Fomin & Fomina, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 327.

⁶⁶¹ Tsimbursky, in Fomin & Fomina, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 327.

“Up to now they have sought for its explanation in the purely political sphere; they have tried to interpret by a distinction of concepts on the exclusively human plane. In fact, the quarrel between the revolution and Russia depends on deeper causes. They can be defined in two words.

“Russia is first of all the Christian Empire; the Russian people is Christian not only by virtue of the Orthodoxy of its convictions, but also thanks to something more in the realm of feelings than convictions. It is Christian by virtue of that capacity for self-denial and self-sacrifice which constitutes as it were the basis of her moral nature. The revolution is first of all the enemy of Christianity! Antichristian feeling is the soul of the revolution: it is its special, distinguishing feature. Those changes in form to which it has been subjected, those slogans which it has adopted in turn, everything, even its violence and crimes have been secondary and accidental. But the one thing in it that is not accidental is precisely the antichristian feeling that inspires it, it is that (it is impossible not to be convinced of this) that has acquired for it this threatening dominance over the world. He who does not understand this is no more than a blind man present at a spectacle that the world presents to him.

“The human I, wishing to depend only on itself, not recognizing and not accepting any other law besides its own will – in a word, the human I, taking the place of God, - does not, of course, constitute something new among men. But such has it become when raised to the status of a political and social right, and when it strives, by virtue of this right, to rule society. This is the new phenomenon which acquired the name of the French revolution in 1789.

“Since that time, in spite of all its permutations, the revolution has remained true to its nature, and perhaps never in the whole course of this development has it recognized itself as so of one piece, so sincerely antichristian as at the present moment, when it has ascribed to itself the banner of Christianity: ‘brotherhood’. In the name of this we can even suppose that it has attained its apogee. And truly, if we listen to those naively blasphemous big words which have become, so to speak, the official language of the present age, then will not everyone think that the new French republic was brought into the world only in order to fulfill the Gospel law? It was precisely this calling that the forces created by the revolution ascribed to themselves – with the exception, however, of that change which the revolution considered it necessary to produce, when it intended to replace the feeling of humility and self-denial, which constitutes the basis of Christianity, with the spirit of pride and haughtiness, free and voluntary good works with compulsory good works. And instead of brotherhood preached and accepted in the name of God, it intended to establish a brotherhood imposed by fear on the people-master. With the exception of these differences, its dominance really promises to turn into the Kingdom of Christ!

“And nobody should be misled by this despicable good will which the new powers are showing to the Catholic Church and her servers. It is almost the most important sign of the real feeling of the revolution, and the surest proof of the position of complete power that it has attained. And truly, why should the

revolution show itself as hostile to the clergy and Christian priests who not only submit to it, but accept and recognize it, who, in order to propitiate it, glorify all its excesses and, without knowing it themselves, become partakers in all its unrighteousness? If even similar behaviour were founded on calculation alone, this calculation would be apostasy; but if conviction is added to it, then this is already more than apostasy.

“However, we can foresee that there will be no lack of persecutions, too. On that day when concessions have reached their extreme extent, the catholic church will consider it necessary to display resistance, and it will turn out that she will be able to display resistance only by going back to martyrdom. We can fully rely on the revolution: it will remain in all respects faithful to itself and consistent to the end!

“The February explosion did the world a great service in overthrowing the pompous scaffolding of errors hiding reality. The less penetrating minds have probably now understood that the history of Europe in the course of the last thirty three years was nothing other than a continuous mystification. And indeed with what inexorably light has the whole of this past, so recent and already so distant from us, been lit up? Who, for example, will now not recognize what a laughable pretension was expressed in that wisdom of our age which naively imagined that it had succeeded in suppressing the revolution with constitutional incantations, muzzling its terrible energy by means of a formula of lawfulness? After all that has happened, who can still doubt that from the moment when the revolutionary principle penetrated into the blood of society, all these concessions, all these reconciling formulas are nothing other than drugs which can, perhaps, put to sleep the sick man for a time, but are not able to hinder the further development of the illness itself...”⁶⁶²

In spite of his fervent support for the Autocracy, Tiutchev criticized the Tsarist imposition of censorship. (Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow had similar doubts about Tsarist censorship, which led to his departing from St. Petersburg until after 1855.) In 1857 he wrote: “It is impossible to impose on minds an absolute and too prolonged restriction and yoke without substantial harm for the social organism.... Even the authorities themselves in the course of time are unable to avoid the disadvantages of such a system. Around the sphere in which they are present there is formed a desert and a huge mental emptiness, and governmental thought, not meeting from outside itself either control or guidance or even the slightest point of support, ends by weakening under its own weight even before it destined to fall under the blows of events.”⁶⁶³

“Why,” he wrote 1872, “can we oppose to harmful theories and destructive tendencies nothing except material suppression? Into what has the true principle of conservatism been transformed with us? Why has our soul become so horribly stale? If the authorities because of an insufficiency of principles and moral

⁶⁶² Tiutchev, “Rossia i revoliutsia” (Russia and the Revolution), *Politicheskie Stat'i* (Political Articles), Paris: YMCA Press, 1976, pp. 32-36.

⁶⁶³ Tiutchev, “O tsenzure v Rossii” (On Censorship in Russia).

convictions pass to measures of material oppression, it is thereby being turned into the most terrible helper of denial and revolutionary overthrow, but it will begin to understand this only when the evil is already incorrigible.”

The government’s oppressive measures could be undiscerning, and its inability to develop a coherent philosophy to counteract the revolutionary propaganda limited its success in counteracting it. This was due in large part to the superficial Orthodoxy of the ruling circles.

This “semi-Orthodoxy” of the ruling elites was expressed by Tiutchev as follows:

*Not flesh, but spirit is today corrupt,
And man just pines away despairingly.
He strives for light, while sitting in the dark,
And having found it, moans rebelliously.
From lack of faith dried up, in fire tossed,
The unendurable he suffers now.
He knows right well his soul is lost, and thirsts
For faith – but ask for it he knows not how.
Ne’er will he say, with prayers and tears combined,
However deep before the closed door his grief:
“O let me in, my God, O hear my cry!
Lord, I believe! Help Thou mine unbelief!”⁶⁶⁴*

By contrast, Tiutchev, like the early Slavophiles and Dostoyevsky, continued to believe in the Orthodoxy of the common people and in the unique destiny of Russia, poor in her exterior aspect but rich in inner faith and piety:

*These poor villages which stand
Amidst a nature sparse, austere –
O beloved Russian land,
Long to pine and persevere!
The foreigner’s disdainful gaze
Will never understand or see
The light that shines in secret rays
Upon your humility.
Dear native land! While carrying
The Cross and struggling to pass through,
In slavish image Heaven’s King
Has walked across you, blessing you.⁶⁶⁵*

However, the successes of government measures are easily forgotten. We have already noted the conversion of Pushkin, Gogol and Dostoyevsky. Moreover, those who were urging the government to remove censorship were not supported by the leading churchmen of the age, and showed a dangerous naivety about the

⁶⁶⁴ Tiutchev, *Nash Vek* (Our Age).

⁶⁶⁵ Tiutchev, translated in Christensen, *op. cit.*, p. 645.

way in which the forces of evil could – and, in the reign of Alexander II, did – exploit this freedom. Tsarist censorship was undoubtedly over-zealous and counter-productive at times, but only the naïve or atheistical could believe that it was unnecessary.

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

The beginning of Kireyevsky's spiritual emancipation may be said to date to 1829, when, as Fr. Sergius Chetverikov writes, he "appeared for the first time in the field of literature with an article about Pushkin, which revealed a remarkably clear understanding of the works of this poet. In this article he already expressed doubt in the absolute truth of German philosophy and pointed out the pressing need for the development of a school of original Russian scientific thought. 'German philosophy cannot take root in us. Our philosophy must arise from current questions, from the prevailing interest of *our* people and their individual ways of life.' But at the same time we must not reject the experience of Western European thought. 'The crown of European enlightenment served as the cradle of our education. It was born when the other states had already completed the cycle of their intellectual development; and where they finished, there we began. Like a young sister in a large harmonious family, Russia was enriched by the experience of her older brothers and sisters prior to her entry into the world.'"⁶⁶⁶

"Europe," wrote Kireyevsky in 1830, "now presents an image of stupor. Both political and moral development have come to an end in her." Only two peoples "from the whole of enlightened humanity... are not taking part in the general falling asleep; two peoples, young and fresh, are flourishing with hope: these are the United States and our fatherland."⁶⁶⁷

⁶⁶⁶ Chetverikov, *Elder Ambrose of Optina*, Platina, CA: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1997, pp. 124-125.

⁶⁶⁷ Kireyevsky, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenij*, Moscow, 1861, vol. 2, p. 237; vol. 1, pp. 45, 46. Quoted in S.V. Khatunov, "Problema 'Rossia-Evropa' vo vzgliadiakh K.N. Leontieva (60-e gg. XIX veka)" (The Russia-Europe problem in the views of K.N. Leontiev (60s of the 19th century), *Voprosy Istorii*, 3/2006, p. 117. We may question Kireyevsky's judgement about the United States, which though "young and fresh", was penetrated by Protestant and Masonic ideologies.

At this stage the full uniqueness and saving truth of Orthodoxy was not yet fully revealed to Kireyevsky. The decisive moment in his conversion, as Nina Lazareva writes, was his marriage to Natalya Petrovna Arbeneva in 1834: "The beginning of his family life was for Ivan Vasilievich also the beginning of the transformation of his inner world, the beginning of his coming out of that dead-end in which his former rationalistic world-view had led him. The difference between the whole structure of Natalya Petrovna's life, educated as she had been in the rules of strict piety, and that of Ivan Vasilievich, who had passed his days and nights in tobacco-filled rooms reading and discussing the latest philosophical works, could not fail to wound both of them.

"In the note written by A.I. Koshelev from the words of N.P. Kireyevsky and entitled 'The Story of Ivan Vasilievich's Conversion', we read: 'In the first period after their marriage her fulfilment of our Church rites and customs made an unpleasant impression on him, but from the tolerance and delicacy that was natural to him he did not hinder her in this at all. She on her side was still more sorrowfully struck by his lack of faith and complete neglect of all the customs of the Orthodox Church. They had conversations which ended with it being decided that he would not hinder her in the fulfilment of her obligations, and he would be free in his actions, but he promised in her presence not to blaspheme and by all means to cut short the conversations of his friends that were unpleasant to her. In the second year of their marriage he asked his wife to read Constant. She willingly did this, but when he began to ask her for her opinion of this book, she said that there was much good in it, but that she had not found anything new, for in the works of the Holy Fathers it was all expounded in a much profounder and more satisfying way. He laughed and was quiet. He began to ask his wife to read Voltaire with him. She told him that she was ready to read any serious book that he might suggest to her, but she disliked mockery and every kind of blasphemy and she could neither hear nor read them. Then after some time they began to read Schelling together, and when great, radiant thoughts stopped them and I.V. Kireyevsky demanded wonderment from his wife, she first said that she knew these thoughts from the works of the Holy Fathers. She often pointed them out to him in the books of the Holy Fathers, which forced Ivan Vasilievich to read whole pages sometimes. It was unpleasant for him to recognise that there really was much in the Holy Fathers that he had admired in Schelling. He did not like to admit this, but secretly he took his wife's books and read them with interest.'

"At that time the works of the Holy Fathers were hardly published in Russia, lovers of spiritual literature transcribed them themselves or for small sums of money they engaged transcribers. Natalya Petrovna made notes from those books which her spiritual father, Hieromonk Philaret (Puliashkin) gave her to read. In his time he had laboured much to prepare the Slavonic *Philokalia* for publication. These were works of the Holy Fathers collected by St. Paisius Velichkovsky which contained instructions on mental prayer, that is, on the cleansing of the soul from passions, on the means to attaining this and in particular on the union of the mind and the heart in the Jesus prayer. In 1836 Ivan Vasilievich for the first time read the works of St. Isaac the Syrian, who was called the teacher of silence. Thus the philosopher came into contact with the hitherto unknown to him, centuries-old

Orthodox enlightenment, which always witnessed to the True Light, our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Acquaintance with the Novospassky monk Philaret, conversations with the holy elder and the reading of various works of the Holy Fathers gave him pleasure and drew him to the side of piety. He went to see Fr. Philaret, but each time as it were unwillingly. It was evident that he wanted to go to him, but forcing was always necessary.’ This continued until, according to the Providence of God, and thanks to the clairvoyance of Elder Philaret and his knowledge of the human soul, a truly wondrous event took place: ‘I.V. Kireyevsky in the past never wore a cross round his neck. His wife had more than once asked him to do that, but Ivan Vasilyevich had not replied. Finally, he told her once that he would put on a cross if it would be sent to him by Fr. Philaret, whose mind and piety he warmly admired. Natalya Petrovna went to Fr. Philaret and communicated this to him. The elder made the sign of the cross, took it off his neck and said to Natalya Petrovna: ‘Let this be to Ivan Vasilyevich for salvation.’

“When Natalya Petrovna went home, Ivan Vasilyevich on meeting her said: ‘Well, what did Fr. Philaret say?’ She took out the cross and gave it to Ivan Vasilyevich. Ivan Vasilyevich asked her: ‘What is this cross?’ Natalya Petrovna said to him that Fr. Philaret had taken it off himself and said: let this be to him for salvation. Ivan Vasilyevich fell on his knees and said: ‘Well, now I expect salvation for my soul, for in my mind I had determined: if Fr. Philaret takes off his cross and sends it to me, then it will be clear that God is calling me to salvation.’ From that moment a decisive turnaround in the thoughts and feelings of Ivan Vasilyevich was evident.”⁶⁶⁸

Soon Kireyevsky met the famous Optina Elder Makary, with whom he started the series of Optina translations of the works of the Holy Fathers into Russian. This, as well as being of great importance in itself, marked the beginning of the return of a part of the educated classes to a more than nominal membership of the Church. It was on the basis of the teaching of the Holy Fathers that Kireyevsky determined to build a philosophy that would engage with the problems felt by the Russian intelligentsia of his day and provide them with true enlightenment.

A very important element in this philosophy would be a correct “placing” of Russia in relation to Western Europe.

According to Kireyevsky, “three elements lie at the foundation of European [i.e. Western European] education: Roman Christianity, the world of the uneducated barbarians who destroyed the [western] Roman empire, and the classical world of ancient paganism.

“This classical world of ancient paganism, which did not enter into the inheritance of Russia, essentially constitutes the triumph of the formal reason of man over everything that is inside and within him – pure, naked reason, based on

⁶⁶⁸ Lazareva, “Zhizneopisanie” (“Biography”), introduction to I.V. Kireyevsky, *Razum na puti k Istine* (Reason on the Path to Truth), Moscow: “Pravilo very”, 2002, pp. XXXVI-XXXIX.

itself, recognizing nothing higher than or outside itself and appearing in two forms – the form of formal abstraction and the form of abstract sensuality. Classicism's influence on European education had to correspond to this same character.

“Whether it was because Christians in the West gave themselves up unlawfully to the influence of the classical world, or because heresy accidentally united itself with paganism, the Roman Church differs in its deviation from the Eastern only in that same triumph of rationalism over Tradition, of external ratiocination over inner spiritual reason. Thus it was in consequence of this external syllogism drawn out of the concept of the Divine equality of the Father and the Son [the *Filioque*] that the dogma of the Trinity was changed in opposition to spiritual sense and Tradition. Similarly, in consequence of another syllogism, the pope became the head of the Church in place of Jesus Christ. They tried to demonstrate the existence of God with a syllogism; the whole unity of the faith rested on syllogistic scholasticism; the Inquisition, Jesuitism – in a word, all the particularities of Catholicism, developed by virtue of the same formal process of reason, so that Protestantism itself, which the Catholics reproach for its rationalism, proceeded directly from the rationalism of Catholicism...

“Thus rationalism was both an extra element in the education of Europe at the beginning and is now an exclusive characteristic of the European enlightenment and way of life. This will be still clearer if we compare the basic principles of the public and private way of life of the West with the basic principles of the same public and private way of life which, if it had not developed completely, was at least clearly indicated in old Russia, when she was under the direct influence of pure Christianity, without any admixture from the pagan world.

“The whole private and public way of life of the West is founded on the concept of individual, separate independence, which presupposes individual isolation. Hence the sacredness of formal relationships; the sacredness of property and conditional decrees is more important than the personality. Every individual is a private person; a knight, prince or city *within his or its rights* is an autocratic, unlimited personage that gives laws to itself. The first step of each personage into society is to surround himself with a fortress from the depths of which he enters into negotiations with others and other independent powers.

“... I was speaking about the difference between enlightenment in Russia and in the West. Our educative principle consisted in our Church. There, however, together with Christianity, the still fruitful remnants of the ancient pagan world continued to act on the development of enlightenment. The very Christianity of the West, in separation from the Universal Church, accepted into itself the seeds of that principle which constituted the general colouring of the whole development of Greco-Roman culture: the principle of rationalism. For that reason the character of European education differs by virtue of an excess of rationalism.

“However, this excess appeared only later, when logical development had already overwhelmed Christianity, so to speak. But at the beginning rationalism, as I said, appeared only in embryo. The Roman Church separated from the Eastern

because it changed certain dogmas existing in the *Tradition* of the whole of Christianity into others *by deduction*. She spread other dogmas by means of the same logical process, again in opposition to Tradition and the spirit of the Universal Church. Thus a logical belief lay at the very lowest base of Catholicism. But the first action of rationalism was limited to this at the beginning. The inner and outer construction of the Church, which had been completed earlier in another spirit, continued to exist without obvious changes until the whole unity of the ecclesiastical teaching passed into the consciousness of the thinking part of the clergy. This was completed in the philosophy of scholasticism, which, by reason of the logical principle at the very foundation of the Church, could not reconcile the contradictions of faith and reason in any other way than by means of syllogism, which thereby became the first condition of every belief. At first, naturally, this same syllogism tried to demonstrate the truth of faith against reason and subdue reason to faith by means of rational arguments. But this faith, logically proved and logically opposed to reason, was no longer a living, but a formal faith, not faith as such, but only the logical rejection of reason. Therefore during this period of the scholastic development of Catholicism, precisely by reason of its rationality, the Western church becomes an enemy of reason, its oppressive, murderous, desperate enemy. But, taken to its extreme, as the continuation of this same logical process, this absolute annihilation of reason produced the well-known opposite effect, the consequences of which constitute the character of the present enlightenment. That is what I meant when I spoke of the rational element of Catholicism.

“Christianity in the East knew neither this struggle of faith against reason, nor this triumph of reason over faith. Therefore its influence on enlightenment was dissimilar to that of Catholicism.

“When examining the social construction of old Russia, we find many differences from the West, and first of all: the formation of society into so-called *mirs* [communes]. Private, personal idiosyncrasy, the basis of western development, was as little known among us as was social autocracy. A man belonged to the *mir*, and the *mir* to him. Agricultural property, the fount of personal rights in the West, belonged with us to society. A person had the rights of ownership to the extent that entered into the membership of society.

“But this society was not autonomous and could not order itself, or itself acquire laws for itself, because it was not separated from other similar communities that were ruled by uniform custom. The innumerable multitude of these small communes, which constituted Russia, was all covered with a net of churches, monasteries and the remote dwellings of hermits, whence there spread everywhere identical concepts of the relationship between social matters and personal matters. These concepts little by little were bound to pass over into a general conviction, conviction – into custom, whose place was taken by law, which established throughout the whole space of the lands subject to our Church one thought, one point of view, one aim, one order of life. This universal uniformity of custom was probably one of the reasons for its amazing strength, which has preserved its living remnants even to our time, in spite of all the

opposition of destructive influences which, in the course of two hundred years, strove to introduce new principles in their place.

“As a result of these strong, uniform and universal customs, it was impossible for there to be any change in the social order that was not in agreement with the order of the whole. Every person’s family relationships were defined, first of all, by his birth; but in the same predetermined order the family was subject to the commune, and the wider commune to the assembly, the assembly to the *veche*, and so on, whence all the private circles came together in one centre, in one Orthodox Church. No personal reasoning, no artificial agreement could found any new order, think up new rights and privileges. Even the very word *right* was unknown among us in its western sense, but signified only justice, righteousness. Therefore no power could be given to any person or class, nor could any right be accorded, for righteousness and justice cannot be sold or taken, but exist in themselves independently of conditional relationships. In the West, by contrast, all social relationships are founded on *convention* or strive to attain this artificial basis. *Outside* convention there are no correct relationships, but only arbitrariness, which in the governing class is called *autonomy*, in the governed – *freedom*. But in both the one and the other case this arbitrariness demonstrates not the development of the inner life, but the development of the external, formal life. All social forces, interests and rights exist there in separation, each in itself, and they are united not by a normal law, but either accidentally or by an artificial agreement. In the first case material force triumphs, in the second – the sum of individual reasonings. But material force, material dominance, a material majority, the sum of individual reasonings in essence constitute one principle only at different moments of their development. Therefore *the social contract* is not the invention of the encyclopaedists, but a real ideal to which all the western societies strove unconsciously, and now consciously, under the influence of the rational element, which outweighs the Christian element.”⁶⁶⁹

“Private and social life in the West,’ Kireyevsky wrote, ‘are based on the concept of an individual and separate independence that presupposes the isolation of the individual. Hence the external formal relations of private property and all types of legal conventions are sacred and of greater importance than human beings”.

“Only one serious thing was left to man, and that was industry. For him the reality of being survived only in his physical person. Industry rules the world without faith or poetry. In our times it unites and divides people. It determines one’s fatherland, it delineates classes, it lies at the base of state structures, it moves nations, it declares war, makes peace, changes *mores*, gives direction to science, and determines the character of culture. Men bow down before it and erect temples to it. It is the real deity in which people sincerely believe and to which they submit. Unselfish activity has become inconceivable; it has acquired the same

⁶⁶⁹ Kireyevsky, “V otvet A.S. Khomiakovu” (In Reply to A.S. Khomiakov), *Razum na puti k Istine* (Reason on the Path to Truth), Moscow, 2002, pp. 6-12.

significance in the contemporary world as chivalry had in the time of Cervantes."⁶⁷⁰

This long and tragic development had its roots, according to Kireyevsky, in the falling away of the Roman Church. "In the ninth century the western Church showed within itself the inevitable seed of the Reformation, which placed this same Church before the judgement seat of the same logical reason which the Roman Church had itself exalted... A thinking man could already see Luther behind Pope Nicolas I just as... a thinking man of the 16th century could foresee behind Luther the coming of 19th century liberal Protestantism..."⁶⁷¹

According to Kireyevsky, just as in a marriage separation or divorce takes place when one partner asserts his or her self against the other, so in the Church schisms and heresies take place when one party asserts itself over against Catholic unity. In the early, undivided Church "each patriarchate, each tribe, each country in the Christian world preserved its own characteristic features, while at the same time participating in the common unity of the whole Church."⁶⁷²

A patriarchate or country fell away from that unity only if it introduced heresy, that is, a teaching contrary to the Catholic understanding of the Church. The Roman patriarchate fell away from the Unity and Catholicity of the Church through an unbalanced, self-willed development of its own particular strength, the logical development of concepts, by introducing the *Filioque* into the Creed in defiance of the theological consciousness of the Church as a whole. But it fell away from that Unity and Catholicity in another way, by preaching a heresy *about* Unity and Catholicity. For the Popes taught that *the Church, in order to be Catholic, must be first and above all Roman* – and "Roman" not in the sense employed by the Greeks when they called themselves Roman, that is, belonging to the Christian Roman Empire and including both Italians and Greeks and people of many nationalities. The Popes now understood "Rome", "the Roman Church" and "the Roman Faith" in a different, particularist, anti-Catholic sense – that is, "Roman" as opposed to "Greek", "the Roman Church" as opposed to "the Greek Church", "the Roman Faith" as opposed to, and something different from and inherently superior to, "the Greek Church". From this time that the Roman Church ceased to be a part of the Catholic Church, having trampled on the dogma of Catholicity. Instead she became the anti-Catholic, or Romanist, or Latin, or Papist church.

"Christianity penetrated the minds of the western peoples through the teaching of the Roman Church alone – in Russia it was kindled on the candle-stands of the whole Orthodox Church; theology in the West acquired a ratiocinative-abstract character – in the Orthodox world it preserved an inner wholeness of spirit; where there was a division in the powers of the reason – here a striving for their living unity; there: the movement of the mind towards the truth by means of a logical chain of concepts – here: a striving for it by means of an inner exaltation of self-

⁶⁷⁰ Kireyevsky, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenij* (Complete Works), Moscow, 1911, vol. I, pp. 113, 246; quoted in Walicki, *op. cit.*, pp. 94, 95.

⁶⁷¹ Kireyevsky, quoted by Fr. Alexey Young, *A Man is His Faith: Ivan Kireyevsky and Orthodox Christianity*, London: St. George Information Service, 1980.

⁶⁷² Kireyevsky, in Young, *op. cit.*

consciousness towards wholeness of heart and concentration of reason; there: a searching for external, dead unity – here: a striving for inner, living unity; there the Church was confused with the State, uniting spiritual power with secular power and pouring ecclesiastical and worldly significance into one institution of a mixed character – in Russia it remained unmixed with worldly aims and institution; there: scholastic and juridical universities – in ancient Russia: prayer-filled monasteries concentrating higher knowledge in themselves; there: a rationalist and scholastic study of the higher truths – here: a striving for their living and integral assimilation; there: a mutual growing together of pagan and Christian education – here: a constant striving for the purification of truth; there: statehood arising out of forcible conquest – here: out of the natural development of the people's everyday life, penetrated by the unity of its basic conviction; there: a hostile walling-off of classes – in ancient Russia their unanimous union while preserving natural differences; there: the artificial connection of knights' castles with what belonged to them constituted separate states – here: the agreement of the whole land spiritually expresses its undivided unity; there: agrarian property is the first basis of civil relationships – here: property is only an accidental expression of personal relationships; there: formal-logical legality – here: legality proceeding from everyday life; there: the inclination of law towards external justice – here: preference for inner justice; there: jurisprudence strives towards a logical codex – here: instead of an external connectedness of form with form, it seeks the inner connection of lawful conviction with convictions of faith and everyday life; there improvements were always accomplished by violent changes – here by a harmonious, natural growth; there: the agitation of the party spirit – here: the unshakeability of basic conviction; there: the pursuit of fashion – here: constancy of everyday life; there: the instability of personal self-rule – here: the strength of familial and social links; there: the foppishness of luxury and the artificiality of life – here: the simplicity of vital needs and the exuberance of moral courage; there: tender dreaminess – here: the healthy integrity of rational forces; there: inner anxiety of spirit accompanied by rational conviction of one's moral perfection – among the Russians: profound quietness and the calm of inner self-consciousness combined with constant lack of trust of oneself and the unlimited demands of moral perfection – in a word, there: disunity of spirit, disunity of thoughts, disunity of sciences, disunity of state, disunity of classes, disunity of society, disunity of family rights and obligations, disunity of the whole unity and of all the separate forms of human existence, social and personal – in Russia, by contrast, mainly a striving for integrity of everyday existence both inner and outer, social and personal, speculative and practical, aesthetic and moral. Therefore if what we have said above is just, *disunity* and *integrity*, *rationalism* [*rassudochnost'*] and *reason* [*razumnost'*] will be the final expression of West European and Russian education."⁶⁷³

We may wonder whether the contrast between East and West has been drawn too sharply, too tidily here. But there can be no doubt that Kireyevsky has unerringly pointed to the main lines of bifurcation between the development of

⁶⁷³ Kireyevsky, "O kharaktere prosveschenia Evropy i o ego otnoshenii k prosvescheniu Rossii" (On the Character of the Enlightenment of Europe and its Relationship to the Enlightenment of Russia), in *Razum na puti k istine*, op. cit., pp. 207-209.

the Orthodox East and the Catholic-Protestant West. The explanation lies in his spiritual development. "Having himself been a son of the West and gone to study with the most advanced philosophers," writes Fr. Seraphim Rose, 'Kireyevsky was thoroughly penetrated with the Western spirit and then became thoroughly converted to Orthodoxy. Therefore he saw that these two things cannot be put together. He wanted to find out why they were different and what was the answer in one's soul, what one had to choose..."⁶⁷⁴

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Kireyevsky was the deepest monarchist thinker among the Slavophiles, although, paradoxically, of all the Slavophiles he had the most problems with the Tsarist censor. At one point he was required to give an assurance to the minister of popular enlightenment that in his thinking he did not "separate the Tsar from Russia". Offended by the very suggestion, Kireyevsky proceeded to give one of the earliest and best justifications of the Autocracy in post-Petrine Russian history... He began from the fact that "the Russian man loves his Tsar. This reality cannot be doubted, because everyone can see and feel it. But love for the Tsar, like every love, can be true and false, good and bad – I am not speaking about feigned love. False love is that which loves in the Tsar only one's advantage; this love is base, harmful and, in dangerous moments, can turn to treachery. True love for the Tsar is united in one indivisible feeling with love for the Fatherland, for lawfulness and for the Holy Orthodox Church. Therefore this love can be magnanimous. And how can one separate in this matter love for the Tsar from the law, the Fatherland and the Church? The law is the will of the Tsar, proclaimed before the whole people; the Fatherland is the best love of his heart; the Holy Orthodox Church is his highest link with the people, it is the most essential basis of his power, the reason for the people's trust in him, the combination of his conscience with the Fatherland, the living junction of the mutual sympathy of the Tsar and the people, the basis of their common prosperity, the source of the blessing of God on him and on the Fatherland.

