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The Theology of the Russian Diaspora

"For most of the twentieth century, the story of Orthodox theology is the story of Russian theology, both in Russia itself before 1917, and in the emigration afterwards (especially in Paris)."

(Rowan Williams, Eastern Orthodox Theology)

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Special Editor
Andreas Andreopoulos

NOTE
FROM THE SENIOR EDITOR

It is with great joy that Analogia dedicates this extensive volume to the Theology of the Russian Diaspora. It is true that for the first half of the 20th century the Orthodox theological floor belonged to this series of eminent theological thinkers whose pathbreaking thought is still a source of immense inspiration for Christian theology in general. Their theology has been a gift of God's loving Providence not only for the Orthodox, but also for the West, since even those of them who dealt with subjects touching the Orthodox identity, they did this in a sound ecumenical perspective, thus helping a deeper self-awareness for the whole the Christian Greek-Western world.

The special editor of this volume is Dr Andreas Andreopoulos who organised the relevant symposium at the University of Winchester. On the part of the Analogia, I express my gratitude for all the work that he put into this.

– ***Nikolaos Loudovikos,*** Senior Editor

EDITORIAL

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the eighth volume of Analogia, dedicated to the theology of the Russian Diaspora. The foundation and inspiration for this volume is a conference that was dedicated to this theme, which took place at the University of Winchester in January 2018, right after the completion of a century after the Russian revolution of 1917, the event that set in motion the migration of Russian intellectuals and theologians to the West. This migration initiated an exchange of ideas between East and West, which had not taken place for centuries in such a scale. In addition, it compelled Orthodox theologians to articulate their own theology in a way that made more sense to Orthodox people in both parts of Europe, and in this way, it may be said that the generation of the Russian diaspora inaugurated modern Orthodox theology, well beyond the confines of Russian communities. The underlying thought in the Winchester conference, as well as in this present volume, was to reflect on the quests, the questions, and the directions that this generation left for us, and rather than simply reminisce about that exceptional period of theological thought and creativity, to attempt an appraisal of its legacy today.

In my own article I tried to address this broad question, focusing on the impact of the thought of the Russian theologians in the areas of apophaticism, mystical theology, modern Orthodox ecclesiology, as well as the neopatristic turn. Some of those areas were undeniably defined in their current form by Russians such as Lossky, Schmemann, Afanasiev, and Florovsky, but we can nevertheless trace their development into our days, and the continuation of that conversation in a different cultural, political, and perhaps also spiritual context.

Brandon Gallaher in his article touches on the difficult and divisive question of ecumenical dialogue, to the extent that it involves the Orthodox Church, also understood as a cultural dialogue between Eastern and Western Christianity. Gallaher is certainly interested in the situation today, as he concludes with his reflection on the Council of Crete in 2016, but in order to illuminate the way this dialogue has been shaped, he starts his examination with its early phases, conducted and developed by members of the Russian diaspora such as Sergei Bulgakov, Nicholas Zernov and Georges Florovsky.

Paul Gavrilyuk examines the roots of the 'neopatristic synthesis', which is associated with Georges Florovsky. Gavrilyuk reminds us that Florovsky's call for the return to the Fathers, which has marked Orthodox theological expression in the 20th and 21st century to a great extent, came about to a great extension as a response, or rather as a reaction to the modernist strand of the time, mostly Bulgakov and Berdyaev. Gavrilyuk's masterful examination of Florovsky's thought concludes with an interesting reflection of neopatristic synthesis against Putin's Russia and some of the problematic theological thought that comes out of it.

Romilo Knežević attempts a comparative approach in the thought of Nietzsche and Berdyaev, both of whom tried to address the impasse of onto-theology, as a natural extension of the thought (and the universe) of Thomas Aquinas. Knežević delves in deep philosophical waters here, as he compares Nietzsche's Chaos with the somewhat more nuanced concept of Ungrund, which Berdyaev recruits from 17th century German mysticism. In this way he illuminates the philosophical dialogue that preceded, formulated, and ultimately defined Russian thought at the beginning of the 20th century.

Paul Ladouceur takes a look at how World War II affected the thought of the Russian religious renaissance. He notes that while people such as Berdyaev and Bulgakov produced their most significant work before the War, the level of their philosophical and theological thought declined rapidly afterwards. Ladouceur looks into a number of reasons for this: the exile situation itself; the difficulty in communicating the major themes of Russian religious thought beyond the Russian context; fundamental problems in religious thought; the passing of generations; and the emergence of an alternative, more patristically and liturgically based theology.

Nikolaos Loudovikos explores some of the philosophical parameters which played a decisive role in the formation of the concept of Sophia in the Trinitarian theology of Sergius Bulgakov. As he argues, although Sophia is an idiosyncratic Russian concept, it was developed by people such as Florensky and—ultimately—Bulgakov, as a Hegelian corrective to Kantian closedness, and also, somewhat paradoxically, as an attempt to move away from German Idealism, and illuminate Divine subjectivity. This kind of examination allows us to understand and appreciate the connection between the Russian religious renaissance, as well as the Russian diaspora, and continental philosophy; a connection that has invited both study and concerns.

Andrew Louth offers an unusual view into the experience of the Russian immigrants of the early 20th century. He talks about the sense of exile many of them felt, looking into an often ignored page of the story of this migration, especially those who did not belong to the learned elite. Louth takes this further by looking at the sense of hospitality that embraced the immigrants, as they developed a dialogue with Western culture. But where this chapter becomes even more interesting is where from these two strands, of the sense of exile and the sense of hospitality, Louth traces the experiential and ecclesiological development of the concept of Catholicity/Sobornicity that was articulated later by Afanasiev, which essentially emerged as a result of the clash between the Eusebian and the Ignatian model of ecclesiology: the model of the church/state balance that was prevalent in the land they left behind, or the model of church as community that they were rediscovering in exile.

Sotiris Mitralexis looks into the ways the theology of the Russian diaspora influenced the generation of Greek theologians in the 60s, thus sparking a new wave of thought, passing the relay as it were, to theologians such as Christos Yannaras

and John Zizioulas. For Yannaras, the renaissance of Greek theology is indebted to the Russian diaspora, which pioneered areas such as the Eucharistic rather than the institutional constitution of the Church, an experiential or apophatic approach to dogma, and an existential rather than a legalistic understanding of sin. These areas could not be easily developed within Greek thought at the time. Nevertheless, Yannaras also insists that the Greek generation of new theology added a philosophical sophistication that exceeded that of the Russians, and, combined with some of the directions of Greek theology at the time, played a decisive role in its outlook today.

A very different view is offered by Stavros Balogiannis, who dedicates his attention to St Luke of Symferopol, a Russian from the generation in examination, who nevertheless never left Russia, but remained behind and offered his services as a doctor, a theologian, and ultimately a bishop and martyr. Balogiannis, a professor of medicine himself, looks into the tenure, or rather the ministry of St Luke, and his pursuit of academic knowledge. This presentation of St Luke, though not directly relevant to the theology of the Russian diaspora, illuminates an aspect of the Russian life of spiritual struggle within Russia, that nevertheless echoes some of the concerns of the diaspora.

Dimitris Salapatas turns to a difficult chapter in the thought of the Russian diaspora, the narrative of Moscow as the 'Third Rome', and by implication the premise of Russian primacy within Orthodoxy. As Salapatas reminds us, while this theory dates almost from the fall of Constantinople, it was articulated in the 16th century as Russia was creating a distinct cultural and theological identity for itself, and while it is still present in Russia today, it was also expressed by Nicholas Zernov, whose first book expresses a Russian-centred view of Christianity. Undoubtedly, Salapatas touches on a complex and painful subject, that perhaps explains much of the difficulties Orthodoxy faces today. While there may be more to be said about this idea and about Zernov himself, this is at least the initiation of a dialogue on the subject.

Christoph Schneider takes a look into the dilemma between religious rationalism and religious irrationalism, which was put forth by Meillassoux as a gradual de-absolutization of the law of identity and the law of sufficient reason, with reference to the work of Leibniz, Kant and Heidegger. If left in these terms, it might be considered a Western European philosophical problem. Nevertheless, Schneider considers it in the context of the dialogue between Florensky and Bulgakov on Western onto-theology and fideism, which allowed them to develop their distinct positions. Schneider's article allows us to consider the Russian diaspora as a tributary to modern philosophical thought.

Finally, Dionysios Skliris attempts a look into the concept of divine and human freedom. He argues that the hardships of the generation of the Russian diaspora, who suffered the dehumanization of modernism both in its socialist collectivist and

then in its liberal capitalist form, urged them to consider different ways to approach freedom philosophically. Skliris focuses particularly on Berdyaev, Florovsky and Lossky, but his examination echoes the wider problem of post-modernity, both in thought and in history.

This collection of articles is a small way to celebrate the contribution of the theologians of the Russian diaspora. Naturally, there is much more to say on the subject. In addition, much of the value of such publications is that they generate a dialogue among scholars – something we experienced at the Winchester conference, which included some edgy confrontations – and a pursuit of the next steps in theological thought. It is in this spirit that these articles are offered to the public here.

– ***Andreas Andreopoulos***, Special Editor

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The legacy of the Russian Diaspora: an evaluation and future directions

ANDREAS ANDREOPOULOS
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A century after the Russian Revolution, the event that caused the migration of Russian intellectuals and theologians to the West, we may evaluate the contribution of that generation to Orthodox theology as well as to wider Christian theology. This article looks into theological areas such as apophaticism, mystical theology, ecclesiology and the neopatristic turn, trying to discern the impact of the theologians of the Russian diaspora today.

It has been just over a century since the Russian Revolution, undoubtedly one of the most significant historical events of the twentieth century. While this was primarily a political event, and its more immediate result was the creation of an international political and military polarity that lasted for over 70 years, it generated ripples within Russian thought and culture beyond the political sphere—including modern Orthodox thought, as well as Christian thought in a broader sense. In terms of theological thought, we can see that several of the Russian intellectuals who moved to Western Europe and America as a result of the Russian Revolution articulated some theological views that made the understanding of the depth of the Orthodox theological tradition surprisingly clear—something unprecedented in modern times. While the influence of the Russian theologians who migrated to the West is undeniable, a century after the seminal event that set in motion what may be described as an explosion in Orthodox theology, we will now take a look into the legacy of that generation and reflect on what it means for us today.

The Russian Revolution was a complex political and social phenomenon which, along with its intended targets of political change in Russia, also put into motion a rather unexpected series of events that affected the Western world. The emigration of large populations of Russians from different layers of Russian society with different skills, levels of education, interests, and familiarity with the Western world, was far from a homogenized phenomenon. Perhaps the majority of those people were assimilated quietly, even if they maintained their language and customs for as long as they lived. From this point of view, Russian communities in the West, as many other immigrant communities, contributed in an indirect way to the emergence of the multicultural society with which we are much more familiar now in the West. They

built parishes and churches that still remain today, and are part of the increasing number of denizens who trace their ethnic origin elsewhere. For the ones among those immigrants, however, who had intellectual, artistic, and theological interests, migration to the West was, despite its hardships, a chance to develop, flourish, and expand well beyond their former boundaries. People such as Diaghilev, Stravinsky, Nabokov, Sorokin, Struve, Kandinsky, and Chagall, to mention just a few, infused the Western world at all levels of the Arts and Sciences and left their mark. Quite impressively, the philosophers and theologians among that generation that we usually associate with the Russian Diaspora were an exceptionally significant group and left one of the most fruitful and far-reaching legacies.

One of the main challenges that immigrants often face is the question of their identity—usually with reference both to the land they left behind and the land they settled in. Russian philosophers and theologians, whose thought up to that point was formulated in the context of their Slavic and Orthodox culture, struggled more and more deeply with the question of identity than other Russian immigrants to the West. We can appreciate this point if we look into the question, or rather the formative power, of cultural identity in the work of the painter and iconographer Leonid Ouspensky in parallel with the formative period of someone who may be rightfully considered his Greek counterpart, Fotis Kontoglou.[1] What is impressive in the parallel trajectories of these artists is that they both developed their artistic identities as exiles from their land of birth within the context of the lively Parisian artistic milieu, at the same time adopting some and rejecting other of its elements. The result was a return to their respective traditions in a much more nuanced way than ever seen before in their respective motherlands. In both cases we can talk about the pursuit of a cultural identity that was formed in dialogue, both with the Western world and with the native traditions these artists served. In addition to their artistic skill, which would have given them some recognition and success in any generation, both Kontoglou and Ouspensky stand out because their unique position of operating within their tradition in an alien cultural context allowed them (or perhaps forced them) to capture and express the essence of that tradition in a way that encouraged a meaningful dialogue with the alien culture but also allowed them to renew their tradition.

This seems to me an apt model to understand the entire wave of theological thought of the Russian Diaspora. We can observe here the pursuit of a spiritual identity as a general phenomenon that was based on the tradition of the land they left behind but could at the same time be articulated using robust theological and philosophical terms, so that it could make sense in the context of the tradition of the land that became their new home. This we may ascribe in varying degrees to the representatives of the Russian Diaspora, as some, such as Bulgakov, were more directly

[1] Cf. my chapter 'Φώτης Κόντογλου–Λεονίντ Ουσπένσκυ: Βίοι Παράλληλοι', in Χρήστος Μαργαρίτης, ed., *Φώτης Κόντογλου: Από τον Λόγο στην Έκφρασι* (Athens, Benaki Museum, 2015), 123–32.

interested in themes that emerged in Russia before the revolution (such as sophiology), while others, such as Lossky, were able to use systematic language that was familiar to Thomists and medievalists in order to express distinctly Orthodox ideas.

The pursuit of identity, of course, is usually the challenge of the integration of the immigrant in general. The spirituality of the Russian Diaspora, as the spirituality of an immigrant (and perhaps somewhat elitist) community, was very much defined by the concern of an Orthodox Christianity that discovers its roots in order to articulate its voice in a way that makes sense to a cultural and theological context beyond its own. The result was noticeable both beyond Orthodoxy, since this was the first time after many centuries that there was a meaningful dialogue with Western theologians, and also within Orthodoxy, since the dialogue necessitated a fresh development of many areas of Orthodox theology.

Since then, the world of ideas has become more complex, more open, and more multicultural. The question of the identity of the (individual) immigrant is still relevant as migration for all sorts of reasons is still taking place on a massive scale today; however, as many ethnic communities have become part of the wider social context of the Western world, we can also add the question of the place of individual spiritualities in a globalized world and their dialogue with the surrounding culture. This is quite important because it allows us to approach the spiritual tradition of Orthodox Christianity in (at least relative) independence from the ethnic cultures that have historically been associated with it in the past and thus explore its ecumenical and apostolic dimension.

In many ways this is one of the things I personally find quite fascinating about the Russian Diaspora. I often found the parcelling of Greek and Russian culture under the umbrella of Orthodoxy somewhat problematic inasmuch as this expresses a claim to a shared culture as the basis for a shared spirituality. Despite sharing the same spiritual and theological tradition, as a person who grew up in the Mediterranean, I am not very touched by narratives of memories from the Russian Steppe; the Ionian Sea of my youth is too different. The metaphysics of the Aegean that my generation came to know through the poetry of Elytis is very different from the wet, dark imagery of the Russian forest; and the dignified humility of the Papadiamandic village is not really compatible with the pretensions of an imperial family with spiritual claims, both before and after its demise. Russian culture is too cold, too intoxicated, and too dark for my Greek disposition. But this is a problem only if we take the connection between culture and spirituality too far, or rather if the cultural expression of spirituality becomes the normative way to talk about things that transcend human experience. This is precisely where the Russian Diaspora, and the nuance of its pursuit for a cultural and spiritual identity, encouraged us to understand Christianity through and ultimately beyond our cultural limitations.

Here, however, I would like to take a look at a number of themes from the theological legacy of the Russian Diaspora, a hundred years after the key events that set

history in motion in order to consider the extent of their effect today. One of the Russian Diaspora's greatest contributions has probably been the (re)discovery of the language of mystical and apophatic theology, which, although part of the Orthodox tradition for a long time, was marginalized by positivist theology both in Greece and in Russia. While Greece, the Balkans and the Near East were, for the most part, under Turkish occupation until the nineteenth century and therefore did not have the freedom to continue the high-level philosophical and theological discourse of the past, Russian theological culture after Peter the Great followed a decisively Western-oriented direction, where even the language of theological instruction for a long time was Latin.[2] Dionysios the Areopagite, Maximos the Confessor, and Gregory Palamas were not read, even by the Orthodox, for many centuries, despite exceptions such as that of Nikodemos the Hagiorite, who managed to include some of the works of Palamas in the Philokalia. Mainstream theologians of the early twentieth century such as Balanos, Androutsos, and Trembelas either ignored the Palamite tradition or shared the negative attitude that Western theology had towards it at the time. The reversal of this situation and the rediscovery of the language of apophaticism and of Gregory Palamas in our times, at least within academic theology, certainly started from within the Russian circles that became associated with the diaspora.

Having said this, despite the relevant volumes that have been written in the last few decades, we are still trying to get our bearings in understanding the apophatic ascetic tradition. For a number of modern theologians, such as Denys Turner, apophatic theology means the same as negative theology (i.e., a theology of logical extrapolation) by which we approach God by gradually eliminating all the categories that attempt to describe him.[3] This, I believe, is not a very satisfactory direction because a series of negative arguments may help deconstruct several layers of misconceptions and even ontologically-mitigated preconceptions that limit our view of the divine, but it is not sufficient, by itself, to lead to any meaningful insight. The elimination of all rationalist categories may lead to an abstract, philosophically induced conception of God, but it can equally lead to nihilism as it does not, as a series of philosophical eliminations, offer something else instead. This understanding of apophaticism, or rather, this attempt to define apophaticism in the lines of an epagogic process of philosophical elimination, is still very prevalent, even among Orthodox scholars. Metropolitan Kallistos Ware for instance, often describes apophaticism in his sermons as a divine prohibition, a command to abandon the pursuit of penetrating the mystery of God due to the limitations of human nature. Similar to the Biblical prohibition of Moses, who was not allowed to see the face of God (Exodus 33:20), Metropolitan Kallistos often mentions the grim instruction

[2] Cf. Ekaterina I. Kislova, '"Latin" and "Slavonic" Education in the Primary Classes of Russian Seminaries in the 18th Century', *Slověne: International Journal of Slavic Studies* 4.2 (2015): 72–91.

[3] Denys Turner, *The Darkness of God: Negativity in Christian Mysticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

one finds at the end of a train platform: 'Do not go further'. Yet, although this expressive image can speak to the impossibility of approaching God using the apparatus of rationalist gnosiology, it does not say much about the nature and the wisdom of this prohibition, or about whether it is possible to approach God in different ways.

On the other hand, there are also theologians such as Christos Yannaras for whom apophaticism signifies the impossibility of processing the experience of the revelation of the divine nature (either in the form of a beatific vision or in the sense of the liturgical experience of the Church) in linguistic and rational terms. Apophaticism here is an expression of freedom from rationalism, and an expansion of the limits of being.[4] In addition, Nikolaos Loudovikos, more recently, has approached apophaticism in the context of the sacramental life of the Church.[5] Such directions present, I believe, a more mature understanding of apophaticism, which may be not found with such clarity among the earlier theologians who nevertheless turned our attention to it, such as Vladimir Lossky. Apophaticism as an expression of the distance between individual or shared experience and language has much potential, as it touches on a philosophical problem of great interest among deconstructionist postmodernists who explore the limits of language and rationality. If apophaticism may be understood as the silence of language and rationalism in the face of the overwhelming experience of the presence of God, I believe that a much more appropriate image for it is that of the Orthodox priest in the Great Entrance of the Presanctified Liturgy, which is carried out in complete silence while his face is covered by a veil during the procession. This silence suggests a definite presence, the presence of the Eucharistic body of the Lord (already sanctified and brought forth as such in a previous service) among the people.

But while the development of apophaticism and its relationship with modern thought seems promising, it is harder to say the same about mysticism. The contribution of the Russian diaspora in the way mysticism is understood today has been quite interesting. It is possible to see two different directions here, not always compatible with each other. On the one hand mysticism has been expressed through charismatic saintly figures, something featured quite strongly in the Russian tradition, which may be seen in the influence of the solitary pilgrim, elder, or self-proclaimed mystic that came to a dramatic exaggeration in the case of Rasputin, who is often remembered as a monk, a clergyman, a spiritual father, or a pilgrim, although the only factual basis of this was simply that he spent a couple of years as a wanderer. He had no monastic profession nor clerical ordination. In spite of this, he was habitually referred to as 'Fr Grigori' by his followers, including members of the Imperial family. Mysticism of this kind falls subject to Dostoyevsky's much discussed criticism of the

[4] Cf. Christos Yannaras, *Έξι φιλοσοφικὲς ζωγραφιές* (Ἀθήναι: Ἴκαρος, 2011), esp. 32.

[5] Nikolaos Loudovikos, *Church in the Making: An Apophatic Ecclesiology of Consubstantiality* (Crestwood, NY: SVS Press, 2015).

unholy triad of miracle, mystery, and authority[6] expressed by the Grand Inquisitor, in Dostoyevsky's *Brothers Karamazov*.

The other direction given to us by the Russian diaspora, especially Vladimir Lossky, was the attempt to consider mysticism in the context of our spiritual and theological language. It is true that Lossky's monumental *Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (published in French in 1944) is in practice an attempt towards an Orthodox systematic theological textbook, which touched on most of the *topoi* of modern Orthodox theology. In this way he responded to some of the difficulties posed by the generation of the Russian religious renaissance which, from Lossky's perspective, had been not careful enough with its systematic theological language, at the same time opening a dialogue with the Western theological tradition. Yet, in his attempt to use concepts that would be meaningful within a Western theological context, Lossky's understanding of mysticism, or the 'mystical union', is informed by the same 'mystical individualism' from which he tries to keep some distance.[7]

The problem here starts with how we define and understand mysticism. Even among several Orthodox theologians, mysticism in the last few centuries, especially after the interest in the beatific vision—defined by Thomas Aquinas as directly seeing the divine essence and as the expected culmination of the ascetic ascent[8]—is understood as a private encounter with the divine, as a beatific vision that essentially defines and confirms sainthood. This is not consistent with the way mysticism was understood in antiquity, where the etymology of the word refers to a sacramental initiation, as well as in early Christianity, where *μυστήριον* refers to the sacrament, and mystical theology, as in the work of Dionysios the Areopagite, essentially means liturgical theology. The pursuit and the expectation of private vision, on the other hand, so much mistrusted by the early Desert Fathers, implies a fideistic approach whose theological background is consistent with a (largely Roman Catholic) view of the miracle (and the vision) as a confirmation of the existence and the power of God, but also of the holiness of the beholder,[9] something that makes further ascetic struggle unnecessary. Fideistic mysticism thus becomes the grave of ascetic ascent.

[6] Cf. Gwenaëlle Aubry, '"Miracle, Mystery and Authority": a Deconstruction of the Christian Theology of Omnipotence', *MLN* 132.5 (2017): 1327–50.

[7] Cf. Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Crestwood, NY: SVS Press, 1976), 20–21.

[8] Summa Theologiae I–II, q. 3, a. 8 and elsewhere, also cf. Robert Llizo, 'The Vision of God: St. Thomas Aquinas on the Beatific Vision and Resurrected Bodies', *Perichoresis* 17.2 (2019): 19–26.

[9] In this way we may also consider the famous incident of the transfiguration of Seraphim of Sarov, written by Nikolai Motovilov. What may be questioned here is not the person of Seraphim himself, but the authenticity of Motovilov, a person with a troubled mental record, who dedicated much of his time and energy to the canonization of Seraphim. Motovilov's narrative of Seraphim's miraculous transfiguration tries precisely to make the case about his personal holiness. Even if the truthfulness of the event itself is not challenged, the motives of Motovilov in writing this down may be questioned. In contrast, Jesus, after his Transfiguration, instructed Peter, John and James to not mention what they saw until after his death and Resurrection (Mt 17:9; Mk 9:9; Lk 9:36).

Something very similar was actually discussed in the generation right after Gregory Palamas, as the Church was struggling to remove any suspicion of Massalianism from hesychastic theology, which seems to have been a considerable concern at the time. People such as Theophanes of Nicea, talking about the Thaboric light and the sacraments, stressed the understanding of the mystical as mystagogical and liturgical, and contrasted it with the private solitary ascent of the one to the One (to use the expression of Plotinus). Theophanes made a clear distinction between the private *μέθεξις*, which is neither shared nor verifiable, and the collective, sacramental *κοινωνία*, which refers to a shared experience of the presence of God.[10] This, of course, is a much older question. If we want to consider it in a wide context, we may notice that while the earliest examples of ascetic ascent (such as the ascent of Moses in Philo, or even the ascent of St Paul to the third heaven) were perhaps closer to the Platonist model of the individual ascent as well as the individual Hebrew *merkavah* (both of which may indeed be considered similar to the Massalian tradition), there is a gradual shift towards a more strongly embodied and collective understanding of the presence of God. While the ascent of Moses on Sinai in Philo is expressed in the context of the Platonist ascent of the (individual) soul, the same narrative in Gregory of Nyssa refers to the ascent of the soul and the ascent of the church community at the same time; and finally, in Dionysios the Areopagite it refers to the liturgical entrance of the celebrant to the altar. It was only after the explosion of hesychasm that the theology, truth, and context of the vision of light was examined more carefully in the Orthodox Church.

Now, while we owe to Russian theologians, or more precisely, to the dialogue between Martin Jugie and the theologians of the Russian diaspora,[11] the modern rediscovery of Palamas,[12] we can see that for a long time Russian theologians were not so much interested in the work of Palamas in its entirety, much of which remains untranslated to this day. In Greek, the critical edition was produced over several years by Panagiotis Chrestou[13] and, more recently, this task is still being carried out in English by Christopher Veniamin.[14] They were rather interested in what became

[10] Χ. Σωτηρόπουλος, ed., *Θεοφάνους Γ΄ Ἐπισκόπου Νικαίας Περί Θαβωρίου Φωτός, Λόγοι Πέντε* (Αθήνα, 1988).

[11] Norman Russell has explored effectively the background and the gradual introduction of Gregory Palamas in Russian thought, as well as his re-introduction in Greek thought. Russell points out that much of the reception of the thought of Palamas in the 20th century has to do with what he calls 'Orthodox identity politics': Norman Russell, *Gregory Palamas and the Making of Palamism in the Modern Age*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

[12] While it is true that the first modern study on Gregory Palamas was published by Gregory Papamichael in 1911 [*Ο Άγιος Ιρηγόριος ο Παλαμάς* (Alexandria, 1911)], before the publications of Bishop Basil Krivocheine, it was based on Papamichael's dissertation at the Russian Theological School of St Petersburg, written a few years earlier.

[13] Παναγιώτης Χρήστου, ed., *Αγίου Ιρηγορίου Παλαμά, Συγγράματα,* 5 volumes (Θεσσαλονίκη: Κυρομάνος, 1966–1992).

[14] Christopher Veniamin ed. and trans., *Mary the Mother of God: Sermons by Saint Gregory Palamas* (Dalton, PA: Mt Thabor Publishing, 2005); *The Saving Work of Christ: Sermons by Saint Gregory Palamas* (Daltoon, PA: Mt Thabor Publishing, 2008); *On the Saints: Sermons by Saint Gregory Palamas* (Dalton, PA:

known as Palamism. Russian theologians up to and including Meyendorff almost exclusively saw Palamas as the theologian of the charismatic visual experience, the author of the *Triads*, and they largely ignored the rest of his work, which is much more Christological and Mariological in nature and also includes diverse works, such as an attempt towards an interreligious dialogue with Islam.[15]

The Greek reception of hesychasm and Palamas, both before and after the twentieth-century contribution of the Russian theologians, has a slightly different flavour than it does in Russian theology and practice. Hesychasm may have originated in the Egyptian desert and may have later found its theological expression by Greek theologians, but it probably became more widespread in Russia than it did in Egypt and Greece. While the Jesus prayer is certainly known and practiced among Greek monks and laity, it is not considered the most normative practice in Greek monasticism; or to say this more correctly, with rare exceptions, such as the monastery of John the Baptist in Essex, UK (whose spiritual roots are Russian, nevertheless), the Jesus prayer does not normally replace the daily cycle of liturgical prayers. It is practiced privately, and it is not seen as the apex of spiritual life. Certainly among modern Greek theologians, the spiritual orientation is more Eucharistic than charismatic, although this is mostly a question of emphasis rather than of systematic pre-eminence.

In the Greek tradition, there was an attempt to moderate the power of the individual experience and combine it with philosophical theology, despite the argument of Palamas himself that 'philosophy does not save'. Yet, the immediate as well as the long-term reception of Palamite mysticism involved two significant limits. The biography of Palamas, written by Philotheos Kokkinos[16] several years after his death, starts with two events that nobody would have been able to remember more than sixty years after they took place, but seem specifically included there in order to give the reader the framework within which Palamism should be understood. The first is Theodoros Metochites' praise of Gregory for his understanding of Aristotelian philosophy. The point here is that the theological perspective of Palamism is understood as an extension of classical philosophy rather than as its simplistic negation. The second incident mentioned by Kokkinos is his conversion of the Massalians of Mt Papikion on his way to Mt Athos. The point in this case is a pre-emptive condemnation of Massalianism and the pursuit of the charismatic, transcendental experience that ignores the sacraments, an accusation that had been levied against Palamas by Barlaam.

Mt Thabor Publishing, 2008); *The Parables of Jesus: Sermons by Saint Gregory Palamas* (Dalton, PA: Mt Thabor Publishing, 2013).

[15] 'Διάλεξις προς Χιόνας', in Παναγιώτης Χρήστου, ed., *Αγίου Ιρηγορίου Παλαμά, Συγγράματα,* vol. 4 (Θεσσαλονίκη: Κυρομάνος, 1988), 120–65.

[16] Παναγιώτης Χρήστου, ed., *Φιλοθέου Κόκκινου, Βίος του Ιρηγορίου Παλαμά* (Θεσσαλονίκη: Πατερικές εκδόσεις Γρηγόριος ο Παλαμάς, 2009).

To return to our concern on mysticism as it has been approached at least since Lossky in the East, we can observe that the basis for its modern understanding, influenced by the Thomist perspective, relies much more on the individual, charismatic experience that could only exceptionally be found in the Eastern roots of spirituality, and, despite all the rhetoric for hesychasm and the theology of Gregory Palamas as a guarantee of an Orthodox pedigree, the experience of the Uncreated Light was contextualized more clearly within the sacramental context of Orthodox theology and practice. The thought of the theologians of the Russian diaspora indeed broached on mysticism and can, perhaps, be clarified and developed further, perhaps as one of the last victims of Florovsky's theological pseudomorphosis.

Another theological *topos* introduced by the Russian diaspora is the study of ecclesiology within Orthodox theology, a theological strand that does not appear as such before the nineteenth century, and yet has largely dominated Christian theological thought of the twentieth century. Afanasiev's study of the Church certainly provided a lot of clarity in terms of the balance of the One and the Many.[17] And yet, the introduction of ecclesiology as a distinct category of theology created about as many problems as it attempted to solve. To be fair to Afanasiev, his *Church of the Holy Spirit* posits, in no uncertain way, the Eucharistic foundation of ecclesiology, and it explores how this Eucharistic dimension spreads over and embraces all the members of the Church, clergy, and laity. Although Afanasiev's thought does not make a strong connection with Patristic thought (Dionysios is almost absent from his thought, while Maximos and Kabasilas are completely absent), he looked into early Christianity (such as the *Didache*, which he placed next to the New Testament in terms of the information they both offer about the early Church, following Harnack[18]) and also provided a basis for much ecclesiological reflection that followed, both in the West and in the East. Nevertheless, the exploration of Ecclesiology has not been exhausted, at least if we compare and contrast modern ecclesiological theory and practice.

The moment we started asking the question 'what is the Church?' is also the moment we started asking 'what is not the Church?' Since the answer to these questions, especially to the second, could not be left to the mostly empirical approach of the distant past (empirical in the sense that every community could have a clear sense of self-definition), it acquired an increasingly legalistic character. Similar questions, which have been plaguing Christianity for centuries, are 'What is the "genuine" Church?', and, with increasing frequency, especially in the age of

[17] While his main work, *The Church of the Holy Spirit* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), was published in English many years after his death, it is largely acknowledged that Afanasiev's thought had been circulated widely long before then, and had had a significant impact among the theologians of his generation for decades, cf. Ambrose Mong, *Purification of Memory: A Study of Orthodox Theologians from a Catholic Perspective* (Cambridge: James Clarke, 2015), esp. chapter 2, which is dedicated to Nicholas Afanasiev.

[18] Afanasiev, *Church of the Holy Spirit,* 87.

blog theology, 'What should I do if I discover that my Church is not the genuine one?' And also, a related question, 'Who is the head of the Church? How limited or absolute is his power?' There is no current consensus on this, except to admit that the Papal (Western) system has failed to preserve the unity of the Church, but the Imperial (Eastern) system has also failed, while Protestant theology has given up completely on the need for a Christian sacramental unity/union—perhaps so that the question of this primordial unity can emerge separated from the question of authority.

We could add a series of problems that have not been addressed sufficiently in the Orthodox Church. For example, there is the problem of ethnophyletism, which although repudiated theologically and repeatedly condemned, is still a harsh reality from which the Orthodox Church does not seem able to escape (and is related to the lack of a clear figure of a *primus*). An additional problem is the distance between the bishop and the priest, which takes away the emphasis on the celebration of the Eucharist, despite the lip service paid to it, in favour of a strongly administrative bishop. While Afanasiev and his successors noted the historical transition from the senior presbyter to the bishop and commented on how this transition affected the early Church,[19] it is hard to ignore that this problem has worsened in our days, with no clear view as to how it could be addressed.[20]

This difficulty of a lack of a common ecclesiological language has been manifested at the higher levels of church life. As we saw in the 2016 Council of Crete, the theological definition of the Church as the body which includes the entire sacramental presence of Jesus Christ has led to claims of exclusivity and exclusion that did not exist before, at least not in this way. More time and energy were spent in Crete trying to address the question of how to refer to non-Orthodox Christian denominations than to more urgent theological and pastoral issues. Could this possibly mean that the initial attempt to systematize the language of the Fathers on the subject of ecclesiology did not anticipate the claims of exclusivity it led to? Would it be possible to step back from a century of ecclesiology and seek a different entry point? After all, the Patristic corpus on ecclesiology is impressively small, indicating that the Fathers did not try to address this question in a systematic way.

Interestingly, the one Father who dedicated a significant part of his work to the study of the sacraments and the structure of the celestial and the earthy Church is the one who used the persona of a character from the first century, quite possibly in order to extricate himself from the theological conversation of his time, possibly as a protest for the abstract direction theology was taking at the time. If we read Dionysios the Areopagite in this way, we can understand his entire work as an attempt

[19] Afanasiev, *Church of the Holy Spirit*, 217–54.

[20] Cf. Dimitrios Bathrellos, 'Church, Eucharist, Bishop', in Douglas Knight, ed., *The Theology of John Zizioulas: Personhood and the Church* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 133–46. Bathrellos is developing this point even further in a forthcoming article.

to escape and denounce the post-Chalcedonian climate of division and opposition, where theological *signifiers* were rapidly losing their empirical connection from their *signifieds*. In Dionysian thought, ecclesiology is the study of the sacraments, as we can see it in his two *hierarchies* (something that has remained unchanged all the way to Nikolaos Kabasilas, who distinguished sacraments from rational symbols in relation to the Church[21]), or the language of doxology, wherever it may come from, as we see it in *Divine Names*, or the language of the transcendence of rationality, as we see in the *Mystical Theology*. Dionysios does touch on the question of the authority of the bishop and the priest, but the base of that authority is not administrative jurisdiction; it is sacramental clarity, the kind of clarity that allows the light of God to pass through. Perhaps it is there, and in the equally sacramental *Mystagogy* of Maximos the Confessor that we could look for the roots of a liturgical ecclesiology[22] that may take away some of the emphasis on ethnic and jurisdictional divisions. Our current definitions of the Church have not made provision for the fragmented Christianity we experience—something more evident in Orthodoxy in the West—and the most moderate Orthodox response to the question of whether to call non-Orthodox Christian bodies churches or not is neither very clear nor very theological. At any rate, perhaps the Patristic and sacramental exploration of the roots of ecclesiology, along with the challenges the Orthodox Church faces in the modern world, will force it out of a cocoon of theological inactivity and into a more daring theological exploration of the unknown.

But perhaps the most lasting among the directions the Russian diaspora opened for us was that which came about as a reaction to the earlier phase of Russian religious philosophical theology: the return to the Fathers and the neopatristic synthesis. This, in short, encapsulates the quite intense dialogue between Sergei Bulgakov on the one hand and Vladimir Lossky and Georges Florovsky on the other. In fact, most of the writings of Lossky and Florovsky are responses or reactions to the thought of Bulgakov.

Georges Florovsky was rightly concerned with the alienation of Orthodox theology during its Babylonian captivity,[23] the period when Russian theology lost its intellectual depth after the forced change of Russian culture and ecclesiastical structure by Peter the Great, while at the same time the Greek church was struggling to survive under the Ottoman rule. During that time, Orthodox theology slipped into using Western theological language, which for the most part was not understood

[21] Nikolaos Kabasilas, *Ερμηνεία εις την Θείαν Λειτουργίαν*, 38:6.

[22] Such as explored by Andrew Louth in his article 'The Ecclesiology of Saint Maximos the Confessor', *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 4.2 (2004): 109–20, as well as in several of the works of Nikolaos Loudovikos, such as *A Eucharistic Ontology: Maximus the Confessor's Eschatological Ontology of Being as Dialogical Reciprocity* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2010).

[23] Cf. Georges Florovsky, *Ways of Russian Theology*, Collected Works Vol. 5, 121. It is interesting that while Florovsky believed this Babylonian captivity began with Peter the Great's reforms, he saw Bulgakov's sophiology as the more recent expression of that Westernization which needed to be eradicated.

correctly and was not really integrated with Orthodox thought. This is a condition from which Orthodox theology has not yet fully recovered.[24] Florovsky used 'pseudomorphosis'[25]—a term that, as Andrew Louth has demonstrated,[26] was borrowed from the study of minerals and refers to an element that appears as something that it is not—in order to describe the illness, and presents the return to the theology and the mindset of the Fathers as the cure.

While his historical observations cannot be disputed, there are several difficulties with the idea of the return to the Fathers. First, which Fathers? The Philokalia, the most recent collection of Patristic writings, still influential today, was compiled during a time when Western theological views and attitudes had already become part of Eastern theology—not so much in the sense of expressing Western ideas (although one of its two editors, Nikodemos the Hagiorite also translated to Greek the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola and the *Spiritual Combat* of Lorenzo Scupoli), but in that it posits a personal monastic asceticism, largely ignoring Patristic texts on the communion of the Church or on love. It can hardly be thought of as a systematic Patristic syllabus, as it does not include important Fathers such as Basil the Great and Dionysios the Areopagite, and the word 'church' is mentioned only three times in the entire compilation. The impression one gets from this collection is that its aim is to demonstrate that since the world in which we live has fallen to the Ottomans, and since the Church as a powerful institution has collapsed, it is not easy to speak of salvation in this world, and therefore we could try to think of salvation as an anchoretic escape, in a way perhaps even more extreme than we can find in the early Desert Fathers. The *Tale of the Pilgrim*, a text that expresses the reception of the Philokalia in the Slavic world, crystallizes this idea quite clearly, as it exemplifies the mendicant lifestyle of the titular pilgrim; it is mostly a personal journey, where the abandonment of the community is seen as a higher calling than belonging to it.

The second question to consider in this context is 'How do we read the Fathers?' When we refer to 'the Fathers' we mean writings that easily cover fifteen centuries, from different parts of the Christian world, addressing different theological or pastoral needs. It is extremely misleading to imply a consistency of language, purpose, or methodology in the Patristic corpus. Even the same writer may use different approaches if a different audience needs to be addressed; Gregory Palamas, for instance, spoke in a very different way to the Muslims who captured him in 1354

[24] As an example of this we may refer to the implicit adoption of the idea of seven sacraments by the Orthodox Church, something that does not exist in Orthodox thought; in the sacramental theology of Dionysios the Areopagite for instance, we find references to only three sacraments. In addition, in a deeper theological sense one could argue, as John Zizioulas has done, that the entire sacramental life of the Church flows from the one sacrament of the Eucharist.

[25] Florovsky, 5, 37, 72, 84, and 121.

[26] Andrew Louth, 'The Authority of the Fathers in the Western Orthodox Diaspora in the Twentieth Century' in Archimandrite Job Getcha & Michel Stavrou, eds, *Le Feu sur la terre. Mélanges offerts au Père Boris Bobrinskoy pour son 80e anniversaire*, (Analecta Sergiana 3) (Paris: Presses Saint-Serge, 2005), 169–76.

than to his monks at Esphigmenou. To compound this problem, we do not write theology in the same way today, where for the most part our theological language is that of a disembodied, reified apodictic philosophy rather than the language of revelation and compassion. Nevertheless, one of the unintended results of the emphasis on the Fathers is a temptation to think of 'the mindset' and the thought of the Fathers as a solid body of legal information, clothed within a cloak of objective authority second only to Scripture—a 'sin' heavier than the Protestant elevation of the Biblical text to an inerrant, literal, absolute and exclusive measure of the truth—since the same reification of the text is not refuted, but it is extended to the Patristic texts. Unfortunately, at least if we consider lay Orthodox theological voices as they are expressed in the blogosphere, but also much of modern formal theology, we simply do not read the Fathers correctly when we try to find in them the reified, inerrant ultimate authority that the Orthodox Church has denied both to the Pope and to Scripture. The Fathers need to be interpreted constantly and read dynamically as 'theological icons' in a 'symphony' of voices throughout time.[27]

Florovsky, of course, was an exceptionally distinguished Patrologist, but the point here is less about the 'correct' Fathers or the sources that could be used as antidotes to the pseudomorphosis and more about the sad realization that we have lost our continuity with our own tradition, that we cannot trust Orthodox spirituality as it was handed to us by the previous generation. We therefore need to look back to a golden era of our theology in order to rediscover our roots. Here, however, we can see a strong parallel with the Western world. This was precisely the disappointment of the Protestant reformers when they realized that their own tradition had been corrupted by the power-hungry Papacy, and they looked to the origins of Christianity as the golden era they could trust. In both cases we can see that (the immediate) tradition is abandoned, in favour of what is considered a probably arbitrarily chosen golden age of theological thought. It is interesting here to note that different traditions have different ideas about what may be considered an ecclesiastical golden age. While for most Protestants this is the time before the Church was consolidated into an international structure, for the Catholic Church it is usually the time of a strong Renaissance Papacy, and for the Orthodox Church the golden age is, unquestionably, a reminiscence of the strong Byzantine Empire. In this light, the neopatristic turn may be considered as a light Reformation, too light to cause a schism in the Orthodox Church (perhaps precisely pseudomorphic theology and practice is still very much present in Orthodoxy today), but then again too light to manage to shake the Orthodox Church out of its own Dark Ages and question some of its cultural assumptions (Byzantinisms or Russianisms) seriously.

[27] Both terms are taken from John Behr, 'Patristic Texts as Icons', in Andreas Andreopoulos & Graham Speake, eds, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth: Studies in Honour of Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia* (New York: Peter Lang, 2016), 151–70.

I have great respect for Florovsky as a scholar, and my view of his neopatristic turn in these terms is meant to show something of the magnitude, perhaps the desperate magnitude, of his endeavour. I believe however, that it is necessary to accept that despite all the reasons that necessitate the return to the Fathers, neopatristic thought crossed a bridge when it rejected the continuity of its own tradition. After all, there are different views, such as that of Christos Yannaras, according to whom the most genuine expression of the Church may be found at the politically destitute time of the *Tourkokratia*, the time when Greece was subject to the Ottomans. This was a time when political authority was completely separated from ecclesiastical authority, when theological ideology had virtually died, yet the sense of participation as a way of life was quite strong.[28] One could find in that sense of church life (what Yannaras would define as a *tropos*/way of life instead of a fideistic attitude) the elusive continuity which had perhaps been lost in the Russian tradition, if Florovsky was right. While the Ottomans restricted Christian theological discourse, they did not oppress or change the way Christianity was practiced in Greece, whereas Peter the Great changed both the way Christianity was taught and the way it was practiced in Russia. Be that as it may, we cannot escape the problem of the discontinuity, especially in a denomination that values tradition so intensely.

It seems to me that the problem of discontinuity stems partially from the question of the identity of the Orthodox Church. The project of the forced Westernization of Russia by Peter the Great in the eighteenth century, and the subsequent hybrid of Latin-Russian theological thought, which for Florovsky is the beginning of the Babylonian captivity, was prepared for centuries. In many ways, the Orthodox Church is perhaps the last institution that did not go through a Reformation, and still understands itself in relation to the medieval, Byzantine Church, in the case of the Greek Church, or its offspring, the Russian Church that was at the same time proud of its Byzantine roots and also tried to emancipate itself from them. But 'medieval' (as referring to the 'middle' between an enlightened antiquity and its renaissance a few centuries later) is not an accurate designation here. It is more precise to modify our historiographic terms with reference to what they truly reflect. The Western Middle Ages largely correspond to a rather bright period in the East. The Eastern Roman Empire, as well as its culture, art, and thought survived after the collapse of the Old Rome in the fifth century. It also survived the hit of the Latin Fourth Crusade, even if this was the beginning of the end for it politically and militarily. The Dark Ages of the East rather start with the fall of Constantinople in the fifteenth century, at least if we limit the understanding of 'dark' in relation to politics, but also to the production of theological thought, and the (lack of) participation in the theological conversation that was taking place in the Christian world elsewhere. Yet it is certainly not sound to argue that these limitations affected the day to day operation of the

[28] Cf. Christos Yannaras, 'Χωρισμός, ο συνεπέστερος δυνατός' *Kathimerini*, 11 November 2018, https://www.kathimerini.gr/994567/opinion/epikairothta/politikh/xwrismos-o-synepesteros-dynatos.

Church in its relationship with its members. Even before the fall of Constantinople, the first sign of the decline may be the time when Eastern philosophers and theologians started using Eastern and Western theologies as different languages, with no expectation of compromise or synthesis. This started already in the fourteenth century, as Yannaras reminds us,[29] when the *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas, a paradigm of Western thought, was translated to Greek by Demetrios Kydonis. In the centuries that followed, church life, art, and architecture kept flourishing despite the final collapse of the Eastern Roman Empire, but most attempts towards the articulation of theological thought were gradually borrowing uncritically from the Western tradition. Therefore, the designation 'Dark Ages' even for that time may refer to some but not all of the aspects of life in the former Eastern Roman Empire.

Regardless of any criticism towards the possible purity or feasibility of the return to the Fathers and the escape from Babylonian captivity, and while the Russian post-Petrine experience of Christian life was possibly more confused than the Greek experience under the Ottomans, it is precisely Florovsky who brought to our attention the intrusion of deeply incompatible strands such as German idealism into Orthodox thought. Yet, the impact of his thought on Church life was limited. While it is difficult to consider Orthodox theological thought today without the formative influence of the call for the return to the thought and the mindset of the Fathers—perhaps an impossible task if taken literally, but at least one that recognizes the undigested influence of Western theology since the fourteenth century, and proposes some ways to address it—much of the pastoral activity of the Orthodox Church is still under its Babylonian captivity in matters such as ethics, spiritual guidance and confession, authority within the Church, liturgical literacy, ethnic lines, and sexuality.

As now we are counting a hundred years after the first exile of the Russians to the West, which initiated many of these questions, we can try to evaluate what the legacy of the Russian diaspora is today. It may be fair to recognize that the Eastern Dark Ages have left wounds from which the Orthodox Church has still not recovered, and for which a sustained consideration of the thought of the Fathers may be helpful, even if it is not a panacea. While, as noted above, it may be possible to find many positive aspects of church life in the Ottoman period, the political liberation of Greece, as also the Russian realization of the value of its pre-Petrine past, brought about a crisis of identity that included the East/West axis, as well as an axis that may be described as pre-medieval/post-Enlightenment. The theological thought of the Russian diaspora was nothing less than a spark of genuine concern for this identity and for the place and the directions of Orthodox theology in the modern world. While it is hard to ascertain to what extent that spark was able to bear long-lasting fruit beyond theological conversations (admittedly, a pessimist view), it is undoubtedly a long-lasting movement of inspiration.

[29] Christos Yannaras, *Ορθοδοξία και Δύση στη Νεώτερη Ελλάδα* (Ἀθήναι: Δόμος, 2006).

Saint Luke Metropolitan of Simferopol as physician, surgeon and academic professor

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'A King's secret ought to be kept, but the works of God should be acknowledged publicly'.

Born in Kertz in 1877, St Luke (Valentine Felixovich Voino-Yassenetski), Metropolitan of Simferopol and Crimea, was a surgeon, professor, author, theologian, philosopher, confessor, martyr, and bishop. He studied Medicine at Kiev's University and graduated in 1903 at the age of 26. Vladimir Felixovich initially worked as a local district physician. He offered his medical services as member of the Kiev Medical Hospital of the Red Cross during the Russian-Japanese war in 1904–1905 in the city of Chita. In 1915, Valentin Felixovich published his first important scientific work, his thesis entitled 'Regional anesthesia', for which he was awarded Chojnacki prize by the Warsaw University. In 1917, Valentin Felixovich went to Tashkent in order to oversee the Department of Surgery as head surgeon of the Tashkent Municipal Hospital. In 1919, his wife Anna, who suffered from pulmonary tuberculosis, died in Tashkent, leaving four orphans. In 1921, Valentin Felixovich was ordained a deacon and priest and, in 1923, he was consecrated as a bishop. He was also appointed full professor of Topographic Anatomy and Surgery at Tashkent's University. His lectures at the university attracted a large number of medical students and surgeons as well as students of various faculties and disciplines. In 1923, Bishop Luke was arrested and sentenced to imprisonment and exile to Siberia. That was the first of three times that Bishop Luke was arrested and exiled without cause, which he endured for 11 years. In 1924, at the hospital of Yeniseisk, Bishop Luke successfully performed the world's first kidney transplant from animal (calf) to man. During the Great Patriotic War, He was called to serve as chief surgeon at the army hospital in Krasnoyarsk. He successfully established 'the battlefield surgery' and saved the lives of numerous soldiers transferred to hospital from various battlefields. For his medical services during the war, he was awarded a medal 'For valiant effort in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945'. After the war, he finished the book 'Late Resection of Infected Wounds of the Large Joints', which was submitted together with his large memorable handbook entitled 'Notes on the Surgical Treatment of Purulent Wounds', which was awarded the Stalin Prize in the first order in 1946. In May 1946, the Holy Synod elevated Bishop Luke to the rank of Archbishop and he was elected Archbishop of Simferopol and Crimea. At the same time, Bishop Luke continued to practice surgery and give consultations in the Army Hospital and Hospital of the Veterans of the Great Patriotic War in Simferopol. He proceeded to the most serious surgical operations on severe and unusual cases.

He released also lectured on surgery and scientific research at Crimea's Medical Institute. On 11 June 1961, St Luke passed to eternity. His extensive scientific knowledge, desire for research, endeavour to open new horizons in surgery, unique surgical capacity, courage, perseveration, continuous hard work, devotion to pedagogy, ethical principles and values, and mostly his genuine and pure Christo-centric life, all contribute to St Luke's unique academic profile. He strongly believed that academic communication and the transmission of knowledge is the ultimate duty of a professor. This duty is not limited to the amphitheater, the teaching hall and the wards, but it should be constantly practiced with patients anywhere, at any time, and in any conditions. St Luke used to say that healing means an essential existential restoration of the person who suffers and a radical amelioration of his quality of life. The doctor must communicate with the patient in order to enter in the altar of his soul and treat the interior dimension of the pain, which is usually more severe than the physical pain. The physician must sacrifice himself for the benefit of the patients. In the last years of his life the harmonization of medicine and surgery with his pastoral work of charity and mercy was a special gift. St Luke's scientific contributions in the field of medicine includes hundreds of papers written over a long period of time, from 1908 to 1956. The publications cover new surgical methods, unusual cases, regional anesthesia, the treatment of pyogenic infections, surgical treatment of infected and septic wounds, treatment of osteomyelitis, on hematogenous osteomyelitis, surgical treatment of the diseases of the spinal cord, excision of the tumors of the central nervous system, and surgical treatment of the disorders of the cranial and spinal nerves. St Luke's texts are very clear, precise, analytical, instructive, written with eloquence and linguistic perfection, enriched with hand drawings by the author and based on extensive references.

Introduction

> 'You people, who may not have much of a relationship with science and do not know much about philosophy, remember always the most basic beginning, which was well known by the early Christians. They considered poor, the person who knew all the sciences yet he knew not God. On the other hand, they considered blessed the person who knew God, even if he knew absolutely nothing about the worldly things. Guard this truth like the best treasure of the heart, walk straight without looking right or left'.

With this simple, profound, instructive, and moving proclamation, Metropolitan Luke summarizes his philosophy, his principles, and underlines the spiritual axis of his life. The Metropolitan of Simferopol Luke, whose full name was Valentine Felixovich Voino-Yassenetski (Войно-Ясенецкий Валентин Феликсович) was a physician, surgeon, academic professor, author of textbooks on surgery, medical dissertations, research articles, priest, theologian, philosopher, confessor, martyr of the truth, author of many books of theology, catechism, and philosophy. The truth was the centre of his life, the axis of his medical practice, science, thought, medical research, teaching activities, social life, his communication with people and the interior light in any aspect of his personal life. St Luke was born in Kertz (Керчи),

on 27 April 1877. He was the third son of his parents,[1] who were descendants of a princely Russian family. His mother, Mariya Dmitriyevna, was Orthodox, and his father, Felix Stanislavovitch Voino Yassenesco, a pharmacist, was a pious practicing Catholic.

During his childhood he was spiritually influenced by the Orthodox Monastery of the Holy Lavra of the Kiev Caves (Киево-Печерская Лавра)[2] and the Holy Bible, a copy of which he received as the most valuable gift upon graduating high school. He was a very gifted pupil with an inclination to the arts[3] but decided to study medicine at the Great Prince St Vladimir Medical School at the University of Kiev,[4] famous

[1] Felix Stanislavovitch Voino Yassenesco (Феликс Станиславович Войно-Ясенецко), a pharmacist, was his father, and Mariya Dmitriyevna was his mother (Мария Дмитриевна). His family included five siblings: Pavel (Павел), Olga (Ольга), Valentin (Валентин), Vladimir (Владимир) and Victoriya (Виктория). (Архиепископ Лука (Войно-Ясенецкий) «Я полюбил страдание…» Автобиография, 1947.

[2] According to the Primary Chronicle (Nestor's Chronicle or Nestor's manuscript), the monastery was founded by an Orthodox monk named Anthony from the Esphigmenou monastery on Mount Athos in the early eleventh century. Antony was settled in Kiev in a cave at the Berestov Mount, called the Cave of Theodosius, and gradually organized a monastic community under the protection of Prince Iziaslav I of Kiev, who ceded the whole mount to the monks. In 1051, Antony called architects from Constantinople in order to build a monastery based on Byzantine architectural style. Among the first disciples were Theodosius and Barlaam. Theodosius was elected abbot (1062–1074) and decided to base the rules of the monastic community on the statute of the Studion Monastery in Constantinople. Gradually, the Lavra of the Kiev Caves (Киево-Печерская Лавра) became the spiritual centre of Kiev's Russians. During the invasions by the hordes of the Tartars, led by Baty-Khan in the thirteenth century and the subsequent occupation of Kiev, Pertseskaya Lavra was destroyed and evacuated. Most monks took refuge in small caves and in catacombs. In the sixteenth century the monastery was reconstructed and was granted stavropegial status by the Patriarch of Constantinople. In the following years, the monastery flourished greatly and acquired much wealth. Before the Bolsheviks' assumption of power in 1917, the monastery was home to over one thousand monks and exercised strong spiritual influence on the Russian people. During the Great Patriotic War (World War II), the Russian army decided to mine the Holy Dormition Cathedral, before the advancing German army. In 1961 the monastery was repopulated and functioned again, now home to only one hundred monks. The reconstruction and restoration of the monastery, based on the previous shape and embellishment, started in 1988 and was accomplished during the years 1998–2000. The Lavra is also the site of the Kiev Theological Academy and Seminary. See also Nora Kershaw Chadwick, *The Beginnings of Russian History: An Enquiry into Sources* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1946).

[3] He wrote in his *Spiritual Will* in 1956: 'The Lord God has blessed me with different talents. In high school, I finished my studies in the School of Fine Arts in Kiev. I was very talented in arts and I decided to enter the Academy of Fine Arts in Leningrad. But in the middle of exams I abandoned this effort because I thought that I should serve God and His people, in work that is more beneficial than art'. Archbishop Luke, *To my three sons, my daughter, my grandchildren and my great grandchildren. My spiritual will*, trans. Fr. Constantine J. Simones (Waterford, CT): https://www.impantokratoros.gr/st-luke-spiritual-testament.en.aspx 12/02/20.

[4] In 1898 Valentin was enrolled in the Medical School of Kiev's University. He was an excellent student, and most enthusiastic from the very beginning of his studies. He was distinguished with excellency in anatomy and surgery. His classmates, who adored and respected him greatly, had been foreseeing with certitude, that he would become professor of Anatomy after graduation shortly. His personality was decorated by an exceptional kindness, genuine politeness and high moral standards. He was characterized by profound orthodox spirit, which motivated his medical ethics, the collaboration with his tutors and classmates and the relationship with people, based always on respect, veneration, compassion, and pure help to every human being, without any social, ethnic, religious or political discrimination. [Νεκτάριος Αντωνόπουλος, Μητρ. Αργολίδος, *Αρχιεπίσκοπος Λουκάς*, (Νέα Σμύρνη: Ακρίτας, 2008)].

for its excellence in education. He graduated as extraordinary student with high achievements and was awarded a medical degree *cum laude* in 1903 at the age of 26.