"But to love the Tsar separately from Russia means to love an external force, a chance power, but not the Russian Tsar: that is how the Old Ritualist schismatics and Balts love him, who were ready to serve Napoleon with the same devotion when they considered him stronger than Alexander. To love the Tsar and not to venerate the laws, or to break the laws given or confirmed by him under the cover of his trust, under the protection of his power, is to be his enemy under the mask of zeal, it is to undermine his might at the root, to destroy the Fatherland's love for him, to separate the people's concept of him from their concept of justice, order and general well-being – in a word, it is to separate the Tsar in the heart of the people from the very reasons for which Russia wishes to have a Tsar, from those good things in the hope of which she so highly venerates him. Finally, to love him without any relation to the Holy Church as a powerful Tsar, but not as the Orthodox Tsar, is to think that his rule is not the service of God and His Holy Church, but only the rule of the State for secular aims; it is to think that the

⁶⁷⁴ Monk Damascene Christenson, *Not of this World: The Life and Teaching of Fr. Seraphim Rose*, Forestville, Ca.: Fr. Seraphim Rose Foundation, 1993, pp. 589-590

advantage of the State can be separated from the advantage of Orthodoxy, or even that the Orthodox Church is a means, and not the end of the people's existence as a whole, that the Holy Church can be sometimes a hindrance and at other times a useful instrument for the Tsar's power. This is the love of a slave, and not that of a faithful subject; it is Austrian love, not Russian; this love for the Tsar is treason before Russia, and for the Tsar himself it is profoundly harmful, even if sometimes seems convenient. Every counsel he receives from such a love bears within it a secret poison that eats away at the very living links that bind him with the Fatherland. For Orthodoxy is the soul of Russia, the root of the whole of her moral existence, the source of her might and strength, the standard gathering all the different kinds of feelings of her people into one stronghold, the earnest of all her hopes for the future, the treasury of the best memories of the past, her ruling object of worship, her heartfelt love. The people venerates the Tsar as the Church's support; and is so boundlessly devoted to him because it does not separate the Church from the Fatherland. All its trust in the Tsar is based on feeling for the Church. It sees in him a faithful director in State affairs only because it knows that he is a brother in the Church, who together with it serves her as the sincere son of the same mother and therefore can be a reliable shield of her external prosperity and independence...

"He who has not despaired of the destiny of his Fatherland cannot separate love for it from sincere devotion to Orthodoxy. And he who is Orthodox in his convictions cannot not love Russia, as the God-chosen vessel of His Holy Church on earth. Faith in the Church of God and love for Orthodox Russia are neither divided nor distinguished in the soul of the true Russian. Therefore a man holding to another confession cannot love the Russian Tsar except with a love that is harmful for the Tsar and for Russia, a love whose influence of necessity must strive to destroy precisely that which constitutes the very first condition of the mutual love of the Tsar and Russia, the basis of his correct and beneficent rule and the condition of her correct and beneficent construction.

"Therefore to wish that the Russian government should cease to have the spirit and bear the character of an Orthodox government, but be completely indifferent to the confessions, accepting the spirit of so-called common Christianity, which does not belong to any particular Church and was thought up recently by some unbelieving philosophers and half-believing Protestants – to wish for this would signify for the present time the tearing up of all bonds of love and trust between the government and the people, and for the future, - that is, if the government were to hide its indifference to Orthodoxy until it educates the people in the same coldness to its Church, - it would produce the complete destruction of the whole fortress of Russia and the annihilation of the whole of her world significance. For for him who knows Russia and her Orthodox Faith, there can be no doubt that she grew up on it and became strong by it, since by it alone is she strong and prosperous."⁶⁷⁵

⁶⁷⁵ Kireyevsky, "Ob otnoshenii k tsarskoj vlasti" (On the relationship to Tsarist power), in *Razum na puti k istine*, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-53, 62.

In a critical review of an article by the Protestant Pastor Wiener, who was defending the principle of complete separation of Church and State and complete tolerance, Kireyevsky wrote: "The author says very justly that in most states where there is a dominant religion, the government uses it as a means for its own private ends and under the excuse of protecting it oppresses it. But this happens *not because* there is a dominant faith in the state, but, on the contrary, because the dominant faith of the people *is not dominant* in the state apparatus. This unfortunate relationship takes place when, as a consequence of some chance historical circumstances, the rift opens up between the convictions of the people and of the government. Then the faith of the people is used as a means, but not for long. One of three things must unfailingly happen: either the people wavers in its faith and then the whole state apparatus wavers, as we see in the West; or the government attains a correct self-knowledge and sincerely converts to the faith of the people, as we hope; or the people sees that it is being deceived, as we fear.

"But what are the normal, desirable relations between the Church and the State? The state must not agree with the Church so as to search out and persecute heretics and force them to believe (this is contrary to the spirit of Christianity and has a counter-productive effect, and harms the state itself almost as much as the Church); but it must agree with the Church so as to place as the main purpose of its existence to be penetrated constantly, more and more, with the spirit of the Church and not only not look on the Church as a means to its own most fitting existence, but, on the contrary, see in its own existence only a means for the fullest and most fitting installation of the Church of God on earth.

"The State is a construction of society having as its aim earthly, temporal life. The Church is a construction of the same society having as its aim heavenly, eternal life. If society understands its life in such a way that in it the temporal must serve the eternal, the state apparatus of this society must also serve the Church. But if society understands its life in such a way that in it earthly relationships carry on by themselves, and spiritual relations by themselves, then the state in such a society must be separated from the Church. But such a society will consist not of Christians, but of unbelievers, or, at any rate, of mixed faiths and convictions. Such a state cannot make claims to a harmonious, normal development. The whole of its dignity must be limited by a *negative* character. But there where the people is bound inwardly, by identical convictions of faith, there it has the right to wish and demand that both its external bonds – familial, social and state – should be in agreement with its religious inspirations, and that its government should be penetrated by the same spirit. To act in hostility to this spirit means to act in hostility to the people itself, even if these actions afford it some earthly advantages."⁶⁷⁶

⁶⁷⁶ Kireyevsky, in L.A. Tikhomirov, "I.V. Kireyevsky", *Kritika Demokratii* (A Critique of Democracy), Moscow, 1997, pp. 520-521.

45. METROPOLITAN PHILARET ON MONARCHISM AND FREEDOM

Useful as the work of lay intellectuals might be, the task of defending the Autocracy from its westernizing critics fell in the first place on the Church as the other pillar of the Symphony of Powers... Now the most outstanding hierarch in the Holy Synod at this time was Metropolitan Philaret (Drozdov). The son of a poor village priest of Kolomna, he was consecrated a bishop at the age of 35 in 1817; he became Metropolitan of Moscow in 1821, serving there for nearly fifty years – fifty! – until his death in 1867. His reputation in Russia was immense: from his fellow hierarchs and the holy Elders of Optina to the simple people who sought his miracle-working help, he was revered as a great saint, the Russian equivalent of St. Photius the Great.

Elena Kontzevich writes: “The turning point in the spiritual life of Metropolitan Philaret was his first encounter with Fr. Anthony [Medvedev], then abbot of a poor hermitage who came to him to pay a visit to his ruling bishop. Fr. Anthony was quite outspoken in condemning the unorthodox and harmful ‘mysticism’ propagated by the masonic Bible Society, which was in vogue during the reign of Alexander I. Metropolitan Philaret hoped to have the Bible translated for the first time into modern Russian and thus supported the Society without really being able to see the danger in its ideas. At this meeting he heard for the first time the Orthodox Patristic teaching of the *inward activity* (Jesus Prayer) and, probably, about Saint Seraphim. He was deeply impressed, and as soon as he could he placed Fr. Anthony as head of the Holy Trinity Lavra, which was in his diocese. After this a great spiritual friendship developed between him and Fr. Anthony, who became his Starets, and without his advice he made no important decision, whether concerning a diocesan matter, governmental affairs, or his personal spiritual life.

“Fr. Anthony had been absolutely devoted to St. Seraphim from the time he entered monastic life at Sarov at a young age. Contact with the Saints revealed to him the realm of Orthodox spirituality and the path to acquire it. St. Seraphim foresaw that he would become ‘abbot of a great Lavra’ and instructed him how to meet the challenge.

“Metropolitan Philaret went through the way of the *inward activity*, the prayer of the heart, under the guidance of St. Seraphim’s disciple, and he thereby acquired great gifts in the spiritual life: gifts of vision, of prophecy, of healing the afflicted. Thus he himself became one of the forces of the great spiritual revival in Russia. He saved the institution of Startsi in Optina Monastery when Starets Lev was persecuted, protected the nuns of St. Seraphim’s Diveyevo Convent, patronized Starets Makary’s publication of Paissy Velichkovsky’s translations, founded the Gethsemane Skete of cave-dwellers near the Lavra. He himself functioned as a Starets. There is a clear indication also that he foresaw the Russian Revolution.”⁶⁷⁷

⁶⁷⁷ Kontzevich, “Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow”, St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, p. 195.

During the Decembrist rebellion that followed on the supposed death of Tsar Alexander I in 1825, Metropolitan Philaret's wise refusal to reveal the contents of the Tsar's will immediately helped to guarantee the transfer of power to his brother, Tsar Nicholas I. Philaret continued to defend Russia against Masonry and other western heresies throughout his life, but was pessimistic about the future. Thus he feared "storm-clouds coming from the West", and advised that rizas should not be made for icons, because "the time is approaching when ill-intentioned people will remove the rizas from the icons."⁶⁷⁸

It is perhaps Philaret, who "should be credited with the first efforts [in the Russian Church] to work out a theory of church-state relations that insisted on the legitimacy of divinely instituted royal authority without endorsing the seemingly unlimited claims of the modern state to administer all aspects of the lives of its citizens."⁶⁷⁹

Philaret said that "it was necessary for there to be a close union between the ruler and the people - a union, moreover, that was based exclusively on righteousness. The external expression of the prosperity of a state was the complete submission of the people to the government. The government in a state had to enjoy the rights of complete inviolability on the part of the subjects. And if it was deprived of these rights, the state could not be firm, it was threatened with danger insofar as two opposing forces would appear: self-will on the part of the subjects and predominance on the part of the government. 'If the government is not firm,' taught Philaret, 'then the state also is not firm. Such a state is like a city built on a volcanic mountain: what does its firmness signify when beneath it is concealed a force which can turn it into ruins at any minute? Subjects who do not recognize the sacred inviolability of the rulers are incited by hope of self-will to attain self-will; an authority which is not convinced of its inviolability is incited by worries about its security to attain predominance; in such a situation the state wavers between the extremes of self-will and predominance, between the horrors of anarchy and repression, and cannot affirm in itself obedient freedom, which is the focus and soul of social life.'

"The holy hierarch understood the [Decembrist] rebellion as being against the State, against itself. 'Subjects can themselves understand,' said Philaret, 'that in destroying the authorities they are destroying the constitution of society and consequently they are themselves destroying themselves.'"⁶⁸⁰

Philaret "did not doubt that monarchical rule is 'power from God' (Romans 13.1) in its significance for Russian history and statehood, and more than once in his sermons expressed the most submissively loyal feelings with regard to all the representatives of the Royal Family. But he was one of the very few archpastors who had the courage to resist the tendency - very characteristic of Russian

⁶⁷⁸ Fomin S. and Fomina T., *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishesviem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Moscow, 1998, vol. I, p. 349.

⁶⁷⁹ Nicols, "Filaret of Moscow as an Ascetic" in J. Breck, J. Meyendorff and E. Silk (eds.), *The Legacy of St Vladimir*, Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990, p. 81.

⁶⁸⁰ Metropolitan Ioann Snychev, *Zhizn' i Deiatel'nost' Filareta, Mitropolita Moskovskogo* (The Life and Activity of Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow), Tula, 1994, p. 177.

conditions - to reduce Orthodoxy to 'glorification of the tsar'. Thus, contrary to many hierarchs, who from feelings of servility warmly accepted Nicholas I's attempt to introduce the heir among the members of the Synod, he justly saw in this a manifestation of caesaropapism..., and in the application of attributes of the Heavenly King to the earthly king - a most dangerous deformation of religious consciousness..., and in such phenomena as the passing of a cross procession around statues of the emperor - a direct return to paganism."⁶⁸¹

Metropolitan Philaret, as Fr. Georges Florovsky writes, "distinctly and firmly reminded people of the Church's independence and freedom, reminded them of the limits of the state. And in this he sharply and irreconcilably parted with his epoch, with the whole of the State's self-definition in the new, Petersburgian Russia. Philaret was very reserved and quiet when speaking. By his intense and courageous silence he with difficulty concealed and subdued his anxiety about what was happening. Through the vanity and confusion of events he saw and made out the threatening signs of the righteous wrath of God that was bound to come. Evil days, days of judgement were coming - 'it seems that we are already living in the suburbs of Babylon, if not in Babylon itself,' he feared... 'My soul is sorrowful,' admitted Metropolitan Philaret once. 'It seems to me that the judgement which begins at the house of God is being more and more revealed... How thickly does the smoke come from the coldness of the abyss and how high does it mount'... And only in repentance did he see an exit, in universal repentance 'for many things, especially in recent years'.

"Philaret had his own theory of the State, of the sacred kingdom. And in it there was not, and could not be, any place for the principles of state supremacy. It is precisely because the powers that be are from God, and the sovereigns rule by the mercy of God, that the kingdom has a completely subject and auxiliary character. 'The State as State is not subject to the Church', and therefore the servants of the Church already in the apostolic canons are strictly forbidden 'to take part in the administration of the people'. Not from outside, but from within must the Christian State be bound by the law of God and the ecclesiastical order. In the mind of Metropolitan Philaret, the State is a moral union, 'a union of free moral beings' and a union founded on mutual service and love - 'a certain part of the general dominion of the Almighty, outwardly separate, but by an invisible power yoked into the unity of the whole'... And the foundation of power lies in the principle of service. In the Christian State Philaret saw the Anointed of God, and before this banner of God's good will he with good grace inclined his head. 'The Sovereign receives the whole of his lawfulness from the Church's anointing', that is, in the Church and through the Church. Here the Kingdom inclines its head before the Priesthood and takes upon itself the vow of service to the Church, and its right to take part in ecclesiastical affairs. He possesses this not by virtue of his autocracy and authority, but precisely by virtue of his obedience and vow. This right does not extend or pass to the organs of state administration, and between the

⁶⁸¹ V. Shokhin, "Svt. Philaret, mitropolit Moskovskij i 'shkola veruiushchego razuma' v russkoj filosofii" ("Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow and the 'school of believing reason' in Russian philosophy"), *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia* (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), 175, I-1997, p. 97.

Sovereign and the Church there cannot and must not be any dividing wall or mediation. The Sovereign is anointed, but not the State. The Sovereign enters into the Church, but the State as such remains outside the Church. And for that reason it has no rights and privileges in the Church. In her inner constitution the Church is completely independent, and has no need of the help or defence of the secular authorities - 'the altar does not fear to fall even without this protection'. For the Church is ruled by Christ Himself, Who distributes and realizes 'his own episcopacy of souls' through the apostolic hierarchy, which 'is not similar to any form of secular rule'.

"The Church has her own inviolable code of laws, her own strength and privileges, which exceed all earthly measures. 'In His word Jesus Christ did not outline for her a detailed and uniform statute, so that His Kingdom should not seem to be of this world'... The Church has her own special form of action - in prayer, in the service of the sacraments, in exhortation and in pastoral care. And for real influence on public life, for its real enchurchment, according to Metropolitan Philaret's thought, the interference of the hierarchy in secular affairs is quite unnecessary - 'it is necessary not so much that a bishop should sit in the governmental assembly of grandees, as that the grandees and men of nobles birth should more frequently and ardently surround the altar of the Lord together with the bishop'... Metropolitan Philaret always with great definiteness drew a firm line between the state and ecclesiastical orders. Of course, he did not demand and did not desire the separation of the State from the Church, its departure from the Church into the arbitrariness of secular vanity. But at the same time he always sharply underlined the complete heterogeneity and particularity of the State and the Church. The Church cannot be in the State, and the State cannot be in the Church - 'unity and harmony' must be realized between them in the unity of the creative realization of God's commandments.

"It is not difficult to understand how distant and foreign this way of thinking was for the State functionaries of the Nicolaitan spirit and time, and how demanding and childish it seemed to them. Philaret did not believe in the power of rebukes and reprimands. He did not attach great significance to the external forms of life - 'it is not some kind of transformation that is needed, but a choice of men and supervision', he used to say. And above all what was necessary was an inner creative uplift, a gathering and renewal of spiritual forces. What was needed was an intensification of creative activity, a strengthening and intensification of ecclesiastical and pastoral freedom. As a counterweight to the onslaught of the State, Metropolitan Philaret thought about the reestablishment of the living unity of the local episcopate, which would be realized in constant consultative communion of fellow pastors and bishops, and strengthened at times by small congresses and councils, until a general local Council would become inwardly possible and achievable.⁶⁸² Metropolitan Philaret always emphasized that 'we live

⁶⁸² "Already in the reign of Alexander I the hierarch used to submit the idea of the restoration of Local Councils and the division of the Russian Church into nine metropolitan areas. At the command of Emperor Alexander he had even composed a project and given it to the members of the Synod for examination. But the Synod rejected the project, declaring: 'Why this project, and why have you not spoken to us about it?' 'I was ordered [to compose it]' was all that the hierarch could reply, 'and speaking about it is not forbidden'" (Snychev, *op. cit.*, pp. 226). (V.M.)

in the Church militant'... And with sadness he recognized that 'the quantity of sins and carelessnesses which have mounted up in the course of more than one century almost exceeds the strength and means of correction'... Philaret was not a man of struggle, and was weighed down 'by remaining in the chatter and cares of the city and works of men'. He lived in expectation 'of that eternally secure city, from which it will not be necessary to flee into any desert', He wanted to withdraw, to run away, and beyond the storm of affairs to pray for the mercy and longsuffering of God, for 'defence from on high'.⁶⁸³

The State was "a union of free moral beings, united amongst themselves with the sacrifice of part of their freedom for the preservation and confirmation by the common forces of the law of morality, which constitutes the necessity of their existence. The civil laws are nothing other than interpretations of this law in application to particular cases and guards placed against its violation."⁶⁸⁴

Philaret emphasized the rootedness of the State in the family, with the State deriving its essential properties and structure from the family: "The family is older than the State. Man, husband, wife, father, son, mother, daughter and the obligations and virtues inherent in these names existed before the family grew into the nation and the State was formed. That is why family life in relation to State life can be figuratively depicted as the root of the tree. In order that the tree should bear leaves and flowers and fruit, it is necessary that the root should be strong and bring pure juice to the tree. In order that State life should develop strongly and correctly, flourish with education, and bring forth the fruit of public prosperity, it is necessary that family life should be strong with the blessed love of the spouses, the sacred authority of the parents, and the reverence and obedience of the children, and that as a consequence of this, from the pure elements of family there should arise similarly pure principles of State life, so that with veneration for one's father veneration for the tsar should be born and grow, and that the love of children for their mother should be a preparation of love for the fatherland, and the simple-hearted obedience of domestics should prepare and direct the way to self-sacrifice and self-forgetfulness in obedience to the laws and sacred authority of the autocrat."⁶⁸⁵

If the foundation of the State is the family, and each family is both a miniature State and a miniature monarchy, it follows that the most natural form of Statehood is Monarchy - more specifically, a Monarchy that is in union with, as owing its origin to, the Heavenly Monarch, God. Despotic monarchies identify themselves, rather than unite themselves, with the Deity, so they cannot be said to correspond to the Divine order of things. In ancient times, the only monarchy that was in accordance with the order and the command of God was the Israelite autocracy. The Russian autocracy was the successor of the Israelite autocracy, was based on

⁶⁸³ Florovsky, "Philaret, mitropolit Moskovskij" (Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow), in *Vera i Kul'tura* (Faith and Culture), St. Petersburg, 2002, pp. 261-264.

⁶⁸⁴ Metropolitan Philaret, quoted in Lev Regelson, *Tragedia Russkoj Tseroki, 1917-1945* (The Tragedy of the Russian Church, 1917-1945), Paris: YMCA Press, 1977, pp. 24-25.

⁶⁸⁵ Metropolitan Philaret, *Sochinenia* (Works), 1848 edition, volume 2, p. 169.

the same principles and received the same blessing from God through the sacrament of anointing to the kingdom .

In 1851, Metropolitan Philaret preached: "As heaven is indisputably better than the earth, and the heavenly than the earthly, it is similarly indisputable that the best on earth must be recognized to be that which was built on it in the image of the heavenly, as was said to the God-seer Moses: 'Look thou that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount' (Exodus 25.40). In accordance with this, God established a king on earth in the image of His single rule in the heavens; He arranged for an autocratic king on earth in the image of His almighty power; and He placed an hereditary king on earth in the image of His imperishable Kingdom, which lasts from ages to ages.

"Oh if only all the kings of the earth paid sufficient attention to their heavenly dignity and to the traits of the image of the heavenly impressed upon them, and faithfully united the righteousness and goodness demanded of them, the heavenly unsleeping watchfulness, purity of thought and holiness of intention that is in God's image! Oh if only all the peoples sufficiently understood the heavenly dignity of the king and the construction of the heavenly kingdom in the image of the heavenly, and constantly signed themselves with the traits of that same image - by reverence and love for the king, by humble obedience to his laws and commands, by mutual agreement and unanimity, and removed from themselves everything of which there is no image in the heavens - arrogance, disputes, self-will, greediness and every evil thought, intention and act! Everything would be blessed in accordance with the heavenly image if it were well constructed in accordance with the heavenly image. All earthly kingdoms would be worthy of being the ante-chamber of the Heavenly Kingdom.

"Russia! You participate in this good more than many kingdoms and peoples. 'Hold on to that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown' (Revelation 3.11). Keep and continue to adorn your radiant crown, ceaselessly struggling to fulfil more perfectly the crown-giving commandments: 'Fear God, honour the king' (I Peter 2.17).

"Turning from the well-known to that which has perhaps been less examined and understood in the apostle's word, I direct your attention to that which the apostle, while teaching the fear of God, reverence for the king and obedience to the authorities, at the same time teaches about freedom: 'Submit', he says, 'to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; whether to the king, as being supreme, or to governors as being sent through him... as free'. Submit as free men. Submit, and remain free...

"But how are we more correctly to understand and define freedom? Philosophy teaches that freedom is the capacity without restrictions rationally to choose and do that which is best, and that it is by nature the heritage of every man. What, it would seem, could be more desirable? But this teaching has its light on the summit of the contemplation of human nature, human nature as it should be, while in descending to our experience and actions as they are in reality, it encounters darkness and obstacles.

"In the multiplicity of the race of men, are there many who have such an open and educated mind as faithfully to see and distinguish that which is best? And do those who see the best always have enough strength decisively to choose it and bring it to the level of action? Have we not heard complaints from the best of men: 'For to will is present in me, but how to perform that which is good I find not' (Romans 7.18)? What are we to say about the freedom of people who, although not in slavery to anybody, are nevertheless subject to sensuality, overcome by passion, possessed by evil habits? Is the avaricious man free? Is he not bound in golden chains? Is the indulger of his flesh free? Is he not bound, if not by cruel bonds, then by soft nets? Is the proud and vainglorious man free? Is he not chained, not by his hands, and not by his legs, but by his head and heart, to his own idol?

"Thus does not experience and consciousness, at least of some people in some cases, speak of that of which the Divine Scriptures speak generally: 'He who does sin is the servant of sin' (John 8. 34)?

"Observation of people and human societies shows that people who to a greater degree allow themselves to fall into this inner, moral slavery - slavery to sin, the passions and vices - are more often than others zealots for external freedom - freedom broadened as far as possible in human society before the law and the authorities. But will broadening external freedom help them to freedom from inner slavery? There is no reason to think that. With greater probability we must fear the opposite. He in whom sensuality, passion and vice has already acquired dominance, when the barriers put by the law and the authorities to his vicious actions have been removed, will of course give himself over to the satisfaction of his passions and lusts with even less restraint than before, and will use his external freedom only in order that he may immerse himself more deeply in inner slavery. Unhappy freedom which, as the Apostle explained, 'they have as a cover for their envy'! Let us bless the law and the authorities which, in decreeing and ordering and defending, as necessity requires, the limits placed upon freedom of action, hinder as far they can the abuse of natural freedom and the spread of moral slavery, that is, slavery to sin, the passions and the vices.

"I said: as far as they can, because we can not only not expect from the law and the earthly authorities a complete cutting off of the abuse of freedom and the raising of those immersed in the slavery of sin to the true and perfect freedom: even the law of the Heavenly Lawgiver is not sufficient for that. The law warns about sin, rebukes the sinner and condemns him, but does not communicate to the slave of sin the power to break the bonds of this slavery, and does not provide the means of blotting out the iniquities committed, which lie on the conscience like a fiery seal of sinful slavery. And in this consists 'the weakness of the law' (Romans 8.3), to which the Apostle witnesses without a moment's hesitation.

"Here the question again arises: what is true freedom, and who can give it, and - especially - return it to the person who has lost it through sin? True freedom is the active capacity of the man who has not been enslaved to sin and who is not

weighed down by a condemning conscience, to choose the best in the light of the truth of God and to realize it with the help of the power of God's grace.

"Only He Who gave this freedom to sinless man at his creation can give it back to the slave of sin. The Creator of freedom Himself declared this: 'If the Son will set you free, then you will truly be free' (John 8.36). 'If you remain in My words, you will truly be My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free' (John 31.32). Jesus Christ, the Son of God, having suffered and died for us in the nature He received from us, by His 'Blood has cleansed our conscience from dead works' (Hebrews 9.14), and, having torn apart the bonds of death by His resurrection, has torn apart also the bonds of sin and death that bind us, and, after His ascension to heaven, has sent down the Spirit of truth, giving us through faith the light of His truth to see what is best, and His grace-filled power to do it.

"This is freedom, which is restrained neither by heaven, nor by the earth, nor by hell, which has as its limit the will of God, and this not to its own diminution, because it also strives to fulfil the will of God, which has no need to shake the lawful decrees of men because it is able to see in these the truth that 'the Kingdom is the Lord's and He Himself is sovereign of the nations' (Psalms 21.28), which in an unconstrained way venerates lawful human authority and its commands that are not contrary to God, insofar as it radiantly sees the truth that 'there is no power that is not of God, the powers that be are ordained of God' (Romans 13.1). And so this is freedom, which is in complete accord with obedience to the law and lawful authority, because it itself wishes for that which obedience demands..."⁶⁸⁶

⁶⁸⁶ Metropolitan Philaret, "Slovo v den' Blagochestivejshego Gosudaria Imperatora Nikolaia Pavlovicha" (Sermon on the day of his Most Pious Majesty Emperor Nicholas Pavlovich), in Kozlov, op. cit., pp. 274-275, 277-279.

46. THE EPISTLE OF THE EASTERN PATRIARCHS

While laymen such as Dostoyevsky and the Slavophiles defended the uniqueness of Eastern Orthodox civilization in the face of the threat of the Western revolution, both political and ideological, the hierarchs of the Eastern Patriarchates – Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem – defended Orthodoxy against an old, but still powerful threat – Roman Catholicism, which in Pope Pius IX received an exceptionally despotic and aggressive head. In May, 1848, they issued the following epistle in response to one addressed to them by the Pope⁶⁸⁷:-

To All the Bishops Everywhere, Beloved in the Holy Ghost, Our Venerable, Most Dear Brethren; and to their Most Pious Clergy; and to All the Genuine Orthodox Sons of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church: Brotherly Salutation in the Holy Spirit, and Every Good From God, and Salvation.