Saint Luke as Physician

Vladimir Felixovitch initially worked as a local district physician after his graduation 'healing the ailments of peasants and workers and finding deep satisfaction in this and proceeded'.[5] Then he proceeded to qualify in surgery and ophthalmology at Kiev University.

In 1904, at the declaration of the Russian-Japanese war,[6] Valentine Felixovitch offered his medical services as a member of the Kiev Medical Hospital of the Red Cross. He went to Red Cross Hospital in the city of Chita (Чита́),[7] where he obtained

[5] He wrote in his *Spiritual Will*: 'As a rural doctor, I worked for thirteen years twelve to fourteen hours a day. I was thinking seriously of abandoning the rural hospital in order travel to distant villages where the people were poor and dying because of the lack of medical help'.

[6] The Russo-Japanese War was the final result of a long rivalry between Russia and Japan for the dominance in Far East, and particularly in Korea and Manchuria. Japan, in a previous war with China from 1894–1895, succeeded to grant Korea's independence. In addition, the Treaty of Shimonoseki, between Japan and China, ceded the Liaodong Peninsula and the island of Taiwan to Japan. In 1898, China, after long negotiations, leased Port Arthur (Lóshun), a seaport of strategic value, to Russia. On 8 February 1904, the Japanese Imperial Navy, under Admiral Togo Heihachiro, attacked the Russian Fleet at Port Arthur, without any formal war declaration, which was only issued three hours later. Numerous sea and land battles occurred between Russian and Japanese forces from February 1904 to late May 1905; the majority of them resulted in Japanese victory (Port Arthur 1904, Chemulpo Bay 1904 ,Yalu River 1904, Nanshan 1904, Telissu 1904, Motien Pass 1904, Ta-shih-chiao 1904, Hsimucheng 1904, Yellow Sea 1904, Ulsan 1904, Port Arthur 1905, Liaoyang 1904, Shaho 1904, Sandepu 1905, Mukden 1905, Tsushima 1905). During the war, Russians suffered disproportionate casualties by the continuous Japanese attacks. The naval Battle in the Tsushima Strait on May 27–29 1905 gave Japan the final decisive victory and brought the Russian government to peace negotiations. During the peace conference at Portsmouth NH, USA (Aug. 9–Sept. 5, 1905), President Roosevelt served as mediator and earned the Nobel Peace Prize for his effort. In the resulting Treaty signed on 5 September 1905, at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine, Japan gained control of the Liaotung Peninsula and Port Arthur, the South Manchurian railroad, and half of Sakhalin Island and Russia recognized Korea as part of the Japanese sphere of influence. Estimates of Russian Army casualties range from around 40,000 to around 70,000 men. The financial and political consequences for Russia were tragic. See also Gary P. Cox, 'Review of the Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero', *Journal of Military History* 70.1, (2006): 250–251. See also 'Text of the Treaty; Signed by the Emperor of Japan and Czar of Russia'. New York Times. Oct. 17, 1905.

[7] The city of Chita (Чита́) is the administrative centre of Zabaykalsky Krai, located at the confluence of the Chita and Ingoda Rivers and on the Trans-Siberian Railway, 900 kilometers east of Irkutsk. Today Chita has a population of 324,444 inhabitants mostly of Chinese, Mongolian and Turkic origin. At the time that Valentin offered his medical services, the city used to have a population of 11,000 inhabitants and was a remote place of exile. Chita was occupied by the Japanese between 1918 and 1920. In 1945, Puyi, the last Emperor of China, and some of his associates were held prisoner in the city. The Red Cross Hospital in 1904 included two departments of Surgery, one of which was under Valentin's direction, who practiced emergent surgery and at the same time also operated on chronic surgical cases. Following his service in Chita, Valentin worked in various provincial hospitals in Siberia under difficult conditions without any laboratory diagnostic support from 1905 to 1910. It is really astonishing that St Luke was able to effectively run a medical practice in those remote areas of Siberia using the most updated textbooks of Medicine and Surgery and applying his original therapeutic methods and innovative surgical techniques. He successfully performed many surgical operations on the brain, eyes, heart, gastrointestinal system, bile ducts, kidneys, spinal vertebrae, joints, and bones. His contributions as physician and surgeon were extensively

considerable surgical experience, proceeding to major surgery on the skeletal system and the skull. At the same time, he worked continuously on the treatment of pyogenic infections, which was a serious problem in medical and surgical practice. He worked extensively in that field for thirteen years, even as provincial doctor in Siberia and other areas (Simbirsk, Kursk, Saratov)—where he faced death caused by bacterial and fungal infections on a daily basis—especially in children, the elderly, and those living without basic hygiene measures. In 1910, working in the city of Pereslav Zalesky (Переславль-Залесский),[8] where he spent six and a half years, he started writing the initial chapter of his textbook on surgical treatment of pyogenic (purulent) infections under the light of a petrol lamp.

Valentine married Anna Vasilievna Lanskaya (Анна Васильевна Ланская), a sister of mercy who had previously worked in the Kiev Military Hospital serving in Russian-Japanese war. She was characterized by exceptional kindness, gentleness, high morality and virtue, so that everyone called her 'holy sister'. They were blessed with four children.[9]

Anna, who suffered from pulmonary tuberculosis[10], died from cold and hunger in 1919. Valentine grieved profoundly after the death of his beloved wife; however, he submitted himself peacefully to will of God he devoted himself totally to science, medical and surgical practice, and the education of his children, finding real consolation only in the Faith. The family was under the spiritual guidance of Abbess Yevyeniya of the Holy Convent of Theodorofski (Феодоровской монастыр).

Valentin Felixovich was continuously working scientifically. He performed numerous surgical procedures, after fervent long prayer inside the operation room in front of the icon of the All Holy Theotokos, beginning each surgical procedure by making the sign of the Cross on the body of the patient at the site of the surgical incision. At that time, he published his first couple of case reports entitled

recognized. Hundreds of patients every day from any region of Russia traveled to him, imploring for his medical help and therapeutic contribution in chronic and incurable diseases. St Luke was very successful on ophthalmological operations. Many blind people regained their vision after surgical intervention by St Luke, a fact which increased his reputation and propagated his fame all over Siberia.

[8] Pereslavl-Zalessky is a city located in south of Yaroslavl Oblast, 140 km northeast of Moscow at the mouth of the Trubezh River. Today it has a population 41,925 inhabitants. In the past, the city was devastated numerous times by the Mongols between the mid-thirteenth century and the early fifteenth century. At the time that Saint Luke worked as surgeon, the working conditions were dire. The operational equipment of the hospital was primitive, with no electricity, no running water, and no X-ray machine.

[9] Michael, the first child of the family, was born in 1907, the second, Helen, was born on year later.

[10] Anna passed away at the age of 38 in October of 1919, when the family lived in Tasked. She left four orphans aged six to twelve. She was buried in Tashkent's cemetery. On her grave, her husband wrote 'Anna Vasilevna, 38 years old. A pure heart, which passionately sought truth'. Valentine chose Sophia Sergeyevna, one of the faithful nurses, who had been widowed and was without children, to help in raising his children. She treated the children with affection, love, respect and responsibility, offering them an excellent education in the spirit of Orthodoxy. All of them studied at the University. Michael and Valentine studied Medicine with MD and PhD degrees. Alexios studied biological sciences, with postdoctoral qualifications and PhD. Helen studied Medicine and Epidemiology. St Luke wrote about Sophia Sergeyevna to his children in 1956: 'With a great deal of self-sacrifice and love, she lifted the heavy cross for your care, during those years of the plague. She raised you successfully and gave you a good education' (*Spiritual Will*).

'Elephantiasis of the face, due to plexiform neurinoma' and 'Retrograde strangulated inguinal hernia'.

In 1915, Valentin Felixovich published his first important scientific work, 'Regional anaesthesia' (Регионарная анестезия), in the form of a dissertation.[11] For this contribution, he was awarded Chojnacki prize by the Warsaw University in the form of 900 gold rubles granted to the best original scientific research 'blazing new trails in the field of medicine'. Valentin Felixovich worked for many years in the field of regional anaesthesia and he was the first who attempted to treat the trigeminal nerve neuralgia by injecting a local anaesthetic into second branch of the nerve at the place where it exits from the foramen rotundum.[12]

In 1917, Valentin Felixovich went to Tashkent[13] in order to oversee the Department of Surgery as head surgeon of the Tashkent Municipal Hospital. He was selected among many other candidates in an atmosphere of stiff competition during a period of economic and social crisis just before the war between the garrison of the city and the Turkic inhabitants, which had tragic consequences on the quality of life of the citizens. At the same time, he was appointed as a professor in the college of Medicine and played a key role in the opening of the University in Tashkent.

[11] St Luke wrote the dissertation during his stay in Moscow, when he worked under the supervision of Profs Dyakonov and Rain, as an external surgeon in the clinic of Professor Dyakonov. The dissertation, published in 1915 in Petrograd, summarized the results of his extensive surgical experience. He also described the technique of the first regional anesthesia in the lower limbs, performed in Russia, by the infiltration of the sciatic nerve by local anesthetic, therefore interrupting the nerve conduction. In the upper limbs, he applied regional anesthesia by infiltration of the medial nerve by local anesthetic. A year later, in 1916, he defended his thesis and received his medical degree. His knowledge of the anatomy of the nervous system and particularly on the course of peripheral nerves and the distribution of sensation on the human body enabled him to apply regional anesthesia very accurately and successfully. His lectures on regional anesthesia in the Surgical Association of Moscow deeply impressed his colleagues. Martynov a famous surgeon said: 'When I read your book, I got the impression of singing birds, which can't help but sing, and I was very impressed'. [Vasily Marushchak, Archdeacon, T*he Blessed Surgeon: The Life of Saint Luke, Archbishop of Simferopol*, (Divine Ascent Press, 2008)].

[12] He explained that he had studied more than three hundred skulls in order to find the most efficient way to inject the local anesthetic into foramen rotundum in the base of the skull.

[13] Tashkent (Ташкент, stone city) is the capital of Uzbekistan in Central Asia, located on the Great Silk Road from China to Europe and with an officially registered poly-ethnic population of about 2.5 million inhabitants, the majority being Uzbeks. The name of the city comes from the Kara-Khanid rule in the tenth century. According to an ancient tradition, the city was founded by Alexander the Great (Iskander Bicorn in the Koran) after his victorious expedition against Scythians in 328 BC. In the ninth century Tashkent was a part of the Samanid state. In the tenth–thirteenth centuries, it was under the rule of the Kara-Khanids and the Kara-Khitans. In 1219, Tashkent was captured and destroyed by Genghis Khan and in the fourteenth century the city was conquered by Amir Temur (Tamerlane). In the second half of the sixteenth century, Tashkent was a part of the Bukhara Khanate, and in 1809 it was annexed to the Khanate of Kokand. In 1865, Tashkent was taken by Russian troops led by Chernyayev and annexed to Russia under the crown of Tsar Alexander II. In April 1918, Tashkent was declared the capital of the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. During the Great Patriotic War, Tashkent became one of the evacuation centres. The Soviet government relocated factories from Western Russia and Ukraine to Tashkent, a fact which led to a great increase in industry. During the war, the city attracted hundreds of thousands of people, providing them with food and work, leading to its being called the 'City of Bread'. After gaining independence in 1991, Tashkent remained the capital of the Republic of Uzbekistan and in 2007 it gained the title of 'Cultural capital of the Islamic world'.

In the middle of the atrocities[14], revolts and campaign against Orthodox faith, Valentin Felixovich was arrested under the pretence of a personal contradiction with one of the members of the hospital's personnel.[15] He was released in a miraculous way at the time that his wife was at the end of her life.

Saint Luke as Doctor and Priest

> 'I see clearly how from my earliest years the Lord—unknown to me—was leading me to the priesthood, which I myself had never even contemplated, for I greatly loved surgery and was wholly: devoted to it'.

On 7 February1921, Valentin Felixovich Voino-Yasenetsky was ordained deacon and the following week he was ordained to the priesthood by Diocesan Bishop Innokenty (Pustynsky) of Tashkent, in a period during which the persecution of the Russian Orthodox Church reached a climax. Fr Luc took up daily duties in Tashkent's cathedral[16] and preached God's word on every possible occasion, expressing strong criticism of materialism and coming in vertical confrontation with the priest Lopakin, who denied Orthodoxy and undertook the anti-Christian atheist campaign in Central Asia. In addition, he peacefully endured the ironic comments and mockery of his colleagues and students for his status as clergyman.

However, Fr Luc continued to perform surgical operations on a daily basis, also heading the Department of Surgery in Tashkent's main hospital. In addition, he was elected full professor of Topographic Anatomy and Surgery at Tashkent's University. He worked diligently towards improving the university and the department of Anatomy and Surgery, with particular application of his pedagogical skills.[17]

[14] Stavros J. Baloyannis, 'The psychological background of the behavioral disorders of the man of our times', *Gregory Palamas* 76 (1996): 41–651.

[15] The member of the personnel was a certain Andrey, a hospital morgue attendant who had a personal grudge against Valentine.

[16] Holy Assumption Cathedral Church (Uspensky Cathedral) of Tashkent was built in 1871 and is the first Orthodox Church in Central Asia. During the early Soviet period, the cathedral was closed and used as a storehouse and garage. After World War II, in December 1945, the church was returned to believers. Although 87% of Uzbekistan's citizens follow the Sunni Islamic tradition, 5% of the total population are Orthodox. As such, Tashkent has four Orthodox Churches: St Uspensky Sobor Assumption Cathedral, Cathedral of Saint Blessed Prince Aleksandr Nevsky, The Cathedral of Equal-to-the-Apostles Great Prince Vladimir, and Holy Martyr Patriarch Ermogen Cathedral. The Orthodox Church of Tashkent was established in 1871 and with Dushanbe (2011) and Bishkek (2011) belong today to the Central Asian metropolitan district of the Russian Orthodox Church.

[17] The history of Surgery in Russia runs parallel with that of the other European Countries. The first Hospital in Moscow was founded in 1682 and was affiliated with the School of Medicine in 1706. Medical and surgical schools were founded in St Petersburg in 1798, in Kharkov, in Kazan in 1804 and in Kiev in 1841. The first Russian professor of surgery was I. F. Bush, who wrote the first textbook of Surgery in Russian in 1807. The most famous Russian professor of Surgery was N. I. Pirogov (1810–1881), who separated chairs of topographical anatomy, histology, and surgery. He applied ether anaesthesia for the first time in 1847 and introduced antisepsis in Russia. He also invented the plaster cast, thus saving thousands of soldiers from amputation during the Crimean war. Pirogov honoured the principle of 'living on Earth not just

His lectures at the university attracted large number of medical students and surgeons as well as students of various faculties and disciplines. He taught topographic anatomy on corpses,[18] making valuable observations on pyogenic inflammation, which he incorporated into his textbook 'Notes on the Surgical Treatment of Purulent Wounds', which was published in 60,000 copies. Fr Valentine was awarded for his scientific work with the First Order Stalin Prize.[19]

During this tragic period of Fr Valentin's life in Tashkent, a schism occurred in the Russian Orthodox Church,[20] which caused great turbulence in the religious circles of the country in that critical period of rapid propagation of dialectic materialism. During the time of the merciless persecution of Orthodoxy, when numerous clerics and monks were executed in Russia, Bishop Innocent of Tashkent was exiled. Fr Valentin was elected as the new bishop. He accepted God's will, knowing clearly all the terrible dangers that he would shortly face. Initially he was tonsured a monk in secret, in his children's bedroom, with the name Luke, 'the beloved physician', and then he was consecrated as a bishop by two exiled bishops in Penjikent, in St Nikolai's Church on 31 May 1923.[21]

for yourself but also for others'. In addition, he was the father of osteoplastic and plastic surgery in Russia. The Moscow Surgical Society was created in 1873. During the Great Patriotic War (1941–1945) Russian surgeons contributed greatly in operating on soldiers at the battlefields and treating millions of wounded people. In the field of neurosurgery, Burdenko, Graschenko Lena Stern are renowned for their pioneer research and diagnostic methods.

[18] The corpses were brought to Tashkent's University every day from the district of Volga due to numerous deaths caused by inflammation, bacterial infections, and starvation, factors which practically devastated the local population.

[19] The State Stalin Prize (Государственная Сталинская премия), called the Stalin Prize, existed from 1941 to 1954, when it changed to that of USSR State Prize. The Stalin Prize (with first, second, and third order) was awarded annually to distinguished authors in the fields of science, mathematics, literature, arts, and architecture to honour the most prominent achievements that advanced civilization and honoured the Soviet Union. The award ceremonies for the Stalin Prize were held twice a year in January and June. The Stalin Prize was also awarded to the neurosurgeons Nikolai Bourdenko (Никола́й Нилович Бурде́нко), Alexandr Vishnyevski (Вишневский), and Nikolai Bernshtyein (Николай Александрович Бернштейн). Bishop Luke was awarded the Stalin Prize in the first order in 1946 for his scientific contribution entitled 'Notes on the Surgical Treatment of Purulent Wounds' and 'Sketches on the Contaminated Surgery'. In 1946, Stalin himself ordered the publication of the second edition of his book. On 27 January 1946, 'Pravda' published the names of the scientists who were awarded with the Stalin Prize, which were included in an article entitled 'Glory to those who are awarded with Stalin's Prize, the pioneers of the popular soviet doctrines'. The sum of the prize raised to 200,000 rubles. In a telegram to Stalin, Bishop Luke asked that 130,000 rubles should be offered to orphans, victims of Nazi invasion. Stalin accepted the proposals and extended all his gratitude to Bishop Luke for his benefaction and solidarity to orphans. Bishop Luke received the Prize in Crimea in December 1946.

[20] The schism of Renovations started when priests from Moscow and Petrograd led by archpriest Alexander Vedensky rose up against Patriach Tikhon. Then the clergy in Russia was divided into two parties: those who were faithful to the Orthodox Church and Patriarch Tikhon and those who became part of the 'living' church, led by Vedensky. Archbishop Innocent insisted fervently that it was essential to remain faithful to the Orthodox Church and Patriarch Tikhon. Bishop Luke always remained faithful and devoted to Patriarch Tikhon and the Russian Orthodox Church (Поспеловский ДВ. Русская православная церковь в XX веке. М., 1995. С. 197–198).

[21] The city of Panjakent is close to Samarkand. Two bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church participated in the consecration of Archbishop Luke, Bishop Daniel Troitsky of Volkhovo, and the Bishop of Suzdal, With the title Bishop of Barnaul, Patriarch Tikhon declared the consecration valid immediately.

The Way to Martyrdom

'I loved Martyrdom, which so Strangely Cleanses the Soul'.

The following month on 9 June 1923, Bishop Luke was arrested by ГПУ (Государственное Политическое Управление) and led to Tashkent's prison, where he remained for two months before being sent to Moscow.[22] A week later, St Luke was taken to Lubianca, where he was mercilessly interrogated and sentenced to imprisonment and exile to Siberia. Initially, he was transported as a detainee to Moscow's worst prison, Butyrka, and from there two months later to the prison of Taganka. Bishop Luke peacefully endured disease, incredible ceaseless humiliation, repeated interrogations, extreme hunger, and innumerable tortures for the glory of God.

In December of 1923, he was sent into exile. This was the first of three times that the bishop Luke was arrested without cause and sent into exile, which he endured for eleven years. The first place of exile was Omsk, then Novosibirsk, and then the town of Krasnoyarsk in the centre of Siberia. Later he was transferred 430 kilometres northwards to the city of Yeniseisk.[23]

His prison became a chapel and an outpatient clinic. Very soon he was asked to operate at the hospital of Yeniseisk, where in 1924 he successfully performed the world's first kidney transplantation from animal (calf) to man. In addition, he performed ophthalmological surgical operations, gynaecological, child- surgical and neurosurgical ones, while at the same time endlessly examining and treating large number of outpatients at the hospital and at his prison. At the same time, he used to teach new surgical techniques to his colleagues and young doctors, who accepted him with great respect, veneration and gratitude for his precious contribution to their medical and surgical practice. The inhabitants loved and adored him exceedingly.

Later on, he was transported to the remote village of Khaya on the river Chunya, a tributary of the Angara,[24] the final destination of his exile, where he continued to practice surgery, despite the lack of medical and surgical equipment, performing, among others, ophthalmological operations.[25] However, in the summer, he was

[22] In Moscow, Bishop Luke visited Patriarch Tikhon, who suggested he continue his medical mission and help the suffering people in those dark days of persecution, prophesying that 'The night will be very long and very dark'. Patriarch Tikhon passed to eternity on 25 May 1925. (Marushchak, *The Blessed Surgeon*).

[23] Yeniseysk (Енисейск) is a small city in Krasnoyarsk Krai in Central Siberia on the Yenisei River with a population of 19,000 inhabitants. Yeniseyk, founded in 1619, and played an important role in the Russian colonization of Siberia. The climate of the city is subarctic, with very long and extremely cold winters.

[24] The Angara River (Ангарá) is the river that drains Lake Baikal. The length of the river is 1,779 km. Angara, passing the cities of Irkutsk, Angarsk, Bratsk, enters the Krasnoyarsk Krai and flows into the Yenisei river.

[25] In Khaya, Bishop Luke successfully carried out an operation on an elderly man with a cataract in an abandoned hut on a narrow bench under the window.

taken back to Yeniseisk where he was able to operate at the hospital and to serve the liturgy in an old monastery.

Due to his ecclesiastical activities, the authorities decided to transfer him further north than Yeniseisk to the city of Turukhansk[26] under unbearable conditions. Bishop Luke continued to practice surgery at the small local hospital without any instruments apart from a small pocketknife. Patients gathered at Turukhansk from every district of Siberia looking for the physician of the soul and body, the good shepherd, the real bishop in type of Christ. His preaching activities, as well as his spiritual and moral support of the patients again pushed the local political authorities to transport him even further north to the frozen village of Plahin. In Turukhansk, the people unanimously demanded that their shepherd and doctor be returned. Thus, the authorities were obliged under public pressure to bring him back in the hospital of Turukhansk, where he worked with all his heart for eight months, treating Russians and Tungusic patients.[27]

Finally, he was allowed to establish himself in Krasnoyarsk.[28] In the hospital of this city, Bishop Luke started from the first day to proceed in surgical operations and to treat people with various diseases and injuries. He performed iridectomy, removed the lacrimal sac under local anaesthesia, and proceeded to resection of the upper jaw; he performed large laparotomies, gynaecological operations and many other surgical procedures within the spectrum of the general surgery. Since his sentence was at the end, he was allowed to return to Tashkent by train. He performed his duties as bishop of the Orthodox Church under incredible difficulties, ironies, and functional problems caused by the authorities. He continued to treat patients in his episcopal residency, since he was not given a position in the university of Tashkent at that time.

In April 1930, Bishop Luke was arrested again on an alleged charge of incitement to murder and, following a long and very tough interrogation demanding a full re-

[26] Turukhansk (Туруха́нск) is a small city in Turukhansky District of Krasnoyarsk Krai, with a population of 4,700 inhabitants, located 1,474 km north of Krasnoyarsk at the confluence of the Yenisey and Nizhnyaya Tunguska Rivers. The town was founded in 1607 by Cossacks. In Tsarist Russia, as well as in the Soviet period, Turukhansk was recognized as a destination for political exile.

[27] Tungusic peoples, Evenks (Эвенки) or Tungus, are inhabitants of Eastern Siberia speaking Tungusic languages and leading a nomadic style of life. They are distinct from Mongols and Turkic peoples. The largest group of Tungusic peoples are the Manchu people, originated from Manchuria. Evenks live mostly in Russia in the Baikal region. 2–3% of Tungusic people have Mitochondrial DNA of Y origin. See also Alan Wood and R.A. French, *Development of Siberia: People and Resources* (New York: St. Martin's, 1989).

[28] The city of Krasnoyarsk (Красноярск) is the administrative centre of Krasnoyarsk Krais on the Yenisei River. The population today is more than one million. According to Anton Chekhov Krasnoyarsk, the third largest city in Siberia is also the most beautiful city. The city was founded in 1628 by Russians as a fortress. In the nineteenth century, Krasnoyarsk was the center of the Siberian Cossack movement. In Tsarist Russia, the city was a place of political exile. Krasnoyarsk has the fifth largest hydroelectric power station in the world and the second largest in Russia. Today the city is a prominent scientific and educational centre of Siberia. The climate is continental with long and very cold winters. See also Anton Chekhov, *The Crooked Mirror and Other Stories* (Zebra Book, 1995), 200.

nunciation of his priestly orders, he was transferred to Samara,[29] to Moscow, then to Kotlas[30] on the Northern Dvina, in a camp that had acquired the name 'Makarikha'. Then he was transferred to the city hospital to serve as surgeon and later on he was transported to Archangel[31] by steamer.

Upon arriving in Archangel, he realized that was practically homeless. Nevertheless, he performed surgical operations at the local hospital in a large outpatient clinic. He operated on a breast cancer patient, undertaking a radical operation despite the serious hesitations of the other doctors.

Bishop Luke gradually started having serious health problems due to the unbearable conditions of his life in exile. He suffered from myoskeletal disorders and developed myocarditis, causing heart insufficiency. In addition, he developed a benign tumour, which was excised by professor Petrov in Leningrad. Later bishop Luke had a retinal detachment in his left eye.[32] He returned once more to his place of exile in Archangel and refused to accept a professional chair in Moscow as he refused to resign from the clergy.[33] He remained in Archangel for six more months, treating patients and performing serious surgical operations. He was eventually released at the end of 1933.

Bishop Luke spent some years looking for appropriate places for scientific work and beneficial surgical practice for the suffering people of Russia. Finally, he established himself in Tashkent, where he worked with great enthusiasm, writing his textbook entitled 'Notes on the Surgical Treatment of Purulent Wounds'.

In 1937, a terrible persecution started against the Orthodox Church by Yezhov[34] who was appointed as head of the Moscow GPU. Bishop Luke was arrested once

[29] Samara (Самара), the previous Kuybyshev (Куйбышев), is the administrative, social, political, economic, industrial, and cultural centre of Samara Oblast. It is situated at the confluence of the Volga and Samara Rivers on the east bank of the Volga. Samara is the sixth largest city in Russia, with a total population of 1,165,000 inhabitants.

[30] Kotlas (Котлас) is a town in Arkhangelsk Oblast, situated located at the confluence of the Northern Dvina and Vychegda Rivers. The population of the town is 60,500 inhabitants. From 1930 to 1953, Kotlas was among the places of exile with labour camps for criminals and political detainees.

[31] Archangel (Архангельск), is the administrative centre of Arkhangelsk Oblast, in the north of European Russia, situated on both banks of the Northern Dvina River near the White Sea. The population of the city is 350,000 inhabitants. For years, the area of Arkhangelsk has been the subject of rivalry between Norwegian and Russian interests in the northern seas. The city resisted Bolshevik rule from 1918 to 1920 Arkhangelsk has a typical subarctic climate.

[32] For the retinal detachment, Bishop Luke was operated on by professor Odintsov in Moscow. Odintsov at that time applied the surgical method of the Swiss ophthalmologist Prof. Gopen.

[33] He wrote: 'They demand that I remove my ryassa. I will never do so. It, my ryassa, will be with me to my very death… I help people as a physician, and I help them as a servant of the Church….'

[34] Bishop Luke wrote '…The Yezhov regime was truly horrifying. At the interrogations, those under arrest were even subjected to torture. They invented something they called "conveyor interrogation," which I had to endure twice… The Cheka interrogators took turns [working in shifts], and the person being interrogated was not allowed to sleep, day or night…' Nikolai Yezhov or Ezhov (Никола́й Иванович Ежо́в, 1895–1940) was a secret police official during the most severe period of Stalin's Great Purge. He was very powerful but gradually he plunged into alcoholism and was replaced from his post by Beria. On February 2, 1940, Yezhov was tried by the Military Collegium as being spy, terrorist and conspirator and he had been condemned to death. He was shot on 4 February 1940. (M. Jansen, N. Petrov, *Stalin's Loyal Executioner:*

more and subjected to undescribed humiliation and tortures for thirteen days, among which the 'conveyer belt' was considered potent method of efficient interrogation. He went on a hunger strike for many days and experienced multiple tactile and visual hallucinations. Although the bishop was drained of all strength by the hunger strike and the conveyer belt, he continued to resist and to honour his faith and his principles with strength, courage and perseverance. It seems incredible, but he even continued to treat patients and to help people physically and psychologically, having unextinguished mercy of them.

In 1939, they charged him again with another three years of exile to town of Great Murta. After the invasion of Nazi German troops in Russia in 1941, Bishop Luke sent a telegram to Kalinin, Director of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR writing:

> I, Bishop Luke, Professor Voino-Yasenetsky, am serving an exile under article such-and-such in the settlement of Bolshaya Murta in the area of Krasnoyarsk. As a specialist in purulent surgery, I could be of use to the troops at the front or in the rear, wherever I am entrusted to serve. I ask that my exile be interrupted and I be sent to a hospital. At the end of the war, I will be ready to return to exile. Bishop Luke.

His request was granted. Bishop Luke was called to serve as chief surgeon at the army hospital 1515[35] in Krasnoyarsk, 5,000 km from Moscow, which included ten surgical departments, and he was appointed as advisor to all military hospitals of the area. St Luke offered his services in that hospital for two years. He used to perform about five or six major operations a day, the most serious ones, undertaking the most severely wounded patients[36] and continuously teaching young doctors. Today, the city's general hospital bears his name.

Bishop Luke successfully developed 'the battlefield surgery', saving the lives of numerous soldiers who were transferred to hospital from various battlefields. After

People's Commissar Nikolai Ezhov, 1895–1940, (Hoover Institution Press, 2002); A. Kudrinskikh, *Nikolai Yezhov: Bloody dwarf*, (Moscow, 2006).

[35] The hospital, which had been previously intended for use as a school, occupied three floors of a large building. The hospital included 1,000 beds and many departments with 20 doctors. Bishop Luke organized a new department of 100 beds for traumatic surgery and orthopedics.

[36] After the war, he was awarded a medal 'For valiant effort in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945' (За доблестный труд в Великой Отечественной войне 1941–1945 гг.). The bishop, upon receiving the medal, in his response speech, underlined: 'I brought back to life and health hundreds, perhaps thousands injured men. I would have helped many more, if you had not grabbed me for no reason at all, and not dragged to eleven years of prison. How much time has been lost and how many people are not saved. But that is not my fault' (Я вернул жизнь и здоровье сотням, а может, и тысячам раненых и наверняка помог бы еще многим, ес ли бы вы не схватили меня ни за что ни про что и не таскали бы одиннадцать лет по острогам и ссылкам. Вот сколько времени потеряно и сколько людей не спасено отнюдь не по моей вине). The Bishop used to teach his colleagues that for a surgeon, there is not an 'instance' but only a living, suffering person. He told patients after a successful treatment: 'It was God Who healed you through my hands. Pray to Him'.

the war, he finished a book entitled 'Late Resection of Infected Wounds of the Large Joints', which was submitted together with the large memorable work 'Notes on the Surgical Treatment of Purulent Wounds' to be considered for the Stalin Prize.

In January 1944, Bishop Luke was appointed Archbishop of Tambov and Michurinsk. He continued his medical practice in the hospitals and completed his essay on the memorable work 'The spirit, soul and body'. The Holy Synod, under the Patriarchal Locum Tenens Metropolitan Sergius, elevated Bishop Luke to the rank of Archbishop and in May 1946 he was elected Archbishop of Simferopol[37] and Crimea. At the same time, St Luke continued to practice surgery and give consultations in the Army Hospital and Hospital of the Veterans of the Great Patriotic War. He performed the most serious surgical operations on severe and unusual cases and gave lectures on surgery and scientific research at Crimea's Medical Institute. Unfortunately, in 1956, St Luke lost his sight; however, he worked continuously preaching and serving the Liturgy.

During Chruchstschow's merciless persecution of the Orthodox Church, St Luke suffered tremendously. He wrote: 'It's a martyrdom. I cannot bear it at my age of 80. But with the Lord's help I will continue my difficult work'.

At the end of his earthly life St Luke gave his last sermon on Lent Sunday. He was very bright, clear, and full of wisdom and grace. In the morning, on Sunday of All Saints, on 11 June 1961, St Luke passed to eternity. He was buried in the All Saints cemetery. On the white marble cross of his grave is simply written: 'Archbishop Luka Voino-Yasenetsky, Doctor of Medical Science, Professor of Surgery'.[38]

By a decision of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in 1995, Archbishop Luke was glorified as a locally venerated saint. In 1996, St Luke's relics were transferred to the Holy Trinity Cathedral. In 2000, the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church canonized St Luke as a saint throughout the Church. He is commemorated on the 11 June.

[37] Simferopol and Crimea (Taurida) Eparchy was founded in 1859. For Russians Crimea is the cradle of Orthodoxy, since this is where the Apostle Andrew used to preach the Gospel and, in 988, Equal-to-the-Apostles Grand Prince Vladimir accepted holy baptism. Simferopol (Симферополь), located in the south-central portion of the Crimean Peninsula, is the capital of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. It is an important political, economic, and cultural center, with a population of 340,000. It was raised on an ancient Scythian city at the Scythian Neapolis that was under continuous Greek cultural influence. After the annexation of the Crimean Khanate to the Russian Empire, the city's name was changed from the Tatarian Aqmescit to Simferopol. The hospital of the city was founded during the Crimean war (Восточная война, 1854–1856). During World War II, Simferopol was occupied by Nazi Germans (November 1941 to April 1944). Germans in that period killed over 22,000 locals (Jews, Russians, Krymchaks, and Gypsies) in Simferopol. On 16 March 2014 the Crimea peninsula was annexed to Russia. Simferopol is the seat of the largest university in Simferopol and Crimea, the Taurida V. Vernadsky National University, founded in 1917. Crimea State Medical University named after S. I. Georgievsky is also one of the most prominent medical schools of Ukraine.

[38] АРХИЕПИСКОП ЛУКА ВОЙНО-ЯСЕНЕЦКИЙ
27/IV 1877—11/VI 1961
Доктор медицинских наук, профессор хирургии

St Luke as Professor of Medicine and Surgery

His extensive scientific knowledge, desire for research, endeavour to open new horizons in surgery, unique surgical capacity, courage, perseveration, continuous hard work, devotion to pedagogy, ethical principles and values, and mostly his genuine and pure Christo-centric life, all contribute to St Luke's unique academic profile. He was sincerely respected and venerated by his medical students, who, following his example, pursued a medical practice full of sacrificial love to suffering human beings. St Luke's participation in the pain, anxiety, agony, troubles, poverty, sadness, and social rejection of his patients was a source of spiritual power for his students, who realized that the sacred task of medicine consisted in the treatment of the body and soul and the restoration of the homeostasis of the patient.[39]

St Luke was an exceptionally hard worker, who inspired his students and showed the value of continuous effort and the exploitation of every moment in pursuit of knowledge and the assistance of suffering people, students, young scientists, and generally speaking human society. The medical students as well as the surgeons used to watch him with great respect and attention operating on a large number of serious surgical cases for many hours, endeavouring to achieve perfect surgical results. During eleven years in exile, St Luke continuously taught all the local doctors, focusing his lessons on the theory and practice of surgery as well as on medical ethics. He instructed them practically in the operation room, examining patients and performing surgical operations[40].

St Luke strongly believed that academic communication and the transmission of knowledge is the ultimate duty of a professor. This duty is not limited to the amphitheater, the teaching hall and the wards, but it should be constantly practiced with patients anywhere, at any time, and in any condition. St Luke's spiritual and scientific influence on the students and doctors who attended his lectures or studied his textbooks and scientific works was instrumental for their way of life and scientific course. The doctors realized the holiness of the human personhood, the solid and compact psychosomatic entity of the human being, who always suffers both physically and mentally. For this reason, it is essential for the doctor to heal the patient as soul and body, with much compassion and respect. И больному нужно об этом напомнить.Значит, такому человеку дается шанс остановиться у этой черты, оглянуться вокруг и спросить себя: «Что я делаю не так?»

St Luke said that healing means an essential existential restoration of the person who suffers and a radical amelioration of the quality of life of the patient.[41]

[39] Stavros J. Baloyannis, 'Human Enhancement from the Orthodox point of view' in Theo Boer and Richard Fischer, eds, *Scientific, Ethical and Theological Aspects from a European Perspective* (Strasbourg: CEC, 2015), 119–128. Stavros J. Baloyannis, 'The philosophy of Dementia', *Encephalos* 47(2010): 109–130.

[40] Варшавский С, Змойро И. Архиепископ Лука Войно-Ясенецкий Доктор медицины, профессор хирургии,лауреат.Журнал "Звезда Востока", № 4, 1989 г. 18 (27).

[41] Elisabeth Vladimirov (Елизавета ВЛАДИМИРОВА) wrote in July 2011 'Archbishop Luke was not for me just an outstanding surgeon, but he was also an outstanding personality, an example of how the

Medicine is the science and the discipline that is applied and practiced on the basis of knowledge, wisdom, experience, erudition, and spiritual background of the physician—which are much more important than the laboratory investigation and Архиепископ Лука для меня не только выдающийся хирург, но и личность, пример того, как профессионализм врача сочетается с небывалыми человеческими и духовными качествами.technological equipment.[42] He taught that the doctor must participate in the pain of the patients with much compassion, communicating with the patient in order to enter the altar of his soul and treat the interior dimension of the pain, which is usually more severe than the physical pain.[43] Но главное не в этом.He taught his disciples that the doctor must sacrifice himself for the benefit of the patients. He must have sacrificial love and compassion as symbol of knowledge, mercy and benefaction. He must trace new original ways in order to proceed to a successful treatment of the patient and ignore the criticism and irony of his environment. He taught, by his own behaviour and attitude, the value of dignity, self-control, self-knowledge, gratitude, remorse, interior peace, truth, mental strength, kindness, politeness, the spirit of Christian love and the

physician professionalism, combined with unprecedented human and spiritual qualities is much beneficial to patients. His modus operandi is well known to patients, he formulated his "shining one, burning myself." Patients really stood for him in the first place among all—family, friends ... and it defines it all. Why did he leave a deep mark in the history of surgery? Because he pursued a gradual path of development. He started from the position of an ordinary Zemsky doctor. For many hours he operated patients. A parallel pursuit was engaged in science—he studied anatomy, physiology, pain management issues. And when a person studies all those fields and has a real scientific background he plots an ideal profile of physician. I am convinced that this is Medicine primarily…And in addition to scientific background there is another face of his personality—the Orthodox faith…And faith allowed him to look at the patient much broader… One of his books is called "Spirit, soul, body." He was actually the first scientist and physician who wrote in terms of Medicine, that the spirit of man is his life giving force… and that this spirit must not be ignored by a doctor, when he is dealing with patients…Behind these beautiful words is one simple thing—we should not treat the disease, but the patient…The older generation of doctors are accustomed to communicate with patients. We have sensory perception of the patient. It is impossible to work without compassion and without attempts to cure, but also to understand the patient. Is it possible today to live and work according to St Luke paradigm? …St Luke wrote that faith helped him to overcome all the difficulties… He lived in a crude hut, where it was so cold that froze the water in the bucket. He writes that he constantly prayed, "If it were not for the prayer – I would not have survived"'. See also Елизавета ВЛАДИМИРОВА, ведущий научный сотрудник отделения торако-абдоминальной хирургии НИИ скорой помощи им. Н. В. Склифосовского: УРОКИ СВЯТИТЕЛЯ ЛУКИ Архив статей журнала ФОМА №7(99), июль2011.И вот на фоне медицинских знаний особую важность приобретает еще одна грань его личности—православная вера.А еще вера позволяла ему смотреть на пациента намного шире многих его коллег: видеть в больном не только больное тело, но и различать болезнь духа.За этими красивыми словами стоит одна простая вещь—мы должны лечить не болезнь, а больного.

[42] St Luke, at the age of eighty and totally blind, could still diagnose the cause of the continuous deterioration of the physical condition of a child only by listening to the case history, treating him subsequently with great success [(Shevchenko Priest Georgi, *Greetings from Holy Hierarch St. Luke, Beloved Physician*, (St Petersburg: Nauka, 2009)].

[43] He wrote to his children in 1956: 'In your scientific endeavors and in your efforts to study the mysteries of nature, you should not look for your own glory but only to lessen the pain of your sick and helpless fellow human beings'.(Архиепископ Лука (Войно-Ясенецкий) «Я полюбил страдание»." Автобиография, Издательство сестричества во имя Святителя Игнатия Ставропольского 2011)

superb value of Orthodox spirituality at any aspect of the life and at any place: at the hospital, amphitheatre, interrogation offices, tribunals, prison, and exile.

St Luke's beneficial contributions were acknowledged[44]. In the last years of his life the harmonization of medicine and surgery with his pastoral work of charity and mercy was a special gift, granted by Lord. Another special gift was the love of martyrdom, spiritual transfiguration, and the capacity of healing the psychosomatic entity of his patients. St Luke as Metropolitan of Simferopol received thousands of letters of appreciation and profound gratitude from patients, citizens of Simferopol, clergy, medical students, professionals, and lay people, all extending their respect, gratitude, and veneration for his medical and pastoral contributions. The Archbishop was a real healer of body and soul for all of them.

St Luke as Author

St Luke, in the field of medical science, was the author of textbooks, dissertations, scientific papers on research, original papers on new surgical techniques, reports of unusual cases, and large number of commentaries. His scientific contributions are highly valued up to our present era. His contributions to the field of theology include his unique harmonization of his biological background with biblical and patristic theology[45].

Medical Works

St Luke's scientific publications in the field of medicine include hundreds of papers, from 1908 to 1956. He started publishing articles in Russian medical journals and abroad from the very beginning of his career. The majority of the publications are on new surgical methods, unusual cases, regional anaesthesia, the treatment of pyogenic infections, the surgical treatment of infected and septic wounds, the treatment of osteomyelitis, the hematogenous osteomyelitis, the surgical treatment of the diseases of the spinal cord, the excision of tumours of the central nervous system, and the surgical treatment of the disorders of the cranial and spinal nerves.

St Luke's texts are very clear, precise, analytical, instructive, written with eloquence and linguistic perfection and enriched with hand drawings by the author and extensive references. In his writings, the wisdom, intelligence, knowledge, methodical and systematic mind of the author as well as his high moral principles are clearly apparent. St Luke's textbook on Pyogenic infections, awarded the Stalin Prize

[44] Kimmer E. Archiepiscop Luka Vojno-Jaseneckij. K 100-letiju so dnja rozdenija, in: ZMP 1977, 4, 55–63.

[45] Ветелев А. "Архиепископ Лука". Некролог и фото. «ЖМП» 1961, № 8, с. 35–38.

in 1946, was first published in 1934 and then followed by three further editions, the last of which appeared in 1956, five years prior to his death.[46]

[46] Among the many scientific publications, the following are of great importance: (i) 'Elephantiasis of the face to neurofibromatosis', published in Surgery in 1908 ('Невроматозный элефантиаз лица, плексиформная неврома', *Хирургия* [1908]), (ii) 'The proper methods of anesthesia for the surgical operations in rural areas' medical Journal 1908 ('О способах анестезии, наиболее удобных в земской практике', *Врачебная газета* [1908]), (iii) 'The application of regional anesthesia in the cervical, mandibular and tongue's 'surgical operations' Proceedings of Moscow's Surgical Association, 1909 ('Регионарная анестезия при операциях шеи, языка и верхней челюсти', *Труды Московского хирургического общества* [1909]), (iv) 'Regional anesthesia', Proceedings of Tabov's Society of Medical Physiology 1909, ('Регионарная анестезия', *Труды Тамбовского физиологического медицинского общества* [1909]), (v) 'Hematogenous pleural sarcoma' Surgery 1910 ('Кровяная саркома ребра', *Хирургия* [1910]), (vi) 'On surgical operation of the fractures of the spinal column' Surgery 1910 ('Об оперативном лечении переломов позвоночника', *Хирургия* [1910]), (vii) 'A review of the surgical contribution in the Hospital of the district Romanov during 1909–1910', (Отчет о хирургической работе Романовской земской больницы за 1909–1910), (viii) 'On the primary osteomyelitis of the spinal column' Surgery 1911 ('О первом остром остеомиелите позвоночника', *Хирургия* [1911]), (ix) 'Bilateral lesion of Vagus nerve', Surgery 1911 ('Двустороннее повреждение блуждающего нерва', *Хирургия* [1911]), (x) 'Zweiter Fall von vorubergehender Erblindung nach Novocain Adrenalininjektion in Augenhohle', *Zentrablatt fur Chirurgie* (1911), (xi) 'A review of the surgical contribution in the Hospital of the Pereyaslavl district', 1911 (Отчет о хирургической работе Переяславльской земской больницы. 1911), (xii) 'Litungsanasthesie des nervus ischiaticus', *Zentralblatt fur Chirurgie* (1912), (xiii) 'A review of the surgical contribution in the Hospital of the Pereyaslavl district during the years 1912–1913' (Отчет о хирургической работе Переяславльской земской больницы. 1912–1913гг), (xiv) 'Regional anaestesia of the sciatic and medial nerves', Proceedings of the twefth Congress of Russian Surgeons, in 1912, ('Регионарная анестезия седалищного и срединного нервов', *Труды XII съезда русских хирургов* [1912 г].), (xv) 'A review of the surgical contribution in the Hospital of the Pereyaslavl district in 1914' (Отчет о хирургической работе Переяславльской земской больницы 1914), (xvi) 'O surgical excision of brain tumors' Proceedings of Kiev's Surgical Society in 1914 ('К казуистике оперативного лечения опухолей мозга', *Труды Киевского хирургического общества* [1914 г]), (xvii) 'Regional anesthesia in the surgical treatment of hand cysts'. *Medical Journal* 1915 ('Регионарная анестезия кисти руки', *Врачебная газета* [1915]), (xviii) Regional anesthesia. Doctoral Dissertation, ('Регионарная анестезия' Докторская диссертация), (xix) 'Treatment of the alteration of the pleural cartilages' *Surgical Messenger* 1923 ('Кариозные процессы в реберных хрящах и их оперативное лечение', *Вестник хирургии* за [1923 г]), (xx) 'Uber das Unterbinden der Gefae bei Extirpation der Milz', *Zeitschift fur Chirurgie* (1923), (xxi) 'Surgical treatment of the pyogenic infections of the large joints' *Surgical Messenger*, 1924, ('Артротомии при гнойных воспалениях больших суставов', *Вестник хирургии* [1924]) (xxii) 'Topographic anatomy of inguinal and exterior loin lymph nodes and the method of their surgical excision' *Tourkmenic Medical Journal*, Volume I, (2) ('Топография паховых и наружных подвздошных лимфатических желез и техника оперативного удаления их', *Туркмен. медицин. журнал* 1.2 (xxiii) 'The dangers of Mamburg's method', *Tourkmenic Medical Journal*, Volume I (7). ('Опасности способа Мамбурга', *Туркмен. медицин. журнал* 1.7, (xxiv) 'The treatment of purulent collections by Balnev's cataplasms', Surgery 1957: 127–135, ('Лечение гнойных воспалений катаплазмами Вальневой', *Хирургия* 8 [1957]: 127–135), (xxv) 'Essays on the surgery of purulent collections' 1st Edition 1934, 2nd Edition 1943 (Очерки гнойной хирургии". I-е издание, 1934,2-е издание, 1943), (xxvii) 'Our experience on the treatment of osteomyelitis, due to wounds from guns, in the advanced army hospitals' 1943, (Наш опыт лечения огнестрельного остеомиелита в госпиталях глубокого тыла. 1943), (xxviii) 'Late excisions of the joints in cases of purulent wounds from guns', Moscow 1944 (Поздние резекции при инфицированных огнестрельных ранениях суставов. Москва, 1944),(xxix) 'On the septic wounds' Proceedings of the Voronez' army hospital 1945 (О раневом сепсисе. Сборник трудов Воронежского военного округа, 1945, (xxx) 'On hematogenous osteomyelitis' 1946–1947 (О гематогенном остеомиелите. 1946–1947), (xxxi) 'On the treatment of chronic purulent collections caused by guns', 1947 (О лечении хронических эмпием плевры после огнестрельных ранений. 1947), (xxxii) 'On pathogenesis and treatment of callus', *Soviet Medicine* 1953, 1 ('Патогенез и терапия мозолей', *Советская медицина* 1 [1953]), (xxxiii) 'Essays on surgery of pyogenic infections'. 3rd Edition 1956 (Очерки гнойной хирургии". 3-е издание, 1956).

During a period in which the use of antibiotics in Russia was either extremely rare or non-existent, the proper surgical treatment of the pyogenic infections was the only available therapeutic method to ensure the survival of patients who suffered from purulent collections, focal infections, and septic wounds. The unique value of the textbook on pyogenic infections was proved during the great patriotic war in Russia by the application of the surgical methods clearly and instructively described by the author, enabling the treatment and the survival of thousands of wounded soldiers in the army hospitals or on the battlefields during the continuous bloody battles against the German aggressors.

Even today, a time during which the overuse of antibiotics has lead to resistant microbial and fungal infections in intensive care units, wards, and even in operation theatres, the value of St Luke's textbook remains of profound importance, a fact which is underlined by the many editions and translations in various languages and by the continued application of his medical methods in many surgical departments in East and West[47].

Works on Theology

His work as theologian, includes his memorable book entitled 'Дух, душа, тело' ('The Spirit, the Soul and the Body'), which might be considered his supreme achievement in science, theology, and philosophy. St Luke began to write that unique work in 1946, when he was already famous,[48] and he finished it in 1947. In this work, he tried to prove that the human being consists of non-material spirit and soul as well as body. Soul motivates and controls the behaviour and the activities of the human person. His statements were based on detailed extensive literature on physics, chemistry, biology, psychology, psychiatry, philosophy, and biblical and patristic theology. The work reveals Bishop Luke's extensive scientific knowledge, his philosophical mind, wisdom, and deep Orthodox spiritual background.

In Russia at the beginning of the 20th century—following the ideological crisis from 1905 to 1917 and the influx of numerous materialistic doctrines and dialectic materialism from Western Europe and the continuous merciless persecution of religion—the young generation felt that it had lost its spiritual background and existential support[49]. St Luke suffered profoundly from the ideological crisis of his country and the political authority's tendencies to suppress all spiritual values and principles in society[50]. He claimed that the spiritual world cannot be investigated

[47] Кузионов Пётр Васильевич: Выдающийся хирург XX века архиепископ Лука, профессор В.Ф. Войно-Ясенецкий Газета Санкт-Петербургской государственной медицинской академии им. И.И. Мечникова № 86 17 июня 2005 г.

[48] At that time, his bust stood in the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow, and the New York Times published his exceptional biography.

[49] Shevchenko, *Greetings from Holy Hierarch St. Luke*, (St Petersburg: Nauka, 2009).

[50] Kimmer E. Archiepiscop Luka Vojno-Jaseneckij. K 100-letiju so dnja rozdenija, in: ZMP 1977, 4,

using the same methods as the material world; there are phenomena that science will never be able to explain because it does not use the appropriate methods.

His work entitled 'Science and Religion' is of unique validity and importance for its confrontation of atheist and materialistic philosophy,[51] written in clear, elegant

55–63.

[51] St Luke decided to write a book with the crucial subject 'Science and Religion' during his studies at the University of Kiev. He accomplished his task later in his life, as priest and bishop. As medical student he noticed the major contradictions among students on the relation between religion and scientific knowledge. He knew also the fervent search for the truth by the students who were confused by all new concepts nourished by the works of Darwin, Haeckel, His, Mendeleev, the theory of relativity by Einstein as well as the recent technological achievements. Haeckel (1834–1919), whose ideas exercised a strong influence on young scientists in Russia, wrote: 'When we examine contemporary science as it was developed by scientists such as Lamark and Darwin, we realize the existent antithesis or rather the complete disagreement between science and religion, on topics concerning the more basic questions of existence and knowledge. For this reason, an enlightened mind cannot accept in association both of them and must make his choice between religion and science'. St Luke accepted the validity of the science and insisted that there is no contradiction between science and religion. Many very famous scientists were at the same time great believers, such as Copernicus, Newton, Pasteur, Pavlov and others. He wrote 'We cannot pose limitation of the human mind in searching the nature. But we know, that today science knows only a small part of the phenomena of the nature. We also understand the great potentiality of science'. However, St Luke underlined that apart from the nature and the material world, there is an infinite superior spiritual world and above the spiritual world there is the Great and Almighty God. The spiritual world cannot be investigated with the methodology of research for the material world. Such methods are totally inappropriate to approach and analyze the spiritual world. In the spiritual world, only faith can understand many miraculous phenomena. For a further understanding of the spiritual phenomena, the human mind and heart have to be enlightened by grace in faith, light, and mental purity. Otherwise, outside the faith the thinker cannot understand anything. St Luke emphasized 'Don't become scandalized when you hear what some scientist say about religion, since they themselves cannot understand its essence… Guard this truth like the best treasure of the heart, walk straight without looking right or left'. Первое произведение выдержало в 90-е годы XX века более десятка изданий. После падения коммунистической доктрины образовался вакуум государственной идеологии. Об этом - труд святителя Луки "Наука и религия" - уникальное произведение, не имеющее аналогов ни в отечественной, ни в зарубежной литературе.У отца Валентина (доктора медицинских наук, профессора, хирурга) всегда находились весомые, яркие контраргументы."Религия потому движет науку, что в религиозном опыте мы вступаем в контакт с вечным Разумом, Голосом мира. *Кто любит Бога, тому дано знание от Него.* Не потому ли часть великих открытий и изобретений принадлежит тем, которые были и великими учеными, и великими христианами... Самые качества упорного исследования - самоотверженный труд, вера в конечный результат, смирение - являются более всего продуктами религии. ... Наука без религии - небо без солнца. А наука,облеченная светом религии, - это вдохновенная мысль, пронизывающая ярким светом тьму этого мира. *Я свет миру. Кто последует за Мной, тот не будет ходить во тьме, но будет иметь свет жизни* ~ так говорит Христос. И теперь понятно, почему в жизни ученых религия играла такую выдающуюся роль. Профессор Деннерт пересмотрел взгляды 262 известных естествоиспытателей, включая великих ученых этой категории, и оказалось, что из них 2% было людей нерелигиозных, 6% равнодушных и 92% горячо верующих (среди них Роберт Майер, К.Э. Бэр, Гауе, Эйлер и другие)".В 1949 году святитель на Пасху приехал в Москву в командировку и две недели очень интенсивно работал в научной библиотеке, о чем в конце мая пишет сыну Алексею: "За две недели, работая в медицинской библиотеке по шесть часов в день, я с отличным успехом проделал огромную работу: просмотрел и прочитал 450 литературных источников по регионарной анестезии и все на иностранных языках. Теперь остается прочитать в Симферополе статьи в русских журналах, часть английской книги на 200 страниц... остается написать 75-100 страниц, и будет новая книга..."Через три года, в 1952 году, весной святитель снова приезжает в Москву и проводит в научных библиотеках несколько чрезвычайно напряженных и плодотворных недель. Сверхнапряженная работа в библиотеках окончательно подорвала зрение единственного зрячего глаза.Это ускорило наступление слепоты.А осенью 1952 года в письме сыну Алексею сообщает, что учится писать на ощупь.Развернувшаяся в СССР в 1950-1952 годах борьба с космополитизмом и

language, perfectly expressing the precious ideas and the scientific arguments. This work is the fruit of the harmonious amalgamation of profound and concrete scientific knowledge with the life in Christ and purity of heart in the context of the experience of martyrdom[52].

St Luke is a unique example of a scientist, doctor, surgeon, professor, mentor, multi-dimensional thinker, intellectual, author, theologian, clergyman, archbishop, man of continuous spiritual elevation, compassion and genuine sacrificial love for others, a martyr who has incorporated all the spiritual beauty of the Orthodox faith, and a man of truth and infinitive interior light.[53]

Toward the end of his life, on 15 February 1954, celebrating the 30th anniversary of his ordination to diaconate, St Luke wrote :

> My thirty-year long journey was difficult and thorny, but at the same time it was also a remarkably blessed one. God's grace was with me along the way, and my path was illumined by the light of Christ. And it is a joy for me, a very great joy, to have travelled that path. It was a great act of kindness done by God for me. I consider the difficult years of priesthood, soon followed by my service as a bishop, not as burdensome, but as the most blessed, best, happiest, years of my life. I could tell you more still of the wonderful guidance of God's hand in my life, but 'I think I have said enough for you to cry out' with me 'Glory to our God for ever and ever. Amen.'

антипатриотизмом задела и Церковь.А кому как не святителю Луке, перенесшему пытки и муки в тюрьмах, ссылках и лагерях, лучше всех известны были политические обвинения властей?

[52] Vladimir Gluschenkov, *Holy Hierarch St. Luke – A Look into the Future / With the Blessing of Most-holy Patriarch Alexey II of Moscow and All Russia,* (Poltava Diocese: Holy Transfiguration Mgara Monastery, 2002). Лисичкин В.А. Лука врач возлюбленный. Жизнеописание святителя и хирурга Луки (Войно-Ясенецкого). Издательство Московской Патриархии 2009.

[53] He wrote in 1956: 'The nine volumes of my sermons have been recognized by the Spiritual Academy of Moscow as unique in contemporary ecclesiastical theology and a treasure of commentary on the Holy Bible'.

Ecumenism as Civilizational Dialogue: Eastern Orthodox Anti-Ecumenism and Eastern Orthodox Ecumenism: A Creative or Sterile Antinomy?[1]

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It is argued that those who uphold Ecumenism and Anti-Ecumenism in the Orthodox Church share much more in common than is normally thought to be the case. Both groups see the Orthodox Church as the Una Sancta of the Creed and that Orthodoxy must always witness to itself as the fullness of the Christian faith. They also both see ecumenical encounter (whether in dialogue or in condemnation of the Other) as being a species of civilisational dialogue between two very different realities of Christian East and West. Ultimately, it is contended, both parties have much to learn from one another so that their opposition is not a sterile but a creative antinomy.

Introduction

If the desire for Christian unity, the century or more push 'that they all may be one', is to remain vital then it will only come from frankly acknowledging that different Christian traditions have had and continue to have quite different motivations for their involvement in the movement. Orthodoxy is here no exception. From the very origins of Orthodox involvement in Ecumenism right down to the present day, the Orthodox—both those who opposed it and those who promoted it—have tended to see Ecumenism as being wrapped up with what might be called 'civilizational dialogue'.

By 'civilisational dialogue' I mean the encounter of different cultural and/or religious traditions with each other which can take multiple different forms such as simply living side by side; working together on a common task; intellectual dialogue or conflict between individuals from the different groups; spiritual sharing between two traditions; and finally 'diplomatic' or formal dialogue between representa-

[1] This essay was first given as a keynote lecture for 'Questioning Ecumenism in the 20th Century: Who, When, Why', 'The Desire for Christian Unity Research Program - 2017 Research Conference', Fondazione per le Scienze Relgiose Giovanni XXIII, Bologna, 13-15 November 2017. Convener: Prof Alberto Melloni. I am indebted to Prof Melloni and the Fondazione for the opportunity to think through these matters systematically and for feedback during the conference. It was subsequently published in another form in the UK in the *International Journal of the Christian Church*,19.4 (2019), 265-85.

tives of governments or religions from the two parties.[2] It is 'civilisational' because Orthodoxy (or, perhaps, 'Orthodoxies' is more precise) in its self-understanding is an expression of different ancient societies or a different complex of cultural developments descended from said ancient societies than those ancient Western societies which have produced the multiple forms of Western religiosity. By using the expression 'civilizational dialogue' I am in no way advocating for some version of the Samuel Huntington (1927–2008) thesis of the clash of civilizations. What I am pointing out is something far more banal. The Orthodox have tended to see their Church as being the development of an alternative non-western narrative (or narratives) of Christianity which produced various non-western Christian civilizations that include the less well-known Kingdom of Aksum and the Zagwe Dynasty of Ethiopia, as well as the Arsacid Dynasty of the Golden Age of Ancient Armenia, but also Byzantium, which has carried on in the liturgical life of the Eastern Orthodox Church as a sort of continuing *ordo* of a unity of heaven and earth. And it is largely from the basis of this Eastern or Byzantine Orthodox tradition that what is written here comes. Historically, when the Orthodox have engaged with other Christian churches, 'civilizational dialogue' has been in the background, as they are always aware that they are encountering, whether to embrace or to condemn, bodies which are the products of Christian civilizations and cultures (often harmonized as the 'West' or 'Latin Christianity') which, though not unrelated to Orthodoxy, are in many ways fundamentally different. Here we are saying nothing astonishing. Nor are we underwriting the sometimes sterile polemicism of some of the most extreme anti-western statements of writers like Christos Yannaras (b. 1935) and Fr John Romanides (1927–2001). Orthodoxy is, in its self-consciousness, seen in its liturgical life and its traditions of prayer and worship, not Western but Eastern, not modern but pre-modern. As the late great ecumenist, Père Nicolas Lossky (1929–2007) wrote:

> The Orthodox world has not experienced the Western crises which resulted in the Protestant Reformation and in the Roman Catholic Counter Reformation. The Orthodox world had its own crises in the East, as it had to deal from afar with the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, its isolation under Islamic rule, the fall of Christian Constantinople to the Muslims (1453), the rise of nationalisms, etc. But since these crises did not affect the essential faith of the church, the Orthodox preserved a strong sense of unbroken continuity

[2] Here I am adapting the typology of inter-religious dialogue/encounter of Marianne Moyaert ['Chapter 9: Interreligious Dialogue' in *Understanding Interreligious Dialogue*, eds, D. Cheetham, D. Pratt, and T. David (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 202–204]. A separate paper would be needed to discuss how in late modernity churches in the Christian West have moved so far from Orthodoxy and the Christian East that the study of inter-religious dialogue is often more appropriate for understanding Eastern Orthodox/Western Christian relations rather than the much more usual lens of intra-Christian ecumenical studies.

> with the faith of the apostles as interpreted and witnessed to by the seven great ecumenical councils and the Fathers of the Church.[3]

This means that—whether one sees it as a Gospel imperative or as the 'heresy of heresies' as some Orthodox zealots do—ecumenism, for Orthodoxy, always involves an encounter with difference, with a religious Other. The civilizational dialogue I am speaking of takes various forms in Orthodoxy in the history of ecumenism and in my lecture I want to trace a variety of these modes as seen in key pioneering pro-ecumenists like Fr Sergii Bulgakov and Fr Georges Florovsky and in the often inflammatory statements of anti-ecumenists such as St Justin Popović (1894–1979), the position of the Holy Community of Athos, and the opponents of the Holy and Great Council of Crete in June 2016. My question in the end is whether these two contrasting 'camps', the Orthodox pro-ecumenists and the Orthodox anti-ecumenists, both of whom are fellow communicants, are really that far apart given that they see ecumenism as an encounter with an Other and whether ultimately the polarity or antinomy we see is creative, helping the Orthodox Church to flourish, or sterile, forcing it into a static intransigence where it can never face the challenges of the modern world.

The most important mode of the civilizational dialogue, which is ecumenism for Orthodoxy, is the cultural dialectic of East with West. By constructing various visions of the West, Orthodoxy has defined itself as the Christian East.[4] Thus, the dialectic is identity-forming and it would not be an understatement to say that the ecumenical movement in the last century or more has been absolutely crucial for the Orthodox for it has served—both positively and negatively—as the vehicle of its self- definition against the religious Other of the West. Another mode we shall see again and again in both Orthodox ecumenical and anti-ecumenical discourse is Orthodoxy as the Universal Church, *Una Sancta*, encountering the western churches or, for the anti-ecumenists when they are being politic, the various 'western confessions' and 'bodies' of Western Christian traditions (I shall return to this reluctance to speak of western churches as 'church' later).

Now it would seem as if this Orthodox theological mode is the height of ecclesiastical chauvinism, an assertion of one institution *über alles in der Welt*. But, as Fr John McGuckin, has reminded us, the Orthodox are pre-modern in their ecclesiology. They do not, at their best, see the Church primarily from an historical and sociological perspective, a typical modern way of viewing the Church, but eschatologically as 'God's unstoppable energy of salvation in the world', which continues to

[3] Nicholas Lossky, 'Orthodoxy' in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, 2nd Ed., eds, Nicholas Lossky, José Míguez Bonino, John Pobee, Tom F. Stransky, Geoffrey Wainwright and Pauline Webb (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2002), 868–72, at 869.

[4] See George Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou, eds, *Orthodox Constructions of the 'West'*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013) and *Orthodox Readings of Augustine* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2008).

be manifested in one enduring Body of the Living Christ. They refuse to 'allow the notion of the Church to be partitioned' when they claim to be the Church and to possess its authentic tradition.[5] Orthodox ecumenists hold to this view but then ask how the western churches can be related to the Church which is Orthodoxy or how individual non-Orthodox are related to the dynamism of salvation in Christ which is the Orthodox Church. Anti-ecumenists, in a very modern way, simply collapse the Church as ark of salvation with the canonical institution of the Orthodox Church and then say there is only darkness outside its bounds. But both alike see ecumenism as the Church encountering a religious Other, whether this is acknowledged as 'myself as an Other' (Ricoeur) or as an alien force depends but the same vision of uniqueness holds in both.

Sergii Bulgakov (1871–1944)

An example of a pro-ecumenist who saw Orthodoxy's encounter with other Christians under the light of the East-West dialectic as well as the 'Universal Church-the churches' mode is the great Russian theologian, philosopher and economist, Fr Sergii Bulgakov (1871–1944).[6] Bulgakov's initial introduction to ecumenism was through attending the first congress of the Russian Christian Student Movement (RCSM) held in Pšerov, Czechoslovakia from 1–7 October 1923. The RCSM was an organization set up to bring together Russian youth in the emigration, primarily Orthodox but also including some Protestants, in order to encourage them in community, a wholistic Christian vision, and to counter Bolshevism. Each day of the conference was opened with a liturgy served by Bulgakov. There was also a strong eschatological sense in the participants, who saw themselves as members of a post-Constantinian Church dedicated to the churching of all of life and (for the Orthodox) the mission of presenting the icon of Orthodoxy to the West. The Eucharist, a strong sense of an eschatological call for Reunion of the Churches and that this must be led by Orthodoxy as the East showing the West the riches of the 'Universal Church' would become the hallmarks of Bulgakov's ecumenism.

At this conference, Bulgakov, in the last speech said something quite typical of all subsequent Orthodox pro-ecumenism, which is that ecumenism was an encounter with the West at its Christian roots:

[5] John McGuckin, 'The Role of Orthodoxy in World Christianity Today–Historical, Demographic, and Theological Perspectives–An Introduction' in *Orthodox Handbook on Ecumenism: Resources for Theological Education,* eds, Pantelis Kalaitzidis, Thomas FitzGerald, Cyril Hovorun, Aikaterini Pekridou, Nikolaos Asproulis, Guy Liagre, and Dietrich Werner (Volos, Greece: Volos Academy Publications in cooperation with WCC Publications, Geneva, and Regnum Books International, Oxford, 2014), 3–8, at 7.

[6] See Brandon Gallaher, 'Fr. Sergius Bulgakov' in *Orthodox Handbook on Ecumenism: Resources for Theological Education: "That they all may be one" (John 17,21),* eds, Pantelis Kalaitzidis, Thomas FitzGerald, Cyril Hovorun, Aikaterini Pekridou, Nikolaos Asproulis, Guy Liagre and Dietrich Werner (Volos, Greece: Volos Academy Publications in cooperation with WCC Publications, Geneva, and Regnum Books International, Oxford, 2014), 201-6.

> Orthodoxy represents the universal truth, and its chief interpreter at present is the Church of Russia, but we can lose this position of leadership if we become unworthy of our calling. It is time for us also to enter into living contact with other confessions, and I am happy as an Orthodox priest to have shared our labours with representatives of the western traditions. We have a heavy task but we must not be intimidated by its weight, for we can achieve it with Christ's help.[7]

This conference was financed by the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) and it would lead Bulgakov to subsequent fruitful collaboration with John Mott (1865–1955), the Secretary General of the YMCA, and Paul B. Anderson (1894–1985), a secretary of the YMCA assigned to work with Russian refugees in Europe. Bulgakov went on to attend the early conferences in the 1920s and 1930s of the Life and Work (Oxford 1937) and Faith and Order (Lausanne 1927, Edinburgh 1937) movements that paved the way for the foundation of the World Council of Churches (WCC). He rose to become one of the most important Orthodox ecumenical representatives before pulling out for health reasons in the spring of 1939.

The Eucharist was at the heart of Bulgakov's vision of ecumenism as an encounter of the Christian East with the West. In fact, his most audacious proposals from June 1933 through 1935, which ultimately came to naught, Florovsky and many of the Anglicans being opposed, were for limited episcopally blessed intercommunion between the Anglicans and the Orthodox in the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius[8]. Bulgakov's basic idea was for a mutual episcopal 'sacramental blessing' of Orthodox and Anglican Fellowship members, both ordained and lay, to partake of communion at one another's altars at Fellowship conferences; this would serve as a sort of seed leading to the eventual complete unity of the two Churches. In the case of the Orthodox, the blessing or sacramental sanction would come from Met. Evlogii (Georgievsky) (1868–1946) of the Russian Exarchate under Constantinople and Evlogii would ask for a corresponding blessing from the Patriarch of Constantinople. In the case of the Anglicans, the appropriate blessing would come from the diocesan bishop or from the Archbishop of Canterbury. Anglican and Orthodox bishops alike would confer the blessing on the Fellowship priest of the other Church so that the blessing would be fully mutual. Orthodox bishops would bless Anglican priests to

[7] Bulgakov quoted at Nicholas Zernov, *The Russian Religious Renaissance of the Twentieth Century* (NY/Evanston: Harper & Row, 1963), 229.

[8] See Brandon Gallaher, 'Bulgakov and Intercommunion', *Sobornost* 24.2 (2002): 9–28 [sequel to 'Bulgakov's Ecumenical Thought', *Sobornost* 24.1 (2002): 24–55]; *Catholic Action: Ecclesiology, the Eucharist and the Question of Intercommunion in the Ecumenism of Sergii Bulgakov*, MDiv thesis, (St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, 2003); 'Great and full of Grace: Partial Intercommunion and Sophiology in Sergii Bulgakov' in *Church and World: Essays in Honor of Michael Plekon*, ed. William C. Mills (Rollinsford, New Hampshire: Orthodox Research Institute, 2013), 69–121, and 'Fr. Sergius Bulgakov' in *Orthodox Handbook on Ecumenism*, 201–6.

communicate at the Orthodox liturgy, to concelebrate with Russian priests if they so desired and to communicate Orthodox and Anglican laity in the Fellowship who wish to participate in these celebrations. Likewise, in an analogous fashion, which Bulgakov left to the Anglicans to determine, the Anglican bishop would bless the Orthodox priest to participate in intercommunion with Anglican clergy and laity. The particular sacramental blessing of Anglican laity to participate in intercommunion at Orthodox altars could take either the form of a blessing by a bishop but, more preferably, the form of Chrismation with the invocation of the Trinity by a priest. This latter rite is the standard Russian way of receiving converts to Orthodoxy and Bulgakov was using it to acknowledge the tacit Orthodox ecclesial status of these Christians. The final version of Bulgakov's proposals was ultimately rejected in June 1935 by the Fellowship council before, however, it could be discussed in open session at the conference.

Christian unity in and through the Holy Spirit is, he argued, not found in the discussions of Joint Doctrinal Commissions, but it is only given at and through the Chalice: 'the way towards reunion of East and West does not lie through tournaments between the theologians of the East and West, but through a reunion before the Altar'.[9] Again we see our mode of ecumenism as civilizational dialogue, the East-West dialectic coming up, not in condemnation of the West but in an eagerness for union with other Christians who are, nevertheless, understood as the religious Other, who are coming into spiritual union with the Eastern Orthodox Church, when they meet Orthodoxy. This approach to ecumenism in no way subscribes to a sort of branch theory with Orthodoxy being one of the branches, along with Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism, of the living tree of the Church. Here Bulgakov is also typical of both Orthodox ecumenists and anti-ecumenists in beginning with the non-negotiable assumption that 'Orthodoxy is the Church of Christ on earth. The Church of Christ is not an institution; it is a new life with Christ and in Christ, guided by the Holy Spirit' and:

> Orthodoxy is not one of the historic confessions, it is the Church itself in its verity. It may even be added that, by becoming a confession, Orthodoxy fails to manifest all its force and its universal glory; it hides, one might say, in the catacombs.[10]

[9] Sergii Bulgakov, 'By Jacob's Well–John iv. 23 (On the Actual Unity of the Divided Church in Faith, Prayer and Sacraments)', *The Journal of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius* 22 (1933): 7–17, at 17, and at *Father Sergius Bulgakov 1871–1944. A Collection of articles by Fr. Bulgakov for the Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius and now reproduced by the Fellowship to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the death of this great Ecumenist,* Introd. N. Zernov (London: The Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius, 1969), 11, and see Bulgakov, 'Spiritual Intercommunion', *Sobornost* 4 (1935): 3–7, at 7, and at *Collection,* 32.

[10] *The Orthodox Church,* trans. Lydia Kesich (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, [1932] 1988), 1, 189.

The Orthodox, Bulgakov argued, were called in the ecumenical movement to perpetually witness to the non-Orthodox, the West, and the Western churches, concerning the uniqueness of the Orthodox Church as the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church which bears within itself the fullness of the faith. The Church, for Bulgakov, is a divine-human eschatological organism which is a spiritual reality incarnated in the world: visible and invisible, institutional and historical as well as spiritual and eternal. The invisible universal Church, *Una Sancta*, Orthodoxy as such, is, Bulgakov argued, like the ancient Jewish temple composed of two circles and all baptized Christians belong to her and are in a sense Orthodox insofar as they are Christian. In the inner circle, the holy of holies, is the visible empirical Church which coincides with the canonical family of Churches known as Eastern Orthodoxy, but in the larger circle, the court of the temple, are the other Western Christian confessions. These groups have to a lesser or greater degree 'a grain of Orthodoxy' insofar as they are related to the 'Orthodox' centre of the temple with its fullness of divine-human life, but all churches are alike ecclesial, tacitly Orthodox.[11]

Bulgakov's emphasis on ecumenism as a form of witness to the truth of Orthodoxy would later become the fundamental trajectory for the Orthodox involvement in the ecumenical movement. However, Bulgakov's version of this now standard position is not meant to be triumphalistic, an example of ecclesiastical chauvinism. He argues that the Orthodox need to learn from their non-Orthodox Christian brothers and sisters and become convicted and changed by these encounters. He sees Christian reunion in Orthodoxy not as a 'Byzantinization' of the non-Orthodox but the non-Orthodox's entry more deeply into their specific identity as Anglican, Lutheran, Roman Catholic, and so on, in entering into communion with the Church. Furthermore, in arguing against the majority of Orthodox or intercommunion as a means to unity of the churches, Bulgakov suggested that the means of reunion or reintegration of non-Orthodox into the Orthodox Church is not through complete theological agreement as worked out in detail by appointed committees of theologians from two churches and approved by their respective hierarchs in a reunion council, e.g., Ferrara-Florence (1438–1445). Rather, reunion if it comes will emerge through a gradual 'molecular' process that begins in a common worship that presupposed a basic or essential union in faith. The example of St Basil with the semi-Arians was often utilized in this context.[12]

Sacramental reunion with the Anglicans was based on a 'living Minimum' of dogma (i.e., the central dogmas of the faith including Christology and Trinitarian theology) grounded in the Eucharist.[13] This position was in contrast to an abstract

[11] *The Orthodox Church*, 188.

[12] See Anton Kartashev, 'The Paths Towards the Reunion of the Churches', *The Journal of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius* 26 (1934): 7–13 at 11 [This and other related articles are recollected in Michael Plekon, ed., *Tradition Alive: On the Church and the Christian Life in Our Time–Readings from the Eastern Church* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Pub. Inc., 2003)].

[13] Bulgakov, 'Ways to Church Reunion', *Sobornost* 2 (1935): 7-15, at 7-9, 12-13 and at *Collection,* 22-24,

maximalism that simply asserted the particular Eastern Orthodox teaching of the moment without attention to its age or context, and an abstract minimalism that appealed to the lowest common theological denominator.[14] Thus the 'living minimum' of dogma on which the entry into communion would be based was simply Orthodoxy.[15] Bulgakov's proposed episcopal 'sacramental blessing', therefore, for intercommunion was in the service of a gradual reuniting or reintegration of non-Orthodox churches with Orthodoxy through acknowledging that the non-Orthodox were already in some sense Orthodox and tacit members of the Orthodox Church.

Christian sacraments, even if defective, as in the case of the sacraments of Western non-Orthodox, are 'a call to universality',[16] being of the empirical Church, insofar as they are celebrated in it, but are from the invisible Church above. Echoing Augustine, he contends that non- Orthodox sacraments from baptism to ordination are, to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the nature of the schism, merely ineffective in schism although most certainly not non-existent. In short, the Church exists outside of its own canonical walls: '"*ecclesia extra ecclesiam*" or rather *ecclesia extra muros*.'[17] What Bulgakov was doing in proposing limited episcopally blessed intercommunion between Anglican and Orthodox was acknowledging that the baptism, orders, *and* the Eucharist of the Anglicans as Western Christians were sacramentally defective but basically Orthodox realities which regained their true force in communion with the Eastern Orthodox Church. Communion was both the end or crown of reunion *and* the means. Here we see that the end of ecumenism, civilization dialogue is the union of the churches in the Church Universal, here understood as Orthodoxy.

St Justin Popović (1894–1979)

Yet let us look at an Orthodox statement which is anti-ecumenist. We will find in it the same civilizational dialogue and its key mode of East facing the West, this time not in encounter but rejection. The figure I want to examine is the Serbian theologian and spiritual father St Archimandrite Justin (Popović) (1894–1979). Popović is not very well known in the West, but he is one of the key ideologues of contemporary Orthodox anti-ecumenists, and he was the teacher of a whole generation of influential theologian hierarchs in the Serbian church, whom he either taught at Seminary in Belgrade or was their spiritual father later in his monastery in

26-27.

[14] *The Orthodox Church*, 188.

[15] Ibid., 188–89 and see Kartashev 'Intercommunion and Dogmatic Agreement', *Sobornost* 4 (1935): 41–8, at 43 and 46.

[16] Bulgakov, 'The Church Universal', *The Journal of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius* 25 (1934), 10–15, at 11.

[17] Bulgakov, 'Outlines of the Teaching about the Church–The Church and Non-Orthodoxy' [Part 1], *American Church Monthly* 30.6 (1931): 411–23, at 418 (and see Part 2 in 31.1 (1932): 13–26 at (1931): 310–4).

Ćelije. Here one notes especially Metropolitan Amfilohije (Radović) of Montenegro (b. 1938), Bishop Atanasije (Jevtić) of Zahumlje and Herzegovina (b.1938) (retired), -Artemije Radosavljević) of Raška and Prizren (b.1935) (retired), and Bishop Irinej (Bulović) of Bačka (b.1947).[18] St Justin the New, as he was named after Justin Martyr, was glorified as a saint by the Serbian Church in 2010 and is revered by Orthodox conservatives throughout the Orthodox world.

In his 1974 book, *The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism*, St Justin attacks (and here we hear in the background the Slavophiles Aleksei Khomiakov (1804-60) and Ivan Kireevsky (1806-56) as well as the rhetoric of ROCOR, which was then in schism from the Moscow Patriarchate but then as now in communion with the Serbian Patriarchate) the European West for its rationalism, individualism and auto-divinization and 'homo-idolization' of humanity. He claims that Christianity in the West from Latin scholasticism onwards continuing through the Renaissance and the Enlightenment down to Nietzsche and Darwin 'gradually transformed into humanism'. In Catholicism, or 'papism' as he likes to say, and in Protestantism alike man has been put in the place of the God-man. Catholicism elevated one man in one office, with its affirmation of infallibility, above the God-man as represented by the Apostles, the Fathers and the Councils. Later we see with Luther and his ilk simply a 'vulgarized papism' with each believer cloning the 'infallible man in Rome' for himself by giving the believer personal infallibility in matters of faith: 'Papism is actually the first and oldest Protestantism... Protestantism is a vulgarized papism, only stripped of mystery (i.e., sacramentality), authority and power'. (We see these ideas earlier in the Slavophiles, especially Khomiakov).

According to St Justin, there exists in Western Christianity, in its humanism, a '*Gleichschaltung* [conformity] of Christianity with the spirit of the times'. The term used is deliberately pejorative, for this was the German term used for Nazification, that is, the process in Nazi Germany which ensured conformity in every sector of society, including the Church. St Justin is comparing Western Christianity to Nazi Germany. The Eastern Orthodox Church, in contrast, is the Body of the God-Man. It lives not by accommodating itself to the spirit of the West but rather by accommodating that 'spirit of the times to the spirit of Christ's eternity—Christ's Godmanhood'. Orthodoxy has never, he argues, ecclesiologically dogmatized any form of humanism and

> has preserved, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the wisdom and the chastity of its heart and its soul... The Orthodox Church has proclaimed no poison, no sin, no humanism, no earthly social system as dogma—neither through

[18] Andrew Louth, *Modern Orthodox Thinkers: From the Philokalia to the present* (London: SPCK, 2015), 147.

> Councils, nor through the 'Body' of the Ecumenical Church. While the west, alas, does nothing but that. The latest proof: the Second Vatican Council.[19]

So far so clear. But what of 'ecumenism'? Ecumenism, we are told elsewhere, 'is the common name for the pseudo-Christianity of the pseudo-Churches of Western Europe'. At its heart is European humanism, which we have just heard is the quintessence of evil summarized in papism. Ecumenism is nothing but one heresy after another so it might be referred to as the 'Pan-heresy'. Moreover, ecumenism, as a sort of summary of 'European heresies', removes the God-Man and puts 'European man' in the place of Christ. It is the 'Legion' Christ cast out of the Gadarene Swine (Mark 5:1–13).[20] I think it is possible now get the basic drift of this negative form of anti-ecumenism as a mode of civilizational 'dialogue', which seems a misnomer here, for it is more like 'civilizational hectoring'. But what it shares in common with Bulgakov is that it sees ecumenism as an encounter with a religious Other who has a different vision of Christianity coming from a different culture. Bulgakov felt that this vision was, in its essence, Orthodox and wished to affirm it, but here we see an acknowledgement of difference in order that it might cast out what is Other.

Georges Florovsky (1893–1979)[21]

The next figure I want to look at who is an example of ecumenism as civilizational dialogue is the Russian theologian and historian Fr Georges Florovsky (1893–1979). It would not be an overstatement to say that the present identification of Orthodox theology with Patristics is the result of the popularization of ideas Florovsky propounded beginning in the 1930s and carried out by his disciples including Fr John Meyendorff (1926–1992) and Metropolitan John (Zizioulas) of Pergamon (b. 1931). I am referring to the so-called, 'neo-patristic synthesis'. Theology, for Florovsky, is called *Patristic* because it follows the patristic spirit and vision; *Neo*-Patristic because the Fathers help us face our current problems and queries; and a contemporary *Synthesis* because we respond Patristically to our age. His ecumenical work—he was one of the key architects of the World Council of Churches (WCC)—was decisive and the present Orthodox ecumenical position is working roughly on lines he established.

[19] Blessed Justin (Popovich), 'Papism as the Oldest Protestantism', Found at <http://orthodoxinfo.com/inquirers/papism.aspx> (last accessed: 26 February 2020). (Taken from *The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism* [Birmingham: Lazarica Press, 2000])

[20] Blessed Justin (Popovich), 'Papism as the Oldest Protestantism', Found at <http://orthodoxinfo.com/inquirers/papism.aspx> (last accessed: 26 February 2020). [From the chapter 'Humanistic Ecumenism' in *Orthodox Faith and Life in Christ*, by Father Justin Popovich, trans. by Asterios Gerostergios (Belmont, MA: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1994), 169]

[21] See Brandon Gallaher and Paul Ladouceur, eds, *The Patristic Witness of Georges Florovsky: Essential Writings*, Foreword by Kallistos Ware (London: T & T Clark/Bloomsbury, 2019).

Florovsky's essential ecumenical position was forged in the mid-1930s in reaction to Bulgakov's ecumenical work though it has many points of contact with it. Bulgakov believed, as we saw earlier, both that the churches might be led to unity by limited episcopally blessed intercommunion and that, although the Orthodox Church most fully embodied the Church Universal or *Una Sancta*, the Church Universal was not bound by its limits and included to a lesser degree other ecclesial bodies as true churches. Throughout his work, in contrast, Florovsky is clear that he believed that the Orthodox Church is *the true and only* Church which does not witness to a 'local tradition of her own' but witnesses to 'Patristic tradition' or 'the common heritage of the Church universal'.[22] Thus Florovsky agrees with Bulgakov that the Orthodox Church is the Church but he disagrees with Bulgakov's affirmation of other Christian churches as having ecclesiality as bodies *in themselves* and speaks more often than Bulgakov of non-Orthodox churches as schismatic or deficient in ecclesiality. Nevertheless, Florovsky argued that not everything that had been held or was even then held by the Orthodox Church was the 'truth of God'.[23] All other churches, he argued, had defected from Orthodoxy as the common tradition of the Undivided Church or were 'schismatic' and were consequently called to return and be healed (i.e., 'conversion') within the unity of the Orthodox Church.[24] Intercommunion between the Orthodox and the heterodox, whose faith and life were so radically different, was naturally inconceivable and as a *means* to unity it was 'a blind alley from which there is no escape'.[25] Future progress on the road to unity would only come from supplementing an 'ecumenism in space' (the discovery and registry of the various agreements and disagreements amongst the churches) with an 'ecumenism in time', which was the reintegration of the East and the West in their return to their common tradition in Orthodoxy.[26] He later would, as we shall see, apply this distinction in his work in the WCC.

He tended, however, to see the common tradition of the Church Universal as essentially 'Eastern', 'Christian Hellenist', and 'Greek' in character.[27] Eastern Orthodoxy

[22] Georges Florovsky, 'The Eastern Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Movement', *Theology Today* 7.1 (1950): 68–79, at 72.

[23] Florovsky, 'Confessional Loyalty in the Ecumenical Movement' [1950] in Gallaher and Ladouceur, *The Patristic Witness of Georges Florovsky: Essential Writings*, 285.

[24] Ibid., 285.

[25] Florovsky cited in 'Report of Conference held at High Leigh June 26–28, 1934 on "The Healing of Schism"'. Found in Oxford Archive of The Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius. Folder labelled 'The Fellowship Conference Policy Before 1940', 6.

[26] Florovsky, 'The Challenge of Disunity', *St Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, 3.1–2 (Fall–Winter 1954–5): 31–6, at 36.

[27] See Gallaher, '"Waiting for the Barbarians": Identity and Polemicism in the Neo-Patristic Synthesis of Georges Florovsky', *Modern Theology,* 27.4 (2011): 659–91 and 'Mia epanexetasē tēs Neo-paterikēs sunthesēs; Orthodoxē tautotēta kai polemikē ston p. Geōrgio Phlōrophsku kai to mellon tēs Orthodoxēs Theologias [A Re-envisioning of Neo-Patristic Synthesis?: Orthodox Identity and Polemicism in Fr Georges Florovsky and the Future of Orthodox Theology'] (translated by Nikolaos Asproulis, Lambros Psomas and Evaggelos Bartzis), *Theologia* 84.1 (2013): 25–92.

as the common tradition of the undivided Church embodied a Christian Hellenism that embraced not only Sts Basil and Gregory of Nyssa but also St Augustine as a sort of honorary Greek Father: 'In answer to an enquiry about his attitude to St Augustine, he gave the unexpected reply: "I would say that Augustine is really an Eastern Father"'.[28] As late as 1955, Florovsky held to the very strange opinion that there was no such thing as Latin Patristics since its distinctive writers were all actually tacitly Greek:

> Here I first of all offer one of my 'heresies'. I believe that the early period of Christian theology, sometimes described as Patristic, was purely and thoroughly Hellenic, Hellenistic, Greek; and that Latin Patristics never existed. Well, it really may seem to be too much. But actually, and this is so important, actually which names are usually given as Latin Fathers? Hilary of Poitiers—well, modern patrologists classify him under East and not under West, because, except for the Latin language, there was nothing Western in his thought at all; Augustine—well, African, neo-platonic, philosopher. That is not true—African temperament, neo-platonic philosophy. Jerome—the beautiful Latin style, but his heart was in the East always. Ambrose—yes, very Latin; unfortunately, almost all his books are translated from Philo, Basil the Great and some other Eastern writers. How much Latin Patristics is left?[29]

He continues in this same vein saying that Latin worship was only instituted in Rome at the end of the fourth century under pressure from Ambrose of Milan since Latin was regarded not as a sacred language like Greek. St Gregory the Theologian, he reminds us, said that the Latins cannot understand the Doctrine of the Trinity as their language is so poor it can't express anything so profound. The disintegration of the common mind in Christendom, he argues, comes from the loss of the Greek language and thought in the West. He dates this loss of the common mind in the West, which he believes probably never began in the East, from the twelfth century and argues that the best way of summarizing it is that the theology of Gregory the Theologian was preached from the pulpit but the treatises of Aquinas were taught in a class. He finishes this line of thought by speaking of the Patristic *ressourcement* in the West: 'there is a rediscovery of the patristic tradition in the western world, I

[28] 'In answer to an enquiry about his attitude to St Augustine, he gave the unexpected reply: 'I would say that Augustine is really an Eastern Father' [E. L. Mascall, 'Obituary of Florovsky', *Sobornost* 2.1 (1980), 69–70]. On the influence of Augustine see Christoph Künkel, *Totus Christus: Die Theologie Georges V. Florovskys* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1991).

[29] Revised Version of 'Quest for Christian Unity: The Challenge of Disunity' (1955), Georges Florovsky Papers, Manuscript Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library, Bx. 3. F. 11, 29.

mean a rediscovery of the Greek Fathers.'[30] Florovsky, not surprisingly, saw the involvement of the Orthodox Church in the ecumenical movement as a kind of 'missionary activity'[31] or as the witness of the truth of Orthodoxy to the whole Christian world:

> Christian reunion is just universal conversion to Orthodoxy … What is beyond [the Church's norm of the rule of faith and order] is just abnormal. But the abnormal should be cured and not simply condemned. This is a justification for the participation of an Orthodox in the ecumenical discourse, in the hope that through his witness the Truth of God may win human hearts and minds.[32]

Note these words by a prominent Orthodox ecumenist for we shall see the very same ideas appearing in an anti-ecumenical statement of Mount Athos 30 years later. Florovsky largely enunciated this vision of ecumenism as what I call 'civilizational dialogue' in successive ecumenical meetings of the WCC in the late 1940s and 1950s. Florovsky's ecumenical theology has since become the core of the present rationale for Orthodox involvement in the ecumenical movement—ecumenism as a sort of tacit evangelism.

Furthermore, although Florovsky believed the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church is (not merely, in a weak sense as found in Vatican II's *Lumen Gentium*, 'subsists in') the Orthodox Church, he did not hold that only Orthodox were therefore Christians. He contended, most famously in the 1933 essay 'The Limits of the Church',[33] which itself is dependent on an earlier little known essay of Bulgakov,[34] that *individual Christians* in various Western schismatic bodies existed outside of the canonical but inside the spiritual bounds of the Orthodox Church. This quasi-membership of certain Western non-Orthodox in the Orthodox Church is by virtue of such elements as right belief, the preaching of the Word of God, and true devotion. Above all, and here he adapts Augustine (just as we saw Bulgakov doing earlier),[35] the heterodox could be said to be Christians due to the 'validity' of their Trinitarian baptism whose graciousness and ecclesiality, albeit lacking full efficacy outside the

[30] Ibid., 29; Compare Review of L.A. Zander, *Vision and Action* (London, 1952), *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly* 1.2 (1953), 28–34, at 32–3.

[31] Florovsky, 'Une vue sur l'Assemblée d'Amsterdam', *Irénikon* 22.1 (1949): 5–25, at 9.

[32] Florovsky, 'Confessional Loyalty in the Ecumenical Movement' [1950] in Gallaher and Ladouceur, *The Patristic Witness of Georges Florovsky: Essential Writings*, 285-286.

[33] See Florovsky, 'The Limits of the Church' in Gallaher and Ladouceur, *The Patristic Witness of Georges Florovsky: Essential Writings*, 247-56 and 'The Doctrine of the Church and the Ecumenical Movement', *The Ecumenical Review* 2.2 (1950): 152–61.

[34] Bulgakov, 'Ocherki ucheniia o tserkvi. (III). Tserkov' i "Inoslavie"', *Put'* 4 (1926), 3–26. Abridged translation: 'Outlines of the Teaching about the Church: The Church and Non-Orthodoxy', *American Church Monthly* 30.6 (1931): 411–23, and 31.1 (1932): 13–26.

[35] See Will Cohen, 'Sacraments and the Visible Unity of the Church,' *Ecclesiology* 4.1 (2007): 68–87.

canonical bounds of the Church, the mainstream tradition of the Orthodox Church acknowledges by receiving the non-Orthodox believers not by a 'new baptism' but by the sacraments of Confession or Chrismation. The validity of Western non-Orthodox sacraments is the guarantee that God continues to act through the Church even in Christians separated from the true Church, drawing separated Christians back to the fullness of union and communion within herself. Thus, although he is not as bold as Bulgakov in regards to acknowledging other churches' ecclesiality and uses 'schismatic' language more often than Bulgakov in regards to the heterodox, he effectively acknowledges the ecclesiality of non-Orthodox churches insofar as their baptisms are said to be tacitly Orthodox making his position in the end little different than Bulgakov.

For Florovsky, the Cyprianic and Nikodimite view that outside the canonical walls of Orthodoxy there was undifferentiated darkness and that all Western non-Orthodox sacraments are null and void was a late theological distortion and overreaction. In no way, he argued, are the canonical and spiritual bounds of the Church identical. He claimed that this latter opinion emerged in the counter-Reformation when Orthodox were being rebaptized by Roman Catholics and, though it was an understandable overreaction at the time, it was contrary to the explicit teaching of the Fathers who distinguished between the sacraments of different sorts of heretics (e.g., Gnostics from Arians) and heretics from schismatics who had broken from the Church but whose basic teaching was sound and so whose baptism also could be said to be in some sense Orthodox as well. As St Basil explains in his first canonical epistle, 'it seemed good to the ancient authorities to reject the baptism of heretics altogether, but to admit that of schismatics, on the ground that they still belonged to the Church' (Letter 188, to Amphilochius). This is the reason that the Moscow Patriarchate and the Ecumenical Patriarchate receives Roman Catholics and Protestants with a Trinitarian Baptism through the Sacrament of Chrismation and not through a repetition of their Baptism which is considered 'valid' though lacking efficacy outside the canonical Church. Florovsky's ecumenical theology is based on the notion that Orthodoxy is encountering with Western Christians those who are the product of another Christian civilization and that it is the vocation of the Orthodox Church to witness to Orthodoxy in the contemporary world to these Western Christians. It is called to ever draw other Western Christians back to the fullness of life in Christ, the Orthodox Church, where their baptism finds its fulfilment.

Mount Athos

It is at this point I want to turn briefly to the Holy Mountain, Mount Athos, renowned for its opposition to ecumenism and critical of the Holy and Great Council of Crete in June 2016 (which affirmed ecumenism). In April 1980, although we see

contemporary statements that echo it as well, we see an anti-ecumenical statement coming from the Sacred Community after a then recent visit of Pope John Paul II to Ecumenical Demetrios in Istanbul and when the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church was just beginning its work. An Extraordinary Conference of the superiors of the twenty ruling Athonite monasteries first affirms in its statement that the Orthodox Church is the Universal Church of the Creed which has a 'spiritual and ontological authenticity' but then distinguishes between the 'churches' and 'confessions' of the West which have, it says, 'perverted the Faith of the Gospel, the apostles and the fathers, are deprived of sanctifying grace, of real mysteries and apostolic succession'.

Now dialogue—and here the Athonites are veritable 'softies' compared with St Justin Popović—in itself with the heterodox West is not necessarily a bad thing from the Orthodox point of view as long as 'the goal is to inform them of the Orthodox Faith and, thus, make it possible for them thereby to return to Orthodoxy when they receive divine enlightenment and their eyes are opened'. There follows in the statement an attack on common prayer and uniatism. It closes with an affirmation of the Holy Mountain's continuing faith in Orthodoxy and that it has 'love' for the heterodox 'to whom real help is given only when the Orthodox show them the vastness of their spiritual sickness and the means of its cure by maintaining a consistently Orthodox position'. Yet we have just seen in Florovsky, the pre-eminent architect of modern Orthodox ecumenism, the very same opinions, albeit couched in much more nuance, which is that Orthodoxy is the true Church of the first millennium and that Ecumenism, while it certainly affirms brotherhood in Christ, ultimately means a witness to the Faith to the non-Orthodox Western churches that all might return to her.[36]

World Council of Churches (WCC)

It might be thought that I am presenting a selection of idiosyncratic examples which show no larger pattern on the official level. In fact, we see the same different modes of ecumenism as civilizational dialogue in official ecumenism, especially the Orthodox engagements with the World Council of Churches (WCC). The Orthodox have, in fact, always affirmed in the WCC the fact that they are the Church Universal. This can be seen in the 1950 Toronto Statement (Florovsky was one of its drafters) where it is said that the WCC is not the *Una Sancta* or a super-church. The WCC, we read in the Toronto Statement, is not there to negotiate union between the churches and that 'membership does not imply that each church must regard the other member

[36] 'Announcement of the Extraordinary Joint Conference of the Sacred Community of the Holy Mount Athos [April 9/22, 1980]', Found at <http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/athos.aspx> (last accessed: 26 February 2020).

churches as churches in the true and full sense of the word'.[37] This statement was a compromise draft from the earlier much blunter position: 'The member churches do not necessarily recognize each other as true, healthy or complete churches but they consider the relationship of other churches to the *Una Sancta* as a question for mutual recognition'.[38]

The Toronto Statement goes on to say '[t]he member churches of the World Council recognize in other churches elements of the true Church' and on this basis enter into dialogue with one another.[39] We see this line of thinking once again in an Orthodox section report on Unity from the New Delhi Assembly of 1961. Florovsky's fingerprints can once more be seen. The statement says that for Protestants the main ecumenical problem is 'denominationalism', which is only solved by interdenominational agreement or reconciliation. The Orthodox, we are told, reject this approach as for them the basic problem is 'schism'. It is not said so explicitly in this context but it is clear that what is implied is that the schism is from the Church which is Orthodoxy. We see this is the case because the statement then says that the Orthodox

> cannot accept the idea of a 'parity of denomination' and cannot visualize Christian Reunion just as an interdenominational adjustment. The unity has been broken and must be recovered. The Orthodox Church is not a confession, one of many, one among the many. For the Orthodox, the Orthodox Church is just the Church.

It then affirms the fact that the Orthodox Church

> is aware and conscious of the identity of her inner structure and of her teaching with the Apostolic message (kerygma) and the tradition of the ancient undivided Church. She finds herself in an unbroken and continuous succession of sacramental ministry, sacramental life, and faith.

It sees itself as having 'a special and exceptional position in the divided Christendom, as the bearer of, and the witness to, the tradition of the ancient undivided Church, *from which all existing denominations stem, by the way of reduction and separation [i.e., schism]*'. What is needed is not, the statement says borrowing Florovsky's distinction we mentioned earlier, 'ecumenism in space' but

[37] 'Toronto Statement, 15 July 1950', Found at <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/central-committee/1950/toronto-statement> (last accessed: 26 February 2020).

[38] Konrad Raiser, 'Orthodox contribution to the WCC', Public lecture at an international symposium on Orthodox theology and the future of ecumenical dialogue: perspectives and problems', Thessaloniki, Greece, 1–3 June 2003, Found at <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/ecumenical-movement-in-the-21st-century/member-churches/special-commission-on-participation-of-orthodox-churches/orthodox-contribution-to-the-wcc> (last accessed: 26 February 2020).

[39] 'Toronto Statement, 15 July 1950', Found at <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/central-committee/1950/toronto-statement> (last accessed: 26 February 2020).

'ecumenism in time' understood as agreement in faith with all ages as prerequisite for unity. Unity will be recovered by the denominations returning to their common past, which, as was just affirmed, is borne by the Orthodox Church.[40]

This basic ecumenical position continues to be reiterated in the WCC by the Orthodox Church: Orthodoxy is the Universal Church and it engages in dialogue with the Western non-Orthodox churches certainly to affirm all that they share in common of Christ but they do so primarily as a witness to the unbroken tradition of the ancient undivided Church which Orthodoxy embodies. To quote the May 1998 Thessaloniki Statement, which was a Pan-Orthodox Ecclesial Statement calling for a 'radical restructuring' of the WCC to make it more Orthodox-friendly: 'We have no right to withdraw from the mission laid upon us by our Lord Jesus Christ, the mission of witnessing the Truth before the non-Orthodox World'.[41] In the late 1990s, what I am arguing is the basic Orthodox ecumenical position, which I am calling civilizational dialogue, comes to the fore after a Special Commission was created to respond to serious 'Orthodox Concerns' that they were being marginalized in the WCC. There were many factors involved, including Orthodox being regularly outvoted in the Assembly and asked to vote on issues at odds with their theology like women's ordination, the May 1997 pulling out of the Georgian Church from the WCC and, as Aram I, Catholicos of Cilicia, then moderator of the Central Committee said at the Harare Assembly of December 1998, 'the ethos and the agenda of the Council, which remained Protestant and Western in spite of the Orthodox presence and participation of churches from different regions'.[42] The difficulty of this issue was reiterated at a Central Committee session in August 1999 dedicated to deeper more productive Protestant-Orthodox dialogue:

[40] 'Orthodox contribution to New Delhi Assembly - Section Report on Unity, New Delhi, India, 1961', Found at <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/ecumenical-movement-in-the-21st-century/member-churches/special-commission-on-participation-of-orthodox-churches/first-plenary-meeting-documents-december-1999/orthodox-contribution-to-new-delhi-assembly> (last accessed: 26 February 2020). Compare 'New Valamo Meeting--New Valamo, Finland, September 1977', Found at <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/ecumenical-movement-in-the-21st-century/member-churches/special-commission-on-participation-of-orthodox-churches/first-plenary-meeting-documents-december-1999/new-valamo-meeting> (last accessed: 26 February 2020).

[41] 'Thessaloniki statement-Thessaloniki, Greece, May 1998', <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/ecumenical-movement-in-the-21st-century/member-churches/special-commission-on-participation-of-orthodox-churches/first-plenary-meeting-documents-december-1999/thessaloniki-statement> (last accessed: 26 February 2020).

[42] Aram I, 'Excerpts from moderator's report to the eighth assembly, 01 December 1998, Harare, Zimbabwe, December 1998', Found at <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/ecumenical-movement-in-the-21st-century/member-churches/special-commission-on-participation-of-orthodox-churches/first-plenary-meeting-documents-december-1999/excerpts-from-moderators-report-to-the-eighth-assembly>, (last accessed: 26 February 2020). Compare Aram I, 'For a Creative Orthodox-Protestant dialogue, 1 December 1999', Found at <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/ecumenical-movement-in-the-21st-century/member-churches/special-commission-on-participation-of-orthodox-churches/first-plenary-meeting-documents-december-1999/for-a-ceative-orthodox-protestant-dialogue>, (last accessed: 25 February 2020).

East-West dynamics vs the Universality of the Church

> The Orthodox-Protestant divide can possibly be understood along the lines of an East-West divide, particularly if 'East' and 'West' are understood not geographically but historically and doctrinally. Can there be a universality which embraces both East and West?[43]

All the texts from this period reflect the very same elements of ecumenism understood as civilizational dialogue I have identified. They affirm, as we saw at New Delhi, that the Orthodox Church sees itself as the Church Universal, that it is called to witness to Orthodoxy to the non- western churches for, as Prof Peter Bouteneff, now of St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, put it, in October 1998 when he was working for the WCC (just before the Harare Assembly of December that year):

> It isn't that we limit all truth, all church reality, or all activity of the Holy Spirit, to the Orthodox Church. But we do believe that the historical splits, because of which world Christianity is now so visibly divided, were splits from the 'right beliefs' of Orthodoxy.

Following the position of Bulgakov and Florovsky before him, Bouteneff affirms that the mystery of the Church which is embodied in its fullness in Orthodoxy cannot be contained within its canonical walls:

> Even as we Orthodox locate the Universal Church within the communion of our Church, it would be impious not to look outside our church boundaries to see, to affirm, and to engage with all that is real and true and beautiful there – all that is of Christ.[44]

The difficulties the Orthodox had with their role in the WCC were eventually partially resolved by a new voting system by consensus, but the unease the Orthodox feel towards the WCC has remained and it has been publicly criticized for

[43] 'Towards a Protestant-Orthodox dialogue within the WCC-Minutes from a Central Committee "Padare" session, 27 August 1999', <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/ecumenical-movement-in-the-21st-century/member-churches/special-commission-on-participation-of-orthodox-churches/first-plenary-meeting-documents-december-1999/towards-a-protestant-orthodox-dialogue-within-the-wcc> (last accessed: 26 February 2020)

[44] Peter Bouteneff, 'The Orthodox churches, the WCC, and the upcoming assembly, 01 October 1998', Found at <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/ecumenical-movement-in-the-21st-century/member-churches/special-commission-on-participation-of-orthodox-churches/first-plenary-meeting-documents-december-1999/the-orthodox-churches-the-wcc-and-the-upcoming-assembly> (last accessed 26 February 2020).

its Protestant and Western ethos by high level Orthodox clerics who are committed to ecumenism.

The Holy and Great Council of Crete-June 2016[45]

I want to close this study of Orthodox ecumenism and anti- ecumenism as civilizational dialogue with one last example of how both Orthodox parties, pro-ecumenist and anti-ecumenist, share a common understanding of the ecumenical movement as an encounter of Orthodoxy with a cultural-religious western Other. The Holy and Great Council of Crete of June 2016 was historic for many reasons, not least because it was the first universal Orthodox Council, despite the absence of four local churches, in the modern period. It acknowledged, with much rancour of some churches, the long-time Orthodox participation in the ecumenical movement as a veritable good. Much of the debate in the Council focused on Paragraph 6 of the document 'Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Rest of the Christian World' and whether it was permissible to call other Christian bodies and confessions 'churches'. The initial pre- conciliar wording of the draft document approved in October 2015 at the 5th Pre-Conciliar Conference was the following:

> *According to the Church's ontological nature, her unity can never be shattered. The Orthodox Church acknowledges the historical existence of other Christian Churches and Confessions that are not in communion with her* and believes that her affiliation with them should be based on a speedy and objective elucidation of all ecclesiological topics, most especially their general teachings on sacraments, grace, priesthood, and apostolic succession. *Accordingly, for theological and pastoral reasons, Orthodoxy has viewed dialogue with various Christian Churches and Confessions, as well her participation, in general, in the present-day Ecumenical Movement in a favorable manner.* She is hopeful that through dialogue she will bear dynamic witness to the fullness of Christ's truth and to her spiritual treasures to those who are separated from her. Her objective purpose, therefore, is to tread upon the path that leads to unity. (§6).[46]

Some hierarchs, principally from the Church of Greece but joined by the Church of Serbia and a few from the Church of Cyprus led by the noted conservative Greek theologian Metropolitan Hierotheos (Vlachos) of Nafpaktos (b. 1945), attacked the

[45] See Brandon Gallaher, 'The Orthodox Moment: The Holy and Great Council in Crete and Orthodoxy's Encounter with the West: On Learning to Love the Church', *Sobornost,* 39.2 (2017): 26-71.

[46] 'Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Rest of the Christian World, 5th Pan-Orthodox Pre-Conciliar Conference, Chambésy, 10–17 October 2015', <https://www.holycouncil.org/-/preconciliar-relations> (last accessed 26 February 2020).

use of *ekklesia* (church) for the 'heterodox' which is a common proxy for Western Christians and Western Christianity by Orthodox zealots. Vlachos is known in the Orthodox world for his attacks on ecumenism and his opinion that Western Christians subscribe to various heretical teachings departing from the Faith of the Fathers, Orthodoxy, including the *Filioque, actus purus, analogia entis*, and analogia fidei, and thus are 'sects' not 'schismatic churches'.[47]

These hierarchs, following in the line of Vlachos, said that it was dogmatically and historically impossible to refer to the non-Orthodox by the name ('church') which was solely reserved for the Orthodox Church which is the true and only Church. After much extended debate, Metropolitan John (Zizioulas) of Pergamon (b. 1931) intervened. Along with Metropolitan Emmanuel (Adamakis) of France (b. 1958), one of the most dynamic Orthodox bishops in the Church today (perhaps best known for his historic role in the (controversial) founding in January 2019 by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine but also a leader in ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue), Zizioulas was sitting side-by-side with HAH Patriarch Bartholomew I (Arhondonis) of Constantinople (b. 1940). Zizioulas showed in Patristic literature from pre-schism times down to the writings of modern 'fathers' that the Orthodox Church has always referred to the bodies of those Christians who are not Orthodox as 'churches.' *Ekklesia* is not a magic word that makes heterodoxy into Orthodoxy. He then paused and asked those who were attacking the use of this term for the non-Orthodox:

> The question now is whether those who have attacked the use of 'church' for the [Western] heterodox are willing to take the next rational step in their argument: 'Will you anathematize the Holy Fathers?' for it is they who use this term of 'church' for the non-Orthodox.'

There was dead silence in the Council chamber and the Patriarch called for a pause to the proceedings. After this stand-off between Metropolitans Hierotheos (Vlachos) and John (Zizioulas), Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew requested the two to come up with a compromise wording the following day. The result of the discussions between the churches after this debate is the following somewhat strange wording, which is arguably intentionally ambiguous:

> *In accordance with the ontological nature of the Church, her unity can never be perturbed. In spite of this, the Orthodox Church accepts the historical name*

[47] See 'Oikoumenismos: Mētropolitēs Naupaktou Kai Agiou Vlasiou Ierotheos Vlachos--Ta "Schismata Tōn Ekklēsiōn"', Found at <https://orthodoxia.online/%ce%b1%cf%80%cf%8c%cf%88%ce%b5%ce%b9%cf%82/%ce%bf%ce%b9%ce%ba%ce%bf%cf%85%ce%bc%ce%b5%ce%bd%ce%b9%cf%83%ce%bc%cf%8c%cf%82-%ce%bc%ce%b7%cf%84%cf%81%ce%bf%cf%80%ce%bf%ce%bb%ce%af%cf%84%ce%b7%cf%82-%ce%bd%ce%b1%cf%85%cf%80%ce%ac%ce%ba%cf%84/> (last accessed 10 November 2017).

> *of other non-Orthodox Christian Churches and Confessions that are not in communion with her* [*Παρά ταῦτα, ἡ Ὀρθόδοξος Ἐκκλησία ἀποδέχεται τήν ἱστορικήν ὀνομασίαν τῶν μή εὑρισκομένων ἐν κοινωνίᾳ μετ' αὐτῆς ἄλλων ἑτεροδόξων χριστιανικῶν Ἐκκλησιῶν καί Ὁμολογιῶν*], and believes that her relations with them should be based on the most speedy and objective clarification possible of the whole ecclesiological question, and most especially of their more general teachings on sacraments, grace, priesthood, and apostolic succession. *Thus, she was favourably and positively disposed, both for theological and pastoral reasons, towards theological dialogue with other Christians on a bi-lateral and multi- lateral level, and towards more general participation in the Ecumenical Movement of recent times*, in the conviction that through dialogue she gives a dynamic witness to the fullness of truth in Christ and to her spiritual treasures to those who are outside her, with the objective aim of smoothing the path leading to unity (§6).[48]

This sentence, '[T]he Orthodox Church accepts the historical name of other non-Orthodox Christian Churches and Confessions that are not in communion with her' can mean that a) the Orthodox Church has always accepted that other (Western) Christian bodies are called and are in some sense 'churches' (as Zizioulas argued as a pro-ecumenist following the lead of such Orthodox pioneers as Bulgakov and his teacher Florovsky); but b) it can also mean that the Orthodox Church accepts that other (Western) Christian bodies have and continue to call themselves 'churches' although this in no way means that it accepts them as such (so Vlachos and those traditional Orthodox who like him are anti-ecumenical). This is Orthodoxy's *subsist in* moment. This is a crucial moment and passage in contemporary Orthodoxy because the debate manifested here is really about the fact that Orthodoxy now finds itself in a different world, a western world, and whether *or not* this world includes within it Western Christians who implicate Orthodoxy and are in some sense in communion with her. There are some in the Church who acknowledge the West but reject it as corrupt and barbarian and refuse to accept that there is anything within it that is unalloyedly good and which touches their internal being as Eastern Orthodox Christians. Others wish to say that the bounds of the canonical Church (=Orthodoxy) do not coincide with the bounds of its spiritual reality and that there is much in this new world of the West in which Orthodoxy finds itself that speaks to its most intimate life and being. Both see ecumenism as the encounter with a religious Other, as what I have called 'civilizational dialogue' in its different modes, but one rejects it and the other embraces it.

[48] 'Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Rest of the Christian World', https://www.holycouncil.org/-/rest-of-christian-world 26 February 2020

Conclusion

But what are we to make of the fact that the Orthodox, whether they be pro-ecumenist or anti-ecumenist, see ecumenism in terms of civilizational dialogue with a religious Other? Is this for Orthodoxy a creative or a sterile antinomy? I want to propose something paradoxical, which is that the perpetual tension between ecumenism and anti- ecumenism in the contemporary Orthodox Church is a creative one. Both sides are united in affirming that Orthodoxy when it meets other Christian groups from the West is encountering something different, a religious Other informed by a narrative of the faith that, while it may arguably ultimately be of one piece with Orthodoxy, is not identical and the same story or faith as Orthodoxy. The way this is articulated differs but I have shown that it is often done through the East-West dialectic, the Church and the churches or confessions opposition and the idea that the Orthodox Church is a perpetual witness to the non-Orthodox of the first unbroken millennium of faith of the Church. This is simply stating a fact.

Yet why would I think that the antinomy of ecumenism and anti- ecumenism might actually be a creative tension? It is creative as both sides keep the other from collapsing into a self-identical isolated extremism. The ecumenists are often in a very great hurry, like Bulgakov with his eccentric ideas for intercommunion. They see that the world has now become wholly Western and, though they wish to affirm the pre-modern Easternness of Orthodoxy, they believe that the disunion of the churches is an enduring scandal in an increasingly secularized world and so why not simply focus on a royal minimum of essentials of the Faith rather than always emphasizing that unity is based on the present full package of beliefs and practices of the Orthodox Church.