1. The holy, evangelical and divine Gospel of Salvation should be set forth by all in its original simplicity, and should evermore be believed in its unadulterated purity, even the same as it was revealed to His holy Apostles by our Savior, who for this very cause, descending from the bosom of God the Father, *made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant (Philippians 2.7)*; even the same, also, as those Apostles, who were ear and eye witnesses, sounded it forth, like clear-toned trumpets, to all that are under the sun (for *their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words into the ends of the world*); and, last of all, the very same as the many great and glorious Fathers of the [Orthodox] Catholic Church in all parts of the earth, who heard those Apostolic voices, both by their synodical and their individual teachings handed it down to all everywhere, and even unto us. But the Prince of Evil, that spiritual enemy of man's salvation, as formerly in Eden, craftily assuming the pretext of profitable counsel, he made man to become a transgressor of the divinely-spoken command, so in the spiritual Eden, the Church of God, he has from time to time beguiled many; and, mixing the deleterious drugs of heresy with the clear streams of Orthodox doctrine, gives of the potion to drink to many of the innocent who live unguardedly, *not giving earnest heed to the things they have heard (Hebrews 2.10), and to what they have been told by their fathers (Deuteronomy 32.7)*, in accordance with the Gospel and in agreement with the ancient Doctors; and who, imagining that the preached and written Word of the LORD and the perpetual witness of His Church are not sufficient for their souls' salvation, impiously seek out novelties, as we change the fashion of our garments, embracing a counterfeit of the evangelical doctrine.

2. Hence have arisen manifold and monstrous heresies, which the Catholic Church, even from her infancy, *taking unto her the whole armour of God, and assuming the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Ephesians 6.13-17)*, has been compelled to combat. She has triumphed over all unto this day, and she will triumph for ever, being manifested as mightier and more illustrious after each struggle.

⁶⁸⁷ Cited, with minor alterations, from
http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/encyc_1848.aspx#52808257.

3. Of these heresies, some already have entirely failed, some are in decay, some have wasted away, some yet flourish in a greater or lesser degree vigorous until the time of their return to the Faith, while others are reproduced to run their course from their birth to their destruction. For being the miserable cogitations and devices of miserable men, both one and the other, struck with the thunderbolt of the anathema of the seven Ecumenical Councils, shall vanish away, though they may last a thousand years; for the orthodoxy of the Catholic and Apostolic Church, by the living Word of God, alone endures for ever, according to the infallible promise of the LORD: *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it* (Matthew 18.18). Certainly, the mouths of ungodly and heretical men, however bold, however plausible and fair-speaking, however smooth they may be, will not prevail against the Orthodox doctrine winning its way silently and without noise. But, *wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper?* (Jeremiah 12.1.) *Why are the ungodly exalted and lifted up as the cedars of Lebanon* (Psalms 37.35), to defile the peaceful worship of God? The reason for this is mysterious, and the Church, though daily praying that this cross, this messenger of Satan, may depart from her, ever hears from the Lord: *My grace is sufficient for thee, my strength is made perfect in weakness* (II Corinthians 12.9). *Wherefore she gladly glories in her infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon her, and that they which are approved may be made manifest* (I Corinthians 10.19).

4. Of these heresies diffused, with what sufferings the LORD hath known, over a great part of the world, was formerly Arianism, and at present is the Papacy. This, too, as the former has become extinct, although now flourishing, shall not endure, but pass away and be cast down, and a great voice from heaven shall cry: *It is cast down* (Revelation 12.10).

5. The new doctrine, that "the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father and the Son," is contrary to the memorable declaration of our LORD, emphatically made respecting it: *which proceedeth from the Father* (John 15.26), and contrary to the universal Confession of the Catholic Church as witnessed by the seven Ecumenical Councils, uttering "which proceedeth from the Father." (Symbol of Faith).

i. This novel opinion destroys the oneness from the One cause, and the diverse origin of the Persons of the Blessed Trinity, both of which are witnessed to in the Gospel.

ii. Even into the divine Hypostases or Persons of the Trinity, of equal power and equally to be adored, it introduces diverse and unequal relations, with a confusion or commingling of them.

iii. It reproaches as imperfect, dark, and difficult to be understood, the previous Confession of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

iv. It censures the holy Fathers of the first Ecumenical Synod of Nicaea and of the second Ecumenical Synod at Constantinople, as imperfectly expressing what relates to the Son and Holy Ghost, as if they had been silent respecting the peculiar property of each Person of the Godhead, when it was necessary that all their divine properties should be expressed against the Arians and Macedonians.

v. It reproaches the Fathers of the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh Ecumenical Councils, which had published over the world a divine Creed, perfect and complete, and interdicted under dread anathemas and penalties not removed, all addition, or diminution, or alteration, or variation in the smallest particular of it, by themselves or any whomsoever. Yet was this quickly to be corrected and augmented, and consequently the whole theological doctrine of the Catholic Fathers was to be subjected to change, as if, forsooth, a new property even in regard to the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity had been revealed.

vi. It clandestinely found an entrance at first in the Churches of the West, "a wolf in sheep's clothing," that is, under the signification not of *procession*, according to the Greek meaning in the Gospel and the Creed, but under the signification of *mission*, as Pope Martin explained it to the Confessor Maximus, and as Anastasius the Librarian explained it to John VIII.

vii. It exhibits incomparable boldness, acting without authority, and forcibly puts a false stamp upon the Creed, which is the common inheritance of Christianity.

viii. It has introduced huge disturbances into the peaceful Church of God, and divided the nations.

ix. It was publicly proscribed, at its first promulgation, by two ever-to-be-remembered Popes, Leo III and John VIII, the latter of whom, in his epistle to the blessed Photius, classes with Judas those who first brought the interpolation into the Creed.

x. It has been condemned by many Holy Councils of the four Patriarchs of the East.

xi. It was subjected to anathema, as a novelty and augmentation of the Creed, by the eighth Ecumenical Council, congregated at Constantinople for the pacification of the Eastern and Western Churches.

xii. As soon as it was introduced into the Churches of the West it brought forth disgraceful fruits, bringing with it, little by little, other novelties, for the most part contrary to the express commands of our Saviour in the Gospel—commands which till its entrance into the Churches were closely observed. Among these novelties may be numbered sprinkling instead of baptism, denial of the divine Cup to the Laity, elevation of one and the same bread broken, the use of wafers, unleavened instead of real bread, the disuse of the Benediction in the Liturgies, even of the sacred Invocation of the All-holy and Consecrating Spirit, the abandonment of the old Apostolic Mysteries of the Church, such as not anointing baptized infants, or their not receiving the Eucharist, the exclusion of married men from the Priesthood, the infallibility of the Pope and his claim as Vicar of Christ, and the like. Thus it was that the interpolation led to the setting aside of the old Apostolic pattern of well nigh all the Mysteries and all doctrine, a pattern which the ancient, holy, and Orthodox Church of Rome kept, when she was the most honoured part of the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

xiii. It drove the theologians of the West, as its defenders, since they had no ground either in Scripture or the Fathers to countenance heretical teachings, not

only into misrepresentations of the Scriptures, such as are seen in none of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church, but also into adulterations of the sacred and pure writings of the Fathers alike of the East and West.

xiv. It seemed strange, unheard of, and blasphemous, even to those reputed Christian communions, which, before its origin, had been for other just causes for ages cut off from the Catholic fold.

xv. It has not yet been even plausibly defended out of the Scriptures, or with the least reason out of the Fathers, from the accusations brought against it, notwithstanding all the zeal and efforts of its supporters. The doctrine bears all the marks of error arising out of its nature and peculiarities. All erroneous doctrine touching the Catholic truth of the Blessed Trinity, and the origin of the divine Persons, and the subsistence of the Holy Ghost, is and is called heresy, and they who so hold are deemed heretics, according to the sentence of St. Damasus, Pope of Rome, who says: "If any one rightly holds concerning the Father and the Son, yet holds not rightly of the Holy Ghost, he is an heretic" (Catholic Confession of Faith which Pope Damasus sent to Paulinus, Bishop of Thessalonica). Wherefore the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, following in the steps of the holy Fathers, both Eastern and Western, proclaimed of old to our progenitors and again teaches today synodically, that the said novel doctrine of the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son is essentially heresy, and its maintainers, whoever they be, are heretics, according to the sentence of Pope St. Damasus, and that the congregations of such are also heretical, and that all spiritual communion in worship of the Orthodox sons of the Catholic Church with such is unlawful. Such is the force of the seventh Canon of the third Ecumenical Council.

6. This heresy, which has united to itself many innovations, as has been said, appeared about the middle of the seventh century, at first and secretly, and then under various disguises, over the Western Provinces of Europe, until by degrees, creeping along for four or five centuries, it obtained precedence over the ancient Orthodoxy of those parts, through the heedlessness of Pastors and the countenance of Princes. Little by little it overspread not only the hitherto Orthodox Churches of Spain, but also the German, and French, and Italian Churches, whose Orthodoxy at one time was sounded throughout the world, with whom our divine Fathers such as the great Athanasius and heavenly Basil conferred, and whose sympathy and fellowship with us until the seventh Ecumenical Council, preserved unharmed the doctrine of the Catholic and Apostolic Church. But in process of time, by envy of the devil, the novelties respecting the sound and Orthodox doctrine of the Holy Ghost, the blasphemy of whom shall not be forgiven unto men either in this world or the next, according to the saying of our Lord (Matthew 12.32), and others that succeeded respecting the divine Mysteries, particularly that of the world-saving Baptism, and the Holy Communion, and the Priesthood, like prodigious births, overspread even Old Rome; and thus sprung, by assumption of special distinctions in the Church as a badge and title, the Papacy. Some of the Bishops of that City, styled Popes, for example Leo III and John VIII, did indeed, as has been said, denounce the innovation, and published the denunciation to the world, the former by those silver plates, the latter by his letter to the holy Photius at the eighth Ecumenical Council, and another to Sphendopulcrus, by the hands of Methodius, Bishop of

Moravia. The greater part, however, of their successors, the Popes of Rome, enticed by the antisynodical privileges offered them for the oppression of the Churches of God, and finding in them much worldly advantage, and "much gain," and conceiving a Monarchy in the Catholic Church and a monopoly of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, changed the ancient worship at will, separating themselves by novelties from the old received Christian Polity. Nor did they cease their endeavours, by lawless projects (as veritable history assures us), to entice the other four Patriarchates into their apostasy from Orthodoxy, and so subject the Catholic Church to the whims and ordinances of men.

7. Our illustrious predecessors and fathers, with united labour and counsel, seeing the evangelical doctrine received from the Fathers to be trodden under foot, and the robe of our Saviour woven from above to be torn by wicked hands, and stimulated by fatherly and brotherly love, wept for the desolation of so many Christians for *whom Christ died*. They exercised much zeal and ardour, both synodically and individually, in order that the Orthodox doctrine of the Holy Catholic Church being saved, they might knit together as far as they were able that which had been rent; and like approved physicians they consulted together for the safety of the suffering member, enduring many tribulations, and contempts, and persecutions, if haply the Body of Christ might be divided, or the definitions of the divine and august Synods be made of none effect. But veracious history has transmitted to us the relentlessness of the Western perseverance in error. These illustrious men proved indeed on this point the truth of the words of our holy father Basil the sublime, when he said, from experience, concerning the Bishops of the West, and particularly of the Pope: "They neither know the truth nor endure to learn it, striving against those who tell them the truth, and strengthening themselves in their heresy" (to Eusebius of Samosata). Thus, after a first and second brotherly admonition, knowing their impenitence, shaking them off and avoiding them, they gave them over to their reprobate mind. "War is better than peace, apart from God," as said our holy father Gregory, concerning the Arians. From that time there has been no spiritual communion between us and them; for they have with their own hands dug deep the chasm between themselves and Orthodoxy.

8. Yet the Papacy has not on this account ceased to annoy the peaceful Church of God, but sending out everywhere so-called missionaries, men of reprobate minds, it *compasses land and sea to make one proselyte*, to deceive one of the Orthodox, to corrupt the doctrine of our LORD, to adulterate, by addition, the divine Creed of our holy Faith, to prove the Baptism which God gave us superfluous, the communion of the Cup void of sacred efficacy, and a thousand other things which the demon of novelty dictated to the all-daring Schoolmen of the Middle Ages and to the Bishops of the elder Rome, venturing all things through lust of power. Our blessed predecessors and fathers, in their piety, though tried and persecuted in many ways and means, within and without, directly and indirectly, "yet confident in the LORD," were able to save and transmit to us this inestimable inheritance of our fathers, which we too, by the help of God, will transmit as a rich treasure to the generations to come, even to the end of the world. But notwithstanding this, the Papists do not cease to this day, nor will cease, according to wont, to attack Orthodoxy,—a daily living

reproach which they have before their eyes, being deserters from the faith of their fathers. Would that they made these aggressions against the heresy which has overspread and mastered the West. For who doubts that had their zeal for the overthrow of Orthodoxy been employed for the overthrow of heresy and novelties, agreeable to the God-loving counsels of Leo III and John VIII, those glorious and last Orthodox Popes, not a trace of it, long ago, would have been remembered under the sun, and we should now be saying the same things, according to the Apostolic promise. But the zeal of those who succeeded them was not for the protection of the Orthodox Faith, in conformity with the zeal worthy of all remembrance which was in Leo III., now among the blessed.

9. In a measure the aggressions of the later Popes in their own persons had ceased, and were carried on only by means of missionaries. But lately, Pius IX, becoming Bishop of Rome and proclaimed Pope in 1847, published on the sixth of January, in this present year, an Encyclical Letter addressed to the Easterns, consisting of twelve pages in the Greek version, which his emissary has disseminated, like a plague coming from without, within our Orthodox Fold. In this Encyclical, he addresses those who at different times have gone over from different Christian Communions, and embraced the Papacy, and of course are favourable to him, extending his arguments also to the Orthodox, either particularly or without naming them; and, citing our divine and holy Fathers (p. 3, 1.14-18; p. 4, 1.19; p. 9, 1.6; and pp. 17, 23), he manifestly calumniates them and us their successors and descendants: them, as if they admitted readily the Papal commands and rescripts without question because issuing from the Popes as undoubted arbiters of the Catholic Church; us, as unfaithful to their examples (for thus he trespasses on the Fold committed to us by God), as severed from our Fathers, as careless of our sacred trusts, and of the soul's salvation of our spiritual children. Usurping as his own possession the Catholic Church of Christ, by occupancy, as he boasts, of the Episcopal Throne of St. Peter, he desires to deceive the more simple into apostasy from Orthodoxy, choosing for the basis of all theological instruction these paradoxical words (p. 10, 1.29): "nor is there any reason why ye refuse a return to the true Church and Communion with this my holy Throne."

10. Each one of our brethren and sons in Christ who have been piously brought up and instructed, wisely regarding the wisdom given him from God, will decide that the words of the present Bishop of Rome, like those of his schismatical predecessors, are not words of peace, as he affirms (p. 7, 1.8), and of benevolence, but words of deceit and guile, tending to self-aggrandizement, agreeably to the practice of his antisynodical predecessors. We are therefore sure, that even as heretofore, so hereafter the Orthodox will not be beguiled. For the word of our LORD is sure (John 10.15), *A stranger will they not follow, but flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers.*

11. For all this we have esteemed it our paternal and brotherly need, and a sacred duty, by our present admonition to confirm you in the Orthodoxy you hold from your forefathers, and at the same time point out the emptiness of the syllogisms of the Bishop of Rome, of which he is manifestly himself aware. For not from his Apostolic Confession does he glorify his Throne, but from his Apostolic Throne seeks to establish his dignity, and from his dignity, his

Confession. The truth is the other way. The Throne of Rome is esteemed that of St. Peter by a single tradition, but not from Holy Scripture, where the claim is in favour of Antioch, whose Church is therefore witnessed by the great Basil (Epistle 48 to Athanasius) to be "the most venerable of all the Churches in the world." Still more, the second Ecumenical Council, writing to a Council of the West (to the most honourable and religious brethren and fellow-servants, Damasus, Ambrose, Britto, Valerian, and others), witnesseth, saying: "The oldest and truly Apostolic Church of Antioch, in Syria, where first the honoured name of Christians was used." We say then that the Apostolic Church of Antioch had no right of exemption from being judged according to divine Scripture and synodical declarations, though truly venerated as the throne of St. Peter. But what do we say? The blessed Peter, even in his own person, was judged before all for the truth of the Gospel, and, as Scripture declares, was found blameable and not walking uprightly. What opinion is to be formed of those who glory and pride themselves solely in the possession of his Throne, so great in their eyes? Nay, the sublime Basil the great, the Ecumenical teacher of Orthodoxy in the Catholic Church, to whom the Bishops of Rome are obliged to refer us (p. 8, 1.31), has clearly and explicitly above (7) shown us what estimation we ought to have of the judgments of the inaccessible Vatican: — "They neither," he says, "know the truth, nor endure to learn it, striving against those who tell them the truth, and strengthening themselves in their heresy." So that these our holy Fathers whom his Holiness the Pope, worthily admiring as lights and teachers even of the West, accounts as belonging to us, and advises us (p. 8) to follow, teach us not to judge Orthodoxy from the holy Throne, but the Throne itself and him that is on the Throne by the sacred Scriptures, by Synodical decrees and definitions, and by the Faith which has been preached, even the Orthodoxy of continuous teaching. Thus did our Fathers judge and condemn Honorius, Pope of Rome, and Dioscorus, Pope of Alexandria, and Macedonius and Nestorius, Patriarchs of Constantinople, and Peter Gnapheus, Patriarch of Antioch, with others. For if the *abomination of desolation stood in the Holy Place*, why not innovation and heresy upon a holy Throne? Hence is exhibited in a brief compass the weakness and feebleness of the efforts on behalf of the despotism of the Pope of Rome. For, unless the Church of Christ was founded upon the immovable rock of St. Peter's Confession, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God* (which was the answer of the Apostles in common, when the question was put to them, *Whom say ye that I am?* (Matthew 16.15), as the Fathers, both Eastern and Western, interpret the passage to us), the Church was built upon a slippery foundation, even on Cephas himself, not to say on the Pope, who, after monopolizing the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, has made such an administration of them as is plain from history. But our divine Fathers, with one accord, teach that the sense of the thrice-repeated command, *Feed my sheep*, implied no prerogative in St. Peter over the other Apostles, least of all in his successors. It was a simple restoration to his Apostleship, from which he had fallen by his thrice-repeated denial. St. Peter himself appears to have understood the intention of the thrice-repeated question of our Lord: *Lovest thou Me, and more, and than these?* (John 21.16;) for, calling to mind the words, *Thou all shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended* (Matthew 26.33), he *was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me?* But his successors, from self-interest, understand the expression as indicative of St. Peter's more ready mind.

12. His Holiness the Pope says (p. viii. 1.12.) that our LORD said to Peter (Luke 22.32), *I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.* Our LORD so prayed because Satan had sought to overthrow the faith of all the disciples, but the LORD allowed him Peter only, chiefly because he had uttered words of boasting, and justified himself above the rest (Matthew 26.33): *Though all shall be offended, because of thee, yet will I never be offended.* The permission to Satan was but temporary. *He began to curse and to swear: I know not the man.* So weak is human nature, left to itself. *The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.* It was but temporary, that, coming again to himself by his return in tears of repentance, he might the rather strengthen his brethren who had neither perjured themselves nor denied. Oh! the wise judgment of the LORD! How divine and mysterious was the last night of our Saviour upon earth! That sacred Supper is believed to be consecrated to this day in every Church: *This do in remembrance of me* (Luke 22.19), and *As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the LORD's death till he come* (I Corinthians 11.26). Of the brotherly love thus earnestly commended to us by the common Master, saying, *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciple, if ye have love one to another* (John 13.35), have the Popes first broken the stamp and seal, supporting and receiving heretical novelties, contrary to the things delivered to us and canonically confirmed by our Teachers and Fathers in common. This love acts at this day with power in the souls of Christian people, and particularly in their leaders. We boldly avow before God and men, that the prayer of our Saviour (p. ix. 1.43) to God and His Father for the common love and unity of Christians in the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, in which we believe, *that they may be one, ever as we are one* (John 17.22), worketh in us no less than in his Holiness. Our brotherly love and zeal meet that of his Holiness, with only this difference, that in us it worketh for the covenanted preservation of the pure, undefiled, divine, spotless, and perfect Creed of the Christian Faith, in conformity to the voice of the Gospel and the decrees of the seven holy Ecumenical Synods and the teachings of the ever-existing [Orthodox] Catholic Church: but worketh in his Holiness to prop and strengthen the authority and dignity of them that sit on the Apostolic Throne, and their new doctrine. Behold then, the head and front, so to speak, of all the differences and disagreements that have happened between us and them, and the middle wall of partition, which we hope will be taken away in the time of his Holiness, and by the aid of his renowned wisdom, according to the promise of God (John 10.16): *"Other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring and they shall hear My voice ("Who proceedeth from the Father")*. Let it be said then, in the third place, that if it be supposed, according to the words of his Holiness, that this prayer of our LORD for Peter when about to deny and perjure himself, remained attached and united to the Throne of Peter, and is transmitted with power to those who from time to time sit upon it, although, as has before been said, nothing contributes to confirm the opinion, as we are strikingly assured from the example of the blessed Peter himself, even after the descent of the Holy Ghost, yet are we convinced from the words of our LORD, that the time will come when that divine prayer concerning the denial of Peter, "that his faith might not fail for ever" will operate also in some one of the successors of his Throne, who will also weep, as he did, bitterly, and being sometime converted will strengthen us, his brethren, still more in the Orthodox Confession, which we hold from our forefathers;—and would that his Holiness might be this true successor of the blessed Peter! To this our humble prayer, what

hinders that we should add our sincere and hearty Counsel in the name of the Holy Catholic Church? We dare not say, as does his Holiness (p. x. 1.22), that it should be done "without any delay;" but without haste, after mature consideration, and also, if need be, after consultation with the more wise, religious, truth-loving, and prudent of the Bishops, Theologians, and Doctors, to be found at the present day, by God's good Providence, in every nation of the West.

13. His Holiness says that the Bishop of Lyons, St. Irenaeus, writes in praise of the Church of Rome: "That the whole Church, namely, the faithful from everywhere, must come together in that Church, because of its Primacy, in which Church the tradition, given by the Apostles, has in all respects been observed by the faithful everywhere." Although this saint says by no means what the followers of the Vatican would make out, yet even granting their interpretation, we reply: Who denies that the ancient Roman Church was Apostolic and Orthodox? None of us will question that it was a model of Orthodoxy. We will specially add, for its greater praise, from the historian Sozomen (*Historia Ecclesiae*. lib. iii. cap. 12), the passage, which his Holiness has overlooked, respecting the mode by which for a time she was enabled to preserve the Orthodoxy which we praise:—"For, as everywhere," saith Sozomen, "the Church throughout the West, *being guided purely by the doctrines of the Fathers*, was delivered from contention and deception concerning these things." Would any of the Fathers or ourselves deny her canonical privilege in the rank of the hierarchy, *so long as she was guided purely by the doctrines of the Fathers*, walking by the plain rule of Scripture and the holy Synods? But at present we do not find preserved in her the dogma of the Blessed Trinity according to the Creed of the holy Fathers assembled first in Nicaea and afterwards in Constantinople, which the other five Ecumenical Councils confessed and confirmed with such anathemas on those who adulterated it in the smallest particular, as if they had thereby destroyed it. Nor do we find the Apostolical pattern of holy Baptism, nor the Invocation of the consecrating Spirit upon the holy elements: but we see in that Church the eucharistic Cup, heavenly drink, considered superfluous, (what profanity!) and very many other things, unknown not only to our holy Fathers, who were always entitled the Catholic, clear rule and index of Orthodoxy, as his Holiness, revering the truth, himself teaches (p. vi), but also unknown to the ancient holy Fathers of the West. We see that very primacy, for which his Holiness now contends with all his might, as did his predecessors, transformed from a brotherly character and hierarchical privilege into a lordly superiority. What then is to be thought of his unwritten traditions, if the written have undergone such a change and alteration for the worse? Who is so bold and confident in the dignity of the Apostolic Throne, as to dare to say that if our holy Father, Sr. Irenaeus, were alive again, seeing it was fallen from the ancient and primitive teaching in so many most essential and Catholic articles of Christianity, he would not be himself the first to oppose the novelties and self-sufficient constitutions of that Church which was lauded by him as *guided purely by the doctrines of the Fathers*? For instance, when he saw the Roman Church not only rejecting from her Liturgical Canon, according to the suggestion of the Schoolmen, the very ancient and Apostolic invocation of the Consecrating Spirit, and miserably mutilating the Sacrifice in its most essential part, but also urgently hastening to cut it out from the Liturgies of other Christian Communions

also,—his Holiness slanderously asserting, in a manner so unworthy of the Apostolic Throne on which he boasts himself, that it "crept in after the division between the East and West" (p. xi. 1.11)—what would not the holy Father say respecting this novelty? Irenaeus assures us (lib. iv. c. 34) "that bread, from the ground, receiving the evocation of God, is no longer common bread," etc., meaning by "evocation" *invocation*: for that Irenaeus believed the Mystery of the Sacrifice to be consecrated by means of this invocation is especially remarked even by Franciscus Feu-Ardentius, of the order of popish monks called Minorites, who in 1639 edited the writings of that saint with comments, who says (lib. i. c. 18, p. 114,) that Irenaeus teaches "that the bread and mixed cup become the true Body and Blood of Christ by the words of invocation." Or, hearing of the vicarial and appellate jurisdiction of the Pope, what would not the Saint say, who, for a small and almost indifferent question concerning the celebration of Easter (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 5.26), so boldly and victoriously opposed and defeated the violence of Pope Victor in the free Church of Christ? Thus he who is cited by his Holiness as a witness of the primacy of the Roman Church, shows that its dignity is not that of a lordship, nor even appellate, to which St. Peter himself was never ordained, but is a brotherly privilege in the Catholic Church, and an honour assigned the Popes on account of the greatness and privilege of the City. Thus, also, the fourth Ecumenical Council, for the preservation of the gradation in rank of Churches canonically established by the third Ecumenical Council (Canon 8),—following the second (Canon 3), as that again followed the first (Canon 6), which called the appellate jurisdiction of the Pope over the West a *Custom*,—thus uttered its determination: "On account of that City being the Imperial City, the Fathers have with reason given it prerogatives" (Canon 28). Here is nothing said of the Pope's special monopoly of the Apostolicity of St. Peter, still less of a vicarship in Rome's Bishops, and a universal Pastorate. This deep silence in regard to such great privileges—nor only so, but the reason assigned for the primacy, not "*Feed my sheep*," not "*On this rock will I build my Church*," but simply old Custom, and the City being the Imperial City; and these things, not from the LORD, but from the Fathers—will seem, we are sure, a great paradox to his Holiness entertaining other ideas of his prerogatives. The paradox will be the greater, since, as we shall see, he greatly honours the said fourth Ecumenical Synod as one to be found a witness for his Throne; and St. Gregory, the eloquent, called the Great (Epistle 25), was wont to speak of the four (Ecumenical Councils [not the Roman See] as the four Gospels, and the four-sided stone on which the Catholic Church is built.

14. His Holiness says (p. ix. 1.12) that the Corinthians, divided among themselves, referred the matter to Clement, Pope of Rome, who wrote to them his decision on the case; and they so prized his decision that they read it in the Churches. But this event is a very weak support for the Papal authority in the house of God. For Rome being then the centre of the Imperial Province and the chief City, in which the Emperors lived, it was proper that any question of importance, as history shows that of the Corinthians to have been, should be decided there, especially if one of the contending parties ran thither for external aid: as is done even to this day. The Patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, when unexpected points of difficulty arise, write to the Patriarch of Constantinople, because of its being the seat of Empire, as also on account of its synodical privileges; and if this brotherly aid shall rectify that which should be

rectified, it is well; but if not, the matter is reported to the province, according to the established system. But this brotherly agreement in Christian faith is not purchased by the servitude of the Churches of God. Let this be our answer also to the examples of a fraternal and proper championship of the privileges of Julius and Innocent Bishops of Rome, by St. Athanasius the Great and St. John Chrysostom, referred to by his Holiness (p. ix. 1. 6,17), for which their successors now seek to recompense us by adulterating the divine Creed. Yet was Julius himself indignant against some for "disturbing the Churches by not maintaining the doctrines of Nice" (Sozomen, *Historia Ecclesiae* lib. iii. c. 7), and threatening (id.) excommunication, "if they ceased not their innovations." In the case of the Corinthians, moreover, it is to be remarked that the Patriarchal Thrones being then but three, Rome was the nearer and more accessible to the Corinthians, to which, therefore, it was proper to have resort. In all this we see nothing extraordinary, nor any proof of the despotic power of the Pope in the free Church of God.

15. But, finally, his Holiness says (p. ix. l.12) that the fourth Ecumenical Council (which by mistake he quite transfers from Chalcedon to Carthage), when it read the epistle of Pope Leo I, cried out, "Peter has thus spoken by Leo." It was so indeed. But his Holiness ought not to overlook how, and after what examination, our fathers cried out, as they did, in praise of Leo. Since however his Holiness, consulting brevity, appears to have omitted this most necessary point, and the manifest proof that an Ecumenical Council is not only above the Pope but above any Council of his, we will explain to the public the matter as it really happened. Of more than six hundred fathers assembled in the Council of Chalcedon, about two hundred of the wisest were appointed by the Council to examine both as to language and sense the said epistle of Leo; nor only so, but to give in writing and with their signatures their own judgment upon it, whether it were orthodox or not. These, about two hundred judgments and resolution on the epistle, as chiefly found in the Fourth Session of the said holy Council in such terms as the following:—"Maximus of Antioch in Syria said: 'The epistle of the holy Leo, Archbishop of Imperial Rome, agrees with the decisions of the three hundred and eighteen holy fathers at Nice, and the hundred and fifty at Constantinople, which is new Rome, and with the faith expounded at Ephesus by the most holy Bishop Cyril: and I have subscribed it.'"