Yet this neglects what Florovsky called the 'cross of patience', which is essential to ecumenism. Orthodox anti-ecumenists (to use a colloquial expression) keep Orthodox ecumenists 'real', always reminding them that they are guardians of the deposit, those who are called to a high calling, not because of their behaviour or any self-worth, but out of free grace, to be the Church and to witness to the dynamism of salvation breaking into the world, the new creation growing in the midst of the nations. This keeping within sober bounds the hopes for unity of the pro-ecumenists by the anti-ecumenists has meant that Orthodoxy, despite itself, has preserved many pre-modern practices, liturgical and ascetic, pointing to core teachings that have not been covered up but remain vital, which other churches in their zeal for *aggiornamento* have lost and are now attempting to recover. Crete, for example, in some ways was successful in preserving Orthodoxy precisely because it failed. Had it been the Orthodox Vatican II then there would have been the risk that a modernizing spirit would have been set lose in the Orthodox Churches that would have led to the sapping of the pre-modern vision of Orthodoxy, its salt and light, which is what makes it so unique amongst all Christian communions.

Yet the creative tension goes both ways. The zeal for unity of the Orthodox ecumenists also keeps the anti-ecumenists 'real'. The pro-ecumenists remind those who would close up Orthodoxy into a hermetically sealed bubble, a *Reinraum*, that this sectarian path is the very contradiction of Orthodoxy as the abiding Spirit of Christ in our midst. Its tradition is vital precisely because it is unafraid to meet the religious Other and to acknowledge him and embrace him as a brother in Christ, not in spite of but because of the difference.

Orthodoxy now finds itself in a different world, a western world. Westernization is not only an historical process but also above all an interior process, which defines the malaise of the Orthodox theologian drowning in the totalizing horizon of this age with its individualism, rationalism and essentialism exemplified by Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, and Descartes. Yet this means the Orthodox thinker is also Western and that his Orthodoxy is split down the middle by the West. We all are Western now. The West is in us and is us. It is not elsewhere and outside, for it is the modern. The critique of the West by the Orthodox is self-critique.[49] One is compelled, therefore, as an Eastern Orthodox to respond to this Western world as it includes within it Western Christians who (as was said earlier) implicate Orthodoxy and are in spiritual communion with her. And this is why many Orthodox ecumenists, in the aftermath of Crete, bearing in themselves an Eastern ecclesial tradition but very much in their upbringing, education, and work lives existing in a wholly Western mode of life, have become emboldened and are beginning, albeit cautiously and critically, to respond to a host of contemporary challenges from the West to the East from sexual diversity to technology.[50]

Orthodox ecumenism is a strange bird. It finds its roots in a civilization that has long ceased to exist except as it is maintained in the liturgical self-consciousness of the Orthodox liturgy but it is inspired and intellectually formed by a fundamentally Western movement for the reunion of the Churches and this is because it is in itself a sort of living antinomy of East and West. But to be a unity of opposites, of two realities inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably united is the quintessence of what it is to be Orthodox, it is to find oneself conformed to Christ in His

[49] Brandon Gallaher, 'Orthodoxy and the West–The Problem of Orthodox Self-Criticism in Christos Yannaras' in *Polis, Ontology, Ecclesial Event: Engaging with Christos Yannaras' Thought*, ed. Sotiris Mitralexis (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2018): 206-225.

[50] See for example the attempt to respond as Orthodox to LGBTQ+/sexual diversity: Brandon Gallaher, 'Tangling with Orthodox Tradition in the Modern West: Natural Law, Homosexuality, and Living Tradition', *The Wheel,* 13/14 (Spring/Summer 2018), 50-63 (forthcoming 2020 in Greek in *Synaxis*) and the British Council Bridging Voices joint Exeter-Fordham project led by Brandon Gallaher; Aristotle Papanikolaou and Gregory Tucker, 'Contemporary Eastern Orthodox Identity and the Challenges of Pluralism and Sexual Diversity in a Secular Age' (https://www.fordham.edu/orthodoxy/bridgingvoices (last accessed: 26 February 2020); Brandon Gallaher and Gregory Tucker, eds, *Eastern Orthodoxy & Sexual Diversity: Perspectives on Challenges from the Modern West* (Washington, DC: British Council, 2019): https://www.fordham.edu/download/downloads/id/14010/BV_Report.pdf (last accessed: 26 February 2020)). Also see the contemporary critique of transhumanism in Brandon Gallaher, 'Godmanhood vs Mangodhood: An Eastern Orthodox Response to Transhumanism', *Studies in Christian Ethics,* 32.2 (2019): 200-215.

Church now in this age and for this age but looking towards the ages of ages, the unfading light of the Spirit of Christ who calls us all to unity in His Kingdom.

A New Chapter in the History of Russian Émigré Religious Philosophy: Georges Florovsky's unpublished manuscript, Russkaia filosofiia v emigratsii

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The article discusses Florovsky's approach to the history of Russian philosophy, focusing on his unpublished article 'Russkaia filosofiia v emigratsii' ('Russian Philosophy in Emigration', finished in 1930). In this article, Florovsky interprets the expulsion of many philosophers from the Soviet Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 as a political and spiritual act, amounting to the government's rejection of creativity and freedom. He takes up the issue of continuity and discontinuity in Russian intellectual history and reaches a conclusion that it is émigré thought, especially religious philosophy, which stands in continuity with the philosophical heritage of pre-revolutionary Russia. In contrast, he interprets the communist ideology developed inside the Soviet Russia as a disruption of this intellectual tradition.

Georges Florovsky (1893–1979) is generally known as a historian of Russian religious thought and an Orthodox theologian. As an intellectual historian he is mostly remembered for his magnum opus, *The Ways of Russian Theology*; as a theologian he is primarily associated with the 'return to the Church Fathers' in twentieth-century Orthodox theology. His theological project is usually discussed under the heading of the 'neopatristic synthesis' (a term that he coined, but did not use frequently) and contrasted with the modernist direction taken by his older contemporaries, including Pavel Florensky, Nikolai Berdyaev, and Sergii Bulgakov. In my new book, *Georges Florovsky and the Russian Religious Renaissance*,[1] I discuss Florovsky's interactions with the leaders of the religious-philosophical renaissance and question the polarizing narrative of Russian émigré theology. According to this narrative, the Paris school of Russian religious thought is neatly divided into the camps of the 'modernists', such as Berdyaev and Bulgakov, on the one hand, and the neopatristic theologians, such as Florovsky and Vladimir Lossky, on the other hand. I show that Florovsky's theological project was in fact deeply influenced by the problems and

[1] Paul L. Gavrilyuk, *Georges Florovsky and the Russian Religious Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

central themes of the renaissance both in its pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary émigré expressions.

In 1920, as the Bolsheviks were tightening their grip on South Ukraine, Florovsky, then 26 years old, left Russia for good. The experience of displacement and emigration had a formative impact on him. On the one hand, emigration and the nomadic scholarly life that followed it was a traumatic experience; on the other hand, it was precisely emigration that drew Florovsky into the orbits of influence of such leading émigré philosophers as Pavel Novgorodtsev, Petr Struve, Nikolai and Vladimir Lossky, Nikolai Berdyaev, Sergii Bulgakov, Boris Vysheslavtsev, and others. It is possible that he would have met with at least some of them if they had all remained in Russia (the location would likely have been either the Lubianka prison in Moscow or a labour camp in Siberia). However, the emigration intensified and accelerated the process of their interaction by creating a new, more tightly knit and more contentious social world. I trace these interactions in considerable detail in the book. I also have a chapter that discusses Florovsky's involvement in and disenchantment with the Eurasian movement. I argue that a form of Eurasian doctrine peculiar to Florovsky made its imprint on the main historiographic scheme of *The Ways of Russian Theology*, the account of the western pseudomorphosis of Russian religious thought.

My study of Florovsky draws on a vast amount of unpublished material, principally gathered from two major archives, the Florovsky Papers at Princeton University's Firestone Library and the equally important archive at St. Vladimir's Seminary Library. This archival research has produced a number of valuable finds. For example, at St. Vladimir's I found and identified several chapters of Florovsky's dissertation on Alexander Herzen, the full text of which had previously been considered lost. I have also discovered Florovsky's lectures on the philosophy of Vladimir Solovyov, given in Prague in the winter of 1922–1923, the very existence of which had previously been unknown to Florovsky scholarship.

In this article I will focus on a manuscript of Florovsky's essay 'Русская философия в эмиграции' ('Russian Philosophy in Emigration'), the manuscript of which is kept in the Florovsky Papers at Princeton.[2] I will discuss Florovsky's understanding of the place of émigré philosophy in the history of Russian philosophy. My special concern will be Florovsky's handling of the issues of continuity and discontinuity, as well as his periodization of Russian philosophy and selection of sources. I will touch upon the question of how the perspective of 'Russian Philosophy in Emigration' compares to Florovsky's other treatments of Russian intellectual history.

[2] I edited and published this essay as 'Г.В. Флоровский. Русская философия в эмиграции' ['G. V. Florovsky. Russian Philosophy in Emigration'], *History of Philosophy Yearbook* (2013): 314–337, a journal published by the Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Since it is sometimes a challenge to gain timely access to scholarly periodicals published in Russia on this side of the Atlantic, an electronic copy of this publication is available at http://www.stthomas.academia.edu/PaulGavrilyuk.

After Florovsky left Russia in 1920, he first settled with his parents in Sofia, Bulgaria, where his father found a nominal post at the local Orthodox seminary. It was in Sofia that Florovsky became friends with the founders of the Eurasian movement: Nikolai Trubetskoi, Petr Savitskii, and Petr Suvchinskii. He stayed in Sofia only two years, leaving for Prague in 1921 in hopes of employment at the newly founded Law Faculty of Charles University. In Prague he began to distance himself from the Eurasians and came in contact with the leading Russian philosophers and public intellectuals who were banished from Bolshevik Russia by the direct order of Lenin during 1922–1923. Florovsky had a less cruel fate than some, since he left Russia voluntarily during the general evacuation, forced by circumstances rather than by banishment. Nevertheless, while he did not arrive on the 'Philosophy Steamer', Florovsky clearly saw himself as sharing one intellectual world with its 'passengers'. (Of course we should not imagine one vessel carrying all philosophers; some arrived by sea, others, like Florovsky, by land). Here is how he put the matter in the first two paragraphs of 'Russian Philosophy in Emigration':

> There is something peculiarly tragic about the fact that several years ago a large group of Russian philosophers was banished from their native land by the order of the Soviet government. They were banished specifically as philosophers. This was a symbolic gesture, which meant a denial of creativity and freedom. Philosophy became useless and prohibited in Soviet Russia. Philosophy became prohibited precisely because the philosophical pathos and creativity are expressions of spiritual freedom. The Soviet lifestyle (*byt*), on the contrary, is a wilful denial and quenching of free spirit. To be sure, there is the official 'Soviet,' 'Red' philosophy. But this 'philosophy' is simulated and fake; it is a 'philosophy' without problematic issues, without searching, without creative agitation […]
>
> The rejection and nonexistence of philosophy in Soviet Russia define the historical place and the meaning of Russian philosophical emigration. Despite the variety of different [philosophical] directions and the contention between them, it is possible to treat the Russian philosophical 'dispersion' as a unified whole. These are not just individual refugees, but precisely a 'dispersion', a Russian philosophical colony in Europe. … Russian thinkers abroad remain the sole carriers of the creative traditions and heritage of Russian philosophy. They are not only keepers, but also continuators. One can put the matter thus: The Russian philosophical 'dispersion' marks a new moment, a new stage in the common historical destiny of Russian thought.[3]

[3] Florovsky, 'Russian Philosophy in Emigration', 314. This and all subsequent quotations are original translations from the Russian text.

With these admittedly dark colours, Florovsky paints the historical background against which he will assess émigré philosophy. The predicament of Russian philosophy is tragic. The expulsion of Russian philosophers is no mere political act; it is also a spiritual act, defining the Soviet regime as something antithetical to philosophy. As far as Florovsky was concerned, there could be no free philosophical inquiry in Russia and, consequently, no genuine philosophy (his passionate affirmation of philosophy's spiritual freedom is worthy of Berdyaev). The exceptions only proved the rule: the stifling of freedom and creativity by the Bolshevik regime meant that philosophy was finished at home and could only be continued outside Russia.

At stake in this discussion was a broader historical issue: *which* Russia, the one that was in the hands of the Bolsheviks, or the one that the exiles took with them abroad in their minds and hearts, could lay claim to the patrimony of the pre-revolutionary Russia? Like any revolutionary dictatorship, the Bolshevik regime at first promoted a rhetoric of discontinuity, even if complete discontinuity was a historical impossibility; the exiled Russian leaders, despite the trauma of expulsion and cultural deracination, or perhaps precisely because of the reality of expulsion and deracination, promoted a rhetoric of continuity. On both sides one was dealing with competing rhetorical strategies, which were meant to *enforce* a certain vision, rather than merely describe an existing historical reality. Both sides often claimed to be the *exclusive* embodiment of true Russia at the present historical moment, but each understood the meaning of 'true Russia' very differently. Florovsky chose the history of Russian philosophy as the battleground on which he could mount the strongest opposition to Soviet ideology. Many leaders of the emigration, including Fyodor Stepun and Nicholas Berdyaev, chose the same weapon. As the Soviet government was physically destroying any remaining representatives of religious philosophy (Vasily Rozanov died of starvation during the Civil War; Pavel Florensky and Gustav Shpet were sent to the Gulag and then executed; Aleksei Losev survived in the Gulag, but with permanent damage to his eyesight), in the 1920s and 1930s the émigré philosophers worked hard to rescue the philosophical tradition by keeping the historical memory alive.

Florovsky's essay is divided into six unequal sections, the first, second and the final sixth one framing the narrative. In the second section, Florovsky offers a division of the history of Russian philosophy into three major periods. The first period, spanning the mid-1820s to the mid-1850s, he characterizes as Russia's philosophical 'awakening', when the task of developing an original national philosophical tradition was first formulated. The second period, coinciding with the second half of the nineteenth century, was marked by a 'religious-philosophical turmoil' and a 'battle for philosophy' because free philosophical inquiry was under much government pressure at the universities (implied parallels with the plight of philosophy in Soviet Russia would not have escaped Florovsky's émigré readers). In Florovsky's highly selective reading of this period, the philosophy of Vladimir Solovyov and

his followers had a focal significance, with the philosophical themes in Tolstoy and Dostoevsky being equally formative and influential. Florovsky's reading is highly selective because he effectively dismisses the materialism and positivism then prevalent in university education as nothing more than 'anti-philosophical temptations'.[4] The third period, roughly coinciding with the beginning of the twentieth century, was marked by a return to religion, a revival of idealism, and an overcoming of positivism and Neo-Kantianism. Most leading religious philosophers of this period began their literary careers in Russia and found themselves expelled abroad in the 1920s.

It should be noted that Florovsky had already deployed the same three-fold periodization in at least two of his previous works, his dissertation on Alexander Herzen and his lectures on the philosophy of Vladimir Solovyov, both finished in 1923. The Herzen dissertation is dedicated primarily to the first period, while the Solovyov lectures focus primarily on the second period. The third period, dealing with the leaders of the religious-philosophical renaissance, was first an intellectual milieu of which Florovsky was a part and only secondly a subject of historical investigation. In 'Russian Philosophy in Emigration', finished in March 1930, Florovsky dealt primarily with his contemporaries, many of whom became close personal acquaintances in emigration. This extremely short focus of historical perspective distinguishes this essay from the vast majority of Florovsky's historical studies. Even in *The Ways of Russian Theology*, published in 1937, Florovsky brought his historical narrative up to the first years after the Bolshevik revolution, but no closer to his own time.

In the third, longest section of 'Russian Philosophy in Emigration', Florovsky distinguishes two directions of Russian émigré philosophy. He considers 'ontologism' (represented by Nikolai Lossky, Semen Frank, and Lev Karsavin) to be the dominant trend and views 'criticism' or 'transcendentalism' as a less influential continuation of Neo-Kantianism (represented by I. Lapshin, S. Gessen, Fedor Stepun, Boris Yakovenko, and G. Gurvich). Somewhat awkwardly, in this section Florovsky also considers the work of Lev Shestov and others whose views do not fit into these two categories.

In the fourth section, Florovsky treats religious philosophy, emphasizing the central significance of the followers of Vladimir Solovyov, the most influential of whom was Bulgakov. This section contains the most extensive treatment of Bulgakov's sophiology found anywhere in Florovsky's academic writings (another important source is his personal correspondence, especially his unpublished letters to A.F. Dobbie-Bateman). The general tone of Florovsky's treatment is neutral and expository, while the background music is an indirect critique of sophiology that Florovsky had recently put forth in such essays as 'The Contradictions of Origenism' (1929),

[4] 'Russkaia filosofiia v emigratsii', 4.

'The Dispute about German Idealism' (1930), and 'The Dead-ends of Romanticism' (1930). At the time of writing these essays and 'Russian Philosophy in Emigration', Florovsky was Bulgakov's junior colleague and protégé at the St Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris. During the Sophia Affair, which broke out in the mid-1930s, Florovsky generally refrained from criticizing Bulgakov publicly, although he privately expressed his dissatisfaction with Bulgakov's system. In contrast, Florovsky's critique of Berdyaev was quite sharp both in 'Russian Philosophy in Emigration' and in *The Ways of Russian Theology*. Berdyaev, given his fighting spirit, did not wait long to return the favour.

The fifth section of 'Russian Philosophy in Emigration' is dedicated to the philosophy of history (treating Pavel Novgorodtsev and Petr Bitsilli) and philosophy of culture. Under the latter category, Florovsky again mentions the work of Berdyaev, especially his analysis of freedom, creativity, and the crisis of culture. Interestingly, in the same section Florovsky mentions Eurasianism in one brief sentence, without naming any names or citing any works. Given how badly the movement was compromised by its involvement with the Soviet secret service in the late 1920s, Florovsky's former association with its leaders must have been a cause of some embarrassment to him.

Consistently referring to himself in the third person, Florovsky mentions his own essays in three places, in the context of discussing religious philosophy, philosophy of history, and philosophy of culture. Apparently, at this point in his own intellectual development, before he published his lectures on the Church Fathers and *The Ways of Russian Theology*, Florovsky has not yet settled intellectually into the role of a neopatristic theologian and preferred to self-identify as a philosopher and intellectual historian, whose contributions were a part of the Russian Religious Renaissance and who did not see himself as set apart from the movement.

In the final section of his essay, Florovsky recognizes that a conclusion about contemporary developments would be premature. He intimates that the resources of modernity have been exhausted and that Russian philosophy is poised to take a new turn. Florovsky maintains that in order to make a new creative breakthrough it is necessary 'to return to the classics'. He concludes by hinting that 'Russian philosophical explorations are inspired by the anticipated synthesis', but does not develop the idea. In December 1936, at the First Congress of the Orthodox Theologians held in Athens, Florovsky publicly announced his theological programme of a 'return to the Church Fathers' with a view of producing a neopatristic theological synthesis. In *The Ways of Russian Theology*, completed at the same time, his interest shifted from philosophy to theology, the scope of his historical narrative expanded by the factor of ten, from the discussion of the past hundred years to more than a millennium of Russian history; more importantly, the overarching concern to show deep originality and continuity of Russian religious philosophy gave way to a narrative that emphasized painful 'breaks' and discontinuities, what he called the western pseu-

domorphosis of patristic and Byzantine tradition. Instead of contrasting a vibrant tradition of émigré philosophy with 'the rejection and nonexistence of philosophy in Soviet Russia', as he did in the essay under discussion, in *The Ways of Russian Theology* Florovsky cast the development of Russian religious thought against the historical horizon of the Byzantine theological tradition. Perhaps it is because 'Russian Philosophy in Emigration' no longer reflected his changed perspective that Florovsky never published this piece. Nevertheless, this essay represents an important *transitional* work in his interpretation of Russian philosophy. The transition that is at stake here is from the 'originality and continuity narrative' of Russian philosophy to the narrative of pseudomorphosis of Russian theology.

In conclusion, we might reflect on how Florovsky would have diagnosed the state of philosophy in Putin's Russia today. I doubt that he would have been greatly impressed, although his verdict about post-Soviet philosophy might have been less damning than his judgment on the Soviet one. In 'Russian Philosophy in Emigration', Florovsky's operating assumption is that totalitarian regimes tend to stifle the creativity that is vital for the flourishing of free philosophical inquiry. As Putin tightens his hold on mass media, will his government continue to marginalize socially and suffocate economically any philosophy that does not serve its imperialist agenda? Are we to expect a present-day 'Philosophy Steamer', or, to modernize things a bit, a 'Philosophy Airliner'? Is it not telling that out of all the émigré philosophies that have 'returned' to Russia after the Perestroika, Eurasianism (in different forms) has proved to have the greatest staying power, finding its most eloquent proponents in people like Alexander Dugin, who is a fascist pseudo-intellectual turned professor? Unfortunately, the present-day proponents of Eurasianism, Dugin included, are reluctant to heed Florovsky's warning against turning a cultural theory into an ideological weapon of the state. Will Russian philosophers, especially those who have the courage to oppose the state propaganda machine, become political refugees yet again? And if they do not leave for the West, will they retire into what Sergei Averintsev called 'internal immigration' in their own country? Only time will tell.

Outside of God: A Theanthropic Scrutiny of Nietzsche's Concept of Chaos and Berdyaev's Notion of the *Ungrund*

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The purpose of this paper is to critically examine and compare Nietzsche's concept of chaos and Berdyaev's notion of the Ungrund, bearing in mind the ontological problem of human freedom and the context of the 'God after metaphysics' debate. Nietzsche and Berdyaev introduce their respective concepts in trying to overcome the impasse of onto-theology caused by the view of God as actus purus. Chaos and the Ungrund stand for the idea of the posse reintroduced in our days by Richard Kearney. The primary cause of onto-theology, for Kearney, is the classic metaphysical tendency to subordinate the possible (posse) to the actual (esse). I identify posse with Godhead, which is the first principle in God, the 'unapproachable intensity of his being' and the 'inexhaustible ground' from which everything originates. But during the past centuries rationalism has deprived God of this first principle. 'The power of the Godhead has disappeared.' Berdyaev reminds us that there cannot be a valuable theodicy without ontological anthropodicy. God ceases to be actus purus when, as the result of his becoming, there is more being than there was before. God and the human being are more than just God. Humans must possess potency similar to the divine, which implies that at the end of their action there is more being than there was before. God cannot be the living God if his creature is not alive. The overcoming of onto-theology, therefore, requires a theanthropic hermeneutical method.

> Nietzsche is the forerunner of a new religious anthropology. Through Nietzsche the new humanity moves out of godless humanism to divine humanism, to a Christian anthropology. Nietzsche is an instinctive prophet of the religious renaissance of the west.
>
> - N. Berdyaev

In this paper I shall critically examine and compare Nietzsche's concept of chaos and Berdyaev's notion of the *Ungrund,* bearing in mind the ontological problem of human freedom in the context of the 'God after metaphysics' debate. Given the immense role the issue of liberty has played in the history of philosophy, it is sur-

prising, lamented Paul Tillich, how little ontological investigation into the meaning of freedom is carried out by modern thinkers.[1]

Nietzsche and Berdyaev introduced their respective concepts in trying to overcome the impasse of onto-theology caused by the view of God as *actus purus*. Chaos and the *Ungrund* stand for the idea of the *posse* reintroduced in our days by Richard Kearney. The primary cause of onto-theology, for Kearney, is the classic metaphysical tendency to subordinate the possible (*posse*) to the actual (*esse*).[2] I identify *posse* with Godhead, which is the first principle in God, the 'unapproachable intensity of his being' and the 'inexhaustible ground' from which everything originates. During the past centuries, rationalism has deprived God of this first principle. 'The power of the Godhead has disappeared'.[3]

But how does the *posse* as the inexhaustible ground manifest itself? If God-*actus purus* is fully actualised, then God-*posse* must be the infinite actualisation. 'The nature of life is actualisation, not actuality'.[4] Life is the infinite actualisation of the inexhaustible ground. The ground is limitless because it is an abyss of potency or newness, which God could never domesticate. The principal trait of God's potency is that it allows for the creation of a living creature, and the creature is living insofar as it continues the augmentation of being. God is alive insofar as he can create the living being. God is *posse* because he can create the being capable of enriching him. Berdyaev reminds us that valuable theodicy depends on the ontological anthropodicy.

> The old doctrine according to which God created man and the world, having in no respect any need of them and creating them only for His own glory, ought to be abandoned as a servile doctrine which deprives the life of man and the world of all meaning.[5]

The overcoming of onto-theology, therefore, requires a *theanthropic* hermeneutical method. I have coined this expression drawing on Berdyaev's idea of God-humanity. This idea suggests that our philosophising should start neither from God

[1] Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (further in the text ST), (Digswell Place: James Nisbet & Co. Ltd, 1968), 202.

[2] Richard Kearney, *God Who May Be* (GWMB), (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2001), 1.

[3] ST, 278.

[4] ST, 272. Philosophers who hate the idea of Becoming are, in Nietzsche's words, 'monotono-theists'. Friedrich W. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols,* trans. Antony M. Ludovici (London: Wordsworth Editions Ltd, 2007), 17.

[5] Nikolai Berdyaev, *The Divine and the Human*, (San Rafael, CA: Semantron Press, 2008), 7. *Ekzistencialnaya dialektika bozhestennogo i chelovecheskogo* (Moskva: Astrel, 2010), 360. Berdyaev's words remarkably betray his awareness of the need for a new anthropology, which at the beginning of the 20th century was named 'philosophical anthropology'. Max Scheler asserted that the 'problems of philosophical anthropology have become the centre of all philosophical problems…' Max Scheler, *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos* (Darmstadt: Otto Reichel Verlag, 1930), 11.

nor the human being but the vision of God-humanity. Onto-theological thinking takes for granted a misbalance between the importance given to God and the human being. However, as Heidegger noted, '*one* being always keeps coming to the fore in this questioning: the human beings who pose this question'.[6]

Nietzsche's ideas of freedom and chaos

For Levinas, Ricoeur, and Derrida, the totalitarian ontology that proceeds from the notion of God as *actus purus* is one of the leading causes of atheism.[7] God's all-embracing causation means that the otherness of the 'I' is fused with the Totality of Being and, ontologically speaking, the creation of the world cannot be justified.[8]

So the 'Christian theme' by which Nietzsche was 'wounded'[9] was the literal interpretation of divine omnipotence that eliminates human otherness. Berdyaev stresses that Nietzsche detested God because he believed that if God exists, human creativity is impossible. Nietzsche, indeed, exclaims, 'Away from God and gods this will lure me; what would there be to create, after all, if there were gods?'[10] Berdyaev approved of Nietzsche's critique of the idea of transcendental infinity, demonstrating, however, that Nietzsche was incapable of imagining a union of the uncreated and created in which the latter not only would not be devaluated but would possess the power to enlarge the former.[11]

Ontological freedom, as explained by John Zizioulas, ought to be distinguished from the freedom of will. Freedom is the question of ontology or 'freedom is to be other in an absolute sense'.[12] Nietzsche, while using different vocabulary, also believed in the ontological character of liberty. Freedom, for Nietzsche, is one's undetermined otherness. Deleuze writes that, according to Nietzsche, what one will

[6] Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics,* trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2000), 4. See also Emmanuel Falque, *The Metamorphosis of Finitude,* trans. George Hughes (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), 38.

[7] GWMB, 168.

[8] Richard Kearney, 'Returning to God after God: Levinas, Derrida, Ricoeur', *Research in Phenomenology* 39.2 (2009): 174. Theodicy, Paul Ricoeur reminds us, is the flagship of onto-theology. Paul Ricoeur, *Evil; A Challenge to Philosophy and Theology*, trans. John Bowden (London: Continuum, 2007), 49.

[9] Nikolai Berdyaev, *The Beginning and End* (BE), trans. R. M. French, (San Rafael, CA: Semantron Press, 2009), 42.

[10] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. Adrian Del Caro, eds Adrian Del Caro and Robert Pippin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 67.

[11] Ibid., 179. Paul Ricoeur also believed that the 'death of God' for Nietzsche signified the death of the God of onto-theology. Kearney, 'Returning to God after God,' 173. Not only did Nietzsche detest God, but he also cursed the good and the righteous because they hate those who create. Nikolai Berdyaev, *The Meaning of the Creative Act* (MCA), trans. D. A. Lowrie, ed. B. Jakim (San Raphael, CA: Semantron Press, 2009), 171. *Smysl tvorchestva: Opyt opravdaniia cheloveka* (STv) (Paris: YMCA Press, 1991), 122.

[12] John Zizioulas, *Communion & Otherness* (CO), ed. Paul McPartlan (New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 39.

want is to affirm its difference. There is a pleasure in knowing that we are different; difference produces enjoyment.[13]

Nietzsche argued that divinities should be able to engender their own opposites out of themselves.[14] He understands nature as chaos, but chaos is the freedom that is abounding with subjectivities and wills: 'every centre of force adopts a perspective toward the entire remainder, i.e., its own particular valuation, mode of action, and mode of resistance'. The organic world, for Nietzsche, 'is the interviewing of beings with *invented little worlds* about them: in that they impose upon outer experience their power, their desire, their habits as their *external world*'.[15] Furthermore, 'every centre of force [in nature]—and *not only man—construes all the rest of the world from its own viewpoint*'.[16] This is what is usually called Nietzsche's perspectivalism. To see the nature 'from the inside', in a disinterested Kantian sense, and not from the perspective of our interest, would be to construct the object subjectively—to see as subject what traditional metaphysics has always viewed as an object.[17]

Everything in nature, and the human being in particular, is a subject that invents its 'little world', projecting its subjectivity and will as its 'external world'. Freedom is here regarded as the power of subjectivity to break the necessity of the given world by creating a new world.[18] The essence of every being is what Nietzsche famously named 'the will to power'.[19] Nietzsche's philosophy inaugurates the problem of creativity as the defining trait of modernity. It creates a rupture in the cultural history of the West by giving new status to the human being, who now from the creature becomes the creator.[20]

Defining chaos

If there were gods, there would be nothing for us to create, asserts Nietzsche, rejecting God and introducing chaos. The primary role of chaos is to allow for unencumbered human creativity. 'I tell you', says Zarathustra, 'one must have chaos in one, to give birth to a dancing star'.[21] Some authors suggest that we should under-

[13] Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche et la philosophie* (Paris: Quadrige/PUF, 2010), 10.

[14] Babette E. Babich, 'Nietzsche's Chaos Sive Natura: Evening Gold and the Dancing Star', *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia* 57 (2001): 229.

[15] Cited in Babich, 'Nietzsche's Chaos Sive Natura', 234.

[16] Cited in Babich, 'Nietzsche's Chaos Sive Natura', 235.

[17] Babich, 'Nietzsche's Chaos Sive Natura', 239.

[18] Freedom to be other, for Zizioulas, 'involves the tendency *to create a world* other than the given one, that is, *to bring about otherness in the radically ontological sense* of *the emergence of new identities bearing the seal of the lover's or the creator's personhood*. This is expressed in art when it is not a mere copy of reality, and it is a distinctive characteristic of the human beings in creation.' *Being as Communion* (BC) (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1997), 40. See also John Zizioulas, *The Eucharistic Communion and the World*, ed. Luke Ben Tallon, (New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 135–36. Italics added.

[19] ' Marie-Alix de Solages, 'Nietzsche et Berdiaev,' Revue Contact, XXXXIe année, N0. 147, 162

[20] De Solages, 170.

[21] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Also Sprach Zarathustra; Nietzsche Werke: Kritische Studienausgabe* (KSA), eds, Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1980), Prologue, 5.

stand Nietzsche's chaos in the archaic Greek sense as *physis*: that which brings forth of out of itself. Since Nietzsche identifies chaos with nature, the meaning of chaos might also be self-generative nature or 'she who will be born, she who will bear'.[22]

Jean Granier stresses that nature, as chaotic being, should not be identified with an intelligible being or with a cosmos. Nature is not a book written by a superior intelligence, but it is merely chaos in the Greek sense of the word. Nietzsche rejects nature as the book of God because he sees it as a fixed manuscript to which we could not add anything. But if nature is not divine creation, how should we understand it? Granier tells us that for the Greek gods, the world was an ever-changing veil that hid the most terrible reality. For the Greeks, the phenomena dissimulated what they showed, because what they showed was the most terrible, i.e., chaos. Nietzsche suggests that the real constitution of things might be so hostile towards life that we needed to create a mask to be able to live). This masking Nietzsche calls art. The naïveté of the Greeks was in their determination to interpret the text of chaos in such a way that its absurdity appears as beauty. Truth, therefore, is what is most terrible. It defines the chaotic being of bottomless depth. To continue living despite that fact, the profound person must embrace the intentional superficiality, the naïveté that characterised the Greeks. Life and art are synonyms for the single creative act of ordering chaos, of stabilising becoming.[23]

In contrast to Spinoza's *Deus sive Natura,* Nietzsche introduces *chaos sive Natura* and de-deifies nature. He is aware that the human being needs the groundless other as the infinite source of life. This is why, apart from de-deifying nature, he also strips it of its rational grounding and its commensurability with human cognitive faculties. For Nietzsche, the inherent self-generative character of nature is the artless art of nature, to which he opposes all-too-artful human art. Nietzsche's objective is to recover the innocence of nature's artlessness, of its natural, unconscious art, as an infinite potential for human creativity. Humanity needs to be re-naturalised,

[22] Babich, 'Nietzsche's Chaos Sive Natura', 227–228. In Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche, argues Babich, chaos is taken in its contemporary sense as impotent confusion. Indeed, Heidegger does say that Nietzsche understands the word chaos not in the primordial Greek sense, but in the later and in particular modern sense. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche,* ed. David Farrell Krell (New York: HarperCollins, 1982), Vol. III, 77. However, Heidegger adds that chaos, for Nietzsche, does not mean 'a turbulent jumble'. 'Rather, it means the concealment of unmastered richness in the becoming and streaming of the world as a whole'. Ibid., 80. Therefore, while it is true that Heidegger does not see a self-generative power in Nietzsche's chaos, it is not entirely correct to say that he identifies chaos with impotent confusion. Emmanuel Falque confirms this, writing that chaos is not a disorder in contrast to cosmos. Chaos, in Falque's words, is where we come from. Emmanuel Falque, *The Wedding Feast of the Lamb,* trans. George Hughes (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016), 16.

[23] Jean Granier, 'Nietzshe's Conception of Chaos', *The New Nietzsche*, ed. David B. Allison, (Cambridge, London: The MIT Press, 1985), 138–139. For Nietzsche's Dionysius, life justifies and affirms suffering, while from the Christian perspective suffering accuses life and makes of it something that needs to be justified. Deleuze, *Nietzsche et la philosophie,* 16–17.

but this is possible only via de-humanised nature, which is redeemed to its chaos.[24] Nietzsche's chaos is less a lack of order than an excess and impossible abundance.[25]

While the human needs re-naturalisation, chaos is still intrinsic to his nature because he is a part of that nature. The human is a part of nature and yet 'outside' of it. But also, nature is part of the human and 'outside' of him. This is the paradox of Nietzsche's dialectics. Once we approach nature as chaos, we can create *ex nihilo* out of its impossible abundance. To be human means to find it impossible to accept any form of givenness. The human, for Nietzsche, is a liar by nature; he is by nature an artist who is opposed to the scientific or theistic 'truth' of the cosmos. The artist is the one who flees from 'truth', and the one who violates reality.[26] Nietzsche's original idea is 'to take what we need from [nature], to dream above and beyond the human'. And not only above the human; we should also be able to go beyond nature. 'Something more grandiose than the storm, and the mountain range, and the sea should arise—and yet born of humanity!'[27]

With his idea of inexhaustible chaos, Nietzsche re-inaugurates the question of the power of being to the Western philosophy. After Nietzsche, there was no returning to the old metaphysics. One could either follow his path in rejecting lifeless divinity or create a radical paradigm shift in our understanding of God.

Freedom 'outside' of God

We recall that ontological freedom is about absolute ontological otherness. To be free means to be utterly unique. Etienne Gilson stated that *to be* is *to act*, and *to act* is *to be*,[28] to which we add that *to act* is *to create*. Action must amount to creation; it must have ontological consequences.

The 'terrifying ontological ultimacy'[29] of the human person requires the actualisation of our uniqueness in our creative acts. I am unique only insofar as the result of my actions is also unique. Unique, in this case, means that what I create is an absolute newness in being. There is *more* being after my acts than there was before. Following the logic of ontological ultimacy, Zizioulas concludes that the authentic person must be *uncreated*, that is, unbounded by any 'necessity,' including God.[30] It follows that we can actualise our 'uncreatedness' only if we can create out

[24] Babich, 'Nietzsche's Chaos Sive Natura', 235.
[25] Babich, 'Nietzsche's Chaos Sive Natura', 242.
[26] KSA, XIII, 193.
[27] KSA, X, 415.
[28] Etienne Gilson, *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy*, trans. A.H.C. Downes (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009), 94. Charles Hartshorne entertains similar idea: 'To be is to act; to be individual is to act individually, that is, as not fully determined by another individual or set of individuals.' *Omnipotence and Other Theological Mistakes* (Albany: State University of New York, 1984), 21.
[29] CO, 235.
[30] 30 BC, 43. Since he does not envisage uncreated freedom, Zizioulas will have to admit that the human person cannot be 'uncreated', that is, it is impossible to say that the person is not determined. Deter-

of uncreated freedom. Uniqueness is impossible without uncreated freedom. John P. Manoussakis maintains that 'the real problem appears to be located in our inability *to imagine freedom prior to existence.* We have to imagine (no matter how unthinkable this is) a God who not only is free in His existence but also a God who is free *from* and *before* His existence!'[31] Berdyaev did not shun away from thinking the 'unthinkable,' and he argued that 'freedom is the power to create out of nothing'.[32] The 'nothing' from this definition does not imply that we create without a medium, but that we create from a potency or undetermined freedom before being.

Potency and non-being

Potency is always a kind of trace of non-being within Being.[33] To build a new paradigm of God, to inaugurate God as the *posse,* we need to introduce non-being to the divine being. As Paul Tillich claimed,

> If God is called the living God, if he is the ground of the creative processes of life, if history has significance for him, if there is no contrary principle in addition to him which could account for evil and sin, how can one avoid positing dialectical negativity in God himself? Such questions have forced theologians to relate non-being dialectically to being-itself and consequently to God. Boehme's *Ungrund*, Schelling's 'first potency,' Hegel's 'antithesis,' the 'contingent' and the 'given' in God in recent theism, Berdyaev's 'meonic freedom'—all are examples of the problem of dialectical non-being exerting the influence of the Christian doctrine of God.[34]

This kind of reasoning prompted Berdyaev to borrow the concept of the *Ungrund* from Jacob Böhme (1571–1624), whom he regarded as the 'greatest of all mystics'.[35] According to Berdyaev, Böhme was 'the first in the history of human thought [who] has made freedom [i.e., *posse*] the first foundation of being [:] freedom is to him deeper and more primary than all being, deeper and more primary than God himself'.[36] According to the German mystic, the *Ungrund* dwells deeper than God; it is the Godhead 'prior' to God. The *Ungrund* is 'the uncausable and uncaused … an

mination, however, precludes uniqueness, without which the person is inconceivable.

[31] John P. Manoussakis, 'From Exodus to Eschaton: On the God Who May Be' *Modern Theology* 18.1 (2002): 98. Emphasis added.

[32] MCA, 144–46. ST, 179.

[33] George Pattison, *God and Being; An Inquiry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 295.

[34] ST, 210.

[35] Nikolai Berdyaev, *Dream and Reality* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1950) (DR), 179. *Samopoznanie* (SP) (Moskva: Hranitel, 2007), 220.

[36] Nikolai Berdyaev, 'Ungrund and Freedom' in Jacob Boehme, *Six Theosophic Points and Other Writings* (Michigan: Ann Arbor Paperbacks, 1958), page xxiii.

eternal nothingness, and the cause of an eternal beginning'.[37] The *Ungrund* is nothing craving for something, similar to Nietzsche's will to power. Böhme goes beyond the confines of Greek thought and starts a new epoch in the history of human thought.[38]

Although Böhme was the first to make freedom primary to God, commencing a whole new epoch, Berdyaev was not entirely satisfied with Böhme's ground-breaking theory. Berdyaev felt he needed to introduce a seemingly minor and yet fundamental amendment. 'According to Böhme', explains Berdyaev, 'this freedom is in God; it is the inmost mysterious principle of divine life; whereas I conceived it to be outside of God'.[39]

If freedom is 'in' God, this implies that freedom is created and given to us by God. But God cannot give what he does not have, that is, he cannot give something that is ultimately different from him. God can give only what he possesses. To manifest his potency by creating his absolute ontological other, the person capable of broadening his being, God would need to have something he does not have. Let us, therefore, ask a question, seemingly mere sophistry: How can God have something that he does not have? Berdyaev's answer to this question is probably his most important contribution to the history of philosophy.

How can it be that there is something that God does not have, something 'outside' of him? God's 'external', to provide absolute ontological otherness, cannot be the privation of being; it could not be the absolute non-being (*οὐκ ὄν*) of Christian theology. It must have full ontological reality. 'If *ex nihilo* meant the absolute negation of being, it could not be the origin of the creature', noted Tillich. Creatureliness entails non-being, but it is more than non-being since it carries in itself the power of being.[40]

The issue, therefore, is the ontological status of the '*nihil*'.[41] Can there be something 'outside' of God with uncompromised ontological status? Pondering the question of evil, Paul Ricoeur seems to be admitting such an assumption: 'It is necessary to think of a nothingness hostile to God, a nothingness not only of deficiency and privation but of corruption and destruction'.[42]

Nicolas of Cusa rejected the classical metaphysical view about the possible as secondary and derivative to the actual. For Cusanus, absolute possibility co-exists with actuality in a co-eternal union. This is Cusanus' idea of *possest,* of the union of *posse* and *esse.* But the coexistence of *posse* and *esse* leads Cusa to the conclusion that everything that exists already exists enfolded in God. If the possibility-to-be exists, argues Cusanus, then all things are already actualised, and nothing remains

[37] Cited by Berdyaev in *Spirit and Reality* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939), 130.
[38] BE, 18.
[39] DR, 99. SP, 124.
[40] ST, 281.
[41] Gavin Hyman, 'Augustine on the Nihil: An Interrogation,' *Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory* 9.1 (2008): 39.
[42] Ricoeur, 60.

outside of it. Since there is nothing other than God, it follows that anything *different* from him is already contained in him, ceasing to be different. Drawing from his initial premise about the coexistence of possibility and actuality, Cusanus necessarily concludes that there cannot be otherness in God, for he is before non-being. If God were posterior to non-being, he would have been not Creator but creature. Consequently, God does not create *ex nihilo* but from himself.[43] The actuality side overrides potentiality. Pure actuality, or actuality free from any element of potentiality, is not alive. 'Life includes the separation of potentiality and actuality. The nature of life is actualisation, not actuality. The God who is *actus purus* is not the living God'. Tillich stresses that, insofar as God is a living God, two elements in him must remain in tension.[44] This is a theological schema in which God and the '*nihil*' become opposites, and it is more radical than the one in which God domesticates the '*nihil*.' The '*nihil*', in a sense, becomes God's rival.[45]

We have defined onto-theology as the failure to understand human freedom from the ontological perspective. Now we can add that onto-theological is the concept of God that does not permit the ontological status of the dialectical non-being. As long as we endorse that the '*nihil*' is the absolute non-being, we cannot overcome God as *actus purus*. Only if there is something both *outside* of God and *in* God can God create something that is not him. What could be concurrently outside of God and in God? If we understand uncreated freedom as Godhead or divine nature, we could think of freedom as both 'in' and 'outside' of God. Divine nature is external to God in the sense that God emerges from it rather than being its creator. In contrast to Cusanus, God creates not from himself but from his nature, which allows him to create ultimate otherness. Nature always remains outside God, and it can never be domesticated. But nature is at the same time 'in'; it is God's infinite power, without which he could not be the living God.

It was because he insisted on the externality of non-being, on the maximum tension between the divine polarities, that Berdyaev managed to produce the image of the living God. Life implies that one *has* something that one *does not have*. It is the absolute otherness of the non-being that generates the tension in the form of longing for what is radically different from us. We desire genuinely only what we do not have, but the power of our *eros* transforms the external into the internal, without ever being able to abolish the difference. *Diaphora*, or difference, Maximus the Confessor reminds us, is a primary ontological characteristic and it does not imply *diairesis* or separation.[46] But *diaphora* as the hypostatic ontological otherness in the

[43] GWMB, 103–4.
[44] ST, 272–73.
[45] Hyman, 'Augustine on the Nihil', 41, 48–49.
[46] 'For Maximus, *diaphora* is an ontological characteristic because each being has its *logos* which gives it its particular identity, without which it would cease to be itself and thus to be at all. Without *diaphora* there is no being, for there is no being apart from beings.' This ontology is also applicable to Trinitarian theology. Zizioulas, CO, 22–23, 23 n29.

Trinity or the particularity of the created is inconceivable without the freedom that is before and outside of every form of Being. Berdyaev suggested an image of God as the union of the inexhaustible and eternal ontological difference, which might also affect our understanding of the nature of the world. This model still awaits severe philosophical appraisal.

Revolution, Exile and the Decline of Russian Religious Thought

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Russian religious thought originated in the mid-nineteenth century and reached an apogee in the decades preceding World War I and the Russian Revolution of 1917, a movement known as the Russian religious renaissance. Almost all the leading figures of the religious renaissance went into exile, and several, especially Nicolas Berdyaev and Sergius Bulgakov, produced their most significant works in the years prior to World War II. But after the war, the mode of philosophical and theological reflection that they represented declined rapidly. This article advances five principal reasons for this decline: the exile situation itself; the difficulty in communicating the major themes of Russian religious thought beyond the Russian context; fundamental problems in religious thought; the passing of generations; and the emergence of an alternative, more patristically- and liturgically-based theology. Despite the decline of religious thought, many of its basic ideas have carried forward into the neopatristic mode of Orthodox theology.

Russian Religious Thought on the Eve of the Russian Revolution

In the decade preceding the Russian Revolution of 1918, the Russian religious renaissance[1] had reached a certain maturity, marked by several major publications. The collective book *Vekhi* (*Signposts*) (1909) contains contributions by seven leading representatives of the Russian religious renaissance, including four former Marxist philosophers who had returned to Christianity: Nicolas Berdyaev (1874–1948), Sergius Bulgakov (1871–1944), Simeon Frank (1877–1954), and Peter Struve (1870–1944).[2] In the words of Simeon Frank, *Vekhi* 'asserted the necessity of a religious foundation for any consistent philosophy of life, and at the same time sharply criticised the revolutionary and maximalist tendencies of the radically-minded Russian intelligent-

[1] The classic study, still unparalleled, of the Russian religious renaissance is Nicolas Zernov, *The Russian Religious Renaissance of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963).

[2] There are two English translations of *Vekhi*: Boris Shragin and Albert Todd, eds, *Landmarks: A Collection of Essays on the Russian Intelligentsia, 1909*, trans. Marian Schwartz (New York: Karz Howard, 1977); and Marshall S. Shatz and Judith E. Zimmerman, trans. and eds, Vekhi: *Landmarks: A Collection of Articles about the Russian Intelligentsia* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1994). For a summary of the Vekhi essays, see Zernov, *The Russian Religious Renaissance*, 111–130; and Christopher Read, *Religion, Revolution and the Russian Intelligentsia, 1900–1912: The Vekhi Debate and Its Intellectual Background* (London: Macmillan, 1979), 106–120.

sia.'[3] The book prophetically warned the intelligentsia of the dangers of rigid Marxist and revolutionary philosophies which had scant regard for freedom in their quest for power. The almost universally negative reaction to *Vekhi* showed that its authors had struck a vital nerve.

Other major landmarks of Russian religious thought prior to the revolution and exile include Pavel Florensky's challenging presentation of Orthodox philosophy and theology, *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth* (1914),[4] and Sergius Bulgakov's first properly theological book, *The Unfading Light* (1917).[5] One of the last manifestations of the Christian intelligentsia in Russia was a collection of essays under the title *Out of the Depths* (1918) (*Iz glibiny*, *De profundis*, from Psalm 21/22), by eleven prominent non-Marxist intellectuals, including five of those who had contributed to *Vekhi* in 1909, dealing with the causes and nature of the revolution.[6] This symposium was a bitter reproach over the consequence of ignoring the message of *Vekhi*. The intelligentsia's continued pursuit of radicalism and revolutionary maximalism was now bearing fruit in the triumph of Bolshevism, marked by the suppression of all forms of dissidence from Marxist ideology and communist rule.

The Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917 and the subsequent triumph of the Red Army in the civil war put an end to debate about the future of Russia. The communist system became rapidly entrenched, radically transforming the Russian economic, political, social, and religious landscape. Between one and two million Russians fled abroad, primarily to neighbouring Eastern European countries, to Western Europe, and to the Far East, especially China. They included not only most of the nobility, senior officials in the imperial bureaucracy, and political opponents of the Bolsheviks, but also much of the country's cultural, intellectual, and religious elites, as well as many demobilised soldiers from the defeated White armies. Most of the leading figures of the Russian religious renaissance fled or were expulsed from the Soviet Union. The inter-war period was a remarkable time of religious and intellectual flowering within the exile Russian community, especially in religious thought. But after World War II, religious philosophy went into rapid decline as the cutting edge of Orthodox thought turned more patristic- and liturgically-based theologies into what is broadly termed neopatristic theology or the neopatristic synthesis.

In the remainder of this paper, I will consider the main causes for the decline of Russian religious thought after World War II under five headings, which, admittedly, overlap somewhat: the exile situation; the difficulty in communicating the

[3] Simeon Frank, *A Biography of P.B. Struve* (New York: Chekhov Publishing House, 1956), 82; translation in Zernov, *The Russian Religious Renaissance*, 111.

[4] Pavel Florensky, *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth: An Essay in Orthodox Theodicy in Twelve Letters* (1914), trans. Boris Jakim (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).

[5] Sergius Bulgakov, *The Unfading Light: Contemplations and Speculations* (1917), trans. T. Allan Smith (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012).

[6] William Woehrlin, trans. and ed., *Out Of the Depths (De Profundis): A Collection of Articles on the Russian Revolution* (Irvine, CA: Charles Schlacks, 1986). See account in Zernov, *The Russian Religious Renaissance*, 207–209.

major themes of Russian religious thought beyond the Russian context; fundamental problems in religious philosophy; the passing of generations; and emerging alternatives.

The Exile Situation

After the Bolshevik triumph in the civil war, the Communists could not tolerate the existence of independent thinking in the new Soviet Union. They moved to eliminate or silence all sources of possible dissent or opposition, especially from the non-Marxist intelligentsia who had not already gone into voluntary exile. In August 1922, Lenin ordered the arrest and expulsion from the Soviet Union of a large number of Russian intellectuals who did not support the Bolsheviks. The best estimate of the number actually banished from the Soviet Union is about 80, together with their immediate families, while many others were sent into internal exile.[7] Among those deported were several leading members of the Russian religious renaissance, notably Nicolas Berdyaev, Sergius Bulgakov, Simeon Frank, and Nicolas Lossky (1870–1965). The one leading philosopher-theologian who was not expelled and chose to stay in Russia was Fr Pavel Florensky (1882–1937), who was imprisoned and eventually executed in 1937.

Many of the Russian expatriates in Western Europe saw the large exile community as the repository of the true Russia, which had been usurped by the Bolsheviks. The expatriates felt that 'Russia Abroad',[8] as it was known in the inter-war period, had a responsibility to preserve and to further authentic Russian culture and values, centred in three areas in particular: Orthodoxy, culture, and the Russian language. The exiles formed associations of all sorts, organised Russian schools and publications, and attempted to minimise assimilation into host societies. The written word—newspapers, journals of all sorts, books—was the principal means of communication and coherence among the widely dispersed expatriate communities.

Initially, the expatriates believed that the communist regime would soon collapse and that they could return to assume their rightful place in Russian society and politics. But as the years went by and the Soviets consolidated their grip over the country, it became increasingly evident that what was first seen as a temporary exile was becoming permanent. World War II put an end to many expatriate initiatives and publications and any remaining dreams of return to a Russia freed of communism. After the war, the 'first wave' of emigrants fleeing the Bolshevik triumph was joined by refugees escaping from the conflict and from oppression under communist rule, and the centre of Russian emigrant life shifted from Europe to the United States.

[7] Stuart Finkel, *On the Ideological Front: The Russian Intelligentsia and the Making of the Soviet Public Sphere* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 9.

[8] The title of a book by Marc Raeff, *Russia Abroad: A Cultural History of the Russian Emigration, 1919–1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

Physical return to Soviet Russia was impossible for most and only a 'metaphysical return'—by means of publications and, after World War II, radio broadcasts—could be envisaged. But the Soviets prevented any significant dissimulation of emigrant thinking in the Soviet Union until after the fall of communism.

Many of the émigrés initially arrived in Constantinople, Sofia and Belgrade, but few stayed long in Constantinople, while Sofia and Belgrade remained important émigré centres in the inter-war years, especially for more conservative political and ecclesiastical groups. Berlin and Prague quickly became the principal centres of the exiled Russian intelligentsia. In Berlin, Nicolas Berdyaev was instrumental in forming the Russian Religious Philosophical Academy as a successor to his Free Spiritual Academy in Moscow. With increasing economic problems in Germany, many of those who went initially to Berlin moved on, especially to Prague or to Paris. In Prague, Russian intellectuals founded a short-lived but influential Russian Law Faculty and other educational bodies. But most of the Christian intelligentsia soon departed for Paris, especially after the founding of the Saint Sergius Theological Institute in 1925.

The initial faculty of Saint Sergius included the best minds of Russian theology in exile. Fr Sergius Bulgakov was invited to head the school and he became Professor of Dogmatic Theology. Once in exile, many religious intellectuals of the pre-revolutionary era returned to the Orthodox Church, joining those who had returned to the Church prior to World War I. But some stood apart from the Church, notably those associated with the 'new religious consciousness' movement, such as Dimitri Merezhkovsky (1865–1941) and his wife Zinaida Gippius (1869–1945).

One of the main reasons for the decline of the type of philosophical-theological thought represented by the leaders of the religious renaissance was precisely its exile situation. Cut off from its roots in Russia, this mode of thought and its native social, cultural and political context were simply too foreign in the setting of intellectual, literary, and personal exile in which the leaders of the religious renaissance found themselves after 1920. The brilliant but exotic flower of Russian religious thought could not bloom for long when it was transplanted unto a far-away soil. Religious philosophy developed in the intellectual ferment of the late imperial regime and it presented Christian perspectives on the future of Russia. This context was no longer relevant in exile. In exile, the Christian intellectuals, despite all their intellectual and cultural achievements, were a poor social, cultural, and religious minority in countries dominated by Western culture and Western Christianity.

Russian Religious Thought in the West

Few of the older generation of Russian thinkers really adapted themselves to the exile situation in which they found themselves; Berdyaev, by far and away the most cosmopolitan of the group, was an exception. Most of the Russian thinkers in exile

attempted to recreate as best they could the cultural and intellectual environment which they had known in Russia. A sign of this was that virtually all of the older generation of the intelligentsia wrote their works in Russian, and their writings were initially published by Russian publishing houses, especially YMCA-Press in Paris (despite its name, it published exclusively in Russian until after World War II), and in Russian journals in Western Europe, especially Paris and Berlin.

Many of the exiles viewed their prime audience as the Russian exile community itself, as a stepping-stone to a hoped-for return to Russia or at least an audience in Russia itself. In addition, while many of this generation were familiar with major Western European languages and could speak English, French, and/or German, they were not sufficiently at ease in foreign languages to write major substantive philosophical and theological works. A related indicator of the problem of acculturation of the older generation of theologians was the use of Russian as the language of instruction at the Saint Sergius Institute; it was only in the 1970s that French became the language of instruction.

Initially, few of the works of the Russian theologians published in Paris were translated. The major exception was Berdyaev's writings, which appeared in Western languages shortly after their publication in Russian. It was easier for some of the younger theologians, such as Georges Florovsky (1893–1979), Leon Zander (1893–1964), and Nicolas Zernov (1898–1980), and of course for the 'second generation' theologians such as Paul Evdokimov (1901–1970), Vladimir Lossky (1903–1958) and Alexander Schmemann (1921–1983), to adapt themselves to the culture of their countries of exile and to acquire a better grasp, both spoken and written, of Western languages than the older generation. Many of the members of the younger generation—the children of those exiled—were educated partly or entirely in the West, and they wrote mainly in Western European languages.

It is important to note that there has been no equivalent of Russian religious thought in other major countries of the Orthodox tradition, such as Greece and Romania, or even Serbia and Bulgaria. Even though most of the major works of the Russian religious thinkers have by now been translated into English and French, these thinkers remain, even today, little known in Greece and other Orthodox countries. Their philosophies and theology are typically dismissed summarily, despite some attempts to make them better known, for example in Greece.

Fundamental Problems in Religious Thought

In the exile setting, certain internal weaknesses and inadequacies in the religious philosophical-theological approach to Orthodoxy became more evident, especially its inadequate grounding in patristic theology, the Byzantine liturgical tradition, Church history, and Orthodox spirituality, and, on the other hand, its excessive reliance on key ideas of modern philosophy, especially German idealism.