And again: "Theodoret, the most religious Bishop of Cyrus: 'The epistle of the most holy Archbishop, the lord Leo, agrees with the faith established at Nice by the holy and blessed fathers, and with the symbol of faith expounded at Constantinople by the hundred and fifty, and with the epistles of the blessed Cyril. And accepting it, I have subscribed the said epistle.'"

And thus all in succession: "The epistle corresponds," "the epistle is consonant", "the epistle agrees in sense," and the like. After such great and very severe scrutiny in comparing it with former holy Councils, and a full conviction of the correctness of the meaning, and not merely because it was the epistle of the Pope, they cried aloud, ungrudgingly, the exclamation on which his Holiness now vaunts himself: But if his Holiness had sent us statements concordant and in unison with the seven holy Ecumenical Councils, instead of boasting of the piety of his predecessors lauded by our predecessors and fathers in an Ecumenical Council, he might justly have gloried in his own orthodoxy, declaring his own goodness instead of that of

his fathers. Therefore let his Holiness be assured, that if, even now, he will write us such things as two hundred fathers on investigation and inquiry shall find consonant and agreeing with the said former Councils, then, we say, he shall hear from us sinners today, not only, "Peter has so spoken," or anything of like honour, but this also, "Let the holy hand be kissed which has wiped away the tears of the Catholic Church."

16. And surely we have a right to expect from the prudent forethought of his Holiness, a work so worthy of the true successor of St. Peter, of Leo I, and also of Leo III, who for security of the Orthodox faith engraved the divine Creed unaltered upon imperishable plates – a work which will unite the churches of the West to the holy [Orthodox] Catholic Church, in which the canonical chief seat of his Holiness, and the seats of all the Bishops of the West remain empty and ready to be occupied. For the [Orthodox] Catholic Church, awaiting the conversion of the shepherds who have fallen off from her with their flocks, does not separate in name only, those who have been privily introduced to the rulership by the action of others, thus making little of the Priesthood. But we are expecting the "word of consolation," and hope that he, as wrote St. Basil to St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan (Epistle b6), will "tread again the ancient footprints of the fathers." Not without great astonishment have we read the said Encyclical letter to the Easterns, in which we see with deep grief of soul his Holiness, famed for prudence, speaking like his predecessors in schism, words that urge upon us the adulteration of our pure holy Creed, on which the Ecumenical Councils have set their seal; and doing violence to the sacred Liturgies, whose heavenly structure alone, and the names of those who framed them, and their tone of reverend antiquity, and the stamp that was placed upon them by the Seventh Ecumenical Synod (Act vi.), should have paralyzed him, and made him to turn aside the sacrilegious and all-daring hand that has thus smitten the King of Glory. From these things we estimate into what an unspeakable labyrinth of wrong and incorrigible sin of revolution the papacy has thrown even the wiser and more godly Bishops of the Roman Church, so that, in order to preserve the innocent, and therefore valued vicarial dignity, as well as the despotic primacy and the things depending upon it, they know no other means to insult the most divine and sacred things, daring everything for that one end. Clothing themselves, in words, with pious reverence for "the most venerable antiquity" (p. xi. 1.16), in reality there remains, within, the innovating temper; and yet his Holiness really bears hard upon himself when he says that we "must cast from us everything that has crept in among us since the Separation," (!) while he and his have spread the poison of their innovation even into the Supper of our LORD. His Holiness evidently takes it for granted that in the Orthodox Church the same thing has happened which he is conscious has happened in the Church of Rome since the rise of the Papacy: to wit, a sweeping change in all the Mysteries, and corruption from scholastic subtleties, a reliance on which must suffice as an equivalent for our sacred Liturgies and Mysteries and doctrines: yet all the while, forsooth, reverencing our "venerable antiquity," and all this by a condescension entirely Apostolic! – "without," as he says, "troubling us by any harsh conditions"! From such ignorance of the Apostolic and Catholic food on which we live emanates another sententious declaration of his (p. vii. 1. 22): "It is not possible that unity of doctrine and sacred observance should be preserved among you," paradoxically ascribing to us the very misfortune from which he

suffers at home; just as Pope Leo IX wrote to the blessed Michael Cerularius, accusing the Greeks of changing the Creed of the Catholic Church, without blushing either for his own honour or for the truth of history. We are persuaded that if his Holiness will call to mind ecclesiastical archaeology and history, the doctrine of the holy Fathers and the old Liturgies of France and Spain, and the Sacramentary of the ancient Roman Church, he will be struck with surprise on finding how many other monstrous daughters, now living, the Papacy has brought forth in the West: while Orthodoxy, with us, has preserved the Catholic Church as an incorruptible bride for her Bridegroom, although we have no temporal power, nor, as his Holiness says, any sacred "observances," but by the sole tie of love and affection to a common Mother are bound together in the unity of a faith sealed with the seven seals of the Spirit (Revelation 5.1), and by the seven Ecumenical Councils, and in obedience to the Truth. He will find, also, how many modern papistical doctrines and mysteries must be rejected as "commandments of men" in order that the Church of the West, which has introduced all sorts of novelties, may be changed back again to the immutable Catholic Orthodox faith of our common fathers. As his Holiness recognizes our common zeal in this faith, when he says (p. viii. l.30), "let us take heed to the doctrine preserved by our forefathers," so he does well in instructing us (l. 31) to follow the old pontiffs and the faithful of the Eastern Metropolitans. What these thought of the doctrinal fidelity of the Archbishops of the elder Rome, and what idea we ought to have of them in the Orthodox Church, and in what manner we ought to receive their teachings, they have synodically given us an example (15), and the sublime Basil has well interpreted it (7). As to the supremacy, since we are not setting forth a treatise, let the same great Basil present the matter in a few words, "I preferred to address myself to Him who is Head over them."

17. From all this, every one nourished in sound Catholic doctrine, particularly his Holiness, must draw the conclusion, how impious and anti-synodical it is to attempt the alteration of our doctrine and liturgies and other divine offices which are, and are proved to be, contemporary with the preaching of Christianity: for which reason reverence was always bestowed on them, and they were confided in as pure even by the old Orthodox Popes themselves, to whom these things were an inheritance in common with ourselves. How becoming and holy would be the mending of the innovations, the time of whose entrance in the Church of Rome we know in each case; for our illustrious fathers have testified from time to time against each novelty. But there are other reasons which should incline his Holiness to this change. First, because those things that are ours were once venerable to the Westerns, as having the same divine Offices and confessing the same Creed; but the novelties were not known to our Fathers, nor could they be shown in the writings of the Orthodox Western Fathers, nor as having their origin either in antiquity or Catholicity. Moreover, neither Patriarchs nor Councils could then have introduced novelties amongst us, because the protector of religion is the very body of the Church, even the people themselves, who desire their religious worship to be ever unchanged and of the same kind as that of their fathers: for as, after the Schism, many of the Popes and Latinizing Patriarchs made attempts that came to nothing even in the Western Church; and as, from time to time, either by fair means or foul, the Popes have commanded novelties for the sake of expediency (as they have explained to our Fathers, although they were thus

dismembering the Body of Christ): so now again the Pope, for the sake of a truly divine and most just expediency, forsooth (not mending the nets, but himself rending the garment of the Saviour), dares to oppose the venerable things of antiquity, — things well fitted to preserve religion, as his Holiness confesses (p. xi. l.16), and which he himself honours, as he says (lb. 1.16), together with his predecessors, for he repeats that memorable expression of one of those blessed predecessors (Celestine, writing to the third Ecumenical Council): "*Let novelty cease to attack antiquity.*" And let the [Orthodox] Catholic Church enjoy this benefit from this so far blameless declaration of the Popes. It must by all means be confessed, that in such his attempt, even though Pius IX be eminent for wisdom and piety, and, as he says, for zeal after Christian unity in the Catholic Church, he will meet, within and without, with difficulties and toils. And here we must put his Holiness in mind, if he will excuse our boldness, of that portion of his letter (p. viii. L.32), "That in things which relate to the confession of our divine religion, nothing is to be feared, when we look to the glory of Christ, and the reward which awaits us in eternal life." It is incumbent on his Holiness to show before God and man, that, as prime mover of the counsel which pleases God, so is he a willing protector of the ill-treated evangelical and synodical truth, even to the sacrifice of his own interests, according to the Prophet (Isaiah 60,17), *A ruler in peace and a bishop in righteousness*. So be it! But until there be this desired returning of the apostate Churches to the body of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, of which *Christ is the Head* (Eph. iv. 15), and each of us "*members in particular*," all advice proceeding from them, and every officious exhortation tending to the dissolution of our pure faith handed down from the Fathers is condemned, as it ought to be, synodically, not only as suspicious and to be eschewed, but as impious and soul-destroying: and in this category, among the first we place the said *Encyclical to the Easterns* from Pope Pius IX, Bishop of the elder Rome; and such we proclaim it to be in the Catholic Church.

18. Wherefore, beloved brethren and fellow-ministers of our mediocrity, as always, so also now, particularly on this occasion of the publication of the said Encyclical, we hold it to be our inexorable duty, in accordance with our patriarchal and synodical responsibility, in order that none may be lost to the divine fold of the Catholic Orthodox Church, the most holy Mother of us all, to encourage each other, and to urge you that, reminding one another of the words and exhortations of St. Paul to our holy predecessors when he summoned them to Ephesus, we reiterate to each other: *take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own Blood. For know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enterin among you not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore, watch.* (Acts xx.28-31.) Then our predecessors and Fathers, hearing this divine charge, wept sore, and falling upon his neck, kissed him. Come, then, and let us, brethren, hearing him admonishing us with tears, fall in spirit, lamenting, upon his neck, and, kissing him, comfort him by our own firm assurance, that no one shall separate us from the love of Christ, no one mislead us from evangelical doctrine, no one entice us from the safe path of our fathers, as none was able to deceive them, by any degree of zeal which they manifested, who from time to time were raised up for this purpose by the tempter: so that at last we shall hear from the

Master: *Well done, good and faithful servant*, receiving the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls, and of the reasonable flock over whom the Holy Ghost has made us shepherds.

19. This Apostolic charge and exhortation we have quoted for your sake, and address it to all the Orthodox congregation, wherever they be found settled on the earth, to the Priests and Abbots, to the Deacons and Monks, in a word, to all the Clergy and godly People, the rulers and the ruled, the rich and the poor, to parents and children, to teachers and scholars, to the educated and uneducated, to masters and servants, that we all, supporting and counselling each other, may *be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*. For thus St. Peter the Apostle exhorts us (I Peter): *Be sober, be vigilant because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist, steadfast in the faith.*

20. For our faith, brethren, is not of men nor by man, but by revelation of Jesus Christ, which the divine Apostles preached, the holy Ecumenical Councils confirmed, the greatest and wisest teachers of the world handed down in succession, and the shed blood of the holy martyrs ratified. *Let us hold fast to the confession* which we have received unadulterated from such men, turning away from every novelty as a suggestion of the devil. He that accepts a novelty reproaches with deficiency the preached Orthodox Faith. But that Faith has long ago been sealed in completeness, not to admit of diminution or increase, or any change whatever; and he who dares to do, or advise, or think of such a thing has already denied the faith of Christ, has already of his own accord been struck with an eternal anathema, for blaspheming the Holy Ghost as not having spoken fully in the Scriptures and through the Ecumenical Councils. This fearful anathema, brethren and sons beloved in Christ, we do not pronounce today, but our Saviour first pronounced it (Matthew 12.32): *Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come*. St. Paul pronounced the same anathema (Galatians 1.6): *I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another Gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed*. This same anathema the Seven Ecumenical Councils and the whole choir of God-serving fathers pronounced. All, therefore, innovating, either by heresy or schism, have voluntarily clothed themselves, according to the Psalm (109.18), (*"with a curse as with a garment,"*) whether they be Popes, or Patriarchs, or Clergy, or Laity; nay, if any one, though an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. Thus our wise fathers, obedient to the soul-saving words of St. Paul, were established firm and steadfast in the faith handed down unbrokenly to them, and preserved it unchanged and uncontaminated in the midst of so many heresies, and have delivered it to us pure and undefiled, as it came pure from the mouth of the first servants of the Word. Let us, too, thus wise, transmit it, pure as we have received it, to coming generations, altering nothing, that they may be, as we are, full of confidence, and with nothing to be ashamed of when speaking of the faith of their forefathers.

21. Therefore, brethren, and sons beloved in the LORD, *having purified your souls in obeying the truth* (I Peter 1.22), *let us give the more earnest heed to the things*

which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. (Hebrews 2.1) The faith and confession we have received is not one to be ashamed of, being taught in the Gospel from the mouth of our LORD, witnessed by the holy Apostles, by the seven sacred Ecumenical Councils, preached throughout the world, witnessed to by its very enemies, who, before they apostatized from Orthodoxy to heresies, themselves held this same faith, or at least their fathers and fathers' fathers thus held it. It is witnessed to by continuous history, as triumphing over all the heresies which have persecuted or now persecute it, as ye see even to this day. The succession of our holy divine fathers and predecessors beginning from the Apostles, and those whom the Apostles appointed their successors, to this day, forming one unbroken chain, and joining hand to hand, keep fast the sacred enclosure of which the door is Christ, in which all the Orthodox Flock is fed in the fertile pastures of the mystical Eden, and not in the pathless and rugged wilderness, as his Holiness supposes (p. 7.1.12). Our Church holds the infallible and genuine deposit of the Holy Scriptures, of the Old Testament a true and perfect version, of the New the divine original itself. The rites of the sacred Mysteries, and especially those of the divine Liturgy, are the same glorious and heart-quickenings rites, handed down from the Apostles. No nation, no Christian communion, can boast of such Liturgies as those of James, Basil, Chrysostom. The august Ecumenical Councils, those seven pillars of the house of Wisdom, were organized in it and among us. This, our Church, holds the originals of their sacred definitions. The Chief Pastors in it, and the honourable Presbytery, and the monastic Order, preserve the primitive and pure dignity of the first ages of Christianity, in opinions, in polity, and even in the simplicity of their vestments. Yes! verily, "grievous wolves" have constantly attacked this holy fold, and are attacking it now, as we see for ourselves, according to the prediction of the Apostle, which shows that the true lambs of the great Shepherd are folded in it; but that Church has sung and shall sing forever: "*They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them* (Psalms 118.11). Let us add one reflection, a painful one indeed, but useful in order to manifest and confirm the truth of our words: – All Christian nations whatsoever that are today seen calling upon the Name of Christ (not excepting either the West generally, or Rome herself, as we prove by the catalogue of her earliest Popes), were taught the true faith in Christ by our holy predecessors and fathers; and yet afterwards deceitful men, many of whom were shepherds, and chief shepherds too, of those nations, by wretched sophistries and heretical opinions dared to defile, alas! the Orthodoxy of those nations, as veracious history informs us, and as St. Paul predicted.

22. Therefore, brethren, and ye our spiritual children, we acknowledge how great the favour and grace which God has bestowed upon our Orthodox Faith, and on His One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, which, like a mother who is unsuspected of her husband, nourishes us as children of whom she is not ashamed, and who are excusable in our high-toned boldness concerning *the hope that is in us*. But what shall we sinners render to the LORD *for all that He hath bestowed upon us*? Our bounteous LORD and God, who hath redeemed us by his own Blood, requires nothing else of us but the devotion of our whole soul and heart to the blameless, holy faith of our fathers, and love and affection to the Orthodox Church, which has regenerated us not with a novel sprinkling, but with

the divine washing of Apostolic Baptism. She it is that nourishes us, according to the eternal covenant of our Saviour, with His own precious Body, and abundantly, as a true Mother, gives us to drink of that precious Blood poured out for us and for the salvation of the world. Let us then encompass her in spirit, as the young their parent bird, wherever on earth we find ourselves, in the north or south, or east, or west. Let us fix our eyes and thoughts upon her divine countenance and her most glorious beauty. Let us take hold with both our hands on her shining robe which the Bridegroom, "altogether lovely," has with His own undefiled hands thrown around her, when He redeemed her from the bondage of error, and adorned her as an eternal Bride for Himself. Let us feel in our own souls the mutual grief of the children-loving mother and the mother-loving children, when it is seen that men of wolfish minds and making gain of souls are zealous in plotting how they may lead her captive, or tear the lambs from their mothers. Let us, Clergy as well as Laity, cherish this feeling most intensely now, when the unseen adversary of our salvation, combining his fraudulent arts (p. xi. 1. 2-25), employs such powerful instrumentalities, and walketh about everywhere, as saith St. Peter, *seeking whom he may devour*; and when in this way, in which we walk peacefully and innocently, he sets his deceitful snares.

23. Now, the God of peace, "that brought again from the dead that great Shepherd of the sheep," "He that keepeth Israel," who "shall neither slumber nor sleep," "keep your hearts and minds," "and direct your ways to every good work."

Peace and joy be with you in the LORD.

May, 1848, Indiction 6.

+ ANTHIMOS, by the Mercy of God, Archbishop of Constantinople, new Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch, a beloved brother in Christ our God, and suppliant.

+ HIEROTHEUS, by the Mercy of God, Patriarch of Alexandria and of all Egypt, a beloved brother in Christ our God, and suppliant.

+ METHODIOS, by the Mercy of God, Patriarch of the great City of God, Antioch, and of all Anatolia, a beloved brother in Christ our God, and suppliant.

+ CYRIL, by the Mercy of God, Patriarch of Jerusalem and of all Palestine, a beloved brother in Christ our God, and suppliant.

The Holy Synod in Constantinople:

47. THE CRIMEAN WAR

The Tsar might consider most European governments legitimate, but they did not return the favour. He was not a liberal or a democrat, so he could not possibly be a legitimate ruler. Even the infidel Turkish Sultan was more legitimate than the "schismatic" Orthodox autocrat. Gratitude to Russia for driving out Napoleon and then suppressing the revolution of 1848, never strong, had completely disappeared with the rise of a new generation of leaders. In 1851 the exiled Hungarian revolutionary Kossuth denounced Russian "despotism" in front of a cheering crowd in London. Meanwhile, the French Emperor Napoleon III was looking to win popularity among French Catholics by challenging the Vienna settlement of 1815 and dividing Austria and Russia...⁶⁸⁸

Nevertheless, it was a remarkable turn-around for these countries to ally themselves with the Ottoman empire against a Christian state, Russia, when they were in no way threatened by Russia...

One factor making for instability was the gradual weakening of the power of Turkey, "the sick man of Europe", in the Tsar's phrase. Clearly, if Turkey collapsed, its subject peoples of Orthodox Christian faith would look to Russia to liberate them. But the Western Powers were determined to prevent this, which would threaten their hegemony in the Eastern Mediterranean and greatly increase the power of their rival, Russia.

Britain in particular was worried at the expansion of Russian influence, mainly at the expense of Persia, in the Caucasus, Afghanistan and Central Asia. Russia's aims in Bukhara and Central Asia, according to the Scottish traveller Alexander Burnes, "were decidedly modest: the two priorities were to encourage trade and to stop the sale of Russians into slavery. The problems was that this was not the message that sank in from Burnes's work; what really hit home back in Britain was his alarmist report that 'the court of St. Petersburg have long cherished designs in this quarter of Asia.'

"This dovetailed with growing British anxiety in other quarters. The consul general in Baghdad, Henry Rawlinson, lobbied tirelessly, warning all who would listen that unless Russia's rise was checked the British Empire would be gravely threatened in India. There were two options: Britain should either extend the empire into Mesopotamia to build a proper buffer protecting the approach from the west; or a major force should be sent from India to attack the Russians in the Caucasus. Rawlinson took it upon himself to support local anti-Russian insurgencies wherever he could find them: he funneled arms and money to Imam Shamil, whose power base in Chechnya was a constant thorn in Russia's side in the mid-nineteenth century. The support he provided helped establish a long tradition of Chechen terrorism against Russia.

"Inevitably, then, Britain seized the chance to cut Russia down to size as the opportunity presented itself."⁶⁸⁹

⁶⁸⁸ Philip Mansel, *Constantinople*, London: Penguin, 1995, p. 268.

⁶⁸⁹ Peter Frankopan, *Silk Roads*, London: Bloomsbury, 2015, pp. 389-290.

But for the time being the “great game” did not go Britain’s way. Thus in Afghanistan, “after it had been reported that the country’s ruler, Dost Muhammed, had received envoys from Russia proposing co-operation, the British took the decision to support her rival, Shah Shuja, with the intention of establishing him in his place. In return, Shuja agreed to the garrisoning of British troops in Kabul and to approve the recent annexation of Peshawar by Britain’s collaborator, the powerful and influential Mahafajah of Punjab.... [But then the decision was made to withdraw to India. In January 1842, in one of the most humiliating and notorious episodes in British military history the evacuating column [of 13,000 troops] under the command of Major-General Elphinstone was attacked on its way to Jalalabad through the mountain passes in the winter snow.”⁶⁹⁰

There were also religious rivalries. The Tsar, as head of the Third Rome, saw himself as the natural protector of the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman empire. He had already demonstrated this in his critical support for the Greeks during their war of liberation from the Turks in 1839-31. And in 1841 he initiated negotiations with the Turkish authorities to obtain for Russian pilgrims the right of travel within Palestine and the establishment of a guest house for them. Later the Russian Church sent its representative to the Holy Land, Archimandrite Porfiry, who “was instrumental in creating an Ecclesiastical Seminary for Arabs in the Monastery of the Holy Cross and organized there studies of Arabic, Greek, Russian and Church Slavonic. Textbooks in Arabic began to appear...”⁶⁹¹

However, the Catholics, whose main political protector was France, were not prepared to allow the Orthodox to play such a prominent role in the Holy Land... "The spark to the tinderbox," writes Trevor Royle, "was the key to the main door of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. By tradition, history, and a common usage which had been built up over the centuries, the great key was in the possession of the monks of the eastern, or Greek Orthodox... Church; they were the guardians of the grotto in which lay the sacred manger where Christ himself was... born. That state of affairs was contested with equal fervour by their great rivals, the monks of the Roman Catholic, or Latin, church who had been palmed off with the keys to the lesser inner doors to the narthex (the vestibule between the porch and the nave). There was also the question of whether or not a silver star adorned with the arms of France should be permitted to stand in the Sanctuary of the Nativity, but in the spring of 1852 the rivals' paramount thoughts were concentrated on the possession of the great key to the church's main west door.

“[Alexander] Kinglake wrote: ‘When the Emperor of Russia sought to keep for his Church the holy shrines of Palestine, he spoke on behalf of fifty millions of brave, pious, devoted subjects, of whom thousands for the sake of the cause would joyfully risk their lives. From the serf in his hut, even up to the great Tsar himself, the faith professed was the faith really glowing in his heart.’”⁶⁹²

⁶⁹⁰ Frankopan, *op. cit.*, pp. 287-288.

⁶⁹¹ Lubov Millar, *Grand Duchess Elizabeth of Russia*, Richfield Springs, N.Y.: Nikodemos Orthodox Publication Society, 2009, p. 55.

⁶⁹² Royle, *Crimea: The Great Crimean War 1854-1856*, London: Abacus, 1999, pp. 15, 17.

"Nicolas I had both temporal and spiritual reasons for wanting to extend his protection of the Eastern Church within the Ottoman Empire. Napoleon III's were rather different. Having dismissed the French parliament he needed all the support he could get, most especially from the Roman Catholics, before he could declare himself emperor. It suited him therefore to have France play a greater role in Palestine and 'to put an end to these deplorable and too-frequent quarrels about the possession of the Holy Places'. To that end the Marquis de Lavalette, his ambassador to the Porte - or the Sublime Porte, the court or government of the Ottoman Empire - insisted that the Turks honour the agreement made in 1740 that confirmed that France had 'sovereign authority' in the Holy Land. Otherwise, hinted de Lavalette, force might have to be used.

"On 9 February 1852 the Porte agreed the validity of the Latin claims but no sooner had the concession been made than the Turks were forced to bow once more, this time to Russian counter-claims. Basing his argument on an agreement, or firman, of 1757 which restored Greek rights in Palestine and on the Treaty of Kutchuk-Kainarji (1774) which gave Russia protection of the Christian religion within the Ottoman Empire, Nicholas's ambassador succeeded in getting a new firman ratifying the privileges of the Greek Church. This revoked the agreement made to the French who responded by backing up their demands with a show of force.

"Later that summer, much to Nicholas's fury and to Britain's irritation, Napoleon III ordered the 90-gun steam-powered battleship *Charlemagne* to sail through the Dardanelles. This was a clear violation of the London Convention of 1841 which kept the Straits closed to naval vessels, but it also provided a telling demonstration of French sea power. It was nothing less than gunboat diplomacy and it seemed to work. Impressed by the speed and strength of the French warship, and persuaded by French diplomacy and money, Sultan Abd-el-Medjid listened ever more intently to the French demands. At the beginning of December he gave orders that the keys to the Church of the Nativity were to be surrendered to the Latins and that the French-backed church was to have supreme authority over the Holy Places. On 22 December a new silver star was brought from Jaffa and as Kinglake wrote, in great state 'the keys of the great door of the church, together with the keys of the sacred manger, were handed over to the Latins'.

"Napoleon III had scored a considerable diplomatic victory. His subjects were much gratified, but in so doing he had also prepared the ground for a much greater and more dangerous confrontation. Given the strength of Russian religious convictions Tsar Nicholas was unwilling to accept the Sultan's decision - which he regarded as an affront not just to him but to the millions of Orthodox Christians under his protection - and he was determined to have it reversed, if need be by using force himself."⁶⁹³

In October, 1852, the Tsar arrived in Kiev and confided to the metropolitan: "I do not want to shed the blood of the faithful sons of the fatherland, but our vainglorious enemies are forcing me to bare my sword. My plans are not yet made - no! But my heart feels that the time is nearing and they will soon be brought to fulfillment."

⁶⁹³ Royle, *op. cit.*, 19-20.

The Tsar asked if there were any holy elders in Kiev. The Metropolitan mentioned Hieroschemamonk Theophilus. On the way there, they saw Blessed Theophilus lying by the side of the road in the middle of an ant-hill, not moving. His arms were folded on his chest crosswise, as in death, and his eyes were completely closed. Ants swarmed in masses all over his body and face, but he, as if feeling nothing, pretended to be dead. Puzzled, the Tsar and the Metropolitan returned to Kiev...

Russian troops moved into the Romanian Principalities, and on July 2, 1853, the Tsar proclaimed: "By the occupation of the Principalities we desire such security as will ensure the restoration of our dues [in Palestine]. It is not conquest that we seek but satisfaction for a just right so clearly infringed." As he told the British ambassador in St. Petersburg, Seymour: "You see what my position is. I am the Head of a People of the Greek religion, our co-religionists of Turkey look up to me as their natural protector, and these are claims which it is impossible for me to disregard. I have the conviction that good right is on my side, I should therefore begin a War, such as that which now impends, without compunction and should be prepared to carry it on, as I have before remarked to you, as long as there should be a rouble in the Treasury or a man in the country."⁶⁹⁴

Nevertheless, when the Powers drew up a compromise "Note", Nicholas promptly accepted it. However, the Turks rejected it, having been secretly assured of Franco-British support. On October 4, 1853 they delivered an ultimatum to the Russians to leave the Principalities within a fortnight. When the Tsar rejected the ultimatum, war broke out. On the same day A.F. Tiutcheva noted in her diary: "A terrible struggle is being ignited, gigantic opposing forces are entering into conflict with each other: the East and the West, the Slavic world and the Latin world, the Orthodox Church in her struggle not only with Islam, but also with the other Christian confessions, which, taking the side of the religion of Mohammed, are thereby betraying their own vital principle."⁶⁹⁵

On November 30 the Russians destroyed the Turkish fleet at Sinope. Promptly the British and the French, and later the Sardinians, declared war on the Turkish side. In March, 1854, the British Foreign Secretary Lord Palmerston in a secret memorandum prepared for the cabinet wrote of the Russian empire's "dismemberment. Finland would be restored to Sweden, the Baltic provinces would go to Prussia, and Poland would become a sizable kingdom. Austria would renounce her Italian possessions but gain the Danubian principalities and possibly even Bessarabia in return, and the Ottoman empire would regain the Crimea and Georgia."⁶⁹⁶

As for the non-Russian Orthodox, Evangelos Katsikiotis writes: "The Greeks, Bulgarians and Romanians all contributed soldiers to Russia in its defense of Crimea in 1853 and Greece indirectly helped Russia by invading Epirus and Thessaly in 1854 in Ottoman Greece. The Greek population itself was enthusiastic for war with the Ottomans and petitioned the King (Otto) to intervene on the side of the Russians... the

⁶⁹⁴ Royle, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

⁶⁹⁵ Tiutcheva, *Pri Dvore Dvukh Imperatorov* (At the Court of Two Emperors), Moscow, 1990, p. 52.

⁶⁹⁶ Palmerston, in Philip Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles*, London: Penguin, 2002, p. 181.

British and French navies shelled and occupied the Greek port of Piraeus to stop Greek supplies and aid to reach Russia."⁶⁹⁷

As A.S. Khomiakov wrote: "Whatever political bases and excuses there may be for the struggle that is convulsing Europe now, it is impossible not to notice, even at the most superficial observation, that on one of the warring sides stand exclusively peoples belonging to Orthodoxy, and on the other - Romans and Protestants, gathered around Islam." And he quoted from an epistle of the Catholic Archbishop of Paris Sibur, who assured the French that the war with Russia "is not a political war, but a holy war; not a war of states or peoples, but solely a religious war". All other reasons were "in essence no more than excuses". The true reason was "the necessity to drive out the error of Photius [the champion of Orthodoxy against the *Filioque* heresy]; to subdue and crush it. That is the recognized aim of this new crusade, and such was the hidden aim of all the previous crusades, even if those who participated in them did not admit it."⁶⁹⁸

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The Russians fought bravely but unsuccessfully, being hampered by technological backwardness (their rifles' range was much shorter than those of the French) and major transport difficulties (there were no railroads south of Moscow), not to mention the threat of bankruptcy - the factor which in the end forced them to sue for peace in 1856.

Metropolitan Philaret of Kiev asked his valet whether he remembered the strange behaviour of Blessed Theophilus. "Up to now I could not understand his strange behaviour. Now, the prophecy of the Starrets is as clear as God's day. The ants were the malicious enemies of our fatherland, trying to torment the great body of Russia. The arms folded on his chest and the closed eyes of Theophilus were the sudden, untimely death of our beloved Batiushka-Tsar."⁶⁹⁹

For on February 18, 1855, the Tsar, worn out and intensely grieved by the losses in the war, died of pneumonia. On his last day he received communion, and said farewell in full consciousness to his family.⁷⁰⁰

Sebastopol fell in September, 1855. In 1856 the new Tsar, Alexander II, signed the Treaty of Paris, thereby bringing the Crimean war to an end. While the Russians had lost some battles and the port of Sebastopol, they retained Kars, which (with Erzurum) they had conquered from the Turks. At the Peace Conference, both Russia and Turkey were forbidden to have fleets in the Black Sea (although Alexander II abrogated this clause in 1870), the Straits were closed for warships, and the Aland islands in the Baltic were demilitarized. On the other hand, as the Russian representative A.F. Orlov

⁶⁹⁷ Katsikiotis, personal communication, April 10, 2020.

⁶⁹⁸ Khomiakov, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenij* (Complete Works), Moscow, 1994, vol. II, pp. 74-75; in Selischev, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

⁶⁹⁹ *Hieroschemamonk Feofil*, Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1970, pp. 108, 111.

⁷⁰⁰ According to one version, he was poisoned by the medic Mandt on the orders of Napoleon III (Ivanov, *op. cit.*, p. 327). This hypothesis seems unlikely. Dr. Mandt wrote: "Never have I seen someone die like this. There was something superhuman in this carrying out of duty to the very last breath" (in Richard Cavensih, "Death of Tsar Nicholas I of Russia", *History Today*, March, 2005, p. 58).

telegraphed to St. Petersburg: "The English claims on the independence of Mingrelia, the Trans-Caucasus and other demands have been completely rejected. The quarrels over Nikolaev stirred up by Lord Clarendon have been resolved by our replies."⁷⁰¹ As Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow put it: "In spite of all this, in Europe we were unconquered, while in Asia we were conquerors. Glory to the Russian army!"⁷⁰²

So in purely military terms, the Crimean war was not such a disaster for Russia after all; if the war had continued, it might well have ended with victory as superior Russian manpower began to tell (the same could be said of the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05). The situation had been much more perilous for Russia in 1812, and yet they had gone on to enter Paris in triumph. As Tsar Alexander II had written to the Russian commander Gorchakov after the fall of Sebastopol: "Sebastopol is not Moscow, the Crimea is not Russia. Two years after we set fire to Moscow, our troops marched in the streets of Paris. We are still the same Russians and God is still with us."⁷⁰³

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However, the fact remained that while the war of 1812-14 had ended in the rout of Russia's enemies and the triumph of the Christian monarchical principle, this had not happened in 1854-56. Russia had "not yet been beaten half enough", in Palmerston's words; but her losses had been far greater than those of the Allies (143,000 deaths as opposed to 21,000 British and 95,000 French deaths). And the war had revealed that Russia was well behind the Allies in transport and weaponry, especially rifles.

In this respect, Nicholas I's intensely conservative and militaristic approach to ruling the empire had not served it well. For he had failed to take account of the technological advances made since 1815 by his chief enemies, France and Britain; and his insistence that the Russian army was the same in 1855 as it had been 1815 only served to guarantee that it would fail to modernize adequately. Moreover, as he himself admitted, his system of censorship and spying, while probably necessary in the first half of his reign when rebellions had to be crushed, paradoxically made it difficult for him to get reliable information from a system of informants who were afraid to tell their master certain uncomfortable truths. And so the defeat revealed to him a bitter truth: that while some form of censorship is and always is necessary, it has to be done with tact and discernment, so that the truth is not suppressed together with the lies. For, as he wrote in his diary, "Ascending the throne, I passionately wanted to know the truth, but after listening to lies and flattery every day for thirty years, I have lost the ability to tell truth from lie."⁷⁰⁴

Russia's anti-monarchist enemies had taken heart from her defeat; and her primary war-aim, the retention of her right to act as guardian of the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire, had not been achieved - she now had to share the guardianship with four other Great Powers.

⁷⁰¹ Orlov, in Selischev, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁷⁰² Metropolitan Philaret, in Selischev, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

⁷⁰³ Oliver Figes, *Crimea*, London: Allen Lane, 2010, p. 397.

⁷⁰⁴ Radzinsky, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

Still more serious was the dispiriting effect that the war had on public opinion. Observers had noted the enthusiasm of the simple people for the war, which they considered to be a holy; the soldiers in the Crimea had shown feats of heroism; and the intercession of the Mother of God had clearly been seen in the deliverance of Odessa through her "Kasperovskaia" icon.⁷⁰⁵ However, examples of unbelief had been seen among the commanding officers at Sebastopol, and some of the *intelligentsy*, such as B.N. Chicherin, openly scoffed the idea of a holy war.

One scoffer was a young officer who was soon to make a worldwide reputation in another field - Count Leo Tolstoy. In his *Sebastopol Sketches* he made unflattering comparisons between the western and the Russian armies. His comments on the defenders of Sebastopol were especially unjust: "We have no army, we have a horde of slaves cowed by discipline, ordered about by thieves and slave traders. This horde is not an army because it possesses neither any real loyalty to faith, tsar and fatherland - words that have been so much misused! - nor valour, nor military dignity. All it possesses are, on the one hand, passive patience and repressed discontent, and on the other, cruelty, servitude and corruption."⁷⁰⁶

Tolstoy was to cast his ferociously cynical eye over much more than the army in the course of his long life as a novelist and publicist. Idolized by the public, he would subject almost every aspect of Russian life and faith to his withering scorn. For, as the poet Athanasius Fet noted, he was distinguished by an "automatic opposition to all generally accepted opinions"⁷⁰⁷.

The leading Slavophiles of the prewar period, such as Khomiakov and Kireyevsky, died soon after the war, and with their deaths the ideological struggle shifted in favour of the westerners. While the war of 1812 had united the nation behind the Tsar, the Crimean war was followed by increasing division and dissension.

The conclusion drawn by Constantine Aksakov (who, in spite of his anti-statism, ardently supported the war) was as follows: "From the very beginning the reason for all our failures has lain, not in the power, strength or skill of our enemies, but *in us ourselves*; we ourselves, of course, have been our most terrible adversaries. It is no wonder that we have been overcome when we ourselves give in and retreat... Believe

⁷⁰⁵ See "Zhitie sviatitelia Innokentia Khersonskogo" ("The Life of the holy Hierarch Innocent of Cherson"), in *Zhitia i Tvorenia Russikh Sviatykh* (The Lives and Works of the Russian Saints), Moscow, 2001, pp. 701-702. Archbishop Innocent of Kherson and Odessa, within whose jurisdiction the Crimea fell, had had sermons "widely circulated to the Russian troops in the form of pamphlets and illustrated prints (*lubki*). Innocent portrayed the conflict as a 'holy war' for the Crimea, the centre of the nation's Orthodox identity, where Christianity had arrived in Russia. Highlighting the ancient heritage of the Greek Church in the peninsula, he depicted the Crimea as a 'Russian Athos', a sacred place in the 'Holy Russian Empire' connected by religion to the monastic centre of Orthodoxy on the peninsula of Mount Athos in northeastern Greece. With [Governor] Stroganov's support, Innocent oversaw the creation of a separate bishopric for the Crimea as well as the establishment of several new monasteries in the peninsula after the Crimean War" (Figes, *op. cit.*, p. 423). However, in the end it was on the other side of the Black Sea, in Abkhazia, that the great monastery of New Athos was constructed shortly before the First World War.

⁷⁰⁶ Tolstoy, *Sebastopol Sketches*; quoted in Figes, *op. cit.*, p. 445.

⁷⁰⁷ Fet, in Figes, *op. cit.*, p. 446

me, the danger for Russia is not in the Crimea, and not from the English, the French and the Turks, no, the danger, the real danger is within us, from the spirit of little faith, the spirit of doubt in the help of God, a non-Russian, western spirit, a foreign, heterodox spirit, which weakens our strength and love for our brothers, which cunningly counsels us to make concessions, to humiliate ourselves, to avoid quarrels with Germany, to wage a defensive war, and not to go on the offensive, and not go straight for the liberation of our brothers. We have protected ourselves! That is the source of our enslavement and, perhaps, of our endless woes. If we want God to be for us, it is necessary that we should be for God, and not for the Austrian or in general for the German union, for the sake of which we have abandoned God's work. It is necessary that we should go forward for the Faith and our brothers. But we, having excited the hopes of our brothers, have allowed the cross to be desecrated, and abandoned our brothers to torments... The struggle, the real struggle between East and West, Russia and Europe, is in ourselves and not at our borders."⁷⁰⁸

Another Slavophile, Yury Samarin, analyzed the situation as follows: "We were defeated not by the external forces of the Western alliance, but by our own internal weakness... Stagnation of thought, depression of productive forces, the rift between government and people, disunity between social classes and the enslavement of one of them to another... prevent the government from deploying all the means available to it and, in emergency, from being able to count on mobilising the strength of the nation."⁷⁰⁹

In the foreign sphere, the most important long-term consequence was the destruction of the Holy Alliance of Christian monarchist powers established by Tsar Alexander I in 1815. Russia had been the main guarantor of the integrity of both Prussia and Austria, and in 1848 had saved Austria from the revolution. But a bare seven years later, the Austrians had turned her against her benefactor... In December, 1855 joined the British and the French in an ultimatum to the new Russian tsar, Alexander II, threatening joint action against him if he did end hostilities.

"Hitherto," writes Bernard Simms, "the Tsarist Empire had tried to stay on good terms with both Prussia and Austria, but tilted strongly towards the latter on ideological grounds. During the war, both powers had blotted their copybooks in St. Petersburg, but Austria's humiliating ultimatum had given far more offence than Prussia's timid neutrality. Henceforth, the Russians saw the Austrians as the principal

⁷⁰⁸ C. Aksakov, in E.N. Annenkov, "'Slaviano-Khristianskie' idealy na fone zapadnoj tsivilizatsii, russkie spory 1840-1850-kh gg." ("Slavic-Christian' ideas against the background of western civilization, Russia quarrels in the 1840s and 50s"), in V.A. Kotelnikov (ed.), *Khristianstvo i Russkaia Literatura* (Christianity and Russian Literature), St. Petersburg: "Nauka", 1996, pp. 143-144. Cf. Yury Samarin: "We were defeated not by the external forces of the Western alliance, but by our own internal weakness... Stagnation of thought, depression of productive forces, the rift between government and people, disunity between social classes and the enslavement of one of them to another... prevent the government from deploying all the means available to it and, in emergency, from being able to count on mobilising the strength of the nation" ("O krepostnom sostoianii i o perekhode iz nego k grazhdanskoj svobode" ("On serfdom and the transition from it to civil liberty"), *Sochinenia* (Works), vol. 2, Moscow, 1878, pp. 17-20; quoted in Hosking, *op. cit.*, p. 317).

⁷⁰⁹ Samarin, "O krepostnom sostoianii i o perekhode iz nego k grazhdanskoj svobode" ("On serfdom and the transition from it to civil liberty"), *Sochinenia* (Works), vol. 2, Moscow, 1878, pp. 17-20; quoted in Sir Geoffrey Hosking, *Russia: People & Empire*, London: HarperCollins, 1997, p. 317.

barrier to their Balkan ambitions, and the idea that the path to Constantinople ran through Vienna – a common slogan in later decades – began to gain currency in St. Petersburg. Even more crucially, the Russians were determined that they would never again face the full force of the German Confederation under the aegis of Austria. Vienna would have to be unbolted from the leadership of Germany. So in late August 1856 the new Russian foreign minister, Gorchakov, announced in a widely discussed circular that the tsar would no longer support his fellow monarchs. The message was clear: the Habsburgs would face the next revolutionary challenge on their own..."⁷¹⁰

Thus the Holy Alliance initiated by the first Tsar Alexander in 1815, after the defeat of the first Napoleon, was brought to an end by the second Tsar Alexander, after Russia's defeat forty years later by the Third Napoleon...

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The Crimean War highlighted a difficult dilemma faced by the Ecumenical Patriarch: his political loyalties were divided between the Turkish Sultan, to whom he had sworn an oath of allegiance, the King of Greece, to whom his nationalist sympathies drew him, and the Tsar of Russia, to whom his religious principles should have led him. After all, in 1598 Patriarch Jeremiah II had called the tsar the sovereign "*of all Christians throughout the inhabited earth*," and explicitly called his empire "*the Third Rome*". But now, centuries later, the image of Russia the Third Rome had faded from the minds of the Patriarchs and most Greek Orthodox; it was the image of a resurrected *New Rome*, or *Byzantium*, that attracted them and their Greek compatriots - this was the truly "great idea". The Russians were, of course, Orthodox, and their help was useful. But the Greeks wanted to liberate themselves and become again the first nation in the world...

But what of the oath of allegiance that the Patriarch had sworn to the Sultan, which was confirmed by his commemoration at the Divine Liturgy? Did not this make the Sultan his political master to whom he owed obedience? Certainly, this was the position of Patriarch Gregory V in 1821, as we have seen, and of other distinguished teachers of the Greek nation, such as the Chiot, Athanasios Parios. Moreover, the Tsar who was reigning at the time of the Greek Revolution, Alexander I, also recognized the Sultan as a lawful ruler, and as lawful ruler of his Christian subjects, even to the extent of refusing the Greeks help when they rose up against the Sultan in 1821. Even his successor, Tsar Nicholas I, who did come to the rescue of the Greeks in 1827 and again in 1829, continued to regard the Sultan as a legitimate ruler.

However, the situation was complicated by the fact that, even if the Patriarch commemorated the Sultan at the Liturgy, almost nobody else did! Thus Protopriest Benjamin Zhukov writes: "In Mohammedan Turkey the Orthodox did not pray for the authorities during Divine services, which was witnessed by pilgrims to the Sepulchre of the Lord in Jerusalem. Skaballonovich in his *Interpreted Typicon* writes: 'With the coming of Turkish dominion, the prayers for the kings began to be excluded

⁷¹⁰ Simms, *Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy*, London: Allen Lane, 2013, pp. 223-224, 222.

from the augmented and great litanies and to be substituted by: "Again we pray for the pious and Orthodox Christians" (p. 152).⁷¹¹

But perhaps commemoration and obedience are different matters, so that commemoration of an authority may be refused while obedience is granted?... Or perhaps the Sultan could not be commemorated by name because no heterodox can be commemorated at the Divine Liturgy, but could and should have been prayed for in accordance with the apostolic command?... For St. Paul called on the Christians to pray "for all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (I Timothy 2.2), although the authorities at that time were pagans...

However, there was one important difference between the pagan authorities of St. Paul's time and the heterodox authorities of the nineteenth century. In the former case, the pagan Roman empire was the *only* political authority of the Oecumene. But in the latter case, there *was* a more lawful authority than the heterodox authorities - the Orthodox Christian authority of the Tsar.

The critical question, therefore, was: if there was a war between the Muslim Sultan, on the one side, and the Orthodox Tsar, on the other, whom were the Orthodox Christians of the Balkans to pray for and support?...

Precisely this situation arose during the Crimean War. The Russians were fighting for a cause dear to every Orthodox Christian heart: the control of the Holy Places. And their enemies were an alliance of three of the major anti-Orthodox powers, Muslim (Turkey), Catholic (France) and Protestant (England). So the supreme loyalty inherent in faithfulness to Orthodox Christianity - a loyalty higher than any oath given to an infidel enemy of the faith under duress - would seem to have dictated that the Patriarch support the Russians. But he neither supported them, nor even prayed for the Russian Tsar at the liturgy.

Perhaps the likely terrible retribution of the Turks on the Balkan Orthodox was a sufficient reason not to support the Tsar openly. But could he not commemorate the Tsar at the liturgy, or at any rate not commemorate the Sultan as other Balkan Churches did not? For even if the Sultan was accepted as a legitimate authority to whom obedience was due in normal situations, surely his legitimacy failed when he used his authority to undermine the much higher authority of the Orthodox Christian Empire?

Certainly, the Georgian Athonite Elder Hilarion (whom we have met before as Fr. Ise, confessor of the Imeretian King Solomon II) felt that loyalty to the Tsar came first in this situation, although he was not Russian, but Georgian. He instructed his disciple, Hieromonk Sabbas, to celebrate the Divine Liturgy every day and to pray for the Russians during it, and to read the whole Psalter and make many prostrations for the aid of "our Russian brethren". And the rebuke he delivered to his ecclesiastical superior, the Ecumenical Patriarch, was soon shown to have the blessing of God.

⁷¹¹ Zhukov, *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov' na Rodine i za Rubezhom* (The Russian Orthodox Church in the Homeland and Abroad), Paris, 2005, pp. 18-19.

"When some time had passed," witnesses Hieromonk Sabbas, "the elder said to me: 'Let's go to the monastery, let's ask the abbot what they know about the war, whether the Russians are winning or the enemies.' When we arrived at the monastery, the abbot with the protoses showed us a paper which the Patriarch and one other hierarch had sent from Constantinople, for distributing to the serving hieromonks in all the monasteries. The Patriarch wrote that they were beseeching God, at the Great Entrance in the Divine Liturgy, to give strength to the Turkish army to subdue the Russians under the feet of the Turks. To this was attached a special prayer which had to be read aloud. When the abbot, Elder Eulogius, had read us this patriarchal epistle and said to the elder: 'Have you understood what our head, our father is writing to us?', my elder was horrified and said: 'He is not a Christian,' and with sorrow asked: 'Have you read this in the monastery during the Liturgy, as he writes?' But they replied: 'No! May it not be!' But in the decree the Patriarch was threatening any monastery that did not carry out this order that it would suffer a very severe punishment. The next day we went back to our cell. A week passed. A monk came from Grigoriou monastery for the revealing of thoughts, and my elder asked him: 'Did you read this prayer which the Patriarch sent to the monasteries?' He replied: 'Yes, it was read last Sunday during the Liturgy.' The elder said: 'You have not acted well in reading it; you have deprived yourselves of the grace of Holy Baptism, you have deprived your monastery of the grace of God; condemnation has fallen on you!' This monk returned to the monastery and told his elders and abbot that 'we have deprived the monastery of the grace of God, the grace of Holy Baptism - that is what Papa Hilarion is saying.' On the same day a flood swept away the mill, and the fathers began to grumble against the abbot: 'You have destroyed the monastery!' In great sorrow the abbot hurried to make three prostrations before the icon of the Saviour and said: 'My Lord Jesus Christ, I'm going to my spiritual father Hilarion to confess what I have done, and whatever penance he gives me I will carry it out, so that I should not suffer a stroke from sorrow.' Taking with him one hierodeacon and one monk, he set off for the cell of the Holy Apostle James, where we were living at the time. When they arrived, my elder was outside the cell. The abbot with his companions, on seeing my elder, fell face downwards in prostrations to the earth and said: 'Bless, holy spiritual father.' Then they went up to kiss his hand. But my elder shouted at them: 'Go away, away from me; I do not accept heretics!' The abbot said: 'I have sinned, I have come to ask you to give me a penance.' But the elder said: 'How did you, wretched one, dare to place Mohammed higher than Christ? God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ says to His Son: "Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet" (Psalm 109.1), but you ask Him to put His Son under the feet of His enemies! Get away from me, I will not accept you.' With tears the abbot besought the elder to receive him in repentance and give him a penance. But my elder said: 'I am not your spiritual father, go, find a spiritual father and he will give you a penance.' And leaving them outside his cell weeping, the elder went into it and locked the door with a key. What could we do? We went into my cell and there served an all-night vigil, beseeching God to incline the elder to mercy and give a penance to the abbot. In the morning the elder went into the church for the Liturgy, not saying a word to those who had arrived, and after the dismissal of the Liturgy he quickly left for his cell. Those who had arrived with the abbot began to worry that he would suffer a heart attack; they asked me to go in to the elder and call him; perhaps he would listen to me. I went, fell at his feet and asked him: 'Be merciful, give them a penance - the abbot

may suffer a heart attack with fatal consequences.' Then the elder asked me: 'What penance shall I give them? God on high is angry with them. What *epitimia* should I give them which would propitiate God?' When I said to my father: 'Elder, since I read the whole Psalter of the Prophet-King David every day, as you told me, there is one psalm there which fits this case - the 82nd: "O God, who shall be likened unto Thee? Be Thou not silent, neither be still, O God..." Command them to read this psalm tomorrow during the Liturgy, when the Cherubic hymn is being sung, at the Great Entrance; let the hieromonk who reads the prayer of the Patriarch before stand under the great chandelier, and when all the fathers come together during the Great Entrance, the priest must come out of the altar holding the diskos and chalice in his hands, then let one monk bring a parchment with this psalm written on it in front, and let the hieromonk, who has been waiting under the chandelier, read the whole psalm loudly to the whole brotherhood, and while they are reading it from the second to the ninth verses let them all repeat many times: "Lord, have mercy". And when the remaining verses are being read, let them all say: "Amen!" And then the grace of God will again return to their monastery.' The elder accepted my advice and asked me to call them. When they joyfully entered the cell and made a prostration, the elder said to them: 'Carry out this penance, and the mercy of God will return to you.' Then they began to be disturbed that the exarch sent by the Patriarch, who was caring for the fulfillment of the patriarchal decree in Karyes, might learn about this and might bring great woes upon the monastery. They did not know what to do. The elder said: 'Since you are so frightened, I will take my hieromonk and go to the monastery; and if the exarch or the Turks hears about it, tell them: only Monk Hilarion the Georgian ordered us to do this, and we did it, and you will be without sorrow.' Then the abbot said: 'Spiritual father, we are also worried and sorrowful about you, because when the Turks will learn about this, they will come here, take you, tie you up in sacks and drown you both in the sea.' My elder replied: 'We are ready, my hieromonk and I, let them drown us.' Then we all together set off in the boat for Grigoriou monastery. When the brothers of the monastery saw us, they rejoiced greatly. In the morning we arranged that the hieromonk who had read the prayer of the Patriarch should himself liturgize; they lit the chandelier during the Cherubic hymn, and when all the fathers were gathered together and the server had come out of the altar preceded by the candle and candle-holder and carrying the chalice and diskos on his head and in his hands, he declared: "May the Lord remember you all in His Kingdom", and stopped under the great chandelier. Then one monk, having in his hand the parchment with the 82nd psalm written on it, stood in front of the priest and began to read: "O God, who shall be likened unto Thee? Be Thou not silent, neither be still, O God..." - to the end. Meanwhile the fathers called out: "Lord, have mercy" until the 10th verse, and then everyone said: "Amen" many times. And they all understood that the grace of God had again come down on the monastery, and the elders from joy embraced me, thanking me that I had done such a good thing for them; and everyone glorified and thanked God.'

"All this took place under Patriarch Anthimus VI. At the end of the war he was again removed from his throne. After this he came to Athos and settled in the monastery of Esphigmenou, where he had been tonsured. Once, in 1856, on a certain feast-day, he wanted to visit the monastery of St. Panteleimon, where Fr. Hilarion was at that time. During the service the Patriarch was standing in the cathedral of the Protection on the hierarchical see. Father Hilarion passed by him with Fr. Sabbas; he didn't even look at

the venerable Patriarch, which the latter immediately noticed. The Patriarch was told about the incident with the prayer in Grigoriou monastery. At the end of the service, as usual, all the guests were invited to the guest-house. The Patriarch, wanting somehow to extract himself from his awkward situation in the eyes of the Russians and Fr. Hilarion, started a conversation on past events and tried to develop the thought that there are cases when a certain 'economia' is demanded, and the care of the Church sometimes requires submission also to some not very lawful demands of the government, if this serves for the good of the Church. 'And so we prayed for the granting of help from on high to our Sultan, and in this way disposed him to mercifulness for our Church and her children, the Orthodox Christians.' When Patriarch Anthimus, under whom the schism with the Bulgarians took place, arrived on Athos after his deposition, and just stepped foot on the shore, the whole of the Holy Mountain shuddered from an underground quake and shook several times. All this was ascribed by the Athonites to the guilt of the Patriarch, and the governing body sent an order throughout the Mountain that they should pray fervently to God that He not punish the inhabitants of the Holy Mountain with His righteous wrath, but that He have mercy according to His mercy."⁷¹²

From this story, we see that there was a fine line to be drawn between submission to the Sultan as the lawful sovereign, and a too-comfortable adaptation to the conditions of this Babylonian captivity. The Tsar considered that the Orthodox peoples did not have the right to rebel against the Sultan of their own will, without the blessing of himself as the Emperor of the Third Rome. But the corollary of this view was that when the Tsar entered into war with the Sultan, it was the duty of the Orthodox subjects of the Sultan to pray for victory for the Tsar. For, as Fr. Hilarion said, echoing the words of St. Seraphim of Sarov: "The other peoples' kings often make themselves out to be something great, but not one of them is a king in reality, but they are only adorned and flatter themselves with a great name, but God is not favourably disposed towards them, and does not abide in them. They reign only in part by the condescension of God. *Therefore he who does not love his God-established tsar is not worthy of being called a Christian.*"⁷¹³

That was also the teaching of New Hieromartyr John Vostorgov (+1918), who served as a very successful missionary in Persia before the revolution, converting many thousands of Nestorians, including bishops, to Orthodoxy: "The Cross is the strength of king and the praise and confirmation of kingdoms... ' There is no doubt that we pray and must pray for the Tsar as a person and as a ruler. From this point of view the Christian is obliged also to pray even for an infidel and false-believing king. That is what the apostles did, that is what they enjoined the Christians to do. But there is also no doubt that, for example, a contemporary Greek in Turkey must not pray for the Sultan with the same prayers with which he prays for the Tsar, at the command of the Church, and with the same union and connection of the concept of the Cross and the concept of the Tsar and the Kingdom. About such kings we cannot say: 'the kings are praised by the Cross'... 'the Cross is the strength of kings'... We thereby confess that

⁷¹² Fomin & Fomina, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 331-333.

⁷¹³ Hieromonk Anthony of the Holy Mountain, *Ocherki Zhizni i Podvoigov Startsa Ieroskhimonakha Ilariona Gruzina* (Sketches of the Life and Struggles of Elder Hieroschemamonk Hilarion the Georgian), Jordanville, 1985, p. 95.

we live in a Christian, and not in a pagan state... The pagan state is an exclusively secular state. Its patriotism, therefore, is simple and crude, merely collective egoism... For the state which is led only by secular and materialist principles, there can be no question of where the power comes from, on what it depends, and what it serves... According to the Christian view, the state in itself is not an end, but only a means and a God-given environment for believers, so that they may successfully traverse their earthly path to attain their eternal and holy aims, to attain moral perfection and eternal salvation...

“Where faith has fallen, where morality has fallen, there there can be no place for patriotism, there is nothing for it to hold on to, for then everything that is most dear in the homeland has ceased to exist...”⁷¹⁴

⁷¹⁴ Vostorgov, in S. Fomin and T. Fomina, *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Moscow, 1998, volume I, p. 400.