As case studies, we can look at the two most prominent Russian religious thinkers in exile, Nicolas Berdyaev and Sergius Bulgakov. Nicolas Berdyaev began his exile in Berlin in late 1922 but quickly moved to Paris, where he remained until his death in 1948. During his Parisian years, he wrote most of the books for which he became well known.[9] Berdyaev also played a key role in promoting the intellectual pursuits of his companions in exile as editor and publisher of works by the leading Russian religious, literary, philosophical, and theological exiles in the 1920s and 1930s. He notably directed the important publishing house YMCA-Press (named for its principal financial backer, the American branch of the YMCA), and he edited the journal *Put'* (The Way), the most influential periodical of the exiled Russian intelligentsia between 1925 and the last of its 61 issues in March 1940.[10]

Berdyaev's major philosophical-theological themes are the primal significance of the human person and its correlates, freedom and creativity; Russian thought; and analysis of the Russian revolution, Marxism, and modernity. Berdyaev's broad spiritual and intellectual culture and his Christian-inspired but not always explicitly Christian thinking on human existence and the modern world touched sensitive chords in European circles from the late 1930s until about the 1960s. During this period he was by far the most well known modern Orthodox religious-philosophical thinker, but his popularity diminished considerably in the last decades of the twentieth century. Among the Orthodox he was more often considered an idiosyncratic figure, only remotely connected with mainstream Orthodoxy. Undoubtedly Berdyaev's failure to see in the Church Fathers the true source of Christian philosophy, together with a perception that he was an existentialist philosopher,[11] contributed to the decline of his star in the late twentieth century.

By the late 1920s, Fr Sergius Bulgakov was the leading representative of the Russian religious renaissance. He was widely respected both in the Russian exile community and among non-Orthodox theologians and church leaders But in the mid-1930s, Bulgakov became embroiled in two important theological controversies, one over his teachings on Sophia or Divine Wisdom (sophiology), and the other concerning his proposal for intercommunion with Anglicans.

Bulgakov developed the idea of Sophia into an integrated but complex theology, reflected in his major theological works. Bulgakov's sophiology raised numerous questions and protests, which culminated in the great sophiological controversy

[9] These include *The Meaning of History* (1923); The End of Our Time (The New Middle Ages) (1924); Freedom and the Spirit (1928); The Destiny of Man (1931); Christianity and Class War (1931); The Fate of Man in the Modern World (1934); The Origin of Russian Communism (1937); Slavery and Freedom (1939); The Russian Idea (1946); Spirit and Reality (1946); The Realm of Spirit and the Realm of Caesar (1949); and The Divine and the Human (1949). All are published in English translation, many in the 1930s, the remainder in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

[10] See the detailed study by Antoine Arjakovsky, *The Way: Religious Thinkers of the Russian Emigration in Paris and Their Journal,* trans. Jerry Ryan (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013).

[11] See Andrew Louth, *Modern Orthodox Thinkers: From the Philokalia to the Present* (London: SPCK, 2015), 64–65.

of 1935–1936.[12] More than any other idea of Russian religious philosophy, sophiology provoked a profound division among exiled Russian theologians. Nicolas Berdyaev, for one, did not adhere to sophiology: 'I do not myself share the views of the sophiological school'.[13] But Berdyaev praises sophiology for 'an indication of creative thought in Russian Orthodoxy', and he defends Bulgakov's 'line of thought in Orthodoxy' and his 'statement of new problems'.[14]

In the mid-1930s, Bulgakov's teachings on Sophia were condemned by two different and mutually hostile factions of the Russian Orthodox Church: Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) (1867–1944), the self-appointed 'guardian of the patriarchal throne' of the Patriarchate of Moscow; and the 'Karlovtsy Synod' of Russian bishops abroad, which became the Russian Orthodox Church outside of Russia (ROCOR).

The 1930s phase of the dispute was set in motion by a report on Bulgakov's sophiology prepared for the Moscow Patriarchate by the young theologian Vladimir Lossky and Alexis Stavrovsky (1905–1972), who had attended the Saint Sergius Institute, but did not complete his studies. In general terms, the Lossky-Stavrovsky report concluded that Bulgakov's teaching on Sophia, as expounded notably in Bulgakov's book *The Lamb of God* (1933), was pantheist, removing distinctions between God and creation. In response, Metropolitan Sergius issued a decree (*ukaz*) on 24 August 1935, which describes Bulgakov's teaching as 'an eccentric and arbitrary (*svoeobraznym i proisvolnym*) sophianic interpretation, frequently perverting the dogmas of the Orthodox faith', and finds that some of its possible conclusions may be 'even dangerous for spiritual life' and that the teaching is 'foreign' to the Orthodox Church. But the *ukaz* stops short of describing Bulgakov's doctrines as

[12] The secondary literature on the Sophia dispute is considerable even in the absence of a full-length monograph. See Arjakovsky, *The Way*, especially 384–402; Antoine Arjakovsky, *Essai sur le père Serge Boulgakov* (Paris: Parole et Silence, 2006); Élisabeth Behr-Sigel, 'La sophiologie du père Serge Boulgakov' (1939), *Le Messager orthodoxe* 57 (1972): 21–48; Paul Evdokimov, *Le Christ dans la pensée russe* (Paris: Le Cerf, 1970); Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1976), Ch. 3, 'God in Trinity'; Aidan Nichols, *Light from the East: Authors and Themes in Orthodox Theology* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1995), Ch. IV, 'Sergei Bulgakov and Sophiology'; Paul Valliere, *Modern Russian Theology: Bukharev, Soloviev, Bulgakov: Orthodox Theology in a New Key* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 287–289; Zernov, *The Russian Religious Renaissance*, Ch. 11, 'The Divine Wisdom'. See also the special issue of St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly devoted to Sergius Bulgakov (49, 1–2, 2005), especially the articles by Brandon Gallaher and Irina Kukota, Bryn Geffert and Alexis Klimoff.

[13] Nicolas Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea,* trans. R.M. French (New York: Macmillan, 1948), 241. Berdyaev had written more emphatically earlier: 'I myself did not stand in the Platonic-sophiological line of Russian religious philosophy. I am not a Platonist and not a sophiologist, unlike V. Soloviev, unlike P. Florensky, unlike Fr Bulgakov'. Nicolas Berdyaev, 'The Russian Spiritual Renaissance of the Beginning of the XXth Century and the Journal Put' (For the Tenth Anniversary of Put')', Put' 49 (1935) (in Russian). Translation: Steven Janos <www.chebucto.ns.ca/Philosophy/Sui-Generis/Berdyaev/essays/rsr.htm> (13.03.2017).

[14] Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea*, 241.

heretical.[15] The ROCOR Bishops' Council had no such qualms and in October 1935 flatly condemned Bulgakov's teachings on Sophia as heretical.[16]

In 1936, Vladimir Lossky expanded his critique of Bulgakov's teachings in a small book which sets out Lossky's theological objections to Bulgakov's sophiology.[17] The book goes on to attack other aspects of Bulgakov's theology, especially his Trinitarian theology and his Christology, his use of gender analogies in theology, his concept of tradition and pan-human ecclesiology, the idea of Godmanhood, and the use of historical analogies and the importance of dogma in the Church. Lossky's book is not exactly a 'manifesto' for a new approach to theology, yet it challenges many aspects of Bulgakov's theology.

Ecclesiastical politics played a major and even determining role in the condemnation of Bulgakov's teaching on Sophia. Bulgakov and the Saint Sergius Institute belonged to the third Russian jurisdiction, headed by Metropolitan Evlogy (Georgievsky) (1868–1946), who was appointed by the saintly Patriarch Tikhon (Bellavin) (1865–1925) in 1922 to head the Russian Church in Western Europe. Evlogy faced an impossible situation. He tried to be faithful to the suffering Church in Russia by remaining within the Moscow Patriarchate, but the compromises of Metropolitan Sergius with the Bolsheviks, especially after 1927, made this increasingly difficult. At the other extreme, ROCOR denounced the 'Red Church' as captured by the Communists. Metropolitan Evlogy was caught in the crossfire and his position in the Moscow Patriarchate became increasingly untenable. In 1930, Metropolitan Sergius attempted to remove Evlogy for having participated in ecumenical prayer services for the suffering Church in Russia and early in 1931 Evlogy placed himself and his jurisdiction under the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.[18]

Thus the condemnations of Bulgakov's theology in the mid-1930s were a convenient way for the other two Russian jurisdictions to embarrass and humiliate Evlogy by attacking his protégé, Fr Sergius Bulgakov. Evlogy defended Bulgakov but felt obliged to appoint a commission to examine Bulgakov's controversial teachings. The commission basically found that Bulgakov's teachings were not heretical but required clarification on a number of points.[19] In the end, Bulgakov retained his

[15] Cited in Paul Anderson, 'Memorandum on Ukaz Concerning the Rev. Sergius Bulgakoff' (Paris: October 30, 1935), in 'Memoranda Regarding the Sophiological Controversy', Archives of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius <www.sobornost.org/Archives_Bulgakov-Sophia.pdf> (07.11.2016).

[16] 'A Decision of the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad of 17/30 October 1935 Concerning the New Teaching of Archpriest Sergei Bulgakov on Sophia, the Wisdom of God'. Cited in Ludmila Perepiolkina, *Ecumenism: A Path to Perdition* (St. Petersburg: Self-published with Archimandrite Alexei (Makrinov), 1999). <http://ecumenizm.tripod.com/ECUMENIZM/id17.html > (07.11.2016).

[17] Vladimir Lossky, *Spor o Sofii: Dokladnaia Zapiska prot. S. Bulgakova i smysl ukaza Moskovskoi Patriarkhii* (Paris, 1936). The book was reprinted in Russia (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Sviato-Vladimirskogo Bratstva, 1996), but no translation in English has been published, although there is an unpublished translation by William Kevin Fisher.

[18] See Paul Ladouceur, 'On Ecumenoclasm: Anti-Ecumenical Theology in Orthodoxy', *Saint Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 61.3 (2017): 323–355.

[19] Translation of the Reports and discussion in Bryn Geffert, 'The Charges of Heresy against Sergius

chair of dogmatic theology at the Saint Sergius Institute, with the stipulation that he refrain from teaching the Sophia doctrine in his classes. There was no publication ban and Bulgakov continued to write about sophiology.

The *intercommunion quarrel* involved two distinct approaches to Orthodox involvement in ecumenism, represented by Sergius Bulgakov and Georges Florovsky. Both were deeply committed to ecumenism but had different perspectives on Orthodox involvement in ecumenical endeavours. The intercommunion controversy took place in the context of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, founded to promote dialogue and rapprochement between the Anglican and Orthodox churches. Although Bulgakov was the senior Orthodox representative in the Fellowship in the 1920s and early 1930s, Florovsky soon became as prominent as Bulgakov, thanks to his learning, eloquence, personal charm, and a good command of English. The Anglicans greatly respected Bulgakov, but they never warmed to his speculative theology, especially sophiology, and were more attracted by Florovsky's biblical and patristic orientation.

After six years of meetings between Anglicans and Orthodox, Bulgakov advanced a novel and audacious proposal for 'partial intercommunion' in the context of meetings of the Fellowship: with the blessing of Anglican and Orthodox bishops, Anglicans would take communion at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy by Orthodox clergy and vice versa. Bulgakov's proposal received the support of the 'modernist' group among the Russians, notably Nicolas Berdyaev, George Fedotov, Anthony Kartashev, Leon Zander, Nicolas Zernov, and, apparently, Metropolitan Evlogy, Bulgakov's ecclesiastical superior, while the 'traditionalists', especially Georges Florovsky and Nicholas Arseniev (1888–1977), opposed it.[20] There was opposition on the Anglican side as well, but in the end the Anglican bishops gave their approval.

Behind Florovsky's specific critiques of the proposal was his conviction that the only basis of Church unity lay in global dogmatic agreement. Bulgakov, thought Florovsky, was playing on the positive psychological tone of the Fellowship meetings to seek support for his proposal, to the detriment of dogmatic and canonical norms.[21] For Florovsky, full dogmatic agreement must take precedence over the experience of unity before the altar, over common prayer shared in the Fellowship; 'unity in truth' (that is, dogma) and canonical authority are more important than 'unity in love' and the shared experience of worship. Thus for Florovsky, since significant dogmatic

Bulgakov: The Majority and Minority Reports of Evlogii's Commission and the Final Report of the Bishops' Conference', *Saint Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 49.1–2 (2005): 47–66.

[20] Arjakovsky, *The Way: Religious Thinkers of the Russian Emigration*, 368–371; Sergei V. Nikolaev, 'Church and Reunion in the Theology of Sergii Bulgakov and Georges Florovsky' (Ph.D. Thesis, Southern Methodist University, 2007) (Ann Arbor MI: ProQuest, 2008), 250–252.

[21] See Georges Florovsky, 'Confessional Loyalty in the Ecumenical Movement' (1950), and 'Letter to William Nicholls' (1950), in Brandon Gallaher and Paul Ladouceur, eds, *The Patristic Witness of Georges Florovsky: Essential Theological Writings* (London: Bloomsbury/T&T Clark, forthcoming 2018).

differences separate the Orthodox and Anglican churches, there can be no question of intercommunion.

The Fellowship debated Bulgakov's proposal for two years after the 1933 conference. Faced with Orthodox opposition and Anglican hesitations, Bulgakov retreated. At the 1933 Fellowship conference, Walter Frere (1863–1938), Bishop of Truro and one of the leading Anglican participants in the Fellowship, stated that there already existed 'spiritual communion at our Eucharists' and 'common worship and a very real, though not fully sacramental, communion with each other'.[22] In an article in the Fellowship's journal *Sobornost* in September 1935, the Anglican divine Charles S. Gillett suggested that the Anglicans should make a 'spiritual communion' during the celebration of the Orthodox liturgy, and vice versa, as a solemn expression 'of a common contrition, a common purpose and a common eagerness for the fulfilment of that common purpose in all its sacramental completeness'.[23] In 1935, Bulgakov recognised that his proposal for intercommunion had floundered: 'Opinion was sharply divided, but I would say that, on the whole, conviction prevailed (a conviction which sprang not so much from the voice of a loving heart, as from the arguments of 'sober reason'!) that the time was not yet ripe for my suggestion.'[24] Bulgakov rallied to the minimalist notion of 'spiritual intercommunion' among the Anglicans and the Orthodox, which represented Florovsky's view.

The clash over intercommunion was an encounter between two contrasting Orthodox visions of ecumenism. The ecumenical theology of Fr Sergius Bulgakov was mystical, sacramental, charismatic, prophetic, and eschatological, whereas Florovsky's was dogmatic, historical, patristic, and exclusive.[25]

These two public theological controversies, with Bulgakov at the centre of each, highlighted important weaknesses in Russian religious thought, now exposed to a much wider range of scrutiny than during its heyday in the decades prior to World War I and the Russian Revolution.

The Passing of Generations

The successors of the leading Russian religious thinkers in exile were not up to the intellectual levels of the older generation. In 1939, Bulgakov contracted a cancer of the throat and had an operation which left him almost unable to speak, although he continued to teach, to write, and to celebrate the Divine Liturgy. Bulgakov died in

[22] Walter Frere, in 'The Nature of Catholic Action', *Sobornost* 2.3 (1935): 24.

[23] C.S. *Gillett,* 'Intercommunion', *Sobornost* 2.3 (1935): 22-23. Rev. Charles S. Gillett is not to be confused with Fr Lev Gillet (1893–1980), a French Orthodox priest also very active in the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius.

[24] Sergius Bulgakov, 'Spiritual Intercommunion', *Sobornost* 4 (1935): 3; reprinted in Father Sergius Bulgakov 1871–1944: A Collection of Articles (Oxford: Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, 1969), 29.

[25] See Paul Ladouceur, 'Two Orthodox Visions of Ecumenism: Sergei Bulgakov and Georges Florovsky', *Ecumenism* 192–193 (2015): 35–39.

1944. Bulgakov's close followers were unable to maintain his intellectual momentum. Bulgakov's main direct successors were Leon Zander, who was active especially in the ecumenical field; Nicolas Zernov (1898–1980), who taught at Oxford University and was closely associated with the Fellowship of Saint Alban and Saint Sergius; and Constantine Andronikof (1916–1997), professor of liturgical theology at Saint Sergius and dean from 1991 to 1993, and translator of most of Bulgakov's major writings into French.

Paul Evdokimov and Olivier Clément (1921–2009) were not direct successors of Bulgakov, nor followers of sophiology. But they were open to certain interests and ideas of the older generation of the religious renaissance, especially Bulgakov, as well as to the emerging neopatristic approach to theology. Evdokimov studied under Bulgakov at Saint Sergius Institute in the mid-1920s—he was in the first graduating class. Olivier Clément was influenced by reading Nicolas Berdyaev and studied with both Evdokimov and Vladimir Lossky in the 1950s.[26] Evdokimov and Clément, together with a few others such as Nicholas Afanasiev, can be considered 'bridging figures' between Russian religious thought and neopatristic theology.

An Emerging Alternative

The great theological controversies of the mid-1930s over sophiology and intercommunion, with Sergius Bulgakov at the epicentre of each, certainly contributed to the decline of religious philosophy from its apogee prior to the Russian revolution. For many of the younger generation of Russian theologians, especially Georges Florovsky and Vladimir Lossky, the major ideas of religious renaissance—notably all-unity and sophiology, even as grafted, if somewhat artificially, to the Orthodox tradition by as great a genius as Bulgakov—were perceived as too dependent on Western philosophy, too speculative in nature, and too distant from the Orthodox tradition contained in patristic thought, especially the theology of the Greek and Byzantine Fathers. For the younger theologians, the gap between the approach and ideas of the philosopher-theologians and patristic theology was simply too great to satisfy the criterion of faithfulness to Orthodox tradition. They set out to re-establish theology in more direct continuity with the patristic tradition. Signs of this were already evident in the 1930s, focussing initially on the revival of Palamite theology of the divine energies.

The main stimulating factor for the re-emergence of Palamite theology in the 1920s and 1930s was severe criticism of Palamism by several Roman Catholic theologians, notably Martin Jugie (1878–1954).[27] Jugie, writing on Palamas' 'strange

[26] For biographies and studies of Lossky and Evdokimov, see Olivier Clément, *Orient-Occident: Deux Passeurs: Vladimir Lossky et Paul Evdokimov* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1985).

[27] Adrian Fortescue, 'Hesychasm', in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 7 (New York: Robert Appleton, 1910). <www.newadvent.org/cathen/07301a.htm> (19.05.2017); Martin Jugie, 'Palamas Grégoire' and 'Pal-

theology' in the early 1930s, attacked the notions of the divine energies and a real distinction between the divine essence and the divine Persons, other 'erroneous and close to heretical' Palamite theses of uncreated deifying grace, the uncreated gifts of the Holy Spirit, the power and light by which one sees the uncreated glory of God, and the inhabitation of the divine Persons in the soul of the just.[28] Returning to his anti-Byzantine polemics in 1941, Jugie solemnly declared that in any case 'Palamism as a dogma in the Greco-Russian Church is indeed dead', and he doubted that 'the current sympathetic consideration of a few Russian émigrés' would be sufficient to revive it.[29]

For some Orthodox theologians, misrepresentations and biased critiques of Palamas confirmed the urgent necessity of accurately presenting Palamite theology and of reviving Palamism as a living feature in Orthodox thought. Jugie's 1941 diagnosis of the status of Palamite theology in Orthodoxy was not far from the mark, but he vastly underestimated the strength of the Palamite revival already underway in the 1930s.

Georges Florovsky first highlighted the importance of the inter-related themes of apophatism, the energy-essence distinction, and theosis, initially in private letters to Bulgakov as early as 1925, and more substantially in his essay 'Creation and Createdness', first published in 1928.[30] Although not directly relying on Palamas, this article makes extensive use of Palamite theology in its central argument that the fundamental distinction between divine nature and human nature is that between uncreated and created. Several other Orthodox theologians also sought to recover Palamite theology, including Archimandrite Basil Krivoshein (1900–1985) and Fr Dumitru Staniloae.[31] Staniloae's book, *The Life and Teachings of Gregory Palamas* (in Romanian), included translations of extracts of the Palamas' *Triads* and two other tracts.[32]

amite (Controverse)' in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, Vol. 11.2 (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1932), cols. 1735–1776 & 1777–1818; Martin Jugie, 'De Theologia Palamitica', *Theologia Dogmatica Christianorum Orientalium*, Vol. II (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1933), 47–183; Sébastien Guichardan, *Le Problème de la simplicité divine en Orient et en Occident aux XIVe et XVe s.: Grégoire Palamas, Duns Scott, Georges Scholarios* (Lyons: Legendre, 1933).

[28] Jugie, 'Palamas Grégoire', *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, 11.2:1764–1765.

[29] Martin Jugie, *Le Schisme byzantin: Aperçu historique et doctrinal* (Paris: Lethielleux, 1941), 383.

[30] Georges Florovsky, 'Tvar i tvarnost', *Pravoslavnaya mysl*, 1 (Paris, 1928). Translation: 'Creation and Createdness', forthcoming in Gallaher and Ladouceur, eds, *The Patristic Witness of Georges Florovsky*. A shorter version also appeared in French in 1928: 'L'idée de la création dans la philosophie chrétienne', *Logos*, 1 (Romania, 1928); and in English as 'The Idea of Creation in Christian Philosophy', *Eastern Churches Quarterly* 8.3 (1949): 53–77.

[31] Basil Krivoshein, 'The Ascetic and Theological Teaching of Gregory Palamas' (in Russian), *Seminarium Kondakovianum*, *Recueil d'études d'archéologie et histoire de l'art, études byzantines*, VIII (Prague, 1936); in English in *Eastern Churches Quarterly* 3 (1938): 26–33; 71–84; 138–56; 193–214 [reprinted as a monograph in 1954 (London: Geo. E.J. Coldwell) and in 1968]; in German in *Das östliche Christentum* 8 (1939); in French in Basile Krivochéine, *Dieu, l'homme et l'Église. Lecture des Pères* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2010).

[32] Dumitru Staniloae, *Viața și învățătura Sfântului Grigorie Palama cu trei tratate traduse* (Sibiu, Romania, 1938); reprinted in Bucharest in 1993 and 2006. It has not yet (2018) been published in a Western

Vladimir Lossky became interested in apophatism and Palamas early in his theological studies. Lossky drew heavily on the Palamite theology of the divine energies in his ground-breaking *Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, first delivered as lectures in Paris in 1942 and published in 1944.[33] The restoration of Palamite theology in Orthodoxy, often referred to as neo-Palamism, continued after World War II, reaching a high point with the publication in 1959 of translations and studies on Palamite theology by Fr John Meyendorff (1928–1992).[34]

In December 1936, both Sergius Bulgakov and Georges Florovsky represented the Saint Sergius Institute at the First Congress of Orthodox Theologians in Athens. Florovsky delivered two papers: 'Western Influences in Russian Theology'; and 'Patristics and Modern Theology'.[35] The first is a résumé of his monumental study *The Ways of Russian Theology*, published in 1937. The second paper calls for a return to patristic theology as the sole true and permanent source for Orthodox theology. Florovsky advocates the need for a neopatristic theology, which he later called a 'neopatristic synthesis'. Florovsky's paper 'Patristics and Modern Theology' can be considered as a sort of 'neopatristic manifesto'. Vladimir Lossky's book *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* is possibly the most significant and influential book of Orthodox theology in modern times. It is a prime example of a neopatristic approach to theology.

Thus by the time that World War II ended, the basic elements of a neopatristic approach to theology were in place, posing itself as an alternative to Russian religious thought, and to the older academic or school theology, as the dominant strand in Orthodox theology.

Conclusion

The current 'Bulgakovian revival' is due in large part to the excellent English translations of Bulgakov's major works published in the last two decades.[36] But it is mostly limited to academic circles, especially among non-Orthodox. Bulgakov's major theological premise of Divine Wisdom, sophiology, has not generated much

European language.

[33] Vladimir Lossky, *Essai sur la theologie mystique de l'Eglise d'Orient* (Paris: Aubier, 1944); English translation *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (London: J. Clarke, 1957; Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1976).

[34] See John Meyendorff, *A Study of Gregory Palamas* (London: Faith Press, 1964); *St Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974); and *Gregory Palamas: The Triads* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983).

[35] Forthcoming in Gallaher and Ladouceur, eds, *The Patristic Witness of Georges Florovsky*.

[36] See Sergius Bulgakov, *Unfading Light* (on religious consciousness, apophatism, creation and anthropology) (1917); the minor trilogy: *The Burning Bush* (on the Mother of God) (1927); *The Friend of the Bridegroom* (on St John the Baptist) (1927); and *Jacob's Ladder* (on angels) (1929); and the major or great trilogy: *The Lamb of God* (1933) (on divine-humanity, Sophia and Christ), *The Comforter* (1936) (on the Holy Spirit) and *The Bride of the Lamb* (1945) (on creation, the Church and eschatology). All are published in English translation by Eerdmans between 2003 and 2012.

enthusiasm from contemporary Orthodox theologians, except in the context of historical theology. The current theological agenda is more dominated by defences of neopatristic theology against critiques from more conservative Orthodox sources, who find the 'neo' aspect too liberal—especially in terms of ecclesiology and ecumenism—for their taste. There are defenses also against critiques from more radical Orthodox, dismayed by the difficulty of neopatristic theology in dealing with modern issues and its excessive if not exclusive reliance on Greek/Byzantine theology as its chief if not sole referent.[37]

In this context, there certainly is a need for Orthodox theologians to draw more explicitly on the positive and permanent aspects of the Russian religious renaissance, such as a broad engagement with the world from a Christian perspective, beyond simple denunciation and attempted withdrawal from 'the world', to an appreciation of aspects of modernity which concord with Orthodox tradition; and emphasis on the theology of the human person, freedom and creativity. These were major themes of Russian religious thought, exemplified notably in Nicolas Berdyaev, but also powerfully present in the other main figures of the Russian religious renaissance. In addition, the importance of social and political theology in the Russian religious thinkers from Vladimir Soloviev to Sergius Bulgakov needs to be recognised and indeed seen as a source for contemporary Orthodox social and political thinking. Beyond the strictly intellectual sphere, we have its manifestation in concrete social action, most clearly represented in the life, writings and martyrdom of Saint Maria of Paris (Mother Maria Skobtsova) (1891–1945).[38]

[37] For an overview of critiques of neopatristic theology, see Paul Ladouceur, 'Light and Shadows in Modern Orthodox Theology', Ch. 17 of *Modern Orthodox Theology: 'Behold I Make All Things New'* (London: Bloomsbury/T&T Clark, forthcoming 2019).

[38] See Mother Maria Skobtsova, *Essential Writings*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003); and Sergei Hackel, *Pearl of Great Price: The Life of Mother Maria Skobtsova 1891–1945* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1981).

What is Sophia? Bulgakov, or the Biblical Trinity between Kant and Hegel

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This paper aims at showing how strong is Hegel's influence upon the very formation of Bulgakov's Trinitarian metaphysics, serving as a correction to Kant's metaphysical closedness, as the Russian theologian understands the latter. It focuses upon the Hegelian coordinates of Bulgakov's understanding of Dinine subjectivity, dealing especially with his concept of Revelation. Finally, it tries positively to apply other possible terms in order to move Sophiology beyond the limits of German Idealism.

I

It is more than possible that if you put the above question even to some of the most fervent exponents of Bulgakov's theology, you will receive more than one answer. Most of the scholars who dealt with this confined themselves to gathering the nuances and differentiations of this concept dispersed in the eminent Russian theologian's writings, without being able to give a final comprehensive definition. It is also possible that even Bulgakov himself would not be able to make a clear-cut statement concerning the essence of his beloved term, which he inherited from his Russian mentor Pavel Florenski (who had taken it from Soloviev).

It must be admitted that, in modern times, Sophia has been a sort of idiosyncratic Russian theological concept; it is a concept with deep *cultural roots* both in Russian thought and art, and also in a specific Russian paganism.[1] Of course, a certain ancient Sophiological doctrine exists already in Augustine, in the Thirteenth Book of his *Confessions*. Sophia here is eternal but not uncreated, she is a superior spiritual creature, created before all the other creatures , before even the beginning of time; she is not the uncreated divine Sophia, identical with God's essence, through which the earth and heaven were made, but she is the 'created Sophia', which 'contemplates the divine light', and thus remains unalterable, through God's love for her.

[1] The magic and pagan elements in Soloviev's thought, along with his *erotic utopia,* his estheticism, and his theurgic devotion, have been well described, between others, by B. Zenkovsky, in his *Histoire de la philosophie russe,* Tome II (Paris: Gallimard 1955), 57–71.

That Sophia, which strongly reminds us of the Plotinian *nous*, stays decisively out of the divine essence, as she is an eternal spiritual being, albeit of a second rank. However, the Russian concept of Sophia, as it is widely known, was more complicated. In a recent book of mine, I ventured to show the Plotinian roots of the concept of Sophia, as they are elaborated mainly through Schelling,[2] as a common ground of all the Sophiological movement (though in slightly different personal approaches within it). Thus, the world-soul as the common mode of existence of the One and of Beings in Plotinus, is transformed into Christian pantheistic (or, alternatively, panentheistic) pan-unity, expressed as Sophiology, through Schelling's alteration of the world soul teaching into a Christian Trinitarian pantheism of the total unity of the *Hen and Pan*. In the present essay, I will limit myself to showing some other philosophical parameters, which played an absolutely decisive role in the very formation of the concept of Sophia, specifically in the Trinitarian theology of Sergius Bulgakov—and especially the catalytic role of Hegel's *Phänomenologie des Geistes* in his thought.

II

Bulgakov's respect for Kant did not pass unnoticed by his readers. As he notes in the preface of his *From Marxism to Idealism,* Kant was for him even more undeniable than Marx. However, in his search for a theoretical foundation of an active social attitude, he soon realized that this has to be metaphysical and religious. Thus, he was gradually cut off from the main part of his Kantian persuasions, though he kept his respect for the tradition of philosophical criticism for a long time. Concerning the essential core of Kantian metaphysics, he even tries a direct theological 'correction' of it, in his chapter on *The Father,* included in his book *The Comforter,* a chapter that Bulgakov considered to be the introduction to all of his Trinitarian theology. As he writes[3]:

> Kant's *Ding as sich,* mute in the capacity of a 'limit concept' (*Grenzbegriff)*, does not remain concealed behind phenomena in the capacity of the unknowable, but is revealed in them, although not adequately; and it is only for this reason that it becomes knowable. Therefore, the empirical is the *revelation* of the noumenal, which in this context corresponds to the Absolute or Transcendent (characteristically, the category of revelation is absent in Kant's 'cubistic' philosophy). Revelation of the noumenon in phenomena presupposes a subject, a predicate, and the copula between them. It presupposes

[2] See my *Church in the Making: an Apophatic Ecclesiology of Consubstantiality* (New York: St Vladimir's Press, 2016), 179–88.

[3] Sergius Bulgakov, *The Comforter, trans.* Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2004), 360.

> that which is revealed, that which reveals, and a certain unity or identity of the two: a mystery and its revelation.

As we are going to see, this 'unity or identity' of 'the subject and the predicate', along with the whole of this theological 'mobilization' of the mute *Ding an sich* through revelation, were depicted mainly on the canvas of the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*. But let us first look at things in some order: God is, for Bulgakov, a 'tri-hypostatic hypostasis' (p. 361—all references to *The Comforter,* a book dedicated to the Holy Spirit, but forming at the same time an excellent overview of the mature Trinitarian theology of its author, are incorporated in the text), comprising Divine Sophia , which is hypostasizedness, not hypostasis (366), the 'image of the Holy Trinity in its proper depths, the Divine World, Divine-humanity', and, in this sense, 'the Father is Sophia (but, of course, not vice versa). This equality expresses the idea that, insofar as Sophia is objective, divine self-revelation, she reveals and expresses the hidden essence of the Father, she is his genuine predicate, whose true Subject he is. Sophia, as Divine-humanity, *belongs* to the Father; she is his revelation' (*op. cit.*). The 'Revealing Hypostases' of the Father are the Son, manifesting himself in the God-man, and the Spirit, manifesting himself in the Mother of God (367)—thus God is 'Fatherhood revealed as Sonhood, and Mother-daughterhood' (367). We shall examine this identification of the Divine World, the Father as Sophia, with the Divine-humanity, in some detail later on in this paper.

Bulgakov thinks of God-Father, (thus repeating Origen, though without acknowledging it), as '*God par excellence, autotheos,* or simply, *Ho Theos*' (377), while the divine hierarchy in the Trinity, comes from 'the praying worship in the Trinity' (380). The latter statement means that the Son is eternally praying to the Father, not only when he becomes Man, but 'His Prayer is included in the Son's eternal hypostatic being'—between Father and Son there exists 'not temporary, but eternal relation of prayer' (372). Finally, he assures us that 'both the Son and the Holy Spirit *pray* to the Father, as Their Father, and Their God' (375), unaware of the fact that he thus introduces three wills in God—how can one pray to an other, without using one's own will, praying to the other, who also has his own will, being thus able to consent or to deny one's prayer—and, in this way he introduces, according to Maximus the Confessor, three divine natures (as will belongs to nature, and derives from it), and, consequently, 'three Gods'.[4] Brandon Gallaher remarks that Bulgakov explicitly criticizes Maximus here, by attributing, against him, and in agreement with his opponent Pyrrhus, the divine will(s) to the Trinitarian Persons, uniting them *a posteriori*, due to their common essence.[5] However, that would mean that God's unity is, somehow, a result of a process of unification, rather than pre-eternally existing. In this line

[4] PG 91:3I3CD.

[5] B. Gallaher, *Freedom and Necessity in Modern Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 102.

of thought, either God's unity is realized as a free communion of love and prayer between separately willing Persons, and the unifying common essence is something, in a sense, achieved precisely in this way, as the result of this love/prayer, or the common essence absolutely determines the divine unity from the beginning, and thus the willing association of the three persons is necessitated by the former, and, consequently, has nothing to do with truly free love or prayer. The Russian theologian seems to give little countenance to the concept *homoousion* in the Patristic Trinitarian thought, a concept which answers precisely to the question of how God's Trinitarian love and freedom is expressed precisely through his very essence, which is then not just a 'common essence', but an *inter-given essence*.[6] Furthermore, there exists perhaps a serious contradiction here, since Bulgakov seems to imply, as we are going to see later on, that God is fundamentally only one Person!

Bulgakov's sympathies are not with the Patristic Trinitarian theology, East and West. Thus, Athanasius confuses, according to him, the divine Logos with Sophia (25), while he omits to deal with the relation between the Father and the Spirit (26), dealing exclusively with the latter's charismatic/sanctifying grace, instead of his cosmological and creative action (27). The Cappadocians are…Tri-theists, and Homoiousians (and… subordinationists, 46), since, due to their Aristotelianism, they are unable to understand God's triunity—i.e., to realize that God is a 'tri-hypostatic I' (31–32), or, even better, that there exists a 'trinitarity of hypostases in the Divine Person' (54). Thus, on the one hand, God remains impersonal in the Cappadocians (31), as well as in Augustine (44), along with John Damascene (43–44), and , of course, in Aquinas, and the Western theology *in toto* (44). On the other hand, there exists no Dogma of the Holy Spirit in the Nicaeno-Contantinopolitan Creed (40). The main problem of the above authors is, according to the Russian theologian, that they are mostly partisans of the Aristotelean doctrine of hypostasis as individual qualification by a special property, which in itself is by no means personal (43). Thus, they are unable to fathom God, who 'as the Absolute Person, is thereby also the tri-hypostatic Person, truly One-in-Three and Three-in-One. He is not Three-in-one (*sic),* but the Tri-unity of the Divine person and his life' (44). This tri-hypostatic Absolute Person, 'in its initial position so to speak, does not yet contain hypostatic distinctions (*gnōrismata hypostatika)*, but is defined solely by the trine self-positing of I as I-I-I, or as I-We-You' (45).

It is of course strange that Bulgakov seems to ignore that the identification of the hypostasis with the person, as it started in the West, and reached its theological maturity in the East, in the writings of the Cappadocians, and, most of all, Gregory Nazianzen, was meant precisely to give an ontological content to the concept of person; and that the *hypostatic attributes* of the divine Hypostases-Persons are not impersonal, but, as Gregory Nazianzen insisted against Eunomius, personal *onomata*

[6] See N. Loudovikos, *Analogical Identities: The Creation of the Christian Self. Beyond Spirituality and Mysticism in the Patristic Era* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2019), 161–87.

scheseōn (names of relations) between the Father and the Son, implied by their very names (the Father is the *γεγεννηκώς* and the Son is *ὁ γεγεννημένος*), and not (impersonal) attributes of the Divine Nature, or of its energies.[7]

Furthermore, as the Russian theologian avers, it is the Father, and only h im, that is revealed, through the two other Persons (137). Thus, the first hypostasis [i.e., the Father] is the One that is Revealed, while in relation to this hypostasis the other two are its bihypostatic Revelation' (149). That means that in this Trinitarian mode of love, according to its meaning, there is only one *subject*, the *center of revelation,* and this constitutes the "monarchy" of the Father' (149, author's italics), the Son and the Holy Spirit being the 'hypostases of revelation' of the Father (*op.cit).* It seems that, while he accused the Cappadocians of Subordinationism, Bulgakov proposes a much stronger one!,[8] as it is obvious that the Father's identity does not depend on any sort of ontological reciprocity between the Divine Persons, as, on the contrary, this is clear for the Cappadocians.[9] Thus, the Father dictates his *subjectivity* upon the two Others, Who give nothing to him in return, save a passive echo of his supreme Person. The Father reveals only himself—he reveals no Sonhood and no Spirithood, while Son and Spirit reveal his Fatherhood: this is a sort of supreme and divine narcissism. Hence the need for speaking of 'sacrificial suffering precisely in the Absolute God, as an aspect of the intra-trinitarian divine life' (66). Thus, there exists a 'sacrificial self-humiliation of the Son', and his self-renouncing, along with a sacrificial 'self-dying' of the Spirit (67) before the Father, Who, strangely enough, also renounces himself for the sake of the Son (65). What seems contradictory here is that, on the one hand, the Father needs and 'uses' the two Others, in order to reveal himself, but, on the other hand, he needs to… renounce himself, in order for this 'usage' to take place. And the general context of this Fatherly revelation is, of course, Sophia, as eternal Divine-humanity, which means that this 'sophianic' revelation is absolutely and unavoidably connected with Creation and Incarnation: 'the Divine Sophia is the eternal Humanity, the heavenly proto-image of creaturely humanity', and the male and female principles are the image of the divine Sophia, depicting the latter's differentiation and unity of the Logos/Son and the Holy Spirit (186). In the Incarnation, these 'male and female principles' are finally manifested in Christ and the Ever-Virgin-Mary, respectively (187), thus forming the creaturely Sophia, which is organically bound with the heavenly one, in a 'pious pantheism', as Bulgakov calls

[7] *Or.Theol.3,16.*

[8] See also, for example, p.195: 'Three hypostatic flames are lit in a row, one behind the other; and therefore they are seen as a single flame; and this single flame is the I of the Father. It overshadows, as it were, the divine I's of the Second and Third hypostases, which are kenotically concealed in Him. And which are *not* actualized hypostatically in creation'. It is, I think, crystal clear in both the New Testament and the Patristic theology, East and West, that *both* the 'Second and the Third Hypostases' are absolutely active in creation, and that the fact that they are revealing the Father, does not need to conceal their personal hypostases.

[9] See N. Loudovikos, *Analogical Identities,* 282–6.

it, and he finally chooses the name *panentheism* (a term invented by Krause) for this 'school' of theological thinking (200).

III

It has become evident, I think, that this Trinitarian metaphysics is impossible without reference to Hegel support. What is perhaps most helpful, in order to better approach the relevant aspects of Hegel's thought is Heidegger's *Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes.*[10] What is interesting here is to study the transition from consciousness to self-consciousness, as Heidegger suggests, through the Hegelian concept of *force,* which describes the way being-for-itself and being-for-another are connected, the latter being the way for the former, in a movement of reciprocal transition:[11] 'Force is just that in which the being-for-itself of what is driven back into itself and the being-for-another (the being of the other itself as such) have their subsistence at the same time. *Force* is the *relation,* identical with itself in its externalization'. 'Force is being-for-itself and being-for-another'.[12] If we replace the Hegelian concept of 'force' with the Bulgakovian concept of 'revelation', which is always the revelation of the Father, we realize that the latter is precisely, in a manner similar to the former, an 'unfolding while remaining a unity, in order to return at once from the unfolding back to a unity'[13]—i.e., the Father. Since 'consciousness as such must become another' [14] in order to become self-consciousness, the Father, as the only Subject of the Trinity, must reveal himself-as-another, in order to fulfil his self-realization as the Father, and become apparent as such. But if this is true as far as it concerns the Son, what becomes of the Spirit? Hegel is still helpful here. As Heidegger writes: 'The *to-itself [Zu-sich]* which belongs to the being-in-itself of the self—the return into itself as truth—is grasped as *desire,* as the passion of the self for itself'.[15] Bulgakov praises Augustine for having made the discovery that the Trinity, and especially the Spirit is love (*amor, dilectio*).[16] Thus, the Father's revelation, as-being-for-itself,[17] consists, 'first', in the unfolding/birth of the Son as being-for-another (together with the mutual pain that this provokes), and then in the return to himself as truth, as comforting desire in the Spirit—Bulgakov used to speak of the Spirit as 'joy and bliss' in the Trinity, which *comforts* the two other Persons for their painful mutual self-renunciation.[18]

[10] Martin Heidegger, *Hegel's Phenomenology of the Spirit,* trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988).
[11] Ibid., 114.
[12] Ibid., 115.
[13] Ibid., 114.
[14] Ibid., 125.
[15] Ibid., 138.
[16] *The Comforter,* 42.
[17] *Op.cit.,* 137; 'there is only One Who Reveals Himself—the Father'.
[18] *Op.cit.* 66.

The second way Bulgakov approaches Hegel, is his deep and essential Sophianic connection of God's nature with man and Creation, in a way that both Creation and Incarnation seem to be a necessary, rather than free, unfolding of God's Sophia, as Divine-humanity, as we have seen. B. Gallaher in his aforementioned work, tries to save Bulgakov from Hegelianism by claiming that in the former's thought, 'God as Absolute is certainly capable of creating the world with a freedom which is one with necessity'[19]—by way of a loving 'synthesis of freedom and necessity'. This necessity, according to Gallaher is due to the fact that 'the expression of himself [i.e., God] as love in creation necessarily but freely belongs to the fullness of his revelation so that he *needs* creation because, as love, he cannot leave unactualized even a single possibility of love'.[20] The same author speaks, in the same line of thought, of a 'gracious necessity' that aims at bridging the gap between freedom and necessity, in God's creative activity.[21]

However, if God is free, he does not need to prove anything to anyone. And if his love is truly free, God does not need to prove that it is free. And if he needs to prove to anyone, or even to himself, that his is the absolutely perfect love, comprising all sorts of love, this would be a perfect narcissism, rather than perfect love. Free love has to be contingent upon one's free will. The fact that God is love *by nature* means, according to the Greek Patristic Triadology, that this love is manifested as the personal and ousianic *inter-giveness* that forms consubstantiality.[22] The fact that he wants to spread this loving, consubstantial mode of existence upon nothingness[23] has nothing to do with a possibly unaccomplished consubstantiality in him, which would need to be achieved also outside him, in order to be perfect. Any sort of necessity, connected with God's love, would mean precisely that the latter is incomplete *per se,* and needs an external complement in order to heal its incompleteness.

IV

In my aforementioned *Church in the Making,* and speaking mainly of Bulgakov's Christology, I ventured to show how can we perhaps understand his notion of the creaturely Sophia, as applying to the consubstantial unification of creation in Christ, in the Spirit. Is there any possible way to understand his Trinitarian theology beyond its obvious Hegelian coordinates?

[19] Gallaher, op.cit., 76.
[20] Ibid., 96.
[21] Ibid., 113.
[22] N. Loudovikos, 'Consubstantiality beyond Perichoresis: Personal Threeness, Intra-divine Relations, and Personal Conubstantiality, in Augustine's, Thomas Aquinas', and Maximus the Confessor's Trinitarian Theologies', in *Studia Patristica* 89 (2015): 33–46, *passim.*
[23] N. Loudovikos, *Church in the Making: an Apophatic Ecclesiology of Consubstantiality* (New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2016), 231.

I believe it impossible to set Bulgakov completely free from his almost idiosyncratic Hegelianism. However, in this way, an essential part of Sophiology places itself, unconsciously, in the tradition of the Western transcendental subjectivism, something that reduces the possibility of a fertile assimilation of some Biblical aspects of the Trinitarian theology, such as consubstantiality. There were also some objections on the part of some Patristic theologians. The Russian thinker tried to defend himself in his *The Burning Bush,* by identifying Sophia with the Maximian *logoi*, or the Palamite uncreated energies, but it is true that it is impossible to discern any sort of internal divine necessity in the two above notions.

Perhaps, what Sophia wants to convey relates to God's infinite *availability and self-offering to creation,* something that in my *Eucharistic Ontology* I termed *theopoiia*—i.e., the other side of theo-humanity, the absolute primordial giveness of God to creation, before and after the Fall.[24] But this is a totally free, unexpected gift of divine life. This is precisely, perhaps, the glowing beauty of Sophia: an infinite divine givenness to creation without limits, an oceanic inexplicable love, an unconditioned unending condescension, the unfathomable joyful and blissful *yes* of God to his creature, which unifies all creatures in the image of his absolute, consubstantial, and consubstantializing love.

[24] In the sixth chapter of the book.

Exile, Hospitality, Sobornost: the Experience of the Russian Émigrés

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The exile of members of the Russian intelligentsia not acceptable to the Bolsheviks can be seen as one of the unintentionally creative events of the last century for Orthodox theology. In exile, the Russians had to make sense of their experience of Orthodoxy, no longer at home in the place where they found themselves—for most of them, Paris. The political structures of Tsarist Russia, which had provided a scaffolding for the Russian Orthodox Church, had been removed, and with that an institutional sense of the Church as existing in *symphonia* with the State: an ecclesiology that went back, ultimately, to the emperor Constantine's conversion and the close relationship between Church and State, envisaged by Justinian's *Codex* and *Novels*. Some, especially Fr Afanasiev, looked back behind the Constantinian settlement and evolved an ecclesiology that drew on the Slavophil sense of *sobornost'*, interpreted in terms of the eucharist as the event of the Church, the influential 'eucharistic ecclesiology'. Exile encountered hospitality offered by Western Christians interested in, and sometimes attracted to, Orthodoxy, two examples of which being the short-lived *colloque* convened by Nicholas Berdyaev and the Catholic philosopher, Jacques Maritain, and the still existing Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius. Exile was, however, for many a traumatic experiences, causing great suffering, and however much diaspora was seen as an opportunity, there remained for many a deep nostalgia for the loss of Holy Russia.

In his essay, 'Two Cities', the Polish poet and essayist Adam Zagajewski makes a distinction between what he calls the settled, the emigrants, and the homeless. He explains the difference between these three categories thus:

> Settled people die where they were born; sometimes one sees country homes in which multiple generations of the same family lived. Emigrants make their homes abroad and thus make sure that at least their children will once again belong to the category of settled people (who speak another language). An emigrant, therefore, is a temporary link, a guide who takes future generations by the hand and leads them to another, safe place, or so it appears to him.
>
> A homeless person, on the other hand, is someone who, by accident, caprice of fate, his own fault, or the fault of his temperament did not want—or was incapable in his childhood or early youth of forging—close and affectionate bonds with the surroundings in which he grew and matured. To be homeless, therefore, does not mean that one lives under a bridge or on the platform

> of a less frequented Metro station (as for instance, *nomen omen*, the station Europe on the line Pont de Levallois—Gallieni); it means only that the person having this defect cannot indicate the streets, cities, or community that might be his home, his, as one is wont to say, miniature homeland.[1]

I quote this to open up the notion of exile or diaspora that forms one pole of the subject of this paper: the diaspora created in the 1920s by the expulsion of the non-Communist intellectuals from the Bolshevik republic. I suppose most of them are to be classified as emigrants, who became settled in the country of their reception and whose children grew up and settled there. My little experience of people in this category suggests that it is not as tidy as Zagajewski suggests. Although 'settled', the children (and grandchildren and great-grandchildren) of these emigrants often preserve a sense of dual belonging; they have not become settled in anything like the sense of those whose families have the roots of long-established settlement. They hanker after their origins, and those origins form part of their sense of who they are.[2]

The third category, to which Zagajewski assigns himself—the homeless—is a very broad category and might be thought to characterize much modern society in the West. Even I, who could not be more English, could be categorized as homeless in Zagajewski's sense: like many children born in the middle of the last century, my parents moved about, so that I cannot indicate streets or a community that belong to my 'miniature homeland'. And this category embraces many of the emigrants, too, especially if they emigrated as children, for even if they turn out to be real emigrants in Zagajewski's sense, whose children have settled, they are unable to point to the streets, the neighbourhood, that unequivocally constitute their 'home'.

The point of these preparatory remarks is to suggest that in looking at the experience of exile or diaspora and its impact on the thought of the Russian émigrés, especially in Paris, we are not looking at a tiny, limited phenomenon, but one that has resonances in many who do not think of themselves as exiles, but whose experience embraces something of that condition, so far as their own sense of their place in the world is concerned.

The other pole of this paper is the notion of *sobornost´*, which has become a key term in the understanding of human community, and in particular, ecclesial community—the sense of being a church—in modern Orthodox theology, and which was profoundly influenced by the thought of the Russian émigrés who made their home in Paris in the middle years of the last century.

The notion of *sobornost´* was one that the émigrés brought with them from their homeland: it is one of the key terms of Slavophil thought, so we must begin by

[1] Adam Zagajewski, *Two Cities* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2002), 3–4.

[2] To take one example out of hundreds, see the book by Fr Alexander Schmemann's son, Serge, *Echoes of a Native Land* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997).

showing how the notion emerged in the nineteenth century.[3] Aleksei Khomiakov, along with Ivan Kireevsky, one of the first Slavophils, sometimes argued that, while Western Christianity was heir to three traditions—of Hebrew religion, Greek philosophy, and Roman law—Slav Christianity, or Orthodox Christianity, was heir to only two of these traditions—Hebrew religion and Greek philosophy (a very questionable position, given the importance of law in the Emperor Justinian's reforms). This meant, in particular, that the Slavs had no real grasp of the notion of an individual, something Khomiakov regarded as embedded in Roman law. For him it was the notion of the individual, cut off from the organic community to which human beings should properly belong, that was the root cause of the problems of the West—problems that had been introduced into Russian society by the reforms of Peter the Great and made worse during the reign of Catherine the Great. In truth, it seems to me that Khomiakov and his Slavophilism were not as uniquely Slav as he thought. Many thinkers throughout the Western world were alarmed at the corrosive effects on human society of industrialization and urbanization, which they felt destroyed natural communities, and reduced human beings to interchangeable units—individuals identified by a factory number or by their place of residence in some faceless flat. Andrzej Walicki calls Slavophilism 'an interesting variant of European conservative romanticism',[4] which was something to be found throughout Europe in the nineteenth century; an English example would be Coleridge, with whom it would be profitable, I think, to compare Khomiakov. Khomiakov looked back to the Russian village, with its church, the great house and its lands, ruled by a village council in which all members of the village participated. Such a society was an organic community; it was not made up of independent individuals but was rather a society in which its members found their identity by belonging. It was an example of the 'one and the many': the one and the many balancing each other, neither reducible to the other. There was a good deal of romanticism about the village life of the Russian peasants, summed up by such romantics in the folk proverb: 'Doing anything in common is good, even dying'.[5]

The 'one and the many'—the *hen kai pan*—was a central issue in the movements in German philosophy that followed in wake of Kant and sought to restore the sense of organic unity of knower and known that Kant had severed: movements characterized as 'Idealism'. For all the anti-Westernism implicit in Slavophil thought, it was, in truth, deeply in debt to the currents of German Idealist philosophy, especially the thought of Schelling. What was important for Slavophils like Khomiakov and Kireevsky was that for them the reconciliation of the one and the many was rooted

[3] As a matter of fact, the term *sobornost´* (as well as the term 'integral knowledge', *tsel´noe znanie*) is not actually found in the writings of the Slavophils, Khomiakov and Kireevsky. See Robert Bird in *On Spiritual Unity: a Slavophile Reader* (Hudson, NT: Lindisfarne Books, 1998), 8 and n. 1.

[4] Andrzej Walicki, *The Slavophile Controversy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 160.

[5] Quoted by Donald Nicholl in the chapter 'The holy folk' in his *Triumphs of the Spirit in Russia* (London: DLT, 1997), 195.

in God the Holy Trinity, in which unity and the manifold are already united, and that this complementarity of the one and the many was characteristic of the cosmos created by God, and in particular of the Church, at least in its Eastern Orthodox manifestation. Khomiakov used the Slavonic word that translated the Greek *katholikos* in the creed—*soborny*—to characterize the way in which the Church held together the one and the many. The word *soborny* is derived from the verb *sobrat´*, to gather together, and I suggest it was a careful attempt to render the root meaning of *katholikos*, which is derived from the expression *καθ' ὅλον*, meaning something like 'to take as a whole'. For what is characteristic of the Orthodox Church, according to Khomiakov, is precisely that the whole body of believers is gathered into a single whole; together they form a unity without having their freedom suppressed. Reconciling freedom and unity was a problem that Schelling had wrestled with, as part of the problem of the One and the Many, which is perhaps why Schelling—of all the German Idealists—came to be so attractive to the Slavophils. The *soborny* nature of the Orthodox Church, which later Russian thinkers came to call by the abstract noun *sobornost´*, was something that Khomiakov contrasted with what he found in the Western Churches: in his view, Roman Catholicism achieved unity at the price of freedom, whereas the Protestant church sacrificed unity in the interests of freedom. Only in the Orthodox Church and her *sobornost´* could be found both unity and freedom: a union freely embraced and a freedom that did not itch to tear apart unity.

This sense of an organic unity, rooted in Christ and his body the Church, in which believers found their identity through faith in the One Christ and through belonging to the One Church—a belonging expressed in the sacramental life of the Church and the mutual concern of all members, living and departed, human and angelic, for one another—reaches back behind the clash of authority and freedom that marked the Reformation to an understanding of the Church more characteristic of patristic thought. Much of Khomiakov's thought was brought to expression through his acquaintance with William Palmer, an Englishman and an Anglican deacon, who made his way to Russia in his quest to promote the unity of the Church. Palmer and Khomiakov exchanged letters, and Khomiakov wrote for him a short ecclesiological treatise, *The Church is One*.[6] In that treatise he expresses very beautifully the meaning of *sobornost´*, the way in which the individual finds his true reality in union with others in the Church, in contrast to the destructive solitude that characterizes reliance on one's self:

> We know that when any one of us falls, he falls alone; but no one is saved alone. He who is saved is saved in the Church, as a member of her, and in

[6] W. J. Birkbeck, *Russia and the Universal Church*, vol. 1 [the only volume published] (London: Rivington, Percival, and Co., 1895) contains Khomiakov's correspondence with Palmer and includes, as the final chapter, Khomiakov's treatises *The Church is One*, which is more easily obtainable elsewhere (see next footnote).

> unity with all her other members… Wherefore no one can rest his hope on his own prayers, and every one who prays asks the whole Church for intercession, not as if he had any doubts of the intercession of Christ, the one Advocate, but in the assurance that the whole Church ever prays for all her members. All the angels pray for us, the apostles, martyrs, and patriarchs, and above all, the Mother of our Lord, and this holy unity is the true life of the Church…[7]

Khomiakov's notion of *sobornost´* has philosophical, political, or sociological roots; he is thinking of (his idealized view of) the Russian village; nothing much is added to the notion in its application to the Church.

Let us now turn to the other pole of the title: the experience of exile, or diaspora, in particular the theological reflection of the Russian émigrés in Paris between the two World Wars. Much water had flowed under the bridge of history between Slavophils and our émigrés, not least the Communist revolution, and preceding that the long period of talk about reform of the Church that culminated in the Moscow Synod or *Sobor* of 1917/18. This aimed to bring an end to the long period of ecclesiological distortion that had been created by Peter the Great's promulgation of the *Ecclesiastical Regulation* of 1721 and the suppression of the Patriarchate. In the view of many of the émigrés, this *sobor* had been a lost opportunity, but it had provided a forum for some serious thought about how the Church should be organized and consequently provoked some ecclesiological reflection (distilled in dialogue form in Bulgakov's *Beneath the Ramparts of Cherson*[8]).[9] The Moscow *Sobor* had taken place under the shadow of the flight of Minerva's owl; even as it restored the patriarchate to its position in the imperial *symphonia* model, the Communist Revolution was embarking on a process that would lead to persecution intended to exterminate the Church altogether. In the diaspora, the Russian émigrés found themselves among Western Christians who were often very welcoming. This forced them to articulate their sense of identity as Russian Orthodox Christians. Some, certainly, did this in a spirit of nostalgia, with an evocation of Holy Russia, now lost, but for many of them something much deeper was involved. They found themselves discovering a sense of the unique spirit of Orthodox—and especially Russian Orthodox—theology and life. This was an enormously contentious issue: there were those who wanted to continue the tradition of theological-cum-philosophical reflection that had marked the later years of the nineteenth century—Fr Sergii Bulgakov was the

[7] Alexey Stepanovich Khomiakov, *The Church is One*, with an introduction by Nicolas Zernov (London: The Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, 1968), 38–9 (There is also a translation of this treatise in *On Spiritual Unity*, 31–53).

[8] Serge Boulgakov, *Sous les ramparts de Chersonèse*, trans. Bernard Marchadier (Geneva: Editions ad Solem, 1999).