48. THE EMANCIPATION OF THE SERFS

"The failures of the Crimean war," writes A.I. Sheparneva, "were connected by the Westerners with God's punishment striking Russia for all her vices and absurdities, by which they understood the existence in the country of serfdom and the despotic character of the State administration. Despotism and serfdom, as the Westerners noted, hindered the normal development of the country, preserving its economic, political and military backwardness."⁷¹⁵ The Slavophiles disagreed about the supposed despotism of the Tsar, but they agreed on the need to abolish serfdom.

"The inadequacies of the respective performances of the various armies," writes Sir Richard Evans, "led to far-reaching reforms in military organization and supply both in Russia and the United Kingdom... In Russia, Tsar Alexander II, who was the grandson of Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia and thus, like many if not most European monarchs of the nineteenth century, part German, reacted to the defeat by embarking on a series of fundamental reforms. The most significant of these was the emancipation of the serfs, carried out after lengthy preparations in 1861. Creating an army whose soldiers had a positive stake in Russia's military success was one of the motivations for the emancipation, which was followed by a reorganization of government in the provinces. The abolition of serfdom had significant implications for rural Russian administration.

"Ending the landlords' police powers meant introducing a centralized system of policing, while on the other hand a sense of loyalty to the regime was to be encouraged by establishing locally elected assemblies, introduced in 1864. The assemblies, or *zemstvos*, existed at district and provincial levels and were elected separately by nobles, townsmen and peasants (the last-named indirectly). At the provincial level, nobles predominated, a factor that dissuaded liberal reformers from pressing for a national assembly; the idea was opposed by conservatives in the tsar's entourage anyway. Thus the autocracy continued. Alexander made efforts to reform the judicial system, introducing western European-style courts and public trials in 1865, with irremovable judges and jury trials for criminal offences. The police retained powers of 'administrative arrest' and exile to Siberia without trial for political offenders, but the reform was still a significant one: in due course, the courts became major centres for the free expression of opinion. In 1862 preventive censorship was replaced by prosecutions after publication. Universities were given greater autonomy, with the professors free to teach what they wanted, and the school system was restructured and extended. Serious attempts were made to purge corrupt bureaucrats and improve the standard of administration. The decentralization of many functions of government to the *zemstvos* undoubtedly helped this process.

"Alexander II appointed the liberal Dmitry Alexeyevich Milyutin (1816-1912) as Minister of War in 1861 with the task of reforming the army. Between 1861 and 1881 Milyutin streamlined the administration, reducing the volume of correspondence by 45 per cent, divided the empire into fifteen military districts, integrated the various branches of the army, reorganized and professionalized the military schools and

⁷¹⁵ Sheparneva, "Krymskaia vojna v osveshchenii zapadnikov" (The Crimean war as interpreted by the Westerners), *Voprosy Istorii* (Questions of History), 2005 (9), p. 37).

training centres, and increased the available reserve from 210,000 in 1861 to 553,000 by 1870. After tremendous struggles with conservatives at Court who wanted nobles to remain exempt from military service, Milyutin finally succeeded in persuading the tsar to introduce universal conscription in 1874, with a six-year period of service followed by nine in the reserve. Milyutin was also concerned by the low level of literacy among recruits – a mere 7 per cent in the 1860s – and set up educational schemes within the army that resulted in a swift increase in the literacy rate among soldiers, half of whom were able to read by 1870 and a quarter of whom could write as well. Thus Russia entered the second half of the 1870s far better prepared for war than it had been two decades before..."⁷¹⁶

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Serfdom arose in the sixteenth century as a result of strictly military needs. "Before then," writes Max Hayward, peasants "had been free to leave their masters every year, by tradition, on St. George's day in November. The introduction of serfdom meant that the peasants were bound to the land in the same way and for the same reasons as their masters were bound to the czar's service."⁷¹⁷

The reasons were military necessity, the Tsar's need to have soldiers to defend his territory, which meant guaranteeing that the nobles did not shirk their duty and the serfs did not run away from the draft... Indeed, as Dominic Lieven writes, "The key to Russian success and Ottoman failures as great powers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was the ruthless Russian system of serfdom and the Westernization of the elites."⁷¹⁸ That is, from the secular, westernizing point of view...

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

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

"From the time of Alexander I views on the subject changed: the state finally became organized, a police force consisting of officials was established everywhere, the people began to emerge from their condition of childhood, received new ideas, felt new needs. The nobility began to chafe at being guardians of the peasants, the peasants – at the restrictions on their liberty, at their patriarchal way of life. All this began to appear and express itself strongly in the second half of the reign of Emperor Nicholas I."⁷¹⁹

⁷¹⁶ Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-239.

⁷¹⁷ Hayward, introduction to Chloe Obolensky, *The Russian Empire: A Portrait in Photographs*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1980, p. 13.

⁷¹⁸ Lieven, *Towards the Flame. Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia*, London: Allen Lane, 2015, p. 49. The westernization of the Russian elites was necessary in order for it to absorb western military technology. In respect of the spiritual life, however, westernization was very bad for Russia.

⁷¹⁹ *Polnoe Zhizneopisanie Sviatitelia Ignatii Brianchaninova* (A Complete Biography of the Holy Hierarch Ignaty Brianchaninov), Moscow, 2002, pp. 317, 319-320.

There were considerable strengths in this patriarchal system, and not just military ones. From the state's point of view it guaranteed the payment of taxes by the village community (or *mir*). From the peasant's point of view, it gave him a certain security, both from the *mir* and from the landlord.

Its main weakness was the sometimes cruel behaviour of the landowners, who had begun to lose their feeling of duty both to the state and to their serfs. Since there were only about nine thousand police to preserve order amid a population of over one hundred million peasants in 1900⁷²⁰, the rogue elements among the nobility could act with more or less impunity. The peasants, correspondingly, began to see their obedience to the nobles as a burden that was not justified, as in the past, by the defence of the land. As such, the formal patriarchal structure probably had to change in view of the change in its spiritual content.

Although there were good landowners who looked after their serfs as well as bad ones who did not, and although, as English observers noted, the Russian peasants were on the whole richer than their British counterparts⁷²¹, the fact remains that the lot of the serf was undoubtedly a wretched one in many cases.

For the serf was completely dependent on his noble owner, who could exploit him with little fear of punishment. Thus Evans writes: "Russian noble landowners frequently lived away from their estates. They spent much of their time and money in St. Petersburg or in French resorts and central European spas, running up enormous debts at the gambling table. Even if they were not indebted or mortgaged up to the hilt, they often saw their estates as little more than sources of income to sustain their lifestyle in the big city... What mattered indeed was the powerlessness of the enserfed. There were estates where peasants were beaten or whipped by their lord, or put in an iron collar if they disobeyed his orders..."⁷²²

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

"Encompassed as they were by a web of rights and duties, serfs could still be bought and sold along with the land they rented or owned. If the seigneur sold an estate, the serfs on it passed to the new owner. The state often gave tacit approval to the practice of selling serfs on their own without land, as implied in a Russian law that banned the use of the hammer at public auctions of serfs, or in a regulation of 1841 that made it

⁷²⁰ Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, p. 50.

⁷²¹ M.V. Krivosheev and Yu.V. Krivosheev, *Istoria Rossijskoj Imperii 1861-1894* (A History of the Russian Empire), St. Petersburg 2000, pp. 10-11.

⁷²² Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

illegal to sell parents and their unmarried children separately from one another. In Russia serfs were not just tillers of the soil; increasingly, they were enrolled as domestic servants, footmen, coachmen, cooks and much more besides..."⁷²³

Thus, as Andrew Marr writes, "Russian serfdom had unique aspects that made Russia feel fundamentally different from Western European societies. For a start, there was no ethnic divide in Russia between owner and serf. They were all the same mix, mostly Slav with some Tatar and sometimes some German. Master, mistress and servants looked alike and had similar names. Serfs, living for generations on the same dark soil, sharing the old stories and the old music, devoutly adhering to the Orthodox religion, seemed to many liberal Russian landowners more 'real', more authentically Russian than they were themselves. To numerous writers and intellectuals Russia seemed uniquely cursed, but when at times radicals tried to 'go towards' the serfs and befriend them, these skeptical, conservative-minded peasants regarded them with bafflement.

"For tens of thousands of poorer landowners there was not even a big cultural divide between them and their human 'property'. Serfs cooked in the master's kitchen, suckled and brought up his children, told stories around the fire and taught the lore of the countryside to the little noble growing up amongst them. They shared hunting trips. Serfs could be talented craftworkers, musicians, decorators and builders that their owners relied on for goods and services, as better-off Western Europeans relied on free, waged workers. Landowners could be asked by the patriarchs of serf families to resolve family disputes. So there was an intimacy in Russian serfdom as experienced in houses and villages remote from the cities, that some Russian landowners felt to be more embarrassing and more emotionally touching than rural servitude in some other places..."⁷²⁴

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Tsar Nicholas I had long planned to emancipate the serfs, and was able to improve the lot of the State serfs considerably. In 1827 he decreed that landowners' estates where a peasant had less than 4.5 desyatins of land was transferred to the state, while the peasants themselves could move to the towns. In 1841 he forbade the sale of serfs wholesale and without land. From 1843 landless noblemen were deprived of the right to acquire serf "souls" (a custom parodied in Gogol's *Dead Souls*). From 1847-48, if a landowner went bankrupt and had to sell his property, his serfs could buy their freedom with land at the auction.⁷²⁵

On his deathbed Tsar Nicholas bequeathed the task of emancipating the peasants to his successor, Alexander II. With the support of his sister Elena, the new tsar set about the task with zeal. "It is better to abolish serfdom from above," he said to the reluctant nobles, "than wait for it to abolish itself from below."

⁷²³ Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

⁷²⁴ Marr, *A History of the World*, London: Pan, 2012, pp. 410-411.

⁷²⁵ Krivosheev and Krivosheev, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

For the serfs were becoming violent... "There were 148 outbreaks of peasant unrest in 1826-34," writes Eric Hobsbawm, "216 in 1835-44, 348 in 1844-54, culminating in the 474 outbreaks of the last years preceding the emancipation of 1861." ⁷²⁶ And Ronald Seth writes: "A Russian historian, Vasily Semevsky, who died in 1916, using official records as a basis, claimed that there were 550 peasant uprisings in the sixty years of the nineteenth century prior to liberation; while a later Soviet historian, Inna Ignatovich, insists, upon equally valid records, that there were in fact 1,467 such rebellions in this period. And in addition to these uprisings serfs deserted their masters in hundreds and thousands, sometimes in great mass movement, when rumours circulated that freedom could be found 'somewhere in the Caucasus'." ⁷²⁷

These disturbances were not caused by poverty alone. "The peasants," wrote the senator, Ya. A. Soloviev, "either were disturbed in whole regions by false rumours about freedom, or were running away from cruel landlords, or resisted the decrees of unjust landowners. The landlords feared both the government and the peasants. In a word, serfdom was beginning to shake and with each day became more and more unsuitable: both for the peasants, and for the landlords, and for the government." ⁷²⁸

The peasants understood their relationship with their masters to be: "we are yours, but the land is ours", or even: "we are yours, and you are ours". ⁷²⁹ While this was unacceptable to the Tsar, he did accept that "emancipation was, in [Prince Sergius] Volkonsky's words, a 'question of justice, a moral and a Christian obligation, for every citizen that loves his Fatherland.' As the Decembrist explained in a letter to Pushkin, the abolition of serfdom was 'the least the state could do to recognize the sacrifice the peasantry has made in the last two wars: it is time to recognize that the Russian peasant is a citizen as well'." ⁷³⁰

"'The great matter of the emancipation is almost done,' Alexander told Bariatinsky, 'and to be completed has only to go through the State Council.' On 27 January 1861, Alexander addressed the Council: 'You can change details but the fundamental must remain unaltered... The autocracy established serfdom and it's up to the autocracy to abolish it.' The decree was approved." ⁷³¹

The emancipation manifesto was published on February 19, 1861. It acknowledged that "the State's legislation, while actively benefiting the higher and middle conditions, defining their duties, rights and advantages, has not attained equal activity in relation to the serfs, so called partly because of the old laws and partly out of habit, who are hereditarily enserfed under the power of the landowners, on whom there lies at the same time the duty to establish their welfare."

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⁷²⁶ Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution, 1789-1848*, London: Abacus, 1962, p. 362.

⁷²⁷ Seth, *The Russian Terrorists*, London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1966, pp. 20-21.

⁷²⁸ Soloviev, in Krivosheev and Krivosheev, op. cit., p. 17.

⁷²⁹ Archimandrite Constantine (Zaitsev), "Velikaia Reforma Osvobozhdenia Krestian. 1861-1961" ("The Great Reform of the Emancipation of the Serfs. 1861-1961"), *Pravoslavnij Put' (The Orthodox Way)*, Jordanville, 1961, p. 24.

⁷³⁰ Oliver Figes, *Natasha's Dream*, London: Penguin, 2002, pp. 144-145.

⁷³¹ Montefiore, op. cit.

The essence of the reform consisted in freeing twenty-two million serfs from their landlords while enabling them to buy the land they tilled. The government would immediately pay the lords 80% of the value of the land by wiping out their debts, while the peasants, having been given their freedom *gratis*, would be given a 49-year period within which to pay for the land at a cheap rate of interest. The remaining 20% would be paid by the peasants directly to the landowners in cash payments or in labour with the aid of generous loans from the government.

Bishop Ignaty Brianchaninov said that the emperor "has found the matter already prepared and has found it necessary to change the form of administration of landowners' peasants. What is the essential significance of the improvement in the peasants' way of life? It is the change in the form of their administration. They are being given freedom, but not self-will. They are coming out from under the jurisdiction of the landowners as if from under the supervisions of educators and guardians, into a relationship of personal service to the state."⁷³²

The reform was in general well received. Thus Bishop Ignaty saw it as "a most happy initiative, a majestic order amazing Europe". He argued: "1. That both the Word of God and the Church - both the Universal Church and the Russian Church - in the persons of the Holy Fathers, has never said anything at all about the abolition of civil slavery, that there is nothing in common between spiritual and civil freedom, that both slaves and masters were constantly taught by the Church the most exact and conscientious fulfilment of their obligations, that the violators of Christ's commandment on love were subject to rebukes and exhortations.

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

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

"But one must not think that civil liberty morally exalts only the peasants: the class of the nobility must unfailingly enter onto a higher level of moral achievement in renouncing the ownership of slaves. That is the characteristic of self-sacrifice and the offering of material goods as a sacrifice for spiritual goods: it exalts, changes and perfects man."⁷³³

According to Dostoyevsky, far from undermining the traditional bonds of society, emancipation in fact strengthened the bond between the Tsar and the people, the union in faith and love which was at the very heart of Holy Russia. For the peasants had

⁷³² *Polnoe Zhizneopisanie Sviatitelia Ignatia Brianchaninova*, op. cit., p. 396.

⁷³³ *Polnoe Zhizneopisanie Sviatitelia Ignatia*, pp. 335-336.

always looked to the Tsar as their father and protector against the greed of the landowners and officials. They had been expecting the Tsar to liberate them, and their expectations had been fulfilled, if not in the precise way they had anticipated. Certainly if the matter had been left to the nobles, without the driving will of the tsar, nothing would have been done.

For Dostoyevsky, as Igor Volgin writes, "the reform of 1861 created a historical precedent of exceptional importance. It presented an example of voluntary renunciation of an age-old historical injustice, a peaceful resolution of a social conflict that threatened to have terrible consequences."⁷³⁴

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

"So recently these hopes have been completely realized. Would the people renounce their further hopes? Wouldn't the latter, on the contrary, be strengthened and reinforced, since after the peasants' reform the Tsar became the people's father not merely in hope but in reality. This attitude of the people toward the Tsar is the genuine, adamant foundation of every reform in Russia. If you wish, there is in Russia no creative, protective and leading force other than this live organic bond of the people with their Tsar, from which everything is derived. For instance, who would have ventured to dream about the peasants' reform without knowing and believing in advance that the Tsar was a father to the people, and that precisely this faith of the people in the Tsar as their father would save and protect everything and stave off the calamity?"⁷³⁵

⁷³⁴ Volgin, *Poslednij God Dostoevskogo* (Dostoyevsky's Last Year), Moscow, 1986, pp. 32-33.

⁷³⁵ Dostoyevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, January, 1881, London: Cassell, pp. 1032-1033.

49. THE BALANCE-SHEET OF EMANCIPATION

Let us look at the balance-sheet of the reform first from a purely material point of view... Emancipation would pave the way for more efficient agriculture (Samarin calculated that peasants' productivity was 50 % higher on their own plots than on the landlords') and the provision of labour for the industrialization of Russia, especially the production of armaments, so sorely needed in view of the relative failure of the Crimean War, by freeing the peasants from the commune as soon as they had paid their redemption payments. These would then be free to seek work in the towns and factories.⁷³⁶

Again, as Sir Geoffrey Hosking writes, "the existence of serfdom obstructed modernization of the army and thereby burdened the treasury with huge and unproductive military expenditure. As the military reformer R.A. Fadeyev pointed [out], 'Under serfdom, anyone becoming a soldier is freed; hence one cannot, without shaking the whole social order, admit many people to military service. Therefore we have to maintain on the army establishment in peacetime all the soldiers we need in war.'⁷³⁷

Philip Bobbitt confirms this judgement: "Because service in the army was rewarded by emancipation, serfs had to be recruited for long periods; otherwise, the number of those bound to the land would have plummeted. Thus recruitment provided only about 700,000 men. There was no reserve. Such measures did not fill the needs of contemporary warfare, which required universal, short-term conscription, followed by service in the reserve. An adequate system, however, would move all serfs through the army in a generation. Therefore modern conscription and reserve service meant the emancipation of the serfs. And this is precisely what happened. In 1861 the serfs were freed; universal military service followed in 1874. Six years' active service and a nine-year reserve created a total force of 1.35 million."⁷³⁸

But there were still more advantages to the emancipation of the serfs. Thus it would save the poorer nobles from bankruptcy. For "by 1859, one-third of the estates and two-thirds of the serfs owned by the landed nobles had been mortgaged to the state and noble banks. Many of the smaller landowners could barely afford to feed their serfs. The economic argument for emancipation was becoming irrefutable, and many landowners were shifting willy-nilly to the free labour system by contracting other people's serfs. Since the peasantry's redemption payments would cancel out the gentry's debts, the economic rationale was becoming equally irresistible."⁷³⁹

⁷³⁶ The Crimean war had revealed Russian rifles to be very inefficient. Therefore priority had to be given to new armaments technologies and factories. But that required a free labour force instead of the system of forced labour of serfs that was then in operation. For "in the words of a report on the Tula Armory in 1861: 'It would seem to be generally indisputable that only free men are capable of honest work. He who from childhood has been forced to work is incapable of assuming responsibility as long as his social condition remains unchanged.'" (David Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, London: Abacus, 1999, p. 241). (V.M.)

⁷³⁷ Hosking, *Russia. People and Empire, 1552-1917*, London: HarperCollins, 1997, p. 318.

⁷³⁸ Philip Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles*, London: Penguin, 2002, pp. 181-182.

⁷³⁹ Figes, *Natasha's Dream*, p. 144. "More than 80% of the small and middle nobility were in debt to the state on the security of their own estates, and this debt would have been unrepayable if it had not been

Inevitably, however, many were disappointed. Many of the peasants had not expected to pay for the land, and found the payments greater than the rents they had been paying earlier. Moreover, once liberated, they lost access to timber and firewood in landowners' forests.

Again, "the Law allowed landowners considerable leeway in choosing the bits of land for transfer to the peasantry - and in setting the price for them. Overall, perhaps half the farming land in European Russia was transferred from the gentry's ownership to the communal tenure of the peasantry, although the precise proportion depended largely on the landowner's will. Owing to the growth of the population it was still far from enough to liberate the peasantry from poverty."⁷⁴⁰

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

Moreover, "during the conservative reign of Alexander III legislation was passed which made it virtually impossible for peasants to withdraw. This policy was inspired by the belief that the commune was a stabilizing force which strengthened the authority of the *bol'shak* [head of the individual peasant household], curbed peasant anarchism, and inhibited the formation of a volatile landless proletariat."⁷⁴¹

So while the government genuinely wanted to free the peasant, both as a good deed in itself, and in order to exploit his economic potential, its desire to strengthen the bonds of the commune tended to work in the opposite direction...

The radicals said that the reform provided "inadequate freedom". However, the real problem was not so much "inadequate freedom" as the fact that emancipation introduced "the wrong kind of freedom". The very composer of the manifesto, Metropolitan Philaret, had doubts about emancipation and the reform process in general.⁷⁴²

for the reform. The value of the payments for the land cleared many debts." (Krivosheev and Krivosheev, *op. cit.* p. 20).

⁷⁴⁰ Figes, *Natasha's Dream* p. 145.

⁷⁴¹ Pipes, *op. cit.* pp. 98-99.

⁷⁴² Metropolitan Ioann (Snychev), *Zhizn' i deiatel'nost' mitropolita Filareta* (The Life and Activity of Metropolitan Philaret), Tula, 1994. As Gregory Frazee writes, "from the very onset of the Great Reforms, Philaret expressed deep reservations about ambitious plans for a radical reconstruction of Russian state and society. In a sermon delivered at Chudovo Monastery in 1856 (and ostensibly directed at more radical perspectives, but implicitly applicable to those with excessive ambitions for reform), Philaret upbraided those who 'work on the creation and establishment of better principles (in their opinion) for the formation and transformation of human cities. For more than half a century, the most educated part of mankind, in places and times, see their transformation efforts in action, but as yet, never and nowhere, have they created a "calm and tranquil life". They know how to disturb the ancient buildings of states, but not how to create something solid. According to their blueprints, new governments are suddenly built - and just as quickly collapse. They feel burdened by the paternal, reasonable authority of the tsar; they introduce the blind and harsh authority of the popular crowd and endless fights among those seeking power. They seduce people by assuring that they will lead

So let us turn to the spiritual balance-sheet... True freedom, according to Metropolitan Philaret, "is Christian freedom - internal, not external freedom, - moral and spiritual, not carnal, - always doing good and never rebellious, which can live in a hut just as comfortably as in an aristocrat's or tsar's house, - which a subject can enjoy as much as the master without ceasing to be a subject, - which is unshakeable in bonds and prison, as we can see in the Christian martyrs'."⁷⁴³

This freedom was not lost under serfdom. Rather, it was emancipation that threatened this true Christian freedom by introducing the demand for another, non-Christian kind.

In fact, as we have seen, the old order, though harsh, was never really one of traditional slavery. It had been dictated by the military situation of the time, in which Russia had vast extended borders with no natural defences. A quasi-monastic way of life was developed in which everyone from the Tsar to the humblest peasant had his "obedience". The Tsar had to obey his calling; the nobles had to obey the Tsar (by providing military service or service in the bureaucracy); and the peasants had to obey the landowners. It was a common effort for a common cause - the preservation of Orthodox Russia. Nobody literally "owned" anybody else. But there were relations of obedience enforced by law that were carried out, for the most part, in the Spirit of Orthodoxy. For, as St. John of Kronstadt said, "the varied forms of service... to the tsar and the fatherland are an image of the main service to our heavenly King, which must continue forever. Him first of all are we are obliged to serve, as fervent slaves of His by creation, redemption and providence... Earthly service is a test, a preparatory service for service in the heavens".⁷⁴⁴

The real problem consisted in the quite different understandings landlords and peasants of the emancipation decree. "The contrast between the two elements is easily illustrated by the mutual relationship of landowners and peasants with regard to the land. The peasants continued to see themselves and their landlords from the point of view of service to the Tsar. Since the landowners had been removed from [their obligation of] service to the land [under Peter III and Catherine II], it remained to them only to leave the land, allowing the peasants to serve on it. As to how the landowners were to be rewarded for their other services, that was the affair of the Tsar. But the landowners looked on the peasants and the land as their own property. Since the

them to freedom, but in reality they lead them away from lawful liberty to wilfulness, and then subject them to oppression."

"Philaret was still more candid in his private correspondence. The same year, 1856, after receiving a far-reaching proposal to restore the Church's prerogatives, Philaret warned that 'it is easy to discern what should be improved, but not so easy to show the means to attain that improvement.' His experience over the next few years only intensified his abiding scepticism. In February 1862, he wrote a close confidante that 'now is not the time to seek new inventions for Church authority. May God help us to preserve that which has not been plundered or destroyed'." ("Skeptical Reformer, Staunch *Tserkovnik*: Metropolitan Philaret and the Great Reforms", in Vladimir Tsurikov (ed.), *Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow, 1782-1867*, Jordanville: Variable Press, 2003, pp. 155-156)

⁷⁴³ Philaret, in Bishop Plato, *On the Question of Freedom of Conscience*, Kiev, 1902.

⁷⁴⁴ St. John of Kronstadt, *Moia Zhizn' o Khriste (My Life in Christ)*, Moscow, 1894.

peasants were being emancipated, it remained to them only to leave the land, which remained in the possession of its owners. There was no possibility of reconciliation between these two points of view. The solution was found in the state redeeming the land from the landowners; it itself covered the expenses of this grandiose operation, and by state decrees took redemption payments from the peasants."⁷⁴⁵

As we have seen, the sanctifying bonds of obedience were already breaking down before the reform as the numbers of peasant riots increased. But the change in formal structure from patriarchal to civil after 1861 meant that these bonds broke down still faster than they would have done otherwise. To that extent, the reform, though rational from a politico-economic point of view, was harmful. As Schema-Monk Boris of Optina said: "The old order was better, even though I would really catch it from the nobleman... Now it's gotten bad, because there's no authority; anyone can live however he wants."⁷⁴⁶

The great playwrights and novelists were also ambivalent about the reform, doubtful about the effect that the word "freedom" had had on intellectuals and peasants alike. Thus the old family retainer in Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* also believed that the rot set in with "Freedom"... And Turgenev wrote: "The new had 'begun ill', the old had lost all power, ignorance jostled up against dishonesty; the whole agrarian organization was shaken and unstable as quagmire bog, and only one great word, 'freedom', was wafted like the breath of God over the waters..."⁷⁴⁷

Fr. Lev Lebedev writes: "Later critics of the reform also justly point out that it suffered from an excessive 'slant' in one direction, being inspired most of all by the idea of the immediate emancipation of the serfs from *the landowners*, but without paying due attention to the question how and with what to substitute the guiding, restraining and, finally, educating function of 'the lords' (the landowners) for the peasants. Indeed, delivered as it were in one moment to themselves, to their own self-administration (after 100 years of the *habit* of being guided by the lord), could the Russian peasants immediately undertake their self-administration wisely and truly, to their own good and that of the Fatherland? That is the question nobody wanted to think about at the beginning, being sometimes ruled by the *illusion* of the 'innateness' of the people's wisdom!... They began to think about this, as often happens with us, 'in hindsight', after they had encountered disturbances and ferment among the peasantry. All the indicated mistakes in the reform of 1861 led to the peasantry as a whole being *dissatisfied* in various respects. Rumours spread among them that 'the lords' had again deceived them, that the Tsar had given them *not that* kind of freedom, that the real 'will of the Tsar' had been hidden from them, while a false one had been imposed upon them. This was immediately used by the 'enlighteners' and revolutionaries of all kinds. The peasants gradually began to listen not to the state official and the former lord, but to *the student*, who promised 'real' freedom and abundant land, attracting the peasant with the idea of 'the axe', by which they themselves would win all this from the deceiver-lords... In such a situation *only the*

⁷⁴⁵ Zaitsev, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

⁷⁴⁶ Victor Afanasyev, *Elder Barsanuphius of Optina*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 2000, pp. 216, 217.

⁷⁴⁷ Turgenev, *Smoke* (1867), chapter XXVII.

Church remained in her capacity of educator and instructor of the people, which task she immediately began to fulfill, although it was very difficult because of the restricted and poor condition of the Church herself. Therefore there soon arose the question of the broadening and strengthening of the rights and opportunities of the Russian Church. The most powerful and influential person who completely understood this was Pobedonostsev, who did a great deal in this respect, thereby eliciting the hatred of all 'democrats'.

"But in spite of inadequacies and major mistakes, the reform of 1861, of course, exploded and transfigured the life of Great Russia. A huge mass of the population (about 22 million people) found themselves a free and self-governing estate (class), juridically *equal* to the other estates...."⁷⁴⁸

Emancipation was a liberal reform carried out by supposedly despotic Russia on a scale unparalleled by any comparable reform in the West.

"In retrospect" writes J.M. Roberts, emancipation "seems a massive achievement. A few years later the United States would emancipate its Negro slaves. There were far fewer of them than there were Russian peasants and they lived in a country of much greater economic opportunity, yet the effect of throwing them on the labour market, exposed to the pure theory of *laissez-faire* economic liberalism, was to exacerbate a problem with whose ultimate consequences the United States is still grappling. In Russia the largest measure of social engineering in recorded history down to this time was carried out without comparable dislocation and it opened the way to modernization for what was potentially one of the strongest powers on earth..."⁷⁴⁹

⁷⁴⁸ Lebedev, *op. cit.*, pp. 342-343.

⁷⁴⁹ Roberts, *History of the World*, Oxford: Helicon, 1992, p. 612.

50. RUSSIAN JUSTICE: LIBERAL, PEASANT AND ECCLESIASTICAL

The emancipation of the serfs in 1861 was the first in a series of liberalizing changes, or reforms, in several other spheres of Russian national life. Emancipation, as Gregory L. Frazee writes, “had eliminated the squire’s authority (which had been virtually the only administrative and police organ in the countryside) and hence required the construction of new institutions.

“One was a new set of local organs of self-government called the *zemstvo*. Because the pre-reform regime had been so heavily concentrated in the major cities (with only nominal representation in rural areas) and plainly lacked the human and material resources to construct an elaborate system of local administration, in 1864 the government elected to confer primary responsibility on society itself by establishing a new organ of local self-government, the *zemstvo*. The reform statute provided for the creation of elected assemblies at the district and provincial level, chosen from separate *curiae* (peasants, townspeople, and private landowners), the assemblies bore primary responsibility for the social and cultural development of society’s infrastructure. Specifically, by exercising powers of self-taxation of the *zemstvo*, ‘society’ in each province was to build and maintain key elements of the infrastructure (such as roads, bridges, hospitals, schools, asylums, and prisons), to provide essential social services (public health, poor relief, and assistance during famines), and to promote industry, commerce, and agriculture.”⁷⁵⁰

“In the *zemstvos*,” writes Hosking, “we see for the first time a new social force emerging: *obshchestvennost’*. The term is difficult to translate, but might be rendered as ‘educated society’, ‘politically aware society’ or even ‘public opinion’. It implied an educated and informed public engaging or wishing to engage in political affairs. In their own eyes its members represented a kind of ‘alternative establishment’, more truly representative of the Russian nation than the regime was. It was not a revolutionary intelligentsia, dreaming of total transformation, but a more practical and moderate opposition, anxious to work independently of the government to bring about gradual social improvement. They were the heirs of the peacefully inclined majority of the Decembrists. Their radical opponents accused them dismissively of being content with ‘small deeds’ which would never generate real change. The government remained, all the same, intensely suspicious of them...”⁷⁵¹

And with reason, for the *zemstvos* were to play a large part in the revolution. This was foreseen by the landowner and friend of St. Seraphim, Nicholas Motovilov, who was invited to a feast in honour of the foundation of the *zemstva*: “When toasts were raised, Motovilov made a speech in which he declared that with the foundation of the *zemstosa* the destruction of Russia would begin. So instead of raising his glass, he threw it on the floor and left the assembly...”⁷⁵²

⁷⁵⁰ Frazee, “Reform and Counter Reform 1855-1880”, in Frazee, *Russia. A History*, Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 209.

⁷⁵¹ Hosking, *op. cit.*, p. 325.

⁷⁵² Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev), *Ideologia Rossii* (The Ideology of Russia), St. Petersburg, 1992, p. 27.

The local government, or *zemstvo* reform had given the nobility a taste of administration, stimulating demands for the introduction of their idol, *constitutionalism* or *representative government* – and not only at the local level.

The initiative here came from the Moscow nobility, who in January 1865, as V. F. Ivanov writes, “agitated for the convening of the people’s representatives, thanking the Tsar for his wise beginnings. The Moscow nobility, who always strove for the good of the State, asked him not to stop on his chosen path and bring to completion the state building begun by him ‘*through the convening of a general assembly of elected delegates from the Russian land for the discussion of the needs that are common to the whole state*’. Emperor Alexander did not accept this appeal. He underlined that ‘not one assembly can speak in the name of the other classes’ and that the right to care for what is useful and beneficial for the State belonged to him as emperor.

“Alexander thought and wisely foresaw that the granting of a constitution for Russia would be disastrous for the latter.

“In a private conversation with one of the composers of the appeal (Golokhvostov), Alexander said: ‘What do you want? A constitutional form of administration? I give you my word, at this table, that I would be ready to sign any constitution you like if I were convinced that it was useful for Russia. *But I know that if I do this today, tomorrow Russia will disintegrate into pieces.*’...”⁷⁵³

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“A second major sphere of reform was education, both at the elementary and higher levels. Of particular urgency was the need for elementary schooling: if the former serfs were to become part of the body politic and good citizens, it was essential that the massive illiteracy be overcome. First through the initiative of the Orthodox Church, later the Ministry of Education and the *zemstvo*, a host of schools sprang up across the countryside. In contrast to the clandestine reformism under Nicholas I, the liberal bureaucrats not only drafted legislation but also published these plans to solicit comment at home and abroad; they then drew heavily on these critical comments as they prepared the final statutes on schools and universities. The Elementary School Statute of 1864 provided the legal framework for this multi-tier system but left financing as the legal responsibility of the local community. A parallel statute sought to regulate and promote the growth of secondary schools. More complex, and political, was reform at the university level, which had been shaken by student unrest and appeared to be a hotbed of radicalism. Nevertheless, the University Statute of 1863 generally dismantled the crippling restrictions of Nicholas I’s rule and transformed the university into a self-governing corporation, with far greater rights for its teaching staff and even some recognition of student rights.

“The third (and arguably most liberal) reform was the judicial statute of 1864. Russian courts had been notorious for their corruption, inefficiency, and rank injustice; indeed, so notorious were they that Nicholas had initiated reform by establishing a

⁷⁵³ Ivanov, *Russkaia Intelligentsia i Masonstvo ot Petra I do nashikh dnei* (The Russian Intelligentsia and Masonry from Peter I to our days), Harbin, 1934, Moscow, 1997, p. 340.

commission in 1850 to rebuild the court system. But that commission had been dominated by old-regime bureaucrats who lacked formal legal training; in 1861 Alexander, persuaded of their incompetence, abolished that commission and established an entirely new committee, which was dominated by liberal *gosudarstvenniki* (civil servants devoted to the state and its interests). Drawing heavily upon European models, the commission adumbrated the following 'fundamental principles' of the new order: equality of all before the law; separation of the judiciary from administration; jury trial by propertied peers; publicity of proceedings; establishment of a legal profession and bar; and security of judicial tenure. As in the educational reform, the commission published its basic principles and invited commentary by the public and legal specialists. It then reviewed these comments (summarized in six published volumes) and made appropriate adjustments before the statute were finally promulgated in November 1864."⁷⁵⁴

The legal reforms were perhaps the most successful and popular, of the Tsar's reforms. As S.S. Oldenburg writes, "Russian justice, founded on the *Juridical Statutes* of 1864, was maintained from that time on a high level; the 'Gogol characters' in the world of the courts departed to the sphere of legend. A careful attitude to those on trial, a very broad provision of rights for the defence, an excellent selection of judges – all this constituted the subject of justified pride among Russians, and corresponded to the mood of society. The juridical statutes were one of the few laws which society not only respected, but which it was ready to defend with zeal from the authorities when the latter considered it necessary to introduce qualifications and corrections into a liberal law for the sake of a more successful struggle against crime."⁷⁵⁵

The reform of the law courts "came down to making Russian jurisprudence on all levels and in all regions maximally just, incorruptible, based not on the whim of judges, but on the law and (which is very important!) on *the public understanding* of the law and its application in every individual case! For the resolution of civil suits, property and other quarrels, and also small criminal cases there were created *special* 'volost' courts' for the peasants. For all the other classes there were created two systems – 'secular courts' (for civil matters and petty criminal ones) that were *elected* by *uyezd* and city assembly, and 'circuit courts', the members of which were *appointed* by the State. In the latter particularly important matters and major criminal cases were examined. In criminal cases in the circuit courts 'jurors' took part; they had been chosen by lot from the population. All this, that is, the investigation in court, took place publicly, in the presence of the people. The final decision belonged, not to the judge, but to *the jurors*, who pronounced a 'verdict' after a secret consultation amongst themselves. On the basis of the verdict the judges formulated the sentence. The court did not depend on any institutions of the authorities. Thus was created the most perfect juridical system in the world (!) of that time, which quickly taught all *the feelings of legality* and a good *consciousness of one's rights*. In this connection humiliating corporal punishments were abolished, and the system of punishments was in general made softer."⁷⁵⁶

⁷⁵⁴ Frazee, *op. cit.*, pp. 209-211.

⁷⁵⁵ Oldenburg, *Tsarstvoovanie Imperatora Nikolaia II* (The Reign of Emperor Nicholas II), Belgrade, 1939, Washington, 1981, pp. 24-25.

⁷⁵⁶ Lebedev, *op. cit.*, p. 344.

Max Hayward writes that “the main criticism of the post-Reform legal system was, in fact, that the juries tended to be far too lenient, and that it was therefore difficult to obtain convictions in criminal cases, whether or not they had a political aspect. This was probably indicative as much of traditional Russian sympathy for the unfortunate as of automatic opposition to the authorities, or of indifference to the law as such. Even so, service on juries undoubtedly gave many Russians of all classes (including peasants) a taste for ‘due process’ which in time was bound to lead to a more widespread understanding that legal formality is not incompatible with justice and mercy.”⁷⁵⁷

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Besides the liberal, westernised justice introduced by the reforms of 1864, there was, as we have seen, another, *peasant* concept of justice, in Russia. “The Emancipation,” writes Figes, “had liberated the serfs from the judicial tyranny of their landlords but it had not incorporated them in the world ruled by law, which included the rest of society. Excluded from the written law administered through the civil courts, the newly liberated peasants were kept in a sort of legal apartheid after 1861. The tsarist regime looked upon them as a cross between savages and children, and subjected them to magistrates appointed from the gentry. Their legal rights were confined to the peasant-class [*volost*] courts, which operated on the basis of local custom.”⁷⁵⁸

The contrast between the two kinds of Russian justice – the individualist-objective justice of the gentry, and the collectivist-subjective justice of the peasantry – was rooted in the schism in the Russian nation that went back to Peter the Great. The entrenchment of the system of serfdom, accompanied by encroachments on the people’s traditionally Orthodox way of life, had both divided the people within itself and created two conflicting concepts of justice: the gentry’s concept, which sought to entrench the gains they had made in law, a law based primarily on western ideas of the rights of the individual citizen, and the peasants’ concept, which rejected the “justice” of that settlement and sought their own justice, a justice based primarily on the rights of the majority community, in its place. After 1861, the situation, and the inter-relationship between the two nations and two concepts of justice, began to develop in a very complex and confusing way.

On the one hand, through the reforms of the period 1861-64, gentry justice began to extend its influence, as we have seen, into the countryside. It was sincerely argued by proponents of the reforms that this influence would ultimately be to the benefit of the peasants themselves, and of the country as a whole. But the peasants did not see it that way: centuries of not-unmerited distrust had done their work, and they chose to cling onto their own justice, which put the interest of the peasant community, the *mir*, above that of the individual peasant. On the other hand, as the divisions between classes and social estates began to weaken and social mobility increased, peasant justice began to extend *its* influence upwards, especially into the younger generation of the nobility and *raznochintsy*. Here the peasants’ “Russian socialism” came into conflict with the

⁷⁵⁷ Hayward, in Obolensky, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

⁷⁵⁸ Figes, *A People's Tragedy*, p. 97.

western socialism that attracted the radical youth, as the youths discovered when they tried and failed to introduce their ideas into the countryside in the 1870s. Nevertheless, there was enough in common between the collectivism of the two world-views to make their eventual explosive union in 1917 feasible – especially after a new generation of peasants had grown up that was more literate than their fathers and more prepared to challenge their authority...

“The professionalism of lawyers,” writes Hosking, “accompanied and almost certainly assisted an evolution taking place in attitudes towards property, the family, and gender. Hitherto family relations had generally been seen in the context of the *rod*, or kin group, with strong authority vested in the eldest male, in men over women, and in parents over children. Descent and inheritance went through the male line, and illegitimate children enjoyed no rights. Members of the *rod* had a right to a share in both movable and immovable property for their sustenance. As a result of these traditions women traditionally enjoyed somewhat more secure property rights than in many European countries: they could reclaim their dowries, and in case of need had a right to a share of the kin’s land and other property to support themselves, though it reverted to the male line after their death. On the other hand, a husband’s permission was required before a wife could take a job, start a course of education, or enter into financial transactions. The church had jurisdiction over family affairs: divorce was difficult to obtain, and marital separation was not recognized in law.”⁷⁵⁹

For besides the new gentry and the old peasant concepts of justice, there was a third, still older kind: the justice of the Church. While this, naturally, tended to focus on strictly ecclesiastical issues, in one area in particular it came into potential conflict with the way in which gentry ideas of justice were developing: marriage and divorce. The novelist Lev Tolstoy discovered these problems when he advised his sister Masha to divorce, and he included discussion of them in his famous novel *Anna Karenina* (1877).

“Over the course of the nineteenth century,” writes Rosamund Bartlett, “the Orthodox Church had made marital separation more rather than less difficult. Petitions for divorce had to be made to the diocesan authorities, and entailed an expensive, bureaucratic and lengthy process, with nine separate stages. Adultery, furthermore, could only be proved with the testimony of witnesses, as Alexey Alexandrovich discovers to his horror when he goes to consult the ‘famous St. Petersburg lawyer’ in Part Four of *Anna Karenina*. It is thus hardly surprising so few petitions were made – seventy-one in the whole of Russia in 1860, and only seven made on the grounds of adultery. But with the Great Reforms, urban growth and the expansion of education came new attitudes towards marriage, and pressure to simplify and update divorce, so it was a constant topic of discussion in the ecclesiastical press in the second half of the nineteenth century. A committee set up by reformers in 1870 proposed transferring divorce proceedings to the civil courts, thus saving the ecclesiastical authorities from having to investigate such matters, ‘which are full of descriptions of suggestive and disgusting scenes, in which the whole stench of depravity is often collected.’ In May 1873, just when Tolstoy was starting *Anna Karenina*, the Holy Synod overwhelmingly rejected this proposal, as it did a proposal to introduce civil marriage (which had already been introduced elsewhere in Europe)

⁷⁵⁹ Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, p. 295.

on the grounds that it was 'legalised fornication'. Nevertheless, the number of divorces rose steadily, from 795 in 1866 to 947 in 1875..."⁷⁶⁰

"Among the educated strata, a newer view was gaining ground, that marriage was a bond of affection between two equal partners, and that children on reaching adulthood were the legal equals of their parents. It seemed to follow from this perception that, where marriage had broken down, procedures for ending it and redistributing property and the care of children should be simple and based on principles of equity rather than on patriarchal moral judgements. Lawyers, imbued with Western legal concepts, increasingly took the view that property should be owned by individuals recognizing their responsibilities rather than by extended families. They naturally also believed that secular law courts were better placed to accomplish this than ecclesiastical courts.

"There was a gradual evolution in the legal disposition of these matters, not so much because of legislation – which was slow and uncertain – but because of the decisions of courts, where the Westernized training of judges and lawyers produced its effects. The Civil Cassation Court in the Senate, to which many family and property cases came for review, tended more and more to come down on the side of acknowledging women's property rights, and recognized marital separation at least thirty years before it reached statutory sanction. In this way by the late nineteenth century the law courts were gradually fostering the view that legal and property rights were vested in individuals rather than in patrimonial extended families..."⁷⁶¹

The problem for the Church was that while the vast majority of Russians were baptized members of the Church, and therefore subject to her law, in practice the majority of them were no longer real Christians. The result was not only that chastity declined: the very understanding of chastity, and its moral necessity, also declined. Liberal western views became more acceptable than the Church's teaching. So it was not only Westernized judges, but also Westernized petitioners, that exerted pressure on the courts to make judgements that were unacceptable from the Church's point of view.

This pressure came to a head after the revolution, when the Bolsheviks introduced civil marriage with divorce-on-demand. The Russian Orthodox Church resisted this innovation fiercely, insisting that civil marriage was not enough for a Christian. The patriarch of the Russian Church at the time was New Hieromartyr Tikhon. Before he became Patriarch, when he was still Archbishop in America, he wrote: "In order to be acceptable in the eyes of God, marriage must be entered into 'only in the Lord' (I Corinthians 7.39), the blessing of the Church must be invoked upon it, through which it will become a sacrament, in which the married couple will be given grace that will make their bond holy and high, unto the likeness of the bond between Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5.23-32), which will help them in the fulfillment of their mutual duties. Sometimes, as in this country, for instance, Church marriage is deemed unnecessary. But if without the help of God we can accomplish no perfect and true

⁷⁶⁰ Bartlett, *Tolstoy. A Russian Life*, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011, pp. 242-243.

⁷⁶¹ Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, pp. 295-296.

good (John 15.5), if all our satisfaction is from God (II Corinthians 3.5), if God produces in us good desires and acts (Philippians 2.14), then how is it that the grace of God is unnecessary for husband and wife in order to fulfill their lofty duties honourably? No, a true Orthodox Christian could not be satisfied with civil marriage alone, without the Church marriage. Such a marriage will remain without the supreme Christian sanction, as the grace of God is attracted only towards that marriage which was blessed by the Church, this treasury of grace. As to civil marriage, it places no creative religious and moral principles, no spiritual power of God's grace, at the basis of matrimony and for its safety, but merely legal liabilities, which are not sufficient for moral perfection."⁷⁶²

⁷⁶² Hieromartyr Tikhon, "An Address of the Right Reverend Tikhon", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 37, no. 4, July-August, 1987.

51. "THE NEW MAN" AND "UNDERGROUND MAN"

Alexander II became tsar immediately on the death of his father in 1855, but was officially crowned and anointed to the tsardom in Moscow in 1856. Just as his father's reign had corresponded to his character: stern, disciplined, unbending, so did Alexander's reign correspond to his own, very different character: well-intentioned, reformist, and morally and culturally unstable. That change, by no means all to the good, was betokened by two bad omens during the coronation ceremony itself: the golden orb fell on the floor, and the crown fell off the head of the Empress Maria Alexandrovna.

The Empress, a German princess who became a fervent convert to Orthodoxy on marrying her husband, probably represented the best of the Romanovs and of the nobility that still ruled the country. She endured much in her family life with great patience. Thus when a séance took place in Peterhof, with the Emperor and many others participating, she refused to attend and said of the strange phenomena that took place: "These are all pranks of the Evil One. Those who commune with us are not at all the spirits we call on but the ones St. Augustine called 'spirits of lies'. Those spirits of the air are dangerous and false... Apostle Paul spoke of them too. Dealing with them is a sin."⁷⁶³

It is not fanciful to suppose that the spiritualism practiced in the higher reaches of Russian society gave access to the devils in human form that caused such upheaval during the reign of Alexander II and in the end caused his death...

Soon after ascending the throne, the tsar lifted the ban on travel abroad and the limitations on the numbers of university students; censorship on the press was eased. The Decembrists, whom Nicholas I had repressed, were allowed to return from exile in Siberia. Thus Prince Volkonsky, a relative of Tolstoy, was given a rapturous reception in Moscow... These developments, together with the fact that the leading Slavophiles of the pre-war period, such as Khomiakov and Kireyevsky, died soon after the war, meant that by the beginning of the 1860s the ideological struggle was shifting in favour of the westerners. Only this new wave of westernism was much more radical than its predecessor...

Of course, westernism had been undermining the foundations of Russian civilization for at least one-and-a-half centuries. A sign of its penetration into cultural life was the series of concerts conducted, with enormous success, by Johann Strauss, the Viennese "waltz king", at Pavlovsk (within easy access by train from St. Petersburg) from 1856 to 1865, again in 1869 and once more in 1886. It was not only his music that was popular: he himself was adored like a modern western pop idol. "It is hardly surprising, given not just his celebrity, his extraordinary musical talent, but also his extreme good looks – dark lustrous hair, swarthy skin and blazing eyes, an eye for fashion and always immaculately turned out – that Johann Strauss was a magnet for Russian women. It soon became *de rigueur* for the ladies to view for his attention by brandishing cigarette packets that bore his portrait and autograph..."⁷⁶⁴

⁷⁶³ Empress Maria Alexandrovna, in Edvard Radzinsky, *Alexander II*, London: Free Press, 2005, p. 121.

⁷⁶⁴ John Suchet, *The Last Waltz*, London: Elliott and Thompson, 2015, p. 105.

This western cultural invasion elicited a backlash. In music it came from a group of five Russian composers, - Cesar Cui, Rimsky-Korsakov, Balakirev, Borodin and Mussorgsky, - who wrote consciously Russian music based on Russian folk themes. But in general such defences proved weak indeed against the onslaught from the West - it is the westerniser Tchaikovsky rather than the Russian nationalist Mussorgsky who remains the most popular Russian composer to this day...

This new wave of westerism coincided with a rebellion in Poland. The Polish revolt, writes Montefiore, "soured Alexander's *perestroika*. The Retrogrades thought too much freedom had been granted, the liberals too little.... Alexander's relaxation of controls over universities and censorship had created a heady expectation that led to student riots which had to be suppressed. 'Here everything is quiet, thank God,' the tsar informed Bariatinsky, 'but a severe vigilance is more necessary than ever, given the thoughtless tendencies of so-called progress.'

"The 1860s were an exciting but disturbing time. Newspapers mushroomed. 'I've never been greatly enamoured of writers in general,' Alexander confided to Bariatinsky, 'and I've sadly concluded that they are a class of individuals with hidden motives and dangerous biases.'"⁷⁶⁵

The new generation of writers were younger and more radical than their predecessors. Students had played no part in the revolutionary ferment of the Decembrist rebellion. But now they were at the forefront. Typical of them was Dmitri Pisarev, who wrote in May, 1861. "Here is the concluding word of our youth camp: what can be broken should be broken; that which withstands a blow can stay, but that which will fly off into fragments is rubbish; in any case beat to the right and to the left, no harm will come of it nor can come of it..." "Literature in all its varieties must strike at one point; it must with all its powers emancipate the human person from those various restrictions which make him ashamed of his own thought, caste prejudices, the authority of tradition, *the striving for a common ideal* and all that outdated rubbish which hinders the living man from breathing and developing freely."

Still more radical was a pamphlet signed by a "Central Revolutionary Committee" that appeared in the spring of 1862. Proclaimed by a group calling itself Young Russia (in imitation of the revolutionary *Carbonari* group, Young Italy), and penned by the student Peter Zaichnevsky, it declared: "We need not a divinely anointed tsar, nor an ermine mantle that hides hereditary inability, but an elected elder who receives a salary for his service. If Alexander II does not understand this and is not willing to voluntarily cede to the people, the worse for him..."

"There is only one way out of the oppressive situation - revolution, revolution bloody and inexorable, revolution that must radically change everything, everything without exception, all the foundations of contemporary society, and destroy the adherents of today's order. We are not afraid of it, even though we know that rivers of blood will flow, that there might be innocent victims. We will have just one cry: 'To the hatchets!' and then attack the imperial party, without pity, the way it does not pity

⁷⁶⁵ Montefiore, *The Romanovs*, London: Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, 2016, p. 400.

us now. We will attack in the squares, if the vile blackguards dare to come out, attack them in their houses, attack in the vilages and towns! Remember that those who are not with us are against us, and those who are against us are out enemy, and enemies must be obliterated by every means.”⁷⁶⁶

The new generation of educated malcontents was called “the intelligentsia”. According to Radzinsky, “it was a roiling mixture of people from every walk of life (clergy, merchants, bourgeoisie, minor officials), primarily those in ‘white-collar[positions, who became writers, journalists, teachers, and scientists.” The *intelligenty* “proudly hailed a new era, and they replaced the nobility as the avant-garde of Russian society.”⁷⁶⁷ According to Sir Richard Evans, however, the term was “originally coined by the Polish philosopher and nationalist activist Karol Libelt (1807-75) to denote the men and women who actively campaigned for Polish national identity on the basis of language, culture and education. The term meant both more and less than its equivalent in the world of the Baltic Germans, the *literati*; it did not include the whole of the educated middle class (the German *Bildungsbürgertum*) but on the other hand it did have a specific connotation of civic activism, particularly – in the light of official restrictions on freedom of speech – in literature, which thus took on a highly political character. Initially drawn from the nobility, the members of the Russian intelligentsia were gradually joined by people of less well-defined social origins, the *raznochintsy* (people of miscellaneous social rank), largely because of the expansion of the professional classes, the universities, and the secondary school system. In 1833, 79 per cent of secondary school pupils were sons of nobles and bureaucrats, but by 1885 this proportion had fallen to 49 per cent. The proportion of commoners among these pupils had risen over the same period from 19 per cent to 44 per cent. By 1894, too, there were 25,000 students at Russian universities. Long before this students began to organize themselves and produce newsletters with titles such as *The Living Voice* and *The Unmasker*. The students formed the audience for the new intelligentsia and eventually supplied it with new recruits: they were, as one commentator remarked, ‘the barometer of public opinion’.

“As the students began to demand the dismissal of ineffectual professors, forcing two in Moscow to resign in 1858, a reaction set in. One group of professors complained that ‘the student is no longer a pupil but is becoming a master’. Admissions were curtailed and the police came back into the universities to supervise conduct. Exemptions from tax were removed, drastically reducing the numbers of the poor ‘academic proletariat’. Meetings could be held only with permission from the university authorities. This clampdown radicalized many students. A number were arrested and expelled. Similar events happened in the provinces, More generally, as newsletters and magazines began to appear in greater numbers, the failure of Alexander II to push forward with more reforms, above all his refusal to introduce an elected national legislature, propelled students and members of the intelligentsia sharply to the left...”⁷⁶⁸

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⁷⁶⁶ Radzinsky, *Alexander II*, pp. 138-139.

⁷⁶⁷ Radzinsky, p. 152.

⁷⁶⁸ Evans, *The Pursuit of Power. Europe 1815-1914*, London: Penguin, 2017, pp. 610-611.

In 1862 there appeared two novels portraying the “new man” of the intelligentsia: Chernyshevsky’s *What is to be Done?* and Turgenev’s *Fathers and Sons*...

Nikolai Gavrilovich Chernyshevsky (1828-89) was the son of a greatly revered priest, was a disciple of John Stuart Mill and closely linked with the exiled socialist Alexander Herzen. In his novel, which was published by the poet Nikolai Nekrasov in his progressive journal *Sovremennik* (The Contemporary), he gave a positive portrayal of the new man in the figure of Rakhmetev.

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

“Allowing the publication of Chernyshevsky’s novel was one of the biggest mistakes the tsarist censor ever made: for it converted more people to the cause of the revolution than all the works of Marx and Engels put together (Marx himself learned Russian in order to read it). Plekhanov, the ‘founder of Russian Marxism’, said that from that novel ‘we have all drawn moral strength and faith in a better future’. The revolutionary theorist Tkachev called it the ‘gospel’ of the movement; Kropotkin the ‘banner of Russian youth’. One young revolutionary of the 1860s claimed that there only three great men in history: Jesus Christ, St. Paul and Chernyshevsky. Lenin, whose own ascetic lifestyle bore a disturbing resemblance to Rakhmetev’s, read the novel five times in one summer. He later acknowledged that it had been crucial in converting him to the revolutionary movement. ‘It completely reshaped me,’ he told Valentinov in 1904. ‘This is a book which changes one for a whole lifetime.’ Chernyshevsky’s importance, in Lenin’s view, was that he had ‘not only showed that every right-thinking and really honest man must be a revolutionary, but also – and this is his greatest merit – what a revolutionary *must be like*’. Rakhmetev, with his superhuman will and selfless dedication to the cause, was the perfect model of the Bolshevik.

“Chernyshevsky’s hero was also an inspiration to the nihilistic students of the 1860s. His asceticism, his belief in science, and his rejection of the old moral order appealed to them. Their ‘nihilism’ entailed a youthful rebellion against the artistic dabbling of their father’s generation (the ‘men of the forties’); a militant utilitarianism, materialism and belief in progress through the application of scientific methods to society; and a

general questioning of all authority, moral and religious, which was manifested in a revolutionary passion to destroy... As Bakunin put it, since the old Russia was rotten to the core, it was 'a creative urge' to destroy it. These were the angry young men of their day. Many of them came from relatively humble backgrounds – the sons of priests, such as Chernyshevsky, for example, or of mixed social origins (*raznochintsy*) – so their sense of Russia's worthlessness was reinforced by their own feelings of underprivilege. Chernyshevsky, for example, often expressed a deep hatred and feeling of shame for the backwardness of Saratov province where he had grown up. 'It would be better', he once wrote, 'not to be born at all than to be born a Russian.' There was a long tradition of national self-hatred among the Russian intelligentsia, stemming from the fact that they were so cut off from the ordinary people and had always modelled themselves on the West."⁷⁶⁹

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

The "son" in Turgenev's novel was Bazarov, whom the author calls a "nihilist", that is, "a person who does not take any principle for granted, however much that principle may be revered".⁷⁷⁰ The term "nihilism" was first introduced, according to B.P. Kosmin, by Michael Nikiforovich Katkov (1818-87), editor of the conservative *Russkij Vestnik* (Russian Herald) and publisher of Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky. He diagnosed Bazarov's spiritual illness as proceeding from his lack of rootedness in the national soil: "Man taken separately does not exist. He is everywhere part of some living connection, or some social organization... Man extracted from the environment is a fiction or an abstraction. His moral and intellectual organization, or, more broadly, his ideas are only then operative in him when he has discovered them first as the organizational forces of the environment in which he happens to live and think."⁷⁷¹

Bazarov was a caricature of the nihilists, materialists who believed only in natural science and in "utility", not useless art or poetry. We see him dissecting frogs, and he dies from a disease contracted from dissecting a human corpse. As Sir Isaiah Berlin writes, he "takes deliberate pleasure in describing himself and his allies as 'nihilists', by which he means no more than that he, and those who think like him, reject everything that cannot be established by the rational methods of natural science. Truth alone matters: what cannot be established by observation and experiment is useless or harmful ballast – 'romantic rubbish' – which an intelligent man will ruthlessly eliminate. In this heap of irrational nonsense Bazarov includes all that is impalpable, that cannot be reduced to quantitative measurement – literature and philosophy, the beauty of art and the beauty of nature, tradition and authority, religion and intuition,

⁷⁶⁹ Figes, *A People's Tragedy*, London: Pimlico, 1997, pp. 130-131.