[9] See the discussion in Hyacinthe Destivelle, *Le concile de Moscou (1917–1918)*, Cogitatio Fidei 246 (Paris: Cerf, 2006), 263–78.

leading figure among these. Others, notably Fr Georges Florovsky, were convinced that this tradition was bankrupt and that a radically fresh start was needed, which Florovsky called 'Christian Hellenism' or the 'Neo-Patristic synthesis'. There also emerged a sense—uniting in some ways those otherwise opposed—that the fundamental issues between Orthodox and Western theology could be found in the hesychast controversy of fourteenth-century Byzantium, with St Gregory Palamas as the champion of Orthodoxy, a sense that in some way built on the tradition of what one might call 'Philokalic' theology that had emerged in the nineteenth century. In another way there was a widespread sense that the heart of Orthodoxy could be found in Russian culture, as depicted in the nineteenth-century literature, not least the novels of Dostoevsky; one could place alongside this the 'Philokalic' theology of the popular work then (in the 1920s) soon to be translated into English as *The Way of a Pilgrim*.[10]

What concerns us is the more specifically ecclesiological reflection we find in the Russian diaspora. There is a sense—made more acute by the perceived failure of the Moscow *Sobor*—that the Constantinian, or Eusebian, tradition of *symphonia* between Church and State was bankrupt, that its understanding of the Church was fundamentally flawed, that Orthodox theology needed to dig more deeply for an authentic ecclesiology. In articulating their sense of what was wrong with Eusebian ecclesiology, the Russians drew on ideas that were becoming the conventional wisdom in the rapidly developing field of New Testament and early Church scholarship. This (largely Protestant) scholarship also enabled the Russian émigrés to articulate their difference from Catholicism—differences that had been elided by the theology of the so-called Symbolic Books of the seventeenth century that had formed the basis of seminary theology in nineteenth-century Russia, all dismissed by Florovsky as a 'pseudo-morphosis' characteristic of the 'Babylonian captivity of [Orthodox] theology'.[11]

In this search for an ecclesiology more deeply rooted in early Christian experience before the compromises of the post-Constantinian period, the Russians—pre-eminent among whom was Fr Nicholas Afanasiev, Professor of Church History at the Institut St-Serge in Paris—turned to the New Testament and the earliest Christian Fathers, especially St Ignatios of Antioch.[12] Here, in contrast to the relatively fixed

[10] *The Way of a Pilgrim*, translated by R.M. French (London: Philip Allan, 1930). Later expanded with *The Pilgrim continues his Way* (London: SPCK, 1954). Walter Frere, in his preface, remarks, 'They suggest a comparison with the matchless folk tales of Leo Tolstoi; and they do not suffer by such a comparison.' But see now *The Way of a Pilgrim*, trans. Anna Zaranko, introduction and notes Andrew Louth (London: Penguin Books Random House, Penguin Classics, 2017), reissued in the 'black' format, 2019.

[11] See Georges Florovsky, *Ways of Russian Theology*, vol. 1, trans. Robert L. Nichols (Belmont, MA: Nordland, 1979), 85 ('pseudomorphosis'), 121 ('Babylonian Captivity'). I owe these references to Sr Seraphima (Dr Julia Konstantinovsky).

[12] Expressed most fully, and rather later on, in his *The Church of the Holy Spirit*, trans. Vitaly Permiakov (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007). His most influential work was an article, 'The Church which preside in Love', in *The Primacy of Peter in the Orthodox Church* (London: Faith Press, 1963),

structures of the post-Constantinian Church, they found a situation that was fluid, with traditions still establishing themselves, and still varying from place to place, from local church to local church. Patterns of ministry and ideas of the Church were still evolving. The first point Afanasiev emphasizes is that it is the whole people of God, the whole *λαός*, that is priestly, sharing in the royal priesthood; priesthood does not refer to a ministerial elite, but to the whole people of God. In the post-Constantinian Church, seen as an imperial-wide structure, there rapidly developed a tendency to focus on the structures of ministry, especially on what was (much later) to be called the episcopal 'hierarchy'—using, or misusing, a word coined by the author of the Corpus *Areopagiticum* in the sixth century. On the contrary, in the New Testament and early Christian writings, it is the local community of the baptized that is the Church. This applies even to the expression 'the Catholic Church', *ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία*. The Eusebian model had more or less taken it for granted that this meant the 'universal Church', the whole institution of which 'local churches' were parts or members or branches. But this is not—so contemporary scholarship (then—as well as now) maintained[13]—what the New Testament meant by the Church, nor St Ignatios, in whose epistles the expression 'Catholic Church' is first found. There the word 'church' designates the local church, but not the local church apart from other local churches; rather it is the case that the whole Church, the 'Catholic Church', the Body of Christ, is found in every local church. Local churches are not members or constituents of the universal Church, they are manifestations of the whole Church, found whole and entire in every church, in every place. With Ignatios, this sense of the Catholic Church existing whole and entire in each place is articulated as the community gathered together with its bishop to celebrate the Eucharist, to form a eucharistic assembly: 'wherever the bishop appears, there let the people be; just as wherever in Christ Jesus, there is the Catholic Church' (*Ad Smyrn*. 8.2). So emerged what was to be called 'eucharistic ecclesiology' that has come to characterize most twentieth-century Orthodox theology and been widely influential—on both the decree *Lumen Gentium* of the second Vatican Council and on ecclesiological reflection within the World Council of Churches. A top-down model with local churches seen as branches of the universal Church has been replaced by a model in which the local community articulates the reality of being the Church, being in Christ, something realized in all local Christian communities, gathered together under their bishops. The unity among the local churches is not a matter of agreement; it is constituted by the fact that each of them is the whole Church, and manifest in a sense of solidarity, articulated, when necessary, by the gathering together, a *synodos*, of the bishops.

57–110 (French original: Neuchatel [Suisse]: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1960), 7–64.

[13] See, for instance, the article on ἐκκλησία by Karl Schmidt in the *Theologische Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, ed. G. Kittel, III (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1938), 502–39.

What Afanasiev is doing here is reconceiving the notion of *sobornost´* in a more strictly ecclesiological context, rather than in the philosophical, sociological context of the Slavophil notion. The most striking difference is the role of the Eucharist, all but absent from Khomiakov's understanding of *sobornost´*.

There is something else, too. As a matter of history, actual reflection among Russian émigrés on the Ignatian model of ecclesiology over against the Eusebian was the consequence of the experience of diaspora or exile. It seems to me, however, that most Orthodox in practice regard the Ignatian model as a temporary ecclesiology for the diaspora: eventually there are to be 'local' Churches in the countries of Western Europe that will return to the Eusebian model as the Orthodox communities settle down in the West.

The New Testament, however, gives little support to this idea of settling down, with the Church becoming part of the political structures of the world, as it came to be with the Eusebian and Justinianic ideal of *symphonia*. When the Apostle Paul says to the Ephesians that they are no longer 'strangers and foreigners' (*ξένοι καὶ πάροικοι*), he means that that is precisely what they are in this world, but that the hidden reality of their existence is that they are 'fellow-citizens of the saints and members of God's household' (Eph. 2:19). Similarly, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, those who live by faith are 'strangers and pilgrims on earth' who are in search of their 'homeland' (Heb. 11:13, 14), while 'here we have no abiding city, but seek one to come' (Heb. 13:14). The author of the second-century *Epistle to Diognetus* reaffirms this, saying of Christians that 'they live in their own countries, but as foreigners; they share in everything as citizens, but dwell everywhere as strangers; every foreign country is theirs and every country foreign' (*Diog. 5.5*). Christians have, over the centuries, settled down and made towns and countries their homes, but these words remind us that at a deeper level, we can never settle down in this world. Perhaps there is some fundamental betrayal involved in the Church accepting a place in this world, as if here it had found its 'ancient homeland', that 'ancient homeland' towards which we look from afar, according to St Basil, when we turn east to pray.[14] Maybe Christians are meant to be 'homeless', in Zagajewski's sense.

Let us now come to hospitality. In some ways, this can be seen as a counterpart of exile: as we have seen, the Russian émigrés in Paris experienced hospitality on the part of the Catholic (and Protestant) theologians and philosophers who welcomed them. An example, to which we shall return, is the so-called 'Berdyaev Colloquy', which must have been the context in which some of the ideas just discussed about what it meant to be Russian Orthodox in Paris were developed. In trying to explore the experience of hospitality, some caution is needed. What we know most about is a small number of intellectuals—the kind of people who frequented the Berdyaev Colloquy—but these were hardly typical. They constituted a tiny elite, members of

[14] Basil the Great, *De Spiritu Sancto* 27.66 (PG 32:192A).

the educated upper class who were fluent in other languages than Russian, especially French, which had been almost as familiar to many upper-class Russians as their native tongue, if not more so. This group of intellectuals, expelled from Russia by Lenin and Trotsky's decree at the end of 1922, amounted to no more that 220 (the number of non-Marxist intellectuals on Lenin's list), of whom about 70 were dispatched on the 'Philosophers' Steamship' (actually two ships which left Petrograd in the autumn of 1922; others, including Sergii Bulgakov, were deported from Odessa later).[15] However, the total number of Russians who found themselves in Paris and its environs—expelled from Russia or in flight—was much, much larger, probably amounting to around 200,000. Many of these Russians found the experience of diaspora totally disorientating. When Mother Maria in the twenties and early thirties visited the mental asylums of northern France seeking out Russia émigrés, she discovered many Russians whose total disorientation bereft of their native land had led them to be classified as mentally ill and confined to asylums. There was nothing wrong with them, she discovered, save that, unable to communicate, they had withdrawn into themselves and had been taken to be mentally ill.

Many others coped only a little better. Let me give you two examples. In her obituary notice for Vladyka Vitaly (Ustinov), later the Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, the Russian historian, Nadieszda Kizenko, comparing Vladyka Vitaly's experience of Paris with that of his predecessors, the Metropolitans Antonii Khrapovitskii, Anastasii Gribanovskii, and Philaret Voznesenskii, remarked:

> Vladyka Vitaly's predecessors had all known more security than he had, and received a more solid theological education. This foundation gave them a sense of the inherent strength of their position, and a certain generosity and largeness of vision. To Vladyka Vitaly, by contrast, Russia, and Orthodox Christianity, were not huge, millennium-old, stable entities that could be taken for granted; they were instead under both overt and covert attack on every front, by the Bolsheviks first and foremost. It was the Bolsheviks and all who worked with them who had destroyed what had been the Russia of his ancestors. Economically straitened France in the 1920s and 1930s, moreover, was hardly a haven of friendliness or opportunity to outsiders, even to those who had learned the language as children and had done military service. (The contemporary phrase *sale étranger*—dirty foreigner—is emblematic.) People who were even slightly older than Vladyka Vitaly might dream nostalgically of their earlier homes as they sought new ones. He, by contrast, went from military service to working for an English company to the St Serge Theological Institute in Paris—with some success, but with little inner fulfil-

[15] See Lesley Chamberlain, *The Philosophy Steamship: Lenin and the Exile of the Intelligentsia* (London: Atlantic Books, 2006), 13–170.

> ment. To him, the only home left, and the only body he could serve with all his heart, was the closest exemplar of his family's ideals and the best living link to the Russia he remembered—the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.[16]

My other example is Metropolitan Antony Bloom's father. Before the Revolution he had been a diplomat. The Revolution and the collapse of the Imperial system called in question his whole life and impressed on him the responsibility his class bore in all this; he refused to make a new life and eventually, in Paris, he sought only the lowliest of jobs and lived as a virtual recluse an 'austere and impoverished life… for the peace of his own mind… whatever financial hardship his wife and son had to endure'.[17]

For the intellectual elite, or at least some of them, things were much better; many spoke French, and indeed other European languages, though most of them were happier writing in their native tongue. Quickly journals were established, in which they could publish, notably *Put´*, 'The Way', founded by Nicolas Berdyaev, and also Russian language publishers, especially the YMCA Press.[18] Other ways of communicating among themselves, and potentially with others, were set up, notably the 'Colloque', usually associated with Berdyaev's name, though established by him and his on-off friend, the Catholic lay philosopher, Jacques Maritain, where thinkers, both Russian Orthodox and Catholic (and also, to begin with, until the Vatican expressed its disapproval, Protestants), met together, gave papers, and discussed philosophical and theological issues. The Catholics, at such meetings, one may imagine (I do not know of any source of real evidence), were interested in expressing their own ideas and finding out more about the philosophical and theological ideas of the Russians; for the Russians themselves, it must have been more a matter of expressing, in a novel context, what they thought was philosophically and theologically important, and in this they were talking as much to themselves as to their Western European interlocutors. Exploring reminiscences of this colloque might seem a profitable way to discover something of the experience of hospitality on the part of its Catholic members, but, though it is often referred to, very little evidence of what happened seems to have survived. There seems to have been no minutes taken, and even in Jean-Luc Barré's long biography, *Jean et Raïssa Maritain*, the colloque gets barely a mention.[19]

[16] *Sobornost* 30.1 (2008): 72–84, at 75.

[17] Gillian Crow, *'This Man of God': Impressions of Metropolitan Anthony* (London: DLT, 2005), 24. It was not only Boris Eduardovich who experienced such alienation; it was the experience of the young Andrei Bloom and his mother: see Avril Pyman, *Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh: A Life* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2016), 8–15.

[18] For *Put´*, see Antoine Arjakovsky, *La Génération des penseurs religieux de l'émigration russe* (Kiev-Paris: L'Esprit et la Lettre, 2002).

[19] Jean-Luc Barré, *Jean et Raïssa Maritain* (Paris: Perrin, 2012; first printed Fayard, 2009), 258–9, 380: these are all the (unrevealing) references that I could find.

The only example of hospitality that bore much fruit, and that we know of, seems to be the foundation of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius. As the title of the fellowship suggests—for St Alban is the proto-martyr of Britain—the fellowship was concerned with relationships between the British, in fact mostly English, and to be precise, Anglicans (members of the Church of England) and the Russian émigrés. The leading spirit behind this fellowship was Nicolas Zernov and his wife Militsa. Nicolas himself was a writer, though mostly a writer about others and a popularizer. He was a deeply humble man, and was content to be thought of—as he presented himself—as one who had moved among the great figures of the Russian emigration, people such as Father Sergii Bulgakov, to whom he was close, and others such as Fr Georges Florovsky, as well as the musician and composer, Nikolai Medtner, to whom he was also close. His own theological work he played down, though he was a contributor to *Put´*, and—as is evident from Arjakovsky's study—one of the early advocates of Eucharistic ecclesiology. The work he is known by concerns the Russian tradition to which he belonged, which he made known in the West, mostly in English, for he settled in England after the Second World War, when he was appointed to the Spalding Lecturership in Eastern Orthodox Culture at the University of Oxford, where he remained until his death in 1980. His works are generally regarded as works of popularization, and therefore tend to be neglected; nevertheless we should remember that the widely used expression, the 'Russian Religious Renaissance', is drawn from the title of one of the most valuable of his books, *The Russian Religious Renaissance of the Twentieth Century*.[20] Our concern with Nicolas is with his involvement in the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius. Involved with it from the beginning, though not actually the founder, he became secretary of the Fellowship in 1934, and by the time he relinquished the position in 1947 on his appointment to the lecturership in Oxford, the membership had grown from less than 350 to over 1,250. Also, under his leadership, the journal of the Fellowship had become more established and adopted the name by which it is still known: *Sobornost* (originally *Sobornost´*, it lost its soft sign with number 3 of series 7 in summer 1976).[21]

The Fellowship was in some ways an anomalous body. The first encounter between the Russia émigrés and the West had been with Catholic theologians and philosophers through the Berdyaev–Maritain colloquy. So far as I know, the only Anglican who ever attended the colloquy was the theologian and, as he liked to call himself, 'Christian sociologist' V.A. Demant, but he had, to my knowledge, little or nothing to do with the Fellowship.[22] The Fellowship was essentially a ma-

[20] Nicolas Zernov, *The Russian Religious Renaissance of the Twentieth Century* (London: DLT, 1963).

[21] On the journal of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, see now Aidan Nichols, OP, *Alban and Sergius: the Story of a Journal* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2018).

[22] Not quite: Demant reviewed Berdyaev's *Spirit and Reality* in *Sobornost*: see Nichols, *Alban and Sergius*, 141. Now almost forgotten, there has been a recent revival of interest in V.A. Demant in Poland, where there has been published a collection of sermons made by Demant himself: Vigo Auguste Demant, *Not One World, but Two: A Miscellany of Preachments*, ed. Sławomir Nowosad (Lublin: Learned Society of

nifestation of ecumenism. The Orthodox Church had adopted a positive attitude to ecumenism from the time of Patriarch Joachim's call for engagement between the Churches in the early 1920s—one of the events that contributed to the ecumenical movement and the eventual establishment of the World Council of Churches. Similarly, the Anglican Church was open to, indeed for the most part enthusiastic about the movement towards unity between the Churches, regarding itself as ideally placed to facilitate such ecumenical endeavour. In contrast, the Vatican was very wary about ecumenism from the beginning until Vatican II and the decree, *Unitatis redintegratio*; it was this anxiety about ecumenism that led to the final extinction of the colloquy Berdyaev and Maritain had promoted. Furthermore, Nicolas had spent time in England, in the end working for an Oxford D.Phil., which he gained in 1932, so he was already aware of the Church of England, and especially of the more Anglo-Catholic side of the Church (his initial links had been with the monastic Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield, which had been pioneering in exploring relationships with the Orthodox Churches). So it was that there blossomed a movement, a fellowship, that sought to engage primarily between the Church of England and the Orthodox émigrés in Paris. The annual conference of the Fellowship—originally a leisurely affair, lasting three weeks—was a venue where Orthodox thinkers met a group of mostly interested Western Christians. In the early days, Fr Sergii Bulgakov gave lectures, later on Fr Georges Florovsky, Vladimir Lossky, even once, I think, Myrrha Lot-Borodine. Friendships developed between those who attended these conferences—especially between the Lossky family and, first, the Anglican Donald Allchin, and later with Timothy Ware (now Metropolitan Kallistos). It was from members of the Fellowship that the official Anglican-Orthodox Conversations were to emerge.

What are we to make of this expression of hospitality? To begin with it was immensely fruitful, not least for expanding the horizons of the Anglican Communion. In the long term, I am not sure. As the ecumenical climate has become more chilly, the Fellowship has found itself looking for a role. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that from the 30s to the 60s, it provided a place where Orthodox and Western Christians could meet, listen to each other, and share, without compromise to their identity.

To close, I want to return to more critical reflections on how the Russians responded to the challenge of exile. Just how far did the experience of exile lead them to embrace an ecclesiology that transcended the Justinianic notion of *symbiosis* between Church and State? It seems to me that, on a closer look, Russians found it difficult to think through the changes demanded by accepting diaspora as the normal and desirable state of Christians: in the world, though not of it, so that, in the words of the second-century *Epistle to Diognetus* already quoted, 'they live in their own countries, but as foreigners; they share in everything as citizens, but dwell

KUL, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, 2017).

everywhere as strangers; every foreign country is theirs and every country foreign'.[23] Let us take the case of Bulgakov. Several times in his sermons, preached during the last period of his life, when he was Dean of the Institut St-Serge in Paris, he reflected on the condition of Russians living in exile. In a sermon preached shortly after his arrival in 1925 on 1 October, the Feast of the Protection of the Mother of God (*Pokrov* means both protection and veil in Russian), Bulgakov considered the importance of this feast for the Russians (for, although the historical origin of the feast belongs in Constantinople, it is in Russia that the feast became popular).

> The Russian land has come to love the day of the Protection of the Mother of God, manifested to a Slav in distant Constantinople. However, not there but in the faraway midnight land did people come to sing joyously and glorify the veiling of the world by the Mother of God… Now in their great sorrow, the Russian Orthodox people cover themselves with the veil of Protection. She manifests her love to the chosen of this people. She has revealed to them her face…[24]

A few years later in 1933, on the centenary of the death of St Seraphim of Sarov, Bulgakov reflected on the destruction of the saint's shrine by the Bolsheviks, and especially the laying waste of the community of nuns St Seraphim had established at Diveevo, the place where 'the feet of the Mother of God had stepped'. How can this be, he asks? How is it that the 'promises of the saint appear not to have been fulfilled'? Bulgakov responds by affirming that the promises refer 'not to the visible and palpable indestructibility of the place of the Mother of God, but to a spiritual, transcendent, and transhistorical reality'. Even though everything tangible is destroyed, 'nevertheless there will remain in the world that light of Tabor from the Holy Spirit which was manifested through him in the Russian land'.[25]

In a deeply moving way, Bulgakov retained a vision of the Russian land and the Russian people, which was only intensified by the experience of exile.[26]

[23] *Epistle to Diognetus* 5.5.

[24] Sergius Bulgakov, *Churchly Joy*, trans. Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2008; Russian original: 1938), 12 (translation slightly modified).

[25] Bulgakov, *Churchly Joy*, 50.

[26] Some of the material in this essay has already appeared in print in two articles of mine: 'The Experience of Exile and the Discovery of *Sobornost'*', *Logos: a Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 56.1–2 (2015): 277–87; 'Experience of and Reflection on Hospitality among Russian Exiles', *Communio Viatorum* 58 (2016): 136–45.

The Reception of the Theology of the Russian Diaspora by the Greek Theology of the '60s: a Case Study

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This paper is the result of an interview with Christos Yannaras and aims to explore the impact of the theology of the Russian diaspora on the creative explosion in Greek Orthodox theology usually described as the 'generation of the '60s' through the eyes of one of its protagonists. My particular approach here is to look into how that protagonist thinks back to that encounter today, both in his personal development and in his assessment of the theological landscape.

The aim of this paper is to explore the impact of the theology of the Russian diaspora on the creative explosion in Greek Orthodox theology usually described as the 'generation of the '60s'; however, my particular approach here is to look into how the protagonists of that generation think back to that encounter *today*, both in their personal development and in their assessment of the theological landscape. To that end, my initial intention was to interview both Christos Yannaras and the Metropolitan of Pergamon, John Zizioulas, as the living protagonists of the Greek theological renewal. However, Christos Yannaras's 31 December 2017 interview provided me with an abundance of material to which I would not do justice were I to try to squeeze it into the first part of a two-part paper; this being the case, I opted here to present Christos Yannaras's take on his, and Greek theology's, encounter with the Russian diaspora. I remain with the hope that an interview with the Metropolitan of Pergamon shall follow in the near future. Given that this is the context of this paper, I should stress that it does not claim to be a *research* paper but, rather than that, precisely what it is—a snapshot of how these protagonists of the *Greek* theological revival remember *today* their encounter with the ideas and figures of the Russian diaspora. Thus, any descriptions of persons or events reflect the protagonist's take on these persons and events rather than my own research on the matter.

Christos Yannaras

Some background on the state of theology and public Christian discourse in Greece during Yannaras's youth, with which most of you are already familiar:

> As far as Christian life in Greece is concerned, the first half of the twentieth century was dominated by the activity of the Christian movement characterized by Yannaras as 'pietistic', the chief actor being the Zoē Brotherhood and its affiliated organizations.[1] These organizations did not derive from the ecclesial life of the Greeks or the institutional church and its structure, but were (and still are) parallel structures independent from the church's hierarchy and control. They proclaimed a 'New Greece' reborn through Christian morality and were recognizably pietistic in nature and theology, in their priorities and activities. Christos Yannaras, born 1935 in Athens, became an active part of the 'Christian movement' in his youth, eventually reaching its core and becoming a member of the Zoē Brotherhood of celibate theologians. Gradually discovering ecclesial Orthodoxy and its patristic and ascetic tradition in all its tangible materiality as something wholly juxtaposed to the pietistic worldview of the 'Movement', a journey documented in his autobiographical *A Refuge of Ideas*, he clashed with the Movement, leaving the Zoē Brotherhood in 1964 and emigrating to Germany to study philosophy and theology at the postgraduate level in Bonn. Up to that decade, the '60s, virtually the only extrovert and active version of Christianity in Greece was the pietistic one represented by the 'Christian Movement'.

As far as Greek *academic* theology was concerned, it oscillated between Roman Catholic scholasticism and Protestant morality, with Orthodoxy's difference from those traditions and denominations not forming an object of theological enquiry. Far from them being at the centre of attention, neither its patristic legacy nor the distinctive features of the Orthodox Church were studied, developed or taught. As far as the first part of the twentieth century is concerned, two important figures can be discerned: Christos Androutsos and Panayiotis Trembelas, authors *inter alia* of two different *Dogmatics of the Orthodox Church*, which dominated academic classes on Dogmatics for many decades.[2]

Returning to the interview: Yannaras remembers that even up until the late '50s and the early '60s, there was virtually no mention—neither in the University of Athens's theological faculty nor within the Christian movement—of the new theological landscape that was being formed in Europe and, later, in the United States due to the activity of the major figures of the Russian diaspora. The first time that those names were heard by the young theologians of Zoē was via Dimitris Koutroubis, the theologian brought to the circles of Zoē by the then head of the Brotherhood Fr Ilias Mastroyannopoulos (b. 1919) after his re-conversion from Roman Catholicism. Through regular discussions with the younger generation of theologians and

[1] On the Brotherhood's history, see Christoph Maczewski, *Die Zoi-Bewegung Griechenlands. Ein Beitrag zum Traditionsproblem der Ostkirche* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1970).

[2] I am borrowing the previous two paragraphs from forthcoming publications of mine on the subject.

Koutroubis's translations of works by the theologians of the *nouvelle théologie*—the first time that such works would appear in Greece—this younger generation would come to know about both the theology of the Russian diaspora and the Roman Catholic *nouvelle théologie*, both of which being, in a sense, movements for the rediscovery of the Church's tradition, as well as *neo-patristic* undertakings wholly different from any theology they had been taught before. In 1960–1965, the names of Alexander Schmemann, John Meyendorff, Vladimir Lossky, Paul Evdokimov, and Olivier Clément—who, Yannaras recalls, in spite of being a Frenchman himself, functioned as a sort of 'public representative' of the Russian diaspora in French society and beyond—were heard for the first time by the Zoē theologians and alongside the names of Henri de Lubac, Yves Congar, Marie-Dominique Chenu, Hans Urs von Balthasar, or Jean Daniélou. It seems that Fr Georges Florovsky was not mentioned at that point in that quite Francophone company, due to him having left the St Serge Institute of Orthodox Theology in Paris for the United States somewhat earlier. The internal conflicts and divisions within the Zoē Brotherhood itself had a lot to do with the stirring up that this encounter engendered, as figures within the movement that oriented themselves towards a rediscovery of the Fathers of the Church (particularly the Cappadocians, Maximus the Confessor, and Gregory Palamas) and of monasticism, the influx of new ideas from the Russian diaspora, and a multitude of other causes effected a profound change, first ignited by Dimitrios Koutroumbis and his fellowship of Zoē theologians gradually discerning the dead end. Yannaras would later write:

> By 1960, academic theology and extra-ecclesiastical pietism were losing their authority. Theology was becoming reintegrated with ecclesiastical life. New themes were being discussed: the Eucharistic rather than the institutional constitution of the Church, an experiential or apophatic approach to dogma, an existential rather than a legalistic understanding of sin.[3]

On the academic level, Yannaras assumes that the first time the names of the Russian diaspora played a role in the University of Athens's theological faculty was during the fierce correspondence between the then doctoral candidate Fr John Romanides and Prof. Panagiotis Trembelas in 1957 on the former's doctoral dissertation on *The Ancestral Sin* (the exchange was published much later in Greece[4]). Russian diaspora theologians, particularly Fr Georges Florovsky due to Fr Romanides's discipleship to him, were among the points of contention in that

[3] Christos Yannaras, *Orthodoxy and the West: Hellenic Self-Identity in the Modern Age*, trans. Peter Chamberas and Norman Russell (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2006), 273.

[4] John S. Romanides and Panayiotis N. Trembelas, *Ἐγχειρίδιον : Ἀλληλογραφία π. Ι. Σ. Ρωμανίδου Καὶ Καθ. Π. Ν. Τρεμπέλα* [Handbook: Correspondence between Fr. J. S. Romanides and Prof. P. N. Trembelas], ed. Georgios D. Metallinos (Athens: Armos, 2009).

correspondence, in which Trembelas sought to show that Fr Romanides should not be awarded his doctorate in Orthodox theology. In other words, the *ancien régime* professor was implicitly portraying the theology of the Russian diaspora in a *negative* light and *against* John Romanides as a student thereof, while John Romanides would stress that his positions are also to be found in the works of established professors of Orthodox theology such as Florovsky, noting that Trembelas had simply not read them. However, this development and battle did not make the Russian diaspora widely known at the time, as it was largely an internal affair, with the publication of the letters taking place much later.

Yannaras notes that the Athens theology professor Hamilcar S. Alivizatos (1887–1969) should have previously known and should have been influenced to some extent by Fr Georges Florovsky and possibly Nicholas Zernov due to his involvement in the World Council of Churches; however, these encounters and their influence had not reached down to his students of theology. Similarly, and among a younger generation of Orthodox theologians teaching at Athens's Faculty of Theology, Nikos Nissiotis (1925–1986) would also have been deeply familiar with those representatives of the Russian diaspora that participated in the WCC; however, this did not directly result in a major way in the later influx of themes and ideas related to the Russian diaspora in Greece.

Influenced by the discovery of a very different Orthodox tradition than the one taught at both the university and the Christian movement, and by extension, Greek Church life at the time (i.e., by a patristic and neo-patristic, sacramental and Eucharistic Orthodox tradition as articulated and sparked by the Russian diaspora), Yannaras clashed with the Zoē Brotherhood in 1964 and left Greece with the help of an Alexander-von-Humboldt scholarship in order to study theology at the graduate level, as well as philosophy, at the University of Bonn, where Jürgen Moltmann was at the time. During the three years he stayed in Bonn (1964–1967: *Heidegger and the Areopagite*, under Louise Abramowsky), he discovered Martin Heidegger's philosophy and critique of Western metaphysics, but he also formed the wish and intention to move to Paris precisely in order to get to know the protagonists of the Russian diaspora there and their distinct approach to theology. His first contact with the **émigré** community was completely coincidental. In a train journey from Bonn to Paris, he met out of sheer coincidence the second wife of Leonid Ouspensky, Lydia Alexandrevna Miagkov, who invited him to the family's home. Having heard an immense amount of praise for Leonid Ouspensky by Fotis Kondoglou and painter Dinos Ksynopoulos back in Greece, Yannaras was delighted to oblige. In subsequent trips to Paris, he would meet Paul Evdokimov and his son Michel Evdokimov, Nikolai Lossky (the son of Vladimir Lossky), Boris Bobrinskoy, Olivier Clément, and many others.

In March 1968, a mere two months before May '68, a scholarship from the World Council of Churches enabled Yannaras to leave military dictatorship-ridden

Greece, where he had returned for a brief interval, and to move to Paris in order to work on a doctoral dissertation in philosophy at the Sorbonne (he received that doctorate in 1971, having previously received his 1970 theology doctorate from the University of Thessaloniki). He soon started to teach at the St Serge Institute of Orthodox Theology, in the heart of the theological diaspora community, his main courses being Byzantine Philosophy and Orthodox Ethics; this lasted for two years. However, the Institute had already descended from its peak, from its glory days. Yannaras's return from Paris to Athens coincided with the beginning, or continuation, of a period of intense conference activity, making regular theological interpenetrations possible. In conferences organized by the Fellowship of Saint Alban and Saint Sergius in the United Kingdom and fuelled almost exclusively by the Russian diaspora from the Orthodox side,[5] he first met Nicholas Zernov, Militza Zernov, and Dimitri Obolensky, among others, while trips to the United States created the opportunity to meet Alexander Schmemann and Georges Florovsky.

Influence

In hearing Yannaras speak about the theology of the Russian diaspora and its role in the Greek theological renaissance from the '60s onwards, a seeming antinomy is to be underscored as particularly important.

(a) On the one hand, Yannaras treats those currents as clearly distinct ones, particularly on the level of the *content* of those theological developments: he does not consider the Greek theological renaissance as a 'translation' of the spirit of the Russian diaspora or as a Greek appropriation thereof. For example, Yannaras holds that, among other aspects, the level of *philosophical* sophistication—the need to respond to particular questions of a markedly *philosophical* texture—witnessed in the new era of Greek theology was not to be found in the theological writings of the Russian diaspora, but was a distinct Greek contribution.

(b) On the other hand, according to him, it is certainly and emphatically true that it is the presence of the theology of the Russian diaspora, together with further turns to the Fathers such as the nouvelle théologie, that sparked the Greek renaissance and made it possible. Without this new theological breeze and the themes, approach, and issues that it put on the table (allow me to repeat Yannaras's summation thereof: 'the Eucharistic rather than the institutional constitution of the Church, an experiential or apophatic approach to dogma, an existential rather than a legalistic understanding of sin'[6]), that new chapter in Greek theology—the first truly and deeply significant chapter

[5] Yannaras made a point of stressing the importance of the role of Arthur Macdonald 'Donald' Allchin from the Anglican side.

[6] Yannaras, *Orthodoxy and the West*, 273.

> since the 14th century and Gregory Palamas[7]—would have been unthinkable. Developments that were not directly related to the new theology articulated by the Russian diaspora and played a significant role in the rebirth of Greek theology included, for example, the seemingly sudden repopulation of Mount Athos and the renewal of Orthodox monasticism. However, the fact remains that without the impact of the theology of the Russian diaspora, which took so painfully long to actually reach the theological faculties, there would have been no obvious way out from the pre-'60s style and content of Greek theology and no route or path to a lively rediscovery of the Fathers, a re-evaluation of living tradition, and a substantial dialogue with modern philosophical thought.

Yannaras himself states that the first time he encountered both the importance of apophaticism (labelled as such) and the centrality of the person as a relational entity was in studying Vladimir Lossky's *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, a book that has been exceedingly formative for his own thought (in stark contrast to other Russian sources: for example, Yannaras confesses to no direct influence whatsoever by Nikolai Berdyaev, while he claims never to have read Vladimir Solovyov). Seeing that such indebtedness to Lossky is not declared by the Metropolitan of Pergamon, one could attempt the schematization that, as far as the Russian diaspora is concerned, Christos Yannaras can be seen as an indirect disciple of Vladimir Lossky (as he never got to meet Vladimir Lossky himself), and John Zizioulas as a disciple of Georges Florovsky. Lossky's insistence on personhood has not been directly received by Zizioulas, but only via Yannaras.[8]

Lossky seems to have been the first step for the influx of that radically alien Russian diaspora theology into Greek public theological discourse at large. His *Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* was presumably the first major Russian diaspora theological treatise to be translated to Greek: 1964 saw it being published in Thessaloniki, translated by Presvytera Stella Plevraki in the formal *katharevousa* Greek of the time. It is safe to assume that the 1970 Greek translation of Schmemann's *For the Life of the World* (Athens: Dodoni, 1970, *Synoro* series, later republished by Domos) also played an important part in the Russian diaspora's impact on Greek theology. This translation was prepared by Zissimos Lorentzatos, practically together with Christos Yannaras, with the former reciting translated passages and the latter scribbling them down in preparation for publication. According to Yannaras, this was the first theological book in Greece to be (shockingly!) published in the Greek vernacular, *demotiki*, rather than the polished, official and classical-sounding *kath-*

[7] The astounding length of this theological silence is also noted by Aristotle Papanikolaou, 'Orthodox Theology in the Twentieth Century', in *Key Theological Thinkers: From Modern to Postmodern*, ed. Ståle Johannes Kristiansen and Svein Rise (Farnham, Surrey – Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), 53.

[8] Papanikolaou also notes that John Zizioulas's reception of the theology of personhood was from Lossky, but mediated via Yannaras: Papanikolaou, 'Orthodox Theology in the Twentieth Century', 59.

arevousa. Lorentzatos's insistence on the vernacular was such that even the book's title, alluding to the New Testamental and liturgical phrase the Greeks were familiar with as *'ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ζωῆς'*, was rendered as *Γιὰ νὰ ζήσει ὁ κόσμος*. This being the case, Schmemann's sacramental theology entered the Greek public theological and Christian discourse as a *new language,* not merely figuratively speaking, but also literally so, further adding to its impact and perceived strangeness.

Yannaras insists that the theology of the Russian diaspora was not received in Greece as a new *ideology* or as a new theological *current*, as a *programme* or *movement*; rather than all that, its absolute strangeness to the established theological parlance of the time made it sound promisingly and explosively otherworldly (i.e., a truly new and different way to conceive and speak of theology, Christianity, tradition, the patristic legacy, and the Church). This *explosive* nature of the influx of Russian diaspora theology in Greece, coupled with the dead-ends of the Greek theological and ecclesiastical landscape at the time, the new challenges posed by the wider post-war condition, and the dynamic protagonists of the younger generation of theologians helped spark the emergence of the multitude of creative Greek theologians with distinct contributions, comprising what has been called 'the generation of the '60s'.

It should be noted that a *linear* understanding of these developments (i.e., a monodimensional sketch of the Russian diaspora as leading to the Greek '60s generation) would be an oversimplification. As, for example, the Theological Faculty of Thessaloniki, under the leadership of Panayotis Chrestou, actualized a return to the Fathers—and as such a way of 'doing theology' that constituted a radical departure from previous norms—that return was not necessarily mediated by the Russian diaspora in particular. The situation in Athens in particular, however, would indeed merit such a linear understanding, according to Christos Yannaras: Athens's Theological School back then is described as immune to such neo-patristic innovations, as if divided from the hyperactivity of the younger theologians with a wall. Even today, and in spite of the fact that the great theologians of the Russian diaspora are considered as well-established authorities, it is difficult to find doctoral dissertations devoted to studying their work, even after a number of decades.

In summarising Christos Yannaras's current take on the reception of the theology of the Russian diaspora by the Greek theology of the '60s, one could say that both these different events, with distinct theological fruits, constituted the most important Orthodox theological developments in many centuries: that these are causally related is enthusiastically asserted—as if caused by one and the same breath of the Spirit.

Nicholas Zernov: Political and Historical Continuity with the 'Third Rome' Theory in our Times

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This article examines the idea of Moscow as Third Rome as it was advocated by Nicolas Zernov, a twentieth century Russian Orthodox ecumenist. It is promoted by many, mainly by members of the Russian Orthodox Church, but also contested by many Orthodox as fallacious, problematic, and not in keeping with the tradition of the Orthodox Church. It is a topic that has been advocated for centuries up to the present day. With the migration of the Russian intelligentsia to the West, this idea travelled with them, promoted now not only to the Orthodox but also to other Christians, who accept this idea as fact. But how does it affect current ecumenical relations? Nicolas Zernov promoted this idea to Orthodox and non-Orthodox Christians in Great Britain through his own academic work and through the work of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, an ecumenical body located in Great Britain, but which has numerous branches around the world. Whether this theory creates problems for modern-day Orthodoxy will be analysed in this article.

Is there a Third Rome? What does this mean for inter-Orthodox relations? What does this mean for modern-day Orthodoxy? Is it an important belief or idea? Who believes it? These and many more questions arise when one thinks of Moscow as the Third Rome. It is promoted by many, mainly by members of the Russian Orthodox Church, and also contested by many Orthodox as fallacious, problematic, and not true to the tradition of the Orthodox Church, as will be evident in this article. It is a topic which has been promoted for centuries up to the present day. With the migration of the Russian intelligentsia to the West, this idea travelled with them, promoted now not only to the Orthodox but also to other Christians, who accept this idea as an established Orthodox belief. But how does it affect current ecumenical relations? Nicolas Zernov promoted this idea to Orthodox and non-Orthodox Christians in Great Britain through his own academic work and through the work of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, an ecumenical body located in Great Britain, but which has numerous branches around the world.

The Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius is an unofficial body promoting relations between Anglicans and Orthodox; 'it numbers among its members some

eminent theologians and Church leaders'[1] and is therefore considered to be 'one of the most important international forums for Orthodox theology'.[2] It does not 'conduct any official negotiations; its members are not committed to any particular scheme of reunion. Its purpose is to help Christians to acquire mutual trust and understanding',[3] and thus prepare the way for the future union between East and West. 'The Fellowship shows the one life of the Church overcoming division'.[4] It is a sign of future unity, desired by everyone involved in the Ecumenical Movement.

The Fellowship is one of many organisations that promote relations between the two Christian traditions. However, its membership, its traditions, and its achievements within the Ecumenical Movement make it, if not the most important organisation, then one of the most significant bodies promoting Anglican-Orthodox relations. Importantly enough, it is a society in which members of both churches have the opportunity to discuss reunion.

The topic examined in this article is enormous. Therefore, this article will only deal with the views and work of Nicolas Zernov on the topic of Moscow as the Third Rome to understand how an Orthodox theme can travel and still be promoted in both the East and the West due to the movement of the Russian intelligentsia. Nicolas Mikhailovich Zernov (1898–1980) was a Russian theologian and a great pioneer in the Christian Unity movement, especially in respect to Anglican-Orthodox relations, as well as relations between the Eastern Orthodox and the Syrian Orthodox of the Malabar, India. He was one of the founding members and undoubtedly one of the most significant figures of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius.

Zernov had two passions, which he retained throughout his life: Russia and Orthodoxy. He was, thus, an 'ikon of Russian Orthodoxy'.[5] His life story, especially in regards to his ecumenical work, makes clear that Nicolas was 'a man of destiny'.[6] This belief is also supported by C.S. Lewis, who stated that Nicolas was '"an institution" in Oxford life'.[7]

Understanding what Zernov understood by this belief is a first step in comprehending the complexity and enormity of the theory of Moscow as the Third Rome. Nicolas Zernov's first published book was entitled: *Moscow, The Third Rome* (1937). Zernov insisted on promoting and maintaining a Russian-centred understanding of the world. Despite leaving his country during the Bolshevik Revolution, Zernov always felt a connection to Russia, its history, its culture, its ideas, not referring of course to its communist history and ideology. This connection was maintained and

[1] Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius Booklet, *Fellowship Archives*, 4.

[2] Anastasy Brandond, Gallaher, '"*Great and Full of Grace*": Partial Intercommunion and Sophiology on Sergii Bulgakov', in William C. Mills, ed., *Church and World* (Rollinsford: Orthodox Research Institute, 2013), 69–121; at 81.

[3] Nicolas Zernov, *The Reintegration of the Church* (London: SCM Press, 1952), 118.

[4] Patrick Thompson, 'The Prayer of the Fellowship', *Sobornost* 17 (1939): 17–22; at 20.

[5] Nicolas Zernov, *Sunset Years* (Oxford: Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, 1983), 13.

[6] Ibid., 12.

[7] Ibid., 16.

strengthened through the existence of the Orthodox Church in the West. For the Russian émigrés in the West, 'the real link with the mother country was the Church'.[8] As Nicolas explained, 'it was my generation that discovered in new depth the true face of Russian culture, and this came about because we saw the Church in its true light'.[9] His Russianness became synonymous with Orthodoxy. This was also the case especially during the first years of the Fellowship (with the existence of the Anglo-Russian Conferences, meaning the Anglican-Orthodox Conferences).

His Russianness is also evident in his publications. He devoted a number of important books and articles to Russia, to Moscow as the Third Rome, to the Russian intelligentsia and Russian Orthodoxy.[10] Zernov's first book, *Moscow, The Third Rome* sought to point out the continuity of the Byzantine belief in which Constantinople was known as the New Rome, a title maintained to this day. However, the Russian belief in Moscow as the Third Rome does not have the full support of the Orthodox world. This argument is examined here to point out that a belief of one part of the Orthodox Church or its members might not reflect the belief of another.

Nicolas Zernov begins explaining that Moscow is 'the Third and last Rome, the successor and spiritual heir of Rome and Constantinople'.[11] He asserts this belief without, however, providing a convincing analysis to justify it. He gives no theological argument or explanation, presenting it merely as a certainty accepted by all. Additionally, Nicolas Berdyaev, when referring to Moscow, explains 'the doctrine of Moscow the Third Rome became a basic idea on which the Muscovite state was formed'.[12] He proclaims the Third Rome idea as a doctrine; however, there is no mention of whose doctrine. Is it considered a doctrine of the Orthodox Church as a whole, or only of the Russians? On the other hand, Zernov attempts to point out the distinctiveness of the Russian Church within the Orthodox world. He explains: 'their [Russian] Church held a singular position among other Christian bodies, her approach to religion being neither Greek nor Latin . . . she has always followed her own path, interpreting for herself the common traditions of Christianity'.[13]

Zernov gives a brief explanation of this Russian theory. Following the Byzantine belief in an Imperial city with an Emperor who, with the Patriarch of the city, is instituted by God and protects the Orthodox faith, Zernov wishes to continue this

[8] Ibid., 22.

[9] Ibid., 21.

[10] These include the following titles: *Moscow, The Third Rome* (London: SPCK, 1937); *St Sergius Builder of Russia* (London: S.P.C.K., 1939); 'The Christians of Russia and the Christians of Great Britain', *Sobornost* 26 (1942): 4–8.; *The Church of the Eastern Christians* (London: SPCK, 1946); *The Russian Religious Renaissance of the Twentieth Century* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1963); *The Russians and their Church*, (London: S.P.C.K., 1978); 'The significance of the Russian Orthodox diaspora and its effect on the Christian west', in Baker Derek, ed., *The Orthodox Churches and the West* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1976), 307–327; *Three Russian Prophets* (Florida: Academic International Press, 1973).

[11] Zernov, *Moscow,* 7.

[12] Nicolas Berdyaev, *The Origin of Russian Communism* (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1972), 10.

[13] Zernov, *Moscow,* 9.

structure in Russia. Nevertheless, he identifies an inconsistency in this new rebirth of Rome through the idea of the Third Rome, or more accurately, the continuation of Byzantium within Russia. This new idea was not only based on ecclesiological matters; the idea of Moscow as the Third Rome owes its existence to the political rise of Moscow. Zernov explains that from 1480, when Moscow was liberated from the Tartars, 'Russia had been expanding and this growth of political power was accompanied by a sense of special vocation associated with the belief in Moscow as the third and last Rome'.[14] Therefore, the Russians took upon themselves the continuation of Byzantium; however, they could not repeat and replicate the Christian, Greek, and Oriental aspects of civilisation that had been achieved by the Byzantines. 'They did not belong to the Mediterranean commonwealth; they had never stood before the majestic ruins of bygone empires; they had never read the annals of their victories, crimes and achievements'.[15] On the other hand, Russia wished to follow its own distinct and unique path.

Historically, according to this argument, the old Rome fell as a political power to the invading Goths and in this way gradually severed its spiritual links with the East whilst New Rome became the centre of Christianity, being acknowledged as the capital of the Christian Empire. However, this new capital was established for political reasons. The Church established its centre in Constantinople in order to maintain political stability and good relations with the Emperor. Moreover, Old Rome was not abolished; it still existed. Nevertheless, with the fall of Constantinople (1453), a new centre had to be found, according to Zernov, inevitably producing the idea of an 'Orthodox kingdom'.[16] However, can we speak of a united Orthodox kingdom after Byzantium? Zernov believed that the Church of Christ 'was not left without protection'.[17] A new power was establishing itself in the North. He points this out by claiming:

> Moscow, the new capital of the resurrected Russia, was the only important city left in Eastern Christendom which was ruled by a Christian prince, in which the Christians were unmolested and Divine worship could be carried on undisturbed.
>
> Russia was no longer a metropolitan province, but she was the heir and successor of Byzantium. Moscow was not another daughter to Constantinople, but the new mother city of all the Eastern Christians; she was to become the third and the last Rome.[18]

[14] Nicolas Zernov, *Eastern Christendom,* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1961), 139.
[15] Zernov, *The Russians and their Church,* 49–50.
[16] Zernov, *Sunset Years*, 70.
[17] Zernov, *Moscow,* 31.
[18] Ibid.

Therefore, the belief of Moscow as the Third Rome formed itself after the fall of the Byzantine Empire. How could God allow for the Turks to invade his Great City? The only explanation, which later was used by the Russians to validate their belief in the Third Rome, was that the Greeks betrayed their faith during the Council of Florence (1439), where 'they had entered into communion with the Latins on the basis of the submission of the Orthodox Church to the Papacy'.[19] The Russians, therefore, ceased to consider the Greek Church a true Orthodox Church; 'they began to regard it as a crippled expression of the true faith'.[20] According to Berdyaev: this created an interesting notion whereby the Russian Church arrogantly believed that 'the Orthodox faith was the Russian faith; what was not Russian faith was not Orthodox faith'.[21] Additionally, the Russians, despite not taking part in the conflict between Rome and New Rome, identified the 'Western Christians as apostates'.[22]

An additional explanation can be given to the catastrophe that occurred in Constantinople. It was believed that 'the Empire had not been destroyed: its centre was simply transferred to the north'.[23] This was verified with a marriage in 1492, in which Ivan III, Grand Prince of Moscow, married Sophia Paleologos, the niece of Constantine XIII, the last Emperor of Byzantium. Interestingly enough, a new Russian television series that came out in 2016, entitled *Sofiya*, examines the life of Sophia Paleologos. The first episode of this series began with the words: 'The Roman Empire fell because it was full of heretics. The Crown was then transferred to Constantinople, also known as Second Rome. Moscow is the Third Rome and there will be no other'. This clearly is repeating Philotheos' belief and statement about the status of Moscow. The fact that this is broadcasted today in Russia evidently shows that this idea of the Third Rome still exists in the minds and the hearts of many Russians.

Ivan's casting off of the Tartar yoke in 1480 and adoption of the title of Tsar, or Emperor, with the Byzantine double-headed eagle as his emblem, collectively suggested the restoration of the Empire in the North.[24] 'The Russians attached supreme importance to the preservation of a link of succession from Constantinople to Moscow, for it brought their new capital under the Biblical promises and bless-

[19] Ibid., 34.
[20] Berdyaev, *The Origin of Russian Communism*, 11.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Zernov, *Moscow,* 34.
[23] Zernov, *Three Russian Prophets,* 25.
[24] The double-headed eagle is also evident in the current Russian flag as a coat of arms used in a number of instances. Additionally, it seems to be a pan-Balkan phenomenon, where a number of modern Balkan states have the double-headed eagle either on their flags or on coats of arms (e.g., Albania, Montenegro, Serbia and in a number of flags within Greece), thus showing a connection with Byzantium and that they are all 'spiritual successors' of Byzantine culture and ideology; therefore, this is not unique to the Russian paradigm.

ings'.[25] This distinct vocation of Moscow can be found in the Old Testament, the book of the prophet Daniel (2:27–49, 7:1–28, 9:24–27). The acknowledged exegesis given for these passages was that the First and Second Coming of the Messiah would happen during the hegemony of the fourth great Empire (i.e., Rome, the Eternal City). According to St Hippolytus, the four Empires are identified as 'Babylon, Persia, the Empire of Alexander the Great, and Rome'.[26] However, Rome is not understood as constricted to one location; it can move, as it has from Rome to New Rome, and, according to this view within the Russian Church, also to Moscow, the Third Rome. Zernov's understanding goes even deeper. He explains: 'Thus the Moscow sovereigns claimed that their crown, which they had received from Byzantium, was even more ancient than the Eastern Empire, for it belonged originally to the great Biblical despot'.[27]

After the Council of Florence, relations between Constantinople and Moscow were briefly halted, the latter believing that New Rome had fallen into heresy. Therefore, the Russians considered themselves to be 'the chosen nation, their orthodoxy and their devotion to the Church being superior to that of their Greek teachers, since they alone remained uncompromisingly hostile to Rome'.[28] This last statement is later contradicted by Zernov when looking at the history of the Russian Church. If the latter truly believed it was superior to their Greek teachers, then there would have been no reason for the Metropolitan of Moscow to receive the title of Patriarch (1589) from Constantinople. A question arises from this elevation: if they received it from a 'daughter Church,' how then is Moscow the head of Orthodoxy, the 'mother church,' when Constantinople is still New Rome, still maintains the faith and still elevates churches from one rank to the other? This question is not examined by Zernov. He merely passes over it.

The first mention of this new title was by a monk named Philotheos, who had made a statement to the Grand Duke Basil III (1505–33), writing:

> The first Rome collapsed owing to its heresies, the second Rome fell a victim to the Turks, but a new and third Rome has sprung up in the north, illuminating the whole universe like a sun . . . The First and second Rome have fallen, but the third will stand till the end of history, for it is the last Rome. Moscow has no successor; a fourth Rome is inconceivable.[29]

This statement, despite being an 'ode' to a political leader, creates a number of questions that are not dealt with by Nicolas Zernov in any of his books or articles.

[25] Zernov, *Three Russian Prophets*, 25.
[26] Zernov, *The Russians and their Church*, 48.
[27] Zernov, *Three Russian Prophets*, 27.
[28] Zernov, *Moscow,* 35.
[29] Ibid., 36.

He maintains this belief without further examining its convictions. For example, he does not explain why Moscow is the final Rome, apart from his Trinitarian analogy, which again is not convincing in explaining why there cannot be a fourth? He merely uses the Trinity analogy due to his belief in three Romes. Additionally, he does not point out the political reasons for such a move, which can be understood as giving a prestigious status to Russia in respect to its relations with the European monarchs of the time.[30] Zernov merely claimed that Moscow is a distinct part of Christianity, in regards to Rome and Constantinople. He gave an interesting comparison, whereby he acknowledges what all three Romes have given to Christianity, claiming:

> Rome bequeathed to mankind the idea of law, discipline and order, and these elements of her civilisation were later incorporated in the imposing system of the Roman Catholic Church. Constantinople introduced into the life of Christendom the unique intellectual and artistic achievements of Greece; and the gift of the Second Rome was the formulation of Christian doctrine. Moscow could not compete in either of these spheres with her great predecessors. Her special domain was the art of Christian living; the application of Christianity to the corporate daily life of the people. And here her contribution was of the first importance. Her ideal was that of a Christian State living as one family . . . The sense of being one community experienced by the Russians was spontaneous and organic. It arose not from obedience to authority, nor from the idea of duty, nor from intellectual agreement: it was due to a pattern of life, a rhythm of existence which was lovingly designed, built and followed by the entire population. Innumerable Church customs and home traditions provided the content of that ritual of daily life which was the most distinctive mark of Russian culture.[31]

Zernov, therefore, wishes to point out the significance of the Russian Church within the global context of Orthodoxy and to show its contribution to the Orthodox Church. In his book, *The Russians and their Church*, Zernov presents the interesting idea of the 'three distinct stages in the evolution of the Church'.[32] Explaining the distinctive gifts and contributions Rome, Constantinople, and Moscow have given to Christianity, he also corresponds each city to a Trinitarian hypostasis; therefore, Rome 'reveals to mankind the Fatherhood of God',[33] New Rome 'reveals the Second Person of the Trinity – the Logos',[34] and finally, Moscow 'praises the Holy Ghost,

[30] For more information on the political side of this belief and elevation see: Alar Laats, 'The Concept of the Third Rome and its Political Implications', accessed: 19/03/2015, 17.32, http://www.ksk.edu.ee/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/KVUOA_Toimetised_12-Laats.pdf,

[31] Zernov, *The Russians and their Church*, 50.

[32] Zernov, *The Russians and their Church*, 179.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

the Spirit of Truth and Giver of Life'.[35] Thus, Zernov acknowledges Russia as the successor of Byzantium, protecting the Orthodox Church worldwide. However, he also understands that 'the great vision of Russia's universal mission became the source of an extreme national pride, which isolated the country from the rest of the world'.[36] Therefore, theoretical beliefs did not coincide with the practical side of events. Zernov believed that 'the message of the Russian Church still is that Christians must trust and obey the Holy Spirit, "the Comforter, the Giver of Life," the source of unity and freedom'.[37]

If his previous idea of Moscow representing the Holy Spirit is accepted, then Moscow should be considered the Church that can bring unity. However, as is evident through the ecclesiastical history of Russia and the Ecumenical Movement, this objective has not been achieved. Additionally, on a Pan-Orthodox level, we see that the Russian Church today seems to promote disunity, as was evident in its stance towards the Holy and Great Council in Crete in 2016—together with other churches, of course[38]. On the other hand, Russian isolation was further demonstrated when the Tsar sought to undertake the liberation of the Orthodox peoples who were under Ottoman rule. This was a continuation of a conviction people had in Russia whereby they 'believed that a leading role is assigned to them in the history of mankind'.[39] However, Russia could not achieve this objective when, at the same time, it would despise those Orthodox who did not follow the Russian traditions. Zernov explains that 'if she was to become the political centre of the Orthodox world she had to

[35] Ibid., 180.

[36] Zernov, *Moscow,* 53.

[37] Zernov, *The Russians and their Church*, 183.

[38] This has been the belief of a number of Orthodox Churches since the synod took place. Some sources which understand this idea of disunity and sabotage can be found here: The Ecumenical Patriarchate's current Archbishop of America, Elpidoforos Lampriniadis, examines the various reasons why some Orthodox Churches did not attend. In regards to Russia, he claims that they had no ecclesiastical and canonical reason...explaining how we probably need to find secular and foreign (to the canon laws) reasons which would explain their withdrawal. For more information: Ελπιδοφόρου Λαμπρινιάδου, 'Η επόμενη Αγία και Μεγάλη Σύνοδος Θεματολογία — Προβληματισμοί,' accessed 05/11/2019, 19.04 https://www.romfea.gr/images/article-images/2018/5/Elpidophorow_Agia__Synodos.pdf

A very lively and important account of the Synod is given in: Brandon Gallaher, 'The Orthodox Moment: The Holy and Great Council in Crete and Orthodoxy's Encounter with the West: On Learning to Love the Church', *Sobornost* 39:2 (2017): 26–70. Here, Gallaher is critical at points towards the Russian Church, explaining how their previous actions foretold their future withdrawal.

Russia might have given other reasons for not attending, however, they were not accepted by many from other Orthodox Churches, especially from a number of representatives from the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Even non-Orthodox understood this move, by supporting the beliefs of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (e.g.:

'The Russian Orthodox Church is still attached to a sense of imperial grandeur and is not backing the universal mission advocated by Bartholomew'). Andrea Tornielli, 'Here is why the Russian Church is not attending the Council in Crete.' *La Stampa,* accessed 04/11/19, 22.04, https://www.lastampa.it/vatican-insider-en/2016/06/15/news/here-is-why-the-russian-church-is-not-attending-the-council-in-crete-1.34987047?refresh_ce

[39] Zernov, *The Russians and their Church*, 176.

enlarge her vision and conquer her national pride'.[40] This, evidently, goes against what St Sergius, the Builder of Russia, believed, in regards to the Church's role. 'St Sergius saw and realized a glorious vision of the Oecumenicity of the Church. He understood that every nation and race has its own contribution to bring into the life of the Church Universal'.[41]

This fact points out the reality that Russia was unable to lead the Orthodox world, despite its desire for ecclesiastical primacy in Orthodoxy. Additionally, Moscow could not maintain this role since 'the Russia of Moscow was a Christian outpost of the Asiatic world',[42] giving a new and very different character to Christianity in comparison to its predecessors, Rome and New Rome. However, Zernov arrives at an interesting conclusion whereby he claims that 'neither Constantinople nor Moscow lived up to their ideal; but their failure does not rob them of significance, for they beheld a great vision, ennobling and uplifting mankind'.[43]

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Third Rome idea 'circulated among churchmen, and even in clerical circles it was not popular and received no substantial development'.[44] Peter the Great (1682–1725) was against the idea of Moscow as the Third Rome. Peter saw Russia progressing only if it left behind its 'Messianic dreams and her exclusiveness'.[45] The idea, however, revived in the 1860s 'for the mundane reason that the texts containing the idea [Philotheos' letters] were published for the first time'.[46]After the 1860s, could we truly refer to Moscow as the Third Rome? If we are to bring it closer to the modern epoch, can Moscow be the Third Rome when at the same time it became the centre of communism, of Soviet power? Intriguingly, '"Communist" imperialism, it seemed, could be understood as a modern reflection of the long-time Russian aspiration to be the "Third Rome"'.[47] Additionally, can we maintain the idea of a Third Rome when at the same time there is no Tsar, no protector of the faith? Is every political leader in modern Russia to be considered a Tsar for the Orthodox world? Interestingly enough, 'the advent of Communism in Russia gave "Third Rome" new and unexpected relevance'.[48] The idea of a Third Rome coincided with Lenin's Third International.[49] Therefore, it is apparent that the belief in Moscow as the Third Rome had a troubling history, not only outside of Russia, but also within the Russian Empire. Thus, it is invalid

[40] Zernov, *Moscow,* 68.
[41] Zernov, *St Sergius Builder of Russia,* 109.
[42] Zernov, *Eastern Christendom,* 141.
[43] Ibid., 142.
[44] Marshall T. Poe, '"Moscow, the Third Rome" The Origins and Transformations of a Pivotal Moment', accessed 02/09/2015, 20.48, http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/nceeer/1997-811-25-Poe.pdf, 1997 (Massachusetts, Harvard University, 1997): 1–22; at i.
[45] Zernov, *Moscow,* 76.
[46] Poe, 'Moscow, the Third Rome', ii.
[47] Ibid., 14.
[48] Ibid., 12.
[49] More on this is examined by Berdyaev in his book: Nikolai A. Berdyaev, *The Russian Revolution* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1971).

today to talk of a Third Rome. It existed as an idea not accepted by many, especially outside Russian circles; however, the troubling Russian history of the twentieth century promotes the view that this is an anachronistic idea, not able to exist today. Additionally, this examination creates a number of questions. Why was Zernov promoting an idea of Moscow as the Third Rome at a time when the Russian capital was the centre of communism? Was it to be understood that Moscow, even under its Soviet existence, was to be considered the Third Rome? And, therefore, the leader of the Communist party taking the role of Emperor/Tsar as the protector and head of the Orthodox Church? Identifying the practice of the Orthodox countries in the East, it seems anachronistic to endeavour to promote and establish the idea of Emperor, since no monarch exists in the East. Therefore, today the head of the Church is not a king, emperor, or tsar, but the respected patriarch or archbishop or synod.

An answer to these questions is that Zernov was merely promoting the significance of Russia in the Orthodox Church and on a global scale, maintaining a 'theocentric position'.[50] It was a way of promoting his Russianness. Through this we may be able to maintain that 'Zernov had no illusion about the condition of the Moscow Patriarchate but supported it out of feelings of solidarity with the believers in the Soviet Union'.[51] However, raising the idea of the Third Rome during a Communist era in Russia could be also understood as propaganda, as a way of trying to bring others closer to an imperialistic and pan-Slavic understanding of politics, religion, and church relations. Therefore, it can be stated that in advancing this idea during a time when Russia was not a Christian state, Zernov created problems. How can Zernov and others maintain this idea when, as a result of communist Russia, the Russian Church saw a schism within itself, giving thus birth to the Russian Church Outside of Russia, also known as ROCOR.[52] Therefore, despite this ideology attempting to unite the Orthodox under one centre, Moscow, it is apparent that this was not possible to be realised, especially when the Russian Church was, in fact, being dismembered from within.

Zernov's belief could be accepted by Orthodox and non-Orthodox. However, the argument leading to this belief can be considered false and void, especially when looking at it from a non-Russian point of view. In order to understand it a comparison needs to be undertaken, referring to the Tradition and the practices of the Orthodox Church.

The Third Rome idea is problematic for many outside Russian Orthodox circles. The difficulty arises from the wording used to express this new idea. Many Russians,

[50] Antoine Arjakovsky, *The Way* (Notre Dame — Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), 440.

[51] Christopher Birchall, *Embassy, Emigrants, and Englishmen — The Three Hundred Year History of a Russian Orthodox Church in London* (Jordanville: Holy Trinity Publications, 2014), 340.

[52] For more information on ROCOR please visit: Russian, Orthodox Church, accessed 25/08/2015, 17/08, http://www.russianorthodoxchurch.ws/synod/enghistory/enhis_rocor.html,

such as Zernov, promote the idea of the Third Rome, presupposing that there was a First and a Second Rome. However, if we are to be faithful to the terminology used by the Church in its Canons, then we cannot speak about First, Second, Third, but about Old Rome (Rome) and New Rome (Constantinople). We find this in the Second Ecumenical Council (381), Canon 3, where we read: 'The Bishop of Constantinople, however, shall have the prerogative of honour after the Bishop of Rome; because Constantinople is New Rome'.[53] In the Fourth Ecumenical Council (451), Canon 28, we read:

> Following in all things the decisions of the holy Fathers, and acknowledging the canon, which has been just read, of the One Hundred and Fifty Bishops beloved-of-God (who assembled in the imperial city of Constantinople, which is New Rome, in the time of the Emperor Theodosius of happy memory), we also do enact and decree the same things concerning the privileges of the most holy Church of Constantinople, which is New Rome. For the Fathers rightly granted privileges to the throne of old Rome, because it was the royal city. And the One Hundred and Fifty most religious Bishops, actuated by the same consideration, gave equal privileges to the most holy throne of New Rome, justly judging that the city which is honoured with the Sovereignty and the Senate, and enjoys equal privileges with the old imperial Rome, should in ecclesiastical matters also be magnified as she is, and rank next after her . . . [54]

These examples point out the fact that the canonical terminology is Old and New Rome and not First, Second, and Third. Additionally, it clearly shows that a status is given to a Church after the whole body of the Orthodox Church decides upon this, through an Ecumenical or Local Council. In regards to the Third Rome ideology, a few within Russia promoted this idea, on their own, without it being decided upon in a Council.

A further reason for the insistence on the terms used by the Ecumenical Councils is the fact that the transition from Old to New Rome happened, in fact, within the same Empire. Byzantium was founded within the Roman Empire, relocating its capital to the East. It later highlighted its Eastern and Greek character; nonetheless, it did begin as a continuation of its Roman history, culture, political entity, and law. This, however, did not happen in the case of Russia. According to Dr Marios Begzos, professor at the University of Athens School of Theology, Moscow's persistence on this new idea could be acknowledged as an establishment of 'the tsarist theocratic pan Slavic

[53] Αγαπίου Ιερομονάχου, Νικοδήμου Μοναχού, *Πηδάλιον* (Αθήνα: Αστήρ, 1982), 157. Translation mine.

[54] Ibid., 206

ideology, namely the establishment of a politico-religious totalitarianism based on Orthodoxy and a strong arm of the Slavic core of the Russian Empire in the autocracy of the Tsars'.[55]

Additionally, in an official capacity, the title of New Rome is still maintained to this day as one of the titles of the Ecumenical Patriarch whereby he is known as Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch. On the other hand, the official title of the Patriarch of Moscow is His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. No mention of Third Rome. This emphasises the fact that, officially, the Moscow Patriarchate does not use the title or the term Third Rome when referring to Moscow, going against the belief of a few Russians who maintain this idea. Furthermore, when looking at the diptychs of the Orthodox Church,[56] we identify the fact that the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia maintains the fifth place, whilst the Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch upholds the primacy of honour. Therefore, the Russian idea of Third Rome seems to be voided by the practice of the Orthodox Church.

This argument might be understood as a competition between the Greek and the Russian Churches. This can be verified by the Moscow Council of 1666–67, where the disputed issue of Constantinople and Moscow's primacy was discussed. The Old Believers[57] asserted that 'the superiority of Moscow was manifest in the existence of an Orthodox monarch, whereas the Greeks, having lost their State, were deprived of their superiority'.[58] Significantly, and this is not expressed by Zernov, the Russian Church at this Council 'had to submit itself at least theologically and canonically to the Greek Church and had to declare that the literary sources of the idea of the Third Rome were fabrications'.[59] However, even within Russia, this idea is not followed by all. 'Scholarly opinion concerning the doctrine is divided: though many specialists argue that "Third Rome" was never very important in Old Russia;'[60] nevertheless, it is still believed that Philotheos' conviction was the official doctrine in Moscow. In the post-Communist era, many non-academics in both Russia and in the West maintain this idea, 'in search of a post-Communist "Russian idea"'.[61]

The importance of the Third Rome idea is understood by many within the Orthodox Church in terms of the political, financial, and, most importantly, ecclesi-

[55] Μάριος Μπέγζος, 'Η Αθήνα απέναντι στην "Τρίτη Ρώμη"', *Social Opinion*, in: Dimitrios Filippos Salapatas, *The Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius — Orthodox and Anglican Ecumenical Relations 1927–2018* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Publishing Scholars, 2018), 171.

[56] The diptychs of the Orthodox Church consist of a list of names of the primates of the Orthodox Church worldwide, showing unity in faith, doctrine, and worship between the Orthodox churches.

[57] The Old Believers are members of a group of Russian religious dissenters who did not accept the liturgical reforms, which were forced upon the Russian Orthodox Church by the Patriarch of Moscow Nikon (1652–58).

[58] Zernov, *Sunset Years*, 72.

[59] Wil can den Bercken, *Holy Russia and Christian Europe — East and West in the Religious Ideology of Russia* (London: SCM Press, 1999), 166.

[60] Poe, 'Moscow, the Third Rome', 14.

[61] Ibid.

ological complications it produces. Despite not being a formal belief, it is acknowledged as an informal reality, which many in the Russian Church wished to believe and maintain even during its Soviet era, as did Zernov, and during the current post-Soviet epoch. It can also be understood as the rise and prevalence of Russian nationalism, an 'increased confidence of the Russian Church'.[62]

It is important to stress that some people might not agree with this examination. Perhaps I have, in my research, interpreted this idea in a direction Nicolas never wanted to take it. Maybe I misunderstood him. Maybe he strove for something else. During a discussion I had with Fr Andrew Louth, who knew Nicolas Zernov, in a conference on the Russian Diaspora in Winchester 11–13 January 2018, Fr Louth stated that Nicolas Zernov might simply have wished to express his nostalgia for Mother Russia, which he had lost due to the revolution. Zernov did not wish to express a conquering atmosphere or promote the idea of primacy within Orthodoxy. I would understand and sympathise with this idea. However, I cannot acknowledge it in this manner. It is difficult to accept such a dangerous idea, which he might have promoted by mistake (or not). He did contribute to its continuation and promulgation not only to the Orthodox but also to the non-Orthodox through the work of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius.

Where is the Russian Orthodox Church today after the fall of communism and the freedom within which she now lives? What theories and ideas does it promote? It is apparent to many Orthodox around the world, especially the non-Russian Orthodox, that the Russian Church today wishes to show her power to other Orthodox and unofficially promote the belief of the Third Rome more through action than statements. The Holy and Great Synod in Crete is a great example of this. Unfortunately, it seems that the Moscow Patriarchate wished to 'sabotage'[63] the Council together with Antioch, Bulgaria and Georgia, despite agreeing on the topics and giving the go-ahead a few months beforehand.[64] Dr Brandon Gallaher gives an excellent exegesis of this in an article in *Sobornost,*[65] where he states:

[62] Rowan Williams, Appendix 2, in Dimitrios Filippos Salapatas, *The Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius: Quest for Truth, Quest for Theology, Quest for Unity - An Exploration of Eastern Orthodox and Anglican Ecumenical Theological and Ecclesiological Relations from 1927 until 2012* (PhD diss., University of Winchester, 2016), 13.

[63] Brandon Gallaher, 'The Orthodox Moment: The Holy and Great Council in Crete and Orthodoxy's Encounter with the West: On Learning to Love the Church', *Sobornost* 39:2 (2017): 26–70; at 58.

[64] Closer to the Holy and Great Council at the Orthodox Academy of Crete, June 2016, Moscow withdrew its participation claiming, among other things, the fact that other Orthodox churches will not be present. This reminds any reader on the Council the phrase which was supported by Moscow (i.e., that the Council would take place 'unless impeded by unforeseen circumstances'). Ibid., 40. In hindsight, one can see why the Russian Church wished to include this phrase, which was not accepted by other Orthodox Churches, hence why the Synod actually took place. However, during the Synaxis of Primates, 'Patriarch Kirill insisted that we should do everything we can to try to assemble every Church. . . If one or more Churches do not attend, then we can decide at the Synaxis about how to proceed without one or more churches at the Council.' Bishop Maximos of Western America, 'Diary of the Council' (Alhambra, CA: Sebastian Press, 2016), 9.

[65] Gallaher, 'The Orthodox Moment', 26–70.

> What was clear at this point was that many local churches, led above all by Moscow, were attempting to sabotage the Council. . .
>
> Moscow sees itself as the largest and the wealthiest of the Orthodox Churches and so on this basis the natural leader of the Orthodox world. It cannot abide the fact that the primacy of the Orthodox Church falls on Constantinople and since 2009 it has developed under Patriarch Kirill I (Gundaev) (b.1946) a quasi-phyletist form of *symphonia* to support its vision of the Russian Federation under President Vladimir Putin as the beacon to the West of Christian majority and rectitude: Ruskii mir (the Russian world). The great tragedy of contemporary Orthodoxy is the re-sovietization (or perhaps more exactly: 'putinization') of the Russian Church.[66]

As is evident in this article, inter-Orthodox relations are at times problematic, based on various ideologies that exist within the national churches. Maintaining a belief such as Zernov did creates problems for Orthodoxy, especially when Orthodoxy endeavours to move forward together. The reason I wished to examine this topic was inspired by my involvement in the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius and my research on its history and theology.[67] This idea is still promoted to the non-Orthodox as an Orthodox fact and belief. The London Branch of the Fellowship had organised a talk in 2015 on 'The Early History of the Russian Church' given by the current Secretary of the Fellowship, Fr Stephen Platt. At this event Fr Stephen explained this belief in Moscow as the Third Rome. Unfortunately, the fact that we Orthodox have very different understandings about ourselves seems to confuse what we should be saying to the non-Orthodox. We do not have a united voice because of our nationalistic differences, which dictate what we should or should not believe. It is ironic that we endeavour to speak to non-Orthodox—to find common ground and understanding—when we have not done this within our Orthodox family. That is why this issue of Moscow as the Third Rome is being promoted to the West as an Orthodox belief. What we need to understand is its weaknesses and the fact that Orthodoxy as a whole never promoted this idea.

[66] Ibid., 58.

[67] Dimitrios Filippos Salapatas, *The Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius — Orthodox and Anglican Ecumenical Relations 1927–2018* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Publishing Scholars, 2018).

Faith and Reason in Russian Religious Thought: Sergei Bulgakov, Pavel Florensky and the contemporary debate about onto-theology and fideism

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This study investigates the relationship between faith and reason in two of the major works of Pavel Florensky and Sergei Bulgakov: *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth* (1914) and *Unfading Light* (1917). The essay relates Florensky's and Bulgakov's philosophical theologies to the ongoing debate about onto-theology and fideism in Western philosophy and theology. The transition from onto-theology to fideism has been characterized by the French philosopher Quentin Meillassoux as a gradual de-absolutization of the law of identity and the law of sufficient reason. This theory is exemplified with reference to the work of Leibniz, Kant, and Heidegger. It is then explored whether Florensky's and Bulgakov's theological contributions can enable us to envisage a 'third way' that overcomes the dilemma between religious rationalism and religious irrationalism. Both thinkers argue—though in different ways—that faith and reason are interdependent, and that the experiential and intuitive character of faith is incomplete without the rational scrutiny of Christian philosophy.

In this essay I explore what Pavel Florensky and Sergei Bulgakov have to contribute to the contemporary debate about faith and reason.[1] I will mainly look at *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth and Unfading Light*.[2] *The Pillar* was published in 1914, and *Unfading Light* just three years later, and there is in some respects a close connection between these two works of Orthodox theology and philosophy. Before I turn to Bulgakov and Florensky, I will give a brief overview of the two most radical positions regarding the relationship between faith and reason: religious rationalism—or onto-theology, to use Heidegger's famous term, and fideism—the belief that faith is independent of, or even adversarial to reason.[3] Forms of religious rationalism were

[1] I am reusing material from Christoph Schneider, 'Au-delà des limites de la raison: réflexions sur l'ouvrage de Paul Florensky *La Colonne et le Fondement de la Vérité* (1914)', *Contacts. Revue orthodoxe de théologie et de spiritualité* 65.1 (2013): 89–100.

[2] Павел А. Флоренский, Столп и утверждение истины (Москва: Правда, 1990); Pavel Florensky, *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth. An Essay in Orthodox Theodicy in Twelve Letters*, trans. Boris Jakim (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1997); Сергей Булгаков, Свет невечерний. Созерцания и умозрения (Москва: Республика, 1994); Sergius Bulgakov, *Unfading Light: Contemplations and Speculations*, trans. Thomas Allan Smith (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: W.B. Eerdmans, 2012). The first page number always refers to the Russian original, followed by the English translation after the slash.

[3] Martin Heidegger, 'Die onto-theo-logische Verfassung der Metaphysik', in *Identität und Differenz*

dominant in Enlightenment theism, whereas fideism is generally characteristic of the post-modern reaction against Enlightenment rationalism. But both theological orientations have premodern precursors. The transition from onto-theology to post-metaphysical philosophy and fideistic religion has been described by the French philosopher Quentin Meillassoux in terms of a *gradual de-absolutization of the two basic principles of rationality*: the law of identity/contradiction and the law of sufficient reason.[4]

Onto-theological thought tends to absolutize the validity of these principles and regards them as normative, irrespective of whether we talk about immanent or transcendent being. Leibniz's argument *ex contingentia mundi* is often considered to epitomize Enlightenment rationalism and onto-theology. According to Leibniz, the law of identity excludes everything that is self-contradictory and thus impossible, and leaves us with two kinds of truths: necessary truths (i.e., truths which cannot not be), and contingent truths (i.e., truths which may or may not be).[5] The law of sufficient reason states that for every contingent truth there must be a sufficient reason which explains *that* it is and *why* it is thus and not otherwise. But neither an individual contingent thing nor a whole series of contingent things can provide a sufficient reason for why there is anything at all and why things are as they are—no matter how far back we go to earlier states of affairs. Leibniz argues that the reason for the existence of the world must thus lie in something extramundane, which has absolute metaphysical necessity. There must be a necessary being which provides a sufficient reason for everything, but which is itself not conditioned by any other being. This highest being is identified with God, who is thought of as the ultimate ground of everything contingent (*ultima ratio rerum*), as the sole cause of itself (*causa sui*), and as a necessary being (*ens necessarium*), that is, as a being that cannot not be.

In Kant's critical philosophy, the law of sufficient reason is de-absolutized and only the law of identity remains unconditionally valid. Kant does not deny any relation between thought and the absolute. First, he maintains that the thing-in-itself (i.e., the world as it is in itself) exists, for otherwise there would be appearances without anything that appears, which is inconceivable for him.[6] Second, he holds the view that the thing-in-itself is non-contradictory. We can know *a priori* that logical

(Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2006), 51–79; Thomas D. Carroll, 'The traditions of fideism', *Religous Studies* 44.1 (2008): 1–22. It goes without saying that there is a wide range of positions between these two extreme poles. Moreover, both onto-theology and fideism are umbrella terms that denote theological and philosophical *tendencies*, rather than clearly defined approaches.

[4] Quentin Meillassoux, *Après la finitude. Essai sur la nécessité de la contingence* (Paris: Seuil, 2006), ch. 2.

[5] Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, 'Die Vernunftprinzipien der Natur und der Gnade', in *Hauptschriften zur Grundlegung der Philosophie*, trans. Artur Buchenau, ed. Ernst Cassirer (Leipzig: Felix Meiner, 1924), 423–34.

[6] Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*, ed. Jens Timmerman (Hamburg: Meiner, 1998), XXVI–XXVII.

contradiction is absolutely impossible, which means that logicality pertains to the phenomenal and the noumenal realm. The thing-in-itself is intelligible and thus also thinkable, but we cannot know anything about it. What Kant famously rejects, however, is the possibility of applying the law of sufficient reason beyond the phenomenal realm, as in the cosmological proof of the existence of God. This leads to a de-absolutization of the law of sufficient reason; its range of applicability is now limited to appearances.

Martin Heidegger continued the project of a critique of pure reason by restricting even logicality to the world of appearances. In Meillassoux's words, it is now believed that the principle of non-contradiction is itself devoid of reason, that is, '*it is unthinkable that the unthinkable be impossible*'.[7] As logicality is metaphysically groundless and thus lacks absolute necessity, it can only serve as a criterion for that which is thinkable *for us*, but not for that which is possible in the absolute sense. The result is a more extreme version of finitism than Kant's critical philosophy, because the law of identity is now de-absolutized, too. Meillassoux argues that, in the wake of Heidegger, it is now legitimate to believe that the nature of the absolute might be self-contradictory—even if it is impossible to know whether or not this is really the case. On this interpretation, Heidegger paved the way for an intellectual justification of irrationalism. Heidegger explicitly states that the origin of the basic principles of thought—of the law of identity, the law of contradiction, and the law of excluded middle—remains unknown to human thinking. We may take these laws to be presuppositions for our thinking, but they lack any metaphysical foundation. We do not know whether they are derived from thinking itself, or from the objects of our thinking, or from neither of these sources.[8]

According to Meillassoux, the finitism advocated by Heidegger and other twentieth-century thinkers inevitably generates the quasi-religious idea of the 'wholly-other'. That is, the notion of the 'wholly-other' is the inevitable obverse of this finitism. It is the outcome of reason's discovery of its own ability to access the absolute: *the stricter the finitism, the stronger the agnosticism about the absolute*. It therefore becomes rationally illegitimate to criticize or discard irrational discourse about the absolute for its irrationality.[9]

All discourses that claim to have access to the absolute are tolerated, *with the one caveat that no attempt is made to support the validity of these discourses with rational argument*. This radical self-restriction of human reason rightly undermines onto-theological conceptions of religion. But it at the same time opens the door for an uncontrollable return of the religious, which may assume forms devoid of any rationality. The destruction of onto-theology has thus resulted in a *plurality of fideisms*.

[7] Meillassoux, *Après la finitude*, 68.

[8] Martin Heidegger, 'Grundsätze des Denkens', in *Identität und Differenz*, ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2006), 125–40; at 138.

[9] Meillassoux, *Après la finitude*, 68.

The absolute can now accommodate an unlimited range of contradicting beliefs, none of which is preferable to the other from the viewpoint of rational argument. Accordingly, contemporary fanaticism and fundamentalism have not arisen because of a radical opposition to the standards of Western rationality. Quite the reverse: *it is the very critique of ideology and dogmatism that has brought about the rise of blind faith.*[10]

1. Rationalism and Onto-theology

Both Florensky and Bulgakov reject onto-theological thought models and religious rationalism, and de-absolutize the law of sufficient reason and causality. Florensky points out that discursion and the law of sufficient reason can only provide certainty by generating a series of reasons.[11] The first reason adduced to explain a thing or state of affairs is not self-evidently true, but has its ground in another reason. Yet the explanatory reason must again be justified by another reason, which in turn needs to be justified as well and so on *ad infinitum*. The tradition sought to terminate this infinite series of explanatory links by positing a highest being that grounds the whole series of explanations as uncaused cause. This leads back to Leibniz's *argument ex contingentia mundi*. Yet according to Florensky, 'so-called "rational faith", faith with rational proofs … is a slander against God, a monstrous product of human egotism, which desires to subordinate even God to itself. There are many kinds of atheism, but the worst is the so-called rational faith … it is hypocritical, accepts God but rejects His very essence, His "invisibility", i.e. His supra-rationality'.[12]

Bulgakov, too, rejects the idea of God as *unmoved mover* and *uncaused cause*, and de-absolutizes the law of sufficient reason. *Philosophically*, he argues, the 'causal series is infinite with a bad infinity; it cannot be interrupted or stopped anywhere. In general, both causality and motion … belong to the world of discursive being and are incapable of leading beyond it except at the cost of self-negation and contradiction'.[13] *Theologically*, the concept of a *first cause* is not suitable to conceive the relation between God and the world, as this would reduce God to an immanent being within the world and violate his transcendence. For Bulgakov, a cause, or a mover, is always something mechanical, something that is subordinate 'to the mechanical law of the conversation of energy'.[14] But God is above the causal chain. Thus, the relation between Creator and creation cannot be envisaged in terms of cause and effect. Rather, createdness must be seen as the result of a *personal* and

[10] Ibid., 73–80.

[11] Флоренский, Столп, 24, 30–32/21, 25–26.

[12] Ibid., 64/48.

[13] Sergius Bulgakov, *The Bride of the Lamb* (Grand Rapids, MI; Edinburgh: W.B. Eerdmans; T&T Clark, 2002), 35.

[14] Ibid., 36.

creative act—in analogy to human creativity.[15] Accordingly, proofs of the existence of God that are based on the law of causality and the principle of sufficient reason must be rejected.[16]

Bulgakov also de-absolutizes the law of identity/contradiction. Yet he draws a distinction between 'logical contradiction' (*противоречие логическое*), which results from an arbitrary violation of the laws of logic, and 'antimony' (*антиномия*). The latter 'is generated by the recognized inadequacy of thinking to its subject or its tasks'.[17] Faced with the plenitude of the infinite, transcendent source, the power of human reason must acknowledge its limitedness.

2. Fideism and Irrationalism

According to Florensky, the absolutization of the most fundamental law of logic, the law of identity, which he discusses together with intuition, paradoxically leads to fideism. As William Desmond explains, the law of identity states that for something to be, and for something to be intelligible, it must be a determinate being. Likewise, for the human mind to think intelligibly, it must think something determinate, otherwise it is not thinking at all.[18] However, as Florensky observes, the severe epistemic restrictions that this law imposes on intelligibility, which excludes everything that is not absolutely determinate as unintelligible, backfire and open the door to subjectivism and irrationalism. For the perception of a being in intuition does not provide the human mind with reasons why it should accept this intuition as an experience of the truth. If 'present givenness' is the criterion for the truth, he argues, then everything given in intuition must be regarded as true.[19]

Bulgakov, too, distances himself from fideism and religious irrationalism. For him, it is for instance Schleiermacher's *Gefühlstheologie* (theology of feeling) that represents religious irrationalism. According to Bulgakov, in Schleiermacher, feeling, which has an explicitly religious character, is opposed to cognition and activity: '*true religion is the feeling and taste for the infinite*', or the 'feeling of exceptional dependence' (*das schlechthinnige Abhängigkeitsgefühl*).[20] Religion is characterized by a strong tendency to adogmaticism, anti-intellectualism, and antilogism. For religious experience to be authentic, it must remain *immediate*, that is, *unmediated* by language and reason. On the other hand, Schleiermacher nonetheless talks about the *comprehension* of God through feeling and ascribes to it an *epistemological* function.[21] The resulting vagueness as to the ontological status of religion is harshly

[15] Ibid., 37.
[16] Булгаков, Свет невечерний, 20, 28/17–18, 27.
[17] Ibid., 89–90/105.
[18] William Desmond, *Being and the Between* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1995), 53.
[19] Флоренский, Столп, 24–30/21–25.
[20] Булгаков, Свет невечерний, 39, 41/40, 43.
[21] Ibid., 41/42.

criticized by Bulgakov. He calls Schleiermacher's *Gefühlstheologie* an 'unrealizable utopia' that ultimately amounts to an agnostic and areligious position, to a 'mystical anarchism'.[22]

3. Beyond Onto-theology and Fideism

How far do Florensky and Bulgakov manage to set out a 'third way' that avoids the impasse of both religious rationalism and irrationalism, onto-theology and fideism? Both thinkers propose a *metaxological* approach that seeks to do justice to the asymmetrical but non-dichotomous relationship between nature and grace, immanence and transcendence.[23] Although they agree about the most fundamental aspects of how faith and reason are related, there are also some important differences between their approaches. Florensky and Bulgakov are both convinced that there is an interdependence and interpenetration between faith and reason, and theology and philosophy. How do they conceive this relationship?

In *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth*, Florensky defines the Truth (*Истина*) as *Intuition-Discursion*, which he understands in terms of a perichoretic reconfiguration of the law of identity and the law of sufficient reason.[24] As shown above, intuition and the law of identity cannot give us metaphysical certainty because they do not provide the human mind with reasons why that which is intuited is metaphysically reliable (fideism). The law of sufficient reason and discursion cannot establish metaphysical certainty because they either lead to an infinite regress or to the concept of an idolatrous 'God of the gap' that terminates the otherwise infinite concatenations of explanatory links (onto-theology). In Florensky's reconfiguration of intuition and discursion, intuition stands for the *reality* and *self-revelatory* character of the Truth, and discursion safeguards the *reasonableness* of the Truth.

Florensky states that the Truth, the synthesis of intuition and discursion, can only be apprehended by going beyond the 'boundaries of rationality'.[25] The term 'rationality'[26] (*paccyдoк*) here stands for a rationality that is determined by the law of identity and the law of sufficient reason. But what does it mean to go beyond the boundaries of rationality? Some commentators have argued that Florensky's notion of Truth as Intuition-Discursion constitutes a new form of fideism[27]—despite his critical remarks about the epistemic unreliability of intuition. But Florensky rather

[22] Ibid., 41/43.

[23] Pavel Florensky, 'The Empyrean and the Empirical: A Dialogue', in *Early Religious Writings. 1903–1909*, trans. Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2017), 25–70; at 35, 53, 55; Павел Флоренский, 'Эмпирея и эмпирия. Беседа', in Сочинения в четырех томах, ed. игумен Андроник Трубачев, П.В. Флоренский, and М.С. Трубачева (Москва: Мысль, 1994), 146–95; see 155, 75, 77; Bulgakov, *Bride*, 201.

[24] Флоренский, Столп, 43/33.

[25] Ibid., 58–59/44–45.

[26] In *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth* the Russian noun *paccyдoк* is normally translated as 'rationality', but depending on context, it can also have the meaning of 'rational mind'.

[27] See e.g. С.С. Хоружий, Миросозерцание Флоренского (Томск: Водолей, 1999), 70–96.

seeks to envisage a higher, richer, more complex form of rationality that he calls 'reason' (*разум*), which is rooted in the dynamic, perichoretic movement among the three divine hypostases.[28] That Florensky's aim is to avoid both religious rationalism and irrationalism becomes clear when one analyses his distinction between three different stages of faith, which he regards as relevant for both phylogeny and ontogeny.[29]

i) The first stage is characterized by a radical clash between human truth and the divine Truth. Florensky vividly describes the rapture experience the truth seeker inevitably undergoes in his quest for the Truth. The challenging and audacious leap of faith from rationality (*рассудок*) to reason (*разум*) is captured by the Tertullian formula *credo quia absurdum est* ('I believe because it is absurd').

ii) Yet despite Florensky's emphasis on the discontinuity between the divine Truth and human truth, there is no dichotomy between faith and reason. Rather, Florensky argues, it is possible to reach the Anselmian stage of *credo ut intelligam* ('I believe so that I may understand'). This means that the encounter with the divine Truth does not take place in a sphere completely beyond reason in the fideistic sense. Rather, faith becomes the 'source of higher understanding' (*источник высшего разумения*).[30]

iii) Finally, Florensky uses the formula *intelligo ut credam* ('I understand so that I may believe') to characterize a third stage, in which the 'boundaries of knowledge and belief merge'.[31] His intention is not to elevate knowledge above faith, but rather to articulate the eschatological hope for a complete *interpenetration* of faith and reason.

Although Florensky is neither a religious rationalist nor a fideist, there is nonetheless a dichotomy between the 'rational mind' (*рассудок*) and 'reason' (*разум*). As he points out, the perichoretic synthesis of the two basic laws of rationality constitutes 'the domain where rationality with all its norms is rooted'.[32] Florensky is trying to think of the transcendent ground of (univocal) intelligibility and distinguishes between a 'lower' and a 'higher' form or rationality. But he has a peculiar understanding of the 'rootedness' of the lower in the higher rationality. The law of identity and the law of sufficient reason are only discussed with respect to their *incapacity* to provide metaphysical certitude. Particularly the law of identity is always associated with the sinful rational mind, with the self-enclosure of the self, with godless pride and spiritual death. But what about the positive function these two principles fulfil? It is one thing to criticize the absolutization of univocal logic, quite another to view

[28] Флоренский, Столп, 48–49/37.
[29] Ibid., 61–62/46–47.
[30] Ibid., 62/47.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid., 58/44.

univocal logic as *intrinsically* sinful; it is one thing to point out that the transcendent ground of intelligibility cannot itself be envisaged by means of the law of identity and the law of sufficient reason, quite another to deny that these principles have *any* positive epistemic function whatsoever. Florensky neither subordinates faith to immanent standards of rationality nor does he believe that faith lacks intelligibility, or is even adversarial to reason. Rather, the problem is that only the divine Truth, the perichoretic synthesis of the two basic laws of thought, is properly intelligible (despite the difficulty for human beings to grasp this Truth), whereas all other, 'lower' forms of intelligibility strictly speaking belong to the 'fallen world'.[33]

In a similar line of thought, Bulgakov explains that myth is the hermeneutically most basic category of religious discourse and precedes theological and philosophical reflection. Using Kantian terminology, he calls myth '*a synthetic religious judgement a priori*'.[34] In cult, myth and the symbolic expressions of its content are inculcated, affect all human faculties, and can become 'the subject of thought, of scientific study and artistic reproduction'.[35] *Epistemologically*, myth has an experiential-intuitive origin and, by virtue of its intrinsic, self-revelatory power and persuasiveness, is experienced as self-evident truth. *Ontologically*, myth, understood in the Christian sense, is based on a realist symbolism.[36] *Hermeneutically*, myth is not opposed to history. In Holy Scripture, in the New and the Old Testament, 'history and myth coincide'.[37] *Theologically*, myth results from the encounter of the immanent world with the divine, transcendent world.

Bulgakov rejects the Enlightenment ideal of pure, universal and atemporal reason. Consequently, he points out that every philosophy, or philosophical tradition, has a supraphilosophical origin and is based on extra-philosophical premises. There is always a philosophical myth underlying philosophy.[38] For philosophy 'God is a problem', like all other objects one can philosophize about. Philosophy's intellectual love of God (*amor Dei intellectualis*) is realized by philosophical investigation, doubt, and reflection on a postulated, abstract absolute. Philosophy has access only to verity, to 'theoretical participation in supertheoretical Truth', but Truth itself always

[33] Since Florensky had a background in mathematics and physics, it would of course not be plausible to believe that he was not aware of the significance of these two basic principles of rationality. But precisely for this reason he was acutely aware of the danger of scientism and reductionism. Yet, paradoxically, it was precisely the *scientific* paradigm changes at the beginning of the twentieth century that enabled and inspired Florensky to develop his Christian metaphysics ('concrete metaphysics') and his reconfigured notion of rationality. See Frank Haney, 'Religious Thought and Natural Science in Vladimir Solov'ëv and Pavel Florenskij. A Comparative Study of their Conceptions of Rationality', in *Vladimir Solov'ëv: Reconciler and Polemicist*, ed. Wil van den Bercken, Manon de Courten, and Evert van der Zweerde (Leuven et al.: Peeters, 2000), 267–86.

[34] Булгаков, Свет невечерний, 57/64. Italics in original text. See Florensky's similar reflections on myth and legend in Флоренский, 'Эмпирея и эмпирия. Беседа', 194/69.

[35] Булгаков, Свет невечерний, 61/69.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid., 62/70.

[38] Ibid., 70–71/82–83.

remains transcendent to it.[39] Philosophical searching is immanent and human, but at the same time directed towards the transcendent. Philosophy constantly strives to overcome the restriction of its activity to the immanent.

Because a pure, independent philosophy does not exist, and since religious experience and Christian faith always have a cognitive character and a linguistically articulated dogmatic content, a 'Christian philosophy'[40] is possible. Similar to Florensky, Bulgakov proposes a 'third way' that avoids both the impasse of religious rationalism (onto-theology) and religious irrationalism (fideism). Living religious experience is considered the only way to comprehend God, and (onto-theological) proofs of the existence of God are viewed as a theological misunderstanding. But a fully incarnational theology nonetheless requires a religious philosophy that rationally scrutinizes the dogmatic content of religion. And it is dogma that mediates between myth and Christian philosophy. But, as Bulgakov explains, '*a single*, *absolute philosophical system* that would accommodate absolute truth *generally speaking does not exist*'.[41] The tendency in Roman Catholic theology to regard Thomism as the absolutely normative Christian philosophy is viewed by Bulgakov as problematic.

Theology and philosophy are interrelated, but no Christian philosophy can be assigned a monolithic and unchangeable status. On the one hand, because any philosophy is informed by (religious) beliefs and metaphysical premises, it is possible to expound the history of philosophy as 'the history of religious self-consciousness'.[42] On the other hand, Bulgakov argues that Christian philosophy can and must (re)interpret Christian dogma within different, historically changing philosophical frameworks, and by means of different conceptual schemes. There is a certain tension between these two statements, even if they do not necessarily contradict each other. In the former case, the focus is on the process of conceptual crystallization, triggered by religious dogmas and beliefs, which results in particular philosophical models of thought; in the latter case, it is presumed that philosophical frameworks are to some extent 'given' and thus bear on how religious dogmas are philosophically explicated. If one follows this second paradigm, it cannot be denied that Christian philosophy stands in danger of accommodating itself to non-Christian thought.

But Bulgakov is not at all saying that Christian dogma can be philosophically explicated within *any* philosophical framework. He is not advocating the view that, for instance, Kantianism, Hegelianism, or Positivism as such provide appropriate conceptual tools to spell out the philosophical significance of Christian dogma. But as Bulgakov's sophiological project reveals, there are always untapped philosophical resources slumbering in Christian doctrines that require actualization. And the critical and creative engagement with new philosophical paradigms and concepts

[39] Ibid., 71/82.
[40] Ibid., 78/91.
[41] Ibid., 79/93.
[42] Ibid., 78/91.

(that are at times implicitly informed by Christian thought, even in a 'post-Christian' era) is often an exploratory attempt to unearth new layers of meaning that have hitherto remained latent. Bulgakov's sophiological integration of human creativity, or Florensky's appropriation of Georg Cantor's idea of 'actual infinity', are cases in point.

There is a second tension in Bulgakov's account of the relationship between faith and reason. He writes: 'That in which one can believe (*веритьь*) is impossible to know (*знать*) … and that which one knows is impossible to believe in';[43] 'that which constitutes the proper object of faith, in keeping with its own nature … cannot become knowledge (*знание*)'.[44] But in what way are faith and reason 'opposed' to each other? The theologically most convincing interpretation is to say that faith in God and knowledge of finite beings are qualitatively different acts, so that they cannot be played off against each other. Faith, as Bulgakov argues, 'is a function not of some individual aspect of the spirit (*дух*) but of the whole human person in its entirety, in the indivisible totality of all the powers of the spirit'.[45] Thus faith is that which directs all human powers—reason, desire and will—towards their ultimate *telos*, which is God. This means that faith and knowledge are not mutually exclusive in the sense that faith is epistemically deficient compared to knowledge.[46] There is neither an epistemic hierarchy nor an opposition between ('proper') knowledge and ('mere') faith.

It is precisely this questionable dichotomy that both the religious rationalist and religious irrationalist uncritically accept. The rationalist considers faith/belief epistemically deficient: I believe when I do not know; I believe when there is insufficient knowledge. Accordingly, 'to believe is to project beyond ignorance, and to claim unwarranted knowing beyond the evidences'.[47] Yet the religious rationalist is convinced that we can know God, so that epistemically vague and indeterminate faith or belief can be overcome. The fideist, too, accepts the opposition between faith/belief and knowledge, but insists that for faith to be genuine faith, it has to preserve its opposition to knowledge. For the fideist, what is required is precisely a purely existential trust in God that completely dispenses with empirical evidence, rational necessity, or any other form of rational justification.

In fact, human reason is opposed to faith only insofar as reason is misdirected, insofar as it operates under the conditions of the fall. The opposite of faith is not knowledge, but *lack of faith* and *unbelief*.[48] Accordingly, it would be misleading

[43] Ibid., 28/27.
[44] Ibid., 30/29.
[45] Ibid., 30/30.
[46] Ingolf U. Dalferth, *Transzendenz und säkulare Welt. Lebensorientierung an letzter Gegenwart* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 129–77.
[47] William Desmond, 'The Confidence of Thought. Between Belief and Metaphysics', in *The Intimate Strangeness of Being. Metaphysics after Dialectic* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2012), 202–30; at 209.
[48] Dalferth, *Transzendenz und säkulare Welt*, 129.

to believe that faith constitutes 'an infantile state of religious consciousness' that eventually needs to be replaced by (superior) knowledge.[49] And if 'knowledge' is understood in the eschatological sense, if it expresses the intimate but dynamic union between human beings/creation and God, then it must be viewed as the *fulfilment* of faith, rather than as its replacement. Although Bulgakov does not state that faith must be superseded by knowledge, he at times seems to embrace the idea of an 'eschatological verification' of the content of faith. He writes that, at present, faith has an insufficient rational foundation, but 'it is animated *by the hope* of becoming knowledge (*знание*), of finding for itself sufficient grounds'.[50] He even goes so far as to suggest that faith 'will become something obvious (*очевидность*), similar to natural necessity (*природная необходимость*)'.[51]

The idea of an 'eschatological verification' has been discussed in the analytic tradition. In response to logical positivism, attempts were made to show that the Christian faith makes genuine truth claims, for example, that the fundamental beliefs held by Christians are either true or false.[52] The logical positivists argued that a sentence is only literally significant if it is verifiable (in principle), if we know what observations would lead us to accept the proposition that expresses the sentence as being true, or reject it as being false.[53] They argued that metaphysical and theological statements do not meet this criterion and therefore cannot be literally significant. For if a religious experience is reduced to the experience of something *empirical*, it becomes empirically verifiable, but it is not an experience of a transcendent God and therefore theologically meaningless. If a religious experience has the character of a *mystical intuition*, but does not generate verifiable propositions, it may be theologically relevant, but it cannot be literally significant.[54]

Despite his remarks about the hope for an 'eschatological verification' of faith, Bulgakov does not fall into this trap. In fact, this aporetic dichotomy is just a variant of the dilemma between rationalism and irrationalism. To be sure, the eschatological fulfilment of creation does increase the certainty of faith. St Paul writes that we will be able to see God 'face to face' (*πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον*), and that 'at present I know (*γινώσκω*) only in part, but then I shall know fully (*ἐπιγνώσομαι*) even as I have been fully known (*ἐπεγνώσθην*) [by God]' (1 Cor 13:12; cf. LXX Gen 32:31; Deut 34:10). The idea of 'knowing' and 'being known' is perhaps inspired by the Hellenic Mystery Religions, and is associated with deification.[55] For Maximus the Confessor, too, 'eschatological knowledge' is tantamount to deification: the known

[49] Булгаков, Свет невечерний, 32/32.
[50] Ibid., 29/28.
[51] Ibid., 31/30.
[52] See e.g. John Hick, *Faith and Knowledge*, 2nd ed. (London; Melbourne: Macmillan, 1967), 169–99, esp. 95.
[53] Alfred J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, 2nd ed. (London: V. Gollancz, 1946), 35.
[54] Ibid., 114–20.
[55] Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 500.

object is perceived through *participation* by grace; eschatological knowledge is *participative knowledge*.[56]

To avoid a reductionist understanding of 'eschatological knowledge', three things need to be kept in mind: first, in the *parousia*, divine grace fulfils all human powers and God is revealed as 'triumphant *truth*, all-conquering *love*' and as 'irresistibly attractive and salvific *beauty*'.[57] For this reason a one-sided emphasis on reason and truth (while neglecting divine goodness and beauty) is problematic. Second, as Bulgakov himself points out, despite the triumphant, all-conquering and irresistible character of the divine intervention, God defeats human beings by *persuasion*, and not by coercion. Human freedom and divine-human synergism are not abandoned.[58] His earlier, above-cited statement from *Unfading Light* that faith will become 'something obvious (*очевидность*), similar to natural necessity (*природная необходимость*)',[59] is therefore at least highly ambiguous. Third, due to the infinite divine plenitude, eschatological existence must be envisaged in terms of an 'ever-moving repose', to use Maximus' paradoxical concept. The heightened, existential certainty of 'eschatological knowledge' cannot be interpreted as a divinely granted insight that fundamental Christian propositions really 'correspond' to (metaphysical) states of affairs. Rather, the task is to envision a dynamic process, in which all our ecclesially mediated symbolizations of God unambiguously fulfil their mystagogical function while excluding the possibility of an idolatrous satiety and ennui.

[56] Maximus the Confessor, Ad Thalassium 60, in *Quaestiones ad Thalassium. II. Quaestiones LVI–LXV* (CCSG 22), ed. Carl Laga and Carlos Steel (Turnhout: Brepols; Leuven University Press, 1990), 77–78.

[57] Bulgakov, *Bride*, 491. Italics added.

[58] Ibid., 492.

[59] Булгаков, Свет невечерний, 31/30.

The Quest for Novel Philosophy of Freedom in the Thought of Nikolai Berdyaev, Vladimir Lossky and Georges Florovsky

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This study attempts to examine novel approaches to the subject of divine and human freedom by certain eminent Russian thinkers of the diaspora. In the first place, a brief survey of the evolution of the notion of freedom in modernity tries to show that its very conceptualization, as well as its relation to nature, changed in relation to the Patristic era. The Russians of the diaspora experienced extreme consequences of the 'programme of modernity', such as the Bolshevik revolution that led to their exile, but also the crises of the societies in which they found refuge. They were thus put into conditions that demanded novel historical reflection in a quest to find their own particular voice that would offer an alternative to the different versions of the programme of modernity. An Orthodox notion of freedom that would be different from both socialist collectivism and liberal capitalism, without however glorifying the medieval past, was urgent. In this paper we shall observe the experimentation of Nikolai Berdyaev with the notion of the *Ungrund* and of Georges Florovsky with that of the *podvig*, as well as the very original use of the Patristic term *hyperousion* by Vladimir Lossky. We shall also examine the notion of freedom in relation to creative artistic genius, to mystical transcendence, and to historical contingency.

Introduction: The modern evolution in the notion of freedom

What is important in the thought of the Russians of the diaspora is that they tried to respond to novel questions which did not exist as such in the Byzantine and Patristic era. From the fall of Constantinople until the end of the nineteenth century, many philosophical, but also scientific, technological, economical and civilizational changes occurred. The leading Russian theologians of the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century did not just try to recover a medieval tradition. Their endeavour was to encounter the actual problems of modernity and then indulge in tradition as a possible way out of modern impasses.

Among the particular philosophical and other changes that occurred especially in the West from the end of Byzantium until the nineteenth century, one can briefly mention the following in relation to the evolution of the notion of freedom:[1]

[1] For this brief sketch, I am inspired mainly by the following works: Panagiotis Kondylis, *Η Κριτική της Μεταφυσικής στη Νεότερη Σκέψη: Από τον όψιμο Μεσαίωνα ως το τέλος του Διαφωτισμού* (Αθήνα:

i) The rise of nominalism, voluntarism, and mechanistic determinism, which correspondingly replace realism, intellectualism, and teleology. Nominalism was already a current inside Western scholastic philosophy. Especially after Duns Scotus and William of Ockham, there was a reversal of priorities. The individual is regarded as the primary ontological datum instead of the general substance. What is more, this evolution is gradually linked with casting doubt on the traditional Aristotelian teleology, which tends to regard nature in its universality as a bearer of inherent goals. Concomitantly, the emphasis is put not on the power of intellection to detect and contemplate these goals, thus leading to their subsequent realization, but on the power of the individual's will independently of any preconceived goals. In the sciences, there is from the sixteenth century onwards a new epistemology in which physics are linked to mathematics in a convincing way, thus neglecting the study of the teleological qualities of nature which help the latter achieve particular goals. Gradually, induction is considered more important than deduction, whereas in the English-speaking world, empiricism replaces the contemplation of general ideas. From the seventeenth century onwards, nature is conceived as a machine rather than as a receptacle of divine ideas that inform it in order to progress in the realization of finalities contemplated by the human intellect. These three movements, namely nominalism, voluntarism, and mechanistic determinism go hand in hand in the replacement of realism, intellectualism, and teleology. Nominalism concerns the ontological question, voluntarism the ethical one, and mechanistic determinism the view of nature. All three are deeply connected with epistemology. The combined result is a new modern worldview in which it is considered more significant to study particular individuals and their often-arbitrary wills, rather than universal essences and their inherent finalities. What is important for our subject is that in this modern worldview, nature is no longer regarded as a bearer of goals but as a field of blind necessity. It is interesting that two of the most important founders of philosophical modernity, namely René Descartes (1596–1650) and Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), acknowledged this deterministic view of nature as necessity, but they tried to find space for the experience of God and ethical values elsewhere, for example in a transcendental sphere or horizon that is totally different from the understanding of nature through science.

In the Byzantine Patristic era, there was no one-sided prevalence of realism, intellectualism and teleology. On the contrary, different views were articulated and a quest for the right balance between the different elements of human will and intellection were sought. At the same time, it is true that Byzantium did not know the radical prevalence of nominalism, voluntarism, and mechanistic determinism that

Γνώση, 1983); Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989); Marios Begzos, *Νεοελληνική Φιλοσοφία της Θρησκείας* (Αθήνα: Ελληνικά Γράμματα,1998); Nikolaos Loudovikos, *Η κλειστή πνευματικότητα και το νόημα του εαυτού: Ο μυστικισμός της ισχύος και η αλήθεια φύσεως και προσώπου* (Αθήνα: Ελληνικά Γράμματα,1999)

one finds in early modernity. For the Byzantine Fathers, nature was not a machine governed by the laws of mathematized physics, but a work of the divine *energeia*, accompanied by *logoi* that express the divine will about its future. Virtue was seen as an unfolding of potentialities inherent in nature that help the latter reach the realization of goals. In this view, even the post-lapsarian state of the fallen nature did not prevent the wise man from observing the finalities of the *logoi* of nature. Sinful passions were not seen as natural instincts, but as tendencies toward non-being that only subsist due to their parasitic indwelling in the forces of nature that are in themselves good. Therefore, on the one hand, modernity was a revolution against the absolutization of realism, intellectualism, and teleology that happened particularly in the West and not in the East, which sought for a right balance. On the other hand, the modern absolutization of nominalism, voluntarism, and mechanistic determinism led to a worldview that was radically different than that of the Eastern Fathers. In what concerns our topic, this change meant that in modernity nature was rather conceived as necessity, since it is known through mathematized physics, whereas freedom, if it existed at all, was usually viewed as liberation from this deterministic nature, which was accessible only to some transcendental element in man. It is to be noted that nominalistic individualism was in tune with the new Protestant emphasis on the individual. The Enlightenment only radicalized this emphasis on the independence of the individual.

ii) Romanticism and German idealism. In the nineteenth century, following the Kantian synthesis, the philosophical current of German idealism tried to achieve a more global integration of different elements, such as freedom and necessity, spirit and nature, intellect and will. This effort to overcome one-sidedness through a higher integration culminates in the dialectical thought of G.W.F. Hegel (1770–1831). The demand of German Idealism and of the general cultural movement of Romanticism is one of right balance and integration of different elements. As such it could be seen as a recovering of the spirit of the Middle Ages before the modern restriction of humanity to individualism and scientism. Nevertheless, in German idealism differences are integrated *precisely as conflictual*. Hence, nature continued to be viewed as necessity, though one that can be sublated in the sphere of freedom.

iii) At the financial and technological level, capitalism and the industrial revolution brought a totally new way of production. Capitalism was linked with a nominalist emphasis on the struggle of different independent individuals. What concerns the history of ideas is that this worldview was transported to nature itself by the thought of Charles Darwin (1809–1882). Darwinism meant the final blow to teleology in its privileged domain, namely biology. After the end of the nineteenth century, even biological nature, which was generally considered a special space of the emergence of finalities, was reduced to a struggle between individuals that are moved by instincts and arbitrary contingency. Furthermore, Freudian psychoanalysis combined nineteenth century's scientism with a novel deconstruction of consciousness. Man is

again seen as moved by instincts and his behaviour is better explained by the suppression of some of his desires. On the other hand, socialist Marxism was equally based on nineteenth century scientism, though combined with a dynamical dialectical thought inherited by German idealism.

iv) Toward the end of the nineteenth century, new philosophical paths were tried out as an alternative to both idealism and materialism. The interconnected philosophical movements of phenomenology, personalism, existentialism, and hermeneutics emerged, following the thought of Edmund Husserl (1859–1938). These currents have the characteristic that they radicalize some elements of the modern programme, but to a such extent that they in fact also deconstruct it in some way. For example, the subjectivity put forward by some versions of phenomenology and existentialism can be seen as both a radicalization of the Cartesian *cogito* and as its deconstruction, or rather as a drawing of its most radical conclusions, which leads to its undermining from within. At the same time, the epistemological revolution that took place thanks to quantum mechanics, the theory of relativity, and other scientific evolutions, such as the uncertainty principle, shattered some of the presumptions of modernity.

It was in this context that the most important Russians of the diaspora thought. Their country was violently westernized by Peter the Great (1672–1725), had become one of the Great Powers of nineteenth century Europe, and had been the pioneer in one of the most extreme projects of modernity, namely communism. At the same time, Russian thinkers experienced a nostalgia for their living tradition, which they regarded as different from Western influences. The thinkers that we will examine here were exiled in the West due to the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. They experienced a material and spiritual orphanage and they had to rearticulate their thought as an alternative from both the socialist version of modernity that had led to their exile and the capitalist one in which they were not totally assimilated. At the same time, their answer was not a refuge to an idealized past. They felt the need to articulate their tradition anew in order to find their particular voice in a changing environment. In what concerns our topic, this meant a need to define freedom in a new way that would be inspired by the Patristic tradition, but would also respond to the modern conceptualizations of nature. When we approach their philosophy of freedom, we have thus to take into account the fact that the notions of freedom and nature have changed drastically since the Patristic era in the ways we have briefly observed and that their Orthodox thought is therefore a novel response, inspired by tradition.

Freedom as liberation from reason in the thought of Lev Shestov (1866–1938)

Before observing the thought of Berdyaev, Lossky, and Florovsky on the subject of freedom, reference must be made to two important immediate predecessors,

namely Lev Shestov (1866–1938) and Sergei Bulgakov (1871–1944). Lev Shestov is known for claiming a sort of radical irrationalism and fideism. He belongs to both the Jewish and the Christian Orthodox tradition, as he was a member of a family of assimilated Jews in the Russian Empire and his thought was influenced by both. Shestov is a modern descendant of a great line of anti-philosophers, who claimed that philosophy and its logic are most inadequate when searching for God or the truth. This line arguably includes, among others, Saint Paul, Tertullian, in some sense Augustine of Hippo and Duns Scotus, Martin Luther, Blaise Pascal, Søren Kierkegaard, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and Friedrich Nietzsche. Shestov's work could be seen as an effort to articulate especially the thought of the two last thinkers, namely Dostoevsky and Nietzsche. Shestov thought that reason and morality are the two great enemies of freedom and truth, since reason oppresses human freedom and morality conceals truth. In this sense Shestov, followed the *Notes from the Underground* (1864) of Fyodor Dostoevsky, but also a philosophy that is 'beyond good and evil' as expounded by Friedrich Nietzsche. The answer to this oppression is radical faith after the example of Abraham as interpreted by Søren Kierkegaard. Shestov would say after Tertullian 'I believe, because it is absurd' (*credo quia absurdum*), and he would think that the greatness of the absurdity contributes to the greatness of faith. He would even be more radical than Kierkegaard in the sense that he demanded not only a suspension of ethics, but a total rejection of it.