⁷⁷⁰ Turgenev wrote that in Bazarov "I could watch the embodiment of that principle which had scarcely come to life but was just beginning to stir at the time, the principle which later received the name of nihilism" (Figes, *The Europeans*, London: Penguin, 2020, p. 217).

⁷⁷¹ *Russkaia Filosofia: Malij Entsiklopedicheskij Slovar'* (Russian Philosophy: Small Encyclopaedic Dictionary), Moscow: Nauka, 1995, p. 253. Montefiore thinks that Turgenev introduced the term.

the uncriticised assumptions of conservatives and liberals, of populists and socialist, of landowners and serfs. He believes in strength, will-power, energy, utility, work, in ruthless criticism of all that exists. He wishes to tear off masks, blow up all revered principles and norms. Only irrefutable facts, only useful knowledge, matter. He clashes almost immediately with the touchy, conventional Pavel Kirsanov: 'At present,' he tells him, 'the most useful thing is to deny. So we deny.' 'Everything?' asks Pavel Kirsanov. 'Everything,' 'What? Not only art, poetry... but even... too horrible to utter...' 'Everything.' [...] 'So you destroy everything... but surely one must build, too?' 'That's not our business... First one must clear the ground.'

"The fiery revolutionary agitator Bakunin, who had just then escaped from Siberia to London, was saying something of this kind: the entire rotten structure, the corrupt old world, must be razed to the ground, before something new can be built upon it..."⁷⁷²

According to Fr. Seraphim Rose: "The figure of Bazarov in that novel is the type of the 'new men' of the 'sixties' in Russia, simple-minded materialists and determinists, who seriously thought (like D. Pisarev) to find the salvation of mankind in the dissection of the frog, or thought they had proved the non-existence of the human soul by failing to find it in the course of an autopsy. (One is reminded of the Soviet Nihilists, the 'new men' of our own 'sixties', who fail to find God in outer space.) This 'Nihilist' is the man who respects nothing, bows before no authority, accepts (so he thinks) nothing on faith, judges all in the light of a science taken as absolute and exclusive truth, rejects all idealism and abstraction in favor of the concrete and factual. He is the believer, in a word, in the 'nothing-but', in the rejection of everything men have considered 'higher', the things of the mind and spirit, to the lower or 'basic': matter, sensation, the physical..."⁷⁷³

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The growth of nihilism fairly soon elicited an anti-liberal reaction in the Russian government. Thus in 1866, Count Dmitri Tolstoy, a relative of the novelist, was appointed Minister of Education. As A.N. Wilson writes, "he caused an immediate about-turn in educational policies. He regarded the superficial materialist outlook of the young to have been caused by not doing enough Latin and Greek, and he abolished the teaching of science in all Russian grammar schools. The police, the army, the Holy Synod were all, likewise, put into reverse gear..."⁷⁷⁴

However, these measures were reactionary rather than truly regenerative; they were reactions to the illness that treated the symptoms but not the cause; the patient, educated society, continued, on the whole, to despise the government and all its works. Profound exposures of the nihilism of the "new man" would appear: in the later novels of Dostoyevsky, in some of the writings of the Optina elders, and, much later, in the collection of essays by ex-Marxists entitled *Vekhi* (Signposts). Since the publication of

⁷⁷² Isaiah Berlin, "Fathers and Children: Turgenev and the Liberal Predicament", in *Russian Thinkers*, London: Penguin, 2008, pp. 317-318.

⁷⁷³ Rose, *Nihilism*, Forestville, Ca.: Fr. Seraphim Rose Foundation, 1994, p. 34.

⁷⁷⁴ Wilson, *Tolstoy*, London: Atlantic Books, 2012, p. 328. On Count Dmitri Tolstoy, see Izmistieva, "Dmitriy Andreevich Tolstoj", *Voprosy Istorii* (Questions of History), 2006 (3).

Darwin's *Origin of the Species* in 1859, science had become the god of the age, worshipped both by scientists and by non-scientists, being not only the engine of material prosperity but the foundation of all "true" philosophy.

As noted above, the essential reading for the Russian "new man" was politics and science. Darwinism was immediately greeted with the greatest enthusiasm by liberals and revolutionaries of all kinds; for it promised to remove the need for any Divine Creator or Law-Giver, reducing the origin of all life to pure chance. Thus Marx wrote to Engels on reading *The Origin of Species* in 1860: "The book contains the basis in natural history for our view." Lenin was no less enamoured of it. John P. Koster writes: "The only piece of artwork in Lenin's office was a kitsch statue of an ape sitting on a heap of books – including *Origin of Species* – and contemplating a human skull... The ape and the skull were a symbol of his faith, the Darwinian faith that man is a brute, the world is a jungle, and individual lives are irrelevant..."⁷⁷⁵

Darwinism needed to be countered on both the scientific and the philosophical/religious levels; but no such refutation was forthcoming until Dostoyevsky's assault on "half-science" in *The Devils*. By this term he meant Darwinism and materialist philosophies that claim to be based on science, as opposed to true science, which humbly remains within the proper bounds of empiricism and does not deny Revelation. One of his characters described "half-science" as "that most terrible scourge of mankind, worse than pestilence, famine, or war, and quite unknown till our present century. Half-science is a despot such as has never been known before, a despot that has its own priests and slaves, a despot before whom everybody prostrates himself with love and superstitious dread, such as has been inconceivable till now, before whom science trembles and surrenders in a shameful way."⁷⁷⁶

The era was a cynical one. And so "Yet another child of Alexander's perestroika," writes Radzinsky, "was Russian satire. Dostoevsky described it in his diary: 'Russian satire seems to be afraid of good deeds in Russian society. Upon encountering such a deed, it becomes anxious and does not calm down until it finds somewhere deep in that deed a scoundrel. Then it rejoices and shouts: 'It's not a good deed at all, there's nothing to be happy about, see for yourselves, there's a scoundrel in it!'"

"That is exactly why satire was so successful among the intelligentsia. Constant criticism is what the new social class demanded and welcomed. Their idol, Saltykov-Shchedrin, wrote an immortal satire, a sacred book for Russian liberals, *The Story of the Town of Glupovo*. The miserable inhabitants of the town are whipped and robbed by the rulers, the city officials, who compete in viciousness, greed, and idiocy. The townspeople compete in docility. One of the city officials turns out to have an artificial head. It does not keep him from ruling the docile residents of Glupovo or keep the people from fearing and obeying him. Young readers easily recognized Russian tsars in the town officials and the history of Russian fear and servility in the history of the townspeople. The moral of the book, the thread through the entire narrative, is to put an end to the docility and our stupid history."⁷⁷⁷

⁷⁷⁵ Koster, *The Atheist Syndrome*, Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth and Hyatt, p. 174.

⁷⁷⁶ Dostoyevsky, *The Devils*, London: Penguin Books, Magarshack translation, 1971, p. 257.

⁷⁷⁷ Radzinsky, *Alexander II*, pp. 155-156.

The debate over science and the “new man” was linked with a deeper debate over rationalism and irrationalism. The “new man” was the supreme rationalist; he allowed no criterion of truth other than “reason”, understood in the narrowest sense. Paradoxically, as the revolution was to demonstrate with irrefutable power, this kind of rationalism was closely linked with the profoundest irrationalism and the Eruption of wildly destructive and anti-rational forces into the human soul and human society as a whole...

In the eighteenth century the Scottish philosopher David Hume had argued that “reason alone can never be a motive to any action of the will”. Reason “can never oppose passion in the direction of the will”. For “’tis not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger.”⁷⁷⁸

A hundred years after Hume, when the most extreme rationalism and positivism was all the rage among the Russian intelligentsia, Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky, quite independently from the philosophers, again drew the attention of his readers to the sea of the irrational that surrounds the small island of our rational minds and that threatens, by its dark power, to overwhelm reason altogether. He did this most famously in his great novel *Crime and Punishment* (1865) in which the student Raskolnikov produces seemingly rational reasons for the irrational act of murdering an old woman.

Perhaps even more penetrating is *Notes from Underground* (1864), in which his anti-hero challenges all the premises of nineteenth-century society, not on rational grounds, but simply because he sees no reason to be reasonable. “I would not be at all surprised, for instance, if suddenly and without the slightest possible reason a gentleman of ignoble or rather reactionary and sardonic countenance were to arise amid all that coming reign of universal common sense and, gripping his sides firmly with his hands, were to say to us all. ‘Well, gentlemen, what about giving all this common sense a great kick and letting it shiver in the dust before our feet simply to send all these logarithms to the devil so that we again live according to our silly will?’ And again: ‘I’d sell the world for a kopeck just to be left in peace. Let the world perish, or let me drink my tea? I tell you, I’d let the world perish, just so long as I could always drink my tea. Did you know that or not? Well, I know that I’m no good, perverse, selfish and lazy.’”

And why shouldn’t he be? What reason can possibly persuade a no good to be good? “Trust them [the rationalist moralists] to prove to you that a single drop of your own fat is bound to be dearer to you, when it comes down to it, than a hundred thousand human lives and that this conclusion is an answer to all this talk about virtue and duty, and other ravings and superstitions.”

So much for Kant’s categorical imperative and Bentham’s utilitarian ethics! For it is no good “proving” to someone that a certain course of action is in his own best interests, or in the best interests of mankind as a whole, or a reflection of Absolute

⁷⁷⁸ Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, book II, section 3.

Reason, if he simply *doesn't want to do it*. For "one's own free, unrestrained choice, one's own whim, be it the wildest, one's own fancy, sometimes worked up to a frenzy – that is the most advantageous advantage that cannot be fitted into any table or scale and that causes every system and every theory to crumble into dust on contact. And where did these sages pick up the notion that man must have something that they feel is a normal and virtuous set of wishes; what makes them think that man's will must be reasonable and in accordance with his own interests? All man actually needs is *independent* will, at all costs and whatever the consequences.

"Speaking of will, I'm damned if I – ...

"I will admit that reason is a good thing. No argument about that. But reason is only reason, and it only satisfies man's rational requirements. Desire, on the other hand, encompasses everything from reason down to scratching oneself. And although, when we're guided by our desires, life may often turn into a messy affair, it's still life and not a series of extractions of square roots.

"I, for instance, instinctively want to live, to exercise all the aspects of life in me and not only reason, which amounts to perhaps one-twentieth of the whole.

"And what does reason know? It knows only what it has had time to learn. Many things will always remain unknown to it. That must be said even if there's nothing encouraging in it.

"Now human nature is just the opposite. It acts as an entity, using everything it has, conscious and unconscious, and even if it deceives us, it lives. I suspect, ladies and gentlemen, that you're looking at me with pity, wondering how I can fail to understand that an enlightened, cultured man, such as the man of the future, could not deliberately wish to harm himself. It's sheer mathematics to you. I agree, it is mathematics. But let me repeat to you for the hundredth time that there is one instance when a man can wish upon himself, in full awareness, something harmful, stupid and even completely idiotic. He will do it in order to *establish his right* to wish for the most idiotic things and not to be obliged to have only sensible wishes. But what if a quite absurd whim, my friends, turns out to be the most advantageous thing on earth for us, as sometimes happens? Specifically, it may be more advantageous to us than any other advantages, even when it most obviously harms us and goes against all the sensible conclusions of our reason about our interest – because, whatever else, it leaves us our most important, most treasured possession: our individuality..."⁷⁷⁹

In *Notes from Underground* we see the first in a long line of anti-heroes – terrorists, murderers, suicides – who crowd the pages of Dostoyevsky's later novels, and for whom, since God did not exist, everything was permitted. As Shestov writes, all his later novels are, as it were, footnotes to *Notes from Underground*. Common to them all is a solipsistic view of the world according to which nothing matters outside their own pride and their own will.

⁷⁷⁹ Dostoyevsky, *Notes from Underground*, New York: Signet Classics, 1961, pp. 98, 110, 112-113.

In another “fantastical story” of his later years, *The Dream of a Ridiculous Man* (1878), Dostoyevsky’s anti-hero says: “The conviction... dawned upon me quite independently of my will that nothing made any difference in this world. I had suspected this for a very long time, but I only became fully aware of it during this past year. I suddenly felt that it really made no difference to me whether or not the world existed. I began to feel with my whole being that *nothing had happened while I’d been alive*. At first I felt that, to make up for it, many things had happened before. Later, however, I realized that this was an illusion – nothing had happened before either. Little by little, I discovered that nothing will ever happen. Then I stopped getting angry at people and almost stopped noticing them. This change manifested itself even in the smallest things. When I walked along the street, for instance, I would bump into people, I was certainly not absorbed in thought, for what did I have to think of by that time? I just didn’t care about anything any more. If only I could’ve answered some of the many questions that tormented me, but I hadn’t found a single answer. Then I became indifferent to everything, and all the questions faded away.

“It was only later that I learned the truth...”⁷⁸⁰

“The truth” is not the common-sense, rationally ordered world-view of civilised man, of the “anti-hill” and the “crystal palace”, in which two plus two always equals four, everything is planned in a rational way to satisfy man’s rationally understood needs, and miracles do not exist. This supra-rational truth is revealed to the ridiculous man just as he is about to shoot himself. It is the world before the fall, but which is still accessible to the heart of man, in which there reign perfect love and joy and a supra-rational kind of knowledge, a world in which, contrary to the thoughts of the underground and ridiculous men, *everything matters, everything* is interconnected with everything else, and man is responsible for *everything and everyone*.

Dostoyevsky was planning to write about this in the second half of *Notes from Underground*.⁷⁸¹ However, while excelling in the depiction of the proud and the semi-deranged, it proved more difficult for him (as for all writers) to create the positive, Christ-like character that could incarnate the supra-rational truth. His first such heroes were Sonya in *Crime and Punishment* and Prince Myshkin in *The Idiot*; his last were Elder Zossima and Alyosha in *The Brothers Karamazov*. Here we find successful images of heavenly good to place against the hellish evil in the hearts of his other characters.

For Dostoyevsky, unlike other “explorers of the unconscious” such as Nietzsche and Freud, saw *two, opposing* spheres of “unreason”, that is, that which is incomprehensible and unattainable to the rational mind: on the one hand, the “unreason” or “anti-reason” of the underground man, enclosed and entombed in his pride and hatred, and on the other, the “unreason” or, better, “supra-reason” of the saint, open to all and everything, but above all and judging everything. For, as St. Paul puts it, “the foolishness of God is wiser than man... He who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one” (I Corinthians 1.25, 2.15). Paradoxically, in Dostoyevsky’s view, the underground man, having plumbed the one abyss, that of his own solipsistic hell, could more easily “convert” to an understanding

⁷⁸⁰ Dostoyevsky, *The Dream of a Ridiculous Man*, New York: Signet Classics, 1961, p. 205.

⁷⁸¹ J.W. Burrow, *The Crisis of Reason, European Thought, 1848-1914*, London: Longman, 2000, p. 150.

of, and participation in, the other abyss, the abyss of infinite, all-embracing love and “supra-reason”, than the “civilised” rationalists. Hence the Raskolnikovs and Shatovs and Dmitri Karamazovs, who, while keeping their minds in hell, do not despair⁷⁸² - and catch a glimpse of Paradise.

It is instructive to compare Dostoyevsky with Nietzsche and Freud. Nietzsche was a true underground man, who wittily and unerringly cut through the pretences of civilised society. But he ended in the madhouse because he failed to see that there was another world, the supra-rational world of love that Dostoyevsky saw. As for Freud, his vision was more superficial than either because his rationalist determinism blinded him to the fact that that man, however driven by irrational impulses, nevertheless in the last analysis *freely* chooses to live in the abyss of sin...

Russian educated society comprehended neither abyss. Being hardly less fallen than the underground men of Dostoyevsky's novels, it, too, simply followed its own desires under a Pharisaic mask of goodwill towards men. St. Theophan the Recluse said of them: “You hear them talk only about the good of the people, but no good ever comes to the people, for it is all talk and no action. Their humanism is feigned: they only take on the appearance of humaneness, but in reality they are egotists. Speech does not require sacrifice. They speak lavishly, but when the matter touches sacrifices, they retreat. Nowadays almost everyone is an actor. Some show off in front of others as being zealous for good, and particularly for enlightenment, and they are all quite satisfied when their own verbal testimony portrays them as really being this way. Therefore as soon as some charitable undertaking comes up among us, talk is everywhere, but deeds do not come to fruition.”⁷⁸³

⁷⁸² The expression is from the Russian Athonite monk Silouan (+1938).

⁷⁸³ St. Theophan, *Thoughts for Each Day of the Year*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 2010, p. 154.

CONCLUSION. LIBERALISM VERSUS THE STATE

Liberalism and democracy grew up together after the overthrow of monarchism, first in England and then in the other great powers. There is a case to be made that democracy cannot survive under an illiberal regime, even a democratically elected one, and that the democratic state is underpinned by liberalism. Thus liberalism and democracy are like Siamese twins joined together, as it were, at the hip. As Stephen Kotkin writes: "Historically, liberalism – a legal order geared to the defense of private property and the civic rights of those recognized as citizens – combined the proclamation of universal principles with slavery or colonialism, and only very belatedly, after considerable struggle, extended legal protections, the right to form associations, and the franchise to all male inhabitants, and finally to women. But despite its glaring exclusions and deep flaws, liberalism, as Alexis de Tocqueville might have noted, is more fundamental to successful state building than democracy. Democratically elected office-holders, in multiparty systems, often behave like dictators unless they are constrained by a liberal order, meaning the rule of law. A liberal order involves a powerful parliament controlling the purse and issuing a steady stream of well-written laws, an authoritative judiciary to interpret and rule on the parliamentary laws, and generally consistent implementation of laws and rules by a highly professional civil service, all of which allows for the influence of civic organizations to be felt. To put the matter another way, liberalism entails not freedom from government but constant, rigorous officiating of the private sphere and of the very public authority responsible for regulation. In short, a liberal order – a geopolitical imperative for reaching the highest levels of *per capita* prosperity in the hierarchical world economy."⁷⁸⁴

Kotkin's point is well taken. But his phrase, "liberalism entails not freedom from government but constant, rigorous officiating...", should alert us to an equal and opposite truth: that liberalism not only underpins the democratic state, it also undermines it in all its pre-liberal forms, replacing it with the liberal state, which is more intrusive – in essence, therefore, *illiberal* – than any of its predecessors. (The first three major liberal revolutions – the English, the American and the French – were all bloody affairs that ended in increased colonial oppression by the liberal victors.) English liberals of the mid-nineteenth century were intuitively aware of this, which is why they preferred a "nightwatchman state" to a great network of laws and bureaucrats. But they failed to remedy the situation (for there is in fact no remedy within liberalism), which is why in the last 150 years and more the constant interference of the state in both private and public life has multiplied exponentially.

For in the long term, like woodworm in an old building, the increase in liberal freedoms and the extension of the liberal order, no matter how tactfully and efficiently it is administered, *bores into authority*, the essential, constitutive ballast of all statehood. It does this in various spheres – religious, political, economic, familial, moral. The result, as we see in almost all wokish (i.e. extreme liberal) states at the present time, can be freakish, irrational, cruel and even despotic.

⁷⁸⁴ Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted. The Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000*, Oxford University Press, 2008, pp. 142-143.

For in the last analysis, *liberalism is a conspiracy of the individual against the State*. Its basic premise is that the individual and his needs and desires are good, and that the State, which seeks to limit those desires for the good of society as a whole, is evil. Except in its anarchist extreme (to which, however, its revolutionary spirit constantly leads it), liberalism recognizes, with reluctance, that the State is necessary. However, the liberal State is almost a contradiction in terms; for while the State seeks to rule (after all, that is its purpose), liberalism seeks to stop it from ruling. In the name of the freedom of the individual, or that select minority of individuals that it calls "the people", it seeks to limit the State, to circumvent or dilute its just demands. The ultimate result is either anarchy or despotism...

God established the State for the sake of the individual, for the sake of his physical and spiritual salvation. He does not bless all States; but He commanded His people to subject themselves, not out of fear alone but also for conscience's sake, to the Roman State in Christ's time and to those States formed in the Roman monarchical tradition since Christ's time. That means being subject, sometimes, even to immoral, cruel and impious rulers provided they provide that minimum of law and order that is necessary for living the Christian life. Sometimes God allows the rule even of antichristian tyrants, who must be disobeyed for the sake of loyalty to the Supreme Ruler, God; He does this to punish or correct - or, through martyrdom, to glorify - His people when they wander from the straight and narrow path. However, it remains a fact studiously ignored by liberals that many of the rulers God has provided down the centuries have been exceptional men, clearly placed in positions of authority by God for the benefit of the people; many have even been numbered among the saints.

Liberals pretend to worship the law; their ideal is the rule-based State, or the State "subject to the rule of law". But looked at from a historical point of view, the law liberals worship is the law made for liberals and by liberals, passed in liberal institutions and parliaments, usually in opposition to the laws proclaimed by kings and bishops. Before the age of republicanism and liberalism, "the rule of law" meant "the rule of the king", for the king, with the Church, was the source of all law. But the liberals came up with a number of paradoxes in order to undermine the king's law: that the king was somehow committing "treason" in not submitting to the will of (some of) his subjects (this was the main charge against King Charles I in 1649), or that laws introduced by kings alone were *ipso facto* tyrannical and unjust. Paradoxically for an individualist ideology, liberals declare that only laws passed by collective institutions, like parliaments, can be truly lawful. Liberalism is aided here by the ideology of *democratism*, which holds that only the vaguely defined collective known as "the people", or its democratically elected representatives, is sovereign. In fact, however, very few democratically elected rulers truly rule, as opposed to reign for a while; behind them is always an oligarchy, which in turn is ruled by charismatic individuals. For in the last analysis *all power is personal*, and all law is created and implemented by *individual people*. Liberalism, the individualist ideology par excellence, tries to replace the personal rule of kings with impersonal collectivities created by liberal oligarchies (a party, an economic class or interest, a national group, a religious sect) because in general such collectivities pander better to the fallen desires of liberal individuals than kings.

The German jurist Carl Schmitt writes: "In a highly systematic manner, liberal thought circumvents or ignores the state and instead moves in a typical, recurring polarity of two heterogeneous spheres, namely ethics and economics, intellect and business, education and property. The critical distrust of state and politics can easily be explained by the principles of a system for which the individual must remain *terminus a quo* and *terminus ad quem*. The political entity must, if necessary, demand the sacrifice of life. For the individualism of liberal thought, the demand is no way attainable or justifiable. An individualism which gives to someone other than the individual himself the disposal over the physical life of that individual would be just as empty a phrase as a liberal freedom, in which someone other than the free man himself decides on its content and measure. For the individual as such there is no enemy with whom he would have to fight if he personally did not want to; to force him to fight against his will is in any case, from the private individual's point of view, unfreedom and violence. All liberal pathos turns against violence and unfreedom. Every impairment, every threat to individual unlimited freedom, private property, and free competition is called 'violence' and is *eo ipso* something evil. What this liberalism of state and politics still accepts is limited to securing the conditions of freedom and to eliminating disturbances of freedom."⁷⁸⁵

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Ethics and economics... Let us look at how liberalism attempts to co-opt these two spheres, beginning with ethics.

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

"The thinker who best articulated these changes was John Stuart Mill, who strove to place freedom, rather than security, at the heart of governance... Mill's central political concern was not how to create order out of chaos but how to ensure that the beneficiaries of order could achieve self-fulfilment. For Mill, the test of a state's virtue was the degree to which it allowed each person to develop fully his or her abilities. And the surest mechanism for doing this was for government to get out of the way..."⁷⁸⁶

⁷⁸⁵ Schmitt, "The Concept of the Political" (1932), in *The Sovereign Collection*, 2020, Antelope Hill Publishing, p. 104.

⁷⁸⁶ Micklethwait and Wooldridge, "The State of the State", *Foreign Affairs*, July-August, 2014, pp. 122: 123.

Here we see the essence of the liberal ethic: individual self-fulfilment. The state played no essential part in this. In an age in which, as it was believed, wars for the usual motives were out-of-date in progressive Europe, when as Constant put it, "*le calcul civilise*" (civilized calculation) had taken the place of "*l'impulsion sauvage*" (the savage impulse), states were no longer necessary even for security purposes. Armies still had to exist, but mainly to keep the colonial savages down, not to settle quarrels between European states on the same upward civilizational curve. In any case, now that the Napoleonic quest for glory through war had been crushed, wars pursued by states interfered with individual self-fulfilment rather than promoted it, especially now that technological advancement made them much more costly in both blood and money.

This brings us to the economic sphere. In what way did a powerful State facilitate the acquisition of money and property – the essential conditions of individual self-fulfilment? Not at all if the liberal theory of laissez-faire economics was to be believed. On the contrary, it was governments who imposed taxes and tolls and customs, which so interfered with rapid economic development. So here again, for the maximum development of individual self-fulfilment it was necessary "for government to get out of the way" ...

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The sphere of ethics could also be called the sphere of *truth*. And it is in the sphere of truth-telling that liberalism makes the greatest claims for itself while falling the furthest away from that ideal of truth-telling that is common to all nations at all times. For what is truth, according to the liberal? It is the decision of the majority in parliament. What the majority votes for is by definition true and just and therefore must pass into law, while the views of the minority are correspondingly false and unjust – at least relative to the view of the majority. But what if the majority becomes the minority or changes its mind? This is no problem for the liberal, for whom truth is a flexible and changeable concept. For if there is no constant and unchanging criterion of truth based on a sound knowledge of the nature of things – that is, on true religion, - there is no other way of determining the truth than by taking a vote.

Liberals justify this attitude by claiming that the truth is found by allowing a multitude of opinions to contend with each other, as in a parliament. There is a limited truth in this – "Where there is no counsel, the people fall; but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety" (Proverbs 11.14). After all, even absolute rulers gather counsellors to themselves and do not take major decisions before consulting with them. And yet we all know that there are evil counsellors, and that even liberal parliaments can make disastrous decisions. And one of the strongest arguments for monarchism is that, especially in emergencies, such as the decision to go to war or not, when a clear-cut decision for which the existing laws do not provide an obvious pointer, and when parliamentary debate on the issue can go on forever and end in paralysis, a single man has to cut the Gordian knot and resolve the impasse - which must always be a solitary decision, however many counsellors and parliamentary votes and opinion polls he has to guide him.

In any case, no state in history should or could be completely liberal; every state bans certain opinions and acts. For complete liberalism is the same as complete anarchy. This is most clearly seen in the sphere of sexual morality. All liberal revolutions since the eighteenth-century Enlightenment have legislated for a progressive loosening of prohibitions in this sphere until, in the early twenty-first century, there is even a growing movement for the permitting of paedophilia, incest and bestiality. Even those conservative or Christian liberals who have been horrified by these developments have been powerless to stop the juggernaut of liberal "reform". Since the separation of Church and State has been enacted almost everywhere, Church leaders, if they are not liberals themselves, which is now almost everywhere the case, even in the Vatican, have been unable to stem the tide that has overwhelmed their own congregations. For in liberal states, the State is separated not only from the Church, but also from the very concept of unchanging truth. Even if some liberal reforms, such as the abolition of slavery, are welcome as being in accordance with Christian truth and morality, they are rarely introduced for the sake of Christian truth but because such is "the will of the people" – the ultimate criterion of "truth" in the liberal state.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the liberal revolution was well under way throughout Europe west of the Elbe and among the English-speaking nations outside Europe. Among the great powers, only Russia under Tsar Nicholas I saw clearly what was happening and stood firmly against the tide as "the gendarme of Europe". His intervention in Hungary in 1849 saved Austro-Hungary from the liberal inundation for another few generations. And in Prussia, too, it was kept in check. But Russia was weakened by her (relative) defeat in the Crimean War of 1854-56 at the hands of the liberal powers of France and Britain (when ungrateful Austria stayed neutral). The mystery of iniquity would continue to advance and would reveal itself openly after the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II in 1917...