In Shestov's thought, Athens represents the symbol of reason, which means adaptation to this world of necessity, whereas Jerusalem stands for the faith in freedom as a continuous miracle that defies the laws of the world.[2] This freedom is absolutely not a freedom of choice between good and evil, but a transcendence of this world that is based on such choices. In other words, in a paradoxical way, evil can be abolished only if a moral choice between good and evil is transcended. Evil is abolished only through faith in the biblical God who is above being and reason, which is tantamount to a sort of rupture. For the latter, the one who is in despair about his failure is in a 'privileged' condition in relation to the one who is confident about his moral achievements. What is crucial is that Shestov shaped a radical sense of freedom that is totally different from freedom of choice and which is contrary to reason and conventional morality. Some of these elements will also be found in Nikolai Berdyaev, though in a different form. The reference to Shestov is necessary, because by drawing the conclusions of the spirit of Dostoevsky, he points to a notion of freedom that is the opposite of reason and rational knowledge of nature.

Freedom as liberation from givenness in the thought of Sergei Bulgakov (1871–1944)

The influence of German idealism is evident in the work of Sergei Bulgakov (1871–1944). This influence is possibly related to some important themes that we

[2] See: Léon Chestov, *Athènes et Jérusalem: Un essai de philosophie religieuse* (Paris: Vrin, 1938).

find in Bulgakov's work and afterwards in the thought of other thinkers of the Russian Diaspora, as well as in the 'theology of personhood' in Greece. In these two currents, those themes will often be linked to personalist and existentialist philosophies. But one has to remember that such themes go back to Romanticism and German idealism. What I mean is the link between freedom and personhood and between necessity and *ousia*. Sergei Bulgakov boldly states: 'In the creaturely spirit, nature is givenness or unfreedom. It is necessity that is realized in the freedom of the person'.[3] Bulgakov openly admits that such intuitions are to be found in modern German philosophers: 'Fichte showed convincingly, the creaturely I is, in its freedom, connected with necessity, with not-I, which reflects and limits it'.[4] The reason that he did not face a problem admitting these influences was that he considered Patristic theology as an incomplete project that can be complemented by modernity. And he regarded German Idealism as a fundamentally Christian philosophy which follows medieval Christian thought, actualizing it in the context of modern challenges.[5] One of the achievements of German idealism is its dialectical mode of thinking, which was turned by Bulgakov into an engagement for an antinomical way of thought, in which the freedom of personhood and the necessity of nature are seen as an antinomy that is vital for the divine-human drama. The notions of *kenosis* of the Son and of the Spirit are equally of Idealist influence. Such notions are found later in Lossky, but in a way that is much more in tune with Patristic theology and with an apophatic understanding of antinomy. What was for Bulgakov a rather positive way of indulging into the antinomical mysteries of Sophia became for Lossky a cause for respect to the unfathomable supra-essential character of God whose antinomies are irreducible and hence ungraspable by the human mind. Before we reach Lossky, it is however to be noted that another feature of Bulgakov's thought is his insistence on the creativity of the divine Sophia that influenced Nikolai Berdyaev, to whom we shall now turn.

The quest for a philosophy of 'abysmal' freedom and creativity in the thought of Nikolai Berdyaev (1874–1948)

Nikolai Berdyaev starts from the remark that there is no true anthropology in the thought of the Fathers,[6] especially in what concerns a positive affirmation of a particularly human creative freedom. The quest for this genuine human freedom is linked nevertheless with a higher idea of God, since the human revolution

[3] Sergius Bulgakov, *The Bride of the Lamb*, trans. Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 128.

[4] Ibid., 127.

[5] Aristotle Papanikolaou, 'From Sophia to Personhood: The development of 20th century Orthodox Trinitarian Theology', *Phronema* 33.2 (2018): 8–9.

[6] Nikolai Berdyaev, *The meaning of the creative act*, trans. Donald A. Lowrie (San Rafael, CA: Semantron Press, 2009), 93.

against the oppressive God of metaphysics would be an uprising of God himself.[7] And, inversely, the degradation of man would also mean the degradation of God. Berdyaev's thought follows some basic insights of German idealism. His main distinction is that between the 'spirit', which is close to the Kantian 'noumena' and 'nature' which is tantamount to the Kantian 'phenomena'. 'Nature' is the domain of objective scientific knowledge (*Verstand* in Kantian terms), whereas 'spirit' is that of 'subjects', persons, or hypostases (Berdyaev uses modern and patristic terms alike), that are free from objective determination (*Vernunft* according to Kant). Berdyaev is in favour of German idealism because he thinks that it has grasped both divine and created 'being' in their living dynamism. The Copernican turn is that whereas for Aristotle, imagination is an essentially passive capacity that receives imprints, after Kant, it is the human subject that forms experience actively even in its scientific comprehension, whereas productive imagination consists in an effort to bridge the phenomenal world of objects with the noumenal world of values. Besides, medieval metaphysics considered immobility and simplicity as the supreme attributes of divine perfection. For Berdyaev, on the contrary, the higher divine characteristics are spirit, life, freedom, action, and movement.[8] But these imply a God who is a multitude of persons to the detriment of the metaphysical demand for simplicity. Being a Trinity implies for Berdyaev a sort of *kenosis*, already at the higher theological level, which is also evident in the dynamic character of God's action in creation and history. The unity of divinity can of course coexist with the multiplicity of the three hypostases, but only if we are ready to sacrifice our idolatrous rationalistic way of thinking which favours ontological monism. The truth of the Trinity is thus approached by antinomical thought, whereas non antinomical rationalist thought leads to heresy.[9] In other words, the heretics of the first centuries were not those who thought about God in an absurd way, but, on the contrary, those who tried to subsume God in the idolatry of reason, of a Hellenic or Jewish bend. In order to approach God, one needs a non-rationalistic thought in which rest could coexist with motion and perfection with dynamism.

Nikolai Berdyaev uses the notion of *Ungrund* by the German mystic Jacob Böhme (1571–1624) in order to formulate such a novel comprehension of freedom and dynamism. *Ungrund* could be translated as 'bottomlessness' or 'groundlessness'. The *Ungrund* is considered a 'Godhead' that is ontologically prior to God as a striving and thirst for freedom. This notion by Böhme initiated voluntarism in modern German thought, as it meant that will precedes being. Analogous notions are formulated by F.W.J. Schelling, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Arthur Schopenhauer, Friedrich

[7] Nikolai Berdyaev, *The divine and the human* (San Rafael, CA: Semantron Press, 2008), 2.

[8] Romilo Knežević, *Homo Theurgos: Freedom according to John Zizioulas and Nikolai Berdyaev* (in print in English with L'Édition du Cerf, Patrimoines, 2018), 185.

[9] Nikolai Berdyaev, *Freedom and the Spirit*, trans. Oliver Fielding Clarke (San Rafael, CA: Semantron Press, 2009), 192–93.

Nietzsche, Nikolai Hartmann and others. The logic of this thought is that for man to be free, there first has to be a similar freedom in God. But the notion of God has to be liberated by the traditional link between the divinity and the absolute perfection (or pure actuality) of being that we encounter in classical metaphysics, such as in Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas. Two interconnected problems with the theory of *Ungrund* are that: i) It considers progress in God, leading to the so-called 'Process' theologies. Human freedom is based on divine freedom only to the degree that anthropogony is dependent on a Theogony, in a modern Christian version of Hesiod. ii) It ultimately implies some form of evil as intrinsically implicated in the development of the Good, being thus in tune with the dialectics of German idealism. It must be noted that putting an undetermined will beyond being is not completely novel. In Neoplatonism, for example, such as in Plotinus and Proclus, the One is beyond being and intellection and it could be considered as tantamount to a very primordial will and energy. In Christian thought, also, sometimes the Father is regarded as possessing an initial good will (*προκαταρκτική εὐδοκία*) that is 'then' carried out by the Logos, who expresses the Father, thus leading to Being and to creation in the Spirit. The Father is thus linked to simplicity of will, the Logos to expression and form, and the Spirit to perfection. (Of course, this peculiar Triadology coexists with the more preponderant one of the common essence and energy of the three Persons).

A highly distinctive trait of the modern German formulation of the initial undetermined will is that it could be seen as somehow comprising evil, which is a necessary part of the dialectic—a view that had been adamantly rejected both by Neoplatonic and Christian thinkers in late antique and medieval times. Nikolai Berdyaev develops the thought of Böhme by considering the *Ungrund* as a *μὴ ὄν* that exists outside God. The notion of *μὴ ὄν* is contrasted to that of the *οὐκ ὄν*. The latter means the absolute nothingness 'out of which' God created the world according the Judeo-Christian tradition, whereas the *μὴ ὄν* is a sort of potentiality that could become a being, but is not yet being, closer to the Hesiodean chaos or the Anaximandrean ἄπειρον. Berdyaev has probably placed the *Ungrund* outside God in order to free him from evil. There is however no dualism, since the Unground is not 'yet' being. It is the chaotic origin of both uncreated freedom and God, which are united.[10] According to Knežević, the reason for posing the *Ungrund* outside of God is to reconcile divine omnipotence and human created freedom. For Berdyaev, God's power is not that of the pure actuality of Aristotelian metaphysics; it is a power that coexists with a powerlessness over the undetermined and uncreated character of the *Ungrund*. According to McLachlan, true freedom evades the determinateness of Being;[11] it thus has to be uncreated but put besides the determinate God of Being. In this way, God would be conceived in a way in which his supremacy would

[10] Knežević, *Homo Theurgos*, 170.

[11] James M. McLachlan, *The desire to be God: Freedom and the Other in Sartre and Berdyaev* (New York: Peter Lang, 1992), 122.

be combined with free indeterminate potency. And there would be a divine ontological grounding equally for human freedom, the latter not being threatened by the omnipotent prescient God of metaphysics. Putting the *Ungrund* outside God is tantamount to a divine *kenosis*, that happens 'first' at the theological level, but is then evident in the Incarnation of Christ. It means that God is not static but is an ever-developing supra-being[12] that can at any time bring radical novelty in tune with his own indeterminate character. Apophaticism becomes thus fundamental in theology in harmony with an anthropology in which original creativity is possible. The *Ungrund* is thus more like a symbol that helps us glimpse into the *kenosis* that happens in the interior of theology.

It is this *kenosis* of God before the possibility of freedom that accounts for divine freedom as a combination of power and powerlessness, which is to be found 'first' in the kenotic intra-Trinitarian dialogue of the persons and which then becomes evident in the *kenosis* of God during the creation of the world and the Incarnation. Christ thus brings the intra-Trinitarian *kenosis* of God into creation, making human innovation possible. Such a sign of innovation is the constant upsurge of new values in human history.[13] The distinction between God and the *Ungrund* can also take the form of the distinction between God and the *Godhead* (*Gott* and *Gottheit* in German), which exist in indivisible unity, the latter referring to the abysmal freedom that grounds God as a Trinity of Persons. The kenotic character of God 'starts' in the fact that he somehow 'accepts' this abysmal freedom that presupposes the dynamic character of his being and 'then' develops intra-Trinitarian relations of love and dialogue between the Persons. God's kenotic character means that he is above movement and rest, as conceived by rationalistic thought. There is an intra-Trinitarian 'movement' tantamount to the generation of the hypostases and the love between them. This kenotic character of God is manifest in the creation of the world, in which God leaves space for the creation of natural otherness, and it is concluded in the Godmanhood of Christ who leaves space for the manifestation of his created human nature alongside his divine one. For Berdyaev, the creation of the world is continuous, which means that man participates in it, thus being able to bring radical newness to the world[14] and even to the divine life itself, as even God awaits his enrichment by man.[15]

The anthropological *enjeu* is a positive human freedom that would be freedom *for* and not only freedom *from*. Following a favourite theme of German idealism, Berdyaev speaks about the new age of the Spirit that begins after Godmanhood. This is a period of perpetual creativity in which the figure of the artistic genius has an indispensable place alongside that of the saint, leading a 'monastic life in the

[12] Knežević, *Homo Theurgos*, 177.
[13] Ibid., 200–201.
[14] Ibid., 219.
[15] Jean-Louis Segundo, *Berdiaeff: Une Réflexion chrétienne sur la personne* (Paris: Aubier, 1963), 128.

world'.[16] This combination of geniality and asceticism consists in a freedom from givenness. In the age of the Spirit, the 'freedom from' of the ascetic (freedom from passions and from sin) can be complemented by the 'freedom for' of the artistic genius (freedom for novelty and originality). The redemption of the age of the Son is thus completed in the creativity of the age of the Spirit. For Berdyaev, genius is contrasted to talent. Talent implies obedience and adaptation to the given, whereas genius is revolutionary and means a break with givenness.[17] The artists and thinkers that influenced Berdyaev in his quest are Aleksandr Pushkin, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Lev Tolstoy, Andrei Byelii, Léon Bloy, Villiers de l'Isle Adam, Verlaine, Joris-Karl Huysmans, Henrik Ibsen, Friedrich Nietzsche, Ernest Hello, Stéphane Mallarmé, and Maurice Maeterlinck.[18] This freedom from givenness seems to mean a participation in Godmanhood through the Spirit, since both God and man as his image draw from the creative primordial freedom of the *Ungrund*. This participation could even be viewed as becoming 'uncreated' by grace, according to the very bold claim of Saint Gregory Palamas (*Triads* 3.1.31). According to Berdyaev's theology of creativity, the artistic genius could be considered as participating in this uncreated divine freedom sharing in its absolute character. True art is inherently Christian, since it is genuine Christianity that seeks transcendence, whereas other kinds of art, such as pagan art, are quite happy with adapting themselves to the given of the world. True art is a non-submission to the world, a theurgy in the etymological sense of the world as a work of God through man.

From the 'Ungrund' to the 'hyperousion': Freedom as irreducibility to nature in the thought of Vladimir Lossky (1903–1958)

In Vladimir Lossky, one finds a critique of rationalism similar to that of Nikolai Berdyaev. What Lossky proposes as an alternative theological epistemology is apophatic participation (i.e., a total psycho-corporeal communion with God). Apophatic participation means encountering God in his true ungraspable character that might seem *antinomic* for the human recipient. Even though Lossky does not indulge in the dialectical character of God as Berdyaev does, he does think that God's supra-essential being may present antinomies that it would be futile to reconcile through a monistic rationalistic approach. The role of theology is rather to put the emphasis on full communion with God (i.e., to a meeting with him in all his richness that surpasses a static understanding). One difference between Lossky's and Berdyaev's points of view is that the latter is interested in human and cosmic creative evolution and thus stresses the importance of the dialectical emergence of newness

[16] Berdyaev, *The meaning of the creative act*, 178.
[17] Ibid., 175.
[18] Ibid., 240–41.

both in God and in His creatures, whereas Lossky is more interested in an ontology of full participation in the existing God.

Vladimir Lossky is more faithful to the Eastern Fathers in that he does not favour—as Berdyaev does—a German philosophical term such as the *Ungrund*, but prefers the Patristic term ὑπερούσιος, meaning that God is beyond being and essence. The latter can be attributed to God only in a metaphorical way and if we speak of God as a supreme Being, then we fail to participate in his dynamic character. The importance of apophaticism lies in the fact that it constitutes a reverent approach to God that does not try to exhaust him in finite human reason. Apophaticism can equally entail a critique of metaphysics (i.e., God viewed as an explanation of physical beings that is in continuity with them), ontotheology (God viewed as one being among many, even if he is the first and supreme being) and ontologism (the effort to reduce everything to a notion of being). A fundamental divine antinomy is that between the essence and the energies of God. 'The "unions" are […] the superessential nature of God. […] The distinctions […] are the processions (*proodoi*) beyond Himself, His manifestations (*ekphanseis*), which Dionysius also calls virtues or forces (*dynameis*), in which everything that exists partakes, thus making God known in His creatures'.[19] Lossky unites different patristic terms such as the *πρόοδοι*, *ἐκφάνσεις* and *δυνάμεις* of ps.-Dionysius with the *ἐνέργεια*, as understood by Saint Gregory Palamas. It is important to have in mind that for Lossky divine essence is not static; it is, in reality, a hyper-essence that transcends the determination of being and knowledge. At the same time, this ecstatic hyper-essence is manifested both eternally and in the world through the energies that also *are* God.

The distinction is thus less one between essence and energy and more between, on the one hand, the indeterminate and ecstatic hyper-essence, and, on the other, its manifestation through the energy that can be participated in. This antinomy is experienced by the faithful who feels that she cannot exhaust God when she participates in Him. In the participation of the divine one has an irreducible simultaneous experience of both transcendence and immanence. This antinomy cannot therefore be reconciled. Like Berdyaev, Lossky is quite bold in ascertaining that simplicity and the principle of non-contradiction might be supreme values for philosophy but can only lead us to the God of the philosophers. The latter is too pure in comparison to the true God participated in by the faithful in all His richness that might be subjectively received as antinomic. But this antinomy is present above all in the Incarnation of God which constitutes a challenge for logical consistency.[20] Christ's Incarnation is paradoxical in nature, but this paradox is the basis for participation in the divinity in a way that is real and comprises the integrity of the human psy-

[19] Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1976), 72.

[20] Aristotle Papanikolaou, *Being with God: Trinity, apophaticism and divine-human communion* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), 28.

cho-corporeal compound. Theological discourse should thus not reconcile the antinomies for the favour of metaphysical simplicity but should rather be antinomic in order to do justice to the tension between cataphatic and apophatic theologies.[21]

Participation in Christ offers us an experience not only of the antinomy between hyper-essence and energies, but also of the one between the hyper-essence and the three persons. Lossky follows here a method of 'deconceptualization' by which philosophical notions such as that of the hypostasis are deprived of their rationalistic content in order to arrive at their theological meaning.[22] If for the philosopher the hypostasis is the substance or the individual, the theologian will follow an apophatic '*kenosis*' of this content in order to understand the hypostasis as irreducible to nature/essence. Each hypostasis of the Trinity does not have content graspable by the human mind through definitions. In fact, the 'impossibility of any common definition of the three hypostases' means that 'they are alike in the fact that they are dissimilar'.[23] The apophatic (non-)definition of the hypostasis is that each hypostasis presents absolute irreducible uniqueness and impossibility of reduction to common essence or nature. The hypostasis is not an individual substance like the Aristotelian *πρώτη οὐσία* that can be subsumed to the common essence.[24] For Lossky, the hypostasis is a person but not an individual. The difference between the two lies exactly in the fact that a person is a deconceptualized individual: 'The individual is part of a species, or rather he is only a part of it: he divides the nature to which he belongs, he is the result of atomization, so to say […] Individuals are at once opposite and repetitive: each possesses its fraction of nature; but indefinitely divided, it is always the same nature, without authentic diversity'.[25] The two interconnected problems of the individual are that the individual is a fragment of nature that separates it and that, as such, it is ultimately reducible to nature in a hierarchy of species and genera. The person, on the contrary, neither divides nature nor is subsumed by it. God is not a Trinity of individuals, because God does not know of a subordination of species and genera in his hyper-essence. But he is a Trinity of persons, because the persons for Lossky mean a simultaneous '*ekstasis*' and '*hypostasis*'. The persons exceed nature, but at the same time they make it subsist. The persons cannot of course exist without nature, but they do signify for Lossky an 'enhypostasization' of nature, its subsistence in concrete modes.

Lossky gradually moved from an apophatic comprehension of the person as irreducibility to nature to a more positive one based on the patristic notion of *τίς* that is interpreted as absolute uniqueness. This notion of personhood is particularly

[21] Ibid., 44.

[22] Ibid., 54–56.

[23] Vladimir Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God*, edited by John H. Erickson and Thomas E. Bird (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974), 113.

[24] Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 50.

[25] Vladimir Lossky, *Orthodox Theology: An Introduction*, translated by Ian and Ihita Kesarcodi-Watson (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1978), 41–42.

patristic and should not be confounded with the philosophical or sociological one.[26] '"Person" signifies the irreducibility of man to this nature – "irreducubility" and not "something irreducible" or "something which makes man irreducible to his nature" precisely because it cannot be a question here of "something" distinct from "another nature" but of someone who is distinct from his own nature while still containing it, who makes it exist as human nature by this overstepping and yet does not exist in himself beyond the nature which he "enhypostasizes" and which he constantly exceeds.'[27] Exceeding nature means that the person is free in relation to nature.[28] The uniqueness of the someone cannot be reduced to individual attributes; it is apophatically undefinable.

The personal attributes that distinguish the divine persons are not natural or individual attributes but denote relations of origin that cannot be further conceptualized. For example, we cannot have a conceptual analysis of the difference between the generation of the Son and the *ekporeusis* of the Spirit. The *Monarchia* of the Father is important in order to safeguard that the persons will not be subsumed by the unique nature. In order to exist as persons, the person must have a personal and not a natural cause. But for Lossky there is no subordination of the nature to the person either. The monarchy of the Father entails an irreducible antinomy in which 'the one nature and the three hypostases are presented simultaneously in our understanding'.[29] The monarchy of the Father does not have connotations of power. On the contrary: If the cause was natural, there would be either a subordination of the hypostases as in Neoplatonism or a polytheistic fragmentation of the divine substance. Since the cause is personal, it entails an equality of nature, power, dignity and honour. The monarchy of the Father is then productive of equality instead of inequality.[30] And, even though we apophatically abstain from attributing conceptual content to the personal attributes of the Trinity, this simultaneous existence of personal uniqueness and natural equality could be viewed as a combination of freedom and love in the Christian God. The monarchy of the Father means freedom from nature, but also equality in nature, or, even more, a loving communion of nature and activity. The fundamental antinomy in Trinitarian being is thus the one between freedom and love that coexist in the Trinitarian God. However, this line of thinking should not be stressed too far, as divine freedom and love are referred both to the personhood and to the (hyper-)essense of God (i.e., to the totality of God).

For Lossky, divine freedom is not explained only by the personal character of God and the monarchy of the Father, but also by the supra-substantial character of his essence, which prevents a static and determinate character of his Being. Both

[26] Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God*, 106.
[27] Ibid., 120
[28] Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, 42.
[29] Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God*, 81.
[30] Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, 47.

divine personhood and hyper-essence entail freedom in God and both do not have a particular conceptual content that could be grasped by our intellects. Divine freedom is thus also linked with apophasis, for example, with the fact that both divine personhood and hyper-essence exceed determinate characteristics that could be conquered gnosiologically. Besides, Lossky is well aware of the nature/will distinction proclaimed by Saint Athanasius. The will is common to the three Persons of the Trinity. The generation of the Son and the *ekporeusis* of the Spirit are not products of the divine will; only the contingent created world is such a product.[31] On the other hand, one cannot say that they are unfree either. Thus, the distinction between 'nature' and 'will' is considered as one between two different modes of existence—in the essence and outside of the essence.[32] The generation of the Son and the *ekporeusis* of the Spirit are interior to the (hyper-)essence of God, whereas the energy is a manifestation also outside of the essence. Of course, divine energy is uncreated, eternal and simple. But the contingent world is also a product of this common divine energy and, in the latter, simple energy can be perceived as multiple. One could deduce that freedom and love concern the totality of God and not only personhood.

Besides, God's freedom seems not to be considered identical with His will. God's will is distinguished from his nature, following Saint Athanasius's distinction. The divine will is common and it can result in contingent products as the created world. But divine freedom seems to be an ampler notion, since it also refers to the personal freedom guaranteed by the *monarchy* of the Father. Perhaps it should be noted here that this personal freedom of God is not a freedom from *essence*, but a freedom from *essentialism*. What Lossky wants to say is that the personal *monarchia* of the Father entails that God as a Trinity of Persons is not subsumed by an essence that could be considered necessary and/or determinate and/or approached by our intellect. The personal *monarchia* of the Father means thus an abolition of essentialism (i.e., of a non-apophatic epistemological and ontological approach), through which one would try to define God in his essence and thus consider certain necessities in his Being. Thus, expressions such as 'freedom from the limitations of nature' do not actually apply to God's essence but tend to evade a wrong essentialist epistemological attitude towards God.

What actually happens with God's nature or essence is that it is rather a 'hyper-essence' (i.e., non-determinate and exceeding Being). Thus, freedom is to be found also in the supra-essential character of God's 'essence', which is termed 'essence' only metaphorically, and not only in God's personhood. The 'enemy' is not essence but essentialism as an ontological and epistemological human stance, the opposite of which is apophaticism. The latter pertains both to God's personhood and to God's hyper-essence, which are considered an antinomical distinction in a free hyper-Be-

[31] Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 85.
[32] Ibid., 86.

ing. There is no equation between person-essence and freedom-necessity in Lossky. Divine freedom is articulated both through the *monarchia* of the Father (and the relevant personal relations of origin) and the supra-substantial character of God's hyper-essence. Both are revered apophatically, whereas necessity rather pertains to an essentialist kind of human thinking that is totally rejected in relation to God and considered the opposite of apophasis: 'The negative approach, which places us face to face with the primordial antinomy of absolute identity and no less absolute diversity in God, does not seek to conceal this antinomy but to express it fittingly, so that the Mystery of the Trinity might make us transcend the philosophical mode of thinking and that the Truth might make us free from our human limitations, by altering our means of understanding'.[33] The question is thus not one of God being liberated from his essence, but one of humans being liberated from essentialism, in order to have full communion in the freedom that is God both in the Trinity of Persons and in his hyper-essence manifested through the energies.

In a very profound remark, Papanikolaou notices that there might be a tension in Lossky between, on the one hand, proclaiming the apophatic character of personhood and, on the other, relating some characteristics, such as freedom and love to personhood.[34] However, one could notice that the character of God as personal freedom and love is considered as a fact of revelation, not as a logical necessity approached rationally. And this fact of revelation does not create a positive concept as to what 'Fatherhood', 'Filiality' or 'Spirituality' really are. The revelation that God is freedom and love rather helps us avoid essentialism and approach God as an antinomy between unity of hyper-essential 'essence' and Trinity of Persons, both exceeding *our own* human notions of necessity. Of course, revelation might be considered as offering us some sort of positive knowledge, for example that God is a Trinity or that the Father is the cause of the other two Persons. But this is non-conceptual knowledge; it is rather knowledge that is implicit in our holistic real communion with God, which includes both his revelation in Christ and our ecclesial participation in him.

The reason of Lossky's ardent opposition to the Western dogma of Filioque is precisely one against a certain epistemological stance. The problem of the Filioque is for Lossky primarily one of ontological and epistemological essentialism. In Thomism, the Persons are considered as relations of opposition that are interior to the divine substance. In this way: i) the Persons are subsumed to the essence; ii) the Persons are exhausted to relations; iii) the relations are also relations of opposition and not only of origin; iv) they can be comprehended by dialectical reasoning that can grasp a dialectical 'evolution' of one divine substance through different processions and oppositions. For Lossky, on the contrary, retaining the fundamental and irreconcilable antinomy between person and hyper-essence also means that the Persons

[33] Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God*, 80.
[34] Papanikolaou, *Being with God*, 65–66.

constitute an absolute otherness that is not exhausted in relations. 'The relations only serve to express the hypostatic diversity of the Three; they are not the basis of it. It is the absolute diversity of the three hypostases which determines their differing relations to one another, not vice versa'.[35] And, even though Lossky's thought is *antinomical*, *it is not dialectical* as in Thomas Aquinas or in modern Hegelian interpretations of Western Trinitarianism. The antinomy of unity and diversity in God is experienced in the event of full communion in him and is not reconcilable through reasoning. The personal character of God means exactly a resistance to a subsumption in a higher synthesis.

Lossky's novel view of personhood is also evident in the fact that he links some traditional features of Christian theology particularly to personhood. Similar to Berdyaev, Lossky admits that he was not able to find a full-blown anthropology of personhood in the Eastern Fathers.[36] A complete anthropology of personhood is thus a task for our age. In this task, however, two things should be kept in mind: i) Lossky seems to think that the image of God in man is particularly linked to personhood. ii) He also seems to think that there has been an anthropology of personhood during the medieval ages in the West, but that it failed. In the West, Boethius (c.477–524) famously defined the person as an 'individual substance of rational nature' (*substantia individua rationalis naturae*). One could thus argue that what was lacking in the East, namely an anthropology of personhood, did take place in the West, even though this question is a complex one.[37] But Lossky thinks that the line of thinking followed by Boethius actually means a separation between anthropology and Christology or, in other words, an anthropology of personhood that is independent from the Christology of personhood. The reason is that Christ does indeed assume a human substance that is individualized in the sense that it has particular properties (*φύσις ἐν ἀτόμῳ θεωρουμένη*), but at the same time he assumes neither a human individual nor a human person, since the opposite would signify Nestorianism. From this event of revelation, one should reach a precious apophatic conclusion that an individualized human substance does not exhaust the mystery of personhood.[38] The fact that Christ does assume an individualized substance without however being a human person means that personhood is *something more* than the individualized substance, even if the two might seem to coincide in the case of human individuals. One could add that following this line of reasoning the notion of the individual is also not exhausted in the individualized substance. But, if we follow Lossky's definitions, one would say that the individual results from the division of

[35] Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God*, 79.

[36] Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God*, 112

[37] Fr Nikolaos Loudovikos calls into doubt the significance of this supposed difference between East and West on the subject of personhood and individuality. For fr Loudovikos's most updated view on this debate, see: Nikolaos Loudovikos, 'Dialogical nature, enousion person, and non-ecstatic will in St Maximus the Confessor: The conclusion of a long debate', *Analogia* 2.1 (2017): 79–110.

[38] See the brilliant remarks of Aristotle Papanikolaou in: Papanikolaou, *Being with God*, 116.

nature that is broken in a hierarchy of genera and species until the individual that constitutes the most specific species. God is not a Trinity of individuals, because God's nature does not comprise such a hierarchy of genera and species and is not thusly divided, even if certain Fathers, such as John of Damascus did consider a Trinity of individuals in God, as Lossky himself admits.

For such reasons, it seems that, for Lossky, it is personhood that constitutes the apophatic mystery par excellence of irreducibility to nature, a mystery that we find both in Triadology and in Christology, and that could arguably be the basis also for anthropology. The individual might not be exhausted to the individualized substance, as we learn from Christology, but, for Lossky, it results from the division of nature and should not be the basis for a genuine anthropology of personhood. In this case, an Orthodox anthropology of personhood should follow a different way than that of Boethius. At the same time, it should be noted that Lossky's apophatic (non-) definition of person as 'irreducibility to nature' *is not used as a polemical notion against nature as such*. It might be regarded as a polemical notion against essentialism or individualism as anthropological and epistemological stances. But at the same time, Lossky does not seem to conceive of a primacy of Person over nature. He only remarks the difference between person and individual, the former 'being' an apophatic mystery of irreducibility to nature, while the latter resulting from a division interior to nature. At the same time, if we ground our anthropology of personhood in Christology instead of an independent anthropology, what follows is that the hypostatic/personal mode of Christ in relation to his Father in the Spirit also becomes the model for human personhood. What follows is that the image of God in man, the κατ' εἰκόνα, is 'situated' especially in personhood and is fulfilled by Christ, even if we encounter here the paradox of a divine Person realizing the mystery of human personhood.

For Lossky, the image of God is 'to be a personal being, that is to say, a free responsible being'.[39] This call is realized in Christ who is fully obedient to the Father, as we observe in the prayer in Gethsemane. Human personhood could thus follow this christological model of freedom from the limitations of nature. Thus, even though Lossky seemed to mourn the lack of an anthropology of personhood in the Eastern Fathers, he himself also seems to reject an independent anthropology of personhood, as the one followed by Boethius, considering it an unfortunate Western line of reasoning. What he proposes is a divine model of personhood for human personhood that happens in Christ. This does not necessarily entail a polemical notion of personhood against nature, since the person is only apophatically considered 'irreducibility to nature'. At the same time, we do find in Lossky a certain consideration that the obedience of Christ to the Father is a model of freedom in relation to one's nature, or a dignity consisting in being able to liberate oneself from nature.[40] This

[39] Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, 71.
[40] Ibid., 72.

means that even though in Trinitarian theology there is no primacy of personhood over nature, since the two are seen as a primordial antinomy, in Christology there is a certain sense that the divine person of Christ is offering his human nature to the Father in a personal mode of obedience.[41] He thus constitutes a model for the human κατ' εἰκόνα after which human persons can also be free from their nature, offering it to God, without however abandoning it, since the goal is rather the transfiguration of nature in a new mode. Then, even if there are no polemics between person and nature in Lossky, we do find a sort of locating the fulfilment of the image of God in man (κατ' εἰκόνα) in the personal mode of Christological obedience to the Father rather than in attributes of human nature. This personal understanding of obedience is also related to a personal understanding of *kenosis*, to which we can now turn.

For Lossky, *kenosis* does not concern the whole divine nature. It is peculiar to the Son. However it is regarded not only as pertaining to the human nature of Christ, but as 'the mode of existence of the Divine Person who was sent into the world, the Person in whom was accomplished the common will of the Trinity whose source is the Father'.[42] The *kenosis* is thus rather viewed as a hypostatical mode of the Son also in relation to the Father, even if it basically concerns the economy. 'There is a profound continuity between the personal being of the Son as renunciation and His earthly *kenosis*'.[43] At some points he might also speak about the 'mystery of the self-emptying, of the *kenosis* of the Holy Spirit's coming into the world',[44] leaving 'His own Person concealed beneath His Godhead'.[45] A distinction might be spotted in the fact that while the Son conceals the glory of his divinity in the *kenosis*, the Spirit hides his Person. However, both Persons fulfil the good will of the Father and one could say that the theme of the two *kenoseis* of the Son and the Spirit is structurally analogous to the theme of the two economies, which has been a much criticized theological development in the early thought of Vladimir Lossky. What concerns us here is that there seems to be an intrinsic relation between *kenosis* and personhood.[46] The *kenosis* is possible thanks to the irreducible and free character of the Person that can conceal the glory of his nature, in the case of the Son or even his own personhood, in the case of the Spirit. Human *kenosis* is then but a realization of the divine image in man, consisting in personhood.

Thus, one could say that, on the one hand, Lossky wishes to situate the image of God in the total personhood rather than in a psychological attribute, such as the intellect, the reason, or the freedom of will. This insistence is related to his avoiding intellectualism and rationalism, which he considers as the vices of Western thought. By following the Palamite anthropology, Lossky would be against a detached anthro-

[41] Ibid., 72
[42] Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 145.
[43] Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, 101.
[44] Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 168.
[45] Ibid., 168.
[46] Papanikolaou, *Being with God*, 109–13.

pology, where only one part of man would bear the 'image of God', and he finds in person a way to articulate a human catholicity that would be in the image of God in a universal way and in a christological perspective. On the other hand, this insistence in personhood, which is arguably a modern development, does not develop in Lossky in a full-blown person versus nature dialectic, since Lossky understands theosis also in a naturalistic way. The hypostatic union is the basis for deification, but the latter also means the participation in the natural divine energies of God, which also permeate human nature. Besides, the divine energy is the foundation of the cosmos and is present in it from the very beginning of creation. One critique that could be made to Lossky's view is that the person is used as a means or as a carrier for the transference of energies from God to creation. The hypostatic union would thus be not the most eminent goal in itself but a sheer means to 'transport' the energies. Once the hypostatic union has taken place, the rest of the salvation takes place through a more or less ahistorical participation in the energies. Such a line of criticism might have some ground in the sense that the hypostatic union could indeed be viewed as ensuring the participation of humanity in the divine energies. At the same time, this critique would be, in my opinion, unjust, since what Lossky tries to do is rather to view person and nature as complementary for salvation. Human personhood, differing from sheer individualism, has a particular 'mission' in the history of salvation as God's image, but its fulfilment by the hypostatic union of Christ means a deification also of nature by divine energy. What is more, the mutual complementarity between person and nature can be observed if we are to follow the logic of the initial much criticized view of Lossky about the two economies: One could say that the Christological event is based on a personal mode of union of the two natures, but it then results in a sort of quasi objective salvation of human nature. On the other hand, the economy of the Spirit means an offering of the common natural energies of God, but paradoxically leads to a personification and individualization of the faithful in relation to the analogy of their personal participation in these energies.

Even if there has been a sharp and just critique to these arguably novel soteriological views, what I want to argue here is that Lossky rather experimented with different ways of showing a complementarity of person and nature in salvation. In any case, he does not seem to have endorsed a one-sided naturalism to the detriment of history. Participation in energies, such as the divine light, is sometimes seen by Lossky as having an eschatological character, since it is tantamount to an experience of the eschatological 'eighth day'.[47] If someone argues that Lossky's view of divinization as participation in the natural energies points towards naturalism, it could also be pointed out that Lossky was one of the main modern theologians who situated the divine image in personhood instead of some natural attribute, as was the case with

[47] Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God*, 60.

most of the Fathers in both East and West. Lossky's stance could best be described as a sort of 'personalist Neo-Palamism', in which personalism serves as a means to actualize Patristic thought in reaction to modern individualism and rationalism, but in dialogue with contemporary Western currents of thought, whereas nature retains soteriological significance due to the influence of the Palamite and Dionysian theological archetype. In the anthropology of this Neopalamite personalism, after baptism, a human person can integrate in himself both the human and the divine energies (by grace),[48] following the model of Christ, who integrates in his hypostasis the divine and the human energies, with the important qualification that unlike a human person, the divine Person of Christ also bears the divine (hyper-) essence.

Freedom as historical contingency in the thought of Georges Florovsky (1893–1979) and the notion of podvig

In his theology of creation, Georges Florovsky formed a strong notion of the contingency of the world in relation to God, drawing some bolder conclusions which were only inherent in the Patristic tradition. His point of departure seems to be the influence of Karl Barth (1886–1968) who distinguishes radically between approaching God through nature and through revelation. In what concerns the former, there seems to be no natural capacity to approach the God of the revelation whatsoever. Revelation is, inversely, an approach of God to men, which is totally different not only from natural theology, but also from natural religion in general.[49] Revelation, however, does not consist in an one-sided divine monologue, but provokes a dialogical syn-ergy between God and man, which is established inside history firstly as a testament and then as a Church based on God's Incarnation. In a later phase of his work (late 1940s-early 1950s), Florovsky seems to have been influenced by the works Christus und die Zeit (Zürich: 1945) by Oscar Cullmann and Essai sur le mystère de l'histoire (Paris: Seuil, 1953) by Jean Daniélou. His interest thus now lies in the history of salvation as a very concrete salvific interaction between God and man. But the latter can also be expressed in dogmatics, which nevertheless are not abstract, but form an indispensable part of this same history of salvation.[50] Christian theology is thus not an abstract meaning—philosophical, metaphysical, or other—but a systematic interpretation of the history of salvation.[51]

[48] Papanikolaou, *Being with God*, 124.

[49] Georges Florovsky, 'The work of the Holy Spirit in Revelation', *The Christian East* 13.2 (1932): 49–64.

[50] See: Nikolaos Asproulis, *Το Μυστήριο του Χριστού και το Μυστήριο της Εκκλησίας: Γεώργιος Φλωρόφσκυ και Ιωάννης Ζηζιούλας σε διάλογο γύρω από τη θεολογική μεθοδολογία* (Ph.D. thesis, Πάτρα: Ελληνικό Ανοιχτό Πανεπιστήμιο, 2016), 77; available at the link http://thesis.ekt.gr/thesisBookReader/id/37547#page/24/mode/2up , last visit 6/3/2019.

[51] Georges Florovsky, 'The Eastern Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Movement', *Theology Today* 7.1 (1950): 68–79.

Florovsky seems to initially espouse the radical disjunction between natural theology and revelation proposed by Barth or the opposition between Athens and Jerusalem proposed by Shestov. At the same time, he thinks that the Greek Fathers have managed to achieve a synthesis between the supra-rational given of the revelation and its philosophical expression in the Hellenic linguistic paradigm of their time. But this achievement is itself part of the history of salvation. It is not an eternal philosophical truth; it is the product of a concrete incarnation that took place in a specific historical context. Such a notion of incarnationism helps Florovsky avoid two opposite dangers: namely, on the one hand, abstract unhistorical rationalism, and, on the other, contextual relativism. For Florovsky, the dogmatics of the Greek Fathers is a concrete historical inculturation that cannot be turned into an eternal truth in an abstract universalist sense. But on the other hand, it is arguably part of God's salvific dialogue with humanity. The Incarnation of the Logos in Greek words is considered almost as important as his Incarnation by assuming a nature with particular properties, including his belonging to a Jewish genealogy. A de-hellenization of Christianity would thus be less the loss of an eternal contemplated truth and more the loss of a concrete historical incarnation that has meaning not as a perennial philosophical system but as a specific historical dialogue between God and humanity.

In Florovsky's thought, elements of personalism as well as of critique of rationalism are linked with his novel evaluation of history as a category that is distinct from nature and its rational contemplation. History is conceived as the place of dialogue between the personal God and the personal human being that constitutes his image. In this historical dialogue, God is revealed in a totally different and novel way in comparison to his fragmentary revelation through nature and its rational contemplation by man. This revelation is initiated by the Testament but is concluded with the Incarnation and the Church that this Incarnation initiates in the Spirit. Then nature is thus regarded as somehow being itself integrated if not subordinated to history. The assumption of the created and human nature by Christ is regarded as part of a historical dialogue, rather than the other way around (e.g., history being considered a part of natural evolution or of a divine plan that takes place primarily through the intelligent planning of nature). It seems that in Florovsky, history is the meaning and the final cause of nature, rather than the other way around. But this means that nature is integrated in a free and in some sense contingent dialogue between personal beings, whereas the inverse, namely an integration of history in nature would be tantamount to a deterministic evolution of preconceived natural forms in time.

In this sense, Florovsky is a modern thinker who developed Patristic thought, for example the notion of the *logoi* of nature, in an original way. What is common with the notion of the *logoi* is that for Florovsky we also find in history a sense of fulfilment of God's intention. His general scheme is one of a historical distance between

a typological symbol and its fulfilment at the appropriate time in the future, while humanity lives in a state of anticipation during the interval. Nikolaos Asproulis justly criticizes this as a sort of latent historicism in Florovsky's thought, since a one-sided emphasis on achievement and fulfilment inside history could be tantamount to accepting a schema of linear historical progress, thus calling into doubt God's ability to provoke genuine surprise or to frustrate created notions of historical progress. It seems that, after all, Florovsky does owe his general line of thinking to German idealism more than he would like to admit. At the same time, he is rather a theologian of dialogue and not a philosopher of dialectics. Fulfilments inside history are achievements of a divine-human dialogue in which both God and humanity consent. At one instance, Florovsky uses the term 'epigenesis' in order to describe historical developments, in contrast to 'evolution'.[52] Whereas 'evolution' means a development of totally inherent capacities, 'epigenesis' means a development that is contingent and dependent on the environment, in contrast to theories of 'pre-formationism'.

It seems that there is a certain tension in Florovsky's thought. On the one hand, he indulges in considerations of historical entelechies that lead history to progress until its eschatological goal. On the other hand, he would not espouse absolute historicism or idealist historical dialectics. What is important in history is that it is contingent and therefore open to surprises. The two parts of the tension could be reconciled if we consider that it is God who brings history to fruition through his interventions and the fulfilments of his promises. On the other hand, man is free to accept, to reject, or even to modify God's determinations. The result of the historical dialogue[53] is thus not necessarily linear or progressive in a dialectical way; it is open to adventures or even to regressions. But the latter do not annul God's ultimate determinateness to lead history towards achievement of soteriological goals but rather sometimes even meet man in his despair or use the results of his failure in a novel salvific way. Florovsky's tension between, on the one hand, the fact that history does comprise a sort of progressive tendency and, on the other, its open and non-predetermined character is also one that we find in Fathers such as Saint Maximus the Confessor.[54] The tension is due to the fact that there is an end in history, namely the eschatological goal of the full manifestation of the hypostatical union between God and man in Christ. And God intervenes constantly to offer us glimpses of this end.

[52] Georges Florovsky, 'Η δύσκολη θέση του χριστιανού ιστορικού', in *Χριστιανισμός και Πολιτισμός, Έργα* 2, trans. Nikos Pournaras (Θεσσαλονίκη: Πουρναράς, 2000), 63–64.

[53] In contemporary Orthodox theology, the theme of the historical dialogue between God and man is developed in its ontological profoundness mainly by fr Nikolaos Loudovikos. See for example: Nikolaos Loudovikos, *A Eucharistic Ontology: Maximus the Confessor's Eschatological Ontology of Being as Dialogical Reciprocity* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2010).

[54] See: Dionysios Skliris, '"Eschatological teleology", "free dialectic", "Metaphysics of the Resurrection": The three antinomies that make Maximus an alternative European philosopher', in *Maximus the Confessor as a European Philosopher*, eds, Sotiris Mitralexis, Georgios Steiris, Marcin Podbielski, and Sebastian Lalla (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade, 2017), 3–23.

But the itinerary is open, and man may or may not realize particular historical goals. Besides, Florovsky is a scholar with an acute historical consciousness, famous for writing a historical account of the evolution of Patristic thought in relation to the history of the Byzantine Empire. And, even though he considers the Greek language as a historical flesh for the Incarnation of the Logos, at the same time he does not hesitate to point out that Byzantine Christianity has been a historical failure in both its antinomical versions as empire and desert.[55] The ideal of the empire has led to an accommodation of the Church to secular power, whereas the ideal of the desert has often led to sectarian splendid isolation.[56] Thusly, Orthodox progress in the future would arguably be *neo-patristic*, yet *post-byzantine*.

The supposedly linear character of history espoused by Florovsky aims to deny the ancient Greek cyclical notion of time. Florovsky is equally against an existential interiorization of eschatology as that found for example in Rudolf Bultmann. In Florovsky, the end of the eschaton is always there, but there is room for genuine tragedy inside history. Florovsky's view could best be described as an 'inaugurated eschatology', since the eschaton did enter history, but there is still tension between the 'already' of the Incarnation and the 'not yet' of the full manifestation of the results of the Resurrection.[57] However, there is the danger in this schematization, as Nikolaos Asproulis brilliantly remarks, that we see history and eschatology as two distinct poles in a dialectical relation, in which the eschaton is solely at the end of the historical itinerary as its continuation. In this sense, history is at the service of eschatology, but in a way that prevents the eschaton from constantly entering history and shaping it from within. In his effort to criticize extreme eschatological visions to the detriment of historicity, Florovsky is led to making history the field par excellence of the emergence of meaning.[58] Florovsky's inaugurated eschatology sometimes gives the impression of promoting the Incarnation at the detriment of the Resurrection and a pneumatology in which the Spirit is moving history at the detriment of a pneumatology in which the Spirit would come from the outside in order to transform history.[59]

The notion of personhood is approached by Florovsky inside the context of this divine-human dialogue. Personhood is the image of God in man which consists in being able to respond to God within a mutual dialogue.[60] Personhood is intrinsically

[55] See the profound analysis in: Thanasis Papathanasiou, 'Αυτοκρατορία και έρημος: Η Ιστορία και οι αντινομίες της στη σκέψη του π. Γ. Φλωρόφσκι', *Synaxi* 64 (1997): 27–52.

[56] Georges Florovsky, *Το Σώμα του Ζώντος Χριστού: Μια Ορθόδοξη ερμηνεία της Εκκλησίας*, trans. Ioannis Papadopoulos (Αθήνα: Αρμός, 1999), 124–25.

[57] See Marios Begzos, *Φαινομενολογία της Θρησκείας* (Αθήνα: Ελληνικά Γράμματα, 1995), 91; Asproulis, *Το Μυστήριο του Χριστού*, 222–26, 242–43.

[58] Asproulis, *Το Μυστήριο του Χριστού*, 244–45.

[59] Ibid., 252.

[60] Georges Florovsky, 'Αποκάλυψη και Ερμηνεία', in A*γία Γραφή, Εκκλησία, Παράδοσις, Έργα* 1, trans. Dimitrios Tsamis (Θεσσαλονίκη: Πουρναράς, 1976), 14–15; 'Αποκάλυψη, Φιλοσοφία, Θεολογία' in *Δημιουργία και Απολύτρωση, Έργα* 3, trans. Panagiotis Pallis (Θεσσαλονίκη: Πουρναράς, 1983), 23–24.

linked to the notion of history, since God only addresses persons, not impersonal natures, and it is this divine call that establishes history as a field of continuous dialogue. When describing the person, Florovsky would start from praising the Aristotelian contribution, since the notion of the first substance (*πρώτη οὐσία*) offers stability and permanence. Some notions that are however linked to the Christian understanding of personhood beyond Aristotelianism are freedom, creativity, dynamism, and universality.[61] Freedom is linked to the notion of *podvig*, meaning the 'ascetical achievement' that is emblematic of Florovsky's thought. *Podvig* is a Russian word that is difficult to translate. It means a courageous act of self-denial and self-transcendence in contrary conditions. *Podvig* could be the deed of a military hero, of an ascetic saint or even of a scientist who struggles for scientific progress in adverse circumstances. Personhood thus involves man's dynamic character in an act that transcends the initial limitations of nature without, however, being contrary to its inner dynamic potentialities. Florovsky envisages a man in the becoming, the personal character of whom entails the dynamic realization of capacities through acting. As Asproulis remarks, 'Florovsky […] understands the notion of person as an individuation of the essence (human or divine) or as a particular expression of it and as an identity that is revealed in its manifestation *ad extra* through acting rather than as the result of a contemplative approach ad intra or as a description of its being'.[62] In Lossky, Meyendorff, and Yannaras we find such a comprehension of the person as being realized in its manifestation through the energy. Especially Yannaras's notion of self-transcendence (αὐθυπέρβασις) has some common traits to that of the *podvig*.[63]

In Florovsky one finds a similar moderately apophatic notion of personhood, but the emphasis is put rather in the *ethical act*, in the *podvig*, than in the natural energy. The *podvig* synthetizes between moral responsibility, reaction to historical challenges and, also, the ecstatic character of personhood, which in a transcendent way performs possibilities that were not entirely absent in the natural given but awaited for their performative realization. The *podvig* is a personal transcendence not only of natural limitations, but also of the physical and the empirical ego or individual.[64] But this personal achievement of the *podvig* is not performed by a transcendental personal self. It is an act of syn-ergy with God which eventually manifests the best potentialities of nature, psychology, and selfhood, albeit in an eminent form attracted by divine grace. Personhood is thus regarded as a possibility to initiate an ecstatic movement that transcends the initial adverse conditions (what could be biblically termed as the '*παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος*', see *Epistle to the Colossians* 3:9), without any escapism from nature. Florovsky sees in this ecstatic character of personhood

[61] Asproulis, *Το Μυστήριο του Χριστού*, 135–137.
[62] Ibid., 138.
[63] See for example: Christos Yannaras, *Το Πρόσωπο και ο Έρως* (Αθήνα: Δόμος, 1987), 119–121.
[64] Georges Florovsky, 'Δημιουργία και Δημιουργηματικότητα', in *Δημιουργία και Απολύτρωση*, 83–84.

the possibility to introject the multitude of other persons inside us after the model of unity of the Trinity[65] that is based in the homoousion and the perichoresis of persons. Florovsky detects psychological and moral traits in personhood, such as subjectivity and moral responsibility—especially in assuming the *podvig*. But, at the same time, he regards personhood as a third way between Western Post-Cartesian individualism and Eastern collectivity. This third 'golden' rule is the catholicity of human personhood in the image of the Trinity. The person can arrive at a universal bearing of its nature even introjecting other persons, as in the Trinity each Person hypostasizes the totality of nature in perichoresis with the other divine Persons. Of course, in humanity this is not a given, but a dynamic achievement in the act of *podvig*.

The emphasis given to history is linked to very strong understanding of the contingency of the world. Florovsky might be well based in the thought of Saint Athanasius about the world being produced by the will of God, but he radicalizes this thought. The world is seen as a 'contingent surplus of existence',[66] as an excess[67] which is in no way ontologically necessary; the world could have not existed at all.[68] This radicalization takes place in contrast to Bulgakov, who seemed to consider creation as an inherent element of God's character as Creator. But it was also in tune with Neo-Thomist personalist emphasis on the contingent character of world's existence. What is more, it meant that if the world is fortuitous then its contemplation cannot teach us anything about God in himself, but only about contingent results of his will. In a very bold articulation, Florovsky states: 'We have to distinguish "two modes of eternity": the "essential eternity" in which only the Trinity lives, and the "contingent eternity" of the free acts of the divine grace'.[69] God's will for the creation of the universe and the various creatures inside it is not ontologically necessary. God could have created another world with different creatures, or he could have abstained from creating any world whatsoever.

It has, however, to be noted that the characterization of the acts of grace of God as contingent is a novel and radical move, which was not performed by the Byzantine Fathers. In the latter, we can find in Saint Maximus the Confessor notions such as the *logoi* of beings that are considered as wills of God, but the latter are not characterized as 'contingent'. The whole notion of 'contingency' is of course rather a Western, particularly Thomist preoccupation, which has gained new actuality in both Neo-Thomist and atheist versions of existentialism. Florovsky thus radicalizes Patristic thought in order to respond to a modern problematic. His response is that we should rather embrace and celebrate the contingent and excessive character of

[65] Georges Florovsky, 'Η καθολικότητα της Εκκλησίας', in *Αγία Γραφή, Εκκλησία, Παράδοσις*, 59.

[66] Georges Florovsky, 'The idea of Creation in Christian Philosophy', *Eastern Churches Quarterly* 8.3 Supplementary issue: Nature and Grace (1949): 55–56.

[67] Florovsky, 'Δημιουργία και Δημιουργηματικότητα', 65.

[68] Ibid., 58.

[69] Florovsky, 'The idea of Creation', 67.

the world, as this means that the latter is a gift, a *charisma* of God's love. Most theologians would agree in that, but it seems that proceeding to characterize even the divine acts in regard to this world as also contingent is something that would gain less consensus.

Florovsky wishes to conceive of a God who is totally free from creation and could arguably create a variety of different worlds or none at all, without himself losing his ultimate ontological value. His effort is thus to exalt divine freedom. At the same time, it could be regarded as problematic to somehow introduce contingency to God, even at the level of his acts, since this would mean a sort of different potentialities, out of which God 'chooses'. But the Byzantine Fathers usually abstained from attributing freedom of choice, since that would include a game between presence and absence (i.e., presence of actualities and absence of possibilities). In the Fathers, God's supra-essential 'being' is rather conceived as a complete presence that is not co-existent with any absence, as an actuality that does not exclude non-existent capacities. God is therefore free in an eminent way without choosing. If we are to put this in an image, God does not choose a way; instead, He creates a way that 'retroactively' is the only possible. For example, modern interpreters of Saint Maximus prefer to interpret the '*logoi* of beings' as uncreated without entering into the sloppy question of whether they are contingent or not. Of course, after man's fall, God adapts his plans to counter the results of the Fall, but, again, this is not viewed as a divine 'choice' but only as divine 'providence'. In any case, the point of my remarks is that Florovsky does move beyond a traditional notion of God by pointing to eternal yet contingent divine acts catering for the contingent world. His wish is rather to exalt the freedom of God, who is not dependent on an internal necessity in what concerns creation. At the same time, this way of understanding the sublimity of divine freedom is a novel one, a modern way which did not exist in the Patristic era. At other points of his work, however, Florovsky tries to follow a Maximian intuition that the divine idea about creation is transcendent and different from creation itself.[70] It seems, thus, that Florovsky does espouse the traditional notion of the divine *logoi* of beings as uncreated and divine. But he poses a further question, which is quite a modern one, namely whether these uncreated *logoi* are in a sense contingent, since God could have willed a different world. Byzantine thinkers did not indulge in such hypotheses, but modernity has brought a new acuteness in this awareness of the non-necessity of the universe, and Florovsky seems to respond to this existential concern. What is more, from the epistemological point of view, the emphasis on the total contingency of the world or even of divine acts pertaining to it means that if we want to know God in himself, we should rather turn away from nature and towards history as the privileged locus of his manifestation. For it is in history that a revelation of God's non contingent being occurs.

[70] Ibid., 69.

Conclusion

In this study I have tried to show the experimental character of the thought of some eminent Russian thinkers of the diaspora concerning the subject of freedom. What we find as a common preoccupation is the need to respond to the modern notion of freedom, which was formulated in the West from the time of medieval nominalism until the more recent currents of personalism and existentialism. In this response, the Russians of the diaspora search in the Patristic tradition for inspiration, even though they frequently remark, like Berdyaev and Lossky, that there is no anthropology of personhood in the Fathers, the latter being a task for our own age.[71] In any case it could be remarked that trying to answer modern questions could not but shape in a way the answers themselves. In other words, even though the aim of the thinkers that we have examined was the final synthesis between freedom and nature, following the relevant Orthodox tradition, the way they have posed the problem tended in many cases to equate nature to necessity and freedom to liberation from it. This stance is widely criticized today, in an era where we are longer conscious of the medieval nominalist roots of existentialism.[72] In this study I have tried to highlight two aspects of the relevant contribution of the Russians of the diaspora: On the one hand, their *ethos* as thinkers, namely the fact that they did not believe that the tradition is closed in its perfection, but insisted that there are new challenges that await a future solution. On the other hand, I have endeavoured to show some specific fruits of their experimentation. Some of the notions put forward, such as that of the *Ungrund* by Nikolai Berdyaev, are less traditional and create acute difficulties, such as an effort to exalt human creativity to the detriment of God's omnipotence, as if God has to be restricted in order to leave space for the human creative genius. Other solutions, such as Lossky's insistence on the *hyperousion* of God or Florovsky's novel synthesis between the Greek notion of person and the particularly Russian notion of the *podvig,* were probably proven to be more successful. The most precious element in the legacy of the Russians of the diaspora is perhaps their very example of creative experimentation, intellectual honesty and experience of historicity in both its impasses and liberating surprises.

[71] Modern Greek theologians did respond to this task set by Russian thinkers such as Berdyaev and Lossky. See for example: Christos Yannaras, *Το Πρόσωπο και ο Έρως*; John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1985).

[72] For an acute and profound critique of ecclesiological consequences of the thought of eminent Russians of the Diaspora, see: Nikolaos Loudovikos, *Church in the Making: An Apophatic Ecclesiology of Consubstantiality* (Yonkers, NY: Saint Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2016).

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